

## Is it true a billboard in Moscow showed a video of Little Big supporting Iran in its match against the US at the 2022 World Cup? ([Original publication](#))

**A viral video allegedly depicted an advertisement at the Oktyabr Cinema on Moscow's Novy Arbat showing a message from Russia to Iran expressing support for the Iranian national team in its match against the United States. We have verified the accuracy of this video.**

*At the end of November 2022, Russian outlets and social media reported a message shown in the center of Moscow in support of the Iranian national football team in its match against the United States at the FIFA World Cup. The publications include a video allegedly filmed on Novy Arbat Street. It shows the Oktyabr Cinema's media façade which is used to air commercials. The one filmed contained the animated messages "The USA is always little" and "Iran is always big" (both in English) shown on a green background imitating a football field. Then the national flags of Iran and the United States appeared on the screen together with the date 11/29/2022 (the day the two countries played their match at the World Cup) and portraits of the Little Big band and the caption "Iran, Russia with you" in Russian and Farsi.*

*Publications about the video were published by various media outlets, such as Komsomolskaya Pravda, Rossiyskaya Gazeta, Gazeta.ru, Obshchestvennaya Sluzhba Novostei, Federal News Agency, Chempionat, Sports.ru and Moskvich Mag. Some of these outlets claim that the video appeared in Moscow on November 29, the day of the match. The video also went viral on social media sites, such as VKontakte, where it was posted by NR (224,000 views), Football | World Cup 2022 (136,000), Champions Cup | Football (100,000) and Moskva 24 (38,000). On Telegram, the video was shared by Novosti Moskvyy (500,000 views), NR (98,000), Moskva 24 (83,000), Vezhlivye Lyudi SVO (80,000), Moskva Live (66,000), Moskovskaya Khronika (54,000) and others. Other examples can be found on Twitter ([here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)).*

[video embedded]

Source: social media

To begin with, Provereno did not find any other recording of the event taken from any different angles; the same video was distributed on social media and by the outlets. If the appeal to the Iranian national team had been repeated more than once on the media façade in the very center of Moscow, it is unlikely that no one would have recorded this commercial and posted it online. At least, we have not managed to find any other video or even verbal evidence from an eyewitness. That the video was shown just once also seems improbable.

Two other observations are noteworthy. Firstly, there is a mistake in the phrase in Farsi, which was reported by a journalist (and Iranologist by training) Yevgeny Kiselyov. "Instead of روسیه (rusie, Russia) it is روسیه (rusbe) but, unfortunately, this does not mean anything," he noted on Facebook. Secondly, the video contains portraits of Ilya Prusikin and Sofya Tayurskaya, frontmen of the Little Big band. They left Russia after February 24, 2022, and have repeatedly opposed the "special military operation" in Ukraine. The band's website

states that they are currently based in Los Angeles. At the time of publication, the two musicians did not comment on the video on their social media.

According to Provereno analysis, the earliest publication with this video appeared on November 28 at 11:50 (UTC+3) on a Telegram channel called Putin TG team and gained more than 80,000 views. Earlier, this channel has been repeatedly caught distributing fake covers of foreign satirical magazines such as Charlie Hebdo and Titanic; once, the earliest entry with a fake cover (that time, on a rocket fall in Poland) was published there.

The media façade at the Oktyabr Cinema is managed by the LBL communication agency. In a telephone conversation with Provereno, the company's press service denied the placing of any commercial dedicated to the football match between Iran and the United States. According to Kirill Rukov, editor-in-chief at The Village, on the evening of November 29, two reporters were on Novy Arbat Street and did not see the video on the screen. "We can confirm that this is a fake. We found out about this yesterday — from news on Telegram that was sent to us," the LBL press service explained them later. It should be noted that The Village had previously reported the video's appearance but later deleted this entry.

Provereno analyzed the viral video and noticed several details allowing us to assert that the viral video was faked. It starts with a commercial for KGBT+, a novel by Viktor Pelevin, and during the very first second of recording the screen switches to the video about Iran and the United States. At this moment, it can be seen that part of the screen seems to be sliding down. Moreover, a white spot appears under the media façade, and a dark spot forms above it (see the gif below, pay attention to the right part of the screen).

[video embedded]

Source: Provereno & Social media collage

The viral commercial ends at the 16th second of the tape, and after that an advertisement for the new album by Soda Luv appears on the screen. If you look again at the same area of the video on the right side of the media façade, you can see how the dark and white spots disappear, while the bottom line of the screen becomes the same as at the beginning of the video (see the gif below).

[video embedded]

Source: Provereno & Social media collage

[image]

Source: Provereno & Social media collage

The contortion of the media façade allows us to conclude that the whole part with the appeal to Irani is simply a digital (and pretty careless) overlaying of the original video.

**Verdict:** Fake