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Russian Detained for Organizing Dubai Nude Balcony Photoshoot – RIA

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Widely shared footage of naked women posing on a high-rise balcony spread across social media has led to several arrests. **Pixabay**

Updated at 5:03 p.m. on April 5 to clarify that the women weren't arrested.

Eight Russian women were among dozens of people involved a widely shared nude photoshoot on a balcony in broad daylight, the Russian state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported Monday.

Dubai police announced arrests on public debauchery charges after video and photos of several naked women posing on the high-rise balcony in the upscale Marina neighborhood made the rounds on social media late Saturday.

Hours after initial reports said the eight Russian women were among those arrested, Russia's Consulate General in Dubai clarified that they hadn't been arrested. The only Russian national to be arrested was the photoshoot's organizer, RIA Novosti reported.

In total, 12 women were detained in connection with the photoshoot, none of whom were Russian, RIA Novosti cited the consulate general as saying.

Those detained face up to six months in jail and fines of up to $1,500 for “lewd behavior” under the United Arab Emirates’ laws, which are based on Shariah law, RIA Novosti reported.

UAE state-linked newspaper The National reported that the photoshoot appeared to be a “publicity stunt” but didn't give further details.

Though comparatively more liberal than its Middle Eastern neighbors, the UAE has imprisoned people for milder offenses like kissing in public or drinking alcohol without a license.

The federation of seven Arab sheikhdoms has also jailed residents for social media comments and videos under strict laws governing expression, while telecom companies block access to popular pornographic websites.

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