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Russia's Supreme Court Declares Jehovah's Witnesses Website Extremist

By The Moscow Times

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Jehovah's Witnesses is a Christian denomination whose members are known for preaching from house to house.

Russia's Supreme Court has ruled that a Jehovah's Witnesses website and three of the religious movement's books are extremist, RAPSI legal news agency reported Wednesday, citing the court.

The Supreme Court's ruling follows its approval in November of the Samara region's ban of the group, Russia's first region-wide ban of the movement.

Jehovah's Witnesses have long encountered difficulties with Russian authorities and have repeatedly been barred from circulating their literature.

In 2004, a Moscow court banned a local Jehovah's Witnesses group, accusing it of recruiting children, prompting believers to abandon their families, inciting suicide and preventing

believers from accepting medical treatment, RAPSI reported.

The ruling was eventually overturned in 2010 by the European Court of Human Rights, which ordered Russia to pay the defendants 70,000 euros ($86,000).

More recently, in January, a court in the southern city of Kurgan ruled that the movement's brochures were extremist, according to RAPSI.

Between 2009 and 2013, various Russian regional courts found 68 Jehovah's Witnesses publications to be extremist, according to Lenta.ru.

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