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RUSSIA: January 2019 - June 2020 prosecutions for not showing full official name - list

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98 prosecutions for not showing a full official name reached court between the beginning of January 2019 and the end of June 2020. These involved 76 registered religious organisations and 22 individuals. Most resulted in guilty verdicts and fines, and the largest increase in the number of prosecutions by religious community was of Muslims.

Between the beginning of January 2019 and the end of June 2020, there were at least 98 prosecutions (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2610) under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 3 (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2246) ("Implementation of activities by a religious organisation without indicating its official full name, including the issuing or distribution, within the framework of missionary activity, of literature and printed, audio, and video material without a label bearing this name, or with an incomplete or deliberately false label").

A religious organisation's full official name must indicate its religious affiliation and its organisational and legal form. Names therefore tend to be long and complicated, but use of an abbreviated form may incur prosecution.

According to Forum 18's analysis of available court records, 98 prosecutions reached court between the beginning of January 2019 and the end of June 2020. These involved 76 registered religious organisations and 22 individuals. Most resulted in guilty verdicts and fines, with a conviction rate across the 18-month period of 72.5 per cent. Most of the eight acquittals were of individuals who should not have been prosecuted in the first place, as only legal entities can be prosecuted under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 3 (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2610). Few appeals in any of the cases succeeded.

Seventy-one cases resulted in convictions and eight in acquittals, while judges closed or sent back ten cases and dropped another as the statute of limitations had expired. Six defendants were freed from administrative liability. The outcome of two prosecutions is unknown.

Sixty-two of the 71 defendants found guilty received fines (before any appeal), while three were given a warning. One case was closed with oral remarks only, and another closed with no punishment because of the insignificance of the offence, but the defendants were still convicted. In four cases, the punishment imposed remains unknown.

In 14 cases, Judges ordered the confiscation of religious literature seized from the defendants. In six of these cases, the items were also ordered destroyed. It is unclear how far orders to destroy literature, including Korans and a Seventh-day Adventist newspaper, have been carried out (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2610).

Many cases – particularly those based on the alleged absence of appropriate signage – involve very similar circumstances. Nevertheless, their outcomes may differ widely as a result of the law's lack of clarity on the issue and judges' varying interpretations both of the law itself and the seriousness of any violations (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2610).

A Pentecostal church in the Moscow Region has appealed to the Constitutional Court (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2610) in an attempt to clarify the question of where exactly an organisation's full official name should be displayed. Lawyers hope that this may go some way towards improving the situation for religious communities.

Religious organisations and individuals also continue to face prosecution under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 4 ("Russians conducting missionary activity"), and Administrative Code Article 5.26, Part 5 ("Foreigners conducting missionary activity") (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2593).

List

Below is a list of all prosecutions which reached court under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 3

(http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2246) ("Implementation of activities by a religious organisation without indicating its official full name, including the issuing or distribution, within the framework of missionary activity, of literature and printed, audio, and video material without a label bearing this name, or with an incomplete or deliberately false label") between the beginning of January 2019 and the end of June 2020.

There are fewer cases in the first half of 2020 than might be expected, because of the restrictions on court functions imposed during the strictest period of Russia's coronavirus lockdown (18 March to 8 May 2020), which was then extended in some regions.

Compared to 2018 (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2474), the largest increase in the number of prosecutions by religious community was of Muslims (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2610), with 28 throughout 2019 and 6 in 2020 until the end of June (the decrease in 2020 was due to coronavirus restrictions). Throughout 2018 there were five such prosecutions of Muslim religious communities. It is unclear why such a sharp rise should have occurred, though it is also discernible among prosecutions in 2019 under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Parts 4 ("Russians conducting missionary activity") and 5 ("Foreigners conducting missionary activity") (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2593).

Forty-one of Russia's 83 federal subjects saw at least one prosecution under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 3 in 2019 and the first half of 2020 (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2610). This is a much wider distribution than the 24 regions in which there were prosecutions in 2018 (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2474).

All names of religious organisations are presented as direct translations of their full official versions, including the legal-organisational form "Local Religious Organisation", "Centralised Religious Organisation", etc., which the Religion Law requires communities to display. Use of an abbreviated form may incur prosecution (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2610).

A fine of 30,000 Roubles (the minimum fine) represents about three weeks' average wages for those in work, or just over two months' average pension. A fine of 50,000 Roubles (the maximum fine) represents nearly six weeks' average wages for those in work, or 16 weeks' average state retirement pension. Religious materials can also be confiscated.

1) 11 January 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith "Good News"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Magistrate's Court No. 28, Sakhalin Region

Circumstances: Protestant church did not display full official name – details unknown

Appeal: rejected without consideration – 15 March 2019, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk City Court, Sakhalin

2) 15 January 2019

Name: Religious Organisation of Chebarkul "Light of Truth" Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals)

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Chebarkul and Chebarkul District Magistrate's Court No. 1, Chelyabinsk Region

Circumstances: after search of premises by Interior Ministry's Centre for Countering Extremism, police, and FSB security service ("to identify persons involved in terrorist and extremist activity"), Pentecostal church charged for not having sign displaying full official name on its façade – sign hung at entrance of prayer room within the house only during meetings for worship, and Judge decides that such information should be displayed continuously

Appeal: unsuccessful – 28 March 2019, Chebarkul City Court, Chelyabinsk Region; supervisory, unsuccessful – 16 January 2020, 7th Cassational Court, Chelyabinsk

3) 17 January 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) "Word of Life", Kazan

Punishment: none – case closed

Court: Privolzhsky District Magistrate's Court No. 8, Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan

Circumstances: same case as Mingazova (see below) – details unknown

Appeal: none

4) 17 January 2019

Name: Yuliya Mingazova

Punishment: none – case closed

Court: Privolzhsky District Magistrate's Court No. 8, Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan

Circumstances: administrator of Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) "Word of Life", Kazan (see above) – details unknown

Appeal: none

5) 1 February 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation "Rostov Church of Christ"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Proletarian District Magistrate's Court No. 4, Rostov-on-Don

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, Protestant church charged with "carrying out its activities" without a sign on its building displaying its full official name

Appeal: unsuccessful – 6 March 2019, Proletarian District Court, Rostov-on-Don

6) 8 February 2019

Name: Aleksandr Barakhtenko

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Yakutsk Magistrate's Court No. 42, Sakha Republic (Yakutiya)

