

OPINION & ANALYSIS

Problem with rapid tests



FULL STORY ON Page 2

ECONOMICS

EBRD & ADB vow for support of Georgian economy

FULL STORY ON Page 3

Zakaria Jorjadze - Country of Liquid Sun

FULL STORY ON Page 4

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

On April 8th, the European Commission and the EU High Representative announced that they will set out plans for a robust and targeted EU response to support partner countries' efforts in tackling the Coronavirus pandemic.

As for the Eastern Neighbourhood region, the EU will provide €80 million of immediate and €883 million of short-term support to EaP countries Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to respond to the COVID19 outbreak.

"The EU's response follows a 'Team Europe' approach, aimed at saving lives by providing quick and targeted support to our partners to face this pandemic. It combines resources from the EU's Member States and financial institutions, in particular the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, to support partner countries and address their short-term needs, as well as the longer-term structural impacts on societies and the economy. The first Team Europe packages are already being implemented in the immediate region: the Western Balkans, in the East and to the South."

The EU is securing in total €3.07 billion for the whole region – €2.1 billion for the South and €962 million for the Eastern Partner countries – and €800 million for the Western Balkans and Turkey.

Oliver Varhelyi, Neighbourhood and Enlargement Commissioner, said: "We share a continent and we can only succeed together", adding that funds will be used

EU allocates €183 million to Georgia

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS EXPRESS READINESS TO SUPPORT GEORGIA IN FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19.



► The EU has allocated funds for EaP states to cope with the Coronavirus. Photo: European Commission.

for urgent response to the health crisis, to strengthen the health systems and to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the pandemic.

Moreover, the Visegrad Four (V4) will establish a Solidarity Program to assist members of the Eastern Partnership in the fight against COVID-19 and to support these former Soviet republics so that they can gradually gain access to the EU's internal market.

In a joint statement issued on April 8 by the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia on the future of the EaP, the quartet said they would implement the "Visegrad Four Emergency Program for Eastern Partnership Countries" within the framework of the Visegrad International Foundation. The program will have a simplified procedure and aim to "strengthen health, social and economic resilience in the EaP countries affected by COVID-19 and its consequences."

The statement was in response to a European Commission report last month on the Eastern Partnership.

The Visegrad Four statement did not call for future EU membership, but said: "Political association and economic integration of Eastern partners remains our main goal."

The four also support "the gradual access of our partners to the EU's internal market to the level of mutual benefit for our partners and EU member states."

The Visegrad Four statement will be part of a debate on the Eastern Partnership, which will be held by EU foreign ministers in late April. It will also focus on the Eastern Partnership Summit, scheduled for June 18th in Brussels, but may be postponed due to a pandemic.

Yesterday, the delegation of the EU to Georgia published an open letter, in which international partners and donor organisations reaffirm their support to the Georgian government and population.

Through this letter, the organisations are expressing readiness to support



► The Visegrad Four statement will be part of a debate on the Eastern Partnership, which will be held by EU foreign ministers in late April. Photo: Front News

Georgia financially due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

They also praised the efforts of Georgian authorities and stakeholders across the public and private sectors and the resilient and cooperative response of the Georgian people.

The letter also notes that the support schemes for business and vulnerable groups have been initiated and recovery plans are being designed.

"Fiscal prudence and the buildup of reserves in recent years make the Georgian economy better prepared to address the economic impact of the crisis." - reads the letter, emphasising the legacy of "structural reform achievements."

Authors of the letter claim they are working together to ensure rapid support

to Georgia and are currently discussing a substantial financial relief package to help the authorities respond effectively to this unprecedented crisis.

"As Georgia's Coat of Arms so appropriately puts it, there is truly 'strength in unity!' " the letter reads.

The letter is signed by International Monetary Fund rep, Ambassadors of France, Germany and EU to Georgia, Head of Regional Representation for the South Caucasus European Investment Bank, Regional Director of Caucasus EBRD, Regional Director for the South Caucasus World Bank, Country Director for Georgia ADB, Supee Teravaninthorn Director General, Investment Operations Department - Region II Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Problem with rapid tests

THE STORY OF ARCHIL GOGITIDZE, AN OPERA SINGER FROM BATUMI, RAISED SUSPICIONS THAT THE 14-DAY QUARANTINE DOES NOT GUARANTEE HEALTH AND THAT THOSE RETURNING HOME MIGHT STILL BE INFECTED WITH THE CORONAVIRUS.

