



FRIEDRICH NAUMANN
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Human Rights Hub

DAVID IASASHVILI STORY

Davit Iasashvili, a former military officer, has been charged with petty hooliganism, failure to comply with a lawful order from a police officer, and insulting a police officer. Notably, he was among the first individuals to be arrested and subjected to physical violence during the protest. He was taken into custody on November 29, 2024, on Chichinadze Street, having arrived at the pro-European rally on November 28. In the early hours of November 29, between approximately 12:15 AM and 12:30 AM, an unidentified individual, allegedly a provocateur, threw a glass bottle onto Chichinadze Street, striking a police officer. As Davit and a nearby woman attempted to assist the injured officer, he observed that law enforcement personnel had withdrawn, thereby enabling masked individuals to approach. One of these masked individuals verbally abused the woman who had provided aid to the injured officer, while another forcibly seized Davit and dragged him into a group of police officers.

Approximately ten masked individuals forcibly attacked Davit, throwing him to the ground and repeatedly kicking him. It is presumed that his head was fractured during this assault. He was subsequently led through a police cordon, where multiple individuals continued to physically assault him. While attempting to protect himself by covering his head with his hands, some of the assailants expressed frustration, stating, 'How could you not hit him in the face?' Upon his continued attempt to shield himself, pepper spray was administered directly onto his hands and face. This chemical exposure resulted in severe burns to his hands, which were visibly damaged and caused persistent discomfort for four days. Due to the intense burning sensation, he was compelled to lower his hands, at which point he was struck in the face, sustaining a visible injury near his left eye socket. Furthermore, after being forcibly thrown to the ground once again, he was kicked in the back of the head by members of the special forces, inflicting a deep laceration that caused continuous and profuse bleeding. As a result of these injuries, his jacket, pants, and shoes were entirely soaked in blood.

Davit was subsequently placed in a police transport vehicle (minivan), where three additional detainees were brought in approximately two minutes later. One of the detainees repeatedly protested his arrest, identifying himself as a journalist and demanding an explanation. The journalist also directed attention to Davit's condition, stating that he was severely injured, bleeding heavily, and required medical assistance. However, Davit himself did not perceive the extent of his bleeding. He was thereafter transported to a nearby state facility with gray-barred windows, which, according to his account, housed a medical center. Upon arrival, it was observed that his mouth was covered in blood, he was experiencing significant nasal bleeding, and the wound on the back of his head was bleeding profusely. Medical personnel assessed his condition and concluded that his injuries were severe, formally recommending his transfer to a hospital for urgent medical intervention. One of the police officers, later identified in the administrative offense report as Davit's official detainer, coordinated his transfer to a medical facility. Two additional police officers accompanied and oversaw his transportation to the clinic.

The arresting officer, as identified in the official report, placed handcuffs on Davit, securing them behind his back. During transport, Davit requested that the handcuffs be repositioned to the front, and his request was granted. He was subsequently transported to the Caucasus Medical Center, located on Vazha-Pshavela Avenue, adjacent to the Module building.

At the medical center, Davit received first aid. He left the facility at approximately 05:00; however, he was required to wait at the clinic's cashier desk, where the staff apologized and demanded payment for the medical services rendered, totaling over 500 GEL.

After receiving medical treatment at the Caucasus Medical Center, Davit was transported to the Kakheti Highway, where he was held in detention until approximately 5:00–6:00 AM. During this time, authorities awaited confirmation regarding the appropriate detention facility for his transfer, and an administrative report was prepared. He was subsequently transported to the Zahesi Detention Center. During transit, due to the driver's fatigue, the vehicle nearly collided on two occasions. At approximately 7:00 AM, they arrived at the Zahesi Detention Center yard, where multiple detainee transport vehicles were lined up. Davit was then taken to the temporary detention facility, where he underwent a formal medical examination by a doctor before being placed in a cell, where he remained for 48 hours. Upon the completion of this period, he was transferred from the detention center to the court.

An administrative offense report was filed against Davit based on the actions outlined in Articles 166 and 173, Part 1 of the Code of Administrative Offences. The case was heard by Judge Koba Chagunava. During the proceedings, two police officers testified, although neither was the official detaining officer. No neutral evidence was presented to substantiate the allegations or confirm the commission of the offense. Despite the absence of corroborating evidence, the judge found Davit guilty, relying solely on the testimony of the police officers, and imposed a fine of 2,000 GEL.

It is noteworthy that the affected party's representatives provided the aforementioned details to the Special Investigation Service. The blood-stained clothing was submitted for forensic examination.

While in the detention center, Davit communicated with representatives of an international organization based in Strasbourg, as well as officials from the Public Defender's Office.

Based on the available information, the Special Investigation Service has commenced an investigation into the incident, specifically concerning potential abuse of authority. Furthermore, the actions of the police officer may, in conjunction with the abuse of authority, be subject to assessment as acts of torture and/or degrading or inhuman treatment.

Davit has been questioned by the Special Investigation Service; however, at this stage, the investigative bodies have not granted him victim status. Additionally, the Special Investigation Service has yet to identify or apprehend the police officers involved in the incident.