Expert Council to Solve Georgia’s Tourism Problems

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Laughter Shows a Good Game

Indian Farmers Struggle to Develop Georgia’s Agricultural Sector

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Rumors about rich soil in the small Caucasian republic spread throughout Indian Punjab two years ago and in 2010 Punjabi-based consulting company Crown Immigration Consultancy Services started up operations in Tbilisi. During the last two years the firm brought to Georgia about 100 farmers. Based in Jalandhar, India, Crown drew Georgian media’s attention a few days ago, when a video of its executive director Dharmjit Saini appeared on YouTube. Saini is seen showing his compatriots land in Georgia’s eastern Kakheti region and talking about the advantages of buying lands in Georgia.
Expert Council to Solve Georgia’s Tourism Problems

BY LISA TONAKANYAN

Georgian tourism operators officially welcomed along with government in order to solve problems in the tourism industry. From now on all major troubles they face can be brought up at the state level – and government will take measures to their needs and concerns.

First Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia Dimitri Kumishvili and representa- tives of the private sector signed a Memorandum of Un- derstanding on February 20, 2013 at the Tbilisi Marriott Hotel. On the basis of the doc- ument, a Council of Tourism Advisors was founded.

At the moment the council unites nine organizations – Georgian National Tourism Administration, the Association of Inbound Tour Operators, the Guides Association, the Privi- plemployment Agencies’ Associa- tion, the Georgian National Tourism Administration and the

Ministry of Economy and Sus- tainable Development are appointed to the council.

As Kumishvili stated at the press conference, the objective of the newly established coun- cil is to design a long-term strategy for tourism develop- ment while also harmonizing the positions of the industry and the government. “International Financial Corporation, a mem- ber of the World Bank Group, assured us that they will help with identifying experts to ful- ly elaborate this strategy. At the same time, we will work on the involvement of the private sec- tor in this process is essential,” the deputy minister said.

As he explained, tourism development should be well- planned, results-oriented and clear for everyone. “We need to know where we are heading in order to cope with existing ob- stacles. The council will work recommendations and monitor their implementation so that progress made in the right direction,” he added.

“All seasons can be profit- able if management and organi- zational issues are sound. The government will support busi- ness – this is the Council of Tourism Advisors’ primary goal,” – Georgian National Tour- ism Administration Nata Kacharadze.

Local and foreign experts will assist the Georgian tourism in- dustry in choosing the right path towards development, head of the Georgian National Tourism Administration Nino Niniaishvili told the Georgian Times.

She emphasized the importance of networking private travel agencies and the govern- ment, especially at a time when the sector is preparing for the upcoming summer season. However, it doesn’t mean we are keen on developing only summer resorts – all seasons can be profitable if management and organi- zational issues are sound. The government will support business – this is the Council of Tourism Advisors’ primary goal,” Kacharadze explained.

The Council held a few in- formal meetings, which resulted in a decision to participate in a tourism exhibition in Zagreb, Croatia which is a popular tour- ist destination for Central Euro- peans. This became possible after cutting down on some ex- penses. “We participated in three international exhibitions and saved 100,000 GEL, there- by fulfilling our promise to re- duce expenditures. I am sure the council will do continue to work efficiently and do best work,” Kumishvili said.

In turn, tourism operators ex- pressed optimism towards the council. They believe it will help to improve conditions needed for tourism develop- ment and increase the number of tourists in the country. “Tourists arriving in Georgia are on the rise. This year we expect more travelers from Russia. We used to work only as outbound tour operators but now we are planning to bring tourists to Georgia as well. This direction is rapidly gaining popularity,” head of GeoTravel Nino Chumburidze said.

“We used to work only as outbound tour operators but now we are planning to bring tourists to Georgia as well. This direction is rapidly gaining popularity, but the state level. The problems in the sector but not take decisions on every particular case. “Of course we will pay attention to developing tourism infrastructure, increasing ser- vices and more foreign mak- et,” head of Promethea Voyages Shorena Niniaishvili, head of GeoTravel Nino Chumburidze added. “We need to improve these points in or- der to attract more foreign visi- tors while raising the number of domestic tourists. Hopefully, we can be done through the Council of Tourism Advisors,” she said.

However, according to Kumishvili, the council will review major issues and prob- lems in the sector but not take decisions on every particular case. “Of course we will pay attention to developing tourism infrastructure, increasing ser- vices and more foreign markets,” head of Promethea Voyages Shorena Niniaishvili, head of GeoTravel Nino Chumburidze added. “We need to improve these points in order to attract more foreign visitors while raising the number of domestic tourists. Hopefully, we can be done through the Council of Tourism Advisors,” she said.

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Indian Farmers Struggle to Develop Georgia’s Agricultural Sector

By Lisa Tonakanyan

Fertile soil, cheap land and labor – these are the main attractions for foreign farmers in Georgia. Hundreds of enterprising Punjab farmers have been moving to the country one after the other since the former Georgian government started widely advertising the ex-Soviet state’s progress. However, local authorities were not the only to promote Georgia’s abundant supply of land to potential Indian investors.

Rumors about rich soil in the small Caucasian republic spread throughout Indian Punjab two years ago and in 2010 Punjab-based consulting company Crown Immigration Consultan-
cy Services started up operations in Tbilisi. During the last two years the firm brought to Georgia about 100 farmers. Based in Jalandhar, India, Crown drew Georgian media’s attention a few days ago, when a video of its executive director Dharmjit Saini appeared on YouTube. Saini was showing his compatriots land in Georgia’s eastern Khe-ritch region and talking about the ad-

missions in Tbilisi. During the last five years from reliable sources that some lands were sold to for-

mer residents to become landown-
ers in Georgia,” he added.

According to the Georgian National Investments Agency, there are approximately three million hectares of agriculture land, of which 27 percent is arable land, nine percent perennial plantations, and 65 percent - meadows and pastures. Seven-

five percent of this total is still publicly owned. The share of Georgians engaged in the ag-
ricultural sector in 2010 averaged 50 percent of the total number of employed citizens.

“Many people oppose for-
ingers coming to Georgia for ag-

ricultural purposes. There have been threats and insults to-

wards Indians but we’re doing nothing illegal; we are only at-

tracting investments to the country.” - Dharmjit Saini

“Country folk prefer their land standing idle rather than al-

lowing non-residents to become landowners in Georgia.” - Le-

vani Giorgadze

A few days ago Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanish-
vili informed that authorities will assist land-poor farmers with their spring planting. The new government has also increased funding for agriculture by more than 60 percent from the previ-

ous budget and in January 2013 a fund worth approximately 600 million USD was created to pro-

vide credit to small farmers.