BY ANASTASIA SOKHADZE

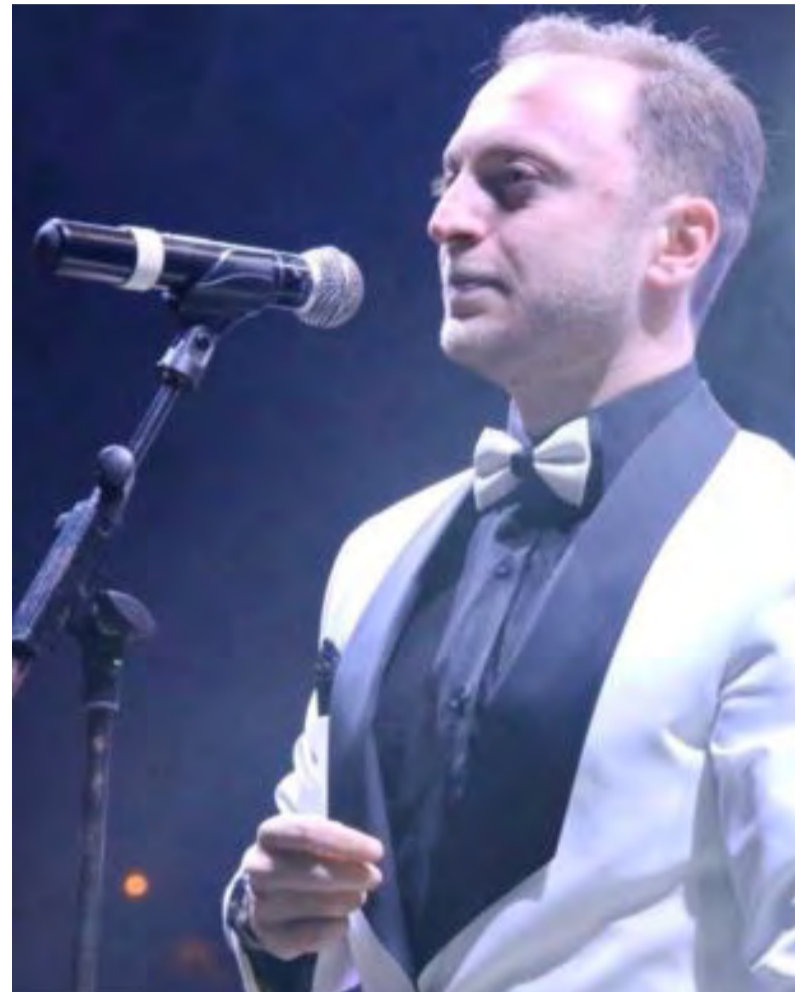
Archil Gogitidze, who tested positive for COVID-19 on April 7th, after demanding to be tested for 10 days, he was released for home treatment.

The singer recalls being neglected by the doctor consulting him. Allegedly, he had symptoms and was feeling uneasy about his condition, but the doctor told him that he was perfectly healthy and did not need to be tested.

“I asked to be tested three times and they told me - you don't need it, you are completely healthy. After that, I asked the Minister of Health of Adjara for help and he helped me to finally get tested,” stated the singer.

After the incident was released to the media, the government was bombarded with questions related to tests. Unfortunately, the questions were left unanswered, but according to the previous statements of the government representatives, the country has chosen ‘only one right strategy- everyone should be tested for whom it is necessary;’ however, there is an acute shortage of quality rapid tests in the world.

“We currently have very little stock due to the lack of quality tests around the world. The rapid test used by us is made in China and is



► The singer Archil Gogitidze.



► The lack of tests has been a problem around the world.

licensed by Germany. In many countries this test is currently registered and for us, a small country, the call is made with shortcomings.” stated Giorgi Shatirishvili, director of the Disaster Center.

The number of groups in need to be tested has increased rapidly, however, the list does not include symptomless individuals, who are unknowingly spreading the virus at a larger rate than others.

