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Judicial Board Backs Candidacy of Russia's Top Prosecutor for Supreme Court Chief Justice

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Igor Krasnov. **Valery Sharifulin / TASS**

Russia's high qualification board of judges has endorsed Prosecutor General Igor Krasnov's candidacy for the post of chief justice of Russia's Supreme Court, the Interfax news agency reported Monday.

Krasnov, 49, is the only candidate for the Russian Supreme Court's top post, which has remained vacant since the death of former Chief Justice Irina Podnosova at age 71 in late July.

Candidates for Russia's Supreme Court chief justice are nominated by the president and confirmed by the upper-house Federation Council for six-year terms. The judicial board's backing serves as a recommendation but does not override the president's role in the nomination process.

It was not immediately clear as of Monday afternoon when President Vladimir Putin is

expected to officially nominate Krasnov.

The legal news outlet Pravo.ru notes that the Federation Council has two weeks to vote on Krasnov's candidacy based on a recommendation by a special presidential commission. Podnosova was appointed chief justice 17 days after being endorsed by the judicial board.

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The Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, a major business lobby, has warned that Krasnov's appointment would signal a tougher line on the state appropriation of assets, a practice that has become much more common since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Krasnov has led the Prosecutor General's Office since January 2020. This spring, he boasted that prosecutors had been involved in legal cases that had brought almost 2.4 trillion rubles ($29.9 billion) worth of private assets under state control.

During Monday's high qualification board of judges session, Krasnov struck a careful balance between defending judicial independence and warning against judges abusing their status. While insisting that any pressure on judges must be "nipped in the bud," Krasnov stressed that their "high status must not create the illusion of impunity."

Last month, Putin awarded Krasnov the title of Honored Lawyer of Russia, which exempts chief justice nominees from passing a qualifying exam. Anonymous sources had told the Kommersant business newspaper that Krasnov still passed the exam with "flying colors."

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