

Desislava Panayotova – alert from 17 March 2021

On 13 March 2021 the local police station in Dupnitsa at the Kyustendil Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Interior was alerted by Mrs. Desislava Panayotova-Yankova about a broken front windshield of a car. The vehicle was used by her and her husband Lyubomir Yankov. An operative team visited the scene of the incident and a pre-trial procedure was initiated.

It was determined that the act must have been committed between 19:00 on 12.03.2021 and 11:30 on 13 March 2021 in Dupnitsa on the parking lot behind the apartment building. The occurrence was classified as a crime according to Art. 216 par. 1 Penal Code. Mrs. Panayotova was present at the inspection of the damaged vehicle and questioned in her capacity as a witness on the case.

On 14 March 2021 an additional conversation with Desislava Panayotova-Yankova and her husband took place. In her written statement, she stated that this is the second damage inflicted upon her vehicle. The first instance had involved a damage by a lead shot to the front windshield of the abovementioned car and had been committed on 4 December 2020. At the time, Ms. Panayotova did not send a signal to the bodies of the Ministry of Interior, because she did not perceive the act as intentional and had assumed that it was a matter of a random shooting with an air gun. The case has been forwarded to the observing prosecutor along all gathered evidence materials.

Desislava Panayotova-Yankova stated that she does not have any indication as to the responsible person. She also states that until that moment there have been no threats against her and her husband neither in their personal nor in their professional lives as journalists.

The police investigation included interrogation of the neighbours, gathering of detailed written statements, alibi checks and an inspection of a specific person who at the time of the crime had the restraining measure “house arrest”. The investigation could not establish that the restraining measure has been violated.

Currently, the investigation continues.