

Russian Governor Promises Tons of Coal as Reward for Weight Loss

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No indication was given as to how the weight loss would be monitored.

The governor of the Kemerovo region of southwestern Siberia, Aman Tuleyev, has promised free tons of coal to residents who suffer from obesity and commit to slimming down, the TASS news agency reported Thursday.

Tuleyev said he wished to replicate the United Arab Emirates's successful dieting drive, called "Your Weight in Gold."

"An unconventional measure has been implemented in the UAE," he was quoted as saying by TASS. "[The authorities] decided to reward residents who lose weight with gold, as obesity is one of the most common causes of premature death there."

According to the Emirates247 news website, the Dubai municipal government was overwhelmed by the response to the scheme, launched in July two years ago, which promised to reward participants with a gram of gold for every lost kilogram.

In Russia's coal-mining heartland, using "black gold" as currency seemed an obvious tweak to the system.

"We, too, will pay [our residents] — except in tons of coal rather than gold coins," Tuleyev said, the BBC's Russian service reported.

No indication was given as to how the weight loss would be monitored.

Governor Tuleyev's press secretary, Anton Gorelkin, said that the authorities were also thinking of launching a reality show focusing on weight loss, TASS reported.

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