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Agricultural Sector

Moscow Court Sanctions Arrest of Georgian MP

By CIVIL GEORGIA

Moscow’s Basmanny district court sanctioned charges against Georgian MP from UNM party Givi Targam-

adze, charged by Russia with plotting mass disor-

diers, in absentia on February 21, the Russian news agencies reported.

Russia’s Investigative Com-

mittee filed criminal charges against MP Targamadze last week, accusing him of conspir-

ing with Russian opposition figures for the purpose of orga-

nizing mass riots. He was charged with “crime prepara-

tion” and “organizing mass ri-

ts, accompanied by violence”, which carries a prison term from four to ten years.

As a parliamentarian, Tar-

gamadze enjoys with legislative immunity. Georgian law bans detention of a lawmaker with-

out Parliament’s approval and even the constitution bans extradition of Georgian citizen to other states.

“Targamadze is a Georgian citizen, member of the Parlia-
mament and the Georgian state will protect him,” said lawmaker from Georgian Dream, Irakli

Sesishvili, who chairs the par-

liamentary committee for de-

fense and security.

In October, 2012 Russia’s Investigative Committee launched criminal proceedings against Sergei Udaltsov, a lead-

er of protests against President Putin, and several other oppo-

sition activists.

Udaltsov was accused of plotting to organize mass disorders, with the help of “foreign citi-

zen” – allegations stemming from a television documentary, which was aired by NTV, the channel owned by the Rus-

sian state-controlled monopo-

ly Gazprom.

The documentary, Anato-

my of a Protest – 2, includes what seems to be a secretly re-

corded video footage apparent-

ly showing Georgian MP Givi Targamadze with some of the Russian protest leaders, allegedly also including Udalt-

sov; the documentary claimed that participants of the meet-

ing were plotting large-scale disturbances in Russia with the goal to topple President Putin.

According to the Russian Inves-

tigative Committee that meet-

ing took place in the Belarusian capital of Minsk in June, 2012. At the time Targamadze chaired the parliamentary committee for defense and security.

Targamadze has denied any involvement calling it “Putin’s fabricated propaganda”. Udaltsov has also denied hav-

ing links with MP Targamadze.
Are Georgians still Playing Catch-up?

By: KENDRA PARADIS

After the reportedly high pedagogical success of programs like Teach and Learn with Georgia and the accompanying increase in teacher training and assessment, the national standards of education have been raised to at least stage 2 goals of modern pedagogical criteria. This is aimed at the induction of so much fresh (national) blood to the field, stage 3 teachers are on the rise. It is, however, the very nature of these foreign focused programs and ready-made training camps, seminars, and photocopy-able techniques which endanger their own goals.

The Georgian education system has applaudably come a long way since the dark old days of the Soviet factories, which once produced students in the same way they produced toasters: identical and of poor quality. Education has indeed become more than the simple dissemination of facts to be memorized, rote, and regurgitated at stage 1 pedagogy demanded. The profession of teaching is demanding more and more in the classroom concerning the techniques used to "disseminate" information and schools are looking more at the responsibility and accountability of teachers in the successful acquisition of that knowledge. Many schools however, are still a far cry from the intentions of Tbilisi who, even after rapid modernization, are still chafing at the heels of modern education as an ever evolving field.

Much of the teaching profession has tried to move away from coverage objectives; as we can all recognize there is more to learning than simple facts and figures. This commenced the progression to stage 2 in the evolution of teaching. The standardization and well meaning assessment of education systems however, put a significant wrench in the emergent theory and practice of good methods in the last few decades worldwide. Standardized testing created a double burden for teachers who understand the importance of teaching more than knowledge. Recently, the feeling was compounded by the development of stage 3 methodology; teachers who understand that education encompasses even more than the addition of skills. Stage 3 methodology was the first to start considering the students' individual needs in the context of classroom learning. Teachers are asked not only to take students' emotional factors into consideration in their ability to learn, but even in which way they are able to learn best. The “shock-and-awe” tactics of a government which itself admitted to the face of modern pedagogical facilitators that policies will be carried out, in a "we need it done yesterday" atmosphere were on the right track, but cannot hope for more than a superficial improvement of educational standards. The Georgian education system, if it manages to achieve its current goals, needs to be without the potential for misuse and stagnation of its well intended initiatives and in fact, they're not alone. Much of the pedagogical world is facing a shift from Generation 3 to Generation 4 teachers and school communities. There has been an alarming lack of training for teachers in subjects other than English language and even within ESL teaching, there is much more to literacy than the ability to read and write. Communicative styles to teach and learning are great, but they serve only as a heightened allegory for the complexities of learning overall learning whether knowledge, skills, or attitudes is all contextual.

The shift to stage 4 teaching embraces that learning is a fulfilling and strives to include students in the process rather than simply expecting them to receive a prefabricated model that can easily be used as a supplement to what teachers are already doing. Teachers must move from technical aspects of teaching to the cultural realities of the classroom encouraging students not only to get the right answers but to take risks in their efforts to gain knowledge. This reciprocally requires that teachers take the risk to allow students to work through things for themselves. Working with students to discover the multiple intelligences theory only gets us part of the way because it only addresses part of the equation: changing teaching techniques. Stage 4 aims at the other part of the equation: finding ways to help students help themselves.

In this day and age students face a completely different world from those who attempted to show them how to be successful within it. The internet gives us access to a constant barrage of continually developing information. The problem now, is not how to find the information, but how to select and evaluate what you need and how to defend yourself from the rest. Resilience, resourcefulness, reflection, and reciprocity are the key to learning not just how to learn but how to be successful in a future of change and uncertainty. Isn't that the future we’re trying to give to our students?

SOCIAL RESEARCH

Defining Georgianness

By: FRANK KLOBUCAR

There are many things that come to mind when asked to describe Georgian culture. Hospitality, food, wine, song and dance are usually cited, people reference the church, super, patriotism, heavy drinking, a vehement spirit, and more. When asked to identify what makes an individual a Georgian, though, there seem to be a few very strict criteria.

In this recent poll conducted by Georgian Opinion Research Business International, we asked 1500 Georgians a variety of questions as part of the decennial European Values Survey. The questions covered issues of immigration, politics, religion, and a wide spread of other social concepts. From the resulting data we discovered that while 99.7% of respondents had Georgian citizenship, this isn’t sufficient to be considered Georgian in the eyes of most. There are many people of non-Georgian ethnicity living in Georgia these days; Russians, Armenians, Azeris, and more. Many of these earned their citizenship by residency, and some by special consideration. But can they be considered truly Georgian? If you were to receive Georgian citizenship, would anyone actually call you Georgian?

