



**FACT SHEET PART 8**

**Sharp Democratic Backsliding and Continuous Systemic Repression in Georgia**

**The document includes major developments from June 14 to June 27, 2025**

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## Introduction

The pro-European protests continue with daily rallies in Tbilisi and other cities of Georgia. The protesters have two main demands: **1. release of all regime prisoners; 2. holding of new elections.**

In response, the Georgian Dream continues systemic repression against demonstrators, civil servants, civil society organizations, media, political opponents, and other critical voices.

Considering the complexity of the situation in Georgia, the number of facts worthy of attention is increasing daily. This document presents the most alarming developments, structured to reveal the sequence of events and their interrelations, **covering the period from June 14 to June 27, 2025.**

The information provided below is based on publicly available sources. Where sources are not originally available in English, IDFI provides an unofficial translation.

### 1. Ongoing protests across the country continue despite systemic repression

This chapter focuses on major incidents during the recent phase of the protests and the forms of repression used against critical voices. The list of issues covered in this part is not exhaustive, as many things happen during the day. More detailed day-by-day information on protests and repression can be found in English on Civil Georgia's Live Blog: Resistance 2025 (Vol. 2 and Vol. 3).

#### 1.1. Repressive mechanisms undermining freedom of expression

As noted in the previous Fact Sheet, GD MP Davit Matikashvili [filed](#) a complaint against activist Lekso Samkharadze for "insulting a political official." The case concerns an [incident](#) that occurred on June 2, when Samkharadze chanted a protest slogan directed at Matikashvili, which included offensive language toward members of the Georgian Dream party. A court hearing in the case was scheduled for June 13. On the same day, Samkharadze [informed](#) the judge's assistant that he would not be attending the hearing. On June 14, it was [reported](#) that Lekso Samkharadze was arrested and taken away on the street. Later, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) [stated](#) that on June 13, Judge Manuchar Tsatsua had sentenced Samkharadze to **14 days of administrative detention**, and he had been arrested to enforce this court decision.

Furthermore, as noted in the previous Fact Sheet, 18 individuals [were summoned](#) to the court based on the [administrative complaint](#) submitted by the Georgian Dream faction to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The posts published on social media, which serve as the basis for fining citizens, used terms such as “slave,” “despicable coward,” “traitor to the homeland,” “modern Bolshevik,” and others to refer to members of the Georgian Dream.

Within this process, the imposition of fines on politicians, journalists, activists, and representatives of civil society for expressing their views on social media continued during the period covered by this document.

Between June 17 and 25, the following individuals were fined 4,000 GEL (approximately 1255 EUR) each: [Tamar Chergoleishvili](#), [Ana Subeliani](#), [Baia Patariaia](#), [Vika Bukia](#), [Elene Khoshtaria](#), [Vakho Sanaia](#), [Davit Katsarava](#), and [Levan Khabeishvili](#).

On June 24, it was [reported](#) that a citizen was fined 2,500 GEL (approximately 784 EUR) for a **comment** made on a social media post. [According to the lawyer](#), the **comment** concerned a representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs who represents the ministry in court.

## 1.2. Repressive administrative proceedings against protest participants and politicians continue

On June 23, activist Albi Kordzaia [announced](#) that she had been informed about the initiation of administrative proceedings against her. According to her, the case concerns an incident that occurred near the courthouse on May 22 during Zurab “Girchi” Japaridze’s court hearing, when police [detained](#) Albi Kordzaia and Salome Kenchiashvili. [According to the lawyers](#), the activists are accused of disobeying a lawful police order and petty hooliganism. Notably, on June 4, Albi Kordzaia was [sentenced](#) to **10 days of administrative detention** on charges of insulting GD MP Tea Tsulukiani.