Circumstances: chair and pastor of Centralised Religious Organisation Association of Christians of Evangelical Faith "Global Strategy", Yakutsk (a Pentecostal church), charged by police for holding weekly events in a hotel conference hall without displaying his organisation's full official name

Appeal: supervisory, successful – 13 May 2019, Supreme Court of the Sakha Republic (Yakutiya)

7) 12 February 2019

Name: Religious Organisation – Institution of Judaism "Torat Khaim"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Simonovsky Magistrate's Court No. 245, Moscow

Circumstances: after Justice Ministry inspection of compliance with Religion Law, yeshiva charged for not using its full official name on its website and social media profiles

Appeal: none

8) 14 February 2019

Name: Spiritual Professional Educational Religious Organisation "Medrese Bilyar" of the Central Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Russia

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Zavolzhsky District Magistrate's Court No. 4, Ulyanovsk

Circumstance: after Justice Ministry inspection, madrassah charged for "carrying out its activities without displaying its full official name"; chair explained that on 2 October 2018 he had changed the name and charter of the organisation, but forgotten to change the sign on its building, which read "Religious Educational Institution of Secondary? Professional Education Medrese 'Bilyar"; also convicted under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 4 ("Russians conducting missionary activity")

Appeal: unsuccessful – 26 April 2019, Zavolzhsky District Court, Ulyanovsk

9) 14 February 2019

Name: Centralised Religious Organisation Association of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) "Kingdom of God"

Punishment: none – case sent back

Court: Elektrostal City Court, Moscow Region

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

10) 21 February 2019

Name: Religious Organisation – Spiritual Professional Educational Organisation "Islamic College of Moscow Region"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Mytishchi District Magistrate's Court No. 126, Moscow Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, Islamic college charged for distributing educational literature and conducting teaching without displaying its full official name on the materials

Appeal: successful (expiry of statute of limitations before original hearing) – 16 May 2019, Mytishchi City Court, Moscow Region

11) 25 February 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) "Glorification Church", Achinsk

Punishment: none – acquitted

Court: Achinsk and Achinsk District Magistrate's Court No. 145 on behalf of No. 5, Krasnoyarsk Region

Circumstances: after FSB security service surveillance, Pentecostal church charged by Prosecutor's Office for holding a conference (on work with former prisoners) at a holiday camp without displaying its full official name at the entrance, at the perimeter, or on the buildings; Judge concludes that there is nothing in law which requires a religious organisation to display its full official name on property which is not its own

Appeal: by Prosecutor, rejected without consideration – 19 March 2019, Achinsk City Court, Krasnoyarsk Region

12) 12 March 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation of Muslims of St Petersburg "Enlightenment"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Krasnoselsky District Magistrate's Court No. 102, St Petersburg

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office received "information about facilities in the basement of an apartment building .. intended for use as a prayer room", Muslim community charged for having "carried out meetings for worship, religious rites and ceremonies" without displaying a sign with its full official name

Appeal: none

13) 15 March 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith "Faith, Hope, Charity", Kyshtym

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Kyshtym Magistrate's Court No. 3, Chelyabinsk Region

Circumstances: Protestant church charged, on basis of investigation by Interior Ministry's Centre for Countering Extremism, for not displaying a sign with its full official name on the building where it carries out its activities

Appeal: none

14) 22 March 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation "Bryansk Society for Krishna Consciousness"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Soviet District Magistrate's Court No. 13, Bryansk

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, based on information from FSB security service, Hare Krishna community charged for not displaying its full official name at its premises

Appeal: unsuccessful – 28 May 2019, Soviet District Court, Bryansk

15) 28 March 2019

Name: Centralised Religious Organisation "Siberian Evangelical-Lutheran Church"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Soviet District Magistrate's Court No. 2 on behalf of No. 4, Novosibirsk

Circumstances: after Justice Ministry check, Lutheran organisation charged for not using its full official name on its website and Facebook page (ie. only "Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church"); church representative argued that it did not have an official site, the site lutheran.ru is run by the Western Siberian Christian Mission, and the Facebook page facebook.com/sibirskayaelc is administered by an individual; arguments "cannot be taken into account by the court, since they are refuted by the case materials and publicly available information on the Internet"

Appeal: successful (overturned for lack of evidence, closed as statute of limitations expired by appeal) – 14 May 2019, Soviet District Court, Novosibirsk

16) 3 April 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation "Falyak", Ordzhonikidze District, Ufa, of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Republic of Bashkortostan

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Ordzhonikidze District Magistrate's Court No. 7, Ufa, Republic of Bashkortostan

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, Muslim community charged for not having a sign with its full official name "at the entrance or on the walls beside the entrance" to the residential house where it carries out its activities; inspection based on information from FSB security service's "examination of premises and adjacent locality"

Appeal: none

17) 8 April 2019

Name: Centralised Religious Organisation "International Islamic Mission"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Khamovniki District Magistrate's Court No. 425, Moscow

Circumstances: after Justice Ministry inspection of compliance with Religion Law, Muslim organisation charged for not using its full official name on its website (instead using International Islamic Mission, TsRO International-Islamic-Mission, and TsRO "MIM")

Appeal: none

18) 18 April 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith "Church of God", Nizhny Tagil

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Dzerzhinsky District Magistrate's Court No. 1, Nizhny Tagil, Sverdlovsk Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection of "compliance with current laws", Protestant church charged for not displaying its full official name on the façade of the building at its registered address (it carries out its activities at a different address)

Appeal: none

19) 22 April 2019

Name: Oleg Prokhorov

Punishment: warning

Court: Yakutsk Magistrate's Court No. 47, Sakha Republic (Yakutiya)

Circumstances: pastor of Local Religious Organisation of Christians of Evangelical Faith "Blessing Christian Church", Yakutsk, charged by police because church had "carried out its activities without specifying its official full name" on its place of worship (its sign "did not correspond to reality")

Appeal: none

20) Unknown date in May 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Evangelical Christian-Baptists "Transfiguration", Vladivostok

Punishment: 100,000 Roubles (under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 4 ("Russians conducting missionary activity")) plus confiscation of literature (under Article 5.26 Part 3)

