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Russian Law Student Handed Jail Term for Reposting ‘Extremist’ Images

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Vasily Kuzmichyonok / TASS

A law student in the Belgorodsky region in southwest Russia has been sentenced to two and a half years behind bars for reposting "extremist" images on social media.

Russians are increasingly being handed prison sentences for their activity on social media. Last year at least seven people, including a Ukrainian librarian and an imam were sentenced under extremism laws for their activity online, the Moscow-based Sova group said.

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Alexander Kruze, 23, was arrested in 2017 and sentenced on Monday over four images on the VK social network that forensic experts described as ‘extremist,‘ the Moskovsky Komsomolets reported.

Kruze, a student at the law faculty of the Voronezh Economic Law Institute was due to defend

his dissertation in the spring of this year titled ’Extremism in Contemporary Conditions" and said he posted the pictures as part of his research.

The law student was accused of sharing images that incited hatred towards Jews, Communists, and the Caucasus and Central Asia. Prosecutors said the posts called for violence against the government.

Kruze said that authorities failed to acknowledge his academic research throughout the proceedings.

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