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RUSSIA: 65 known "extremist" religious literature cases in 2014

By Victoria Arnold, Forum 18

A total of 65 individuals and religious communities are known to have been prosecuted in 2014 across Russia for possession of allegedly "extremist" banned religious literature which does not appear to incite violence or hatred, Forum 18 News Service notes. Of these, 56 ended up with punishments. The cases were brought under Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("Production and distribution of extremist materials"), and all the cases related to the alleged possession of Muslim or Jehovah's Witness literature by individuals, religious communities, shopkeepers or stall holders. Courts continue in 2015 to rule Muslim and Jehovah's Witness literature "extremist", opening the way for more prosecutions. In 16 of the 65 known 2014 cases, courts ordered the religious literature to be destroyed. Prosecutors may use Article 20.29 convictions to seek to have a religious community forcibly dissolved. These 65 literature-related "extremism" cases are part of a wider pattern of investigations and prosecutions of people exercising their freedom of religion or belief.

A total of 65 individuals and religious communities are known to have been brought to court in 2014 across Russia for possession of religious literature which does not appear to incite violence or hatred, Forum 18 News Service has found in an analysis of court records. Of these, 56 ended up with punishments. The cases were brought under Code of Administrative Offences Article 20.29 ("Production or mass distribution of extremist materials"), and all the cases related to the alleged possession of Muslim or Jehovah's Witness literature. In 16 cases, courts ordered the confiscated religious literature destroyed.

Article 20.29

Article 20.29 of the Administrative Code punishes "production or mass distribution of extremist materials included in the published Federal List of Extremist Materials, as well as their production or storage for mass distribution". Once a court – even a low-level court - has ruled a text "extremist" and the verdict has come into force, the ruling must be communicated within three days to the Justice Ministry, which maintains the Federal List. The item will then be added to the List within a further 30 days, banning its distribution throughout Russia.

Possession of a banned text renders the possessor liable to criminal prosecution (see Forum 18's "Extremism" Russia religious freedom survey http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=1724).

Courts continue to rule Muslim and Jehovah's Witness literature "extremist", opening the way for more prosecutions for their possession or "mass distribution". Despite the term "mass distribution", prosecutors have often brought charges even if only one copy of a text is discovered. No state agency has answered Forum 18's questions on whether it is right that people should be punished for their possession and whether such prosecutions are a sensible use of police and prosecutors' time (see F18News 20 March 2015 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2049).

Individuals found guilty under Article 20.29 may be fined 1,000 to 3,000 Roubles (currently about 140 to 420 Norwegian Kroner, 16 to 50 Euros, or 17 to 52 US Dollars) or up to 15 days' detention. Officials of an organisation may be fined 2,000 to 5,000 Roubles (about 280 to 700 Norwegian Kroner, 32 to 80 Euros, or 44 to 86 US Dollars). Organisations may be fined 50,000 to 100,000 Roubles (about 6,960 to 13,930 Norwegian Kroner, 800 to 1,600 Euros, or 860 to 1,720 US Dollars) or have their operations suspended for up to 90 days. The "extremist" material itself is confiscated and may be destroyed.

In 16 of the 65 known 2014 cases, courts ordered the religious literature to be destroyed. Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses and human rights defenders have condemned such court-ordered religious literature destruction (see eg. F18News 28 August 2014 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=1990).

These 65 literature-related "extremism" cases are part of a wider pattern of investigations and prosecutions of people exercising their freedom of religion or belief, such as prosecutions of some communities exercising freedom of religion or belief in public without state permission (see eg. F18News 2 March 2015 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2044).

Similarly, Muslims and Jehovah's Witnesses who meet to study religious texts in private and pray may be detained for months, prosecuted, and either fined or jailed under the Criminal Code (see eg. F18News 6 March 2015

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2046).

Many other individuals were prosecuted under Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("Production or mass distribution of extremist materials") for material that did appear to be violent or racist.

