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Belarus to Extradite Drunken Plane Passenger

By The Moscow Times

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A Saratov businessman who fled to Belarus to avoid arrest after raising a drunken ruckus on a flight from Moscow to an Egyptian resort in January is to be extradited to Russia this week.

Sergei Kabalov, 54, was put on a federal wanted list after behaving violently while drunk on board a Kogalymavia airline plane bound for Hurghada on Jan. 11.

A YouTube video filmed by another passenger shows Kabalov striking a flight attendant, punching another passenger and trying to break into the cockpit while shouting that he was an officer with the Russian foreign military intelligence agency and "could kill anyone with two fingers."

Russian authorities had planned to arrest him after he returned from his vacation in Egypt, but Kabalov did not use his return ticket.

After more than a month of hiding, he was caught in Belarus and taken into custody. It took the Russian INterior Ministry some time to prepare the documents to extradite Kabalov. The businessman is currently in being held in the city of Grodno.

He will be brought to Russia aboard a special train car for prisoners on Friday, Interfax reported, citing an unidentified law enforcement official.

Kabalov faces charges of attempted hijacking and assault and could be jailed for up to eight years if convicted.

Kabalov's case is one in a series of violent incidents by drunken passengers on Russian airlines, prompting politicians to discuss a crackdown on on-board drinking.

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