Court: unknown Lenin District Magistrate's Court, Vladivostok, Primorye Region

Circumstances: same case as stantsiya Ugolnaya Methodist church (see below at case 22); Baptist church charged under both Part 3 and Part 4 for not displaying its full official name (including on religious literature) at conference for children's ministers jointly organised with Methodists (verdict describes event as "free and open to all")

Appeal: case closed as statute of limitations had expired by date of conviction (confiscated items returned) – 16 September 2019, Lenin District Court, Vladivostok, Primorye Region

21) 8 May 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith "God's Grace"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Pervomaysky District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Izhevsk, Udmurt Republic

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with Religion Law and Extremism Law, Protestant church

charged for not displaying its full official name "at the place of religious activity"; according to the verdict, "These violations of the requirements of federal law on freedom of conscience and religious associations are unacceptable [and] create an information vacuum for the population of the city of Izhevsk about the activities of the religious organisation"

Appeal: none

22) 15 May 2019

Name: Religious Organisation "Christian Methodist Church, stantsiya Ugolnaya, Vladivostok"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus confiscation of literature

Court: Soviet District Magistrate's Court No. 24, Vladivostok, Primorye Region

Circumstances: same case as Transfiguration Baptist church (see above at case 20); Methodist church charged by Justice Ministry for selling religious literature and CDs which did not bear its full official name, at conference for children's ministers on the premises of a sanatorium; also convicted under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 4 ("Russians conducting missionary activity")

Appeal: unsuccessful – 24 June 2019, Soviet District Court, Vladivostok, Primorye Region; supervisory, unsuccessful – 8 November 2019, Primorye Regional Court

23) 21 May 2019

Name: Religious Organisation Regional Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Mari El Republic under the Central Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Russia

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Yoshkar-Ola Magistrate's Court No. 5, Mari El Republic

Circumstances: after routine documentary inspection (by Justice Ministry?) of compliance with Religion Law and aims and procedures set out in organisation's charter, Muslim organisation charged with not using its full official name in its documents and publications

Appeal: none

24) 22 May 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation "Parish of the Holy Mother of God of the Roman Catholic Church, Vladivostok"

Punishment: none – acquitted

Court: Lenin District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Vladivostok, Primorye Region

Circumstances: Catholic parish charged for distributing copies of "Dawn Vladivostok" newspaper which did not bear its full official name, instead showing the name "Catholic Parish of the Holy Mother of God"

Appeal: by Justice Ministry, unsuccessful – 24 July 2019, Lenin District Court, Vladivostok, Primorye

25) 30 May 2019

Name: Sergey Bachkala

Punishment: none – case sent back for jurisdictional reasons and not resubmitted

Court: Apsheronsk District Court, Krasnodar Region

Circumstances: Council of Churches Baptist pastor (therefore leader of unregistered religious group) – details unknown

Appeal: none

26) 31 May 2019

Name: Natalya Volynets

Punishment: none – case sent back

Court: Yakutsk Magistrate's Court No. 62 on behalf of No. 63, Sakha Republic (Yakutiya)

Circumstances: pastor of Religious Organisation Jubilee Church of Evangelical Christians – details unknown

Appeal: none

27) Unknown date in May/June 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation "Living Word" Church of Blagoveshchensk, Centralised Religious Organisation Association of Churches of Christians of Evangelical Faith of Amur Region

Punishment: unknown if imposed

Court: Blagoveshchensk Magistrate's Court, Amur Region

Circumstances: Protestant church – details unknown; transferred from Mag Court No. 2 for jurisdictional reasons on 6 May 2019

Appeal: none

28) 13 June 2019

Name: Samvel Avakyan

Punishment: unknown fine

Court: Koshki District Magistrate's Court No. 134, Samara Region

Circumstances: Baptist charged by police for not displaying full official name of religious organisation on house where meetings for worship held – despite his not having a religious organisation; defendant charged with violating Article 7 of the Religion Law on the organisation of religious groups and the communication of their places of worship, "by which he committed an administrative offence under Article 5.26 Part 3"; appeal verdict notes that defendant did not submit notification of creation of religious group; appeal Judge concludes that "for religious groups it is not required to register as a legal entity with an indication of religious belief in the name, and it is not required to indicate their full name when carrying out activities"

Appeal: successful – 11 December 2019, Koshki District Court, Samara Region

29) 17 June 2019

Name: Zhalil Zayimov

Punishment: none – acquitted

Court: Shakhty District Magistrate's Court No. 5, Rostov Region

Circumstances: chair of Local Religious Organisation of Muslims of Shakhty (same case as organisation – see below at case 40) charged by police for holding Friday prayers "while information on the legal entity was absent at the place of prayer"; Judge acquits because only organisations can be prosecuted under Part 3, though does not mention Supreme Court ruling

Appeal: none

30) 18 June 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation "Nizhny Novgorod City Society for Krishna Consciousness"

Punishment: none – case sent back for unknown reasons

Court: Nizhny Novgorod District Magistrate's Court No. 1, Nizhny Novgorod

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

31) 24 June 2019

Name: Local Islamic Religious Organisation "Mosque of Starokucherganovka Village, Narimanovsky District, Astrakhan Region"

Punishment: unknown

Court: Narimanovsky District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Astrakhan Region

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

32) 27 June 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation "Astrakhan Community of the Central European Regional Administrative Centre of the New Apostolic Church"

Punishment: unknown

Court: Soviet District Magistrate's Court No. 1, Astrakhan

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

33) 10 July 2019

Name: Centralised Religious Organisation of Christians of Evangelical Faith Mission "Time of Salvation", Amur Region

Punishment: unknown if imposed

Court: Blagoveshchensk Magistrate's Court No. 10, Amur Region

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

34) 11 July 2019

Name: A.M. Alejev

Punishment: 40,000 Roubles plus destruction of books

Court: Kalinin District Magistrate's Court No. 5, Ufa, Republic of Bashkortostan

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, director of New Age "Church Universal and Triumphant" religious group charged for not displaying the full official name of a religious organisation on the premises or on religious literature; verdict calls the church a religious group and a religious organisation simultaneously – disregards November 2017 Supreme Court ruling, acknowledges but does not cite December 2017 Constitutional Court ruling on types of materials; Judge orders that two unidentified books should be confiscated and destroyed by bailiffs

Appeal: none

35) 12 July 2019

Name: Religious Organisation "Christian Methodist Church, stantsiya Ugolnaya, Vladivostok"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Soviet District Magistrate's Court No. , Vladivostok, Primorye Region

