Saakashvili Creates Yet More Scandal

On July 20th, President Mikheil Saakashvili stated that US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had monitored the controversial forcible dispersal of the protest rally held on May 26, 2011. According to the President “each stage of the rally was observed by an FBI group based at the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and this group delivered a report stating that the police measures did not exceed the limits of the law.”

Giorgi Targamadze: “We think we have a good chance of winning”

The Presidential Election campaign has officially begun in Georgia following the President's decree concerning the date. The election will be held on October 27, meaning that September 11th is the deadline for the nomination of candidates. All the supposed major contenders have in fact already stated whether they will take part.

Kakha Gogolashvili: Dialogue with Russia Puts Us in a Trap

Russia’s Expansion to the East: from a military to a geopolitical perspective

Cyber Hooliganism—Does Georgian Law Protect Us?

“With a few strokes of the keyboard you can ruin someone’s reputation, and sometimes their life. It sounds like an exaggeration, but it’s a fact!” says A.M., one of the victims of cyber-bullying. It is naive to believe that only semi-literate people and teenagers can become the victims of cyber bullies, because we live in the age of information, which in the hands of the wicked can be a formidable weapon. One fine day anyone could find themselves among the victims of cyber criminals.
On July 20th President Mikheil Saakashvili stated that US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had monitored the controversial forcible expulsion of the protest rally held on May 26, 2011. According to the President “each stage of that was under the protection of an FBI group based at the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and this group delivered a report stating that the police measures did not exceed the limits of the law.”

This statement, implying that the USA approved of the actions taken during the event, has aroused criticism and concern in many quarters. The current U.S. Administration, Richard Norland, responded by describing the events of that day as “a tragedy.” “Let me say first of all, of course I was not here on May 26, 2011, but I know that this was a terrible tragedy for Georgia. And at the time, if you look at the statements that we made, you’ll see that we called for a thorough investigation of what happened to make sure that all responsible parties were brought to account,” Norland commented. However, many others demanded from making further comments as court case concerning the May 26th events is pending.

The Parliamentary majority called the President’s statement “irresponsible” and insisted that both Saakashvili and former Interior Minister Vano Merabishvili “must be questioned concerning the May 26 events.”

“This person is accustomed to spreading big lies, but what he has said about 26 May is scandalous. I don’t want the country to have any problems with a strategic partner and a friend because of Mikheil Saakashvili’s statements,” Matanisa Kobuladze, Georgian Dream MP and former Vice Speaker of Parliament, said. Addressing members of the President’s United National Movement, she asked “Saakashvili invented many lies and obviously this is a lie too. But maybe you should demand answers from your President, and ask him why he makes such scandalous statements about the U.S.”

Parliamentary minority member and possible UNM presidential candidate Davit Bakradze claims that the U.S. government did indeed monitor the May 26th events.

“The information I have received from Merabishvili and the U.S. government is that a certain group of American experts was in Georgia in May 2011 conducting a court, but we don’t want any training for Georgian police officers. After the conclusion of the rally, this group made a report,” Bakradze stated. “As far as I know, Bakradze explained, the police actions in a lie too, however, there were some cases in which the report referred to the misuse of force,” he added.

Merabishvili’s lawyer Giri Chivashvili states that a report written by a major American research company into the events of May 26, 2011 “might play a crucial role in Merabishvili’s case and demonstrate the innocence of the former Interior Minister.” He explains that the U.S. State Department hired the Bensus Company to make a detailed report on the events of May 26, 2011.

“Their survey gives a detailed overview of all the events leading up to, and which were part of, the rally on May 26, 2011. It is absolutely impartial, and stresses that there was no misuse of force by senior Georgian officials on May 26th,” Chivashvili said, adding that the U.S. Embassy delivered this report to the MIA. He commented that the U.S. government requested at the time that the report not be made public and that the recommendations within it should only be used to help Georgian governmental agencies in the future. The MIA has not yet made a statement concerning this report.

The People’s Assembly was the first body to ask Ambassa- dor Norland to make an assessment of the President’s statement. Nino Burjanadze, leader of the Democratic Movement, United Georgia and a member of the executive board of the Assembly, stated that the President was “fostering anti- American feelings among the populace.”

“Saakashvili has been acting against the interests of our country for a long time. First he ruined Georgian-Russian relations, now he is putting in danger our relations with the USA,” she said.

According to the President of the Experts Club, Soso Tsiskarishvili, Saakashvili is trying to arouse hatred for the U.S. in Georgia.

“Saakashvili thinks that the US’s interest in pursuing Euro-Atlantic integration has declined. Therefore he acts as if the current Georgian government is pro-Russian and he is the only leader who will take a pro-Western course,” Tsiskarishvili commented, adding that Saakashvili’s statements will only create more negative feel- ings towards him and his par- ty.

Co-Chairman of the Centre for Strategic Research and ex- Minister of Foreign Affairs Saakhet Ninidze thinks that the U.S. Ambassador has now made a clear statement and answered all the questions which could be posed by vari- ous political groups.

“Since Richard Norland has commented it would be absurd to think that anybody ever sup- ported the actions of the previous government during the May 26 events. It’s aptly that the Georgian President has aroused such a dispute with our strategic partner,” Menagishvili told The Georgian Times.

On May 26 2011 Georgian police violently dispersed an anti-government rally in Tbilisi, crushing protesters’ attempts to prevent a military parade marking the country’s 20 years of independence. One policeman and three protesters died, dozens were injured and many others were arrested in the course of the so- called “family riot.”

The Founder and the President Malkhaz Gulashvili. Tel: (+995) 577 461 046 The Georgian TIMES 12, Kiliadzr str, Tbilisi, Georgia. Tel: (+995 21) 234495. E-mail: office@geotimes.ge; http://www.geotimes.ge

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The Georgian Times

Kakha Gogolashvili: Dialogue with Russia: Puts Us in a Trap

By: Eka Gazdebiani, GT

The internal political situation in Georgia is becoming strained due to the upcoming Presidential Elections. The public is becoming polarised, and the leaders of the main opposition party have had eggs and stones thrown at them. In addition, despite the improving dialogue with Russia, the occupying troops are still installing barbed wire at the administrative border in the conflict regions. Kakha Gogolashvili, political scientist and head of the Economy Research Centre here discusses these issues in an interview with The Georgian Times.

