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RUSSIA: Special Bimonthly FORB Digest (16-31.12.2020)

30.12.20 – Jehovah's Witnesses under the yoke of repression: results of 2020

Link to full text in Russian: jw-russia.org/news/2020/12/11.html

How many people were repressed for their faith in 2020. As of December 30, 2020, 427 followers of the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses are officially accused, suspected, defendant, convicted or acquitted.

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29.12.20 – Police detain dissident Orthodox figure

Link to full text in Russian:
<https://tass.ru/proisshestviya/10372533>

After having seized the Central Urals convent and been expelled from the church, the former schema monk Sergius Romanov was arrested in order to give evidence. This was reported to TASS by a source in law enforcement agencies. According to the source, he was arrested for questioning because of a video recording posted on YouTube in which Sergius urges his devotees to “die for Russia.”

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29.12.20 – A Primorye prosecutor requested six-and-a-half year imprisonment for the 77-year-old believer Vladimir Filippov

Link to full text in Russian:
<https://jw-russia.org/news/2020/12/10.html>

On December 29, 2020, the Nadezhdinsky District Court held a hearing in the criminal case against a former military officer from the village of Razdolnoye.

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24.12.20 – The Tambov region becomes a 59th region in which Jehovah’s Witnesses are persecuted

Link to full text in Russian:
<https://jw-russia.org/news/2020/12/9.html>

In the morning of December 24, 2020, at least two searches of believers were carried out in the city of Kirsanov, Tambov Region. Details are being specified.

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22.12.20 – Another verdict for practicing faith: a three-and-a-half year suspended sentence for the 23-year-old Rostov-on-Don-based Semyon Baybak

Link to full text in Russian:
<https://jw-russia.org/news/2020/12/8.html>

A conscientious objector, whose faith does not allow him to take up arms, was convicted under “extremist” articles 282.2 and 282.3 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. Vladimir Barvin, a Leninskiy District Court judge, issued the verdict on December 21, 2020.

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22.12.20 – Jehovah’s Witnesses to appeal their convictions in south Russia

Link to full text in Russia:
<https://www.kavkaz-uzel.media/articles/357860/>

Jehovah’s Witnesses from Rostov-on-Don Semen Baibak, who was given a three and a half years suspended sentence, and Ruslan Alyev, who was given a two and a half years suspended sentence, do not agree with the verdicts and intend to appeal them, their associates report.

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21.12.20 – About hundred new Orthodox churches opened in Moscow

Moscow, December 21, Interfax – Almost a hundred Orthodox churches have been built in Moscow over the past decade, the administrator of Program-200, State Duma deputy Vladimir Resin told *Interfax* on Monday.

Continue reading...

19.12.20 – Relatively light, but unjustified, sentences for Jehovah’s Witnesses in south Russia

Link to full text in Russian:
<https://www.kavkaz-uzel.media/articles/357758/>

A court in Sochi found Jehovah's Witnesses Viacheslav Popov and Nikolai Kuzichkin guilty of arranging the activity of an extremist organization. Popov was sentenced to one year and ten months in a penal colony and Kuzichkin to a year and a month incarceration. Taking into account time spend in detention, Kuzichkin was released from serving the sentence..

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18.12.20 – Sochi-based believers Kuzichkin and Popov were sentenced to imprisonment but were released due to having, in effect, completed their sentence

Link to full text in Russian:
<https://jw-russia.org/news/2020/12/6.html>

On December 18, 2020, Yuriy Pilipenko, a judge of the Khostinsky district court, found two Sochi residents guilty of organizing the activities of an extremist organization because of their religion.

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18.12.20 – Woman Jehovah's Witness spends 14 months in prison without trial

Link to full text in Russian: <https://cutt.ly/8jrLH8F>

Alevtina Bagratian spent a year and two months in custody in a SIZO. Her husband, Artem, who is ill with diabetes, was left behind bars.

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18.12.20 – Kursk Jehovah's witness left in Sizo

Link to full text in Russian:
<https://kursk46.com/news/13086-kurskogo-svidetelja-iegovy-ostavili-v-sizo.html>

The period in a SIZO was extended for members of the Kursk

division of the Jehovah's Witnesses sect. The Lenin district court ordered to extend the detention of Artem Bagratian until 11 July.

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17.12.20 – A Rostov-on-Don sentence for practicing faith: one of Jehovah's Witnesses, Ruslan Alyyev, 33, was handed a two-and-a-half year suspended sentence

On 17 December 2020, Vladimir Strokov, judge of the Leninskiy District Court of Rostov-on-Don, found a law-abiding believer guilty of participating in the activities of a banned organization just because he observes the customs of his religion: he reads the Bible and recommends it to others.

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17.12.20 – Court sentences for mere membership in Jehovah's Witnesses congregation

Link to full text in Russian: <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.media/articles/357712/>

A court in Rostov-on-Don sentenced Jehovah's Witness Ruslan Alyyev to a two years and six months suspended sentence, having found him to be a member of an extremist organization.

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17.12.20 – Russian president repeats his objection to hurting believers' feelings

Link to full text in Russian: <https://credo.press/234702/>

"In our country, nobody is allowed to make offensive attacks upon one confession or another. This would destroy the country from within and I ask everybody not to do this," Vladimir Putin declared at his big press conference on 17 December, responding to a RT correspondent's question about terrorism

and caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad. The journalist asked him to point out the line “between freedom of speech and offending believers.”

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16.12.20 – A Novosibirsk court sentenced 66-year-old Yuriy Savelyev, one of Jehovah’s Witnesses, to six years in prison.

Link to full text in Russian:
<https://jw-russia.org/news/2020/12/4.html>

Leninsky District Court of Novosibirsk judge Yekaterina Kashina sentenced Yuriy Savelyev to six years in a general regime colony for believing in Jehovah God on December 16, 2020.

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