2014 prosecutions

Of the 65 known Article 20.29 prosecutions in 2014 for religious literature, 59 resulted in conviction in the first instance, four in acquittal, and two in the charges being dropped. Three convictions were overturned on appeal. Even in cases of acquittal or successful appeal, defendants are forced to spend time, energy and money to counter the charges against them, Forum 18 notes.

Fifty-five of the 65 known cases were brought in relation to Islamic literature or videos, 35 of them involving texts banned by Lenin District Court in Orenburg in 2012, the largest "extremism" ruling in Russia so far. The ban on 50 of the 68 texts banned in Orenburg was overturned on appeal on 27 February (see F18News 20 March 2015 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2049). The remaining 10 cases in 2014 known to Forum 18 involved Jehovah's Witness literature.

In 2014 judges ordered the religious books to be destroyed in 16 cases, several of which involved multiple items. In a further 20 cases, confiscation was ordered. The fate of materials in other court proceedings is unclear in the written verdicts.

Nine registered religious organisations with legal status faced charges under Article 20.29 in 2014. Seven of these were mosque communities, while two were Jehovah's Witness communities. Of the 56 individuals charged, 14 were shopkeepers or stallholders accused of selling "extremist" material.

Examples of Article 20.29 cases during 2014 include:

- the Mufti of a Mosque in Saransk fined 5,000 Roubles for possession of one copy of Turkish theologian Said Nursi's "Guidebook for Women", during an inspection by a District Prosecutor who did not produce a search warrant as the law requires. Mosque staff think the book was planted, and Mufti Zyaki Aizatullin stated that the first time he had seen it was during the inspection. An appeal against the fine was rejected in March 2014 (see F18News 1 May 2014 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=1953);

- Jehovah's Witness Aleksandr Yevdoshenko fined 2,000 Roubles in Krasnoyarsk after a man from the Rodina political party's "Committee for Rehabilitating Victims of Sects" (a party previously banned from elections for inciting racial hatred) claimed to have been given an "extremist" booklet at a religious meeting in May 2014. Jehovah's Witnesses state that no "available evidence" exists that the Rodina activist who brought the complaint to police was present (see F18News 8 September 2014 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=1994);

- Ramazan mosque in the Urals city of Yekaterinburg fined 50,000 Roubles – equivalent to nine months' official minimum wage – for possessing religious literature which does not appear to incite violence or hatred. The mosque's imam Albert Bayazitov was formally warned about the inadmissibility of "extremist" activity. A court rejected the appeal against the fine in December 2014 (see F18News 22 January 2015 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2031);

- and five shopkeepers or stallholders prosecuted for offering Islamic or Jehovah's Witness texts for sale (see F18News 22 January 2015 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2031).

The Russian authorities began similar prosecutions in Crimea soon after it was annexed from Ukraine in 2014 (see Forum 18's Crimea religious freedom survey http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2051).

How prosecutions start

The majority of known 2014 cases listed below arose from raids or inspections carried out by law enforcement officials, usually with the aim of "checking compliance with anti-extremism legislation", according to court verdicts. In a few cases against Jehovah's Witnesses, prosecutors brought charges after an individual handed in a text to the police or security services after receiving it in the street or at a meeting.

Further consequences

Prosecutors may then use convictions under Article 20.29 as evidence of "extremist" activity and seek to have a religious community dissolved on that basis. If entire communities are banned as "extremist" their former members face prosecution with the risk of being jailed if they continue to meet together. This has been the experience of Jehovah's Witnesses in Samara, Taganrog, and Abinsk (see eg. F18News 6 March 2015 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2046), and a Muslim community in Borovsky village in Tyumen Region (see F18News 3 December 2014 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2020).

