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RUSSIA: "Extremist" literature fines rose in 2016

By Victoria Arnold, Forum 18 (<https://www.forum18.org>)

Administrative prosecutions for religious literature and videos deemed "extremist" (all Jehovah's Witness or Muslim) rose between 2015 and 2016. Across Russia 103 defendants were punished, including one man's 13-day jail term and a Jehovah's Witness congregation's 45-day suspension. Prosecutions led to a mosque being liquidated.

A total of 123 individuals and organisations across Russia are known to have been brought to court in 2016 for the so-called "mass distribution" of religious literature and other items deemed to be "extremist", Forum 18 has found. None of this material appears to incite the violation of human rights, violence or hatred. Of this total, 103 defendants ended up with punishments, including a 13-day jail sentence for one man who shared a video on social media, and a 45-day suspension of activity for a Jehovah's Witness congregation in Voronezh.

(A full listing of known 2016 cases is at the bottom of this article.)

There were in 2016 more prosecutions under Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") than in either 2015 or 2014 (see Forum 18's "extremism" Russia religious freedom survey http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2215). In 2015, 89 prosecutions led to 79 punishments including four jail sentences (see F18News 25 April 2016 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2171). In 2014, 65 prosecutions led to 56 fines (see F18News 31 March 2015 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2052).

Despite the relatively low fines for private individuals and officials, conviction under Administrative Code Article 20.29 can have serious consequences for the communities to which they belong. The Mirmameda Mosque, an unregistered religious group in Samara Region, was declared "extremist" and its activities banned after its imam was fined twice in 2016 – once for a banned video posted on the group's social media page, once for a banned book allegedly found in its mosque (see below).

Several registered Jehovah's Witness organisations were dissolved as "extremist" in 2016 after Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") prosecutions; these convictions were also cited as one of the reasons for the liquidation of the Jehovah's Witness Administrative Centre and all local congregations across Russia in April 2017 (see F18News 20 April 2017 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2274).

Jehovah's Witness prosecutions overtake those for Islamic literature for first time

For the first time since Forum 18's records began, the number of prosecutions for possession or sharing of Jehovah's Witness materials is higher than that for Islamic books or videos – at 63 versus 60 prosecutions. In 2015, the breakdown by religious affiliation stood at 32 Jehovah's Witness/55 Islamic (plus 2 Falun Gong), while in 2014, it was 10 Jehovah's Witness/55 Islamic.

As these figures indicate, the proportion of Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") cases involving Muslim literature has remained fairly static, while the proportion involving Jehovah's Witness literature has increased hugely. This is in line with the intensification of state attention towards Jehovah's Witnesses over the last two to three years, culminating in the Supreme Court's decision to dissolve their national-level Administrative Centre and outlaw their activities as "extremist".

In 2016, judges ordered Islamic literature to be destroyed in 12 of the prosecutions found by Forum 18 and confiscated in another 16. Jehovah's Witness texts were subject to destruction in 11 cases and confiscation in 20. In all other cases, either judges did not pronounce on the fate of the "extremist" material, or the question did not apply as the offence had taken place online.

Administrative Code Article 20.29 and the Federal List of Extremist Materials

Administrative Code Article 20.29 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. Religious literature which does not support the violation of human rights is included on the List alongside violent racist, nationalist, and Islamist materials (see Forum 18's "extremism" Russia religious freedom survey http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2215).

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, originally put in October 2015, on: whether it is right that people should be prosecuted for distribution of texts which do not advocate violence, hatred, or the violation of human rights in other ways; whether such prosecutions are a sensible use of police and prosecutors' time; and why cases are initiated when only one copy of an item has been found (see Forum 18's "extremism" Russia religious freedom survey http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2215).

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

The Federal List now runs to over 4,100 items, often does not include full bibliographical details, and is irregularly updated. Checking whether a particular item is on the List can be very difficult or even impossible. The removal of an item from the Federal List is rare and can be short-lived, and in recent years, new texts have been added at an increasing rate (see Forum 18's "extremism" Russia religious freedom survey http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2215). As of 1 January 2017, the List also shows when entries were added, as well as when they were ruled "extremist".

From 23 November 2015, an amendment to the Extremism Law stops some, but not all, sacred texts - "the Bible, the Koran, the Tanakh and the Kanjur, their contents, and quotations from them" - from being ruled "extremist" and placed on the Federal List (see F18News 30 November 2015 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2126).

If convicted, "juridical persons" (religious organisations, commercial concerns, media outlets, etc.) may receive a fine of 100,000 to 1 million Roubles or have their activities suspended for up to 90 days. Individuals face a fine of 1,000 to 3,000 Roubles or up to 15 days' administrative arrest – for a person acting in an official capacity (dolzhnostnoye litso), the fine stands at 2,000 to 5,000 Roubles. The "extremist" material in question will likely be confiscated and may be ordered destroyed.

Many individuals are charged with offences under Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") for dissemination of material which does appear to incite the violation of human rights, violence or hatred. Forum 18 found a total of 1,132 cases under Administrative Code Article 20.29 in 2016 (an increase from 849 in 2015). This figure includes prosecutions for both religious and non-religious texts, images, videos, and songs, and for both material which does appear to be violent or racist and that which does not.

Consequences

Prosecutors may use convictions under Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") as evidence of extremist activity and reason for attempting to have a religious community dissolved and banned as "extremist".

On 22 July 2016, Samara Regional Court ruled that the Mirmameda Mosque in Chapayevsk was "extremist" and that its activities should be prohibited. Ilgar Guseynov, the imam of the unregistered Shia religious group, had twice received fines at Chapayevsk City Court for the alleged "mass distribution of extremist materials" – 3,000 Roubles on 29 February 2016, because FSB internet monitoring found a link on the mosque's VKontakte page to the banned Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran", and 3,000 Roubles on 5 May 2016, after prosecutor's office staff, FSB officers, and anti-extremism police carried out an "inspection of compliance with the requirements of the law on federal security" and found a copy of the prayer book "Fortress of a Muslim" (edition unspecified in verdict) on a lectern in the mosque.

The Prosecutor's Office had already issued Guseynov with a warning of the "inadmissibility of extremist activity" on 21 January 2016, when the first Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") prosecution was initiated. This threatened dissolution should new evidence of extremism come to light. After the second conviction, therefore, prosecutors applied to the regional court to have the group's activities halted and banned. As a result, Judge Tatyana Rodina concluded that the mosque's activities had led to "the undermining of the foundations of constitutional order, the morality, health, rights and freedoms of person and citizen, the country's defence and the security of the state".

Guseynov appealed to the Russian Supreme Court on 14 September 2016, but this was unsuccessful. Mirmameda Mosque was added to the Justice Ministry's list of banned "extremist" organisations on 31 October 2016.

This has also been the experience of ten registered local Jehovah's Witness organisations (in Taganrog in 2009; Samara in 2014; Abinsk and Tyumen (though the latter ban was overturned on appeal) in 2015; Stariy Oskol, Belgorod, Elista, Oryol, and Birobidzhan, all in 2016; and Cherkessk in 2017). The Supreme Court also declared the Jehovah's Witnesses' national-level Administrative Centre an extremist organisation on similar grounds on 20 April 2017 and prohibited all Jehovah's Witness activity in Russia. One registered Muslim organisation, in Borovsky village in the Tyumen Region, is also known to have been liquidated as a result of an Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") conviction .

If an entire religious community is banned as "extremist", its former members may face criminal prosecution if they continue to meet informally. Sixteen Jehovah's Witnesses in Taganrog were convicted on 30 November 2015 of "continuing the activities of a banned extremist organisation" (see Forum 18's "extremism" Russia religious freedom survey http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2215).

A Danish Jehovah's Witness, Dennis Christensen, is currently in pre-trial detention in Oryol on charges of "continuing the activities of a banned extremist organisation" (Article 282.2 of the Criminal Code). He was arrested during a raid by armed riot police and the FSB security service on a bible study meeting on 25 May 2017 (see F18News 26 May 2017 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2282).

