



Section: **News**

Jehovah's Witnesses arrested in eastern Uzbekistan



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MOSCOW, August 1 (RAPSИ) – The Namangan police in eastern Uzbekistan have arrested members of the Jehovah's Witnesses religion for trying to convert local Muslims and for holding secret prayer meetings, a local police officer told RIA Novosti on Friday.

“We stopped an illegal meeting of this organization and found print and electronic media in the meeting room that we collected for further review,” the source said. All of the arrested are Uzbek citizens.

Under the Uzbek law on the freedom of conscience and religious associations, religious literature can only be used by registered religious associations within its registration area. The law also prohibits religious propaganda.

The arrested could face a fine of up to 100 times the minimum wage (about \$5,000 at the Central Bank of Uzbekistan exchange rate).

Over 2,200 religious associations have been registered in Uzbekistan. More than 90% of them are Muslim organizations, but there are also 159 Christian organizations, eight Jewish and six Baha'i communities, one Hare Krishna society and one Buddhist pagoda in Uzbekistan.

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