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First Russian Charged Under Controversial Anti-Missionary Law

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A Krishnaite in ⊠southern Russia's Cherkessk has been charged under the "Yarovaya Law" for handing out religious ⊠books on the street, the SOVA Center for Information and Analysis reported Thursday. ⊠This is the first time that charges have been pressed under the ⊠anti-missionary part of the controversial law.⊠

At the end of July a⊠ local man informed the Interior Ministry in Cherkessk of a Krishnaite ⊠activist who engaged in conversation with two people on the street about⊠ his beliefs and gave them some religious books.

As a result, ⊠administrative action has been brought against the Krishnaite. He is ⊠accused of infringing the Code of the Russian Federation on ⊠Administrative Offenses in relation to religious associations and the ⊠freedom of worship.

The defendant has no affiliation to religious ⊠organizations and maintains he did not try to

talk other people into joining one. Nevertheless, a representative from the Center for Combating Extremism said in court that the Krishnaite violated the Religious Associations and Freedom of Conscience Law.

According to recent amendments to anti-terror laws authored by ultraconservative Duma Deputy Irina Yarovaya and Senator Viktor Ozerov, the law restricts missionary activities to premises occupied by religious organizations.

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