Known 2014 Article 20.29 "extremist" religious literature cases:

1.) 9 January

Name: Mufti Zyaki Aizatullin

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Proletarian District Court, Saransk, Republic of Mordovia

Material: "Guidebook for Women" by Said Nursi (banned by Koptev District Court, Moscow, 21 May 2007) in locked cabinet at Uskudr Cathedral Mosque

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: Supreme Court of Mordovia, 5 March – unsuccessful; supervisory appeal, 24 April – unsuccessful

2.) 22 January

Name: Ildar Nartdinov

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Kirov District Court, Perm Region

Material: Video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk district, Tyumen region, 7 April 2011), uploaded onto social network

Confiscation/destruction: Removal from all forms of data storage belonging to defendant

Appeal: None

3.) 27 January

Name: Nur Muslim community

Fine: 50,000 Roubles

Court: Sysert District Court, Sverdlovsk Region

Material: "Clarifying the fundamentals of faith: notes on true doctrine", by Muhammad ibn Saalih Uthaymeen (banned by Buguruslan City Court, Orenburg Region, 19 October 2007) in cabinet in mosque prayer hall

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

4.) 29 January

Name: S. Sadykov

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Lenin District Court, Omsk

Material: "Foundations of faith in the light of the Koran and Sunnah", by Salih al-Suheyimi, Abd al-Razzaq al-Badar, and Ibrahim al-Ruheyli (banned Central District Court, Tyumen, 11 October 2010), uploaded onto VKontakte social network

Confiscation/destruction: Not applicable

Appeal: None

5.) 4 February

Name: Marat Shaipov

Fine: 2,000 Roubles

Court: Volzhsk City Court, Mari El Republic

Material: Jehovah's Witness literature, including "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned Soviet District Court, Krasnoyarsk, 14 February 2013), distributed outside shopping centre

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: Mari El Supreme Court, 26 March – unsuccessful; supervisory appeal, 29 May – unsuccessful

6.) 5 February

Name: F. Mukhamedzyanova (shopkeeper)

Fine: 2,000 Roubles

Court: Industrial District Court, Samara

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012), for sale in Islamic goods shop beside mosque

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: Samara Regional Court, 6 March – verdict overturned as statute of limitations had expired

7.) 11 February

Name: Imam R. Kelmetyev

Fine: Unknown

Court: Perevolotsky District Court, Orenburg Region

Material: "How to accept Islam" (banned Krasnoyarsk District Court, Astrakhan Region, 14 March 2013) and "Introduction to Islam" (banned Arsenyev City Court, Primorsky Region, 24 December 2012) on literature stand in mosque

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

8.) 14 February

Name: R. Zabiroy

Fine: 2,500 Roubles

Court: October District Court, Penza Region

Material: "The Constellation of the Righteous Caliphs" by Osman Nuri Topbas (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) given to prison library on "relatives' day"

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: Penza Regional Court, 20 March – unsuccessful; supervisory appeal, 30 July – unsuccessful

9.) 14 February

Name: "Unity" Foundation for the Protection of Cultural Traditions

Fine: None – suspension of activity for 90 days

Court: Lyublino District Court, Moscow

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) available in prayer house

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: Unknown

10.) 25 February

Name: Marat Zakirov

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Tengushevo District Court, Republic of Mordovia

Material: Pages from "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) uploaded onto Odnoklassniki social network (book given to defendant in prison)

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

11.) 6 March

Name: Jehovah's Witness community of Samara

Fine: 50,000 Roubles

Court: Soviet District Court, Samara

Material: Two Jehovah's Witness titles (among those banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009)

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: Samara Regional Court, 17 April – unsuccessful; supervisory appeal, 14 July – unsuccessful

12.) 11 March

Name: T. Magomedov

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Verkhnekamsky District Court, Kirov Region

Material: 2 copies of "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012)

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: None

13.) 14 March

Name: Al-Mardzhani Cathedral Mosque

Fine: 50,000 Roubles

Court: Vakhitovsky District Court, Kazan

Material: 18 copies of "The Constellation of the Righteous Caliphs" by Osman Nuri Topbas and one of "Introduction to Islam" (both banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) for sale in mosque shop

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: Supreme Court of Tatarstan, 16 April – fine overturned as statute of limitations had expired; books to be destroyed

14.) 24 March

Name: Anna Bakanova (education manager at rehabilitation centre for disabled children)

