

Russia Jails Journalist Kotrikadze, Businessman Chichvarkin in Absentia Over ‘War Fakes’

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Yekaterina Kotrikadze and Yevgeny Chichvarkin. tvrain.tv, Social media

Moscow courts on Monday [sentenced](#) exiled Russian–Georgian journalist Yekaterina Kotrikadze and Russian businessman Yevgeny Chichvarkin to several years in prison in absentia after finding them guilty of spreading “fakes” about Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Prosecutors accused Kotrikadze, news director and anchor of the exiled broadcaster TV Rain, of [posting](#) about alleged [war crimes](#) committed by Russian troops in Ukraine on her personal Telegram channel in the spring of 2022.

Chichvarkin, owner of the Michelin–starred restaurant Hide in London, was accused of [posting](#) a Russian Anti–War Committee statement on his Instagram in August 2024.

Witnesses in both trials [described suffering](#) “emotional distress” after reading Kotrikadze’s and Chichvarkin’s social media posts.

“Unlike Chichvarkin, I’m a patriot,” the news outlet Mediazona quoted one of the witnesses as saying when questioned by a state prosecutor.

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Moscow’s Dorogomilovsky District Court handed Chichvarkin a nine-year prison sentence in absentia after finding him guilty of spreading “war fakes,” as well as violating Russia’s “foreign agent” law.

Chichvarkin fled to Britain in 2008, saying he feared for his life if jailed in Russia, where he faced extortion and kidnapping charges he claimed were politically motivated.

Separately, Moscow’s Golovinsky District Court on Monday found Kotrikadze [guilty](#) of the same crimes as Chichvarkin and sentenced her to eight years in prison in absentia.

Several other journalists employed at TV Rain have also been [convicted](#) or [face](#) “war fakes” charges, including Koktrikadze’s husband, Tikhon Dzyadko, who serves as editor-in-chief of the exiled broadcaster.

TV Rain [suspended](#) operations in March 2022 after Russia ordered it to stop broadcasting over its critical coverage of the war in Ukraine. It later resumed broadcasting abroad and is now based in Amsterdam.

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