EU helps Georgian company adjust its business during coronavirus outbreak

As people around the world are practicing self-isolation and social distancing, small businesses are doing their best to re-arrange their operations.

Supermarket ‘Georgita’ in the Georgian capital Tbilisi is an example of a business that has adjusted its operations to the new situation, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Using the tools made available through the ‘EU4Business’ initiative, the company now offers online shopping and home delivery to its customers – two much needed services during the coronavirus outbreak.

Before the pandemic, experts from the EU project ‘Advice for Small Businesses’ worked with the company to help it establish a solid online presence.

The company received assistance on how to diversify its sales strategy. It began with



a concept for an e-commerce platform and a mobile application, followed by designing and developing mock-ups. The EU4Business consultants then moved on to database development, programming and testing.

The ‘Advice for Small Businesses’ project is implemented by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development under the ‘EU4Business’ initiative.

(euneighbours.eu)

FRIDAY		APRIL 10	
Day		Sunny	High: 16°C
Night		Low: 5°C	
SATURDAY		APRIL 11	
Day		Partly Cloudy	High: 15°C
Night		Wind	Low: 6°C

published by **The Messenger**

43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia

Founded by Prof. **Zaza Gachechiladze**
Tamar Gachechiladze
Publisher

Phone: +995 99 56 56 21; +995 77 76 00 00
E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge
http://www.messenger.com.ge/

Nino Metreveli
Commercial Director

Mariam Mchedlidze
Editor-in-Chief

Giorgi Totadze
Design and Layout

The Messenger welcomes your contributions. If you are interested in submitting an article or news item please contact.

All contributions should be submitted by e-mail.

The Messenger Georgia's English language daily is an independent newspaper,

and, therefore, the opinions expressed in some articles do not necessarily coincide with those of the newspaper. We take no responsibility for any claims made in advertisements.

The Messenger preserves the style of a source written in English where possible.

EXCHANGE RATES: US DOLLAR - 3.1794 | EURO - 3.4576 | GBP - 3.9227 | 100 RUSSIAN RUBLE - 4.2035 | SWISS FRANC - 3.2747 |

EBRD & ADB vow for support of Georgian economy

INT'L PARTNERS EXPRESS READINESS TO SUPPORT GEORGIA IN FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19.

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

Presidents of Asian Development Bank (ADB) and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) held a video conference with Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia discussing the support package for Georgia's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery of the economy.

Bank presidents Suma Chakrabarti (EBRD) and Matsugu Asakawa (ADB) have praised the steps taken by the government against the virus and to cope with the economic crisis sparked by the virus and said that the country will be able to rapidly regain its economic rates and positions.

Asakawa said that pandemic is causing severe hardship for many, especially in tourism and once Georgia moves past the peak of the pandemic, significant challenges will remain to facilitate a recovery. "ADB is working on a package of support to quickly help Georgia build a path to economic stability and growth," he noted.

According to the Georgian gov't press office, parties are working on development of a package of measures that will focus on tackling challenges caused by pandemic. Gakharia and the bank presidents also discussed the measures and assistance that Georgia may receive to continue the state-funded programmes.

ADB's support is expected to focus on countercyclical budget financing, a fast tracked policy based loan for social protection measures, and programs to



► Georgian PM has held a video conference with the presidents of ADB and EBRD. Photo: Prime Minister's press office.

strengthen the energy, urban water, and vocational skills sectors - all of which are essential to ensuring a strong recovery. ADB is also increasing support for private sector operations in Georgia by providing loans and trade finance to banks in the country.

PM thanked the banks for funding many projects in Georgia

and emphasized that all major infrastructure projects funded by them are being implemented despite the ongoing crisis.

On March 18th, ADB announced an initial package of approximately \$6.5 billion to address the immediate needs of its developing member countries, including Georgia, as they respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

ADB stands ready to provide further financial assistance and policy advice whenever the situation warrants.

The EBRD has allocated funds worth € 1 billion through the emergency Solidarity Package to assist its clients across 38 economies, including in Georgia.

European Bank
for Reconstruction and Development

ADB

Asian Development Bank

► The presidents of the international banks praised Georgian gov'ts efforts in the fight against the coronavirus crisis.