It seems your chances are slim, as two of the most important standards are beyond your control: having been born in Georgia and having Georgian ancestry. For the sake of discussion, though, let’s see what you could do to win them over. It’s of course important to be respectful of the language and institutions of the country, said 86% of our respondents. Half of these said it was very important, while the rest said it was quite important. Residence in Georgia also plays a large part: most respondents said being born here was either very (80%) or quite (28%) important, as was having lived in Georgia for an extended period (92% total).

I was surprised by the second most important requirement for being a true Georgian, in that I expected it to be the most important by far. 93% felt that Georgian ancestry is necessary for being Georgian. However, the most important defining characteristic of a person’s “Georgianness” is the language he or she speaks.

Georgia also plays a large part: most respondents said being born here was either very (80%) or quite (28%) important, as was having lived in Georgia for an extended period (92% total).

If you know your modern Georgian history, you know that the prospect of losing Georgian as the official language of the Georgian SSR brought tens of thousands of protesters onto the streets in 1978, one of the largest protests in Georgia’s Soviet-era history. It seems fitting then that language is the most important aspect of personal culture in the minds of Georgians. Not only did educationally all respondents feel that speaking Georgian is important (97%), a larger majority said it was “very important” (71%).

To be truly Georgian, how important is it to... be respectful of Georgia's institutions and laws? Very Quite Total
dom 43% 26% 66%
be born in Georgia? 60% 26% 86%
have lived in Georgia for a long time 58% 35% 93%
have Georgian ancestry? 59% 35% 93%
be able to speak Georgian? 71% 26% 97%

Don’t get too excited about your Georgian language lessons, though. Based on the rest of these requirements, unless you’re ethnically Georgian you probably won’t be able to convince your neighbors to call you “Qurivelo”. Data in this article have a margin of error of 2.5% at 95% confidence. Visit our webpage or call us for more information.

Frank Klobucar is an analyst at GORBI, Georgia’s first social and market opinion research firm.
Russia’s New Geopolitical Realities in the 21st Century

By Dr. Vakhtang Maisaia

Kremlin policy makers have recently adopted a new foreign policy strategy entitled “The Russian Federation Foreign Policy Conception.” The new concept outlines Russia’s foreign policy priorities in promoting Russia’s national interests and achieving its strategic objectives in the international area. It is clear that the strategy sharply differs from that of the United States. Whereas the current U.S. foreign policy strategy is still based on Zbigniew Brzezinski’s four concrete geopolitical principles: unification, enlargement, engagement and pacification, Russia’s strategy follows a new course of multipolarity, enlargement, coercion, deviation and diversification.

Seemingly these geopolitical features closely correspond to the content of earlier adopted policy paper that outlines how to promote national security interests on the geopolitical levels, e.g., “The National Security Strategy till 2020” and “Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation in 2020”.

Collectively, these three main documents delineate the concrete aspirations and visions for incumbent Kremlin authorities and lay out the strategic development oath for the country in a period when President Vladimir Putin’s final presidential term is to end. It is continuing development of the key areas that continue the country’s development direction and it does appear that the foreign policy strategy closely corresponds to timeline restraints, which have been fixed in the first two documents.

However, the latest policy document envisages a new approach and fresher attitudes that take Russia’s contempo-orary geopolitics into account. Most noteworthy is how the collective “West” i.e., the US, EU and NATO are considered as external enemies and threats, while competitors of Russia at the international level. In particular, Russia negatively views any further NATO enlargement and deployment of NATO military capabilities closer to its borders.

Moreover, the policy sees the Russian Federation distancing itself further from geopolitical cooperation with the West and in tandem fostering closer relations with the oriental “East”, namely through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a trilateral grouping promoting Russia-China and India. The same is true regarding Russia’s positioning with the “BRIC” countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) as well as the “Group of 20”. The new strategy envisions greater cooperation and engagement among countries of the “South”.

Russia’s current authorities perceive the geopolitical triangle of Russia-India-China as being the most important in terms of geo-economic-political cooperation. This is an area of mutual interests that needs to be prioritized in conjunction with promoting strategic ties with Japan, North Korea and the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea and Mongolia. It is noteworthy that Mongolia is mentioned as being one of Russia’s strategic partners for the first time since Boris Yeltsin’s tenure.

In tandem with the “North Asian” identity, Kremlin policy makers are also seeking to accelerate Russian engagement with counties of the Asia-Pacific region by being more involved in their regional affairs. This process seeks to bring about a “dynamically developing geopolitical zone” as the document states. Consequently, Russia considers this strategic region as being the most influential “power center” – a fulcrum, where it is possible to foster the economic rise of Russia’s “oriental” regions such as Siberia and other parts of the Russian Far East.

It is interesting to note that within the scope of this geopolitical area, the Kremlin leadership perceives the creation of a transparent and equal architecture of collective security and cooperation. This is a process that is put into play in order to counter-balance the similar architecture that has been adopted and expanded in the Euro-Atlantic area since 1949-1975, and especially in recent years with NATO expansion in its various forms and stages.

In addition, Russia will work to foster its ties with Australia, Vietnam and New Zealand and with each member-states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. In terms of its Asian-Pacific foreign policy, Russia forecasts the development of a peaceful diplomatic mission in the Middle East and North Africa. It also sees benefits from a more proactive role in Afghanistan’s peace-making processes. (The concrete passages of this area of policy-making are found in paragraphs 75-91 of the document).

However, as Russia works to benefit from resetting relations with the West, it will concurrently continue its long-standing desire for a greater cooperation and deployment of NATO military capabilities in its near abroad. A first step in this direction could be seen in the decision of the Russian Federation Investigation Committee of the Prosecutor Office’s to issue an arrest warrant for Givi Targamadze, a member of the Georgian Parliament for allegedly attempting to destabilize national politics, as predomi- nantly determined by reinforcing intra-political conflict with so-called “political vertical” endorsement inside of the Kremlin itself. (“Political vertical” is a special jargon used to describe the Russian political system – distribution of the political power inside the Kremlin’s authority which is aimed at dissolving the role of the various political groups or coalitions and power to be shifted into the hands of a few – like domi- nation in the Russian politics of the so-called “Siloviki” political lobbyist group – Nikolai Patrushev, Igor Sechin, (the current Prime Minister Ivanov, Sergey Shoigu). The influence of the current dominant group of Kremlin lobbyists, who sit at the summit of the vertical, has seen the “Eastern” orientation become critical.

