

Journalists Beaten and Arrested while Covering Protest Demonstration

Follow-up information:

As a result of investigation, carried out by the Special Investigative Service of Armenia under the criminal case launched under the articles 309 (para 2), 164 (para 2) and 185 (para 1) of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia¹, and on the basis of acquired evidence charges were brought against police officers captain Kostan Budaghyan, sergeants Tachat Noraturyan and Arthur Ayvazyan under Article 164 para 2 (hindrance to the professional activities of journalists committed by an official using one's official position), while Lieutenant Colonel Davit Perikhanyan was charged with hindrance to the professional activities of journalists and willful destruction of property. These officers were temporarily suspended from their duties.

On August 15, 2016, the above-mentioned cases were referred to the Court with indictment.

On February 20, 2017, the Court of General jurisdiction of the Kentron and Nork-Marash administrative districts of the city of Yerevan found Kostan Budaghyan, Tachat Noraturyan and Arthur Ayvazyan guilty of committing crimes they were charged with and sentenced them to pay fines in an amount of 500.000 AMD each, without forfeiting the right to take an office or serve in law enforcement bodies. The Court also found Davit Perikhanyan guilty of committing crimes he was charged with and sentenced him to pay fine in an amount of 600.000 AMD.

¹ The referred articles of the Criminal Code are related to the hindrance to the legal professional activities of a journalist, willful destruction of property committed by an official and actions committed by an official which obviously exceeded his/her authorities and caused essential damage to the rights of citizens, organisations.