Circumstances: after Justice Ministry inspection, Methodist church charged for not displaying its full official name at its premises

Appeal: unsuccessful – 26 August 2019, Soviet District Court, Vladivostok; supervisory, unsuccessful – 8 November 2019, Primorye Regional Court

36) 15 July 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) "Word of Life"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Dolgoprudny Magistrate's Court No. 30 (on behalf of No. 297), Moscow Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, Pentecostal church charged for not having a sign with its full official name on the external walls of its building or at the entrance to its grounds, and for distributing literature which did not bear its full official name; defence argued that owner of premises does not permit sign and the law does not specify where sign should be – therefore church has placed one at entrance of room where meetings for worship held; defence notes that some unmarked literature is personal property of pastor, kept in cupboard, while remainder was in office with no public access

Appeal: unsuccessful – 5 September 2019, Dolgoprudny City Court, Moscow Region; supervisory, unsuccessful – 19 February 2020, 1st Cassational Court, Saratov; Constitutional Court appeal lodged on 23 June 2020

37) 16 July 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Evangelical Christians "Philadelphia", Debesy Village, Udmurt Republic

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Debesy District Magistrate's Court, Udmurt Republic

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, Protestant church charged for not having a sign with its full official name on the façade of the building where it holds meetings for worship and carries out other activities (which is not the address at which it is registered)

Appeal: none

38) 17 July 2019

Name: Autonomous Non-Commercial Organisation "Christian Cultural-Educational Spiritual Centre 'Life'"

Punishment: none – statute of limitations expired

Court: Moscow District Magistrate's Court No. 7, Kaliningrad

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

39) 18 July 2019

Name: Oleg Kobzev

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Yelets Magistrate's Court No. 3, Lipetsk Region

Circumstances: pastor of Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith "Bethlehem", city of Yelets, charged by police for not displaying a sign with the church's full official name on its building; defendant argued on appeal that having a sign on the façade was not possible, as the church only rented part of it, and the police did not examine the door used by worshippers, which does have a sign; Appeal Judge referred to 2017 Supreme Court ruling and noted that subject of prosecution can only be organisation

Appeal: successful – 17 September 2019, Yelets District Court, Lipetsk Region

40) 23 July 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation of Muslims, Shakhty

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Shakhty District Magistrate's Court No. 5, Rostov Region

Circumstances: Muslim community charged by police for not displaying its full official name at its premises

Appeal: unsuccessful – 26 August 2019, Shakhty City Court; supervisory, unsuccessful – 8 November 2019, Rostov Regional Court

41) 25 July 2019

Name: Centralised Religious Organisation "Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the City of Moscow"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Danilovsky District Magistrate's Court No. 248, Moscow

Circumstances: same case as Alyautdinov (see below); after routine Prosecutor's Office inspection, Muslim organisation charged for not displaying its full official name on Moscow Islamic College building (for which it jointly signed the agreement of free use with the city) and for the presence on the premises of literature "distributed as part of missionary activity" not bearing its full official name

Appeal: none

42) 25 July 2019

Name: Ildar Alyautdinov

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Danilovsky District Magistrate's Court No. 248, Moscow

Circumstances: chair of Centralised Religious Organisation "Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the City of Moscow" charged in same case (see above)

Appeal: none

43) 15 August 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation of Muslims of Khimki, Moscow Region

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Khimki Magistrate's Court No. 258 on behalf of Khimki Magistrate's Court No. 264, Moscow Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with Religion Law, Muslim community charged for not displaying its full official name at the cultural centre where it carries out its activities – its sign (on internal glass doors) read "MROM Khimki kindness care spirituality knowledge"; also charged under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 4 ("Russians conducting missionary activity")

Appeal: unsuccessful – 26 November 2019, Khimki City Court, Moscow Region; supervisory, rejected without consideration – 14 August 2020, 1st Cassational Court, Saratov

44) 22 August 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation "New Way Church of Evangelical Christians", Belovo

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus confiscation of literature

Court: Belovo Magistrate's Court No. 7, Kemerovo Region

Circumstances: Protestant church charged because it "distributed religious printed materials [magazine title redacted] as part of missionary activity, which were freely available on the premises .. and contained topics relating to the Protestant branch of Christianity, without labelling showing the name of this organisation"; Appeal Judge cites December 2017 Constitutional Court decision on marking of materials, but notes that original case did not establish whether the church had distributed the magazine outside places where missionary activity could be conducted without hindrance and where labelling is not required, therefore decision overturned

Appeal: supervisory, successful (decision overturned and case closed as statute of limitations had expired) – 8 November 2019, Kemerovo Regional Court

45) 26 August 2019

Name: Religious Organisation "Irkutsk Society for Krishna Consciousness"

Punishment: none – case closed for unknown reasons

Court: Irkutsk District Magistrate's Court No. 64, Irkutsk Region

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

46) 29 August 2019

Name: Olga Chernykh

Punishment: none – acquitted

Court: Soviet District Magistrate's Court No. 16, Lipetsk

Circumstances: chair of Religious Organisation of Modern (Progressive) Judaism of the City of Lipetsk charged by Justice Ministry, after "work on countering extremism" by Interior Ministry's Centre for Countering Extremism found that organisation's office did not have a sign displaying its full official name; defendant stated that organisation no longer used address at time of inspection, but had not yet drawn up documents for new address; Judge acquits because only organisation can be charged under Part 3

Appeal: none

47) 29 August 2019

Name: Vladimir Akulov

Punishment: none – acquitted

Court: Oymyakon Magistrate's Court No. 24, Republic of Sakha (Yakutiya)

Circumstances: police charged "follower of religious movement 'Evangelical Christianity'" for distributing religious literature "without markings showing its religious affiliation", on behalf of Union of Nehemiah Centralised Religious Organisation of Evangelical Christians, among apartment block residents – one of whom called police; defendant also charged under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 4 ("Russians conducting missionary activity"); Judge acquits on basis of 2017 Supreme Court ruling that only organisations can be charged under Part 3

Appeal: none

48) 16 September 2019

Name: Gulomali Rasulov

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Usolye-Sibirskoye and Usolye District Magistrate's Court No. 92, Irkutsk Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with migration, town planning, and land law, chair of Local Religious Organisation of Muslims "Mosque" of the City of Usolye-Sibirskoye charged for not having a sign displaying its full official name on its mosque's façade or fence; no reference to 2017 Supreme Court ruling