On June 25, Judge Zviad Tsekvava [fined](#) Elene Khoshtaria, leader of the “Droa” party, 5,000 GEL (approximately 1568 EUR) on charges of petty hooliganism and disobedience to police orders. The case concerns an incident that occurred on March 28, when Khoshtaria was [arrested](#) during a protest. Khoshtaria [stated](#) that after her arrest, police inflicted injuries on her jaw and teeth, and while in temporary detention, they handcuffed her and fully stripped her. On June 27, Khoshtaria [went](#) on a hunger strike. She made her [announcement](#) outside the parliament building on Tbilisi's Rustaveli Avenue - the central location of continuous pro-European protest, stating it was her [“firm decision”](#). “Now, when the regime has launched a new attack and

arrested practically all of the opposition, I want to declare a new form of struggle — one that is not emotional or thoughtless, but victory-oriented,” she [stated](#) while communicating with media representatives.

### 1.3. Vehicle ramming into protest participants

On June 22, a passenger car [drove](#) at high speed into a crowd of pro-European demonstrators. [According to eyewitnesses](#), the vehicle deliberately hit two protest participants despite being warned by the police present at the scene. One of the injured, Mariam Mekantsishvili, [sustained](#) a pelvic contusion and a fractured rib. She [stated](#) that protesters were able to identify the person driving the vehicle.

On June 24, it was reported that the Ministry of Internal Affairs [arrested](#) one individual in connection with the incident under criminal procedure. The investigation [is underway](#) under the article concerning beating or other forms of violence against two or more persons, **which is punishable by a fine, community service, or imprisonment for up to two years.**

### 1.4. Imposition of fines on journalists and protest participants for “artificially blocking the road” continues

The imposition of fines on participants in the non-stop protest, which has been **ongoing for more than 212 consecutive days**, continues for “artificially blocking the road.”

Furthermore, media actors are being [fined](#) 5,000 GEL (approximately 1568 EUR) under this charge while they were performing their professional duties during the protest. Among the latest to be added to this list is a journalist from the TV Channel “Formula”. [According to the “Formula”](#), their journalist, Anamaria Gelitashvili, has been fined for the [second time](#), for “artificially blocking the road” while she was performing professional duties.

## 2. Adoption and/or initiation of other restrictive measures for the consolidation of the Georgian Dream's systemic repression

The Georgian Dream and institutions under its effective control continue to announce and/or adopt further repressive measures against critical voices.

The following chapter aims to provide information about the recent decisions/initiatives aimed at further targeting demonstrators, media, civil servants, CSOs, political opponents, and other critical voices.

## 2.1. Application of repressive mechanisms by the Anti-Corruption Bureau against civil society organizations

On June 18, during a briefing of civil society organizations, it was [revealed](#) that five non-governmental organizations had been served with court orders, **issued based on motions of the Anti-Corruption Bureau**, requiring them to provide various types of detailed information to the Bureau. On June 19 and 23, three additional organizations reported [receiving](#) similar court orders. As of June 27, according to the publicly available information, **a total of eight civil society organizations** had been served with court orders requesting information. These organizations are: Transparency International – Georgia, Civil Society Foundation, Sapari, Economic Policy Research Center (EPRC), Georgia’s Future Academy, the Media Development Foundation (MDF), Social Justice Center (SJC), and the International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED).

The Anti-Corruption Bureau [is requesting](#) information from commercial banks, the Revenue Service, and the CSOs.

Banks must provide transaction records for the organizations **covering January 1, 2024, through June 10, 2025**. The Revenue Service must supply tax-related information for the **same period**.

The civil society organizations are [required](#) to provide all contracts, including grant agreements, entered into from January 1, 2024, onward, whether with foreign donors or Georgian individuals. Additionally, the organizations are [required](#) to submit “any financial and legal documentation” related to such contracts, including: detailed information about activities carried out under the agreements, such as a description of the activity, its purpose, date of implementation, location, time, **beneficiaries and participating persons (name, surname, and personal number)**. They are also [requested](#) to provide interim and final report of the contract agreement (“narrative report”), “photo and video materials depicting the activities,” “relevant correspondence and communication related to the agreements, if there exists an agreement between the parties in the form of correspondence,” organizations' social media addresses and related expenses, and other documentation.

