

Kazakhs Target Churches

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The  **Moscow Times**

ALMATY, Kazakhstan — Kazakhstan's upper house of parliament approved a bill Thursday that backers say will help combat religious extremism but critics call a blow to freedom of belief.

The bill approved by the Senate will require existing religious organizations to dissolve and register again through a procedure that is virtually guaranteed to exclude smaller groups, including minority Christian communities.

Rights activist Ninel Fokina said the rules would greatly complicate the life of Lutherans, Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses.

(AP)

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