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# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 186/94

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TO: PRESS OFFICERSAI INDEX: NWS 11/186/94  
FROM: IS PRESS OFFICEDISTR: SC/PO  
DATE: 16 AUGUST 1994 NO OF WORDS:292

NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - **TADZHIKISTAN** (This item is being sent to the research team's media contacts)

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES**

India - 16 August - SEE NEWS SERVICE 175/94

\*\* Rwanda - 19 August \*\* - SEE NOTE ABOVE

Haiti - 24 August - SEE NEWS SERVICE 184/94

Brazil - 14 September - PLEASE NOTE THIS IS AN INTERNATIONAL RELEASE. SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

Kosovo - 19 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

Algeria - first week of October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

France - 12 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

## **TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES**

Thailand - 6 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 184/94

Bhutan/Nepal - 25 August - See news service 168/94

Togo - 15 September - See news service 168/94

Indonesia - 28 September - LAUNCH OF CAMPAIGN

Turkey - 14 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 181/94

News Service 186/94

AI INDEX: EUR 60/WU 03/94  
16 AUGUST 1994

TADZHIKISTAN: JOURNALISTS ARRESTED IN CLAMPDOWN AGAINST OPPOSITION NEWSPAPER

Amnesty International is calling for the immediate and unconditional release of two journalists arrested last week in the capital Dushanbe.

Maksud Khusaynov, an award-winning Tadjikistani journalist and fellow journalist Mukhammadrakhim Saydar were arrested on 9 and 11 August after state security agents searched their homes and discovered copies of the opposition newspaper Charogi Ruz ("Light of the Day") which is published in Moscow and circulated clandestinely inside Tadjikistan.

Unofficial sources report that there have been other arrests in recent days in what appears to be a clampdown against possession of the newspaper.

These arrests have come at a time when Tadjikistan's parliament is preparing to debate an amnesty law which would benefit political prisoners charged with offenses connected with the 1992 civil war.

An amnesty is one of the conditions required from the government by the opposition in Tadjikistan for a successful outcome to ongoing peace talks aimed at national reconciliation and an end to the continuing opposition insurgency from Afghanistan.

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