On June 19, the online media outlet Netgazeti [reported](#) that the Anti-Corruption Bureau indicated in its motion also the “[Foreign Agents Registration Act](#)” (that entered into force on May 31, 2025). Previously, it [was known](#) that the Bureau was requesting information under three laws: the Law of Georgia on the Fight Against Corruption, the Law on Grants, and the

**Law on Political Associations of Citizens.** However, [according to Netgazeti](#), the Bureau's motions reveal that it also relied on the "Foreign Agents Registration Act" as a basis for its requests, even though this law is "not mentioned at all in the court orders."

On June 18, the head of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Razhden Kuprashvili, [stated](#) that claims suggesting the Bureau is improperly requesting documents from NGOs that contain citizens' personal and professional confidential information are deliberate disinformation. On June 19, GD MP Archil Gorduladze [said](#) that to verify how specific funds were spent, it is necessary to have information about the beneficiaries: "Otherwise, if such a mechanism does not exist, any non-governmental organization can claim they helped people, while in reality the money may have been spent on acquiring materials for Molotov cocktails or buying fireworks."

On June 23, the Anti-Corruption Bureau [issued](#) a statement on the matter, noting that "the information requested by court order pertains solely to the activities carried out within the framework of grant agreements, and does not involve requesting personal data of individuals receiving services from these organizations, including information related to their health or legal advocacy. We would like to once again emphasize that such information will not be requested either during the current or any future legal proceedings."

Notably, on June 24, Transparency International - Georgia [published](#) part of the court order, which **explicitly mentions beneficiaries**. The organization [indicated](#) that "Razhden Kuprashvili is lying when he says that they are not requesting personal information of our beneficiaries. The document clearly states that they are requesting personal data of the beneficiaries under our protection".

The CSOs have [appealed](#) the court orders requesting information to the Court of Appeals. Further details on these proceedings are not publicly available at this stage.

## **2.2. The sessions of the "Parliamentary Investigative Commission" and the criminal proceedings for refusing to appear before it continue**

The "Parliamentary Investigative Commission," whose mandate is "to investigate the activities of the United National Movement committed from 2003 to this day," continues its sessions. Attending a session at the commission's request is mandatory, and failure to comply carries criminal liability, punishable by a **fine or imprisonment for up to one year**, as well as disqualification from holding office or engaging in specific activities for up to three years.

**Judgments have begun to be delivered in criminal cases initiated for refusing to appear before the commission.** On June 23, Judge Jvebe Nachkebia [sentenced](#) Zurab "Girchi" Japaridze, leader

of the party “Girchi - More Freedom,” to **7 months of imprisonment**. On the same day, Judge Zviad Sharadze [sentenced](#) Mamuka Khazaradze and Badri Japaridze, leaders of the party “Lelo,” to **8 months of imprisonment** each. On June 24, Judge Nino Galustashvili [sentenced](#) Giorgi Vashadze, leader of the party “Strategy Aghmashenebeli,” to **7 months of imprisonment**. On June 27, Judge Nino Galustashvili sentenced [Givi Targamadze](#) to **7 months of imprisonment** and [Nika Melia](#) to **8 months of imprisonment**. In addition to imprisonment, all of them were [banned](#) from holding an appointed office in public service for 2 years. (Among those imprisoned based on the judgments of the first instance court are politicians who paid the bail imposed as a measure of restraint.)

**Furthermore, new criminal proceedings have been initiated against some individuals already in pre-trial detention for refusing to appear before the commission.** On June 20, Nika Melia, leader of the “Akhal” party, was [charged](#) with splashing water on a judge. Melia is [accused](#) of contempt of court. On June 24, it was revealed that a new charge was also [brought](#) against Irakli Okruashvili. [According to Netgazeti](#), Okruashvili has been charged with a threat to murder. [According to his lawyer](#), the case concerns an incident that occurred several years ago, although the details are unknown to him.

