

Natig Gasimov, Tragic Protagonist of Film The Son, Awarded National Hero of Azerbaijan

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, June 27, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- 19-year old volunteer Natig Gasimov, who fought in the First Karabakh War in 1992, has been made a National Hero of Azerbaijan.

President Ilham Aliyev signed a decree Tuesday [conferring the title of National Hero of Azerbaijan on Gasimov](#). This is the highest honour awarded in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Gasimov was bestowed the title posthumously for special services in protecting the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and for personal courage shown during a combat mission. He had single-handedly defended a strategically-located church near Aghdam, fending off Armenian forces for several days.

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Gasimov's disappearance after being taken prisoner by Armenian forces was investigated by London-based filmmaker Karan Singh in his documentary film, *The Son*.

The film used unpublished photos taken by Italian war photographer Enrico Sarsini, who covered the conflict for Russia's Ogoniok magazine. He was present with Armenian forces during their siege of the church.

Sarsini was also present when Gasimov surrendered in exchange for the lives of Azerbaijani hostages held by Armenian forces. Sarsini took photos of Gasimov's interrogation by Armenian officers and soldiers, but then had to leave to return to Moscow. After Sarsini's departure, the young Azerbaijani prisoner of war was never heard of again.



Film poster of *The Son*

"I'm very proud for Natig Gasimov that his heroism and his sacrifice have been recognised. This is a landmark moment for his family and friends," said Karan Singh, the director of The Son.

The [46-minute film](#) found out what happened to Gasimov, uncovering new evidence that pointed to those responsible for his disappearance, particularly retired Armenian officer Lt. General Vitaly Balasanyan who the film reveals was present at Gasimov's interrogation.

"Due to our investigation and film, Natig's fate is not a statistic anymore. Today he is Azerbaijan's National Hero," said the film's executive producer Tale Heydarov.

The Son held its world premiere in 2021 at the Whistleblower Film Festival in Washington D.C. that highlights civil and human rights violations across the globe.

The documentary was also selected for screening at the prestigious [Mumbai International Film Festival](#). In March this year, it held its UK premiere at BAFTA's Princess Anne Theatre in London, where the film received loud applause from the large audience.

"Our story resonates today, as mothers continue to lose their sons due to wars and war crimes," said Eckart Sager, the producer of The Son. "With Natig now a National Hero, his family finally has closure."

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