Appeal: none

49) 19 September 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation of Muslims of the City of Luga and Luga District

Punishment: none – case closed with oral remarks only but defendant found guilty

Court: Luga District Magistrate's Court No. 81, Leningrad Region

Circumstances: Muslim community charged for not having a sign on its mosque (in an historic building deemed a cultural monument) displaying its full official name; chair explained that there had been a sign, which he had removed at request of city's chief architect as it was too large for a cultural monument – new sign not yet installed on day of inspection, but was put up on day of court hearing

Appeal: none

50) 24 September 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation of Christians of Evangelical Faith "Blessing Christian Church", Yakutsk

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus destruction of literature

Court: Yakutsk Magistrate's Court No. 47, Sakha Republic (Yakutiya)

Circumstances: after Justice Ministry inspection, church charged for displaying literature (one hymn book as well as 44 magazines) on its premises not bearing its full official name; with reference to Constitutional Court ruling of 2017, "The dissemination of religious literature and materials of religious significance within the framework of missionary activity should be understood not only as the delivery of these materials to specific individuals, but also the provision of free access to this literature and materials to an indefinite circle of people"

Appeal: none

51) 25 September 2019

Name: Centralised Religious Organisation "Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the City of Moscow"

Punishment: none – case sent back for unknown reasons

Court: Vnukovo District Magistrate's Court No. 138, Moscow

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

52) 3 October 2019

Name: Firgat Yunusov

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Gorodishche District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Penza Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with Extremism Law, chair of Muslim community charged because its mosque had no sign displaying its full official name (Local Muslim Religious Organisation of Sursk, Gorodishche District, Penza Region, Centralised Religious Organisation Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Penza Region)

Appeal: none

53) 3 October 2019

Name: Ismail Deberdeyev

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Gorodishche District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Penza Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with Extremism Law, imam and chair of Muslim community charged because its mosque had no sign displaying its full official name (Local Muslim Religious Organisation "Makhalla No. 2116", Srednyaya Yelyuzan village, Gorodishche District, Penza Region, Central Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Russia); no mention of 2017 Supreme Court ruling, but defendant acquitted on this basis on appeal

Appeal: successful – 16 January 2020, Gorodishche District Court, Penza Region

54) 8 October 2019

Name: Local Muslim Religious Organisation of Issa Workers' Settlement

Punishment: unknown

Court: Issa District Magistrate's Court, Penza Region

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

55) 8 October 2019

Name: Local Religious Muslim Organisation of Sarsky Khutor, Maysky District, Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

Punishment: warning

Court: Maysky District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

Circumstances: joint inspection by Prosecutor's Office, FSB security service, police, and local administration of compliance with Religion Law concluded that Muslim community had carried out missionary activity at a house of culture and another address without displaying its full official name either on the buildings or on its religious literature (verdict notes that the literature was not being distributed at the time of inspection, but was freely accessible to anyone visiting, "not only to members"); Judge concludes that community's actions had caused no injury to anyone

Appeal: none

56) 10 October 2019

Name: Religious Organisation Ancient Orthodox Cynovia (Monastery) Intercession of the Holy Mother of God, Sofino Village, Serdobsb District, Penza Region

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Serdobsb District Magistrate's Court No. 3, Penza Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with Religion Law, Old Believer monastery charged for not displaying a sign with its full official name at the residential house where it carries out its activities; hegumen argued on appeal that a sign with full details was always on the door to the prayer room, including on day of inspection, and that agreement had been reached with house owner to put sign on fence – points out that law does not specify where and how signs should be placed – Judge counters that signs should indicate necessary information so as to allow "an indefinite circle of persons to reliably establish which particular religious organization operates in a given place", and the placement of a sign inside the building "limits the rights of citizens"

Appeal: unsuccessful – 26 November 2019, Serdobsb City Court, Penza Region

57) 14 October 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Evangelical Christians "Bread of Life"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus confiscation of printed materials

Court: Volosovo District Magistrate's Court No. 4, Leningrad Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, church charged for not having a sign on its premises displaying its full official name and not showing its full official name on hymn books

Appeal: none

58) 17 October 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation of Evangelical Christians "Yekaterinburg Church of Christ"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus confiscation of literature

Court: Kirov District Magistrate's Court No.3, Yekaterinburg, Sverdlovsk Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, Protestant church charged for displaying religious literature on its rented premises which does not bear its full official name; re. Constitutional Court determination of December 2017, "the presence of literature on premises belonging to a religious organisation and the absence of evidence of its distribution at the time of the inspection does not indicate the absence of a violation, since the literature in this case is freely available to all citizens visiting the church"; defence argues that the church displays its full official name at its entrance, and no missionary activity is carried out on the premises, which are closed to all but parishioners; Judge orders confiscation of single copies of a New Testament with Psalter, New Testament with Psalms (different edition), "Fundamentals of Christianity", and a CD entitled "Sinai: teach me to fly"

Appeal: unsuccessful – 20 November 2019, Kirov District Court, Yekaterinburg; supervisory, rejected without consideration – 17 February 2020, 7th Cassational Court, Chelyabinsk

59) 24 October 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith of Omsk Region

Punishment: unknown

Court: Soviet District Magistrate's Court No. 80, Omsk

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

60) 24 October 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) "Mountain of God", Samara

Punishment: warning

Court: Industrial District Magistrate's Court No. 44, Samara

Circumstances: church charged because Justice Ministry inspection found it had not used its full official name in contracts with a building firm in 2017-2018

Appeal: none

61) 30 October 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Novodvinsk Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith

Punishment: none – oral comment only; defendant freed from administrative liability

Court: Novodvinsk Magistrate's Court No. 1, Arkhangelsk Region

Circumstances: after routine document inspection by Ministry of Justice, church charged for using abbreviated form of name on VKontakte social network; church chair points out that page is private and name has now been corrected; Judge concludes that church should be relieved of liability because of the insignificance of the offence

Appeal: none

62) 30 October 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation of Muslims of Yegoryevsk District of Moscow Region

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus confiscation of literature