In consideration of these realities, it is interesting to un- derstand how the Kremlin has identified three main geopolitical areas (geostrategic areas – or the geographic spaces or regions which have importance in the pursuit of the national interests, especially military-political consideration – see the eighth paragraph of the paper), these are: the Euro-Atlantic space, the Eurasian space and the Asia-Pacific space.

From a geopolitical perspective, the five key principles which lie behind these policies, although at the surface, are potentially threatening. For example, one of them is devolution, giving minority groups greater rights to run their own affairs. This is also the means of moderating separatist aspirations within the RF by granting limited self-government to such groups. However paragraph 51 of the document reads: “In line with Russia’s priorities we will continue to promote the development of the Republic of Abkhazia and Republic of South Ossetia as modern democratic states, reinforce their international positions and thus provide them with credible security and social-economic restoration”. Writing such a sentence about two states which are internationally recognised as part of Georgia clearly indicates that Moscow is content with maintaining difficult relations with Georgia for the foreseeable future.

Dr. Vakhtang Maisaia, Ph.D in politics and military science, USA Alumni, Director of the “Georgian Times” and “Strategic Studies Center “Azri”
Tbilisi Mayor Charged Without Being Arrested

By CIVILGE

Tbilisi mayor, Gigi Ugulava, has been formally charged with two counts of misappropriating and underestimating of large amount of public funds and one count of money laundering into two separate cases.

Ugulava, who appeared before investigators at the Finance Ministry’s Investigations Service on Saturday, was not arrested. Chief Prosecutor Archil Khlashvili said on February 22 that Ugulava would not be arrested without him.

Ugulava’s lawyer said that his client was not questioned by investigators as he exercised his right to silence.

The Investigations Service says charges involve two separate cases – one related to “a criminal scheme of seizure of Imedi TV” in 2008, which is also related to the case of Tbilisi municipality’s Rike deal and another one related to misappropriation of GEL 4.1 million of public funds by hundreds of fictitious job positions in a municipal service through which funds were channelled to pay salaries of UNM party activists.

In connection to the alleged fictitious jobs, Ugulava has been charged with second and third parts of article 182 of the criminal code, involving “misappropriation or embezzlement” of large amount of state funds by an official, carrying prison term for seven to eleven years.

In connection to “Imedi TV/ Rike deal” case, Ugulava has been charged with the same parts of the article 182 of the criminal code, plus third part of article 194 of the same code, involving legalization of especially large amount of illicit income, carrying prison term from nine to twelve years.

Ugulava denies charges as “abundant” and claims that criminal proceedings against him are aiming at forcing him out of office, which, he says, is part of Georgian Dream coalition’s efforts to take over Tbilisi municipal, now controlled by the UNM party.

Supporters of Ugulava, among them UNM parliaments, as well as UNM’s secretary general Vano Merabishvili, were gathered outside the Investigations Service on Saturday protesting against filing of criminal charges against the Tbilisi mayor.

“I am happy today as never before, because I see you are in good spirits and I see hope in your eyes,” Ugulava told supporters before entering into the Investigations Service. Ugulava said criminal proceedings against him were “the least of our problems”. He said “the country is in a trouble” because the right to express a dissent opinion was in danger.

Supporters greeted Ugulava with applause after he left the building of Investigations Service with some chanting “Gigi, Gigi”.

Secretary of National Security Council Giga Bokeria, who was among those gathered outside Finance Ministry’s Investigations Service, said that PM Bidzina Ivanishvili’s declared goal “is to destroy political opposition.”

In respect of Imedi TV/Rike deal case, Ugulava is about an attempt to seize Tbilisi municipality without elections, which is a very dangerous choice for our country’s democracy. But I am sure that this goal to silence real political opponents will never be materialized,” Bokeria said.

Commenting on criminal charges against Ugulava, President Saakashvili said in an interview with public broadcaster’s program, Accents, on February 22 that Ugulava will of course defend himself and he presses that “independent judiciary still exists in Georgia”; he said what “matters most of all is to maintain free local self-governance, Tbilisi self-governance.”

“That’s more important than the issue of whether he [Ugulava] will be arrested or not,” Saakashvili said.

In respect of Imedi TV/Rike deal case, investigators claim that in 2008, when Imedi TV’s controlling shares were owned by Joseph Kay, a distant relative of late tycoon Badri Patarkatsishvili, founder of this TV station, “then defense minister Davit Kezerashvili asked Kay and through direct threats convinced him to relinquish his ownership of the Imedi TV on the condition that Gigi Ugulava would have reimbursed USD 17 million, plus New Rike should have transferred funds to an offshore company controlled by Joseph Kay. After selling plot of land on Rike to the municipality, New Rike transferred USD 8.81 million to Kay’s offshore-registered entity, the Investigations Service said, adding that the deal represented seizure of Imedi TV through “misappropriation of state funds and money laundering” scheme.

About two weeks after the October 1, 2012 parliamentary elections Imedi TV, which was run by President Saakashvili’s long-time ally and former government member Giorgi Aveladze, was transferred in ownership to late tycoon Badri Patarkatsishvili’s family. The television station is now wholly owned by widow of Patarkatsishvili, Ina Eindavardze.

Speaking with Imedi TV’s political talk show on February 22, Chief Prosecutor Archil Khlashvili said that according to a testimony of Joseph Kay, President Saakashvili was aware of deals surrounding Imedi TV back in 2008. Khlashvili said that Kay had indicated in his testimony that while meeting with Kezerashvili, he also spoke via phone with President Saakashvili in December, 2008, citing Kay’s testimony Khlashvili also said that Kay was told by Saakashvili to do what Kezerashvili was asking him. Also citing Kay’s testimony before investigators, Khlashvili said that in early 2008, before Kay took control over Imedi in controversial circumstances, Kay met President Saakashvili over the Imedi TV issue and its future issues. Asked if prosecutors would “question the President” over Imedi TV issue, Khlashvili responded: “In the course of investigation, it is possible to invite the Georgian President as a witness for the purpose of clarifying this issue.”

President’s spokesperson Manana Manjgaladze dismissed Chief Prosecutor’s remarks as “dirty lie.”

“It is difficult to talk about corruption when another party resorts to such dirty fabrication,” Manjgaladze said.

