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Russia's Consumer Rights Watchdog Files Lawsuit Against 14 Alcohol-Selling Websites

By The Moscow Times

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More than 40 people suffered poisoning after drinking the fake alcohol they bought via the Internet in Krasnoyarsk last week.

Russia's consumer rights watchdog has filed a lawsuit demanding that 14 alcohol-selling websites be banned, the Interfax news agency reported Thursday.

According to watchdog Rospotrebnadzor, the sites sell low-quality duplicates of "elite alcoholic drinks."

On Wednesday, in the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk, a woman died of alcohol poisoning from methyl alcohol, the local branch of the Investigative Committee said, Interfax reported. The woman has become the ninth victim of four counterfeit alcohol sellers who were arrested in Krasnoyarsk that same day.

They have been selling the alcohol via the Internet. When searching the vendors' apartments, law enforcement officials discovered more that 300 boxes with fake spirits, including fake Jack Daniel's whiskey, Interfax reported.

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Federation Council Chairwoman Valentina Matviyenko on Wednesday estimated that the production of illegal alcohol has cost the state budget between 200 to 270 million rubles ($3-4.1 million), the RIA Novosti news agency reported. According to Matviyenko, the legal production of alcohol has fallen this year, and that taxes on alcohol paid to the budget had fallen by 21 percent compared with the same period of time in 2014.

She also said that the money from illegal alcohol sales might be used to sponsor terrorism or the drug market, RIA reported.

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