Court: Yegoryevsk District Magistrate's Court No. 44, Moscow Region

Circumstances: after inspection by Prosecutor's Office, FSB security service, police, fire service, and Rospotrebnadzor (consumer rights protection), Muslim community charged for keeping on its premises unspecified printed materials which did not bear its full official name; according to the verdict, they were "freely available to those attending religious events, including 127 people who were at a religious event on 16 August 2019. Visitors to the place of worship got acquainted with their content, which testifies to the mass distribution of this literature within the framework of missionary activities"; also charged under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 4 ("Russians conducting missionary activity")

Appeal: unsuccessful – 24 January 2020, Yegoryevsk City Court, Moscow Region

63) 8 November 2019

Name: Local Muslim Religious Organisation "Makhalla No. 2073", Maylyk Village, Almenyevsk District, Kurgan Region

Punishment: none – freed from administrative liability

Court: Almenyevo District Magistrate's Court No. 1, Kurgan Region

Circumstances: Muslim community charged for not displaying its full official name – had only a home-made sign in Tatar on its building; case brought by police; imam says he has ordered a new sign; Judge waives liability because of insignificance of offence

Appeal: none

64) 8 November 2019

Name: Local Muslim Religious Organisation "Makhalla No. 737", Podyasovo Village, Almenyevo District, Regional Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Kurgan Region, part of the TsDUM [Central Spiritual Administration of Muslims] of Russia

Punishment: none – freed from administrative responsibility

Court: Almenyevo District Magistrate's Court No. 1, Kurgan Region

Circumstances: Muslim community charged for not displaying its full official name; case brought by police; Judge waives liability because of insignificance of offence

Appeal: none

65) 11 November 2019

Name: Vadim Dekhtyarenko

Punishment: none – acquitted

Court: Nadym District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Region

Circumstances: same case as organisation (see below at case 76); after unscheduled Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with terrorism and extremism laws, minister of Local Religious Organisation "Mission of Evangelisation and Benevolence 'Awakening'", Nadym, charged because it holds meetings for worship three times a week in a rented garage without displaying a

sign with its full official name; Judge acquits because only religious organisations are subject to prosecution under Part 3

Appeal: none

66) 20 November 2019

Name: Roman Tulyupa

Punishment: none – acquitted

Court: Salekhard District Magistrate's Court No. 1, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Region

Circumstances: leader of unregistered Council of Churches Baptist religious group charged by police for distributing copies of the newspaper "Do you believe?", without labels showing the full official name of a religious organisation, via post boxes in a block of flats; Judge concludes no evidence that Tulyupa was responsible

Appeal: none

67) 21 November 2019

Name: Roman Tulyupa

Punishment: none – acquitted

Court: Salekhard District Magistrate's Court No. 1, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Region

Circumstances: leader of unregistered Council of Churches Baptist religious group charged again by police for distributing copies of the newspaper "Do you believe?", without labels showing the full official name of a religious organisation, via post boxes in a block of flats; Judge concludes no evidence that Tulyupa was responsible

Appeal: none

68) 21 November 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Seventh-day Adventists, Barnaul

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: October District Magistrate's Court No. 4, Barnaul, Altay Region

Circumstances: Seventh-day Adventist Church charged for "carrying out its activities without displaying its official full name, in particular, without a sign showing necessary information, including full name [and] religious affiliation"

Appeal: unsuccessful – 14 January 2020, October District Court, Barnaul, Altay Region

69) 22 November 2019

Name: Religious Organisation – Spiritual Professional Educational Organisation "Moscow Islamic College"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Danilovsky District Magistrate's Court No. 248, Moscow

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, Muslim college charged for using an incomplete form of its name on the sign at its premises and on its Facebook and VKontakte pages

Appeal: none

70) 26 November 2019

Name: Khusyain Kichutkin

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Neverkino District Magistrate's Court, Penza Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with the Extremism Law, chair of the Muslim Religious Organisation of Dzhailovo village charged because community "carries out its activities in the building of a mosque .. and did not display its official full name"; defendant attributes this to ignorance of the law and points out that a sign was placed on the façade three days after the case was opened; no mention of 2017 Supreme Court ruling

Appeal: none

71) 27 November 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation "Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Christ the Saviour", Izhevsk

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Industrial District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Izhevsk, Udmurt Republic

Circumstances: Prosecutor's Office inspection found that church did not display a sign with its full official name and religious affiliation; church representatives explained in court that there had been a sign on the façade until the local administration head warned them to take it down as the building does not belong to the religious organisation; by the time of the hearing, the sign had been replaced and agreement had been obtained from one of the building's two owners

Appeal: none

72) 5 December 2019

Name: Local Muslim Religion Organisation "Makhalla of the Red Mosque" No. 298, Astrakhan

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Kirov District Magistrate's Court No. 4, Astrakhan

Circumstances: Muslim community charged for not displaying its full official name on its building or at the entrance to its grounds, as established by the local branch of the Justice Ministry; community leader admits this and says that the violation has been eliminated

Appeal: none

73) 11 December 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation – Church of Evangelical Christian-Baptists of Kirov "Transfiguration"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Lenin District Magistrate's Court No. 54, Kirov

Circumstances: apparently after Justice Ministry inspection, Baptist Union church charged for not displaying its full official name on its building, on literature it has in a rack at its entrance ("This literature is freely available to all citizens visiting the organisation, and not only to its members, which can be regarded as the distribution of religious literature"), or on its website and social network page, where it uses an abbreviated name

Appeal: unsuccessful – 4 March 2020, Lenin District Court, Kirov

74) 11 December 2019

Name: Local Religious Muslim Organisation, Maysky, Maysky District, Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Maysky District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

Circumstances: joint inspection by Prosecutor's Office, FSB security service, police, and local administration of compliance with

Religion Law concluded that Muslim community was not displaying its full official name on its buildings

Appeal: none

75) 12 December 2019

Name: Religious Organisation – Institution of Judaism "Ogaley Yakov"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Basmanny District Magistrate's Court No. 387, Moscow

Circumstances: unknown

Appeal: none

76) 12 December 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation "Mission of Evangelisation and Benevolence 'Awakening'", Nadym

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Nadym District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Region

Circumstances: same case as Dekhtyarenko (see above at case 65); after unscheduled Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with terrorism and extremism laws, Protestant church charged for holding meetings for worship three times a week in a rented garage without displaying a sign with its full official name

Appeal: none

77) 18 December 2019

Name: Religious Organisation of the City of Zlatoust "Truth of Life" Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith

