

RUSSIA: Border officials stopped entry into Russia of four alleged supporters of “Tablighi Jamaat”

HRWF (22.11.2016) – <http://bit.ly/2gdPl2l> – The border guards in the Khatny, Tyumen, and Kurgan regions denied entry into Russia to four Kyrgyz citizens for their alleged support of the organization Tablighi Jamaat.

On 28 October 2016, a border checkpoint of Russia in the Kurgan and Tyumen regions reported that during the month, four Kyrgyz citizens were identified and denied entry into Russia for suspicion of their association with an organization considered extremist by the Russian Government.

All of these Kyrgyz citizens had previously been employed in Russia and were suspected to be adherents to “radical Islam.”

The religious association, Tablighi Jammaat, had been banned in Russia in 2009.

About Tablighi Jamaat, Sova Center says: “We view this ban as illegal. The movement had been engaged in spreading of Islamic beliefs and has not been violent in any way. We consider the persecution of the followers of this organization to be unjust and we remind our readers that this movement is not prohibited in Kyrgyzstan and is in fact very popular among the populous.”

Translation/ adaptation by Scott and Olga Allen for *Human Rights Without Frontiers*

Opinion of Human Rights Without Frontiers about “Tablighi Jamaat”

Tablighi Jamaat (TJ) is a revivalist missionary movement

within Islam, which was founded in India in the early twentieth century. The term means 'those who preach' and is sometimes rendered 'Society for Spreading Faith.' The TJ movement seeks to revitalise Muslims in their faith and to encourage them to follow Islamic religious practices more vigorously.

Tablighi Jamaat originated in the Deobandi School of Sunni Islam (1) in Uttar Pradesh in north India. Muhammad Ilyas Kandhlawi, an Islamic scholar and Sufi teacher, is credited to be its founder. It has grown significantly over time to millions worldwide and is now present in some form throughout the Muslim world. It is particularly prevalent in South and Central Asia.

Annual gatherings (called *ijtima*) are held in various countries and attract large crowds. The largest ones occur in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The annual World Gathering in Tongi, Bangladesh, (called *Bishwa Ijtimā*) is the largest TJ pilgrimage in the world with approximately five million people attending each year, significantly larger than the *Hajj*^[1] itself.

The world headquarters for Tablighi Jamaat is located in the New Delhi suburb of Basti Nizamuddin. There are some 50,000 active TJ members in the UK and in France an estimated 100,000 followers.

Teachings

TJ's doctrine is based on six principles, commonly referred to as the *Six Points*:

- Faith in the oneness of Allah (the *Kalima*)
- The offering of the five prayers daily (*Salat*)
- The knowledge and the remembrance of Allah ('*Ilm & Dhikr*)

- Respect for every Muslim (*Ikram al Muslim*)
- Sincerity of intention (*Ekhlas*)
- Time set aside for this work (*Dawah & Tabligh*)

TJ members try to imitate the life of Prophet Muhammad and adopt a lifestyle of personal piety and austerity. Members are expected to proselytize at least three times per month, forty days and four months every year, as well as to study at TJ's central mosque in Pakistan for a month.

TJ claims to be apolitical, asserting that Muslims should only participate in politics and carry political power 'once all Muslims have corrected their ways, accepted the *Sharia* as a complete system of life and abandoned their attachments to worldly gains.'

Human Rights Without Frontiers considers that Tablighi Jamaat is a pietist religious group which is not a terrorist organization, and does not use or advocate violence.

[\[1\]](#) Pilgrimage to Mecca after the holy month of Ramadan.

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