

Office Raid for Russian Newspaper Suspected of 'Extremism'

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The  Moscow Times

The offices of an independent newspaper in Siberia have been raided on suspicion of extremism, the Meduza news website reported Monday.

The Listok newspaper, based in Russia's Altai region, was founded by the chairman of the local branch of the Parnas opposition party.

Investigators seized eight computer towers and a safe from the property.

In a message published on the newspaper's website, staff speculated that the raid was due to a reader-generated comment. The user, who did not use his real name, accused regional official Alexander Berdnikov of missing local Victory Day celebrations to go on holiday with his mistress.

The article also said the raid had been the “third or fourth on the Listok offices in the last few years,” although no prosecutions have ever been made.

If newspaper staff are found guilty of extremism they could face up to four years imprisonment.

Statistics from the Supreme Court that show 544 people were convicted of extremist offenses in 2015, up from 414 in 2014.

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