More on 2016 figures

Of the 123 prosecutions under Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") known to Forum 18, 105 resulted in conviction in the first instance, and fourteen in acquittal. Judges halted the remaining four cases because the time limit on administrative prosecution had expired. Defendants appealed against 31 convictions, only three of which were overturned (two for technical reasons, only one because the judge found no evidence of an offence). One appeal was withdrawn by the defendant. Another two sentences were reduced (although the convictions themselves remained). No cases in 2016 are known to have been sent for re-trial.

Even if they are ultimately exonerated, defendants are forced to spend time, energy and money to counter the charges against them, Forum 18 notes. A few defendants pursue appeals through the cassational stage (also heard at a regional/republic court) and up to the Supreme Court, although these efforts are rarely successful.

Overall, Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") prosecutions are overwhelmingly based on the online sharing of materials (1,018 out of 1,132 cases in 2016), usually by means of the Russian social network VKontakte. Prosecutions for religious materials, however, continue to be dominated by hard copies of books and other materials and comprise the majority of "offline" cases found by Forum 18 (86 out of 114).

Fourteen of the 37 prosecutions involving online religious material were based on the sharing of the Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran". This was banned by Nefryugansk City Court in the Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Region (Tyumen Region) on 7 April 2011 and does not appear to incite hatred or violence. Another 16 online religious cases arose from the posting of a link to the main international Jehovah's Witness website jw.org which was banned and blocked as "extremist" by a Russian Supreme Court ruling of 2 December 2014.

The Justice Ministry removed 50 Islamic texts from the Federal List in July 2015 after an appeal by authors and publishers eventually saw the extremism ban on them lifted – they had been among 68 items originally outlawed in a 20-minute hearing at Lenin District Court in Orenburg in March 2012 (see F18News 27 July 2015 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2084).

While there were 35 prosecutions for possession of the Orenburg texts in 2014 and 18 in 2015 (including three involving items already deleted from the Federal List), 2016 saw only three (none of which were for the reprieved texts). Several of the Orenburg titles have also been banned by other courts in different editions, however – this, combined with the Federal List's wildly varying levels of bibliographical detail, often leads to confusion in investigations and court proceedings as to exactly which books are involved. Individual believers and mosque authorities must also check carefully which texts they possess.

The popular Muslim prayer book "Fortress of a Muslim", by Said al-Qahtani, was unbanned in its 2001 fifth edition by the Orenburg ruling. It was ruled "extremist" and outlawed in its 2006, 2009 and 2010 editions on 16 February 2015 by Kurgan City Court, and by the same court in its 2004 on 6 April 2015 (after Orenburg Regional Court had upheld the publishers' appeal). Ussuriysk City Court in Primorye had already banned a further two undated editions on 31 July 2014. In 2016, Forum 18 found 14 prosecutions for possession of "Fortress of a Muslim", four of which resulted in acquittal because of uncertainty over the edition of the book.

There were 21 prosecutions of legal entities under Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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")

in 2016, with some organisations charged more than once) – a substantial increase from five in 2015 and nine in 2014. This increase was driven by an intensification in the prosecution of Jehovah's Witness communities, which accounted for 18 of these 21 cases (up from three in 2015 and two in 2014). The other organisations prosecuted were: one Muslim community in the Volgograd Region, which received a 7-day suspension of activities; a small business selling Islamic religious items in Bashkortostan, which was sentenced to 20 days' suspension of activity; and a labour camp in the Ulyanovsk Region, which was fined 100,000 Roubles for allowing a banned Islamic text inside the prison mosque.

Forum 18 found that prosecutions under Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") took place in 41 of the 83 federal subjects of Russia in 2016. The regions which saw the highest numbers of cases are as follows: Bashkortostan Republic (15), Arkhangelsk Region (13), Kirov Region (11), Krasnodar Region (8), and the Republic of Karachai-Cherkessiya (7).

Further examples from 2016

The only individual to be detained for an Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") offence in 2016 was Artur Grunichev, who posted the video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Region, 7 April 2011) on his VKontakte profile page. According to the court verdict, "The posted material was freely available to be viewed, downloaded and copied by an unlimited number of individuals .. including minors". Grunichev admitted sharing the video in 2014, but said that he had been unable to delete it as he had lost his mobile phone.

Judge Viktor Belyayev of Buy District Court (Kostroma Region) sentenced Grunichev on 10 October 2016 to fifteen days' administrative arrest. On 19 October, Kostroma Regional Court reduced this on appeal to thirteen days, concluding that the maximum punishment should not have been applied when the defendant admitted the offence.

On 20 December 2016, Lenin District Court in Voronezh suspended the activities of the Central Voronezh Jehovah's Witness community for 45 days. Officials had carried out a raid on a rented sports centre where about 1000 worshippers had gathered for a service, and allegedly discovered banned religious literature (titles unspecified) hidden between a lectern and the wall. Community members argued in court that the items must have been planted during the raid, pointing out that they had no need for such literature during services, for which they required only the Bible and a hymn book.

The community appealed successfully against its conviction on 2 March 2017 at Voronezh Regional Court, where Judge Svetlana Kurchevskaya decided that there was insufficient evidence of an offence.

Two men in Dagestan who were convicted under Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") in 2016 have since been prosecuted under Administrative Code Article 282.2, Part 1 ("Organisation of the activities of a banned extremist organisation"), charges based in part on their possession of books by late Turkish theologian Said Nursi. Ilgar Aliyev was fined an unknown amount at Izberbash City Court and Artur Kaltuyev was fined 2000 Roubles at Kirov District Court in Makhachkala, both on 26 April 2016. Kaltuyev is now on trial at Makhachkala's Lenin District Court alongside his brother Sukhrab Kaltuyev and their friend Ziyavdin Dapayev. Aliyev is currently in pre-trial detention, having been arrested in mid-April 2017 (see F18News 12 May 2017 http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2279).

How cases start

The majority of known Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") cases in 2016 arose from raids or inspections carried out by 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.

It is also apparent that, rather than rely on chance sightings or reporting by other citizens, regional state agencies, including the FSB security service and anti-extremism police, carry out systematic online monitoring of internet users in their regions in order to track down any sharing or reposting of links, videos, or text files containing allegedly extremist material (even when such reposts were clearly made before the material was banned). Twelve of the sixteen prosecutions for posting links to the Jehovah's Witness jw.org website took place in the Arkhangelsk Region between 26 April and 11 July. The written verdicts acknowledge that they arose from monitoring of VKontakte by the Arkhangelsk FSB.

Known 2016 freedom of religion and belief-related Administrative Code Article 20.29 ("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") cases

1) 12 January

Name: N.N. Golchenko

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Mirny District Court, Sakha Republic

Material: defendant charged with giving various banned Jehovah's Witness texts, including several issues of "Watchtower" magazine, to local residents in their apartment buildings

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: unsuccessful – 22 March 2016, Supreme Court of the Sakha Republic

2) 20 January

Name: A.Kh. Shamsutdinov

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Vyatskiye Polyany District Court, Kirov Region

Material: internet monitoring by anti-extremism police found that defendant had uploaded Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Region, 7 April 2011) onto his VKontakte profile page – defendant claimed that he had done this in 2011 (before the film was banned) and had since forgotten about it

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

3) 22 January

Name: Aleksandr Parygin, chair of "Central" Arkhangelsk Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 1500 Roubles

Court: Lomonosov District Court, Arkhangelsk

Material: 31 copies of Jehovah's Witness brochure "The government that will bring paradise" found during FSB search of defendant's car – defendant claimed that they had been planted

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 25 February 2016, Arkhangelsk Regional Court

4) 29 January

Name: Albina Khusniyarova, business owner

Fine: 3000 Roubles

Court: Dyurtyuli District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" (in two editions, both banned by Kurgan City Court, 16 February 2015 and 6 April 2015) found allegedly for sale during prosecutor's office inspection of "compliance with the requirements of anti-extremism legislation" at the defendant's shop, "Konsultant"

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

5) 29 January

Name: religious paraphernalia shop "Konsultant", owned by Albina Khusniyarova (above)

