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Georgia celebrates the National Day of Police, Gakharia awarded 10 employees of MIA
Police day is celebrated on May 31st.



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Atlantic Georgia plans to increase number of employees
The Economy Minister visited the facility.



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Number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Georgia continues to rise



26 new cases were reported in Georgia yesterday.

By NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

On Sunday, the number of confirmed coronavirus cases has increased by 26. 5 more people have recovered, Marina Ezugbaia, the medical director of the Infectious Diseases Hospital told reporters.

According to her, 18 of the new cases are from the village of Mushevani in Bolnisi, 4 from the quarantine area and 4 from the so-called Saburtalo cluster. As Ezugbaia noted, people should only leave their homes if necessary.

According to Amiran Gamkrelidze,

head of the Center for Disease Control, the 26 new cases confirmed should not be a cause of panic. He explained that yesterday's increase and lifting the restrictions are not directly connected to each other.

According to Gamkrelidze, during the mitigation process, the number of cases in all countries has increased and it is expected that the number of cases will increase in Georgia as well. However, as he points out, all new cases are under control.

As of today, there are 783 cases of the Coronavirus reported in the country. Out of this, 605 have already recovered and 12 of them have died.

The Economy Minister Natia Turnava stated that the next two months will be the hardest for the economy.

"There is a crisis in Georgia as well as around the world. I have said before, May will be hard, and June will be hard, the whole year will not be good either, because instead of the expected 5 percent growth, we will get an average 5 percent drop. We have to work very hard to make 2021 a year of excellence," said Natia Turnava.

According to GEOSTAT, Georgia's economy shrank by 16.6 percent in April.

Around the world, the number of con-



Mzia Saganelidze (RFE/RL)

18 of the new cases are from the village of Mushevani in Bolnisi.

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Georgia celebrates the National Day of Police, Gakharia awarded 10 employees of MIA



About 5000 employees of the ministry were awarded various awards.

BY NIKA GANTSEMLIDZE

Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia congratulated the police on their professional day and spoke about the role of the police in the daily life of the state, especially in the context of the Coronavirus pandemic.

He congratulated 'Police Day' to everyone in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, including border guards, rescuers and firefighters. Vakhtang Gomelauri and Giorgi Gakharia awarded 10 employees of various departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs with a medal - 'For Special Merit' at the event dedicated to the Police Day.

According to the head of the government, Georgia should always remain in the region and Europe, one of the most efficiently controlled and one of the cleanest countries in terms of virus spread speed.

"First and foremost, it is the joint accomplishment of everyone - our citizens, doctors, police officers - that Tbilisi and Batumi were declared the cleanest cities in Europe in terms of COVID-19," said Prime Minister of Georgia.

On the occasion of the Police Professional Day, on behalf of the Minister of Internal

Affairs, about 5000 employees of the Ministry were awarded various awards. The US Embassy congratulates the Georgian police on Police Day. The relevant announcement was published by the embassy.

On May 27th, Ambassador Degan presented a certificate of appreciation to Minister of Internal Affairs Vakhtang Gomelauri to congratulate the

Ministry on Police Day and demonstrate the respect and gratitude of the U.S. Embassy for the support and achievements of the Ministry and its law enforcement professionals, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Georgia, Police Day is celebrated on May 31st, this year, because of the pandemic, the celebration was not held.



The US Embassy also congratulated 'Police Day.'

Number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Georgia continues to rise

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Turnava says that the economy will continue to drop.

Confirmed coronavirus cases is growing daily. As of today, there are more than 6 million confirmed cases, out of which more than 370 thousand have sadly passed away. More than 2,7 million people have already recovered.

The most cases have been reported in the US, where the number of people infected with the novel coronavirus has surpassed 1,8 million. Following the US is Brazil, Russia, Spain, and the UK.

The new coronavirus originally spread in China, in the end of 2019. Since then, the virus has spread worldwide in more than 200 countries.

