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Hunger-Striking Bolotnoye Defendant Ends Protest

By Oleg Sukhov

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Sergei Krivov sitting in his cell, where he has been on a hunger strike since Sep. 19 to protest legal infractions in the case against him. **Alexander Baroshin**

Bolotnoye trial defendant Sergei Krivov has called off his hunger strike on Friday after more than two months of refusing to eat.

Krivov is currently receiving medical attention to treat the consequences of his hunger strike at Matrosskaya Tishina, Itar-Tass reported, citing Investigative Committee spokesman Sergei Stukalov.

The decision comes immediately after the European Court of Human Rights stepped in and asked the Russian government for information about Krivov's health and his access to doctors at the request of his lawyers.

Krivov says he has been on hunger strike since Sept. 19 to protest legal infractions in the case

against him, such as the delivering of court documents a month late.

In a letter that Dmitry Agranovsky, the lawyer for another Bolotnoye defendant, posted on his LiveJournal page, the court said it had asked Russia about the length of Krivov's hunger strike, his state of health and whether or not he had access to regular medical checks and assistance.

The court gave Russian authorities until noon on Nov. 27 to respond, without specifying what further measures it might take if they failed to meet the deadline.

One of the 28 people accused of participating in alleged riots at an opposition rally on Bolotnaya Ploshchad on May 6, 2012, Krivov faces up to eight years behind bars on charges of taking part in riots and inflicting physical harm on law enforcement officials.

He has repeatedly complained of feeling ill during court hearings this week and fainted several times. Judge Natalya Nikishina has refused to allow first aid workers into her courtroom, however, saying that only the court can call for medical assistance.

Krivov has sought permission not to participate in court hearings in order to restore his health and terminate his hunger strike but his applications have been rejected by the court. The judge has also rejected requests by Krivov's lawyers to conduct an independent medical examination of his health.

The defendant's lawyer, Vyacheslav Makarov, said earlier this month that Krivov was being denied medical help and that he could die because of his health condition.

This is not the first time Krivov has resorted to a hunger strike to protest a decision by the court. The activist held a hunger strike in December 2012 to protest an earlier extension of his arrest for the Bolotnoye case. He ended that strike in late January 2013. Fellow activists said at that time that he had already lost more than 17 kilograms since being detained Oct. 18.

Human rights ombudsman Vladimir Lukin expressed his concern over Krivov's condition in a message to the Federal Prison Service, activist Lev Ponomaryov told journalists on Wednesday.

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