

# Separmurad Nyazov

Pink Palace, Ashgabat

Born: 19 February 1940, Gypjak

## TURKMENISTAN

President-for-life



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## Training/education

**1966:** Graduates from Leningrad Polytechnic Institute as electrical engineer.

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## Professional experience

**March 2006:** Says that those who read his book for schoolchildren, the *Ruhnama*, three times will find spiritual richness, become more intelligent, recognise God and go straight to Heaven. The book tells the country's history in a way to confirm him as its spiritual guide.

**December 2005:** Has Khudaiberdy Kurbandurdyev, editor of weekly *Adalat (Justice)*, sentenced to eight years in prison for "professional negligence" and "treason."

**August 2004:** Personally dismisses interior minister in live TV broadcast for alleged incompetence after leaflet campaign calling for Nyazov's overthrow and trial. Orders building of an ice palace in Ashgabat.

**2004:** Orders all rural libraries to be shut down, saying Turkmen villagers do not read.

**2003-05:** Cracks down hard on only non-government Turkmen-language media available in the country, the US-funded *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty*, with harassment, arrests, beatings and imprisonment.

**25 November 2002:** Orders arrest of large number of supposed plotters after alleged assassination attempt.

**29 December 1999:** Proclaimed president-for-life by rubber-stamp parliament.

**22 October 1993:** Proclaims himself "The Turkmenbashi" (Father of All Turkmens).

**21 June 1991:** Elected president, and also becomes prime minister.

**27 October 1990:** Elected first president of Soviet Turkmenistan.

**1985:** Becomes head of Turkmen Communist Party and renames it Turkmenistan Democratic Party.

**1962:** Joins Soviet Communist Party.

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## Hobbies/interests

Poetry, philosophy, history, music, personality cult, bizarre decrees.

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