Fine: 20 days' suspension of activity

Court: Dyurtyuli District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: Islamic "Fortress of a Muslim" (in two editions, both banned by Kurgan City Court, 16 February 2015 and 6 April 2015) found allegedly for sale during prosecutor's office inspection of "compliance with the requirements of anti-extremism legislation"

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

6) 5 February

Name: M.R. Gaynanov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Volzhsk City Court, Mari-El Republic

Material: defendant charged with sharing Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Region, 7 April 2011) on his VKontakte profile page – denied knowing it had been ruled extremist

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

7) 11 February

Name: A.N. Musin

Fine: unknown

Court: Baymak District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: defendant charged with uploading Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Region, 7 April 2011) to his VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

8) 16 February

Name: Roman Pinegin, chair of Kirovo-Chepetsk Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Kirovo-Chepetsk District Court, Kirov Region

Material: defendant charged with posting link to Jehovah's Witness site jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on his social network profile page – found by prosecutor's office monitoring of "compliance with the requirements of federal legislation on combating extremism and on the defence of the rights of minors"

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: unsuccessful – 7 April 2016, Kirov Regional Court

9) 16 February

Name: M.Sh. Gumerov

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Dimitrovgrad City Court, Ulyanovsk Region

Material: search of defendant's home found a copy of Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" (undated; published by "House of Printing", Kazan); judge concludes that there is no evidence that the seized book corresponds to the editions on the Federal List; judge also notes the 2015 Orenburg Regional Court ruling which overturned the ban on another edition of "Fortress of a Muslim"

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

10) 16 February

Name: I.S. Ismailov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Soviet District Court, Volgograd

Material: defendant charged with uploading the Islamic text "Purification and education and the need of Muslims for this", by Muhammad Nasiruddin al-Albani (banned Abakan City Court, Khakasiya, 8 June 2010) onto his VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

11) 25 February

Name: M.I. Yegorov

Fine: unknown

Court: Lenin District Court, Cheboksary

Material: defendant charged with uploading unspecified Islamic texts (banned by Kotelnich District Court, Kirov region, 16 April 2015; Ussuriysk District Court, Primorye, 31 July 2014; and the Supreme Court of Tatarstan, 22 December 2014) onto his social network profile page; titles redacted but texts include works by Said Nursi

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

12) 29 February

Name: Ilgar Guseynov, imam

Fine: 3000 Roubles

Court: Chapayevsk City Court, Samara Region

Material: Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" uploaded onto religious group Mirmamedia Mosque's official VKontakte page, where it was "publicly accessible"

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

13) 1 March

Name: M.R. Miftakhutdinov

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Dimitrovgrad City Court, Ulyanovsk Region

Material: defendant accused of keeping copy of banned Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" in his home, found during search – judge concluded that there was no evidence that the book in question was the same as the editions on the Federal List

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

14) 2 March

Name: D.M. Magomedov, director of women's medrese

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Kizilyurt District Court, Dagestan

Material: prosecutor's office and FSB inspection of medrese found single copy of Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" (unspecified edition) in staffroom, which director admitted having bought; medrese also closed for operating without a licence

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

15) 3 March

Name: Oryol Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 500,000 Roubles

Court: Railway District Court, Oryol

Material: FSB raid on Jehovah's Witness premises found single copy of "What is the purpose of life? How can you find it?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) and two copies of "Was life created?" (banned by October District Court, Belgorod, 4 March 2015)

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: successful on basis of statute of limitations; literature still destroyed – 22 April 2016, Oryol Regional Court

16) 4 March

Name: Yekaterina Kuznetsova

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Tikhoretsk City Court, Krasnodar Region

Material: defendant charged with handing out Jehovah's Witness brochure "Was life created?" (banned by October District Court, Belgorod, 4 March 2015) in the street; she gave some literature to a man who then called the police – convicted on 17 December 2015; on appeal, sent for retrial by Krasnodar Regional Court on 4 February 2016; retrial judge notes that "Was life created?" was not listed in the police report among the items seized on the scene, and that giving extremist material to a particular person does not constitute mass distribution if further dissemination is not intended

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

17) 4 March

Name: Zinaida Leontyeva

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Tikhoretsk City Court, Krasnodar Region

Material: defendant charged with handing out Jehovah's Witness brochure "Was life created?" (banned by October District Court, Belgorod, 4 March 2015) in the street; she gave some literature to a man who then called the police – convicted on 17 December 2015; on appeal, sent for retrial by Krasnodar Regional Court on 4 February 2016; retrial judge notes that "Was life created?" was not listed in the police report among the items seized on the scene, and that giving extremist material to a particular person does not constitute mass distribution if further dissemination is not intended

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

18) 4 March

Name: E.R. Akhmetzyanov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Malmyzh District Court, Kirov Region

Material: FSB carried out inspection of timber-processing plant owned by defendant after "receiving information about the distribution of extremist materials" on its premises; found single copies of Islamic texts "Fortress of a Muslim" (banned in undated edition by Ussuriysk District Court, Primorye, 31 July 2014) and "Usul al-iman: postulates of the Muslim faith" (banned by Zyuzinsk District Court, Moscow 25 March 2014) inside sawmill

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

19) 4 March

Name: Gulnara Nikitina

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Volzhsk City Court, Mari-El Republic

Material: defendant charged with sharing Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Region, 7 April 2011) on her social network profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

20) 11 March

Name: Labour Camp No. 10, Ulyanovsk Region

Fine: 100,000 Roubles

Court: Dimitrovgrad City Court, Ulyanovsk Region

Material: prosecutor's office inspection of the prison found a copy of Islamic text "History of the righteous caliphs" by Abdel Hamid al-Sahhar (banned by Lenin District Court, Ivanovo, 16 January 2014) inside the mosque; book included on the printed list of books freely available to inmates in the mosque, dated 29 January 2015

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: partially successful (fine reduced to 50,000 Roubles) – 28 April 2016, Ulyanovsk Regional Court

21) 16 March

Name: F.F. Kadyrov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Vakhitovsky District Court, Kazan

Material: internet monitoring by anti-extremism police found electronic copies of Islamic texts "Foundations of faith in the light of the Koran and Sunnah", by Salih al-Suheyli, Abd al-Razzaq al-Badar, and Ibrahim al-Ruheyli (banned Central District Court, Tyumen, 11 October 2010) and Mohammed at-Tamimi's "Book of Monotheism" (banned by Buguruslan City Court, Orenburg Region, 6 August 2007), on defendant's VKontakte page

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

22) 17 March

Name: Aleksandr Shinder, committee chair of Birobidzhan Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 3000 Roubles

Court: Birobidzhan District Court, Jewish Autonomous Region

Material: police and FSB inspection of rented hall found 2 copies of Jehovah's Witness texts "My book of Bible stories" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009), 1 copy of "The Bible: God's word or man's?" (banned by Factory District Court, Kemerovo, 28 October 2010), 1 copy of "Come be my follower" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009), 3 copies of "How did life begin?" (banned by Serov District Court, Sverdlovsk Region, 19 February 2016); defendant claimed that he had signed no rental contract on the hall, which is used by three unregistered Jehovah's Witness groups

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 2 June 2016, Court of the Jewish Autonomous Region

23) 17 March

Name: A.R. Khudayberdin

Fine: unknown

Court: Baymak District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: defendant charged with uploading Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Region, 7 April 2011) to his VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

24) 21 March

Name: V.V. Vasilyev

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Kez District Court, Udmurt Republic

Material: 13 issues of the Jehovah's Witness journal "Awake!" and 24 issues of "Watchtower" magazine found in a chest of drawers in defendant's flat – defendant accused of distributing them at services held on the premises; police carried out search after receiving tip-off about presence of extremist literature

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: withdrawn – 27 April 2016, Supreme Court of the Udmurt Republic

25) 23 March

Name: T.Kh. Bopkhoyeva

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Oymyakon District Court, Sakha Republic

Material: defendant accused of keeping a copy of Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" (2007 edition) in her flat, accessible to her underage children and the "many outside people" who visit – defendant explained that she had brought the book with her from her previous address for personal use and kept them in a cupboard not accessible to outsiders; judge concludes that the edition of the book found in the defendant's home is not on the Federal List