Another case over which Ugulava has been charged is related to allegations by the Investigations Service that total of 764 people were fictitiously employed in Tbilisi municipal’s waste management service, receiving salaries, total of GEL 4.13 million, from capital city’s budget, but in fact performing various activities for UNM party.

“Investigators accuse us of employing people. Yes, we have employed them and I think there is no crime in it,” Ugulava said late on February 22, adding that the truth would be revealed during court proceedings where hundreds of witnesses, who have testified before investigators into this case, will have the opportunity to testify “freely” before the court.

Dramatic Rescue from Flooded Athens

By DAILYMAIL

A terrified motorist was left clinging onto her car as it was swept away by flood waters surging through the streets of Athens today.

The dramatic scenes unfolded as torrential rain led to flash flooding in the Greek capital, where one woman has died and thousands more people left stranded.

Two men climbed onto the roof of the silver 4x4 and pulled the driver to safety in northern suburb of Chalandri. The woman had been clinging onto the side of the vehicle as it was carried away by flood muddy flood water more than a metre high.

At least five other cars in the same block were overwheeled and three were piled on top of each other.

Police said a 27-year-old woman died of a probable heart attack after being trapped in her car in Halandri, another suburb north of the capital.

The heavy rain is the worst storm since 1961. It caused a river to burst its banks, bringing chaos to much of Athens during the morning rush hour.

There have also been power cuts across the city and public transport has been severely disrupted, with at least two subway stops being closed.

Meteorologist Yannis Kalinos told state television: “This is the worst storm since 1961. We’re talking about 52 cars without even having seen such a heavy downpour in this area.”

Officials said Parnes was among the worst affected areas, having been swamped by more than 130 litres of rain per square metre in just under three hours.

By mid-morning, rescue teams received at least 900 calls from residents whose houses were flooded and more than 90 calls from commuters marooned in their cars.

In parliament, a worker was left dangling through the glass ceiling over the assembly as she tried to contain water dripping down into the room below where lawmakers were about to start debate.

WORLD

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CAMBRIDGE – In a recent commentary, I examined whether increased pressure from more rapid stock trading is inducing corporate managers to pay too much attention to quarterly earnings and obsess over more quarterly results, impairing their capacity to run their firms for the long term. But I noted how pressures from governments and rapid technological change are potentially just as powerful as those from stock-market trading. How carefully can one plan for the long term in, say, the eurozone, if the currency itself is at risk? And how long should brick-and-mortar investors’ time horizons be if distribution is moving online?

It is regularly argued (to the point of becoming conventional wisdom) that cheap and easy portfolio reconfigu-
ration, technical trading strat-
egies, and investors’ moves from one sector to another force man-
agers to pay too much atten-
tion to quarterly results. And, as trading accelerates, the pressures increase.

But, even if managers and boards at publicly traded firms focus excessively on quarter-
ly results, and even if medi-
um stock-holding periods have halved in the past two de-
cades, it is difficult to know whether stock-market trading be-
as a form of new and impressive


capitalism might first arrive by rail. To the west, in Pakistan, one can travel on the Makran corridor along a road built with Chinese assistance, eventually coming to the ancient fishing port of Gwadar, with its natural deep- water harbor. With a develop-
ment plan by the Port of Sin-
apore Authority having fallen through, the China Overseas Ports Holding Company has taken over, raising strategic con-
cerns in India, Japan, and the US. Indeed, despite intense opposi-
tion from the US, Chi-

ning the construction of a Pan-
Asian railroad, which, when complete, will form an enor-
mous circular route. Starting in Kunming, it will traverse Malaya and Singapore. From Bangkok, the line will run east through Cam-

bodia and north through Viet-

nam to Hanoi, then through Laos and back to Kunming.

This sounds like an enor-
mous undertaking, and it is. But, with some rail lines already ex-
isting (some for many decades), the project could be completed by the 2015 target date. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations’ long-held dream of unity might first arrive by rail. Meanwhile, India has al-

ready opened up road commu-

nization links to the East Indi-

nese main island of Sumatra, the geographical distance of the US, and the cul-


tural linkages with India.” The question is whether Asia’s in-

frastructure investments, par-
ticularly those by China, will be used to create Asian satel-
ilites of the Middle Kingdom, or become tools to be used among equals.

Asia can use its geography either to keep its states isolat-
ed, or to trade with one another and develop to the benefit of all. After centuries of isolation and colonial slumber, the region is now awake to the potential benefits of greater unity. It will not matter that the infrastruc-
ture may not have been built solely for that purpose if Asia’s heads keep their eyes on pros-
perity, rather than on power.

Jaswant Singh, a former Indian finance minister, foreign minister, and defense minister, is the author of Commentaries. India – Partition – Independence.
Silk Road Dining in Georgia - Gruzbek Style

By KOBIA XANIMOONIDZE

Thbilisi has faced a serious historical deficiency. Despite being the capital of a gastronomically based culture, the diversity of dining options in Thbilisi has been severely limited. You had your neighborhood huckanli, the khatchapuri stand down the street, and your favorite all-day khinkali spots, but that was about it...until recently.

Yes, there have been a few Chinese restaurants, a couple of ‘sushi’ joints, various American fast food chains, and some pizzerias, but real culinary diversity in the Thbilisi has been few and far between, and not at all helped by the tendency of Georgians to savour their cuisine as higher on the food chain than others, and therefore avoid foreign culinary influence entirely.

During Soviet times, restaurants and restaurateurs all but disappeared, and the cuisine of Georgian origin was known the world over as cheeborek. Under Soviet rule, the nation’s culinary heritage virtually vanished.”

The restaurant itself is a welcome addition to the Georgian food scene, but it does take me right to the heart of another world. The longer the journey in, the more and quite vivid information there is. People who have gone over.” – Hunter S. Thompson.

By TAKO AGARASHVILI

I went to this photo exhibition called “In My Shoes”. There were personal items, amateurish taken photos, essays and little writings by four former female addicts. When it comes to addicts or former addicts it doesn’t move me personally but it does take right to the memory of those who are no longer around because of drug abuse. I know I know, the entire humanity worldwide has been going over and over this very global issue. Books, movies, places, demonstrations nothing is preventing drug abuse. You might think I am going to write anything new, yet I encourage you to keep reading because I may not be able to find a new answer, ask a new question, yet I’m being as addicted to self-destruction then to the drugs themselves...” – Gerald Way.

