

RUSSIA

Jehovah's Witnesses, Said Nursi Followers and the Church of Scientology do not use or advocate the use of force nor violence in their teachings, and their aim is not to overthrow the political regime in place. Nonetheless, they are prosecuted on the basis of the “**Law on Fighting Extremist Activity**”, originally adopted in 2002 but amended in 2006 in such a way that removed the necessity for alleged violators to be associated with violence or calls to violence.

This opened the door for arbitrary and unrestrained interpretations of the concept of extremism, which enabled the criminalization of religious activities carried out by non-Orthodox minority groups. This move was criticized by the UN Human Rights Committee (28 April 2015), the PACE Monitoring Committee of the Council of Europe (14 September 2012), and the Venice Commission (1 June 2012), which called on Russia to correct the law, by making an element of violence or hatred a requirement for prosecution.

Jehovah's Witness

Dennis CHRISTENSEN

Date of birth: 18th December 1972

Date and place of arrest: On 25th May 2017, in the town of Oryol

Charges: Participating in extremist activities

Article of the criminal/ civil/ administrative code: Criminal Code Article 282.2 Part 1 (Actions directed at the incitement of hatred [nenavist] or enmity [vrazhda], as well as the humiliation of an individual or group of persons on the basis of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, attitude to religion, or social group).

First court decision: The Sovietsky District Court ordered him to be held in pre-trial detention for two months. He appealed against his detention.

Last court decision: On 19th February 2018, appeal was denied by Oryol Regional Court. His pretrial detention was nearly one year. His trial started in April 2018.

Place of detention: Krasnoarmeiskaja 10, SIZO-1, City of Orel, 302040, Russia

Other information: He is a Danish citizen. He was arrested by armed officers from the FSB after attending a meeting of the Jehovah's Witnesses, alongside some 50 other worshippers who were later released without charge. The raid and arrest came after Russia's Supreme Court banned the Jehovah's Witnesses in April over alleged extremism. This is the first time that a Jehovah's Witness has been jailed since the Soviet Union.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2qAOmhc> , <http://bit.ly/2rk49SS> , <http://bit.ly/2rDXWUF> , <http://bit.ly/2rjWSIX> , http://forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2290

Scientologists

Sakhil ALIEV

Date and place of arrest: On 6th June 2017, in St. Petersburg

Charges: Participating in an extremist organization, illegal business, inciting hatred and enmity, and violation of human dignity

Article of the criminal/ civil/ administrative code: Criminal Code Article 171 (Illegal commercial activity without registration) and Articles 282 and 282.1 (Organizing an extremist organisation or of extremist activities)

Last court decision: On 7th June 2017, he was sentenced to two months pre-trial detention. His detention was repeatedly prolonged. As of 31st December 2017, he was still in prison.

Other information: He was arrested alongside Anastasia TEREENTIEVA, Galina SHURINOVA, Ivan MATSITSKIY and Konstanci ESAULKOVA.

Source: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/324976?download=true> , <http://bit.ly/2rgWMPm>

Ivan MATSITSKIY

Date and place of arrest: On 6th June 2017, in St. Petersburg

Charges: Participating in an extremist organization, illegal business, inciting hatred and enmity, and violation of human dignity

Article of the criminal/ civil/ administrative code: Criminal Code Article 171 (Illegal commercial activity without registration) and Articles 282 and 282.1 (Organizing an extremist organisation or of extremist activities)

Last court decision: On 8th June 2017, he was sentenced to two months pre-trial detention. His detention was repeatedly prolonged. As of 31st December 2017, he was still in prison.

Other information: He was arrested alongside Anastasia TEREENTIEVA, Galina SHURINOVA, Sakhil ALIEV and Konstanci ESAULKOVA. He was also an applicant before the European Human Rights Court in the case *Church of Scientology of St. Petersburg and Others v. Russia*.

Source: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/324976?download=true>

Galina SHURINOVA

Date and place of arrest: On 6th June 2017, in St. Petersburg

Charges: Participating in an extremist organization, illegal business, inciting hatred and enmity, and violation of human dignity

Article of the criminal/ civil/ administrative code: Criminal Code Article 171 (Illegal commercial activity without registration) and Articles 282 and 282.1 (Organizing an extremist organisation or of extremist activities)

Last court decision: On 8th June 2017, she was sentenced to two months pre-trial detention. Her detention was repeatedly prolonged. As of 31st December 2017, she was still in prison. Other information: She was arrested alongside Anastasia TEREENTIEVA, Sakhil ALIEV, Ivan MATSITSKIY and Konstanci ESAULKOVA. She was also an applicant before the European Human Rights Court in the case *Church of Scientology of St. Petersburg and Others v. Russia*.

Source: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/324976?download=true>

Anastasia TEREENTIEVA

Date and place of arrest: On 6th June 2017, in St. Petersburg

Charges: Participating in an extremist organization, illegal business, inciting hatred and enmity, and violation of human dignity

Article of the criminal/ civil/ administrative code: Criminal Code Article 171 (Illegal commercial activity without registration) and Articles 282 and 282.1 (Organizing an extremist organisation or of extremist activities)

Last court decision: On 8th June 2017, she was sentenced to two months pre-trial detention. Her detention was repeatedly prolonged. As of 31st December 2017, she was still in prison.