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

26) 4 April

Name: G.M. Rakhmanin

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Gulkevichi District Court, Krasnodar Region

Material: defendant accused of distributing banned Jehovah's Witness literature at a bus stop, including "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned in two editions by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009, and Soviet District Court, Krasnoyarsk, 14 February 2013); judge points out that case file does not establish which editions or issues of the literature was allegedly distributed – therefore impossible to say that he was handing out banned texts

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

27) 4 April

Name: D.M. Khavayashkhov

Fine: unknown

Court: Takhtamukay District Court, Adygeya

Material: Islamic text "General view of Islam" by Ali al-Tantawi found during inspection by prison staff and FSB in a prison inmate's bed; defendant claimed he knew nothing about the book and the inspectors must have planted it

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

28) 12 April

Name: L-A.N. Elsunkayev

Fine: 1500 Roubles

Court: Muravlenko City Court, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Region

Material: defendant charged with sharing Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Neftyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Region, 7 April 2011) on his VKontakte page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

29) 14 April

Name: Dinis Khakimov

Fine: 1500 Roubles

Court: Sernur District Court, Mari El Republic

Material: defendant charged with sharing Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Neftuyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Region, 7 April 2011) on his VKontakte page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

30) 20 April

Name: Artur Kaltuyev

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Kirov District Court, Makhachkala

Material: 13 Islamic books and six brochures by Said Nursi, including from his Risale-i Nur collection (banned by Koptev District Court, Moscow, 21 May 2007) found during search of defendant's home – defendant denied he had any intention of "mass distribution"

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 2 June 2016, Supreme Court of the Republic of Dagestan

31) 26 April

Name: S.N. Paukshtaitene

Fine: unknown

Court: Severodvinsk City Court, Arkhangelsk Region

Material: defendant charged with posting a link to the Jehovah's Witness website jw.org site (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

32) 26 April

Name: Igor Rudakov, a founding member of Serov Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Serov District Court, Sverdlovsk

Material: defendant charged with keeping a copy of Jehovah's Witness text "What does the Bible really teach?" (2005 edition – banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) in his home, found during a search by investigative committee officials – claimed that he did not live permanently in the flat in question, and that the book belonged to his adult son, who does; his son also testified to this effect, explaining that he kept the book for personal purposes, not "mass distribution", and that the defendant did not know about it

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 13 July 2016, Sverdlovsk Regional Court

33) 26 April

Name: Ilgar Aliyev

Fine: unknown

Court: Izberbash City Court, Dagestan

Material: 13 Islamic books and three brochures by Said Nursi, including from his Risale-i Nur collection (banned by Koptev District Court, Moscow, 21 May 2007) found during search of defendant's home – defendant denied he had any intention of "mass distribution"

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 11 June 2016, Supreme Court of the Republic of Dagestan

34) 28 April

Name: E.D. Zaripova

Fine: unknown

Court: Leninogorsk City Court, Tatarstan

Material: single copy of Islamic text "The best example in calling and upbringing: the most perfect man" by Omer Celik, Mustafa Ozturk, and Murat Kaya, found by police at a mosque bookstall in the town's market; defendant stated she had a copy of the Federal List and that the book was not for sale – she had not yet managed to remove it from the stall

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

35) 28 April

Name: E.D. Zaripova

Fine: unknown

Court: Leninogorsk City Court, Tatarstan

Material: single copy of Islamic text "Pictures from the Lives of the Prophet's Associates" by Abdulhamid ibn Abdurrahman Assuhaibani (banned by Kotelnich District Court, Kirov Region, 16 April 2015) found by police for sale at a mosque bookstall in the town's market; defendant stated that she had a copy of the Federal List, but that the book in question was not on it

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

36) 29 April

Name: N.A. Zvereva

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Kotlas City Court, Arkhangelsk Region

Material: defendant charged with posting a Jehovah's Witness article on her VKontakte profile page, which contained a link to the jw.org website (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) – claimed that

when she posted the material, the site had not been banned, but admitted not deleting it after find out that it had been ruled extremist

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

37) 5 May

Name: Ilgar Guseynov, imam

Fine: 3000 Roubles

Court: Chapayevsk City Court, Samara Region

Material: Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" (edition unspecified – banned in multiple editions by three different courts) found during prosecutor's office, FSB, and anti-extremism police inspection of "compliance with the requirements of the law on federal security" in Mirmamed Mosque run by a Shia religious group; imam had previously been convicted under Article 20.29 and had received a warning of the "inadmissibility of extremist activity"

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

38) 16 May

Name: S.I. Sitdikov, mosque director

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Nizhnevartovsk City Court, Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous District

Material: defendant "failed to ensure internal control over the receipt and distribution of literature on the premises" of his mosque – police inspection found a single copy of Islamic text "Usul al-iman: postulates of the Muslim faith" (banned by Zyuzino District Court, Moscow 25 March 2014) on a bookshelf in the women's prayer room

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

39) 16 May

Name: Nikolai Lyashenko, Jehovah's Witness community chair

Fine: none – case dropped because time ran out

Court: Serov District Court, Sverdlovsk Region

Material: defendant accused of keeping unspecified prohibited Jehovah's Witness brochures and books in his home, as discovered in a search by investigative committee officials

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

40) 16 May

Name: Jehovah's Witness community of Serov

Fine: none – case dropped because time ran out

Court: Serov District Court, Sverdlovsk Region

Material: community chair accused of keeping unspecified prohibited Jehovah's Witness brochures and books in his home, as

discovered in a search by investigative committee officials (see above)

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

41) 16 May

Name: Jehovah's Witness community of Prokhladny

Fine: 100,000 Roubles

Court: Prokhladny District Court, Kabardino-Balkariya

Material: raid by police and FSB on Kingdom Hall allegedly uncovered single copies of Jehovah's Witness texts "How to develop a close relationship with God", "What can people hope for?", and "How to achieve happiness in life" (all banned by Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014)

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: unsuccessful – 8 August 2016, Supreme Court of the Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

42) 17 May

Name: N.I. Khvorostetskaya

Fine: 3000 Roubles

Court: October District Court, Novorossiisk, Krasnodar Region

Material: defendant charged with distributing copies of Jehovah's Witness text "Will you follow Jehovah's loving guidance?" (banned by Soviet District Court, Krasnoyarsk, 24 January 2013) outside a shopping centre – admitted disseminating Jehovah's Witness beliefs but denied handing out any forbidden items; testimony of a witness who stated that he had seen a copy of the brochure in a police officer's hands as the officer questioned the defendant, and that two passers-by said they had received booklets from somebody else, was dismissed by judge because the witness was also a Jehovah's Witness and his statement contradicted other testimony

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 20 July 2016, Krasnodar Regional Court

43) 19 May

Name: G.N. Arzhukanova, head of professional college

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Lenininsk District Court, Volgograd

Material: single copy of Jehovah's Witness text "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) found among books in college library during prosecutor's office anti-extremism inspection; defendant explained that, in order to cut costs, several staff posts had been abolished, including the position of librarian

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

44) 23 May

Name: K.F. Loginova

Fine: unknown

Court: Solombalka District Court, Arkhangelsk

Material: defendant posted link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her VKontakte profile page – found by FSB internet monitoring

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

45) 25 May

Name: A.S. Sapozhkov

Fine: 3000 Roubles

Court: Kanevskaya District Court, Krasnodar Region

Material: defendant charged with keeping a copy of Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said' al-Qahtani (banned in two editions by Ussuriysk District Court, Primorye, 31 July 2014) at his home and regularly giving it to friends when they visited – book found during search of the flat

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

46) 26 May

Name: Aleksei Golovenkin

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Lomonosov District Court, Arkhangelsk

Material: defendant posted link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on his VKontakte profile page – found by FSB internet monitoring

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

47) 26 May

Name: Leonid Golovenkin

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Lomonosov District Court, Arkhangelsk

Material: defendant posted link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on his VKontakte profile page – found by FSB internet monitoring