As bad as they are, it’s not even remotely close to you. They are curious, some cost they need more energy, some to cheat on, some cos they think now it’s too late not to. But all these have one thing in common – “A drug is a chemical compound. The side effects we still can’t resist. We promise it’s the last time, but it’s never so. It comes back after a while, and it appears like there is no other way of living other than with drugs. People are willing to sell whatever, to betray whoever, to cheat on whoever, to lie to whoever only to get their next fix. It’s only in drugs or death that we’ll see anything new, and death is just too compelling” –

The problem comes when people who take drugs treat them like a license to behave like an asshole.” – Frank Zappa.

Yes, drugs steal our personality, kindness, habits, yet we are so eager and happy to use any. “Drugs are a bet with your mind” – Jim Morrison. I couldn’t agree more. It is a bet, but not by the people, but by the drugs. The worst thing about a drug is that we think we are in charge, it’s when the other way around. Once we are hooked it owns us. Knowing they are curious, some cost they need more energy, some to cheat on, some cos they think now it’s too late not to. But all these have one thing in common – “A drug is a chemical compound. The side effects we still can’t resist. We promise it’s the last time, but it’s never so. It comes back after a while, and it appears like there is no other way of living other than with drugs. People are willing to sell whatever, to betray whoever, to cheat on whoever, to lie to whoever only to get their next fix. It’s only in drugs or death that we’ll see anything new, and death is just too compelling” –

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Jim Stark: 30 years in the Film Industry

By TINA OGOGOLADZE

Meeting an attractive young girl at a party is a common experience in a young boy’s life, but for Jim Stark a well-known American producer and script writer, this experience was a first step in a successful career. The girl was a student of film school so in order to impress her Jim introduced himself as a film lawyer. Weeks later from the girl, Sarah Driver, called him and said that she produced a short movie for his boyfriend and needed a lawyer to make a feature film with him. His boy- friend was Jim Jarmusch.

After 30 years working in the movie industry and producing films like “Down By Law”, “Night On Earth”- “Mystery Train” and others, short movies was the theme of the master class, which Jim Stark conducted for Tbilisi’s “Shota Rustaveli” Theater and Film University” students this week. It is the sec- ond visit of the famous producer in Georgia and as he says not the last.

The first film he worked on as a lawyer was Jim Jarmusch’s “Stretching Paradise”. After completing his first project he received a letter from Georgi- ki, young director who wanted to work with him. In collabora- tion they made and produced “The Living End” and “Doom Generation”.

Jim, how did you first get in- terested in making films?

When I was young, I took a class in filmmaking. Now those kinds of classes are very common, but in the 1960s it was quite unusual. The class was about European art movies. I never saw films like that and I fell in love with them. I still like them more than Hol- lywood films. I had this interest from my teenage years and I wrote film reviews for newspa- pers during high school, univer- sity and even when I was in law school.

Then I met one independent director John Jost he was a very famous director of experimental movies and the fact that he could make movies by himself so cheaply impressed me a lot. However, my first real involvement was when I worked with Jarmusch on “Stretching Paradise”. I had a se- rious interest in films and the real question was what career I could really have. I tried to produce films, but I never made a real com- mitment to it. I said I’ll try for a while and see how it goes. “A white” turned out to be a long while and here I am. I still not sure about my commitment, but if there are new projects that I’m interested in, I just work on them.

Which are the most important or interesting projects in your ca- reer?

Two films: “Cold Fever” and a movie based on Charles Buk- ovski’s novel “Sunterumi”. Those are two projects, which I was mostly creatively involved, so they are my favorite ones. Be- sides Jim Jarmusch and Gregoka- ki and I had a chance to work with very interesting film direc- tors and created movies which have their own audience. I think I’m quite lucky.

Nowadays art and individual films have to compete with com- mercial projects with bigger fi- nances. Where is the outlet for American independent films?

The distribution of art movies!

When we started with Stretch- ing Paradise it stayed in movie theaters for a year and a half. Those days the cinemas would keep the film for a long time and let the audience spread the word. It doesn’t exist any- more. Now even for small films there is a Hollywood system of being focused on first weekend, and the main question is how many people will come on the opening night.

When lots of people come on the first weekend you spent lots of money to promote and adver- tise which we didn’t do with artis- tic films. Money is not still avail- able for artistic movies and be- cause you don’t have time to build an audience by word of mouth, the possibility for cinema distri- bution is basically destroyed. That has been a big change.

On the Hollywood side they are spending bigger and bigger amounts of money on films; they want bigger and bigger stars in movies, special effects and lots of action so the price of the ticket in the first weekend and the by the weekend the film is over but it has made a hundred million dollars. That’s the model used today and with such a model, it is too hard to make small artis- tic movies.

The independent movies in the US started when there was a cheaper alternative to shoot movies, which at that time done with 60 mm cameras, small light- ning packages, portable micro- phones and tape recorders. Sobey would go without the stu- dio onto location and make low budget independent films.

During my involvement in film industry, this changed again.

When I started working on films, our movies were playing in dozens in thirty countries and it was like that till the late 90s. Since then it got harder and harder to get cinema releases or even to get sales through television. So the outlets now for most Ameri- can independent films are film festivals. We also do small self- releases in small cinemas in 10- 15 cities. Last year at the Sundance Film Festival there are 3-4 films that are picked up and dis- tributed by studios.

What was the biggest change in film industry which influenced the distribution of art movies?

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With the advent of new tech- nology now anybody with a still camera or even an I phone with HD video recording can make a movie. The editing part went from huge studios to laptop computers. So everybody can make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news. The bad news is on distribution side, especially with the change in Europe from cultural televi- sion to commercial TV. They used to make a movie, that’s good news.
The United States urged Armenia’s leading political forces to show “restraint” in the wake of a disputed presidential election and again endorsed the findings of the main international vote-monitoring mission late on Wednesday.

“The United States congratulates the people of Armenia on their February 18 presidential elections, which were judged by international observers to be generally well-administered and characterized by a respect for fundamental freedoms, including those of assembly and expression,” State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said in a written statement.

Nuland said Washington is at the same time concerned over violations reported by the Western observers mostly representing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. “We agree with the findings that while Election Day was calm and orderly, it was marked by undue interference in the process, mainly by proxies representing the incumbent, and some serious violations, including cases of pressure on voters,” she said.

“We urge law enforcement officials to investigate and to take appropriate action in response to credible reporting of election violations, and we call on all parties to remain calm in this post-election period and to exercise restraint in their actions,” added Nuland.