THE QUALITY OF GEORGIA-PRODUCED MASKS ARE ACCEPTABLE, SAYS GAMKRELIDZE

Miran Gamkrelidze, head of the Centers for Disease Control, said that masks produced in Georgia are perfectly acceptable for household use. According to him, it should be used only once for medical purposes.

"We gave a recommendation, we inspected these masks. The masks have passed the Center for Disease Control tests. We have a big department for Biosecurity and bioprotection, which is working on this type of issues, such as

what type of mask to wear, and what lab coat to wear," he stated.

Georgia-produced masks are already on sale in pharmacy chains. The quality of the masks, however, has been the subject of criticism on social media.

According to the Minister of Economy Natia Turnava, at the initial stage, pharmacies will be supplied with up to 400,000 masks, with the price per mask being 50 tetri. One person is allowed to buy 3 pieces of multiple-use masks.

JOURNALISTS, DOCTORS, CONSUMER INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES TO BE TESTED DURING AGGRESSIVE TESTING

According to the director of the Republican Hospital Levan Gopodze, persons at high risk will be tested during aggressive testing. As Gopodze told the media, tests with the new testing algorithm will be available for especially high-risk groups such as journalists, medical staff and consumer service representatives:

"Including the representatives of the medical field, journalists at high risk, representatives of consumer service, etc.," said Gopodze.

The Ministry of Health has approved new algorithms for testing COVID-19 for different groups. According to the document, certain groups of the society will be subjected to aggressive testing. These groups are persons in penitentiary institutions, specialized daycare institutions for elderly, persons in inpatient psychiatric facilities, defense forces and ecclesiastical persons, including people in monasteries.



Zakaria Jorjadze - Country of Liquid Sun

A prominent public figure, a successful wine maker occupying a special place in the history of Georgian wine making, a friend and follower of Ilia Chavchavadze and David Sarajishvili – that is how we can refer to Zakaria Jorjadze.

Jorjadze was the first to export Georgian wine and make this product of the Georgian soil well-known. He was awarded a gold medal for exhibiting Kakhetian red wine at the exhibition in Brussels in 1888.

Zakaria Jorjadze obtained special education first in Austria and then in France in one of the important wine making centres, Montpellier. He did his best to introduce the achievement of wine making of that period, European experience and modern technologies to Georgia.

Upon his returning from France in 1887, Jorjadze established a wine cellar in the Kvareli region, on his estate, between the two villages of Eniseli and Sabue. The historical building of the wine cellar, which is equipped with 120 unique kvevris and installations of that time as well as a château built in the European style in 1886, has survived to present day. According to the information of his contemporaries, wine was made according to European technology in Jorjadze's wine cellar. The wines made there, based upon the European way of production, as the best export commodity and under the trademark "Prince Z. Jorjadze and Company, were successfully exported to Russia and Europe. The trade house Iv. Mukhranbatoni and Company and Prince Z. Jorjadze and Company already owned wine storehouses in Moscow, St-Petersburg, Odessa and other cities by that time.

In 1887, Jorjadze, who had just returned to Georgia from France and being familiar with European culture, built a residential house at his family estate which was designed by the first Georgian architect, Simon Kldishvili. The house is located between Sabue and Eniseli, on



► Zakaria Jorjadze

the territory of the old family building belonging to the Jorjadze family.

Many historical names and events are related to the Jorjadze estate. In 1850s, the French writer, Dumas, visited Zakaria's father, Aleksandre, in Eniseli and mentions the Jorjadze's estate in his book about the Caucasus.

Georgian-Polish relations, which were established as early as the nineteenth century and which have also affected the life of the Jorjadze family, are also worth mentioning. The Tsar's Russia used to exile Polish patriots to Georgia and Georgians to Poland. Obviously, Georgian-Polish families were formed and the family bonds were becoming stronger between them. Zigismund Zlatnicki, who

was exiled from Poland, became the Jorjadze's brother-in-law from the side of the Bagrationis. Zakaria's wife was Tamar Bagration-Mukhraneli and Zigismund's son, Elias, was the grandfather of Giorgi Bagrationi who migrated first to Greece and then to Spain where he settled after the Revolution. He established close contacts with the King of Spain, Juan Carlos, and obtained certain dynasty rights in Europe.