Punishment: none – freed from administrative responsibility

Court: Zlatoust Magistrate's Court No. 1, Chelyabinsk Region

Circumstances: case brought as a result of Prosecutor's Office inspection triggered by information from regional branch of Interior Ministry Centre for Countering Extremism – inspection found that there was no sign bearing the organisation's full official name on its surrounding fence, and the sign on the building's façade was obscured by the fence; defence argued that the fence was temporary and only there because of construction work, that the sign is fully visible to anyone who comes inside the grounds, and that the law does not stipulate where a sign with an organisation's full official name should be placed; Judge concludes that situation does fall under Part 3 and the fact that the church's name is not visible from outside the fence "restricts the rights of citizens", but lifts administrative responsibility on grounds that offence is "of little significance"

Appeal: none

78) 19 December 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Muslim Religious Centre "Islam", Yashalta District, Republic of Kalmykiya

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Yashalta District Magistrate's Court, Republic of Kalmykiya

Circumstances: Muslim community charged by police for carrying out "meetings for worship, other religious rites, and ceremonies" (considered missionary activity) without displaying a sign with its full official name on its building; on appeal, chair argued that community carries out no commercial activities and exists solely on donations, which are "barely enough for the purchase of religious items necessary for the administration of religious rites and for utilities", and asks for punishment to be reduced to a warning

Appeal: unsuccessful – 19 February 2020, Yashalta District Court, Republic of Kalmykiya

79) 20 December 2019

Name: Local Religious Organisation Christian Mission "Gospel to the East", Pokorovsk, Khangalassky Ulus

Punishment: none – case closed because of insignificance of offence

Court: Khangalassky District Magistrate's Court No. 54, Sakha Republic (Yakutiya)

Circumstances: Protestant organisation charged for using an incomplete form of its name in its letterhead and in correspondence with the Sakha republic branch of the Justice Ministry (although full form was also used); Judge notes that it is perfectly possible to determine which organisation sent the letters, therefore rejects arguments of "gross violation of federal law" – appeal Judge decides no offence committed at all

Appeal: by Justice Ministry, unsuccessful and defendant acquitted – 3 February 2020, Khangalassky District Court, Sakha Republic (Yakutiya)

80) 25 December 2019

Name: Local Muslim Religious Organisation of Sosnovoborsk Village, Sosnovoborsk District, Penza Region, of the Centralised Religious Organisation Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Penza Region

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Sosnovoborsk District Magistrate's Court, Penza Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with Religion Law, Muslim community charged for not having a sign on its building displaying its full official name

Appeal: unsuccessful – 12 February 2020, Sosnovoborsk District Court, Penza Region

2020

81) 10 January 2020

Name: Dmitry Makarov

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Bolshaya Glushitsa District Magistrate's Court No. 127, Samara Region

Circumstances: leader of Pentecostal religious group, Church of the Apostle Paul, charged by police because church did not have sign with full official name on the building where it carries out its activities – church's documents were being reprocessed, so new sign could not yet be produced; acquitted on appeal because only religious organisations are subject to prosecution under Part 3

Appeal: successful – 6 February 2020, Bolshaya Glushitskaya District Court

82) 16 January 2020

Name: Local Religious Organisation Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith "Chapel of Victory"

Punishment: none – case closed

Court: Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Magistrate's Court No. 28, Sakhalin Region

Circumstances: Protestant church did not display its full official name – details unknown

Appeal: none

83) 17 January 2020

Name: Religious Organisation Local Church of Seventh-day Adventist Christians "Expecting", Yoshkar-Ola, Mari El Republic

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Yoshkar-Ola Magistrate's Court No. 12 / 13, Mari El Republic

Circumstances: Seventh-day Adventist church charged for distributing religious literature on the VKontakte social network without displaying its full official name (i.e. Local Church of Seventh-day Adventist Christians "Expecting", Yoshkar-Ola, Mari El Republic, rather than Religious Organisation Local Church of Seventh-day Adventist Christians "Expecting", city of Yoshkar-Ola, Mari El Republic); regional Justice Ministry carried out inspection of church's compliance with Religion Law and the aims and procedures of its activities as stipulated in its charter, after FSB security service sent screenshots of VKontakte pages

Appeal: unsuccessful – 10 February 2020, Yoshkar-Ola City Court, Mari El Republic; supervisory, unsuccessful – 12 May 2020, 6th Cassational Court, Samara

84) 20 January 2020

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Seventh-day Adventist Christians, Yakutsk

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus destruction of literature

Court: Yakutsk Magistrate's Court No. 44, Sakha Republic (Yakutiya)

Circumstances: after Justice Ministry visit (at church's invitation), church charged for not displaying its full official name on the façade or fence of the private house where it holds meetings for worship (according to defence, while façade was being repaired), and because pastor was presented during bible study with a book "of a religious nature" which was marked with a different form of the church's name; book (title redacted in verdict) ordered destroyed

Appeal: unsuccessful – 2 March 2020, Yakutsk City Court, Sakha Republic (Yakutiya)

85) 20 January 2020

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Seventh-day Adventist Christians, Yakutsk

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus destruction of literature

Court: Yakutsk Magistrate's Court No. 44, Sakha Republic (Yakutiya)

Circumstances: after Justice Ministry visit (at church's invitation – same occasion as above), church charged for leaving copies of the newspaper "Hidden Treasure", which were not marked with the church's full official name, on a table in a corridor, "freely accessible to visitors"

Appeal: unsuccessful – 2 March 2020, Yakutsk City Court, Sakha Republic (Yakutiya); supervisory, unsuccessful – 15 July 2020, 9th Cassational Court, Vladivostok

86) 21 January 2020

Name: Religious Organisation Spiritual Muslim Professional Educational Organisation Medrese "Izge" (Blessed)

Punishment: none – case closed with oral remarks and community freed from liability

Court: Yoshkar-Ola Magistrate's Court No. 5, Mari El Republic

Circumstances: Muslim institution charged for not having a sign displaying its full official name at the address at which it carries out its activities; Judge imposes no punishment because of the "insignificance" of the offence

Appeal: by Justice Ministry, unsuccessful – 19 February 2020, Yoshkar-Ola City Court, Mari El Republic

87) 21 January 2020

Name: Local Muslim Religious Organisation "Makhalla No. 122", Yoshkar-Ola, Mari El Republic

Punishment: none – case closed with oral remarks and community freed from liability