Weather

Monday, June 1

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 28°C
Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 16°C

Tuesday, June 2

Day Clear
High: 30°C
Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 17°C

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USAID Zrda and bp Georgia Strengthen Communities in Georgia

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

Since 2018, the USAID Zrda Activity in Georgia (USAID Zrda) and bp Georgia have been implementing the joint community development program in 41 villages where bp and USAID Zrda activities overlap. The joint program is being implemented as part of the broader Community Development Program, initiated and funded by bp and its oil and gas partners. Focus areas of the partnership include agriculture, business and community development. Within the joint program, USAID Zrda and bp support sustainable social and economic development projects that respond to the needs of the local population and have the potential to positively impact the target communities by creating jobs and income-generation opportunities.

USAID Zrda co-finances community development initiatives in 41 villages through technical assistance, training and small grants activities, contributing up to \$300,000 to the joint program. bp, on behalf of its oil and gas partners, is investing \$2 million in the broader Community Development program, the current phase of which is being implemented during 2018-2021 in 218 villages, including in 41 villages with more than 14,000 local residents, under the joint program with USAID Zrda.

USAID Zrda and bp Georgia

are implementing the joint program through their partners in the regions: Biological Farming Association Elkana and Regional Development Association (RDA).

Biological Farming Association Elkana is implementing small business development projects in 22 villages (including 2 IDP settlements) located in the Kaspi, Gori, Kareli and Khashuri municipalities of Shida Kartli region along the Western Route Export Pipeline better known as Baku-Supsa pipeline. Activities include supporting sustainable income generation activities through enterprise development and agricultural knowledge dissemination in the communities.

The program is designed to help entrepreneurs develop their ideas into businesses. As an example, Lali Jinikashvili from the village Tsitelubani of the Gori municipality has bought 2 egg incubators and now her business is spreading to neighboring villages. According to Lali, she always has customers that call in to join a queue for arranging eggs.

As Elkana has informed *The Messenger*, in Shida Kartli Region the program assisted 49 small business projects while 43 more are currently selected for further support, some of them work in agriculture operating small greenhouses, others have small sewing ateliers, or produce dry fruit and run iron work-

shops. In most cases, the entrepreneurs were supported through grants and training to help them kick off their small businesses.

Shalva Chinchaladze has also developed an iron workshop in the village Kvemo Brolosani, Khashuri municipality. "This assistance gave me an opportunity to partner up with several bid winner companies, and most importantly, I managed to create a workplace for locals" - he told us, adding that his workshop provides a variety of services like building and renewing iron doors, windows, ovens, footbridges, agricultural tools and others.

Another successful project is presented in the village of Kvemo Shakshaketi, Kareli Municipality - Grigol Gikashvili's greenhouse supported in 2018. Grigol is producing vegetables and greens to sell his produce not only locally, but at nearby fresh markets. Grigol Gikashvili emphasized the importance of hands-on training and recommendations that enabled him to start production of ecologically clean agricultural products.

In addition to the direct results of the joint USAID Zrda and bp Georgia program, the project has very powerful impact with regard to the informal education of locals: "They learn how to submit tax declarations or make bank transactions, how to issue an invoice or adhere to

work safety requirements; and in the long-term, we are happy to see that these beneficiaries become a model for replication," Elkana stated.

Another partner under the joint USAID Zrda and bp Georgia program, the Regional Development Association (RDA), is implementing community development initiatives in the 19 villages located in Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni and Tsalka municipalities of Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions along the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and South Caucasus Pipelines.

Main activities include investments in rural infrastructure projects to improve economic and living conditions, capacity building of community-based organizations and supporting sustainable income generation activities through enterprise development and agricultural activities.

As RDA has informed *The Messenger*, "Within USAID Zrda and bp joint program, RDA supported the implementation of 8 infrastructure projects that benefited 1,065 local households, while 8 more are currently selected for further support in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions.

Roman Karapetian, the village Skhvilisi Community Based Organization (CBO) head told us that the old wooden irrigation system channel in the village of Skhvilisi caused water loss, hence there was shortage of water and community was hardly able to irrigate its agricultural land plots.

"Up to 50 locals worked on the rehabilitation of the irrigation channel after which, new metal

construction was installed to prevent water loss affecting up to 70% of villagers," Karapetian commented, emphasizing the involvement of local government in this project.