Does the current political situation in Georgia pose both impartial and fair elections in October?

No. Several attacks on representatives of the opposition United National Movement have increased the pressure. The government has not dealt with these effectively. The situation needs to be improved, and urgently, in order for us to say that there is a free election environment. If candidates live under threat of abuse by angry mobs, regardless of the authority, attacks on administrative border and protest by occupying troops, improve the voter lists etc., the election environment cannot be considered free.

I would say however that the media are working relatively. Coverage is pluralistic, as all sides of opinion are being presented. There are some disagreements and opposition channels. I think there has been quite big progress in this respect.

What should the government do to prevent attacks on opposition candidates?

The police should prevent them and detain those who commit such holocations. As a result people hinder the election process and this makes them doubly criminal. Therefore serious actions should be imposed on those who commit them. A 100 GEL fine and the selective detention of 2-3 people are not enough. Everyone who throws stones or raises their hand to any presidential candidate should be detained, and any harassment of people of an opposite opinion should be stopped. The government should show that it will not tolerate such actions.

Who do you think is most likely to win the October elections?

We know that at this stage the Georgian Dreams candidate is leading, but this is not due to his personal popularity. He is riding on Bidzina Ivanishvili’s popularity. There is no solid basis for such confidence, as his rating is not stable or convincing. It may fall if a more charismatic candidate emerges, or a more persuasive programme which is properly presented.

The election is not a foregone conclusion, it is possible for other candidates to win.

What do you think about the UNM candidate?

It is possible for the UNM candidate to win. Even after the election, it will be Davit Bakradze, who is not associated with the crimes and mistakes of the UNM government. He has considerable administrative experience and will be quite a strong competitor. If Bidzina Ivanishvili does not win in the first round, he will be a candidate to win the election, and it is not possible to understand this about Bidzina Ivanishvili. He has less political experience and is less well known as a politician. He is better known as an analyst, public figure, manager, etc.

If there is a second round, if it does not achieve over half the vote of the first ballot, it is difficult to say which candidate would win. The ratings are changing; serious campaigning has not begun yet. The candidates have not presented programmes, they have yet to hold meetings and demonstrate their strengths. Therefore, everything may change.

How has the improved Russia dialogue since the last election brought us any results?

We have not yet achieved the results we want and need. The current situation is focused on getting quick results. The main problem is that everything is still obscure. We have not been able to set a long-term policy towards Russia whose direction we know. The main differences between us are still there and there is no way to overcome them. We cannot be sure to what extent there is a real threat of a new war. There is clearly some threat, as Russia is trying to provoke us again by installing barbed wire and detaining people at the administrative border.

As for economic cooperation, there are questions about this as well. Sometimes, the Russian sanitaryian says things that do not make our wine producers happy and do not encourage a feeling of sustainability. We can see that there has not been the great progress we hoped for in getting Georgian wine approved by Russia and reverting the embargo. But we cannot say that we should therefore abandon our strategy and return to the previous situation, when we had no dialogue at all with Russia. I think more public diplomacy is required here. Government attempts alone are not enough, and cannot be as the two governments have quite different interests. Public diplomacy would focus on the transformation of these interests.

Do you think that the installation of the barbed wire is a central directive or a local initiative?

This is a centrally driven political move. Nobody can do such things without Russian government authorisation. The decision has been made to fix the ‘border’ and it is therefore necessary to build a borderline infrastructure, which requires money and political will. This action carries certain foreign relations threats, as it may be criticised, therefore Russia is taking it gradually and cautiously. First one and later another section of Georgian territory will be violated, as complete implementation of the border creation programme will cause a great scandal in the West and provoke future international resolutions, which have not been made recently. This is why Georgia has begun a direct dialogue with Russia and is not pursuing the issue of the occupied territories strictly in international organisations. We are in a trap – on the one hand we want a dialogue with Russia, but on the other having this dialogue does not give us a moral right to demand that Russia respect our rights in international organisations, and though the dialogue is achieving nothing. This is a dilemma, and we have to find a golden mean.

What has been achieved at the Geneva negotiations?

The Geneva format is channel through which all the parties to the conflicts in the occupied territories can meet each other. But it will not result in the resolution of the conflict. There is no such objective on the agenda of the Geneva format, it will not make any decision about South Ossetia and Abkhazia’s status or restoring Georgia’s territorial integrity. The people who attend these negotiations have no desire to include such issues on the agenda. We take part in order to prevent any serious complications occurring and to maintain communication so that we can share our positions and prevent the complete alienation of the conflict parties, which will be followed by their isolation. Finally, without the Geneva format we would not have a mechanism for finding out what the plans of the other parties are.

What will the Vilnius Eastern Partnership summit bring to Georgia?

This is an EU summit. The Georgia-EU Association Agreement will be signed, which includes part of the DCFTA, and completion of the negotiations on this agreement will be registered. But the DCFTA will only be signed later, when it has been translated into all the EU’s official languages of Business after being elaborated in its final form and edited. The decisions made at the Vilnius Summit will be important for the future of Georgia, as they will affect how soon Georgia can come closer to, and eventually join, the EU. We will discover what the new government of Georgia needs to do to make further progress towards.

The opposition are always saying that Georgia has turned away from the West and is behind the EU-Russia front. Do you see any sign of this? Of course Georgia has not changed its course, but before the new government came in it was not pursuing the Western course fully either. In order to pursue a pro-Western course you have to meet Western requirements. These were not fully reflected in our politics, although we were and will remain a pro-Western country because this is the requirement of our people. Of course the previous government made mistakes, and some steps it has taken leave room for doubt about its pro-Western course. Constantly we are following the set course. There is some reason for us to be concerned – for the criticism, including some from the opposition, as this will weaken the national policy. But we cannot say that we are not doing anything.

