



Section: **News**

## Russian Supreme Court bans Jehovah's Witnesses branch in Stary Oskol



[http://rapsinews.com/judicial\\_news/20160616/276324256.html](http://rapsinews.com/judicial_news/20160616/276324256.html)

14:30 16/06/2016

**MOSCOW, June 16 (RAPSИ)** – The Supreme Court of Russia on Thursday declared “The Jehovah’s Witnesses of Stary Oskol” in Belgorod Region an extremist organization and ruled to liquidate it, RAPSИ learned in the courtroom.

Previous ruling to liquidate organization, issued by the Belgorod Regional court on February 10, was found legal. The ruling came into force today.

Representatives of the organization claimed that its liquidation is a disproportionate measure that is cruel to believers. An appeal also mentioned refusal to consider motions filed by the organization.

A lawyer representing the Jehovah’s Witnesses said that the Belgorod Regional court mistakenly found the organization extremist because forbidden literature was found in possession of some of its members. He also said that Russian law enforcement agencies are showing discriminatory attitude towards the Jehovah’s Witnesses. He quoted rulings of Russia’s Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights, referring the inadmissibility of restrictions on freedom of conscience, including the guise of fighting extremism.

Jehovah’s Witnesses have had many legal problems in Russia.

On June 9, Russia’s Supreme Court on Thursday banned the Jehovah’s Witnesses of Belgorod as extremist organization.

In March 2015, a court in Tyumen fined the organization 50,000 rubles (\$773) and seized prohibited literature.

In January 2014, a court in Kurgan ruled to ban the organization's booklets as extremist. The books talk about how to have a happy life, what you can hope for, how to develop good relations with God and what you should know about God and its meaning.

In late December 2013, the leader of the sect's group in Tobolsk, Siberia was charged with extremism and the prevention of a blood transfusion that nearly led to the death of a female member of the group.

In 2004, a court in Moscow dissolved and banned a Jehovah's Witnesses group on charges of recruiting children, encouraging believers to break from their families, inciting suicide and preventing believers from accepting medical assistance.

Jehovah's Witnesses is an international religious organization based in Brooklyn, New York. Since 2004 sever branches and chapters of the organization were banned and shut down in various regions of Russia.

---

© 2010 RIA Novosti