**In parallel with the criminal proceedings, the commission continues its sessions, with its mandate [extended](#) once again, this time until August 5.** The Commission once again [summoned](#) several opposition politicians: [Giorgi Gakharia](#), Mamuka Khazaradze, Nika Gvaramia, and Giorgi Vashadze. Giorgi Gakharia had already [appeared](#) before the Commission once. Giorgi Vashadze and Mamuka Khazaradze [refused](#) to appear, which [led](#) to the initiation of criminal proceedings against them and the [imposition](#) of prison sentences of 7 and 8 months, respectively. Nika Gvaramia also [refused](#) to appear the first time and later [declined](#) to pay the bail imposed in an ongoing criminal case against him, [resulting](#) in his arrest on June 13. It is noteworthy that Khazaradze and Gvaramia have been [summoned](#) to the Commission’s session on June 30 to provide explanations regarding **“actions carried out to the detriment of Georgia’s foreign policy goals between 2012 and 2025.”**

Giorgi Gakharia, on the other hand, has been [summoned](#) for June 23 in connection with a [decision](#) made during his tenure as Minister of Internal Affairs to install a police checkpoint near the occupation line in the village of Chorchana. [According to the Commission’s chairperson](#), Tea Tsulukiani, the Commission will further investigate issues related to Gakharia’s resignation, his transition to the opposition, and his party-related activities on the international stage.

On June 14, the Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia [released](#) a statement indicating that an investigation is underway into acts of sabotage, attempted sabotage under aggravating circumstances, aiding hostile activities of foreign organizations or organizations under foreign control, and mobilizing funds for actions directed against the constitutional order and national



security of Georgia (the punishment for these crimes ranges from 2 to 15 years of imprisonment). According to the [statement](#), among other issues, the subject of the investigation is the conduct of Giorgi Gakharia, then Minister of Internal Affairs and now the leader of the opposition party “Gakharia – For Georgia”, in August 2019, specifically, the installation of a police checkpoint near the occupation line in the village of Chorchana.

On June 22, the party “Gakharia – For Georgia” [released](#) a statement, which reads: “The commission has been notified twice in writing that Giorgi Gakharia is again willing to participate in the session. However, considering that he is currently abroad on a pre-planned visit, he has expressed readiness to take part in the session remotely, in online format. This format is, on the one hand, provided for by the commission's regulations, while on the other hand, it was previously suggested by the commission itself during the first summons in April. Nevertheless, on June 22, we were officially informed by the commission that it refuses to question Giorgi Gakharia remotely and insists on his physical presence at the June 23 session.”

It is noteworthy that on June 23, Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations, Davit Bakradze, was [questioned](#) by the commission in an online format. [According to commission member Tengiz Sharmanashvili](#), the commission questions witnesses and victims remotely, but since Gakharia himself is “responsible” for certain events, he should not be questioned in an online format.

On June 23, Gakharia did not appear at the commission session. [According to the chairperson of the commission, Tea Tsulukiani](#), Gakharia had confirmed his willingness to attend the session and had not informed the commission in advance of his intention to leave the country. The commission members [agreed](#) that Giorgi Gakharia would not be offered remote participation again; however, no commission member supported the idea of referring the case to the Prosecutor’s Office. Ultimately, the commission [decided](#) to summon Giorgi Gakharia to its session on July 2, where he will be required to appear in person. In response, on June 23, “Gakharia – For Georgia” representative Berdia Sichinava [stated](#) that Giorgi Gakharia is ready to attend the commission’s session on **July 2 in an online format**.

Notably, on June 26, 2025, it was [announced](#) that, on June 30, the Procedural Issues and Rules Committee will discuss the early termination of the mandates of “Gakharia – For Georgia” party members and prepare a corresponding conclusion.

### 2.3. New set of repressive legislative amendments initiated and adopted by Georgian Dream

On June 26, 2025, Georgian Dream adopted several sets of legislative amendments, a large part of which was adopted in an expedited manner.

