



Johnson lied about Putin missile ‘threat’ – Kremlin

Description

UK: The former British prime minister claimed the Russian president had made the comments in a telephone call last February

Allegations that Russian President Vladimir Putin threatened then-UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson with a missile strike are *“a lie,”* Kremlin press secretary Dmitry Peskov said on Monday. Johnson’s accusations have emerged in a new BBC documentary about the crisis in Ukraine.

Recalling a telephone call with Putin on February 2, 2022, just over three weeks before tensions over Ukraine escalated into full military action, Johnson claimed the Russian leader *“threatened me at one point.”*

“He said, ‘Boris, I don’t want to hurt you but, with a missile, it would only take a minute’ or something like that... jolly,” the former PM told the British broadcaster.

“There were no missile threats,” Peskov told reporters on Monday. *“When he explained challenges to the security of the Russian Federation, President Putin remarked that if Ukraine joins NATO, the potential deployment of NATO or American missiles at our borders would mean that any missile could reach Moscow in mere minutes.”*

The Russian official wondered if Johnson had lied deliberately or *“simply didn’t understand what President Putin was talking about.”* If the latter is true, people should be concerned for Johnson, Peskov added.

Putin has publicly voiced Russian concerns over NATO infrastructure in Ukraine and other parts of Eastern Europe for decades. Russia began military operations against Ukraine after failing to get security guarantees from Washington, which would have rolled back the deployment of NATO assets in Eastern Europe and suspended its expansion in the region. The US dismissed Moscow’s concerns and claimed that Ukraine was free to seek membership as a sovereign nation.

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