

Journalist Sergei Naumov Released in Uzbekistan

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He was freed from a police detention centre where staff had claimed they had no record of him.

Sergei Naumov, an independent journalist jailed in northwest Uzbekistan on September 21, has been released at the end of his 12-day sentence.

Naumov was detained on September 21 and appeared in court in the town of Urgench the same evening, charged with manhandling a woman in the street, an accusation he denied outright. He was not given a lawyer for the hearing. (See **Journalist Held Incommunicado in Uzbekistan**.)

After his court appearance, Naumov effectively disappeared from the system, since police in Urgench and in the greater Khorezm region told IWPR and others including a lawyer hired to defend him that they had no record of him on their list of people in detention.

Despite these assertions, Naumov was released from the pre-trial detention centre in Urgench, after serving time for what counts as an administrative rather than criminal offence. The centre is run by the uniformed police force, which comes under Uzbekistan's interior ministry.

Police are still holding Naumov's passport, which would normally be returned in such cases.

Naumov has reported on environmental issues and human rights abuses, including the use of forced labour in the cotton industry in Khorezm, an otherwise little-reported part of Uzbekistan.

"He has been threatened by Uzbek law-enforcement officers on several occasions," Nadezhda Ataeva, head of the Association for Human Rights in Central Asia, **told IWPR last week**. "These threats have been repeated anonymously by phone and on the internet."

Location: [Uzbekistan](#)

Topic: [Human rights](#)

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