

## Georgia Rustaveli Protest Marks 200<sup>th</sup> Consecutive Day

By Messenger Staff

On June 15, Georgia marked the 200<sup>th</sup> consecutive day of nationwide protests against the ruling Georgian Dream party, with demonstrators once again flooding Tbilisi's Rustaveli Avenue and gathering in several regional cities. Protesters called for the resignation of the government, the release of political prisoners, and a rerun of the October 2024 parliamentary elections, which they consider illegitimate.

In Tbilisi, protestors assembled in two key locations — one group near the government administration building and another marching from Republic Square to Parliament. Demonstrations also took place in Batumi, Gori, Kutaisi, Telavi, Zugdidi, Akhaltsikhe, and Chkhorotsku. Despite ongoing repression, the turnout showed no signs of waning.

Georgian Dream's response has grown increasingly punitive in recent weeks. Activists, opposition members, and journalists have faced detentions and fines under newly passed laws criminalizing "insults" toward officials and the blocking of roads. On June 14, activist Aleksandre Samkharadze was sentenced to 14 days in detention for shouting protest slogans near a ruling party MP. Journalists including Ekaterine Mishveladze and Dea Mamiseishvili have been fined thousands of lari for social media posts and banners deemed



insulting. Earlier this week, protester Mate Devidze was sentenced to 4.5 years in prison for allegedly assaulting police during a demonstration. His case sparked renewed outrage, with his sister Elene Devidze addressing a mass rally demanding his release.

Despite the growing pressure, grassroots efforts have intensified. In Tbilisi's districts of Varketili and Sanzona, local pro-

test walks were held in the days leading up to the 200th day. Participants distributed protest literature, including printed letters from imprisoned activists, and encouraged continued resistance. In Telavi, protestors marched specifically in support of Mate Devidze, signaling growing solidarity between the capital and the regions.

The government's broadening use of legal tools to suppress dis-

sent has drawn criticism from local civil society groups and international observers. Critics argue that the laws being used to detain and fine protesters are politically motivated and aimed at silencing opposition. However, the government maintains it is acting within the law to preserve order.

As the protest movement enters its seventh month, its demands remain unchanged: the

resignation of the Georgian Dream-led government, the release of those they consider political prisoners, and new parliamentary elections. Despite arrests and escalating legal pressure, the momentum behind the demonstrations remains strong. The next steps for both the government and the protest movement are uncertain, but what is clear is that Georgia's political crisis is far from over.

By Messenger Staff

## Prosecutor's Office Investigates Chorchana Incident as Sabotage, Questions Former Security Chief



Georgia's Prosecutor's Office has confirmed that current government official and former State Security Service head, Vakhtang Gomelauri, has been questioned as a witness in an ongoing investigation linked to the 2019 incident near the occupation line in the village of Chorchana.

The investigation centers on actions taken by then-Interior Minister and later Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia on August 24, 2019, during a sensitive stand-off in the area bordering Russian-occupied territory. Authorities are now reviewing whether those actions may have constituted sabotage or posed threats to national security.

According to the Prosecutor's Office, the case is being pursued under several serious charges, including sabotage, attempted sabotage under aggravating circumstances, assisting hostile foreign entities, and mobilizing financial support for activities targeting Georgia's constitutional order and national security. These fall under Articles 318, 319, and 321<sup>^</sup>2 of the Georgian Criminal Code.

Gomelauri, who was head of the State Security Service at the time of the incident, appeared before investigators as part

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# Prosecutor's Office Investigates Chorchana Incident as Sabotage, Questions Former Security Chief

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of the broader inquiry. The controversial deployment of a Georgian checkpoint near the occupation line in Chorchana in 2019 has been a point of political and legal contention ever since.

The Prosecutor's Office also noted that a parliamentary investigative commission is examining the same event. Giorgi Gakharia has already appeared before that commission to provide explanations.

Authorities state that the investigation is ongoing and that further updates will be provided to the public in due course.

## The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

### Majority of Georgians Support Ongoing Protests, ISSA Study Finds



More than half of Georgia's population backs the continuation of anti-government protests, according to the latest nationwide survey by the Institute for Social Studies and Analysis (ISSA). The study, conducted between May 5 and 20,

reveals that 53% of respondents support the ongoing demonstrations, with 32% expressing strong approval.

In Georgia's regions, support remains high. While 46.5% favor the protests, 36.5% oppose them. Notably, the proportion of those firmly for and firmly against the protests is almost equal outside the capital.

The findings are based on face-to-face interviews with 2,000 adults across the country. The survey has a margin of error of  $\pm 2.2\%$  and a 95% confidence level. Responses were weighted according to key demographics — such as age, gender, education level, and place of residence — as well as voting patterns from the 2024 parliamentary elections.

The research was conducted by ISSA in collaboration with the U.S.-based Rosner Research LLC.

### Eter Liparteliani Becomes Georgia's First Female Judo World Champion

Eter Liparteliani has made history by becoming the first Georgian woman to win a gold medal at the Judo World Championship. Competing in Budapest, Liparteliani claimed the world champion

title after defeating Japan's Momo Tamaoki by ippon in the final match.

The Georgian judoka showcased dominant form throughout the tournament, winning every bout by ippon. On her path to the final, she overcame Ju Kim (South

ing a decisive victory over Tamaoki in the final.

The 2025 Judo World Championship has been underway in Budapest since June 13, bringing together top athletes from around the globe. Liparteliani's



Korea), Daria Kurbonmamadova (Russia), Pihla Salonen (Finland), and Maýsa Pardayeva (Turkmenistan), before securing a decisive victory over Tamaoki in the final.

The 2025 Judo World Championship has been underway in Budapest since June 13, bringing together top athletes from around the globe. Liparteliani's achievement marks a historic milestone for Georgian judo and sets a new standard for future generations.

# Conferment of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette – Dr. Eter Svanidze, Principal of Georgian School Tbilisi

On June 12, at the Ambassador's official residence, Ambassador Ishizuka Hideki held a ceremony to confer the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette to Dr. Eter Svanidze, Principal of Georgian School Tbilisi and one of the recipients of 2025 Spring Conferment of Decorations on Foreign Nationals.

Since the establishment of the Georgian School Tbilisi in 1995, Dr. Eter Svanidze, as a principal, has been dedicated to Japanese language teaching and Japanese culture promotion among her pupils and students, which helped to deepen the mutual understanding between Japan and Georgia. In 2022, in recognition of its contribution to Japanese language education in Georgia, the school was awarded the Foreign Minister's Commendation. This year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the Japanese language education at the school.

Ambassador Ishizuka appreciated Dr. Svanidze's longstanding dedication to the development of Japanese language education and cultural exchange and presented her with the order and a letter of commendation. Dr. Svanidze then expressed her heartfelt gratitude.



Weather

Monday, June 16

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 25°C

Night Clear

Low: 14°C

Tuesday, June 17

Day Clear

High: 25°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 14°C

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Founded by Prof. Zaza Gachechiladze

Tamar Gachechiladze Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000

E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge

http://www.messenger.com.ge/

Nino Metreveli Commercial Director

Mariam Mchedlidze Editor-in-Chief

Khatuna Gogichaishvili Layout Designer, Photographer

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