

Russia's FSB Detains Crimean Tatar Activists, Religious Figures

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FSB officers outside the home of Crimean Solidarity activist Memet Lyumanov during Tuesday's searches. **Crimean Solidarity / Facebook**

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) on Tuesday [searched](#) the homes of nearly a dozen Crimean Tatar activists and religious figures in annexed Crimea, according to a local rights group.

At least 10 people were detained during the searches, including Muslim clerics residing in the peninsula's northern Dzhankoi district, as well as members of the Crimean Solidarity rights group in the southern town of Bakhchysarai.

Among those [detained](#) was former Imam Remzi Kurtnezirov, who is permanently disabled, according to his daughter Emine Islyamova.

In a [video](#) published by Crimean Solidarity on Facebook, Islyamova claimed that armed FSB officers planted “extremist” books inside their home during Tuesday's searches.

Related article: [Russia Charges Crimean Tatar Activist Over Facebook Posts](#)

The mass detentions mark the [second](#) such police crackdown against Crimean Tatar activists and religious figures in the annexed peninsula over the past week.

Kremlin-installed authorities are likely [moving](#) to silence independent Islamic leaders in Crimea and pave the way for replacing them with pro-Russian clerics, according to Yevheniy Yaroshenko, an analyst with the Crimea SOS rights group.

“One of the reasons for the [FSB] searches is due to disagreements over the appointment of Imams,” Yaroshenko [told](#) RFE/RL affiliate Krym.Realii last week.

“[Russian] occupiers demand namaz [prayers] to be led exclusively by Imams appointed by the [Moscow-controlled] Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Crimea,” she was quoted as saying.

“But members of Muslim communities want prayers to be led by the Imam whom they choose themselves.”

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