

World

Houthi rebels sentence 13 to death on homosexuality charges in Yemen

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A Houthi-run court in Yemen has sentenced 13 people to executed, on charges relating to homosexuality, a judicial court confirmed this week.

Houthi rebels control large parts of Yemen. (AFP/Getty)

The death sentences were handed down in Ibb, an area controlled by the Houthis rebels. [According to reports in AFP](#), quoting an anonymous source, three others were jailed on similar charges and another 35 people were detained in the province, also for alleged [homosexuality-related offences](#).

The court findings are open to appeal and it is not clear when any of the public executions are due to be carried out, but, according to a report by the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor in 2022, the Houthis have sentenced 350 people to death - 11 of who have been executed - since they seized Yemen's capital city of Sanaa in 2014.

"The Houthis are ramping up their abuses at home while the world is busy watching their attacks in the Red Sea," Niku Jafarnia, a researcher for Human Rights Watch, told AFP.

"If they really cared about the human rights they purport to be standing up for in Palestine, they wouldn't be flogging and stoning Yemenis to death."

According to Amnesty International, the rebels continue to target LGBTQ+ people with arbitrary arrest and torture, including rape and other forms of sexual violence. In 2022, the Southern Transitional Council, a secessionist organisation in South Yemen, and the Houthis arrested at least five people on the basis of either their refusal to conform to "masculine" and "feminine" presentation or their LGBTQ+ activism.

On one occasion, a queer man was pulled off the street and accused of being a "sexual deviant." He was detained in a military vehicle and only released on the condition that he agreed to help the Houthis capture people who did not conform to gender norms. However, after he was released he refused, and was told by security forces that he was wanted for arrest once again.

In addition, the Houthis' "mahram agreement" continues to ban women from travelling without a male guardian or written evidence of their consent. Meanwhile, increased restrictions on travel have affected women's ability to work, resulting in many being unable to access healthcare, with Yemeni female humanitarian workers unable to reach them.

Eleanor Noyce

P.-S.

• Pink News. Feb 08 2024 :

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/02/08/houthi-rebels-death-penalty-homosexuality-charges/>