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Russian Regional Court Declares Jehovah's Witnesses' Texts 'Extremist'

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A regional court in Russia's Kurgan region ruled that two religious texts published by Jehovah's Witnesses are extremist, meaning they will be added to a list of banned materials, the Kurgan city prosecutor said in a statement Friday.

A book titled "Save Yourself in God's Love" and a booklet titled "Let the Spirit of God Influence You, Not the Spirit of the World" propagate hatred toward other religions, linguistic and religious studies experts concluded during court proceedings that lasted for over a year. The religious materials were published in Germany, the statement said.

Several other Jehovah's Witnesses texts have been declared extremist by courts across Russia in recent years, while entire regional organizations of the religious group have been declared extremist and banned by courts.

In March, a court in southern Russia denounced a local chapter of Jehovah's Witnesses in the town of Abinsk, within the Krasnodar region, as "extremist."

Overall, more than 60 Jehovah's Witnesses publications are included on the federal list of extremist materials. Most were blacklisted on allegations of inciting religious hatred by criticizing other branches of Christianity.

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