

## **Armenian Protestors Refuse to Budge**

**Author:** [Nazik Armenakyan](#)

President offers temporary subsidy on electricity price rise, but that isn't enough for most demonstrators.

Protests over electricity price hikes showed no sign of tailing off as they entered their 11<sup>th</sup> day in the Armenian capital Yerevan.

Police are maintaining a cordon, but have largely left the demonstrators alone since a disastrous intervention on June 23 which only served to bring more people out into the streets. (See **[Armenia Electrified](#)**.)

When police using water cannons moved in to disperse the crowd, nearly 240 people were detained, and more than 20 were taken to hospital. Journalists covering the demonstration were among those roughed up and detained.

The protesters were soon back, and have occupied the same spot - Baghramyan Avenue - continuously since then, using large rubbish bins as barricades, and ignoring police demands to clear the thoroughfare.

They are demanding the reversal of a decision by Armenia's Public Services Regulatory Commission to approve the third price increase in three years for power supplied by Electric Networks of Armenia (ENA). They are also calling for the company to be audited, since it is unclear why it is not making money. Since the police intervention, they have also been calling for an investigation into the violence used against demonstrators and journalists.

Today, July 3, it was announced that the police would be looking into allegations of assaults and other wrongdoing committed by officers, but only with regards to journalists.

The government has been reluctant to back down on the electricity price issue. Prime Minister Hovik Abrahamyan said on June 25 that subsidised rates would be offered to 105,000 vulnerable households.

Two days later, President Serzh Sargsyan said the government would carry out an audit of ENA, and would cover the price rise difference for everyone until that was completed.

This promise seems to have thinned out the crowds attending the rally to an extent, although many are still sceptical that the government will act in good faith.

**Nazik Armenakyan is a photojournalist working for ArmeniaNow.com.**

**Location:** [Armenia](#)

**Topic:** [Opposition](#)  
[Protests](#)

---

**Source URL:** <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/armenian-protestors-refuse-budge>