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Jailed WSJ Reporter Appeals Arrest in Russia on Spying Claims

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The Lefortovo pre-trial detention center, where Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich, arrested on suspicion of espionage, is being held in Moscow. **Evgenia Novozhenina / Reuters**

Jailed Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich's attorneys have appealed his arrest on suspicion of espionage, the Vedomosti business daily reported Monday, citing the press service of Moscow's Lefortovo District Court.

"An appeal has been filed with the court," the newspaper cited the court's press service as saying.

"The date of the hearing on his detention appeal will be announced this week."

Gershkovich, 31, a U.S. citizen and former Moscow Times reporter, was detained while reporting from the Ural Mountains city of Yekaterinburg and brought to Moscow on March 30, with the Kremlin claiming he was caught "red-handed."

He is believed to be the first foreign journalist arrested on spying allegations in Russia since

the fall of the Soviet Union.

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A Moscow court ordered him to remain in pre-trial detention until May 29.

The Wall Street Journal strongly denies the espionage accusations against its reporter.

U.S. President Joe Biden and numerous media organizations have called on Russian authorities to free Gershkovich.

The Moscow Times reported that Gershkovich's surveillance and detention were organized by the Federal Security Service (FSB)'s military counterintelligence department.

According to media reports confirmed by The Moscow Times' sources, Gershkovich could be viewed by the Kremlin as leverage for a future prisoner exchange as Russia seeks to return a pair of alleged Russian spies jailed in Slovenia.

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