**Based on the [amendments](#) to the Law of Georgia on Freedom of Speech and Expression, adopted in an expedited manner:**

- The definition of “defamation” has been revised: the aspect of “causing harm to a person” has been removed. Under the new definition, defamation is considered to be a “statement that contains a substantially false fact and damages a person’s reputation.”
- In defamation disputes, the burden of proof now lies with the defendant rather than the claimant.
- The rule has been abolished, according to which it was inadmissible for the refusal by the defendant to disclose professional secrets or their source in matters of freedom of speech restriction to become the sole basis for making a decision against them.
- Content regulation of expression becomes permissible in cases of insult in public space, whereas previously this was permissible only in cases of face-to-face insult.
- The provision has been abolished, which excluded the restriction of freedom of expression on the grounds of protecting privacy and personal data in cases where the dissemination of information is necessary for the implementation of public self-governance in a democratic state.
- A person will be exempt from liability for “defamation” of a public figure only if they prove that, prior to disseminating the “false fact,” they “took all necessary and reasonable measures to verify the accuracy of the information and were unaware of its falsity”.
- The possibility of full or partial exemption from liability (qualified privilege) for disseminating a statement containing a substantially false fact, previously allowed by law under certain circumstances, has been completely abolished.
- Amendments have also been made to the [procedural legislation](#) regarding defamation cases. Defamation cases have been added to the list of cases that the court must review in an expedited manner, within one month.
- A new [subsection](#) has been added to the Civil Procedure Code regulating legal proceedings related to defamation.

According to the [statement](#) made by GD MP Davit Matikashvili on June 25, 2025, the above-mentioned **amendments will also apply to the statements made 100 days before the regulation comes into effect, if the dispute is not already initiated.**

While assessing the legislative amendments, the Social Justice Center [indicated](#) that “based on the latest legislative initiatives of Georgian Dream, restrictions on freedom of speech and expression and censorship will be consolidated at the legislative level and will radically weaken the guarantees for protecting freedom of expression and democracy in the country.”

**Based on the [amendments](#) (the list provided below is not exhaustive) to the Organic Law of Georgia on Common Courts, adopted in an expedited manner:**

- The number of judge members in the High Council of Justice increases from 9 to 12. The Independent Inspector's Service will be abolished from September 1, 2025, and disciplinary proceedings against judges will be led by the Council's Secretary. The terms and powers of court chairpersons and heads of collegiums/chambers will be extended, and the position of deputy court chairperson will be restored. The prohibition on electing more than 4 Council members in any 6-month period is abolished.
- “Improper performance of duties” returns as a disciplinary offense, and judges' right to demand publicity of disciplinary processes is abolished. The measure for disciplinary penalties increases, specifically, salary deduction from 10% to 50%.
- Photo-video recording and broadcasting in court buildings, including court yards, is prohibited and will be available only to courts and persons authorized by them. **Media and journalists will be allowed to video record sessions only if the High Council of Justice decides so.** Photography by journalists is completely prohibited. Judicial acts will become public for relevant cases only after final decisions are made. The obligation for publicity of a whole range of decisions made by the High Council of Justice is abolished.
- A judge's salary without supplements ranged from 4,000 to 7,000 GEL. With the changes, salaries will increase in the range of 10,512 to 14,600 GEL (figures are indicated without salary supplements/bonuses). The compensation principle has changed, and a judge's salary has been tied to the basic official allowance of the respective year's budget (with coefficients of 7.2-10).

Several Georgian civil society organizations, while assessing the amendments adopted to the Organic Law on Common Courts, [indicated](#) that “these amendments substantially expand and simplify mechanisms for punishing judges, thereby further strengthening the power of the judicial clan. At the same time, the amendments return to the reality of 2007-2013 in

deteriorated form and practically completely prohibit providing documented information to the public about judicial processes.”