Finally, do you think the cohabitation between political forces is a positive or negative phenomenon?

If this cohabitation existed we would be quite a good sociopolitical model, but statements alone are not enough. There have been attempts to regulate the relationship between the UNM and the new ruling party, but these have been taken on both sides.

However the attempts at cooperation on security and foreign policy issues are very welcome. The sooner we overcome the dilemma, that one side must be completely right and the other must be criminal and had the sooner we will get the benefit. We are not talking about political parties here – the whole of civil organisations that one side must take this step, as GD supporters think that the UNM and all its supporters are criminal and should be in prison while UNM supporters think that the new government is pro-Russian and is leading the country towards Russia. This conflict goes to the levels of hysteria. It should be eliminated.

If we overcome this and become able to achieve compromise, respect each other’s opinions and forgive and admit mistakes, then there is a serious chance of our political and economic environment healthier and improving the political culture.
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Fiber Optic Technologies
The Presidential Election campaign has officially begun, according to the President’s decree containing the dates. The election will be held on October 27, meaning that the deadline for the nomination of candidates is October 14. The Georgian Times has interviewed Mr. Giorgi Targamadze, who according to the NDI opinion poll released earlier in this month is currently the 4th most popular of the declared presidential candidates.

**Why have you decided to participate in this election?**

For any political party in a democratic system it is important to participate in the elections. To participate in any kind of elections not only one’s right but an obligation. A political party which feels it has a responsibility towards the population, is confident in its strength, sure of its ideology etc. should give the voters the right to vote for its candidates in any election, from local government to presidential. Moreover, after this presidential election the new constitution will come into force, a European type one in which the president’s powers are subordinated to those of parliament, and the Christian-Democratic Movement was one of the parties which supported this change. I think this presidential election will be very important in the transition to a new century, and we will take part in any political activities. Moreover, this is also the only way we can have support among the public.

**Your party has existed for 4 years. What has been achieved?**

We established the party when Georgia was in a very difficult situation. We enjoyed electoral majorities in a very short period of time. This shows that the Christian-Democratic Movement did not make any significant mistakes. We started with 8.6% of the vote but in the two years since we were in 12% support nationally. This was a great progress, and showed we were going in the right direction. Everything was going well, and we were preparing for the parliamentary elections of 2012, but none of us could have imagined that businessman Bidzina Ivanishvili would decide to enter politics. I think he did not understand why he only decided to do so at a particular time.

Ivanishvili entered the politics when the opposition was very weak and divided. The people from the United, the Great and the Patriotic party did not have strong houses of voters, with the exception of one: the Christian-Democratic Movement. The situation then was that the Christian-Democratic Movement had about 7% support, but the Christian-Democratic Movement supported had the most experienced politician. He was a person who has never participated in any election before, to become the President of a democratic republic.

I don’t think we have a good Education Minister, as no significant changes were made in this area. Even those reforms which the Christian-Democrat Movement supported had lots of gaps in them. For example, we did not understand his new initiative “Freebooks for all Schoolchildren”. We think the Christian-Democrat Movement supported everything we could, but we have not seen any small achievements in our teams who can finance our campaigns.

**So you think that the electoral environment is worse now?**

Nothing has changed regarding the voter lists either; in fact the situation is even worse now: the number of voters has increased, but nobody knows how this has happened. It would take only three months to introduce a biometric ID system to identify voters, at a cost of 8 million lari. I remember Ivanishvili promising that if Saakashvili changed the old system he would finance this, but I think since he has become Prime Minister he has forgotten all his campaign promises.

Media monitoring also had a great effect on the parliamentary elections in 2012, and for five months before they were held. Have you heard of any kind of media monitoring taking place this year? We are asking foreigners to finance this work during electoral campaigns. Not all of us have our own media organizations to support us like the GD, and we should try to ensure that all the presidential candidates have equal conditions. The current government has refused to give the political parties enough funds to conduct normal electoral campaigns. All thesefailings give advantages only to the GD and UNM, this is why we think that the present Georgian government is acting irresponsibly or has made some kind of secret agreement with the previous ruling party. All the other political parties are in a very bad situation; we do not have millionaires in our teams who can finance our campaigns.

The children of rich people should not get any benefits which are actually paid for out of the state budget, which is obviously for ordinary and even poor people. I think this is very unfair. With this money the government could provide more help for socially vulnerable families. Theft from Georgian writers and publishers has also been violated by the Ministry of Education.

Margvelashvili is also very busy. His public criticism of the new Labour Code was very embarrassing for the Georgian parliamentarians majority.

I could continue talking about the most important issues, but I think it’s better to concentrate the Georgian population’s attention on each presidential candidate. According to the same NDI poll the current President, which ever he may be, has around 10% support at present, Nino B。“Whoever wants to become a candidate of each presidential candidate. First of all, we should look not only at the leaders but also at the people.

When will your campaign officially begin and why should people elect you?**

I am beginning my campaign on September 1st, but August will be a very busy month as we will be working with NGOs, international organizations, local institutions and of course the media as usual.

Under the new constitution the next President of Georgia will not have executive power but he will be the leader of the country, the top person, and will represent Georgia at the international level. Therefore our programme will focus on maintaining our Western orientation, upholding our aspirations and of course values and improving relations with Russia but not at the expense of our own interests or by making unacceptable concessions. We believe it is important to strengthen our defence and security systems, and therefore our programme will be focused on developing our defence and security systems, and of course addressing the social problems, including health care and education. We also want to help the socially vulnerable families who receive free school books, and for the last three years we have. We can’t understand why
The Peoples of the Caucasus Have a Special Mission to the World

By VAKHTANG MAISAIA, GTN

Here follows an interview with Bakur Kiguradze, President of Globalization International Research Institute, ex-political prisoner, co-author of the geopolitical conception “The Caucasus Geostrat - Caucasus geopolitics: global, regional and local development perspectives”.

