

Georgian Opposition Head Slapped With Massive Fine

June 12, 2012



Ivanishvili taking part in an anti-government protest in Tbilisi on May 27. **Irakli Gedenidze**

A Tbilisi court has slapped a \$91 million fine on Georgia's billionaire opposition leader Bidzina Ivanishvili for violating party funding rules.

The fine, imposed in two separate rulings, is equal to more than 2 percent of Georgia's total budget revenues for this year and to about 1.4 percent of Ivanishvili's estimated personal wealth of \$6.4 billion, the civil.ge news site [reported](#).

The rulings were based on decisions of the country's Audit Chamber, which accused Ivanishvili of providing vehicles on preferential terms and free satellite dishes to his party, Georgian Dream.

While the chamber said that both services were worth some 14.8 million lari (\$9 million), the court ruled that Ivanishvili's fine should be 10 times that amount because the violations had occurred multiple times, the report said.

The businessman's lawyers condemned the ruling as part of the authorities' efforts to obstruct Ivanishvili's political ambitions. They said they would appeal, but they had little hopes of success, civil.ge reported.

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