

# Adjara villagers demand compensation for hydroelectric power projects

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**A group of residents from the village of Kirnati in Georgia's Adjara region staged a protest on 24 February against construction projects implemented by the Adjara Energy 2007 company.**



According to the protesters, they did not receive compensation for the land given to the company for construction of a new hydroelectric power plant in the area. While some of the land was owned by the government and sold to the company, many villagers continued to use it for agricultural production.

Protester Avni Tsintsadze told *InterPressNews* that they organised a similar protest before and had reached an agreement, but that the agreement was not honoured by the company.

'We didn't let them work for three months, and we finally agreed that they would honour our agreement in February. However, they're still not paying us any attention. We are 210 families in this situation. We're blocking the road leading to the power plant again, until they pay', Tsintsadze said.

Adjara Energy 2007 was registered in Georgia in 2007. In the same year, the Georgian government signed a [memorandum](#) according to which seven power plants would be built by the company, investing \$168 million. In 2011, this memorandum was amended, obliging the company to construct three power plants instead of seven, and to put them into operation.

The inhabitants of Kirnati staged their first protest before the construction began, because they used the lands allocated for the construction of the power plant. However, only some of them legally owned the lands. Some of these lands had been sold to the company by the government. Initially, the company only gave compensation to the legal land owners, but eventually also agreed to compensate people who had been using the land. However, after taking control of the land, the company refused to pay the compensation, claiming that it had already paid for the land when it bought it from the government.

According to *FactCheck*, the company did indeed acquire the land from the state in 2012. *Netgazeti* [reported](#) that following the construction of the power plant, some of the land where the farmers grow their crops will be flooded.

Environmental group, Green Alternative, conducted a study on the issue, concluding that 2.5 km<sup>2</sup> of land will be affected by the construction works, including flooding of private and state-owned land, resettlement of 20 families, flooding of a school, a cemetery, forests, and grazing land.

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