Can you tell us about the analytical institute you have created and the new conception it has elaborated, which is clearly one of the best conceptual documents to emerge from what might be called the Georgian Geopolitical School?

Firstly, thank you very much for your interest in the “The Caucasus Geostrat” and the activities of our institute, the Globalization International Research Institute or GIRI. GIRI was set up in 2002 in order to promote the national geopolitical consciousness and revive the Georgian geopolitical school traditions which go back to the twenties of the last century. The analytical nucleus of the institute is a team of the most competent and professional scientists and researchers who specialize in various different fields: archaeology, history, theology, ethnology, cultural studies, philosophy, political science and geography. The team members have conducted various interesting projects and programmes and multi-disciplinary research which has successfully produced this final “product”, the geopolitical conception “The Caucasus Geostrat” which has been published in the Georgian, Russian and world languages. In the globalisation epoch humanity is being driven by a new wave of thought and practice labeled “liberty”, and a new kind of person is being created with a new mentality. However, within the world’s various regional geopolitical “clutter-zones”, the Caucasus being an example of one of these, a genetic memory based on historical values preserves a certain rivalry etc.) and global level (fierce competition between great powers seeking regional hegemony, the world economic recession, massive migration challenges, drug and arms smuggling, etc.) can promote peace and stability in the region, which will in turn lead to the geopolitical integration of the regional actors.

This is the relevance of this conception to recent geopolitical processes, such as the re-emergence of a Russia v. USA bipolar world order, the ad

NEWS

UNM Loses Tbilisi City Council Chairmanship

Zad Samadashvili, UNM member and chairman of the Tbilisi City Council (Sakrebulo), was voted out on July 26, less than a month after UNM lost majority in the capital city’s Sakrebulo. UNM councillors did not participate in the July 26 session of the Sakrebulo.

Although UNM lost majority in Sakrebulo after 16 of its members quit the party since last year’s parliamentary elections, no political group within Sakrebulo, neither those affiliated with the Georgian Dream, holds the majority in the city council right now.

Later on the same day when Samadashvili was voted out, a former UNM member, Irakli Shikhisashvili, was elected by most of the non-UNM members of Sakrebulo as a new chairman of the Tbilisi City Council.

One of the GD councillors Galiku Zumbadze, who is a member of the Republican Party, refused to support Shikhisashvili – position not shared by other 24 councillors, who now form the new majority in the Sakrebulo.

Also on July 26 new chairperson of Sakrebulo’s 13 commissions were elected – posts previously held by UNM members, who were voted out on July 19.

Economy Minister Named as Deputy PM

PM Ivanishvili named on July 26 Minister of Economic Development, Giorgi Kvirikashvili, as deputy prime minister.

The post was previously held by former Education Minister Giorgi Margvelashvili, who is GD’s presidential candidate and who resigned from minister’s post last week as he prepares for election campaign. Before Margvelashvili, Defense Minister Irakli Alasania held the post of deputy PM till January, 2013.

And the new Deputy PM in Ivanishvili’s government is Kakha Kaladze, who holds energy
Russia’s Expansion to the East: from a military to a geoeconomic perspective

Russia’s ongoing attempts to enlarge its influence not only on the military expansionism but geoeconomic expansionism, as it is sometimes called, “liberal imperialism” doctrine expounded in 2002 by Anatoly Chubais, the most liberal politician in Russia.

Notably, on July 17, 2013 President Putin declared in Chi-

ra, while on a visit to the Far East region, that the “gasifica-

tion” of the Far East region would be completed by 2015. This will not only improve do-

mestic supplies but enable Rus-

tia to become a new energy market – the Asia-Pa-

cific region. By exporting Rus-

sian gas to other customers in the area. The Kremlin’s current geo-political mission – not only to conquer the countries to its West but also dominate the East – very precisely reflects its historic geopolitical ambitions, expressed even in its national heraldic symbol (the bear heads looking both East and West).

The Russian government is unsatisfied with the European energy market, which declined in 2012 (gas consumption decreased by 1.5%). In the Asia-Pacif

cic region gas consumption rose 3% last year. Russia’s indus-

trial gas reserves are now 32 trillion cubic metres and the Russian mega-corporation Gazprom can meet 62 billion cubic metres of Asia-Pacific demand at this stage. Certainly new market realization per-

spectives will improve the country’s economic perfor-

mance figures but as stated they also promote foreign policy goals as well as national eco-

nomic interests.

Russia is pursuing several important goals at the same time, which include the following:

- Counterbalancing its so-called “European” foreign policy failures which are caus-

ing the Kremlin many politi-

cal grievances. These include the failure to stop the promo-

tion of the “anti-Russian” en-

d-energy project NABUCCO, which will deliver gas from Azer-

baijan’s Shah-Deniz deposits to European markets without passing through Russia (31 billion cubic metres of gas will be transported through this 1,100 km pipeline, which serves the national interests of coun-

tries such as Turkey, Georgia, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, and Austria) and the agree-

ment, despite fierce Kremlin opposition, to decrease retail gas prices for European cus-

tomers from $50 to $300 per 1,000 cubic metres. The emer-

gence of a new market certain-

ly reduces Russia’s dependence in Western “custody”, as it sees it, despite its almost total mo-

nopolization of this market (Al-

garian gas accounts for only 10% of European gas deliver-

ies and Norway about 5%). Even though Gazprom, through political leverage pro-

vided by the Russian govern-

ment, has managed to torpedo the implementation of the NABUCCO project recently

and persuaded Austria and Bulgaria to abandon it, the geopolitical rivalry between the Russia and EU remains strong, and unproductive from a Russian point of view. “Encompassing” Turk-

menistan, with its gas extrac-

tion potential of 60 billion cu-

bic metres per year, in order to monopolize gas supply in the Asia-Pacific region. This

would give The Kremlin effec-

tive monopolies over the Oriental and European direc-

tions and decreasing the tran-

spor-

tion of the Caspian-

us and the Balkans. The same strategy will be extend-

ed to Kazakhstan and other Cau-


casian states, who are also thought to be important competitors whose success could work against Russia’s geoeconomic interests;

- Reinforce its “muscles” in the East in order to counter the US’s ambiguous geopolitics in the Asia-Pacific region. This new confrontation of the cen-

ters of global power in a new market is very dangerous for the world.

