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Taliban will ‘weed out and exterminate’ LGBT+ people in Afghanistan, warns exiled gay author

Monday 6 September 2021, by [KELLEHER Patrick](#) (Date first published: 17 August 2021).

Gay Afghan author Nemat Sadat has warned that the Taliban will “weed out and exterminate” the LGBT+ community in Afghanistan following their seismic takeover.

There has been significant concern for the [safety and wellbeing](#) of women, girls and LGBT+ people in Afghanistan after the extremist militant group seized power.

The Taliban is [expected to enforce](#) its extreme interpretation of Sharia law across Afghanistan, which would see many women, LGBT+ people persecuted. Under it, queer people and women could be sentenced to death.

Speaking to *PinkNews*, Sadat said there is “no telling” how bad the situation will become for [LGBT+](#) Afghans stuck in the country under Taliban rule.

Sadat and his family left Afghanistan when he was still a baby and they ultimately settled in the United States. In 2012, he returned to his birth city of Kabul to work as a professor of political science at the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF).

Widespread anti-LGBT+ sentiment meant that it was impossible for him to settle there. Warlords spread rumours that he was a practicing homosexual. Sadat reacted to the rumours by advocating for LGBT+ rights on campus and in his classroom.

Shortly afterwards, the Taliban got involved. The extremist group wrote a manifesto claiming AUAF had “become a bastion of [gays](#) and lesbians” because of Sadat’s activism, adding that he should be “targeted and killed”.

At the end of the 2013 academic year, Sadat left Afghanistan and moved to New York where he intensified his campaign for LGBT+ rights in his home country on social media.

Sadat was told that he would be “penalised with the death penalty” if he returned to Afghanistan. He was eventually fired by the university.

He has spent the years since advocating for the rights of LGBT+ Afghans. He has watched with horror in recent days as the Taliban marched through the country, seizing control in the process.

The situation was already dire for LGBT+ people living in Afghanistan, with most forced to live their lives in secrecy – but he expects the reality to become significantly worse under Taliban rule.

Taliban could enact anti-gay purge in Afghanistan, author warns

“The Taliban will impose a ‘bait, kill and dump’ policy,” Sadat explains. “That is, they will appoint informants to lure gay and bisexual men online and in public spaces and take them to a secluded spot and kill them and dispose of their bodies.

“I know this because that is what undercover Taliban elements within Afghan government during the Karzai and Ghani era did and those who escaped shared their story with me.”

Sadat says the Taliban will likely not “publicly execute” LGBT+ people and show the footage to the world, adding that they have “gotten savvy about PR and may be inclined to carry out their anti-gay purging without the world watching”.

“They want to shift public opinion on their side,” he says.

“LGBT+ Afghans really don’t have any options. They can either await a slow death or a quick one. Whatever little joy they had will evaporate knowing that the Taliban can take their life at any moment.”

Sadat says the LGBT+ community in Afghanistan has spent the last 20 years “living like zombies in an open-air prison with no rights or equality”, fearing persecution from their families and society.

Queer people have been forced to keep their identities “under wraps” in an effort to survive. Taliban rule will make it even harder for the LGBT+ community to live their lives in secret.

“As bad as life was for LGBT under the regimes of Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani, there is no telling how severe it can get under the Taliban,” Sadat says. “It’s not hyperbolic to say that the Taliban will do what Nazis did to homosexuals: weed them out and exterminated them from Afghan society.”

Sadat is calling on people to put pressure on western governments to create a program to bring LGBT+ Afghans to safety abroad - although he concedes that there are likely “millions” of LGBT+ people in the country. Not all can be rescued, he says.

Patrick Kelleher August 17, 2021

P.S.

• Pink News. 2021/08/17:
<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2021/08/17/afghanistan-taliban-lgbt/>