

Human Rights Watch

Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2011/12/22/kazakhstan-detainee-dies-after-police-beating>

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(New York) - A man detained in connection with the December 16, 2011 violence in western Kazakhstan died on December 21 apparently from injuries sustained in police custody, Human Rights Watch said today. The death of Bazarbai Kenzhebaev, 50, occurred amid reports of other police beatings in police custody and a lockdown of the city of Zhanaozen.

Kenzhebaev was in Zhanaozen on December 16 to be with his younger daughter, who had just given birth. Police arrested him while going the short distance between his daughters house and the maternity hospital and brought him to the Zhanaozen Main Police Department. Elena Kostyuchenko of the Russian weekly *Novaya Gazeta* spoke with Kenzhebaev on December 19, and described to Human Rights Watch his multiple beatings in custody. Kenzhebaev is identified as AA in Human Rights Watch's [December 22 news release](#).

Bazarbai Kenzhebaev should never have been beaten and he should not have died, said Rachel Denber, deputy Europe and Central Asia director at Human Rights Watch. The Kazakh authorities should immediately investigate his death, prosecute those responsible, and take urgent measures to stop and prevent police mistreatment.

Human Rights Watch said the authorities should allow detainees immediate access to family members, legal counsel, and medical personnel, and allow human rights monitors access to Zhanaozen, including to all places of detention.

In accordance with the United Nations Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, all suspected cases of unlawful killings, including in response to complaints by relatives, and reliable reports, should have a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation. This investigation should determine the cause, manner and time of death, the person responsible, and any pattern or practice which may have brought about that death. The investigation should result in a publicly available written report.

Kostyuchenko said that Kenzhebaev's family told her that he died on the evening of December 21 due to a ruptured intestine. He had been detained on December 16 at about 5:00 p.m. and released about 24 hours later. Kostyuchenko interviewed Kenzhebaev after his release and he told her that he was beaten when he was arrested, while being transported to the police station, at the station, in his cell, and while being accompanied to the interrogation room.

Kostyuchenko said that Kenzhebaev had visible bruises and that he had been coughing blood for two days and had blood in his urine, but could not call a doctor because phone communications had been [shut down in Zhanaozen](#). He had feared leaving his home to go to the hospital because he had heard that individuals who were detained a second time would not be released.

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