As is traditional, what Rus-

sia seeks to achieve in the West it is seeking to achieve in the East. While Russia has tradi-

tionally regarded such expan-

sion as self-protecting, this is not how it is seen in the coun-

tries directly affected.

Is it the FBI’s job to engage in international politics???

By DR. VAKHTANG MAISAIA, GT

The title of this article was suggested by a statement made by a man with an abnormal person about an event which took place in Georgia some time ago.

On July 20 President Mikhail Saakashvili, who has already become a “lame duck” and whose comments at any kind of session, meeting or briefing cannot be taken seri-

ously, held a meeting with what was described as a civic group (students, so-called “independ-

ent experts”, etc.) of his fel-

dow travellers at which he said that the latter, like the FBI, deal with international politics ac-

ting as a monitoring agency such as for example, the EUMM, but a pri-

vate military company. Accord-

ing to its mission statement it is first and foremost a decision support organization, a firm which equips its clients with the capability to succeed in address-

ing their most pressing concerns by understanding what is hap-

pening around them, anticipat-

ing events, instituting a robust decision making process and re-

sponding accordingly and effec-

tively to developments.

It is interesting to note who the past and present govern-

mental clients of the company are.

- The US Department of State – Bureau for Internation-

al Narcotics and Law Enforce-

ment

- The US Department of Jus-

tice – International Criminal Training and Assistance Pro-

gram

- The US Marine Corps: Maritime Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)

- Marine Special Operations Command

- The Inter-service Nonlethal Individual Weapons Instructor Course

- The Organization for Se-

curity and Co-operation in Eu-

ropa

- The Pittsburgh Citizens’ Police Review Board

- The Washington State Pa-

rol

The involvement of this company, with this purpose and list of clients, in Georgia’s affairs indicates what aspira-

tions the ex-cycling pair’s lead-

ership and their supporters amongst foreign political lob-

byists had in May 2011. If the Densus Group’s involvement in those events is confirmed, it should be examined in the light of the Geneva Convention, par-

ticularly its clauses on mercen-

ary activity. This is generally defined as the employment of extra national irregular forces to fight in international conflicts, but is obvious that hired for-

eigners can and do participate in internal conflicts. In this con-

text, the events of 26 May 2011 can be seen as paramili-

tary operation conducted by Special Forces, with the prob-

able additional involvement of Armed Forces units, which had fatal consequences for people participating in a peaceful pro-

test rally.

The alleged involvement of the Densus Group representatives in monitoring the breakup of the demonstration, whether or not they directly participated in the action itself, is proscribed un-

der the Geneva Convention as it is regarded as the involvement of hired foreign mercenaries in the internal political conflicts of another country, (in this case Georgia). Certainly, at the very least, the Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia should launch a prelimi-

nary inquiry into the Presi-

dent’s statement that the FBI were involved, whether it’s cor-

rect or not, and equally certain-

ly the possible involvement of The Densus Group and the role it may have played, whether it’s correct or equally further grounds for a new investigation of the 26 May 2011 events.

Dr. Vakhtang Maisaia is an Associate Professor at Sukhishvili Teaching University, the GT Azeri Strategic Studies Centre
“With a few strokes of the keyboard you can ruin someone’s reputation, and sometimes their life. It sounds like an exaggeration, but it’s a fact!” says A.N., one of the victims of cyber-bullying. It is naive to believe that only semi-literate people and teenagers can become the victims of cyber bullies, because we live in the age of information, which in the hands of the wicked can be a formidable weapon.

One fine day anyone could find themselves in the hands of victims of cyber criminals.

Everyone knows of the existence of professional hackers, who gain unauthorised entry to the computers of major institutions, financial structures facilities, public organisations, banks and so on. But while the “white hats” hackers usually raise a smile in most people, we cannot say the same about the “black hats” internet hooligans, who steal people’s personal data and use it to defame and abuse them.

According to a survey of two thousand people in the UK, half of them had suffered the ages of 11 and 18 had been victims of cyber bullying. According to another study, conducted by psychologists at the University of California at Los Angeles, three out of four teenagers aged 12 to 17 have been a) targeted by internet hoosiers, b) been victims of cyber bullying and c) been placed in the hands of cyber criminals.

The account, generally by deceiving and then using their password.

If contact information, or any other information about person is placed on the internet without their permission they should immediately contact the police. But will the police take any action?

Unfortunately, in practice, the competent authorities will do only anything about such behaviour in three cases: a) if the case is possible and involves senior public figures, b) if those dealing with it have a direct material interest in the matter and c) if the information disclosed constitutes a state secret.

International experience of combating cyber hooliganism

South Korea drafted a law aimed at prosecuting internet hackers in 2007. In Europe, cyber hooliganism is not a crime in itself but various aspects of the process, such as the act of publishing someone’s personal information, are. In Germany for example hacking is civil offence but carries a penalty of up to 5 years in prison for adults. Teens usually face less severe penalties, such as probation or community service.

They can post information about the victim on sites devoted to hatred or pornography, which can make the personal vulnerable to physical attack.

The main forms of cyber bullying are:

Denigration - the intentional presentation of the victim in a way designed to seriously damage their reputation in the eyes of the public, through the publication of material about them on web pages, forums and newsgroups and via e-mails and photo-sharing.

Cyber-stalking - the systematic harassment, often sexual in nature, accompanied by threats.

Imposition - the intentional imprisonment of another person by gaining access to their accounts and passing themselves off as the owner of the account, generally by deceiving and then using their password.

