

# **RUSSIA: Special bimonthly FORB Digest (01-15.11.2020)**

**13.11.20 – A Cherkessk resident is suspected of extremism for talking about the Bible. Her daughter's drawings were seized as evidence from the believer**

Link to full text in Russian:  
<https://jw-russia.org/news/2020/11/3.html>

In the morning of November 12, 2020, a group of law enforcement officers led by an investigator of the FSB for Karachay-Cherkessia V. Drakin repeated the search of Yelena Menchikova. Dracinom repeated the search of Elena Menchikova.

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**13.11.20 – Crimea: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (October)**

In October, the “justice’s courts” of Crimea received at least 2 new administrative trials against members of religious organizations under Art. 5.26-4 (*Illegal missionary activity*). 31 One of them is against Imam Abliakim Galiyev for holding Friday prayers (juma namaz).

On October 14, “judge of justice” Peter Kireyev imposed fine of RUR30,000 to the Catholic Church of the Byzantine Rite – a parish of transferring the relics of Nicholas the Wonderworker (Yalta) under RF CoA0 Art.5.26-3 for “acting as a religious organization without the official full name indicated”.

In total, at the end of October, the CHRG recorded 101 administrative trials in Crimea against religious organizations and their members under Art. 5.26 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation. Within the framework of these proceedings, imposed fines totaled to at

least RUR 1,340,500.

Crimean Human Rights Situation Review (October 2020)

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**11.11.20 – Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe notes Russian repression in Crimea**

Link to full text in Russian:  
[https://risu.ua/ru/ekspert-rasskazal-o-presledovanii-veryan-pc-u-musulman-i-svidetelej-iegovy-v-okkupirovannom-krymu\\_n113386](https://risu.ua/ru/ekspert-rasskazal-o-presledovanii-veryan-pc-u-musulman-i-svidetelej-iegovy-v-okkupirovannom-krymu_n113386)

In a year in occupied Crimea, the number of cases fabricated by Russian security forces involving Muslims increased to 70 and the persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses and ousting of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (PTsU) intensified.

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**11.11.20 – Spiritual Muslim Board of Russia denies existence of overwhelming support for ban on marrying non-Muslim women**

Moscow, November 11, Interfax – The Spiritual Muslim Board of Russia has clarified that only the Ulema Council, a council of influential theologians, supports a ban on Muslim men marrying women of other religions, while a number of the board's members are opposed to this decision.

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**10.11.20. Pentecostal preacher fined for message on social network**

Link to full text in Russian:  
<https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4566099>

The Zavodsky district court of Kemerovo fined the pastor of the New Generation Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals), Andrei Matiuzhov, 10,000 rubles for inciting hatred. The case against the clergyman was opened on the basis

of materials of the regional directorate of the F.S.B. The issue was a video sermon by Andrei Matiuzhov, "Love of money is the root of all evils," in which law enforcement perceived, among other things, a statement against Islam.

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### **06.11.20 – Russian high court lightens burden on protestant churches**

Link to full text in Russian:  
[http://www.rapsinews.ru/judicial\\_news/20201106/306474970.html](http://www.rapsinews.ru/judicial_news/20201106/306474970.html)

The activity of a religious organization does not presuppose assuring free access for citizens to liturgical facilities that are located within residential buildings, and consequently it has no obligation to install external signs with its name. It is sufficient for there to be tablets with pertinent information inside the facilities. This is said by a new ruling of the Russian Constitutional Court [CCRF] that was published on its official website.

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### **06.11.20 – Constitutional court clarifies requirements of procedure for postinf name of religious organization**

Link to full text in Russian:  
[http://www.sclj.ru/news/detail.php?SECTION\\_ID=521&ELEMENT\\_ID=8315](http://www.sclj.ru/news/detail.php?SECTION_ID=521&ELEMENT_ID=8315)

The Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation published Order No. 45-P of 3 November 2020 in the case concerning verification of the constitutionality of part 3 of article 5.26 of the Russian Code of Administrative Violations of Law and point 8 of article 8 of the federal law "On freedom of conscience and religious associations," in connection with an appeal by the religious organization Word of Life Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) of Dolgoprudny.

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**05.11.20 – Putin said inadmissible to hurt feelings of believers, to allow extremism – Peskov**

Moscow, November 5, Interfax – Russian President Vladimir Putin has stated the inadmissibility of hurting feelings of believers and of allowing manifestations of extremism at a meeting with members of religious associations, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

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**05.11.20 – Putin backs idea of int'l ban on insulting religious feelings**

Moscow, November 5, Interfax – A ban on insulting the feelings of the faithful should be enshrined in international law, Russian President Vladimir Putin said.

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**04.11.20 – Two more Saratov-based believers await an early release trial in exchange for a fine**

Link to full text in Russian:  
<https://jw-russia.org/news/2020/11/2.html>

Saratov residents Alexey Budenchuk and Alexey Miretsky, convicted for their faith, have served more than half their sentence. The defense petitioned for their early release and replacement of the part of the sentence that had not been served with a fine.

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**03.11.20 – Freedom of speech mustn't hurt religious feelings – Russia's Matviyenko**

Moscow, November 3, Interfax – Freedom of speech is an unconditional value, but no red lines must be crossed by

insulting religious feelings, Russian Federation Council Speaker Valentina Matviyenko said.

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### **03.11.20 – 400 victims of a legal collusion: the number of Jehovah's Witnesses accused of extremism is growing**

Link to full text in Russian:  
<https://jw-russia.org/news/2020/11/1.html>

In 3.5 years after the liquidation of all Jehovah's Witnesses groups, the number of innocent victims exceeded four hundred. From Kamchatka to Kaliningrad, law-abiding believers are accused of "extremism."

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### **02.11.20 – Russian Orthodox Church advises France to adopt law protecting believers' feelings**

Moscow, November 2, Interfax – France needs to adopt a law on the protection of believers' feelings in connection with the publication of cartoons which led to an attack on people in a catholic cathedral in Nice, the Russian Orthodox Church said.

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### **02.11.20 – Jehovah's Witness dies while awaiting trial**

Link to full text in Russian:  
<https://ovdinfo.org/express-news/2020/11/02/60-letniy-svidetel-iegovy-u-kotorogo-proshel-obysk-skonchalsya-posle-poezdki>

Yury Kim, a Jehovah's Witness from Nikolsk in Penza oblast, died after a trip to court in which he familiarized himself with the order regarding a search in his residence. This is reported on the website of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia.

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**02.11.20 – Criminal case opened for arranging and participating in activity of extremist organization of Jehovah's witnesses**

Link to full text in Russian:  
<https://penza.sledcom.ru/news/item/1507868/>

The second department for investigation of especially important cases of the regional Investigative Committee of Russia (S.K.R.) opened a criminal case on a charge of arranging the activity of an extremist organization (part 1 of article 282.2 CC RF) and participating in it (part 2 of article 282.2 CC RF). The criminal case is being investigated with the operational support of the directorate of the Russian F.S.B. for Penza oblast.

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