

Yeltsin's Bear Will Retire to Better Digs Outside Moscow

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A bear at the Moscow Zoo. Yeltsin handed a bear, called Ugryum, which in Russian means gloomy, over to the zoo in the early 1990s.

The brown bear that former President Boris Yeltsin gave to the Moscow Zoo will be moved to a new location so that he can meet his old age "with dignity," the zoo's director Sergei Popov said at a news conference Tuesday.

The zoo had previously received numerous letters from visitors, complaining that the bear's living conditions are too cramped.

Yeltsin handed the bear, called Ugryum, which in Russian means gloomy, over to the zoo in the early 1990s, having received him as a present from the governor of Primorsky region. After spending 18 years in the capital, Ugryum is now bound for Sary Oskol in the Belgorod region, south of Moscow.

The bear needs a cage at least a hectare in size, Popov said. The Moscow zoo covers 21 hectares in total, in which it has to accommodate 8,000 animals.

It is not yet clear how big Ugryum's cage in Sary Oskol will be, though Popov made assurances that he would have the best conditions the zoo can provide.

But the bear should not get ready to leave soon.

"There is no standard procedure [for these moves]," a representative of the zoo said. "It could take weeks or months."

For the Moscow Zoo's second resident brown bear, also in need of a roomier cage, no solution has yet been found.

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