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## **Spiritual leader and two sect members found guilty of committing a number of especially grave offenses, including those against minors**



The evidence gathered by the Moscow Investigations Directorate of the Investigative Committee of Russia has been found by the court to be sufficient to sentence Mitrodevanand Paramakhamsa, Tatyana Severtseva, and Dmitry Tsaturyan. Depending on the role of each, they have been found guilty of committing offenses under Paragraphs D and F of Part 2 of Article 117 (torture committed against a juvenile by a group of persons under preliminary conspiracy), Paragraph B of Part 4 of Article 132 (sexual violence), Paragraph A of Part 3 of Article 111 (intentional infliction of severe bodily harm, committed by a group of persons under preliminary conspiracy), Paragraph E of Part 2 of Article 127 (illegal deprivation of liberty committed against a juvenile), and Article 239 (organization and participation in an illegal community) of the Criminal Code of Russia.

The investigation and the court established that, no later than December 31, 2012, Paramakhamsa had brought together followers of Oriental practices and created the illegal religious community

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Kaula Dharma, being a totalitarian sect of a destructive cult, where he had promoted a religious doctrine invented by him, aimed at denial of common moral values, among the followers and their children. In order to implement the common illegal intent, in 2015, the accomplices had put three minor children in a basement of a house in Moscow Region upon Paramakhamsa's instruction. They had kept the children there for a long time, systematically beating them for slightest faults, and committed sexual violence against them.

Fearing exposure by law enforcement officers, in 2016, the majority of the sect members had fled to foreign countries. Apart from that, Tsaturyan had convinced the boy's relatives and Russian law enforcement bodies that the child had been dead and transported him to the Republic of Belarus. In June 2017, the boy had been located. At present, the boy lives with his relatives. The child's mother was charged in absentia with committing an offense under Paragraph B of Part 4 of Article 132 of the Criminal Code of Russia and declared wanted.

Despite the complexity of the investigation caused by a big number of episodes and non-obvious nature of the offenses, as well as an active obstruction to the investigation, investigators managed to collect evidence proving the perpetrators guilty of the offenses they were accused of.

Investigators of the Investigative Committee of Russia carried out a significant amount of investigative and procedural actions at a high professional level. More than 20 witnesses were identified and questioned; more than 28 complex forensic examinations were performed, the results of which provided for establishing the involvement of all the co-perpetrators to the offenses.

Today the court has sentenced Mitraddevanand Paramakhamsa to 16 years of imprisonment in a strict regime colony, Severtseva to 15 years of imprisonment in a general regime colony, and Tsaturyan to 6 years of imprisonment in a strict regime colony.

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