Fine: 2,000 Roubles

Court: Anzhero-Sudzhensk City Court, Kemerovo Region

Material: "Book of Monotheism" by Muhammad al-Tamimi (banned by Savyolovo District Court, Moscow, 2 April 2004), accessible from laptop in children's computer class

Confiscation/destruction: Neither

Appeal: None

15.) 7 April

Name: Daniya Soldatikova (shopkeeper)

Fine: None – but 5 days' suspension of trading imposed

Court: Lenin District Court, Tyumen

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani and "Forty Hadith" by Imam al-Nawawi for sale in Islamic goods shop

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: None

16.) 17 April

Name: Marat Gaynullin

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Volzhsk City Court, Mari El Republic

Material: Video "Wonders of the Koran" uploaded to V Kontakte social network

Confiscation/destruction: Not applicable

Appeal: None

17.) 22 April

Name: Rakhmat Mosque

Fine: 50,000 Roubles, plus formal warning regarding "extremist" activity

Court: Ordzhonikidze District Court, Yekaterinburg

Material: "Life of the Prophet" by Safi-ur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012)

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Sverdlovsk Regional Court, 19 June – unsuccessful

18.) 24 April

Name: Rail Ganiyev

Fine: 3,000 Roubles

Court: Volzhsk City Court, Mari El Republic

Material: video "Wonders of the Koran" " (banned Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk district, Tyumen region, 7 April 2011) uploaded to Vkontakte social network

Confiscation/destruction: Not applicable

Appeal: none

19.) 25 April

Name: "Irshad" Muslim Community

Fine: 50,000 Roubles

Court: Asbest City Court, Sverdlovsk Region

Material: "Life of the Prophet Mohammed" by Ibn Hisham (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) and the "Book of Monotheism" by Mohammed ibn Suleiman al-Tamimi (banned by Savyolovsky District Court, Moscow, 2 April 2004) accessible to mosque visitors

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: Sverdlovsk Regional Court, 11 June - unsuccessful

20.) 28 April

Name: Kasymkhan Zhangereyev (shopkeeper)

Fine: 4,000 Roubles

Court: Pallasovka District Court, Volgograd Region

Material: Titles unknown – 7 computer discs and 6 books in Islamic goods shop and house

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: None known

21.) 28 April

Name: A. Idrisov (correctional colony inmate)

Fine: None – proceedings halted as statute of limitations had expired

Court: Omutninsk District Court, Kirov Region

Material: "Life of the Prophet Mohammed" by Ibn Hisham (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) found in prison classroom

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

22.) 29 April

Name: D. Tyulegenov (correctional colony inmate)

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Skopin District Court, Ryazan Region

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) – accused attempted to distribute book to other correctional colony inmates

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: None

23.) 30 April

Name: Valentina Udovitskaya (a founder of the local Jehovah's Witness community)

Fine: 2,500 Roubles

Court: Spassk District Court, Primorye Region

Material: Over 200 Jehovah's Witness books and brochures, including "What does the Bible really teach?"

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: Primorye Regional Court, 21 August – unsuccessful

24.) 13 May

Name: Kh. Ragimov

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Zadneprovsky District Court, Smolensk Region

Material: Video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk district, Tyumen region, 7 April 2011) uploaded to Vkontakte social network

Confiscation/destruction: Not applicable

Appeal: None

25.) 14 May

Name: S. M.

Fine: None – charges dropped as statute of limitations had expired

Court: Pervomaisky District Court, Vladivostok

Material: Two copies of "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani found at defendant's private home

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: None

26.) 28 May

Name: Imam Musa Sagov of Spiritual Centre, Yakutsk Cathedral Mosque

Fine: 3,000 Roubles

Court: Magistrates' Court No. 47, Yakutsk

Material: "Fundamentals of Brotherhood" (banned by Koptevo District Court, Moscow, 21 May 2007) and "Tract on Nature" (banned by Central District Court, Kaliningrad, 27 September 2012), both by Said Nursi, in Khandyga village mosque

