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Russian Budget Airline Pobeda Bans Gum on Planes

By The Moscow Times

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Russia's low-cost airliner Pobeda, a subsidiary of national carrier Aeroflot, has banned chewing gum on its planes citing the high cost of scraping off the dried gum left by shameless passengers, news agency Interfax reported Tuesday.

"The ban on chewing gum use has been in place since the middle of June and is connected to losses sustained by the airline," Pobeda's press secretary Yelena Selivanova said.

Prior to the ban, cleanup was costing the company up to 100,000 rubles ($1,749) per piece of gum, Pobeda CEO Andrei Kalmikov told news website Gazeta.ru previously.

"The airline sometimes has to spend up to 100,000 rubles in order to peel off one piece of gum and return the equipment to a normal state," Kalmikov said.

Pobeda, Russia's first budget airline, was launched last year under the name Dobrolyot. But the carrier was grounded shortly thereafter when the EU firms it leased its planes from pulled

out of their contracts over the Russian carrier's service to Crimea. Crimea, which Russia annexed from Ukraine last year, is under strict EU sanctions.

The airline relaunched soon after, minus the services to Crimea, and rebranded itself under the new name Pobeda — which means "victory" in Russian. The airline operates flights from Moscow to 17 cities across Russia, according the company's website.

Pobeda's Selivanova did not mention how the airline intends to prevent passengers from surreptitiously bringing gum on board. While no other airlines ban gum, a handful of cities do — including, most famously, Singapore, which banned the substance in 1992.

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