

TI Georgia Reports 60 Attacks on Journalists in Early 2026, Cites Worsening Media Environment

By MESSENGER STAFF

Transparency International Georgia said it recorded about 60 cases of attacks, threats, violence, and interference against journalists in the first four months of 2026, warning that most cases remain uninvestigated.

In a statement marking World Press Freedom Day on May 3, the organization said "the absolute majority of crimes committed against journalists remain uninvestigated, and the perpetrators have not been brought to justice," pointing to a pattern of impunity.

TI Georgia said independent media continue to operate under "a continuous struggle for survival," despite "repeated attempts" by the Georgian Dream government to silence critical outlets. It also noted that 2026 marked a precedent, with the United Kingdom sanctioning pro-government channels Imedi TV and POSTV for spreading disinformation and pro-Russian narratives.

The group identified three main forms of pressure: physical attacks and threats, the use of courts and law enforcement against journalists, and

regulatory actions by the Georgian National Communications Commission.

It said authorities increasingly use administrative charges against journalists covering protests, including fines and frozen bank accounts, describing the practice as an attempt to create a "chilling effect."

TI Georgia also criticized the communications regulator, saying its expanded powers to oversee broadcast content have led to warnings against critical outlets such as TV Pirveli and Formula TV over wording used in coverage, raising concerns about censorship.

The commission has also acted against other outlets, including Radio Marneuli and Caucasia TV, over foreign funding.

The watchdog said pressure is reinforced by verbal attacks and smear campaigns by government officials and affiliated media, often labeling critical reporting as "fake news."

The findings come as Georgia fell to 135th place in the 2026 World Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders, reflecting what TI Georgia described as a "repressive environment" for independent journalism.



Constitutional Court Finds Gaps in Safeguards for Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment

By MESSENGER STAFF

The Constitutional Court of Georgia has upheld a constitutional claim filed by the Public Defender of Georgia, ruling that existing regulations on involuntary psychiatric treatment do not provide sufficient legal safeguards for patients.

The case focused on rules governing compulsory psychiatric care, including how such treatment is authorized, reviewed, and extended. The Public Defender argued that, although similar in nature to other forms of involuntary treatment, the current system imposes disproportionate restrictions on individuals' rights without adequate procedural protections.

According to the Public Defender's assessment, patients subjected to compulsory treatment lack effective mechanisms to challenge or regularly reassess the necessity of their continued treatment. The complaint also raised concerns about insufficient judicial oversight and the risk that individuals may remain under compulsory care even when it is no longer medically justified.

The Court agreed that these shortcomings create a risk of rights violations. It found that prolonged compulsory psychiat-

ric treatment, if continued without objective medical necessity and without proper safeguards, may reach the threshold of inhuman or degrading treatment under the Constitution.

In its reasoning, the Court emphasized that regular and impartial reviews of a patient's condition are essential, along with the ability to initiate reassessment and ensure meaningful judicial control over decisions. It also pointed to structural flaws in the current system, noting that decisions on continuing treatment are largely confined to a single medical institution, with limited involvement of independent experts and insufficient court supervision.

Such an arrangement, the Court said, increases the risk of unjustified or excessively long treatment.

As a result, the Court declared the disputed provisions unconstitutional in relation to Article 9 of the Constitution, which protects against inhuman and degrading treatment.

At the same time, the Court postponed the invalidation of the norms until November 1, 2026, giving the legislature time to introduce amendments and bring the legal framework in line with constitutional standards.