They say that Zakaria Jorjadze had brought a canon devised to hail suppression thunder clouds in the sky mortar to protect his vineyards. The canon Nortira failed to meet his expectations and so he decided to use the mortar for other purposes. When preparations for a feast began at the estate in Enise Jorjadzes' estate within several hours. The Kobulashvili



► 1888, Brussels International Exhibition. Gold Medal

lis (descendants of Aleksandre Orbeliani) would come from Kisiskhevi, the Chavchavadzes from Tsinandali and Kvareli and the Jorjadzes, Vachnadzes

and Andronikashvili from adjacent territories. Even Ivane Mukhranbatoni was a frequent guest and close relative of the Jorjadzes. Zakaria Jorjadze had great friendships and business contacts with prominent entrepreneurs of the time including David Sarajishvili, Akaki Khosh-taria and the Zubalashvili brothers. Once, there was a great feast at the Jorjadzes estate which was attended by Ivane Mukhranbatoni. As a joke, Ivane decided to check Zakaria skill as a wine taster and dropped a golden coin into one of the oak barrels full of cognac. Jorjadze walked around the barrels, tasted the cognac and found the barrel with the coin. One more story is connected with Jorjadze cognac.



► George Jorjadze

Barbale Imerlishvili - Country of Liquid Sun

Industry began to develop gradually in Georgia from the end of the nineteenth century. With the appearance of the first entrepreneurs, some of them became involved in the manufacture of alcoholic beverages and opened up factories for their production.

In 1926, the lady of a noble family, Barbale Imerlishvili, initiated the establishment of a vodka distillery in Tbilisi. Together with her two companions, she invested 25,000 roubles in this business and rented a land plot from the Beibutov family near the River Mtkvari where it joined the River Vere. Imerlishvili paid an annual rent of 40 roubles for this land over a period of 12 years.

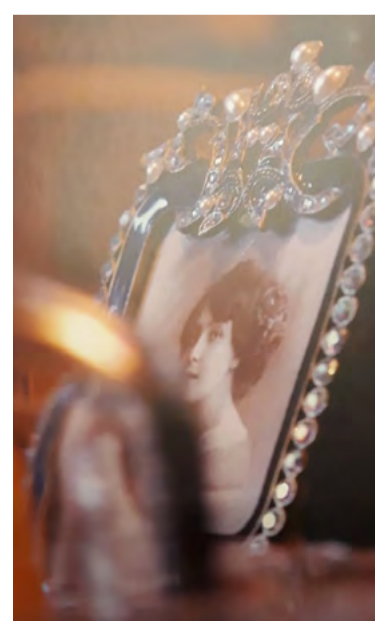
Imerlishvili invited two Jews from Russia, Messrs Elikin and Edelson, to undertake the installation of the equipment in the factory and putting it into operation. She entered into a contract with them 1827 according to which Edelson was commissioned to set up the factory and Elkin would travel to Russia to buy and bring in the required equipment and steam machine. The equipment was purchased in Kharkiv and brought to Tbilisi in 1828 via the Military Road. The factory was put into operation in 1829.

Barbale Imertishvili and her technologists used malt, wheat, oats, chacha, mulberry, fruit, sugar, lemon and orange

for producing various alcoholic drinks. The Based upon the existing information, the factory produced wine, vodka, liqueur, various extracts, cognac, sweet vodka and even beer Vinegar was made separately,

As an annual profit, the factory made 5,000 roubles in silver. Imerlishvili and her companions created a kind of network in Tbilisi for the sale of the products and purchased dukhans where they were successfully sold.

Imerlishvili's factory was rather well equipped from that time onwards and fully met the European technical standards of the period. Although experiments were made for obtaining



spirits by a chemical method, the process was only possible in an environment of more advanced technology.

The factory existed for a period of only seven-or-eight years. As expected, dispute arose between the partners. Imerlishvili invested the borrowed capital into the factory and as she failed to repay the debt in time, creditors took part of the factory which led to disagreements amongst the partners. In 1830, Elkin and Edelson left the factory which further affected its operation as well as the products. Finally, the disagreements became more and more intense and ultimately resulted in the closure of the factory.