Six arrested at protest against power line in Pasanauri

Locals gathered to protest against the construction of a power transmission line in Khando Gorge, Pasanauri, north-eastern Georgia on 10 May. Six were arrested for ‘disobeying police’.

Roughly 150 people gathered in the village of Khando to block the construction work. Protesters later blocked the main road in Pasanauri, after which police arrested six of them for ‘disobedience’.

‘We are tired of peaceful actions’, Liberali magazine quoted a local protester.

Georgia’s deputy Minister of Energy Ilia Eloshvili said later that the population has ‘no right to interfere with the construction’.

‘Lines go over the roofs of our houses’, locals told Rustavi 2, claiming that this was the major reason for them to obstruct the construction.

Eloshvili denied this and said no power lines would go over any roofs. ‘The construction is taking place 100–150 metres away from the houses’, he claimed.

‘We will work hard to ensure that their health is not in danger’, Eloshvili told the Georgian Public Broadcaster.

The construction is part of a larger project to connect Ksani and Stepantsminda.

Environmental rights group the Green Alternative appealed the decision to grant permission for the project in
November 2016. According to them, the project’s risks had not been properly studied.

‘This construction might cause cancer, leukemia, or cause neurodegenerative processes, particularly among children. Due to a lack of agreement on how the power line construction could affect people, we stand with the WHO’s recommendation that construction has to be as far from the populations as possible’, Liberali magazine quoted Green Alternative’s head Nino Gujaraidze.

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