

Putin's Inner Circle Corners \$30Bln Garbage Reform Market – Report

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Russians will reportedly pay \$28.7 billion for waste disposal between the next 10 to 15 years. **Gavriil Grigorov / TASS**

President Vladimir Putin's close associates are the biggest beneficiaries of the country's 2 trillion ruble (\$28.7 billion) waste disposal reforms, according to an [analysis](#) of contracts by Russia's Important Stories investigative website published Thursday.

Companies linked to close Putin associates Sergei Chemezov, Arkady Rotenberg and Yury Kovalchuk, as well as former prosecutor general Igor Chaika, have reportedly cornered one-quarter of the market. They have scored state contracts totaling 423 billion rubles (\$6 billion) to collect garbage across the country, Important Stories reported.

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Chemezov, Putin's former KGB colleague, was said to be the beneficiary of 165 billion rubles (\$2.4 billion) in awarded contracts through companies owned by the state industrial

conglomerate Rostec which he heads.

Companies linked to Chaika [through his son](#) won contracts worth 107 billion rubles (\$1.5 billion), Important Stories reported. Further down the list, Putin's former judo sparring partner Rotenberg was a reported beneficiary of contracts worth 88 billion rubles (\$1.2 billion) and Putin's alleged "personal banker" Kovalchuk of 63 billion rubles (\$904 million) in contracts.

Waste disposal contracts in at least 30 Russian regions have been awarded to relatives of governors, mayors, ruling party lawmakers and prosecutors, Important Stories reported.

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Four out five contracts had been awarded to a single bidder at close to maximum prices, the website reported, noting that consumers would end up shouldering the costs. Russians will pay 2 trillion rubles for waste disposal between the next 10 to 15 years, the outlet said.

It linked the lucrative contracts to Russia's trash reform, which tasked regional authorities with choosing operators to collect waste starting in 2019 and was expected to increase costs.

"Looking at the list of Russia's garbage kings, you can't help but feel that this reform was initiated for the president's numerous friends and officials' relatives to collect hundreds of billions of rubles from everyone for decades," it wrote.

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