**Based on the [amendments](#) adopted in an expedited manner to the Law of Georgia on National Security Policy Planning and Coordination**, the National Security Council apparatus will be liquidated on September 1, 2025. The information on the initiative concerning the abolishment of the National Security Council was [revealed](#) on June 17. Under the [amendments](#) adopted, “the coordinating body for national security policy planning is the Government of Georgia”.

**Based on the [amendments](#) adopted to the Law of Georgia on the Georgian Intelligence Service** from August 1, 2025, the Georgian Intelligence Service [will be transformed](#) into an agency within the scope of governance of the State Security Service.

On June 25, 2025 (before the final adoption of the amendments concerning the National Security Council and the Intelligence Service), the Social Justice Center [issued](#) the assessment indicating the following: “In recent weeks, the Georgian Dream has made several new decisions that have led to fundamental changes within the security system, including replacing the head of the State Security Service, launching a legislative process to merge the Intelligence Service with the State Security Service, and announcing the abolition of the National Security Council. All of this is another alarming signal on the path of democratic regression, consolidation of power, and strengthening of unaccountable security structures.”

#### **2.4. Abolishment of Special Investigation Service**

On June 24, Georgian Dream [adopted](#) legislative amendments in the third reading, based on which the Special Investigation Service [will cease](#) to exist from July 1, 2025, and its main investigative functions will be transferred to the Prosecutor’s Office. The Special Investigation Service was responsible for investigating particular crimes committed by law enforcement officers.

On June 26, 2025, several civil society organizations [issued](#) a joint statement dedicated to the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. Among other issues, the statement [indicates](#) the following: “It is noteworthy that the Special Investigation Service has been ineffective in fulfilling its obligations so far, thereby actually facilitating police violence, torture of peaceful demonstrators, and impunity for those guilty of inhumane treatment. However, the abolition of this institution once again demonstrates that the state is further worsening the existing institutional mechanisms against torture and police violence.”

## 2.5. The Communications Commission reviewed the Georgian Dream's complaints against critical broadcasters

As noted in the previous Fact Sheet, Georgian Dream [filed](#) complaints with the Communications Commission (ComCom) against the TV channels "Formula," "TV Pirveli," and "Mtavari Arkhi" (the latter currently operating on a website and social platforms only), citing their use of various terms during broadcasts and on social media while covering current events.

[According to the complaints](#) submitted by Georgian Dream, the use of terms such as "regime," "oligarchic regime," "pro-Russian political regime," "prisoners of the regime," "judicial clan," "so-called Speaker of Parliament," and other similar expressions constitutes a violation of the law, as they fail to distinguish between factual reporting and opinion. The complaints argue that the TV channels should face appropriate sanctions for using such terms.

On June 19, the substantive review of the complaints was [concluded](#). At the end of the session, the chair of the commission, Kakha Bekauri, [thanked](#) the complainant [Georgian Dream] for submitting the complaints. [According to him](#), the review process would allow the commission to gain experience and, at the same time, help broadcasters understand what constitutes a violation and what does not.

The commission [will announce](#) its decision on the Georgian Dream's complaints against TV channels "Formula" and "TV Pirveli" on July 3.

## 3. Updated information on the criminal cases initiated against the demonstrators

One of the most repressive measures taken by the Georgian Dream is the opening of criminal cases against **more than 50 demonstrators** in connection with the ongoing protests, while **no individual responsible for torture, inhuman treatment, or violence against peaceful demonstrators and media has been held criminally liable**.

Previously, criminal proceedings have also been initiated in connection with the April-May 2024 protests, and in the first week of February 2025, the first instance court completed a review of these criminal cases and [issued](#) judgments of conviction for all persons detained under criminal charges.