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

48) 31 May

Name: V.K. Magerramov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Soviet District Court, Volgograd

Material: defendant charged with posting a link on his VKontakte profile page to another VKontakte page which contained sayings from Said Nursi's "Risale-i Nur" collection (Islamic texts banned in various editions by different courts) – admitted post but denied knowing the texts had been ruled extremist

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

49) 31 May

Name: E.Z. Esenbulatov

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Soviet District Court, Makhachkala

Material: shopkeeper charged with offering for sale Ali Mohammed al-Salabi's Islamic text "Abu Bakr al-Siddiq: the first righteous caliph" (banned by Petukhovo District Court, Kurgan Region, 16 December 2014) – found during police inspection

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

50) 31 May

Name: Yu.N. Sablina

Fine: unknown

Court: Lomonosov District Court, Arkhangelsk

Material: defendant posted link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

51) 2 June

Name: S.V. Fedotov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Prokhladny District Court, Kabardino-Balkariya

Material: unspecified banned Jehovah's Witness literature found during search of defendant's home after people who had allegedly been at Jehovah's Witness gatherings went to the police with accusations that he had given them extremist items; defendant explained he had acquired the books before they had been banned, for his own and his family's personal use and denied giving them to anybody else

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: unsuccessful – 19 July 2016, Supreme Court of the Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

52) 6 June

Name: L.A. Pychkina

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Solombalka District Court, Arkhangelsk

Material: defendant posted link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

53) 6 June

Name: A.A. Belolapova

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Lomonosov District Court, Arkhangelsk

Material: defendant posted link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her VKontakte profile page – claimed she did not know the site had been ruled extremist and she had only posted the link because she had liked the picture

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

54) 7 June

Name: Jehovah's Witness community of Lipetsk

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: October District Court, Lipetsk

Material: prosecutor's office inspection of Jehovah's Witness premises found one copy of "What does God require of us?", one copy of "Jehovah's Witnesses: who are they? What do they believe?" (both banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009), and three copies of "The Bible: God's word or man's?" (banned by Factory District Court, Kemerovo, 28 October 2010) outside the property's fence, in a plastic bag on a rubbish heap; community chair explained that no extremist literature was found in the building – the books were only discovered outside, where it was already dark; judge concludes that these circumstances introduce "unavoidable doubts" as to the defendant's guilt

Confiscation/destruction: banned texts transferred to prosecutor for decision on destruction, non-banned texts for decision on return to owner

Appeal: unsuccessful – 7 July 2016, Lipetsk Regional Court

55) 8 June

Name: Zh.A. Navrotskaya

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Klinty District Court, Bryansk Region

Material: defendant accused of giving copies of Jehovah's Witness text "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) to two other people inside a residential building

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 19 July 2016, Bryansk Regional Court

56) 9 June

Name: Z.A. Gilyazova

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Kunushak District Court, Chelyabinsk Region

Material: defendant charged with keeping banned Islamic literature in a cupboard at her home, including Fauziya Bayramova's "The path of knowledge to truth" (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) – claimed she did not know the texts had been ruled extremist; materials found during FSB search of the property

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

57) 9 June

Name: I.I. Fakhrutdinov

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Kunushak District Court, Chelyabinsk Region

Material: defendant accused of keeping one copy of each volume of Islamic text "The Prophet Mohammed: crown of the human race" (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) at his home "with the aim of mass distribution among residents" – found during search by FSB; admitted never checking the Federal List for the book

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

58) 10 June

Name: T.F. Tarasova

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Velsk District Court, Arkhangelsk Region

Material: defendant posted link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her VKontakte profile page – claimed that she had made the post on 1 June 2014, before the ban came into force, and only learned that the site had been ruled extremist in 2015, when it was blocked, after which she stopped using it; defendant deleted the post on 27 May 2016

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

59) 14 June

Name: N.N. Starostina

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Koryazhma District Court, Arkhangelsk Region

Material: defendant posted link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her VKontakte profile page – claimed that she did not know the site had been ruled extremist

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

60) 14 June

Name: A.Zh. Imishev, imam

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Buzuluka District Court, Orenburg Region

Material: FSB and prosecutor's office inspection of mosque to check "compliance with federal anti-extremism legislation" found a copy of Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said al-Qahtani (banned by several courts in multiple editions) in a locked office cupboard; judge accepted that it was unclear whether the edition of the book corresponded to those on the Federal List, that the cupboard's contents were not generally accessible, and that the accused imam bore no responsibility for the mosque's religious literature; judge also stated that "It is not mass distribution to pass extremist materials to a particular person for familiarisation without the aim of subsequent mass distribution"

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

61) 16 June

Name: "Southern Abakan" Jehovah's Witness Community

Fine: 150,000 Roubles

Court: Abakan City Court

Material: search of Jehovah's Witness building allegedly found several banned items of literature, including "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) – lawyers argued that community never used the building where the books were found

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 26 July 2016, Supreme Court of the Republic of Khakassiya

62) 17 June

Name: A.V. Boytsova

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Mtsensk District Court, Oryol Region

Material: defendant posted link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

63) 23 June

Name: "Central Stavropol" Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 100,000 Roubles

Court: Industrial District Court, Stavropol

Material: police raid on Kingdom Hall allegedly found 21 copies of Jehovah's Witness text "What does the Bible really teach?" (2009 edition, banned by Soviet District Court, Krasnoyarsk, 14 February 2013) in a cupboard in the conference hall

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

64) 24 June

Name: Saransk Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 100,000 Roubles

Court: Lenin District Court, Saransk

Material: police raid on Kingdom Hall during evening service seized copies of Jehovah's Witness texts "How to develop a close relationship with God", "What can people hope for?" (both banned by Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014), and "Good news from God" (banned by Lenin District Court, Vladimir, 23 October 2013); community chair claimed that the event in question was not held by his organisation and the literature must have been planted

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 12 August 2016, Supreme Court of the Republic of Mordoviya

65) 29 June

Name: Kh.U-A. Semyonov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Malokarachayevsky District Court, Karachai-Cherkessiya

Material: single copy of Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" (banned in two editions by Ussuriysk District Court, Primorye, 31 July 2014) found during inspection of shepherd's hut belonging to defendant; defendant accused of giving the book to acquaintances and discussing it with his family – denied this in court

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

66) 30 June

Name: M.N. Malova

Fine: unknown

Court: Gelendzhik City Court

Material: unknown Jehovah's Witness texts

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: unsuccessful – 28 August 2016, Krasnodar Regional Court

67) 1 July

Name: M.Z. Baygazakov

Fine: unknown

Court: Baymak District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: defendant charged with sharing the Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Neft'yugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Region, 7 April 2011) on his VKontakte profile page – argued that he had posted the file before the film had been declared extremist and had deleted it as soon as he learned of the court ruling

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

68) 5 July

Name: Kh.E. Isakhov

Fine: unknown

Court: Volzhsk District Court, Samara Region

Material: prosecutor's office "inspection of compliance with the requirements of federal law on religious activity" found a copy of Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" by Said al-Qahtani (banned in two editions by Ussuriysk District Court, Primorye, 31 July 2014) in prayer house run by defendant

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

69) 7 July

Name: V.F. Dubovik

Fine: unknown

Court: Verkhnekamsk District Court, Kirov Region

Material: prison inmate charged with giving fellow prisoners a copy of Islamic text "Foundations of faith in the light of the Koran and Sunnah" (2nd edition), by Salih al-Suheyli, Abd al-Razzaq al-Badar, and Ibrahim al-Ruheyli (banned Kurgan City Court, 16 February 2015)

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

70) 8 July

Name: Svetlana Vorontsova

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Isakogorsk District Court, Arkhangelsk

Material: defendant accused of posting link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her social network profile page – found during monitoring by the FSB

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

71) 11 July

Name: O.V. Kirst

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Isakogorsk District Court, Arkhangelsk

Material: defendant accused of posting link to Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her social network profile page – found during monitoring by the FSB

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

72) 18 July

Name: Nizhny Tagil Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 100,000 Roubles

