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Human Rights Hub

# BILAAL DUISHVILI STORY

Bilaal Duishvili, a student, has been accused of noncompliance with a lawful order issued by a police officer and of committing an act of insult against a police officer (these alleged actions constitute a violation as prescribed under Article 173 of the Code of Administrative Offences).

Bilaal Duishvili was arrested on December 4, 2024, at approximately 03:42, near Republic Square. It is relevant to note that on December 3, 2024, Bilaal participated in a rally held on Rustaveli Avenue with his friends. Alongside other citizens, he protested against the government's alleged anti-Western policies, demanded the scheduling of new, legitimate elections, and called for the release of individuals reportedly detained unlawfully. Bilaal temporarily left the rally at approximately 23:00. Shortly after his departure, the first announcement instructing the dispersal of the rally was made on Rustaveli Avenue, followed by police intervention. Approximately 20 to 30 minutes before his arrest, Bilaal returned to the rally and was situated near the Biltmore Hotel, where many participants had gathered. Subsequently, law enforcement officers began another operation to disperse the protesters. Special forces units were stationed near the Blue Gallery, and a blockade was established at the roundabout near Republic Square. Media footage shows that, at 03:30, law enforcement used audible warnings followed by water cannons to disperse the demonstrators. Bilaal Duishvili, along with other protesters, moved in the direction of Rustaveli Metro. As they approached Republic Square and continued their march toward the metro station, special forces units began pursuing and detaining protesters. At approximately 03:42, Bilaal was detained. During his detention, he was reportedly forced to the ground and physically taken to a police detention vehicle.

Footage obtained by the media appears to show Bilaal Duishvili being pushed to the ground and physically restrained by approximately ten police officers. After his arrest, Bilaal was transported to a police cordon, where he was allegedly subjected to physical and verbal abuse; he was punched in the head and neck during this time.



Bilaal Duishvili was reportedly subjected to particular aggression by riot police, who repeatedly instructed him not to participate in future rallies. While detained, several riot police officers allegedly assaulted him inside a police minibus for approximately 15–20 minutes. Subsequently, he was handed over to a patrol crew and transported to a police station. During the arrest, Bilaal's wallet was reportedly taken, and his phone was either lost or stolen.

Upon arrival at the police station, Bilaal Duishvili underwent an external examination. Approximately 40 minutes later, it was determined that he required urgent medical attention. He was subsequently released from



custody with a written statement requiring his appearance in court and was handed over to medical personnel. Bilaal underwent a five-day course of treatment at Tbilisi Central Hospital. Medical evaluations revealed that he had sustained a broken nose, necessitating emergency surgery. Additionally, multiple bruises were documented on various parts of his body.

Several days after his arrest, Judge Zviad Tsekvava heard Bilaal Duishvili's case in court. Two police officers provided testimony against the defendant. Notably, their testimonies contained significant inconsistencies, which resulted from the officers' not being present at the scene of the arrest.

The police were unable to substantiate the allegation that Bilaal had insulted an officer. Despite this, Judge Tsekvava rendered a guilty verdict. However, the court ultimately decided to release Bilaal from administrative responsibility, issuing him only a verbal reprimand. The Special Investigation Service, tasked with investigating potential abuse of official authority and allegations of degrading or inhuman treatment, initiated an inquiry into Bilaal Duishvili's incident. The Service granted Bilaal the status of a victim in the investigation. However, despite this designation, neither the officers who detained him nor the police officers who testified against him in court were questioned during the course of the investigation.