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## **RUSSIA: Muslim followers of peaceful new religious movements prosecuted**

### **Muslim followers of peaceful new religious movements prosecuted**

*Two-year prison term for a Tablighi Jamaat follower*

SOVA CENTER/ HRWF (31.03.2022) – <https://bit.ly/3qX6mD0> – *In January, a court in Omsk fined three followers of Tablighi Jamaat under Art. 282.2 of the Criminal Code. The regional court changed the punishment and sentenced one of them to a two-year prison term and two to a suspended sentence.*

In March 2022, Sova Center reported that three followers of the Islamic movement Tablighi Jamaat were sentenced in the Omsk region, which was recognized as an extremist organization in Russia.

The verdict was delivered on 13 January 2022 by the Kirovsky District Court of Omsk. **Sultan Dyusekenov** was convicted for organizing the activities of an extremist organization (Part 1 of Art. 282.2 of the Criminal Code), and **Abdimomun Mamytov and Murat Baltabayev** for participating in this organization (Part 2 of Art. 282.2 of the Criminal Code). All of them were sentenced to a fine of 20 to 90 thousand rubles.

On 30 March, the Omsk Regional Court considered the prosecutor's appeal and toughened the sentence. **Dyusekenov was finally sentenced to two years in a general regime colony with deprivation of the right to engage in public organizations for three years and restriction of liberty for a year and a half.** Mamytov and Baltabayev received a year and a half probation sentence with additional penalties in the form of a three-year ban on participation in the work of public organizations and restriction of freedom for eight months.

The accused were detained in the spring of 2021 as part of a group of 11 people. According to the investigation, they *"were spreading the ideology of Tablighi Jamaat using specialized religious literature."*

According to the investigation, Dyusekenov was the head of the "cell" of Tablighi Jamaat, which functioned from 24 July 2020 to 3 April 2021, in which he attracted Mamytov and Baltabayev. The latter, the court stated, were entrusted with the responsibility of promoting the activities of Tablighi Jamaat among the local population.

The Tablighi Jamaat religious movement was banned in Russia in 2009, in the opinion of Sova Center, without proper grounds.

This association was engaged in the propaganda of fundamentalist Islam, but was not noticed in any calls for violence, and therefore the persecution of its supporters, in is unjustified.

**See HRWF report about Tablighi Jamaat here**

***Three residents of Dagestan suspects of participating in the non-existing religious organization "Nurjular"***

SOVA CENTER/ HRWF (22.03.2022) – A criminal case has been initiated in Dagestan under Art. 282.2 of the Criminal Code.

On 22 March 2022, the Investigative Department of the Investigative Committee of Russia for Dagestan announced the opening of proceedings under Part 2 of Art. 282.2 of the Criminal Code (participation in the activities of an extremist organization) against three residents of the republic.

According to the investigation, from 2000 to 2017, the suspects participated in the activities of the international religious association Nurcular, recognized as extremist in 2008. They took part in meetings *"to study the ideological sources of this extremist organization*, according to the Investigative Committee.

The criminal case was initiated based on the materials of the regional FSB of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The opening of a similar case against a resident of Dagestan Izberbash became known in January. Earlier, in 2021, a court in Izberbash terminated a number of cases of alleged Nurcular participants investigated under Part 2 of Art. 282.2 of the Criminal Code.

Sova Center considers the Nurjular ban illegal. His

recognition as an extremist organization in 2008 was the result of unreasonable bans on the books of the Turkish Islamic theologian of the moderate direction Said Nursi – for promoting the superiority of Islam over other religions.

In 2018, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that by banning these books, Russian courts violated Art. 10 of the European Convention guaranteeing freedom of expression. The opinion of the Sova Center is that the Nurjular organization does not exist and Russian Muslims studying Nursi's heritage are not part of any such organization. Nevertheless, the Nurjular association is banned in Russia as an extremist organization, as a result of which Muslims reading and discussing Nursi's books are prosecuted.

**See HRWF report on Nurjular/ Said Nursi followers here**

*Photo: wikipedia.org*

**Further reading about FORB in Russia on HRWF website**

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