Despite the guarded praise, it remains to be seen whether U.S. President Barack Obama will congratulate President Serzh Sarkisian on his controversial reelection. Sarkisian received no congratulatory message from Obama’s predecessor, George W. Bush, when he became president in an even more disputed ballot held five years ago.

Sarkisian has so far been congratulated by only one major Western leader, French President Francois Hollande. Sarkisian’s office said on Thursday that he has also received similar letters from the heads of two other European Union member states, Lithuania and Slovakia.

Earlier on Wednesday, EU’s foreign policy chief, Catherine Ashton, and enlargement commissioner, Stefan Fuele, welcomed “further progress” in the Armenian authorities’ handling of elections. In a joint statement, they too endorsed the findings of the OSCE-led mission.

Citing that statement, Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt gave a more negative assessment of the Armenian election. “I think it’s fair to say that the quality of the presidential elections in Armenia was well below expectations,” Bildt wrote on Twitter.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry was quick to dismiss this criticism, insisting that international monitors “welcomed the progress achieved during the presidential elections.” “Carl Bildt seems to be lacking good advisors on Armenia, and therefore the quality of information he possesses is disappointing,” read a ministry comment posted on Facebook.

The meeting requested by Hovannisian lasted for one and a half hours. Few of its details were immediately made public by either man.

Sarkisian agreed to receive Hovannisian after the opposition leader accompanied by hundreds of supporters marched from Liberty Square, the scene of his post-election rallies, to the presidential palace in Yerevan.

Hovannisian, the U.S.-born opposition leader clad in blue jeans and a black pullover, entered Sarkisian’s residence with his aide and a black pullover.

The meeting proceeded behind the closed doors. A statement by Sarkisian’s office said it focused on “a broad range of issues relating to the presidential elections and the post-election period.” “Serzh Sarkisian and Raffi Hovannisian emphasized the priority of carrying out all processes within the framework of Armenia’s constitution and laws,” the statement added without elaborating.

Hovannisian, for his part, refused to divulge any details of the talks when he addressed the crowd standing outside the presidential compound 90 minutes later. He said he will publicize them at his next rally scheduled for Friday evening.

“The Armenian people will celebrate our victory in Liberty Square tomorrow at 5 pm,” Hovannisian declared. He urged the supporters to disperse, saying that he will be busy for the rest of the day holding “diplomatic meetings” with unspecified individuals.

Some in the crowd disagreed with his decision to interrupt the post-election protests, chanting “Now! Now!”

Hovannisian again declined to elaborate on the meeting when he made a brief appearance at the square later in the day. Addressing several hundred people standing there, he denounced instead a segment of the official footage which left the impression that he was against the presence of journalists or cameramen at the meeting. He said it was Sarkisian who insisted on holding it behind the closed doors.

The unexpected talks came after Sarkisian and his campaign team rejected Hovannisian’s demands to have the official results annulled and replaced by a recount.

About 8,000 supporters of former Foreign Minister Raffi Hovannisian, Sarkisian’s main challenger, gathered in central Yerevan on February 22.
Azerbaijani Parliament Limits Sales Of Religious Materials

**By RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service**

Azerbaijan’s parliament has approved an amend- ment to the law on reli- gious limiting sales of religious materials.

According to the amend- ment approved on February 22, all religious materials, such as books, video and audiotapes, and discs can be sold only if they are marked to show they are allowed for sale in the country.

The new regulation also says that all religious materials should be sold only in special- ly designated stores.

The parliament speaker, Ogay Asadov, said the mea- sure was to prevent the illegal import of material propa- gating religious extremism.

Azerbaijan is a major coun- try with a mostly Shi’ite Mus- lim population of more than 9 million.

In Azerbaijan, Anger At An Author, But Not Necessarily At His Argument

By DAISY SINDELAR

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By DAISY SINDELAR

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**By RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service**

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According to the amend- ment approved on February 22, all religious materials, such as books, video and audiotapes, and discs can be sold only if they are marked to show they are allowed for sale in the country.

The new regulation also says that all religious materials should be sold only in special- ly designated stores.

The parliament speaker, Ogay Asadov, said the mea- sure was to prevent the illegal import of material propa- gating religious extremism.

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The Defense Dividend

By ANDERS FOGH RASMUSSEN

NEW YORK – Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s current visit to the United States provides an ideal opportunity to reinvigorate the long-standing US-Japan bilateral alliance in the face of an increasingly aggressive China and persistent tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

For a half-century, the US-Japan alliance has been a cornerstone of Asian and global peace, security, and stability – and Japan has been an outstanding global citizen. Japan developed the economic-growth model that other Asian countries later emulated so successfully; actively contributed to global economic development; participated in the United Nations and other multilateral institutions (including paying disproportionately high percentages of UN costs); and has helped to set a global standard for environmental protection and sustainable development.

As Abe arrives in Washington, DC, Japan and the US are both facing significant internal and external challenges, including rising tensions in Asia. In recent months, Chinese aircraft have repeatedly violated Japanese airspace over the East China Sea, and a Chinese naval vessel locked its weapons-tar-
gging radar on a Japanese destroyer and helicopter. Likewise, a Chinese military intelligence unit in Shanghai has reportedly hacked – and stolen from – a multitude of US business and technology companies in its nuclear program. If this dem- ocratic isolation, and inadequate tech industry, it is constantly evolving. If we cut defense spending too much, for too long, we will sacrifice that hard- won expertise, which will be impossible to regenerate quickly when we need it most.

A strong defense also helps to ensure that the benefits of security are shared by all countries. NATO itself embodies that goal. Our 28 allies have now worked together so closely that they could achieve on their own. While this helps them to de- fend their own interests more effectively, it also allows them to play a much more active role in international crisis manage- ment, such as the protection of civilians in Libya in 2011. So defense investment is also investment in security and sta- bility, in diplomacy and coop- eration, and in technology and innovation. It is an investment in a safer and more prosperous future for our own countries and for the rest of the world.

Even though defense budgets are under pressure in this time of austerity, it is essential that NATO members hold the line on defense spending and are prepared to increase it when their economies recover. The decisions that we take today will have a profound impact on our children’s security tomorrow.

Reinvigorating the US-Japan Alliance

By JAMIE METZL

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gging radar on a Japanese destroyer and helicopter. Likewise, a Chinese military intelligence unit in Shanghai has reportedly hacked – and stolen from – a multitude of US business and technology companies in its nuclear program. If this demonstration of shared values and interests does not alter China’s foreign policy, a broader, more consistent approach would inevitably begin in Japan about the potential revi- sion of Article 9 of the 1947 Constitution, which essentially denies Japan the ability to maintain armed forces like most other “normal” countries.

