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Politicized Vodka on Sale

By The Moscow Times

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Although the Federal Service for Intellectual Property rejected the Royalty company's application to trademark Volodya i Medvedi vodka, that brand went on sale last week in X5 Retail Group stores, Stanislav Kaufman, Vineksim vice president for marketing, told Vedomosti.

A company affiliated with Vineksim is manufacturing vodka in Ukraine under that name, which translates as Volodya and the Bears (Volodya is a nickname for Vladimir), and exporting it to Russia. Vineksim and Royalty are not affiliated.

Royalty filed for a trademark in December 2009. Its application was rejected in October, and its appeal was rejected Feb. 15. The patent service ruled that the brand name, which seemingly makes reference to the prime minister's first name and the president's last name, "is detrimental to the image and interests of the state and is contrary to public interests."

(MT, Vedomosti)

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