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Russian Sect Leader Grabovoy Wins Human Rights Case for 'Unfair Jail Time'

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A Russian sect leader who claimed he could resurrect the child-victims of the Beslan terror attack has been awarded 2,400 euros ($2,677) by Strasbourg's European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

Grigory Grabovoy appealed to the court after being forced to wait two years and three months for his trial to come before the Russian court. He was arrested in 2006, but only found guilty of fraud in 2008. The court found that Russia had violated human rights laws on "excessive lengths of pre-trial detention."

Grabovoy first moved to Russia from his native Kazakhstan in 1995. He initially dedicated

himself to academia, and went on to front a national television show promoting “good health.”

He continued to drift toward the spiritual and the occult, and his claims became more outlandish. Grabovoy declared himself as the second coming of Christ in 2004, declaring that he could heal serious illnesses in return for cash payments, and told grieving mothers after the Beslan terrorist attack in 2004 that he could raise their children from the dead.

Grabovoy was initially sentenced to 11 years in a prison colony, a term which was reduced to 8 years. He was also ordered to pay a fine of 750,000 rubles, and compensation to seven families.

Members of his sect were found in 57 separate Russian regions, prosecutors told the court.

Grabovoy's lawyers claimed that his sentence was illegal, and that families who believed that Grabovoy could raise the dead did not understand that he had only been speaking in “biblical terms.”

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