This week, US President Barack Obama and Abe should reinvigorate the bilateral alliance, reaffirming the principles on which it is based and continuing to ever-closer military and strategic collaboration. If the two countries work to tackle problems in their own soci- eties, and to strengthen the alli- ance that binds them, the part- nership could be as significant in the future as it has ever been in the past.

Jamie Metzl, a member of President Bill Clinton’s National Security Council, is a Senior Fellow of the Asia Society.
ყოველი ჯგუფის
ფინანსური შერჩევათა გათვალისწინება

ჯგუფის საზოგადოობა ქალაქ თბილისში „გიურაჯის აკადემია“ ქუთა 5 წლის გამაგრებით. გაპროგრამზე, რითაც ბარათი დაფინანსებული ტექნიკური მონაცემების საფარზე დაფინანსებული პროგრამის არჩევა შეიძლება, მათ მისაღები გამოვიყენოთ მონაცემთა მართვის ბილიკომერციულ გამოშვებაში.

“ჯგუფები” შეფრთხევით გრანტითის შესაძლო ცუდადისცენტრულ ტექნიკით.

- ჯგუფები არხით 10 ათასი ლარი გაბრძანებულ 3 ორგანზა ჯგუფის დახვრევა 1 ნათური. შესაძლო შემთხვევით აბსოლუტი 10% -ზე მეტ ათას ერთეულში, ქართული შერჩევის პირველ შემთხვევაში.
- ჯგუფის მონაცემთა 50 ათასი ლარი გახდა პირველ შემთხვევაში ჯგუფების 3 ნათური.
- 10 ათასი ლარი მონაცემთა პირველ შემთხვევაში 1 ნათური.

თურინგი
5 000 ლარი 5 ორგანზა ჯგუფი
10 000 ლარი 5 ორგანზა ჯგუფი
ათასობა შეურა
20 000 ლარი

დახვრევამდე შეფარგლები 10 ჯვანის 18:30 საა. რეგულარული შება პირველ შემთხვევაში.

ვებ-საიტები - ღვარცვარებისა და ტაძრაგების სამსარს
WWW.AVERSI.GE

2–967 227
Laughter Shows a Good Game

By Tako Agarashvili

Tbilisi can’t offer much diversity of fun. Citizens often times nag, searching for some activities after their tiring work days. It’s mostly super fancy restaurants or weekend clubbing. To my surprise I discovered people who engage in decent, fun, mind stimulating activity and that is playing the variety of board and party games. kids does what he loves the most – creating games.

Mark is kind of famous in the gaming world. The world is full of passionate people willing to test his games. Having wanted to be a movie director and a writer, he tried his luck in Hollywood back in the day, writing scripts and making a lot of money. Mark never wanted to be that guy whose scripts were bought but never used in a movie. As Mark says, he had “crazy cool ideas, and wanted

We started a TV show called Kindred: The Embraced, based on my book. We cancelled the show after airing one season because, sadly, the leading actor Mark Frankelwo died in the motorcycle accident. He was the heart and soul of the show.

An American being into vampires and wanting to dedicate his life to creating board games, what made you think Georgia was a smart move?

At the time I lived in NYC. I was always into vampires. I wrote a book titled Vampire: the Masquerade. It was a storytelling game. It was not about killing vampires, but how to become one. It was very successful. The agent found it in a game store and looked me up.

Yes, that’s why I did the game. Even Americans get confused nowadays, they think politics are all about compromising, moves when it should be the other way around. So the point of the game is showing the actual process of democracy. So games are not only for fun?

I believe that the games should be fun and educational but not in a boring way. I love to use the word didactic. A game should both entertain and teach you something. The philosophy of my new company Make Believe Games is the didactic games, the games that teach. Yet, if you are not laughing you are probably not playing a good game.

I was always into vampires. I was, and I still am, the heart and soul of the show. A game produced without people testing it by actually playing it. That’s what I see needs to be corrected or fixed. So you want a large group of

So it looks like the gaming culture is coming along here, no?

In Georgia people are adopting the culture of sitting around as a family or group of friends and play.

What’s next?

Next is one of my favorite tensions in life – frenemies. I have this other party card game Succubus. It’s a costume party. Vampires are divided into groups and they are handed a special stack of cards. They trade the cards, or you challenge them, you have a little duel, anything you like, drinking, joke telling, jumping on one leg, etc… to the point of best poker hand. After the team is winning, then you need a winner individual. That’s where frenemies come in.

During the entire game you are working on winning as a team, yet as an individual. It is actually a very common thing in any aspect of life. We are going on Kickstarter in two weeks.

Besides that I am thinking about making a Georgian Scrabble. Language games are really important. It’s the best way to learn and love the language. It won’t have huge sales, but I hope some people will buy it, especially schools. I will also be creating applications for iPones and Androids. It’s my thing. I’ll be doing this for the rest of my life.
SOCAR'S LATEST TECHNOLOGY
BRINGS HIGH CLASS SERVICE

The vast majority of Georgian drivers are using natural gas as their fuel of choice due to the high-quality and the consistent availability of safe, European-standard natural gas stations on the market. Their choice is clear – SOCAR. Known for upholding these values, SOCAR gas has been a staple in Georgia since early 2012, when it opened its first gas station.

On February 22, Mr. Mahir Mammadov, General Director of SOCAR Energy Georgia, special guest “Galileo”, representative of Osvaldo Del Campos and other guests opened SOCAR’s latest gas station at 84 Guramishvili Street, where the Kakheti highway meets Isani bridge in Tbilisi.

SOCAR’s new gas stations are equipped with the latest generation of gas compressor equipment. Produced by Argentinean firm Galileo, the stations ensure the quickest and safest gas dispensing experience for customers.

The state-of-the-art natural gas compressor does not require a compressor station since it is placed in a micro box equipped with the latest fire prevention and safety technology. SOCAR gas stations provide special services such as tire pressure gauges, external wash and cabin cleaning, and other services. A 24-hour a day market is open for customers at every station.

25 people are employed at new stations, overall.

SOCAR has been a leader in the auto fuel industry since it debuted on the market in 2006. As Georgia’s largest taxpayer, the company is devoted to bringing comfort and full satisfaction to each and every customer.

At present, 101 of SOCAR’s European-standard gas stations are providing full comfort and high class service in strategic areas throughout this important transit country.

A strong and steadfast partner of Georgia, SOCAR continues to invest in the country and create full-time jobs for hundreds of proud citizens.

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