As of June 27, 2025, according to publicly available information, criminal investigations have been initiated against **56 individuals** in connection with the ongoing protests **from November 2024**. Out of the overall number, **42 persons are detained**. Between June 14 and June 27, 2025,

not a single case resulted in the substitution of pretrial detention with an alternative measure of restraint. **The judgments of conviction have already been delivered against [4 individuals](#), arrested since November 2024.**

Furthermore, as noted in the previous Fact Sheet, **two more criminal investigations** have been initiated in relation to the developments at the courthouse. In one of these cases, **one individual was charged and placed in pre-trial detention** (further details are provided in Section 3.2).

The following chapter provides major updates covering the period from **June 14 to June 27, 2025.**

### 3.1. New Criminal Case against the Poet Zviad Ratiani

On June 23, during a protest on Rustaveli Avenue, poet Zviad Ratiani was [arrested](#) under criminal charges. On June 25, the pro-government TV channel POSTV released [footage](#) allegedly depicting an altercation involving Zviad Ratiani and a police officer during which Ratiani allegedly slaps the officer in the face. He has been [charged](#) with assaulting a police officer - **an offense punishable by 4 to 7 years of imprisonment**. On June 25, Judge Arsen Kalatozishvili [ordered](#) pre-trial detention for Zviad Ratiani.

It is noteworthy that on the night of November 28-29, 2024, Zviad Ratiani was [detained](#) under administrative charges during a protest. Video footage [shows](#) police officers physically assaulting him at the moment of arrest. Following the detention, he was [sentenced](#) to 8 days of administrative imprisonment. Ratiani [was](#) a victim of police ill-treatment also back in 2017.

### 3.2. Criminal charges brought against teacher and activist Nino Datashvili

As noted in the previous Fact Sheet, on June 11, the Ministry of Internal Affairs [launched](#) a criminal investigation against Nino Datashvili, who was [arrested](#) and charged on June 20. Based on the formal filing of charges, the exact legal qualification of the accusation against Datashvili was clarified. She is [charged](#) with allegedly assaulting a court bailiff while the latter was performing official duties - **an offense punishable by 4 to 7 years of imprisonment**.

On June 21, Judge Eka Barbakadze [ordered](#) her pre-trial detention. [According to the Prosecutor's Office](#), there was a risk of Datashvili committing a new offense, influencing witnesses, obstructing the investigation, and fleeing. Partnership for Human Rights (PHR), representing Datashvili's interests, [stated](#) that during the court proceedings, prosecutors were

focused on accusing Datashvili, rather than demonstrating whether there were grounds for imposing pretrial detention on her. Despite this, [according to PHR](#), the judge did not find it interesting to examine why it was necessary to detain Datashvili, including failing to examine why there was a possibility of fleeing in circumstances where Datashvili knew 10 days before her arrest that an investigation had been launched against her and she had not attempted to flee.

It is noteworthy that before the imposition of pre-trial detention, Nino Datashvili [asked](#) the judge to allow her to remain free for at least one month, as her child is taking the Unified National Exams for university admission and she wished to be by his side during this period. Additionally, on June 23, a statement was [released](#) by a group of teachers expressing solidarity with Nino Datashvili and claiming that she is being subjected to politically motivated prosecution. The teachers also [called](#) for the revocation of the pre-trial detention decision.

The Tbilisi Court of Appeals [upheld](#) the decision made by the Tbilisi City Court concerning her pre-trial detention.

The case concerns an incident that [occurred](#) on June 9 inside a court building, where a confrontation took place between Nino Datashvili and court bailiffs. [According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs](#), Datashvili attempted to enter an ongoing court hearing, which the bailiffs did not allow. [According to Datashvili](#), the conflict arose after the bailiffs prohibited her from moving freely within the court premises. The footage [shows](#) court bailiffs forcefully removing Datashvili from the courthouse and dragging her on the ground, during which she tries to break free from the officers. During the struggle, she allegedly [hits](#) one of the officers. At the court hearing, Datashvili [stated](#) that she considers herself a victim, as she had bruises and difficulty walking following the incident. She also [noted](#) that the incident has its own underlying context, which she intends to substantiate with supporting evidence.

