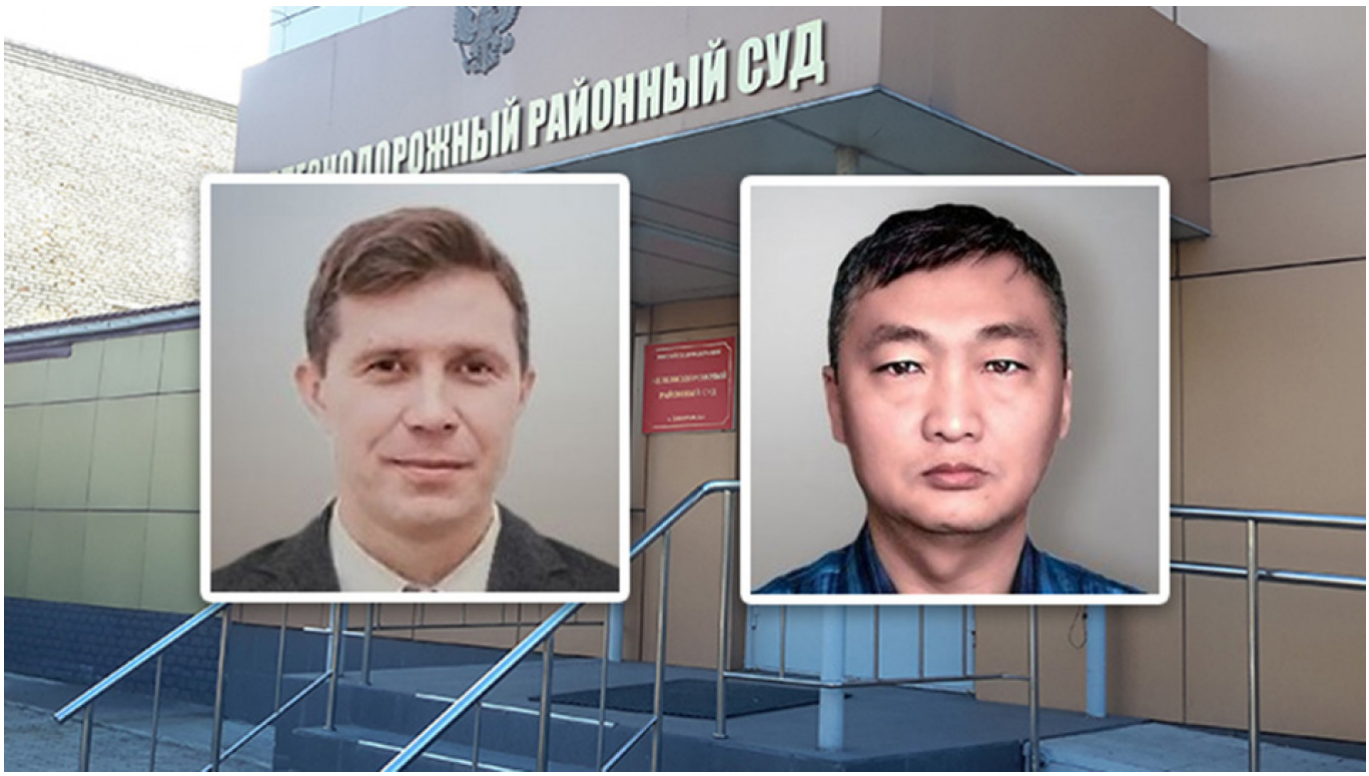
The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Sentences 2 'Extremist' Jehovah's Witnesses

February 05, 2020



Nikolai Polevodov and Stanislav Kim **jw-russia.org**

Two Jehovah's Witnesses have been convicted of extremism in Russia's Far East, the group said Tuesday amid what activists say is an escalating crackdown on the religious group.

The ruling to hand the two worshippers in the Khabarovsk region a two-year suspended sentence comes after Russia's Supreme Court declared the Jehovah's Witnesses an "extremist" organization in 2017.

Related article: Russia 'Escalating' Jehovah's Witnesses Crackdown – HRW

A court found Jehovah's Witnesses Nikolai Polevodov and Stanislav Kim guilty of membership in an extremist organization, the Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia group said.

Polevodov and Kim are also among six fellow believers currently awaiting a verdict on charges of organizing an extremist organization. They were detained during a raid on what the

Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia called a non-religious gathering at a cafe in 2018.

Prosecutors had asked the court to sentence Polevodov and Kim to three years in prison.

The court database withholds the defendants' names but notes that Tuesday's verdict is guilty.

Human Rights Watch said 2019 marked an escalation in the persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia, with nearly 500 raids and 18 convictions, including nine real prison sentences.

President Vladimir Putin called the persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses under anti-extremism law "complete nonsense" in 2018.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2020/02/05/russia-sentences-2-extremist-jehovahs-witnesses-a69172