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Drug Agency to Block E-Wallets to Curb Internet Sales

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The Federal Drug Control Service wants the legal ability to block drug dealers' electronic wallets without a court authorization, the organization's head told journalists on Monday.

Viktor Ivanov said that his service currently blocks about 3,000 websites selling drugs each year, but that the system is too cumbersome to swiftly react to new threats, Interfax reported.

In comments carried by Slon.ru news website, a representative of Internet payment service Yandex.Dengi has criticized the initiative, noting that money transfers above 15,000 rubles ($380) cannot be done anonymously, with users required to provide their passport details in order to make such a transaction.

The initiative comes as authorities struggle to stop the spread of a new blend of synthetic marijuana, known commonly as "spice," that has already claimed 25 lives.

About 20 suspected drug dealers offering the synthetic marijuana blends have been detained throughout Russia in recent weeks.

On Monday, the Vologda branch of the Investigative Committee said it had opened an investigation into the death of two men found dead in the town of Cherepovets after smoking the substance.

About 3 million Russians regularly use such smoking blends, Ivanov told Interfax.

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