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Man Charged in Telavi Wedding Case Says He Did Not Intend to Injure Russian Tourist

By Messenger Staff

A man detained over an incident at a wedding in Telavi says he regrets that a Russian woman was injured but insists he did not intend to harm her.

The incident took place at a hotel in Telavi, where, according to Georgia's Ministry of Internal Affairs, witnesses said Russian citizens staying at the hotel insulted wedding guests from a balcony and poured liquid onto the wedding sound equipment. Investigators say the confrontation escalated, and Giorgi Chighladze allegedly assaulted a Russian woman, who was taken to a clinic for medical treatment.

The circumstances leading up to the assault remain disputed, with wedding guests, the injured woman and their respective lawyers offering differing accounts of how the confrontation unfolded.

Chighladze was detained and charged under Article 120 of Georgia's Criminal Code, which concerns the intentional infliction of minor bodily injury. The offense is punishable by up to three years in prison.

In a letter released by his lawyer, Mariam Durglishvili, Chighladze apologized for the woman's injury but denied intending to cause it.

"I am sorry that this woman was injured, but I did not intend this. Any person can pay a high price even for an unintentional act committed during a conflict," Chighladze wrote.

Writing from the Gurjaani Pre-Trial Detention Facility, Chighladze thanked those supporting him and said he would continue to fight the case.

"I will fight and defend our dignity to the very end," he said. He also urged people not to react to provocations.

"I ask and urge everyone: try not to fall for provocations and do not act in a moment of anger caused by an insult," he wrote.

The case has also led to administrative proceedings against singer Aleksandre Mrelashvili.

The Interior Ministry said Mrelashvili was being questioned as a witness when he refused to remain at a police station, verbally insulted officers, and damaged a locker used to store personal belongings.

Mrelashvili denied the allegations in a video statement.

"There was no violence, neither on my part nor on the part of the police, and there were no verbal insults," he said, adding that false information about the incident had been circulating on social media.

The incident has also prompted comments from Mamuka Mamulashvili, commander of the Georgian Legion in Ukraine. He said reports circulating in Ukraine suggest one of the Russian tourists involved could potentially be wanted by Ukrainian authorities and may have collaborated with Russia, although he acknowledged there is no confirmed information to support that claim.

He also alleged that Russian tourists collect information for Russian intelligence services and said Georgian authorities should do more to respond to such incidents.

National Bank Explains Drop in Refinancing Loans After Gotsiridze's Criticism

By Messenger Staff

The National Bank of Georgia said the decline in refinancing loans issued to commercial banks is linked to increased GEL liquidity in the banking system following foreign exchange interventions.

The central bank said it supplies banks with the amount of GEL liquidity demanded by the system and uses refinancing loans as one of several tools to balance liquidity and keep short-term interest rates close to the refinancing rate.

"The National Bank supplies the banking system with the amount of GEL liquidity for which there is demand within the system," the bank said.

According to the National Bank, the reduction in refinancing loans is mainly connected to foreign currency purchases that increased GEL liquidity in the banking system. The bank said it purchased USD 2.43 billion in 2025, which supplied the banking system with GEL 6.62 billion, while foreign currency purchases by May 2026 added another GEL 3.94 billion.

The statement came after opposition politician Roman Gotsiridze questioned the sharp decline in commercial banks' borrowing from the National Bank.

"Strange things are happening in Georgia's banking system. Commercial banks no longer want the National Bank's money. The National Bank should explain this development," Gotsiridze wrote on social media.

Gotsiridze said commercial banks had borrowed GEL 4.2 billion from the National Bank as of December 31, but the amount had fallen to around GEL 300 million.

"The volume of so-called refinancing loans has decreased thirteenfold over the past six months. While commercial banks had borrowed GEL 4.2 billion from the National Bank as of December 31 last year, that figure has now fallen to around GEL 300 million," he said.

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