Court: Tagilstroyevsky District Court, Nizhny Tagil, Sverdlovsk Region

Material: organisation accused of keeping banned Jehovah's Witness literature at a residential address, "with the aim of mass distribution", including two copies of "Watchtower" magazine and one of the journal "Awake" – allegedly found by FSB during search of the property

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 13 September 2016, Sverdlovsk Regional Court

73) 22 July

Name: Aleksandr Vozhzhov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Kaluga District Court, Kaluga Region

Material: defendant charged with keeping Jehovah's Witness literature (all banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009, or Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014), including two copies of "Jehovah's Witnesses: Who are they? What do they believe?", "How to achieve happiness in life", and two copies of "How to develop a close relationship with God", in his home "with the aim of mass distribution among the residents of Kaluga"; books found by police search after CCTV allegedly showed defendant leaving Jehovah's Witness literature among the stock of a local mini-library

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

74) 28 July

Name: A.I. Dmitriyevykh

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: October District Court, Kirov

Material: defendant charged with distributing booklet "Was life created?" (banned by October District Court, Belgorod, 4 March 2015) at Jehovah's Witness gatherings in May 2016 – denied that his organisation had met at all in the period cited by prosecutors; booklets voluntarily handed in to police by members of the public who allegedly attended the meetings

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 13 September 2016, Kirov Regional Court

75) 28 July

Name: Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: none – case dropped because time ran out

Court: Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky City Court, Kamchatka Region

Material: Jehovah's Witness literature, including, four copies of "How to develop a close relationship with God" (banned by Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014) found during official search "on a shelf in a cupboard" in a building used for religious services

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: [by prosecutors, against earlier return of case by court – successful, 29 June 2016, Kamchatka Regional Court]

76) 5 August

Name: V.A. Zinyukova

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Syzran City Court, Samara Region

Material: defendant posted an audio file about the Jehovah's Witnesses on her VKontakte profile page – the recording contained a reference to the Jehovah's Witness website jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014)

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

77) 22 August

Name: R.M. Bayguzhin

Fine: unknown

Court: Khaybullinsk District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: defendant shared Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Neft'yugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District, 7 April 2011) on his VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

78) 22 August

Name: S.R. Kunaksov

Fine: unknown

Court: Khaybullinsk District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: defendant shared Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Neft'yugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District, 7 April 2011) on his VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

79) 23 August

Name: Albina Khusniyarova, business owner

Fine: 4000 Roubles

Court: Dyurtyuli District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: single copy of Ali Mohammed al-Salabi's Islamic text "Abu Bakr al-Siddiq: the first righteous caliph" (banned by Petukhovo District Court, Kurgan Region, 16 December 2014) found allegedly for sale during prosecutor's office inspection of "compliance with the requirements of anti-extremism legislation" at the defendant's shop, "Konsultant"

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

80) 2 September

Name: Minzilya Valiyeva, Director of the Kushnarenkovo Inter-Settlement Central Library

Fine: unknown

Court: Kushnarenkovo District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: single copy of Jehovah's Witness text "What does God require of us?" (banned by Gorno-Altai City Court, Altai Republic, 1 October 2009) found in the children's library collection

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

81) 8 September

Name: F.A. Alidarov

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Kalinin District Court, Tver Region

Material: prison inmate accused of repeatedly offering Islamic text "Usul al-iman: postulates of the Muslim faith" (banned by Zyuzinsk District Court, Moscow 25 March 2014) to other prisoners; defendant denied knowing the book had been ruled extremist, and claimed he had found the book in a cell during his pre-trial detention, bearing a stamp from the prison library, and brought it with him to his current prison – during his transfer, staff had seen the book and allowed him to keep it; fellow prisoners testified in court that defendant had not discussed the book with them or incited any inter-ethnic hatred and said they had not read their previous written testimonies compiled by a prison officer (in which they claimed the opposite) – judge concludes that this casts doubt on the case and that other evidence suggests defendant had no intention of "mass distribution"

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

82) 8 September

Name: Kh.M. Didigov

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Chudovo District Court, Novogorod Region

Material: defendant accused of distributing ten copies of Islamic text "Fortress of a Muslim" (Nalchik 2011 edition, banned by Kurgan City Court, 6 April 2015) to passers-by outside a shopping centre

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

83) 9 September

Name: V.A. Khromenkov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Teykovo District Court, Ivanovo Region

Material: defendant accused of uploading audio recording of the text of Jehovah's Witness brochure "Good news from God!" (hard copy of which banned by Lenin District Court, Vladimir, 23 October 2013) to his VKontakte profile page "as a result of which, this material was available to an unlimited circle of persons who, having visited his page, had the opportunity to view and further disseminate the above extremist material"; defendant admitted the upload but denied knowing that the text had been declared extremist

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

84) 14 September

Name: R.R. Kipkeyev

Fine: unknown

Court: Zelenchukskaya District Court, Karachai-Cherkessiya

Material: Islamic text "Ramadan: frugality, gratitude" from Said Nursi's Risale-i Nur collection (banned by Koptev District Court, Moscow, 21 May 2007) found by anti-extremism police in unspecified circumstances

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

85) 15 September

Name: G.Kh. Shaymardanov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Ozyorsk City Court, Chelyabinsk Region

Material: defendant put a link on his social network profile page to an electronic version of Islamic text Muhammad at-Tamimi's "Book of Monotheism" (banned by Savyolovo District Court, Moscow, 2 April 2004)

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

86) 16 September

Name: Jehovah's Witness community of Kirov

Fine: none – case dropped when time ran out

Court: October District Court, Kirov

Material: community chair accused of distributing the brochure "Was life created?" (banned by October District Court, Belgorod, 4 March 2015) at Jehovah's Witness gatherings

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

87) 21 September

Name: A.M. Khabiakhmetov, imam

Fine: unknown

Court: Davlekanovo District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: defendant "allowed the presence in open access" of a copy of Islamic text "The Prophet Mohammed: crown of the human race" by Fethullah Gulen (banned by Lenin District Court, Orenburg, 21 March 2012) in his mosque, "that is, implemented mass distribution, and storage with the goal of mass distribution, of extremist material" – claimed "nobody had told him" that the book had been ruled extremist, and the mosque had few parishioners, did not hold Friday prayers, and was only really open at Uraza-bayram and Kurban-bayram (Eid); book found during scheduled prosecutor's office inspection of "compliance of the Muslim religious organisation with anti-extremism legislation"

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

88) 22 September

Name: O.V. Rybakova

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Central District Court, Sochi

Material: banned Jehovah's Witness literature, including "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009), found during FSB search of defendant's home

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

89) 22 September

Name: M.Kh. Magomedova

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Megion City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Region

Material: defendant charged with giving her son, a prisoner, a copy of Islamic text "Muhammad: peace and blessings of Allah be upon him" by Safi ar-Rakhman al-Mubarakfuri – denied knowing that the book had been banned as extremist; judge concluded that her actions did not constitute "mass distribution"

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

90) 30 September

Name: M.A. Fazliyev, imam

Fine: none – given warning

Court: Davlekanovo District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: police and prosecutor's office inspection of defendant's mosque found two unspecified Islamic texts by Osman Nuri Topbas and Sheikhul Khadis Maulana and Muhammad Kandahlawi; defendant denied all knowledge of the books and explained that he was not acquainted with the Federal List as he did not have a computer with internet access; judge halts proceedings because of the "insignificant nature" of the offence, taking into account the fact that Fazliyev had no direct intention of distributing extremist materials and had previously lectured on the unacceptability of radical Islam

Confiscation/destruction: destructions

Appeal: none

91) 30 September

Name: R.G. Safiullin, imam

Fine: none – given warning

Court: Davlekanovo District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: police and prosecutor's office inspection of defendant's mosque found two unspecified Islamic texts by Osman Nuri

Topbas and Sheikhul Khadis Maulana and Muhammad Kandahlawi; defendant denied all knowledge of the books and explained that he was not acquainted with the Federal List as he did not have computer with internet access; judge halts proceedings because of the "insignificant nature" of the offence, taking into account the fact that Safiullin had no direct intention of distributing extremist materials and had previously lectured on the unacceptability of radical Islam

