

Protesters Against Lace Panties Ban Detained While Wearing Underwear On Their Heads

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Valeria Ibrayeva wears lace panties on her head at a protest in Almaty. **Dina Baidildayeva**

Upcoming regulations restricting the diversity of Russians' underwear choices have met with resounding disapproval, including from protesters who were detained by police while wearing panties on their heads.

The production, import and sale of synthetic lace panties will be banned this summer within the Customs Union between Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, Gazeta.ru reported.

The law, which went into effect in the Customs Union in 2012 but not yet enforced, will ban underwear that does not reach a 6 percent threshold for moisture absorption, which aims to prevent products potentially harmful to consumers. Moisture absorption in many of the most popular synthetic material mixtures for lace panties is reportedly around 3 to 3.6

percent.

Lace panties will disappear from store shelves by July 1, 2014, said Valery Koreshkov, minister for technical regulations in the Eurasian Economic Union, the planned successor to the Customs Union.

Companies are supposed to be following the regulations already, though they are "pretending that they are new to them," he said, Itar-Tass reported.

The Russian Industry and Trade Ministry previously announced that it would try to overturn the Custom Union's rules regarding underwear after receiving complaints from clothes manufacturers.

News of the upcoming disappearance of lace underwear, sold everywhere from high-end lingerie stores to kiosks in Moscow metro station underpasses, has generated a swarm of news articles featuring pictures of women in lace panties and a flurry of activity on social networks.

Bringing in the other hot-button issue of the day — the possible euthanasia a giraffe at a Danish zoo — opposition leader Alexei Navalny tweeted: "Already the second day of my Twitter feed stuffed slightly less than full with lace panties. The giraffe Marius and lace panties."

Many young women expressed outrage at the ban and promised to stock up on undergarments before July.

The indignation was not confined to Russia, however. Kazakh women protesting the ban in Almaty on Sunday were detained by police after wearing panties on their heads, television station NTV reported.

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