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No Turkish Fabric Means No Anti-Turkish T-shirts

By Anna Dolgov

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Some Russian designers have offered anti-Turkish designs in response to Moscow's angry rhetoric against Ankara.

Russian production of T-shirts with anti-Turkish slogans has been delayed by disruptions in fabric imports from Turkey, Russian media reports said Wednesday.

Some Russian designers have offered anti-Turkish designs in response to Moscow's angry rhetoric against Ankara for the shooting down of an Su-24 bomber near the Turkish-Syrian border, and the growing anti-Turkish sentiment in the country.

The glitch? Russian clothing manufacturers rely on Turkish fabrics, and deliveries of those have been delayed amid the dispute between the two countries, designers said, independent Meduza news portal reported.

Russian News Service quoted designer Yekaterina Dobryakova as saying she was unable to

start making anti-Turkish T-shirts because trucks carrying Turkish fabrics were getting detained at the border.

But perhaps she did not mean the remark to be taken at face value. Later in the day, Dobryakova said on her Facebook page that Russian News Service misinterpreted her comment, which was intended as sarcasm. She confirmed, however, that disruptions of fabric imports from Turkey have presented a major problem for Russian clothes manufacturers.

“Got a call from RSN [Russian News Service], asking me whether I planned to make shirts with anti-Turkish themes,” Dobryakova said on her Facebook page. “I said, sarcastically, that as soon as trucks from Turkey are allowed across the border, I will immediately do so.”

“I had no plans to make T-shirts with the theme of war, or even a political theme, but the trucks have indeed been stopped, and very soon we won't be able to sew, because all Russian fabric suppliers are working with Turkey, and we have no domestic alternative,” she said.

Another designer, Alexander Konasov — who offers anti-Turkish shirt designs on his website — said Turkey was a “monopolist” on Russia's fabrics market, Russian News Service reported. But Konasov insisted he would use fabric made by Russian manufacturers, the report said.

“We will have several designs — with tomatoes, and with the words 'I won't be going,' and so on,” Konasov was quoted by Meduza as saying.

The Russian government has banned fruit and vegetable imports from Turkey, and has ordered Russian tour operators to stop selling travel packages to Turkey.

Konasov's website also showcases a shirt with a slogan that reads: “We don't need Turkish shores, we now have Crimea and snowy Sochi,” and another one that shows a likeness of Turkish President Recep Erdogan being chased by a bear, topped by the slogan “Run, Turk, run.”

“Our clients follow the news and want to express their solidarity,” Konasov was quoted by Russian News Service as saying. “Our T-shirts are part of how people can express their views on foreign policy and on patriotism.”

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