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: None (but see entry for 16 June)

27.) 3 June

Name: Vladimir Morev

Fine: 1,500 Roubles

Court: Lenin District Court, Tyumen

Material: Jehovah's Witness literature handed out in defendant's taxi

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Tyumen Regional Court, 7 July – unsuccessful

28.) 3 June

Name: Shamil Chupanov

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Obninsk City Court, Kaluga Region

Material: "Gardens of the Righteous" by Imam al-Nawawi, "Way to the Koran" by Elmir Kuliyeu, and "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (all banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) uploaded onto Vkontakte social network

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: None

29.) 9 June

Name: Aleksandr Yershov (shopkeeper)

Fine: Unknown

Court: Magistrates' Court No. 6, Dimitrovgrad, Ulyanovsk Region

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) on sale in bookshop

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Unknown

30.) 16 June

Name: Spiritual Centre (Muslim religious organisation)

Fine: 50,000 Roubles

Court: Yakutsk City Court, Sakha Republic

Material: "Fundamentals of Brotherhood" (banned by Koptevo District Court, Moscow, 21/05/2007) and "Tract on Nature" (banned

by Central District Court, Kaliningrad, 27/09/2012), both by Said Nursi, in Khandyga village mosque – see entry for 28 May

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: Supreme Court of the Sakha Republic, 16 July – fine overturned as statute of limitations had expired, but books still destroyed

31.) 18 June

Name: Marina Levchenko (hospital doctor)

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Bryukhovetskaya District Court, Krasnodar Region

Material: Jehovah's Witness literature kept in desk in Accident and Emergency Department

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Krasnodar Regional Court, 19 August – unsuccessful

32.) 20 June

Name: Rafik Akhmetov (chair of "Shaban" Muslim religious organisation)

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Romodanovo District Court, Republic of Mordovia

Material: Islamic literature including "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) discussed by Akhmetov with mosque worshippers

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: None

33.) 25 June

Name: Valery Ishutin

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Lenin District Court, Jewish Autonomous Region

Material: One copy of Jehovah's Witness brochure "What does the Bible really teach?" on literature stand in street

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: Jewish Autonomous Regional Court, 4 August – unsuccessful

34.) 25 June

Name: A. Gabdulkhayeva

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Beryozovka District Court, Perm Region

Material: Pages from "The Way to the Koran" by Elmir Kuliyeu (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) uploaded onto Vkontakte social network

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Unknown

35.) 27 June

Name: Aleksandr Yevdoshenko

Fine: 2,000 Roubles

Court: Soviet District Court, Krasnoyarsk

Material: One copy of "What does the Bible really teach?" allegedly given during religious meeting to anti-"sectarian" political party activist

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Krasnoyarsk Regional Court, 1 August – unsuccessful; cassational appeal, 11 September – unsuccessful

36.) 21 July

Name: Akhmed Dakhkilgov

Fine: 3,000 Roubles

Court: Kanevskaya District Court, Krasnodar Region

Material: "The Way to Faith and Perfection" by Shamil Alyautdinov (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) found in defendant's home

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: None

37.) 15 August

Name: Unknown shopkeeper

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Kunashak District Court, Chelyabinsk Region

Material: Seven copies of "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) in village shop

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Unknown

38.) 15 August

Name: Jehovah's Witness community of Partizansk

Fine: None – community acquitted

Court: Partizansk City Court, Primorye

Material: Unspecified Jehovah's Witness literature kept in Palace of Culture

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: By Partizansk Prosecutor against acquittal to Primorye Regional Court, 22 September – acquittal upheld

39.) 18 August

Name: D. Gafurov (shopkeeper)

Fine: 2,000 Roubles

Court: Kirov District Court, Samara

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) for sale in Islamic goods shop

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

40.) 8 September

Name: Islam Bashlayev (shopkeeper)

Fine: Unknown

Court: Thought to be Grozny

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) for sale in Islamic goods shop