Confiscation/destruction: destructions

Appeal: none

92) 30 September

Name: Z.M. Tavliyarov

Fine: none – given warning

Court: Davlekanovo District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: police and prosecutor's office inspection of defendant's mosque found two unspecified Islamic texts by Osman Nuri Topbas and Sheikhul Khadis Maulana and Muhammad Kandahlawi; defendant denied all knowledge of the books and explained that he was not acquainted with the Federal List as he did not have computer with internet access; judge halts proceedings because of the "insignificant nature" of the offence, taking into account the fact that Tavliyarov had no direct intention of distributing extremist materials and had previously lectured on the unacceptability of radical Islam

Confiscation/destruction: destructions

Appeal: none

93) 6 October

Name: Petrozavodsk Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 50,000 Roubles

Court: Petrozavodsk City Court, Karelia

Material: five copies of Jehovah's Witness text "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) found by police in a cupboard in an outbuilding used for Jehovah's Witness gatherings, during a search requested by the FSB; lawyers argued that the police themselves planted the books

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 23 December 2016, Supreme Court of the Republic of Karelia

94) 7 October

Name: Andrey Ogorodnikov, chair of Jehovah's Witness community of Kostomuksha

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Kostomuksha City Court, Karelia

Material: FSB raid allegedly found several items of banned Jehovah's Witness literature in Kostomuksha Kingdom Hall, including four copies of "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009); lawyers argued that community took stringent measures to guard against presence of extremist literature; judge concludes that there is no evidence that defendant himself committed any offence

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

95) 7 October

Name: Jehovah's Witness community of Kostomuksha

Fine: 50,000 Roubles

Court: Kostomuksha City Court, Karelia

Material: FSB raid allegedly found several items of banned Jehovah's Witness literature in Kostomuksha Kingdom Hall, including four copies of "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009); lawyers argued that community took stringent measures to guard against presence of extremist literature; chair acquitted (see above)

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 7 December 2016, Supreme Court of the Republic of Karelia

96) 10 October

Name: Artur Grunichev

Fine: 15 days' administrative arrest

Court: Buy District Court, Kostroma Region

Material: defendant posted Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District, 7 April 2011) on his VKontakte profile page – "The posted material was freely available to be viewed, downloaded and copied by an unlimited number of individuals"

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: unsuccessful, but sentence reduced to 13 days – 19 October 2016, Kostroma Regional Court

97) 11 October

Name: Jehovah's Witness community of Budyonnovsk

Fine: 500,000 Roubles

Court: Budyonnovsk City Court, Stavropol Region

Material: FSB raid on Jehovah's Witness building uncovered one copy of "Bearing thorough witness about God's Kingdom" (banned by Uspensky District Court, Krasnodar Region, 19 June 2013), seven copies of "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009), and two copies of "How to achieve happiness in life" (banned by Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014); chair and lawyer claimed that FSB officers had planted the books during the raid and explained how, before every service, community members would search the building to check for forbidden items; before the raid began, the electricity to the building had been cut off, allowing the officers to plant the texts under cover of darkness

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: unsuccessful – 14 December 2016, Stavropol Regional Court

98) 11 October

Name: R.V. Baksheyev

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Cherlak District Court, Omsk Region

Material: text of an Islamic book entitled "Monotheism" uploaded to defendant's VKontakte profile page; no such book on Federal List, but may be Mohammed at-Tamimi's "Book of Monotheism" (banned in different editions by Savelovsky District Court, Moscow, 2 April 2004, and Buguruslan City Court, Orenburg Region, 6 August 2007)

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

99) 12 October

Name: Yury Kim, Jehovah's Witness community chair

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Nikolsk District Court, Penza Region

Material: defendant allegedly "allowed the storage with the purpose of mass distribution" of "How to develop a close relationship with God" (banned by Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014) and "How to achieve happiness in life" (banned by Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014) in a hall used for Jehovah's Witness services; judge accepted witness testimony which stated that the book in question was seized from a jacket which did not belong to Kim

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

100) 12 October

Name: I.R. Gumerov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Baymak District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: defendant shared Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District, 7 April 2011) on his VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

101) 12 October

Name: M.Z. Baygazakov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Baymak District Court, Bashkortostan

Material: defendant shared Islamic video "Wonders of the Koran" (banned by Nefteyugansk City Court, Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous District, 7 April 2011) on his VKontakte profile page

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

102) 14 October

Name: Makhalla No. 791, Pallasovka

Fine: 7 days' suspension of activities

Court: Pallasovka District Court, Volgograd Region

Material: two copies of Islamic text "Islam Today" by Ali al-Mawdidi found during FSB anti-extremism inspection of mosque; verdict acknowledges that the book was located in a locked room to which only members of the organisation have access; imam Sultanov denied knowing that the book had been declared extremist or how it had come to be in the mosque, and explained that his community has few financial resources (acknowledged by judge)

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

103) 19 October

Name: M.N. Kamaldinova

Fine: unknown

Court: Kovrov City Court, Vladimir Region

Material: text of unidentified Islamic book (banned by Buguruslan City Court, Orenburg Region, 6 August 2007) uploaded to defendant's profile page on social network; defendant admitted uploading the text, but claimed it was for personal use and she did not know it had been ruled extremist

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

104) 22 October

Name: A.A. Mikhailova

Fine: unknown

Court: Okulovka District Court, Novgorod Region

Material: text of three unidentified Islamic books (banned by Buguruslan City Court, Orenburg Region, 19 October 2007) shared online

Confiscation/destruction: n/a

Appeal: none

105) 25 October

Name: Fadkhudin Khamidov

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Lenin District Court, Perm

Material: Islamic literature including "Personality of a Muslim" (banned by Buguruslan City Court, Orenburg Region, 19 October 2007) found during FSB inspection of Muslim prayer room organised by the defendant; defendant denied knowing that there was banned material on the premises or how they got there; judge decided that there was insufficient evidence of an offence – "The very fact of the discovery of two books .. included in the published Federal List of Extremist Materials, in the prayer room, and also the fact that Khamidov organised the prayer room on a voluntary basis, do not testify to Khamidov's involvement in mass distribution, or storage for the purpose of mass distribution, of extremist materials. In the case materials, there is no evidence that Khamidov brought these books to the prayer room, or kept them for the purpose of acquainting parishioners with their content, or that he was charged with the duty of controlling the receipt and storage of religious literature in the prayer room"

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

106) 28 October

Name: Alyona Kurganova

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Urupsky District Court, Karachai-Cherkessiya

Material: Jehovah's Witness literature found by FSB and anti-extremism police during inspection of defendant's home – including

"Bearing thorough witness about God's Kingdom" (banned by Uspensky District Court, Krasnodar Region, 19 June 2013) and "What you need to know about God and His purpose" (banned by Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014); all in only one or two copies; defendant accused of keeping books "with the goal of mass distribution among adherents of the Jehovah's Witness faith and other citizens" and attempting to give them to passers-by in the street

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

107) 28 October

Name: Nadezhda Geraskova

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Urupsky District Court, Karachai-Cherkessiya

Material: nineteen different Jehovah's Witness titles found by FSB and anti-extremism police during inspection of defendant's home – including "Questions of youth", "What does the Bible really teach?" and "Come be my follower" (all banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) and "The Bible: God's word or man's?" (banned by Factory District Court, Kemerovo, 28 October 2010); all in only one or two copies; defendant accused of keeping books "with the goal of mass distribution among adherents of the Jehovah's Witness faith and other citizens" and attempting to give them to passers-by in the street

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

108) 8 November

Name: S.A. Gerbusheva

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Primorsky District Court, Novorossiysk, Krasnodar Region

Material: Jehovah's Witness charged with handing out copies of "How did life begin?" (banned by Serov District Court, Sverdlovsk Region, 19 February 2016), and "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) at a bus stop

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

109) 9 November

Name: Maysky Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 200,000 Roubles

