

## South Korea 'bans' miniskirts

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A new law has come into force in South Korea that effectively bans the wearing of miniskirts. The controversial piece of legislation is called the "overexposure law" and is an attempt by the government to curb what it views as public

indecenty. Anyone caught wearing a miniskirt could be fined around \$45. It is one of the first laws to be passed by new president Park Geun-hye and has come under considerable criticism. Her father, Park Chung-hee, who led the country between 1963 and 1979, introduced a similar decree on the appropriateness of what Korean women could and couldn't wear. A spokesperson from South Korea's police said the law is more concerned with public nudity than provocative clothing.

Celebrities and politicians are up in arms over the new law. Democratic United Party member Ki Sik Kim wrote on Twitter: "Why does the state interfere with how citizens dress? Park Geun-hye's government gives cause for concern that we are returning to the era when hair length and skirt length were regulated." Many female celebrities have posted photos of themselves in skimpy clothing online to make their feelings against the law known. Short skirts and shorts are extremely popular in South Korea. They are the fashion items of choice for the majority of the country's pop stars. Singer and fashion icon Lee Hyori tweeted: "Is the overexposure fine for real? I'm so dead."

Sources: Daily Mail / CNN

### Writing

Everyone should be able to wear what they want, when they want. Discuss.

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

new laws / miniskirts / controversial / overexposure / public indecency / criticism / interfere / concerns / hair length / regulated / celebrities / fashion items / majority

### True / False

- Miniskirts have been banned in S. Korea to stop women catching colds. T / F
- Anyone wearing a miniskirt could be imprisoned. T / F
- The president's father introduced a similar law when he was leader. T / F
- S. Korean police said they aren't so interested in miniskirt violations. T / F
- Politicians and celebrities said arms should also be covered. T / F
- A politician asked why S. Korea was returning to an age of regulation. T / F
- Women protested by uploading pics of themselves in revealing clothes. T / F
- A pop star said she thought the law was necessary for teenagers. T / F

### Synonym Match

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. effectively    | a. control     |
| 2. curb           | b. revealing   |
| 3. considerable   | c. indecent    |
| 4. nudity         | d. butt into   |
| 5. provocative    | e. pretty much |
| 6. up in arms     | f. reason      |
| 7. interfere with | g. nakedness   |
| 8. cause          | h. superstar   |
| 9. skimpy         | i. sizable     |
| 10. icon          | j. angry       |

### Discussion – Student A

- Do you think the law is repressive?
- What would people do if the next thing to be regulated was hair length?
- Would you be happy if your daughters wore miniskirts?
- Is there a minimum or maximum age for wearing a miniskirt?
- What fashion is unacceptable in your country?
- What is the minimum that people should wear in public?
- Should we go back to more conservative ways of dressing?
- What questions would you like to ask president Park Geun-hye?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. A new law has come                       | a. considerable criticism  |
| 2. controversial piece                      | b. in arms                 |
| 3. come under                               | c. clothing                |
| 4. the appropriateness of what Korean women | d. into force              |
| 5. more concerned with public nudity than   | e. concern                 |
| 6. politicians are up                       | f. could and couldn't wear |
| 7. interfere with                           | g. provocative clothing    |
| 8. cause for                                | h. items of choice         |
| 9. skimpy                                   | i. of legislation          |
| 10. the fashion                             | j. how citizens dress      |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of the miniskirt ban?
- How important is the ban in relation to other problems in Korea?
- Is it strange Koreans wear miniskirts that are not part of the culture?
- What do you think of an "overexposure" law?
- What do you think of people wearing clothes that reveal a lot of skin?
- Would a \$45 fine stop you wearing clothes you like?
- Is the ban an attack on personal freedom?
- Do you think the ban will affect Park Geun-hye's re-election chances?

## Spelling

- fcltiyfevee bans the wearing of miniskirts
- controversial piece of iilleonasqt
- public cncednyie
- come under socnaredielb criticism
- introduced a msrliai decree
- opocavreivt clothing
- Why does the state fetrriene...
- how scniztei dress
- cause for crneon
- hair length and skirt length were letauedgr
- female ibtcrelseei
- fashion items of choice for the majityro

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. a	3. i	4. g	5. c
6. j	7. d	8. f	9. b	10. h

## Role Play

**Korean pop star** - You think the miniskirt ban is totally stupid. Tell the others three reasons why. Ask Park Geun-hye why she passed this law. Tell her women across the country will vote her out of power. Tell her there are more important things to make laws about.

**President Park Geun-hye** - You think the new law is very important. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell the others also that it's important that the country goes back to being more conservative. Tell them there are plenty of lovely clothes that women can wear that are below the knee.

**Government opposition leader** - You think the new law is dangerous. Tell the others three reasons why. Ask Park Geun-hye why she's focusing on miniskirts when the North is developing nuclear weapons and the world is in recession. Tell her that fashion is an important aspect of personal freedom.

**Mother** - You think Park Geun-hye is a hero. Tell the others three reasons why. You have three teenage girls and are shocked at what they wear. Miniskirts are not part of Korean culture. You hate pop stars for influencing how young girls dress. Tell the opposition leader Korean culture is important.

## Speaking – Annoyances

What would you like to ban? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- miniskirts
- mobile phones in cinemas
- chewing gum
- music players in public
- kissing in public
- children in restaurants
- drunkenness
- other \_\_\_\_\_

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.