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Unknown

41.) 8 September

Name: Imam Khadzhi Murtazov

Fine: Unknown

Court: Factory District Court, Grozny

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) available in Tukhsaroy village mosque

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: Unknown

42.) 10 September

Name: A. Zaynutdinov

Fine: 2,000 Roubles

Court: Pyt-Yakh City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District, Tyumen Region

Material: Three copies of "Constellation of the Righteous Caliphs" by Osman Nuri Topbas (both banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) for sale in trading pavilion

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

43.) 11 September

Name: A. Sharipova

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: October District Court, Omsk

Material: "Gardens of the Righteous" by Imam al-Nawawi (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) posted on Vkontakte social network

Confiscation/destruction: Not applicable

Appeal: None

44.) 17 September

Name: Saadat Akhtayeva (shopkeeper)

Fine: 3,000 Roubles

Court: Magistrates' Court No. 17, Makhachkala, Republic of Dagestan

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (18 copies) and "Gardens of the Righteous" by Imam al-Nawawi (5 copies) (both banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) for sale in Islamic goods shop

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

45.) 22 September

Name: Imam Ilgiz Fatikhov

Fine: Unknown

Court: Arti District Court, Sverdlovsk Region

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) in Ust-Manchazh village prayer house

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: None

46.) 22 September

Name: Esenbulat Esenbulatov

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Magistrates' Court No. 9, Makhachkala, Republic of Dagestan

Material: Seven copies of "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) for sale in Islamic goods shop

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: None

47.) 24 September

Name: Magomedamin Israpilov

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Magistrates' Court No. 11, Makhachkala, Republic of Dagestan

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani and "Gardens of the Righteous" by Imam al-Nawawi (both banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) for sale in market

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Lenin District Court, Makhachkala, 18 November – unsuccessful

48.) 26 September

Name: Imam Enver Batchayev

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Ust-Dzheguta District Court, Republic of Karachay-Cherkessiya

Material: "Forty Hadith" by Imam al-Nawawi (banned by Sol-Iletsk District Court, Orenburg Region, 28/05/2012) in Ust-Dzhegutinsk mosque

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

49.) 30 September

Name: Ch. Konomatova

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Surgut District Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District, Tyumen Region

Material: Unspecified Islamic literature banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012

Confiscation/destruction: Books to be kept to establish legal owner (see entry for 8 October)

Appeal: None

50.) 8 October

Name: Imam Vildan Safargaliyev (imam)

Fine: 3,000 Roubles

Court: Surgut District Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District, Tyumen Region

Material: Islamic literature including "Forty Hadith" by Imam al-Nawawi (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) in Federovsky village mosque (see entry for 30 September)

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

51.) 8 October

Name: Imam Fyanyus Bikmayev

Fine: 2,000 Roubles

Court: Kuznetsk District Court, Penza

Material: "History of the Prophets in the light of the Holy Koran, Vol. 2" and "Constellation of the Righteous Caliphs" by Osman Nuri Topbas (both banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) on table in mosque

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: None

52.) 10 October

Name: I. Alekseyev

Fine: 2,000 Roubles

Court: Artyom City Court, Primorye Region

Material: Jehovah's Witness text "What does the Bible really teach?" uploaded to file-sharing website

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: None

53.) 22 October

Name: A. Gorbach

Fine: None – defendant acquitted

Court: Solnechny District Court, Khabarovsk Region

Material: Jehovah's Witness brochure "What does God demand from us?" (banned by Gorno-Altai City Court, Altai Republic) and other literature

Confiscation/destruction: "What does God demand from us?" ordered destroyed; other confiscated literature returned to defendant

Appeal: Not applicable

54.) 22 October

Name: Sverdlovsk Regional Spiritual Administration of Muslims

Fine: 50,000 Roubles (imam Albert Bayazitov also given formal "extremism" warning)

Court: Chkalovsk District Court, Yekaterinburg

Material: Literature, films, and audio recordings, including "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani and "Gardens of the Righteous" by Imam al-Nawawi (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) on open shelves in mosque