### 3.3. Key developments in the case of Mzia Amaghlobeli

Court hearings are ongoing in the case of Mzia Amaghlobeli, founder of the online media outlets “Batumelebi” and “Netgazeti”, who is [detained](#) under criminal charges (possible term of imprisonment: 4-7 years) for slapping Batumi Police Chief Irakli Dgebuadze. At the hearing held on June 23, the defense lawyer [spoke](#) about Amaghlobeli’s **significant deterioration in vision**.

On June 26, the Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association (GYLA) [announced](#) that the European Court of Human Rights has commenced the substantive examination of the complaint submitted on behalf of Mzia Amaghlobeli, which was filed on April 28. [According to GYLA](#), the

Court began reviewing the case under an expedited procedure. Additionally, in its correspondence, the Court [noted](#) that the case may be granted the status of an “Impact Case.”

The application before the European Court of Human Rights on behalf of Mzia Amaghlobeli was [lodged](#) by GYLA on April 28. The complaint [argues](#) that “the fundamental rights of the European Convention on Human Rights, such as - the right to liberty and security (Article 5 of the Convention), the right to a fair trial (Article 6 of the Convention), the right to respect for private and family life (Article 8 of the Convention), freedom of expression (Article 10 of the Convention), Article 13 of the Convention in conjunction with Articles 8 and 10 (right to an effective remedy), and the limitation on use of restrictions on rights (Article 18 of the Convention), have been violated against Mzia Amaghlobeli.” Furthermore, GYLA’s statement of April 28, [indicated](#) that “the application sent to the European Court of Human Rights contains only a part of the violations committed against Mzia Amaghlobeli.” The case review regarding the other violations is still [ongoing](#) at the national level. The potential dispute in the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on those violations will be possible after the national proceedings have concluded.

#### **3.4. 11 defendants were assigned court-appointed lawyers against their will**

As the expiration of the 9-month pre-trial detention period for criminal cases initiated against protesters since November 2024 approaches, court hearings are being conducted intensively.

As of June 27, the most recent hearing for 11 individuals charged with participating in group violence was [held](#) on June 26. Before the hearing, all 11 defendants were [assigned](#) lawyers of the [Legal Aid Service](#) (state-funded legal entity) by order of Judge Nino Galustashvili, against their will.

Netgazeti [explains](#) that the judge is rushing to deliver a verdict in the case, as the 9-month pre-trial detention period is about to expire, and in the absence of a judgment, the defendants would have to be released from custody. Consequently, Netgazeti [notes](#) that the appointment of lawyers, who are guaranteed to attend all scheduled hearings, was intended to ensure the uninterrupted continuation of court proceedings.

Before the June 26 Hearing, GYLA [responded](#) to Judge Galustashvili’s decision and noted that it constitutes a serious interference with the defendants’ right to legal defense, as they had explicitly refused the appointment of lawyers from Legal Aid Service, and there was no legal basis for imposing such a decision. Judge Galustashvili’s decision was also [criticized](#) by the



Georgian Bar Association, claiming that it sets a dangerous precedent that threatens the proper conduct of a fair trial.

At the hearing held on June 26, three lawyers from Legal Aid Service, Irakli Benia, Salome Ardoteli, and Dali Tushishvili, [appeared](#) before the court. All three [requested](#) recusal and explained to the court that they could not effectively represent individuals who do not trust them. **They also [noted](#) that there was no legal basis for their appointment in this case, that none of the defense lawyers had engaged in tactics to deliberately delay the proceedings, and that the court should not expect a lawyer from Legal Aid Service to attend a hearing solely because a private lawyer is absent.**

The defendants also [filed](#) motions to remove the lawyers appointed against their will. Judge Nino Galustashvili [restricted](#) both the lawyers from Legal Aid Service and private lawyers from reading aloud the legal provisions that define the grounds for appointing lawyers from Legal Aid Service. Ultimately, the judge [denied](#) the motions submitted by the defendants and the lawyers and upheld the decision to assign the lawyers on a mandatory basis.