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According to Kowalski, Limber and Agatston, authors of the book “Cyber bullying: bullying in the digital age” (2008), the phenomenon has some similarities with the traditional harassment and intimidation, but is also unique in many ways and creates its own similarities with the traditional bullying and harassment. According to another study, the phenomenon has lasted for many years, 13% 4-6 per year and 19% 7 or more. Most (51%) had experienced it only once and had told their parents or other adults about their experiences. 1,454 teenagers, aged from 12 to 17, participated in this anonymous online survey and 41% of these reported having received 1-3 internet threats per year, 13% had received 4 to 10 threats, 19% 7 or more. Most (51%) respondents had been threatened by their classmates, and 43% by online friends they had not met in real life.

Cyber bullying is not a trifl, nor is it confined to the young. Educated professionals are increasingly finding themselves victims of it. Almost every day new ways of inflicting harm using the new Internet are appearing, putting pressure on internet users to make their own crimes. So it appears Georgia has much work to do if it wants to protect the victims of cyber hooligans, but this is not enough in itself to identify a concerned person, merely the computer which was used. However internet providers such as Silknet, which by which to identify cyber-hooligans? In Germany, there are several tools, which can help identify cyber bullies, but it also has other mechanisms of "appropriate operational investigative procedures".

In Aisha’s case they are now pursuing a particular activity for which there is no existing legislation. In future they planned to create a special department to mediate any disputes about bullying.

In the US state of Missouri in 2008 a law against cyber bullying was introduced after a teenager committed suicide, amidst much publicity, following repeated taunts by cyber bullies. In the state of New Jersey stricter laws were also adopted in schools and universities following another suicide. In spring 2011 an anti-cyber bullying summit was held at the White House. At this, delegates from Facebook explained that they were aiming to create a special department to mediate any disputes about bullying.

The same thing had happened to three other girls who approached the police recently, one of whom is married with children. At first the police reasoned that Aisha, by the other girls, saying that there was nothing they could do. Only when they learned that Aisha had been driven to try and commit suicide by the bullying did they take a statement from her. Even then, the investigator from the Vake-Saburtalo District of Tbilisi explained that there is no case law in Georgia will never be able to trace an internet or social network criminal because the necessary technologies do not exist in Georgia. He said that the only thing they could do was use the "old" method of phone tapping.

In Aisha’s case they are now trying to do this by tracing calls already made to her phone. But this has thrown up even more difficulties. In principle, every phone user can request information from their provider (Geocell, Magticom or Beeline) an itemised list of incoming calls and who made them. But Aisha cannot do this because her number is not registered in her name. She bought the number in the street in the Temka neighbourhood, and this is apparently illegal, as it is already registered to another person, as it would not be if bought directly from a Geocell, Magticom and Beeline office, where the phone number is automatically registered in your name on purchase.

What does the law say about cyber bullies? The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia has told GT:“According to the Georgian legis- lation, cyber crime is punish- able under articles 284, 285 and 286 of the XIX Chapter of the Criminal Code. When such crimes are committed, appro- priate operational investigative measures will be taken to identify the perpetrators and criminal proceedings launched.”

But the Code does not actu- ally say anything about cyber blackmail, do and stalkerism in themselves. The relevant arti- cles read: Article 284. Illegal Access to Computer Information 1. Illegally accessing computer information protected by law, i.e. information held in data-carriers, computers, computer systems or networks, and the blocking, loss, modifying or copying of such information, including actions de- signed to ensure the malfunction- ting of the computer, computer system or network, shall be punishable by a fine, correc- torive service of up to two years in length or a term of impris- onment similar in length. Violation of a) by a group conspiracy; b) by misuse of official posi- tion or of a person who had been justified access to the comput- er, computer system or network concerned, shall be punish- able by a fine, corrective ser- vice of up to two years in length, or deprivation of the use of computer, computer system or network for a term not in excess of five years.

Violation of Rules of Maintenance of Computer, Computer System or Network

Violation of the rules on maintenance of a computer, computer system or network by a person who has access to that computer, computer system or network, shall be punish- able by a fine, corrective serv- ice of up to two years in length, or deprivation of the use of computer, computer system or network for a term not in excess of three years.

Identifying a cyber hooligan

Can we identify these huck- eys? Yes, but a number of steps first need to be taken. First of all we need their IP address. Every computer has its own external numerical address (IP) and is identified by it. However, others we have spoken to have pointed out that it is in the interests of the tele- communication operators to sell as many numbers as possible in order to get more clients, and they know that IP addresses can be bought in the streets. How- ever the police are taking no action against the vendors of these numbers, or the telephone providers, thus encouraging them to sell. I do not believe that cyber bullies can use this illegality to get away with their crimes. As Aisha has much work to do if it intends to help victims of crime such as Aisha.
Sena Motors has established a new Honda Centre in Tbilisi. The latest 2013 model Honda cars were unveiled at its opening, at which media representatives also took part in a test drive of a new Honda CRV.

Founder of Sena Motors Gia Alikhanashvili stated that Sena Motors has worked with various brands over the years, but has now decided to concentrate on Honda. Sena Motors has been the official representative of Honda in Georgia since February 19, 2012 and satisfies the requirements of Honda standard S3. S1 means the dealer provided effective showroom, S2 means it provides technical services, S3 means it operates a full service centre offering original automobile and parts.

Alikhanashvili also stated that a special service centre for second hand automobiles currently being used in Georgia has been opened, but since February the company has sold 24 new Hondas. “We are in a very good price and quality segment”, he said.

Honda’s new official webpage was also presented at the Honda Centre opening. Representatives of The Embassy of Japan in Georgia and of Honda itself were also on hand to submit detailed information about the company and its products.
Georgia has come to the attention of the international film industry in recent times. World famous Hollywood producers and directors now visit Georgia quite frequently, and Michel Hazanavicius, who has an Oscar and 26 other major awards to his name, has joined them on a mission to find “new blood” in Georgia.

This is not the first time the French director has demonstrated an interest in Georgia. Film buffs will remember that his Oscar-winning film The Artist has a Georgian theme. It opens with the hero, George Valentine, escaping from prison during a military service.

