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Jailed Reporter Safronov Moved to Siberian Hospital

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Ivan Safronov. **Gleb Shchelkunov / Kommersant**

Jailed Russian journalist Ivan Safronov has turned up in a Siberian hospital as he awaits transfer to a prison colony, his supporters said Tuesday.

The "FreeSafronov!" group said it had been unable to find out Safronov's location since Sept. 13, when he was removed from a prison in the Siberian region of Krasnoyarsk "to another facility."

On Tuesday, the group said it received a letter from Safronov, who told supporters that he was taken to a tuberculosis sanatorium elsewhere in the Krasnoyarsk region after spending three days at an unknown transit point.

"I'm waiting for placement in a new prison colony for some unclear reason," Safronov said in the letter dated Sept. 22.

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He said that he was in good health despite being placed at the hospital.

Safronov was sentenced to 22 years in prison last September on treason charges. Russian authorities accuse the former defense reporter of collecting secret information about the Russian military and passing it to Czech spies.

He and his supporters deny the treason accusations. They claim the criminal prosecution is revenge for his reporting on Russia's sale of fighter jets to Egypt that triggered a diplomatic scandal

Russian officials have insisted the case was not related to Safronov's journalistic work.

Safronov lost his final appeal last month when Russia's Supreme Court upheld the court ruling against him.

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