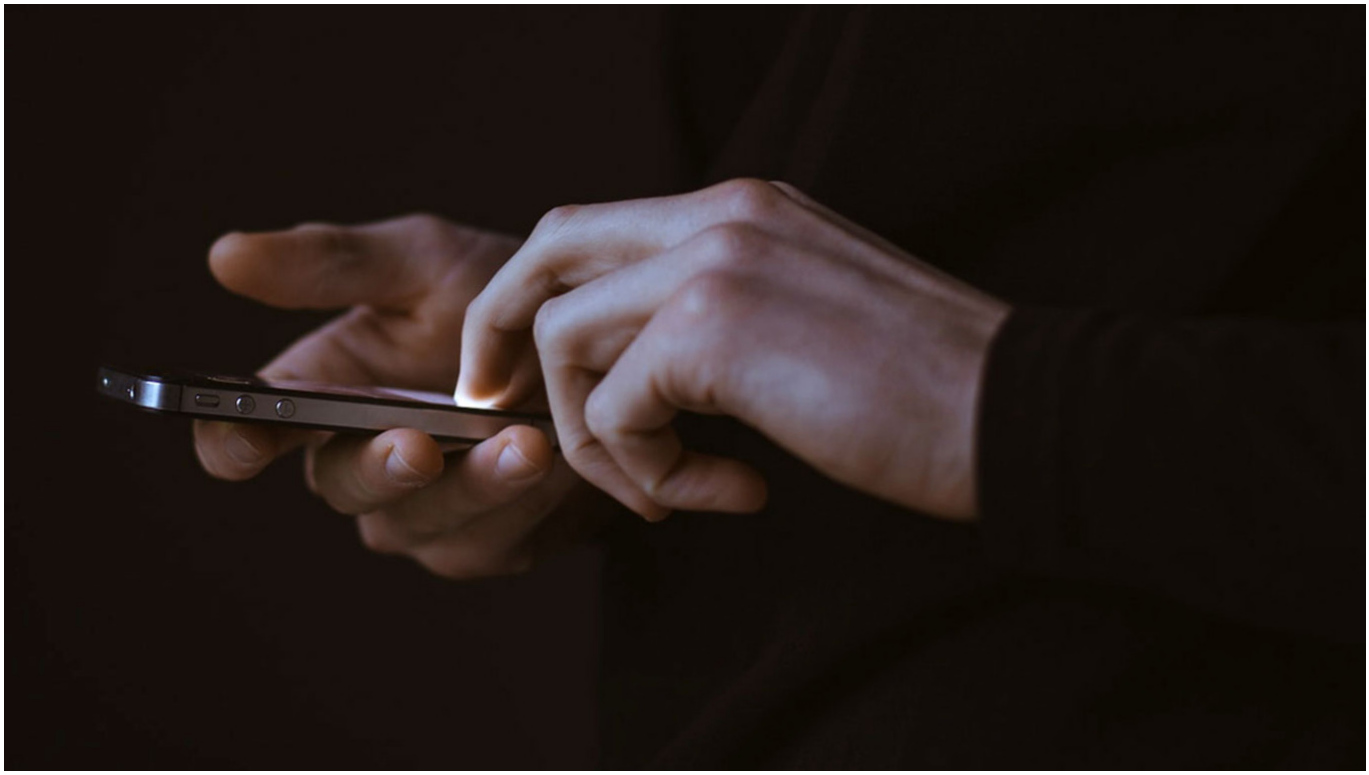
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# Russian Businessmen Slam Putin, Ukraine Invasion in Leaked Call – Reports

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**Gilles Lambert / unsplash**

A leaked phone call allegedly between two wealthy Russian businessmen highlights frustration with Russia's leadership and war effort among the country's elite, the Current Time broadcaster reported late Tuesday.

The men in the recorded conversation are identified as Roman Trotsenko, one of Russia's richest businessmen, and Nikolai Matushevsky, the creator of Moscow's Flacon and Khlebozavod design spaces. The original 40-minute conversation, dated Jan. 10, 2023, was posted on YouTube early last week.

The two businessmen denied the recording's authenticity.

"The Russia that we love so sincerely fell into the clutches of a**holes," one of the voices is heard saying in the recording as the other voice emphatically agrees.

“They’re professing some strange 19th-century [beliefs]. This can’t end well, it will end in hell. People will kill each other on the streets of Moscow,” the voice adds.

**Related article**: Elites Allegedly Insulting Putin in Phone Call Cause Sensation in Russia

With extensive use of crude language, the speakers give a bleak assessment of Russia’s future after President Vladimir Putin’s rule.

“How can a country live and develop where the only ideology is making money and keeping one group of people in power?” the voice identified as Roman says.

“They’ll die at some point and leave nothing behind. It will just be a scorched desert.”

Trotsenko and Matushevsky deny the conversation ever taking place, saying they do not discuss politics with one another.

“I think it’s a fake or someone’s stupid joke using AI,” Current Time quoted Matushevsky as saying.

Current Time said it believes the call’s authenticity could be substantiated by personal details divulged by the speakers, including their locations outside Russia which could be cross-checked through their public Instagram posts.

Trotsenko, whom Forbes ranks as Russia's 38th-richest person with a $3.8 billion net worth, is believed to be close to Putin ally and Rosneft CEO Igor Sechin.

The leak comes one month after another audio recording of a phone call between high-profile Russians — who also denied its authenticity — rocked Russia’s elites.

In it, voices resembling that of music producer Iosif Prigozhin and billionaire Farhad Akhmedov expressed anger toward Putin and the invasion of Ukraine.

The alleged conversation caused an uproar as a glimpse into the private views of Russia's elites, who are believed to be under pressure to publicly back the Kremlin's offensive.

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