Other information: She was arrested alongside Sakhil ALIEV, Galina SHURINOVA, Ivan MATSITSKIY and Konstanci ESAULKOVA. She was also an applicant before the European Human Rights Court in the case *Church of Scientology of St. Petersburg and Others v. Russia*.

Source: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/324976?download=true>

Said Nursi Followers

Ilgar Vagif-ogly ALIYEV

Place of residence: Izberbash

Date and place of arrest: On 19th April 2017, in the city of Izberbash in Dagestan

Charges: Holding "classes involving a group of adherents of [Nurdzhular]"

Statement of the defendant: He says that such an organisation [Nurdzhular] does not exist and denies engagement in extremist activity.

Article of the criminal/ civil/ administrative code: Criminal Code Article 282.2 Part 1 1 (Organizing an extremist organisation or of extremist activities)

Place of detention: Investigation Prison in Makhachkala

Other information: He is held in pre-trial detention.

Source: http://forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2279

http://forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2358

Ziyavdin DAPAYEV

Date of birth: 12th May 1982

Place of residence: Mahachkala

Date and place of arrest: In March 2016, Mahachkala

Charges: Involvement with the banned Nurdzhular organisation

Statement of the defendant: He says that such an organisation [Nurdzhular] does not exist and denies engagement in extremist activity.

Article of the criminal/ civil/ administrative code: Criminal Code Article 282.2 Part 1 1 (Organizing an extremist organisation or of extremist activities) and part 2 (Participation in an extremist organisation).

First court decision: At the end of December 2016, Makhachkala's Soviet District Court extended his detention until 4th March 2017.

Last court decision: The first full hearing took place on 3rd April 2017 at Mahachkala's Lenin District Court. There have been eight hearings so far, the most recent on 16th June 2017. As of 31st December 2017, he was still in prison.

Place of detention: Investigation Prison No. 1 in the Dagestan capital Makachkala

Other information: He was detained alongside, Artur KULTUYEV, his brother Sukhrab KULTUYEV, and fourteen other people on suspicion of involvement in a Nurdzhular organisation. Most of those were released after questioning. While Sukhrab KULTUYEV and Artur KULTUYEV were placed under travel restrictions, DAPAYEV remained in custody. His name has been added to the Rosfinmonitoring list of "terrorists and extremists".

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2166 ,

http://forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2270 ,

http://forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2290

Bagir KAZIKHANOV

Age: 31 years

Place of residence: Ulyanovsk

Date and place of arrest: On 9th April 2014, and then again on 25th February 2015, in Ulyanovsk.

Charges: Creating a cell of a banned Nurdzhular organisation and participating in its activities

Statement of the defendant: He says that such an organisation [Nurdzhular] does not exist and denies engagement in extremist activity.

Article of the criminal/ civil/ administrative code: Article 282.2 Part 1 (Organizing an extremist organisation or of extremist activities)

First court decision: On 25th February 2015, he was sentenced to three-and-a-half-years to be served in a general-regime correctional colony by Lenin District Court in Ulyanovsk.

Last court decision: On 6th and 13th May 2015, Judge Maksim Maksimov of Russia's Ulyanovsk Regional Court upheld the three-and-a-half-year prison term.

Other information: He was arrested alongside Stepan KUDRYASHOV and Aleksandr MELENTYEV. KAZIKHANOV was the first reader of the works of the late Turkish Islamic theologian, Said Nursi, to receive a jail sentence in Russia since September 2013.

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2066
http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2046

Yevgeny Lvovich KIM

Date of birth: 5th October 1974

Date and place of arrest: On 26th December 2015, in Blagoveshchensk (Amur Region)

Charges: Disseminating the religious ideas of the international religious association Nurdzhular, fully aware of the fact that... [it] had been recognised as extremist and its activities prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation. The charges claimed that his speeches at his meetings 'were aimed at inciting religious hatred', promoted the 'superiority of the Turkic peoples', and contained 'negative evaluations' of Armenians and Russians.

Statement of the defendant: He says that such an organisation [Nurdzhular] does not exist and denies engagement in extremist activity.

Article of the criminal/ civil/ administrative code: Criminal Code Article 282.2 Part 1 (Organizing an extremist organisation or of extremist activities)

First court decision: On 25th January 2016, a full hearing took place with an unknown outcome.

Second court decision: On 19th June 2017, he was sentenced to three years and nine months in an ordinary-regime correctional colony by Blagoveshchensk City Court. His imprisonment is to be followed by one year of "restrictions on freedom". During this time, he will not be allowed to move or travel outside his place of residence without permission, and may have to report regularly to probation authorities.

Last court decision: On 24th August 2017, his appeal was unsuccessful. He has lodged a cassation appeal at Amur Regional Court.

Place of detention: Correctional Colony No. 3 in Khabarovsk

Other information: His time in detention before and during the trial, amounting to nearly 18 months, will be subtracted from his sentence. He is on the Rosfinmonitoring list of "terrorists and extremists".

Source: http://forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2250 , <http://bit.ly/2m4omww>
http://forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2270 ,
http://forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2279 ,
http://forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2290
http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2332