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: Sverdlovsk Regional Court, 16 December – unsuccessful

55.) 24 October

Name: R. Chipchikov

Fine: None – defendant acquitted as edition of text could not be matched to edition on Federal List

Court: Zelenchukskaya District Court, Republic of Karachay-Cherkessiya

Material: One copy of "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) found in defendant's house

Confiscation/destruction: Book returned to defendant

Appeal: Not applicable

56.) 24 October

Name: I. Khaliullin

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Volzhsk City Court, Mari El Republic

Material: Video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District, Tyumen Region, 7 April 2011) uploaded onto Vkontakte social network

Confiscation/destruction: Not applicable

Appeal: None

57.) 24 October

Name: T. Chomayev

Fine: None – defendant acquitted

Court: Zelenchukskaya District Court, Republic of Karachay-Cherkessiya

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani in defendant's home, shared with neighbours – but not an edition included on Federal List

Confiscation/destruction: Not applicable

Appeal: None

58.) 6 November

Name: Unknown

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Magistrates' Court No. 11, Makhachkala, Republic of Dagestan

Material: "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani and "Gardens of the Righteous" by Imam al-Nawawi (both banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) for sale in market

Confiscation/destruction: Destruction

Appeal: None

59.) 13 November

Name: Yu. Kasparova

Fine: 3,000 Roubles

Court: Cheremushki District Court, Moscow

Material: Audio recording of "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani on CD for sale at market

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

60.) 25 November

Name: Khava Magomadova (correctional colony inmate)

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Maikop City Court, Republic of Adygea

Material: "A basic understanding of Islam" (banned by Maikop City Court, 24 November 2010) distributed to fellow inmates

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

61.) 4 December

Name: Aleksandr Alyokhin (shopkeeper)

Fine: 2,000 Roubles

Court: Biysk City Court, Altai Region

Material: Jehovah's Witness text "Knowledge that leads to everlasting life" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009); for sale on bookshop counter

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

62.) 8 December

Name: E. Kovalyov

Fine: 3,000 Roubles

Court: Industrial District Court, Vladikavkaz

Material: Islamic literature including "A guide for seekers of knowledge" (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012)

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

63.) 19 December

Name: Imam Khayruddin Bilolov

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Tayshet City Court, Irkutsk Region

Material: Islamic literature including "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani and "Forty Hadith" by Imam al-Nawawi (both banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) on table in mosque prayer hall

Confiscation/destruction: Confiscation

Appeal: None

64.) 24 December

Name: Satsita Chukuyeva (shopkeeper)

Fine: 1,000 Roubles

Court: Lenin District Court, Grozny

Material: One copy of "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said bin Ali bin Waqf al-Qahtani (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) for sale in Islamic goods shop

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Unknown

65.) 24 December

Name: Unknown, possibly Madina Obidova

Fine: 1,500 Roubles

Court: Perm District Court, Perm Region

Material: Pages from "The Way to the Koran" by Elmir Kuliyeu (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) uploaded onto Vkontakte social network

Confiscation/destruction: Unknown

Appeal: Unknown

(END)

For more background, see Forum 18's surveys of the general state of freedom of religion or belief in Russia at http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=1722, and of the dramatic decline in religious freedom related to Russia's Extremism Law at http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=1724.

A personal commentary by Alexander Verkhovsky, Director of the SOVA Center for Information and Analysis <http://www.sova-center.ru>, about the systemic problems of Russian anti-extremism legislation, is at F18News 19 July 2010 http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=1468.

A personal commentary by Irina Budkina, Editor of the <http://www.samstar.ucoz.ru> Old Believer website, about continuing denial of equality to Russia's religious minorities, is at F18News 26 May 2005 http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=570.

More reports on freedom of thought, conscience and belief in Russia can be found at <http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?query=&religion=all&country=10>.

A compilation of Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) freedom of religion or belief commitments can be found at http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=1351.

A printer-friendly map of Russia is available at <http://education.nationalgeographic.com/mapping/outline-map/?map=Russia>.

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