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Japanese Blogger Flies Home After Spending 2 Months in Moscow Airport

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Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport

A Japanese blogger who had been living in the secure zone of Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport for upward of two months has returned to his home country, Russian media cited a spokesperson for the Japanese Embassy in Moscow as saying Thursday.

Tetsuya Abo, 36, claimed he was a journalist who had suffered from what he said was a dire free speech situation in Japan, but later admitted he was a blogger and freelancer, television station Zvezda reported. He came to Moscow on May 1 and had a return ticket for May 29. Abo went to the airport on that day and went through security and passport control, but instead of boarding the plane bedded down in a corner between the gates.

He was reportedly hoping to receive Russian citizenship, but, according to lawyers cited by Russian media, providing him with political asylum was not an option since there was no evidence he was being directly persecuted in his home country.

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