Georgian Actor to appear in Film by Oscar Winning Director

Georgian director is that he is very supportive, he wants you to show your talent and does not criticise. He was easy to talk to, you never felt that he was a big Oscar winning director, and this helped me and make it easier for me to interpret the role. Three actors were left; I was lucky enough to be the director’s favourite, and now I have been confirmed in the role. You can’t imagine the happiness I felt then and still feel now.

I do not want to speak badly about Georgian directors, but for two years I have been far from both theatre and cinema. I used to go to all the castings and try and be active, but when I understood that this served no purpose I did not try any more, and was forced to leave my favourite job.

Therefore, what is happening now is a gift from God. God has seen how much I love this art. I cannot do anything else; I cannot deal with other professions. Therefore, I am grateful to Hazanavicius, as this part will help enrich my CV and I will gain great experience.

What is the film’s main message? If it is about the Chechen War, do you know the director’s position on this?

I have not been introduced to the scenario; they were only visiting Georgia to find actors for secondary roles. As far as I know, Chechens were selected for the leading roles. The Georgians consulting to the casting team connects with me periodically, providing me with information. Shooting starts at the end of August, but special seminars will be held in Sighnaghi beforehand, and it seems that all the relevant details of the film will be given to me there.

film called “The Russian Case” above the inscription on screen “Long Live Free Georgia,” and the hero is guided by this slogan in his fight against communism. Throughout the film.

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The young MPs made a survey regarding to the discussion held at the Parliament and expected changes of the Compulsory Military Service in the current structure and the forms of the military service.

Sandro Eliashvili and Jaba Peranidze, the representatives of G1 of the Defence Ministry, Kakha Shanshiashvili, Vice-colonels, Human right and civil integration committee of Youth Parliament hold a public discussion of current situation and potential changes of the Compulsory Military Service in the European House today.

The meeting was attended the deputy head of legal department of the Defence Ministry, Kakhi Shamsaashvili, Vice-colonels, Sandro Eliashvili and Jaba Peranidze, the representatives of G1 defence politics and planning department.

During the meeting, current condition and expected changes were discussed. The young MPs presented positive and negative sides of the current structure and the forms of the military service.

The representatives of Defence Ministry informed society about potential decrease and increase of the period.

They spoke about burning issues for the society, how the military service prevented youth in professional development.

The young MPs made a survey regarding to the discussion topic and 400 citizens interviewed.

Secretary of Georgian Dream Political Council to be Irine Imerlishvili

Secretary of Georgian Dream Political Council to be Irine Imerlishvili. Irine Imerlishvili will head the political council of Georgian Dream instead of Eliso Chapidze. InterPressNews Orangjeti correspondent informs that closed session of Baltrus Imaishvili and Georgian Dream leaders was held in Shekvetili today.

Orangjeti majoritarian MP of Georgian Dream Zviad Kveshaftidze stated that the main topic of discussion was Eliso Chapidze’s statement, who resigned as the secretary of Georgian Dream political council due to her family commitments.

Davit Bakradze to be Presidential Candidate of National Movement

Davit Bakradze to be Presidential Candidate of National Movement. Davit Bakradze will be presidential candidate of National Movement. The final result of the Primary was declared on the primary held at Expo Georgia. There were four presidential candidates: Davit Bakradze, Giorgi Bamtrisdze, Zara Japaridze and Shota Mabukashvili.

Online survey results were also declared. The leader in the online survey was Davit Bakradze.

Human Right and Civil Integration committee of Youth Parliament hold a discussion

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The Georgian Times trilingual online portal offers the latest Georgian news and analysis in English, Georgian and Russian languages.

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fanfan the “IT” place in Batumi

By TAKO AGARASHVILLI, GT

Batumi’s stages and halls may host the world’s jazzmen but the real home of this is a café-restaurant called fanfan. Famous people from a variety of different spheres visit this place – Ketato (musician), Supa Nijaradze (musician), Tako Chkheidze (models), Uta Bekala (artist), Levon Minashvili (artist), Tornike Rebia (director/actor), Tamel Rebia (actress), Kakadu (musician/artist/ DJ), Natia Parjanadze (actress), Kote Kurbainishvili (musician), Mavic (models), Tusia Beridze (models), Bas Potskhishvili (director) and many more. They all come here because they know what I would call a restaurant with love. And love did happen here. It grew, it grew further. It even got people married. Most importantly, it has founded a super successful family business.

fanfan café/restaurant is run by happily married couple Marika and David Dadashvili (aka Mavne). The adventure began in 1998 when Nino Chubinashvili held a show in Batumi. The home of famous writer Chabua Amirejibi, at #27 Ninoshvili Street alongside Batumis Boulevard, served as the venue. This is a historic building, over a hundred years old. I haven’t been at the fashion show, but I have learned that it is what brought Mavne and Marika together.

There is a lovely story of two people meeting, becoming friends first, then falling in love and finally getting married. A few years later, on December 31, 2010. But what really hooked me was the outcome. Years later, when they wanted to set up fanfan, Mavne and Marika rented the exact house they had met in. It is laid back, cozy, tasteful, chic yet homely, familiar but not stuffy, a quite unusual place, decorated with fresh valley flowers, funky table covers, a bar made of mirrors and vintage tables and chairs, totally asymmetrical. It offers high quality service, the most amazing food and a wonderful atmosphere. You will love everything about this place – you feel the vibe of the happy couple, in every aspect of it, the touch of love, sparkling all over the place, and of course you will be enchanted by the stunningly gorgeous Marika herself. It is she who I interviewed for GT.

Why establish a restaurant as a family business?

Mavne was originally a sailor. He didn’t give much thought to getting into the entertainment business. He has been around for quite some time now, very well known for his outgoing personality. He has a knack of making people feel comfortable around him. He knows how to throw an “it” party. After living in Tbilisi for two years we decided it would be fun to go back into the entertainment business. Mavne wanted to run a chill place, where you can sit back, eat, play a game and communicate, rather than a night club or bar.

This place is not for dancing. It’s for ‘dining and winning’. A DJ event doesn’t bring in much money. We had opened many music bars last year, and it was great, but I can’t say that live music or a DJ put much on the balance sheet. A quiet Tuesday may bring in more income than a loud Saturday. It’s not the DJs but the cooks we are proud of. All day long they keep our customers satisfied. They make them come back, that’s the key.