Court: Yoshkar-Ola Magistrate's Court No. 5, Mari El Republic

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection, Muslim community charged for not having a sign displaying its full official name on its building

Appeal: by Justice Ministry, unsuccessful – 19 February 2020, Yoshkar-Ola City Court, Mari El Republic

88) 21 January 2020

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Seventh-day Adventist Christians, Prokhladny

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus confiscation of literature

Court: Prokhladny District Magistrate's Court No. 3, Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

Circumstances: Seventh-day Adventist church charged for having religious literature on its premises, "freely accessible to all citizens", not labelled with its full official name; 48 books, including New Testament, ordered confiscated; Judge notes 2017 Constitutional Court decision

Appeal: sent for re-examination – 18 March 2020, Prokhladny District Court, Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya; case closed on re-examination – 19 May 2020, Prokhladny District Magistrate's Court No. 3, Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

89) 21 February 2020

Name: Ilgar Gashimov

Punishment: 5000 Roubles

Court: Predgorny District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Stavropol Region

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office "check on the legality of the activities of a prayer room" in a market building, based on unspecified request, leader of unregistered group "Shia Muslims of Stavropol Region" charged for conducting weekly prayers without displaying the full official name of an organisation, and for doing so without notifying the Justice Ministry of the existence of a religious group; defendant points out that he is not the leader of a religious organisation and did not know a sign was necessary; lawyer argues that the community is not a registered organisation (though it has tried to register); Judge notes that defendant cannot be subject to prosecution under Part 3 as an individual and reclassifies the case under Administrative Code Article 5.26 Part 4 ("Russians conducting missionary activity")

Appeal: none

90) 6 March 2020

Name: Local Religious Organisation of Traditional Chuvash Faith "Tura"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Kalinin District Magistrate's Court No. 7, Cheboksary, Chuvash Republic

Circumstances: after Justice Ministry inspection of compliance with Religion Law, religious organisation charged for not using its full official name on social media, instead using several different forms

Appeal: unsuccessful – 7 May 2020, Kalinin District Court, Cheboksary, Chuvash Republic; supervisory, unsuccessful – 27 July 2020, 6th Cassational Court, Samara

91) 10 March 2020

Name: Yekaterina Zubkova

Punishment: none – case sent back

Court: Lenin District Magistrate's Court No. 12, Tyumen

Circumstances: same case as Local Religious Organisation "Tyumen United Methodist Church 'Salvation'" (see below at case 96); after Prosecutor's Office inspection based on information from FSB security service, pastor of Methodist church charged for not

displaying a sign with its full official name on its rented premises

Appeal: none

92) 12 March 2020

Name: Religious Organisation Church of Seventh-day Adventist Christians, Maysky District

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Maysky Magistrate's Court No. 2, Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

Circumstances: charged by police after FSB security service and Interior Ministry's Centre for Countering Extremism inspection of premises found that neither buildings nor religious literature ("which was freely available to all citizens visiting this organisation, and not only to its members, which is regarded as the distribution of religious literature") displayed organisation's full official name

Appeal: verdict changed (unknown how) – 4 June 2020, Maysky District Court, Republic of Kabardino-Balkariya

93) 13 March 2020

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) "New Testament", Aleksandrovsk

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Aleksandrovsk District Magistrate's Court No. 1, Perm Region

Circumstances: Pentecostal church charged because it did not have a sign with its full official name on the façade of its building

Appeal: none

94) 13 May 2020

Name: Local Muslim Religious Organisation No. 1, Nizhnevartovsk

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus destruction of literature

Court: Nizhnevartovsk District Magistrate's Court No. 12, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region

Circumstances: Muslim community charged by police for having two copies of the Koran in its place of worship which were not labelled with its full official name

Appeal: none

95) 14 May 2020

Name: Local Religious Organisation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) "Good News Mission", Izhevsk

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus confiscation

Court: Pervomaysky District Magistrate's Court No. 2, Izhevsk, Udmurt Republic

Circumstances: after Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with Religion Law, Pentecostal church charged because it had distributed literature at meetings for worship which did not bear its full official name; Judge orders that 12 copies of a book called "Shop of Hearts" should be confiscated; pastor So Jin Wook also charged under Part 5

Appeal: none

96) 14 May 2020

Name: Local Religious Organisation "Tyumen United Methodist Church 'Salvation'"

Punishment: 45,000 Roubles

Court: Lenin District Magistrate's Court No. 12, Tyumen

Circumstances: same case as Zubkova (see above at case 91); after Prosecutor's Office inspection based on information from FSB security service, Methodist church charged for not displaying a sign with its full official name on its rented premises; church representatives argue that church rents only part of building and appropriate sign is put up at the entrance to the rented part before all meetings for worship (inspection took place outside meeting times); appeal Judge notes that "The presence of such information inside the building limits the rights of citizens wishing to join this religious movement to attend events of a religious nature, and does not exclude the occasional attendance at such events by citizens who do not want to participate in them"

Appeal: unsuccessful – 10 July 2020, Lenin District Court, Tyumen; supervisory – lodged on 24 September 2020 at 7th Cassational Court, Chelyabinsk

97) 20 May 2020

Name: Local Religious Organisation of Muslims of Kamen-Rybolov Village "Islam"

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles

Court: Khankaysky District Magistrate's Court No. 89, Primorye Region

Circumstances: Prosecutor's Office inspection of compliance with the Extremism Law and Religion Law found that Muslim community did not have a sign with its full official name on its building

Appeal: unsuccessful – 7 July 2020, Khankaysky District Court, Primorye Region

98) 27 May 2020

Name: Local Muslim Religious Organisation No. 2, Nizhnevartovsk

Punishment: 30,000 Roubles plus destruction of literature

Court: Nizhnevartovsk District Magistrate's Court No. 8, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region

Circumstances: Muslim community charged by police for having a copy of the Koran and a collection of hadiths called Bulugh al-Maram in its place of worship which were not labelled with its full official name

Appeal: none

(END)

Full reports on freedom of thought, conscience and belief in Russia
(<http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?query=&religion=all&country=10>)

For more background see Forum 18's survey of the general state of freedom of religion and belief in Russia (http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2246), as well as Forum 18's survey of the dramatic decline in this freedom related to Russia's Extremism Law (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
(http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=1468)

Forum 18's compilation of Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) freedom of religion or belief commitments
(http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=1351)

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