Court: Maysky District Court, Kabardino-Balkariya

Material: five banned copies of Jehovah's Witness journal "Awake!" seized during FSB and anti-extremism police raid on Jehovah's Witness building – officials had been tipped off by a citizen who complained that the Jehovah's Witnesses had been distributing literature on the Federal List at their gatherings and "publicly declared the superiority of their beliefs over others"

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 7 February 2017, Supreme Court of the Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

110) 10 November

Name: Samyat Atyakov

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Lopatino District Court, Penza Region

Material: imam charged with keeping five copies of Islamic text "Islam Today" by Abu al-Mawdidi (banned by Buguruslan City Court, Orenburg Region, 6 August 2007) on an open shelf in the prayer room of his mosque among other literature intended for study by parishioners – found during prosecutor's office inspection

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

111) 17 November

Name: Chapayevsk Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: unknown

Court: Chapayevsk City Court, Samara Region

Material: an OMON police raid on Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall found four copies of "What does the Bible really teach?", three copies of "Worship the only true God" (both banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009), and single copies of "How to cope with the loss of a loved one", "Man is a miracle of creation", and "Jesus: where did he come from? How did he live? Why did he die?" (all banned by Matveyevo-Kurgan District Court, Rostov Region, 29 September 2014); earlier, the prosecutor's office had issued the community with a caution regarding the inadmissibility of extremist activity; lawyer Maksim Novakov claimed that the banned books had been planted in the building

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 7 February 2017, Samara Regional Court

112) 21 November

Name: Abdulali Damirov

Fine: 2000 Roubles

Court: Kolomna City Court, Moscow Region

Material: unknown Islamic text among 19 items banned by Buguruslan City Court, Orenburg Region, 19 October 2007; defendant admitted buying the book in 2008 but denied knowing that it was extremist – described how he and friends would meet at his home to discuss the book, including the question of whether it had extremist content

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

113) 21 November

Name: A.N. Shustov

Fine: 100,000 Roubles

Court: Nolinsk District Court, Kirov Region

Material: defendant accused of handing out copies of Jehovah's Witness text "Was life created?" (banned by October District Court, Belgorod, 4 March 2015) in the street; community chair (see below) argued that they could not have done, as regular meetings are held to acquaint members with updates to the Federal List

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: unsuccessful – 17 January 2017, Kirov Regional Court

114) 22 November

Name: Svetlana Isayeva

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Urupsky District Court, Karachai-Cherkessiya

Material: Jehovah's Witness charged with keeping a copy of "My book of Bible stories" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) at home and offering other Jehovah's Witness texts, including "Awake! The crisis of clean water" (banned by Gorno-Altaysk City Court, 1 October 2009) and "Awake! Is religion losing its influence?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) to other residents of the district; defendant claimed the book found in her home had been planted and denied having distributed those seized from other residents

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

115) 22 November

Name: Svetlana Kordiyaka

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Urupsky District Court, Karachai-Cherkessiya

Material: Jehovah's Witness charged with keeping a copy of "What You Need to Know about God and His Purpose" (banned by Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014) and two copies of "Come be my follower" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) at home and offering them to other residents of the district

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

116) 5 December

Name: Kirovo-Chepetsk Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 100,000 Roubles

Court: Nolinsk District Court, Kirov Region

Material: Jehovah's Witness text "Was life created?" (banned by October District Court, Belgorod, 4 March 2015); details unclear, but appears that members of the community were accused of handing out copies in the street; community chair (see below) argued that they could not have done, as regular meetings are held to acquaint members with updates to the Federal List

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: unsuccessful – 24 March 2017, Kirov Regional Court

117) 7 December

Name: Sergey Zharovtsev, chair of Kirovo-Chepetsk Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: none – acquitted

Court: Nolinsk District Court, Kirov Region

Material: Jehovah's Witness text "Was life created?" (banned by October District Court, Belgorod, 4 March 2015); details unclear, but appears that members of the community were accused of handing out copies in the street; judge accepts that chair has no responsibility for actions of community members

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: none

118) 8 December

Name: Saransk Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 150,000 Roubles

Court: Lenin District Court, Saransk, Mordovia

Material: a raid on the community's Kingdom Hall found three copies of Jehovah's Witness text "How to develop a close relationship with God" (banned by Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014) and one copy of "Awake! In what respect? Why is this important now?" (banned by Salsk City Court, Rostov Region, 27 June 2011); lawyers claim that books were planted by police officers during the raid and point out that the community regularly inspected its building for prohibited materials

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: unsuccessful – 13 February 2017, Supreme Court of Republic of Mordovia

119) 8 December

Name: O.L. Grinishina

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Kirovo-Chepetsk District Court, Kirov Region

Material: defendant posted link to Russian version of Jehovah's Witness site jw.org (banned by Central District Court, Tver, 7 August 2013, and the Supreme Court, 2 December 2014) on her VKontakte profile page, which prosecutors claimed was "openly accessible to all users of the social network" and her actions therefore constituted "mass distribution of extremist material"; defendant denied the charges, suggesting that somebody must have copied her profile, stating that she was well aware that the site had been banned, and that her profile was in any case not openly accessible to all, but only to friends; lawyer Maksim Novakov pointed out that website address in itself did not contain any extremist material

Confiscation/destruction: none

Appeal: unsuccessful – 21 February 2017, Kirov Regional Court

120) 14 December

Name: Andrey Posokhov, chair of Pyatigorsk Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 5000 Roubles

Court: Pyatigorsk City Court, Stavropol Region

Material: 11 compact discs seized during anti-extremism police search of Jehovah's Witness building (defendant had told the officers that all information on his organisation's activities were stored on them); later examination of the discs found that one contained the text of "What does the Bible really teach?" (banned by Rostov Regional Court, 11 September 2009) and "How to achieve happiness in life" (banned by Kurgan Regional Court, 5 August 2014); defendant accused of "giving an unlimited circle of people the opportunity to see and study" these texts during services

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: successful – 22 March 2017, Stavropol Regional Court (defendant had been absent from initial hearing – judge concluded that there was no evidence that he had received sufficient notice or that he had agreed to be informed by text message; statute of limitations expired by the time of appeal, so no retrial possible)

121) 14 December

Name: R.R. Dzuyev

Fine: 1000 Roubles

Court: Omutninsk District Court, Kirov Region

Material: Islamic texts "Stories from the Holy Koran", Safiya Khabibullina, 2007; "Forty Hadiths", "Fortress of a Muslim", 5th edition, trans. Vladimir Nirshi; prisoner accused of passing banned books to a fellow inmate, suggesting that he read them; lawyer argued that his actions did not amount to propaganda; head of educational department had given books from warehouse of personal belongings to defendant, who applied for them through the prosecutor – checked the Federal List after two other prisoners reported that Dzuyev had passed the books to them

Confiscation/destruction: confiscation

Appeal: none

122) 19 December

Name: I.A. Adzhiyev

Fine: unknown

Court: Karachayeysk City Court, Karachai-Cherkessiya

Material: imam of mosque accused of distributing unspecified banned Islamic texts in his mosque, as allegedly discovered in an inspection by prosecutor's office and Justice Ministry officials; defendant accepted responsibility but denied knowing the books were on the Federal List

Confiscation/destruction: destruction

Appeal: none

123) 20 December

Name: "Central Voronezh" Jehovah's Witness community

Fine: 45 days' suspension of activity

Court: Lenin District Court, Voronezh

Material: four unspecified banned Jehovah's Witness brochures allegedly found hidden between a stand and the wall, during a raid on rented sports centre, where about a thousand worshippers were taking part in a service; community members claimed that the items were planted by officials during the search, stating that they had no need for such literature during worship – only the Bible and a hymn book

Confiscation/destruction: unknown

Appeal: successful (although punishment had already been enacted) – 1 March 2017, Voronezh Regional Court (judge found that there was insufficient evidence of an offence)

(END)

For more background see Forum 18's surveys of the general state of freedom of religion and belief in Russia at http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=2246, and of the dramatic decline in this freedom related to Russia's Extremism Law at http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=2215.

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.

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