How about the interior?

Mavne called up Giga Koteishvili (artist) and asked him to give the interior a touch. He did, and we thereby gained a partner.

They were still looking for premises in May but you opened the business in June.

How did you manage that?

It’s Mavne’s thing. During never-ending remodeling works he will just say, “That’s it, we are opening today at 8pm!” and it works. He has done this a few times now and did it again last year on June 9th. We were painting the window frames and then all of a sudden opened it up. We didn’t paint the window frames and then all of a sudden opened it up. We didn’t want to be missing the action.

How did it go so popular?

No, there was no PR company for fanfan. Mavne made it himself. He had the idea of making a place for everybody, but people hadn’t found a place to sit weren’t leaving because they had jumped into people they knew and were standing by the tables chatting. Even the rain outside, which was intense, wasn’t creating a negative vibe, the customers were soaking wet but still smiling. Almost every day some people can’t in get it. This isn’t packed, yet they keep coming, taking a chance that they will be able to get into fanfan. Once they do, they soon say – fanfan rocks!

But you don’t have to take my word for it. Ketato (musician) told me, “This is the only place I go to in Batumi. I love the interior and the music, and the business is run by Mavne and Mariika, my friends – this place is my home. My inner world clicks perfectly with the interior, energy, vibe, food and staff. I pick with the overall atmosphere of fanfan. Last year I was working on the ‘Méodies de Vera Quartet’ project and had to be in Batumi for two months. I came here every day for a trout plate and a glass of white wine. This year I have switched to mussels with blue cheese and a glass of white wine. I come here every day. I feel confident in saying that you can’t get better mussels in blue cheese sauce than in fanfan. This place has a habit of luring you, once you are in, you feel comfortable, you keep coming, taking a chance that you will be able to get into fanfan.

Mavne’s place people expect food and dancing here. We want to break this stereotype. We do dance once in a while, but this place is not for dancing. It’s for ‘dining and winning’. A DJ event doesn’t bring in much

Tornike Rebia (director/actor) added, “I go to fanfan because the owners are my friends. I love the tasty interior. As soon as you walk in you feel you are a guest in a home you love to go to. You can sit back in the beautiful ‘saloon’ and run into any number of people you know. You gravitate towards people with a similar history and their sophisticated friends, all hanging out in the same place. You can’t possibly buy this; it can only come from the food and environment.”

Keti Gabadze (founder of Kalta Group) said, “I love going to fanfan. Mavne and Mariika are my dear friends. At home there – it’s nice and cozy. Giga Koteishvili knows how to make a public place comfortable, well-balanced and homely. I love their food – great appetizers and delicious mussels and desserts, especially the lemon tart. Rumour has it that Mavne makes the best mussels ever! I haven’t tried them yet, but I hope I’ll get lucky next time I’m there.”

Georgia is ready for Transit Provision for Coalition

Georgia’s transit opportunity was a key talking point of the meeting at Georgian Defence Minister Irakli Alania and Commander U.S. Transportation Command, General William M. Fraser discussed ISAF reverse transit of NATO forces and cargos and alternative transit way through Georgia. Through the meeting with American General, Defence Minister emphasized that Georgian side is ready to provide transit route for coalition forces.

Head of 14/28 Logistics Operation Planning Division of JS, Major General Alkhamadovshvili delivered a presentation to the representatives of the USTRANSCOM on Georgia’s transit opportunities. As Irakli Alania highlighted, American partners are studying Georgia’s infrastructural opportunities with great attention. “Georgia might be one of the alternative ways for unimpeded transit of forces and cargoes from Afghanistan before and post 2014. Our country offers NATO coalition forces suitable infrastructure and good potential option for transit. Today we had a very thorough discussion and we introduced partners our vision. As General outlined our future relations is so strong that it will be one more opportunity to continue Georgian-U.S. strategic partnership” – stated Irakli Alania.

General Fraser focused on the importance of the meeting as well. “It has been a very productive meeting. We very much have appreciated the partnership and relationship we’ve had for so many years. As we talked today we see opportunities and future relationship to build upon the things we have done together intransit and supporting operations but also as we were returning equipment back to the United States that we can take it to the next level. Create opportunities from a commercial perspective will aid security and stability in the region.”

At the end of the meeting American General offered condolences for the loss of soldiers as well. “It was a very emotional meeting. General Fraser focused on the importance of the meeting as well: “It has been a very productive meeting. We very much have appreciated the partnership and relationship we’ve had for so many years. As we talked today we see opportunities and future relationship to build upon the things we have done together in transit and supporting operations but also as we were returning equipment back to the United States that we can take it to the next level. Create opportunities from a commercial perspective will aid security and stability in the region.”

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Besides the legendary mussels plates you serve, I have heard that Mavne is a ‘mussels whisperer’, is this so?

He is! The first time I had black sea mussels he prepared them. His recipe is simple, but outstanding. This year I have switched to mussels with blue cheese and a glass of white wine. I come here every day. I feel confident in saying that you can’t get better mussels in blue cheese sauce than in fanfan. This place has a habit of luring you, once you are in, you feel comfortable, you keep coming, taking a chance that you will be able to get into fanfan. Once they do, they soon say – fanfan rocks!

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SUNDAY BRUNCH

Gather around with your friends and family on Sundays for brunch at Tbilisi Marriott where we will cater to every family member! Sunday Brunch at Parnas captures the essence of Marriott's glamorous culinary tradition where Chef Pedro Gonzalez offers a variety of delights on the buffet with comfort cuisine combined with modern flavor. Everyone will find Sunday Brunch exciting with unlimited complimentary wines from Telavi Wine Cellar, mimosas for the ladies and kids' game room equipped with Xbox KINECT for your little one to enjoy!

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SOCAR’s multi-functional building officially recognized as one of the world’s most popular

Amazing SOCAR-McDonalds on the black sea coast in Batumi