

[Previous post](#)[Research beagles released as pets](#)[Next post](#)[EU politicians back science-based fisheries](#)

NEWS BLOG

Bulgarian scientists' corruption protest slams PM's mobile phone

18 Dec 2012 | 15:07 BST | Posted by alison abbott | Category: Policy

More than 100 young Bulgarian scientists staged a second protest in Sofia yesterday, demanding that a competition for 14.8 million Lev (US\$9.8 million) from the Bulgarian National Science Fund (BNSF) be scrapped. They claim that the winners were selected corruptly. They also demanded the resignation of research minister Sergei Ignatov, who has not addressed their concerns about corruption.

The protest won unprecedented press coverage because physicist Victor Atanasov from the University of Sofia acquired, and broadcast, the mobile phone number of prime minister Boyko Borisov. The protesters blasted so many SMS text messages announcing their demands that Borisov had to switch his phone off.

The scientists' first protest, on 5 December, had not drawn much response. Some of the participating scientists say that their e-mail accounts became blocked after the protest, and others were notified that state inspectors would turn up in their labs to spot-check their purchases of equipment. Members of Parliament voted down a proposal to establish a formal investigation into the affair.

This time around, says Atanasov, "we had the prime minister's attention — and our e-mail accounts are unblocked."

Atanasov says that the SMS campaign was a cry for help to the prime minister because "we feel we have been subject to enormous injustice and we need his protection".

The scientists also charge that BNSF chief Rangel Gjurov, a geologist with an eccentric view on earthquake prediction, is not qualified for the position. They have sent a formal request to the Supreme Administrative Court to determine whether Gjurov is legally a professor. "If we win this it would invalidate the competition, even without a formal investigation into how it was carried out," says Atanasov.



ATANASOV

Previous post

Research beagles released as pets

Next post

EU politicians back science-based fisheries

Comments

Comments are closed.

© 2018 Macmillan Publishers Limited. All Rights Reserved.
partner of AGORA, HINARI, OARE, INASP, ORCID, CrossRef and COUNTER