



Section: **News**

## Russian Supreme Court upholds ban on another Jehovah's Witnesses branch



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**MOSCOW, October 18 (RAPSI, Oleg Sivozhelezov)** – The Supreme Court of Russia has upheld a lower court's decision to ban The Jehovah's Witnesses branch in the city Oryol as extremist organization, RAPSI reports from the courtroom on Tuesday.

On June 14, the Oryol Regional Court liquidated the organization on the request of the Justice Ministry's regional Directorate.

The Jehovah's Witnesses representative said earlier that no violations had been found during the inspection conducted by the Justice Ministry on April 1, 2013.

On Tuesday, representatives of the Justice Ministry and prosecutor's office insisted that the Oryol court's ruling was legal and valid and asked the Supreme Court to uphold it.

The Jehovah's Witnesses representatives in turn said that liquidation of the organization is a disproportionate measure restricting people's rights to freedom of religion.

Jehovah's Witnesses have had many legal problems in Russia.

On October 12, a court in the Jewish Autonomous Region ruled to ban a branch of "The Jehovah's Witnesses" in Birobidzhan because of distributing extremist literature by the organization.

On June 16, Russia's Supreme Court declared "The Jehovah's Witnesses of Stary Oskol" in the Belgorod Region an extremist organization and ruled to liquidate it.

On June 9, the Jehovah's Witnesses of Belgorod was banned as extremist organization.

In March 2015, a court in Tyumen fined the organization 50,000 rubles (\$792) and seized prohibited literature.

In January 2014, a court in Kurgan ruled to ban the organization's booklets as extremist. The books talk about how to have a happy life, what you can hope for, how to develop good relations with God and what you should know about God and its meaning.

In late December 2013, the leader of the sect's group in Tobolsk, Siberia was charged with extremism and the prevention of a blood transfusion that nearly led to the death of a female member of the group.

In 2004, a court in Moscow dissolved and banned a Jehovah's Witnesses group on charges of recruiting children, encouraging believers to break from their families, inciting suicide and preventing believers from accepting medical assistance.

Jehovah's Witnesses is an international religious organization based in Brooklyn, New York. Since 2004 sever branches and chapters of the organization were banned and shut down in various regions of Russia.

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