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Russian Police Probe Cheeky Church Photo

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Kaluga / vk.com

Russian police have launched a probe into a photograph of a woman flashing her buttocks in front of a church, the latest in a string of racy photos snapped outside religious landmarks, state media reported Thursday.

Authorities have launched at least four cases in recent weeks against young people, mostly women, for posting sexually suggestive content on social media near places of worship.

Analysts and activists say the flurry of prosecutions on charges of "insulting religious feelings" reflects the Kremlin's intensifying focus on defending conservative values.

Related article: A Flurry of Prosecutions for Racy Photos Reflects Russia's Intensifying Embrace of 'Traditional Values'

The police department in the city of Kaluga 180 kilometers southwest of Moscow said it

discovered “while monitoring the internet” a photograph of a woman flashing her buttocks in front of a church.

“An inspection is ongoing and a procedural decision will be made as a result,” the state-run RIA Novosti news agency quoted the police department as saying.

It did not identify the woman or the place of worship in front of which she posed for the raunchy photo.

The latest probe comes after a blogging couple was sentenced to 10 months in jail for a photo in which they simulated oral sex in front of St. Basil's Cathedral on Red Square. The sentence marked the first time a real prison term on charges of “insulting religious feelings” had been handed down in several years.

Russia passed the “insulting religious feelings” law in 2013 in retaliation to anti-Kremlin activist group Pussy Riot’s anti-Putin performance at Moscow’s Christ the Savior Cathedral.

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