Over the past two years, RDA has implemented 47 small business development initiatives and 25 more entrepreneurs are expected to be selected for further support within USAID Zrda and bp partnership. Right now, given the state of emergency in the country due to the COVID 19 pandemic, many of the entrepreneurs have to adapt to the new reality and think of ways to maintain normal running operation.

Shoghakat Ribakov, sewing shop owner in the village of Zemo Skhvilisi who has bought different inventories and machines within the Community Development Initiative program started sewing protective face masks and gloves for agricultural work. Given the lack of demand on other items and shortage of protection items, Ribakov decided to adapt: "After I started sewing face masks in the village, given the global shortage, some were even taken to the hospitals," the entrepreneur told us.

Within the joint program, USAID Zrda and bp are making every effort to improve livelihoods and increase community resilience through support to sustainable, social and economic development projects that respond to the needs of the local population and have the potential to positively impact the target communities including by creating employment and income-generation opportunities.



Lali Jinikashvili, egg incubator, Tsitelubani



Shalva Chinchaladze, iron workshop, Kvemo Brolosani



Grigol Gikashvili, greenhouse, Kvemo Shakshaketi



Shoghakat Ribakov, Sewing Shop, Zemo Skhvilisi



School Gym, Avranlo



Anzor Jakelidze, Joinery Shop, Avranlo



Zviad Devdariani-Beefarm, Baret



Irrigation System Rehabilitation Process, Skhvilisi



Anichka Sarkisian, Greenhouse, Skhvilisi



Cattle Waterings, Tkemlana

Atlantic Georgia plans to increase number of employees

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

The Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia visited Atlantic Georgia, a manufacturer of electric domestic appliances, in Kutaisi. Natia Turnava inspected the ongoing process in the enterprise and got acquainted with its plans for the future.

According to her, “while we are already managing the spread of the Coronavirus epidemic and the economy is slowly opening up, we are paying special attention to enterprises that are primarily established by foreign investors and are planning to expand.”

Atlantic Georgia, which has been operating in the Kutaisi Free Industrial Zone since 2017, is a subsidiary of the French international group Groupe Atlantic. Groupe Atlantic operates in 73 countries around the world, in Georgia it produces all kinds of export products - water heaters.

The invested capital in 2017 amounted to ₾47,113,020, and in 2018 - ₾26,227,437. The company employs about 140 people in Georgia, and after the expansion, the number of employees will increase even more.

“It is important that despite the global crisis, the company plans to expand, and if today they employ up to 140 people, in a few months, after the expansion, they will employ more than 200 of our citizens - they have very good, attractive conditions and salaries. Our Ministry, through the Produce in Georgia program, is helping them to solve all the technical problems and issues that exist as soon as possible and to expand the enterprise soon,” noted Turnava.

The company plans to increase the production of water



Atlantic Georgia has been operating in the Kutaisi Free Industrial Zone since 2017.

heaters in the future, as well as start new large-scale projects: the production of steatite (heating element), the manufacture of convectors (radiators) and cooperation with Bosch. In order to implement these projects, the company will make additional investments, and the number of employees will increase by 50 new staff.

“It is important that despite the global crisis, pandemic and challenge, the company’s plans have not changed and, on the contrary, they are thinking more about expanding production, and employing more people. Therefore, we will always have strong support,” added the minister.



The company employs about 140 people in Georgia, and plans to increase the number of employees.

EU launches new website showcasing over 160 active EU projects in Georgia



Photo: European Union

On 29 May, the EU launched the website EU4Georgia.ge, which provides detailed information on over 160 active EU-funded projects in Georgia.

The EU delivers over GEL 350 million (approximately €100 million) of assistance to Georgia every year in a wide array of areas, including economic and private sector support, agriculture, education, public administration, justice, environment, transport and culture. Most of this assistance arrives via projects implemented by international and local partners.

“We are happy to now be able to bring this information together in one place to help everybody to be better informed of all the projects that the EU is engaged in,” said Carl Hartzell, EU Ambassador to Georgia. “This website is a contribution to our ongoing efforts to ensure that all Georgians are aware of the EU-Georgia partnership and its positive impact.”

In addition to the detailed project information, the website features an interactive map showing the impact of select EU-supported interventions throughout the country. This feature will be expanded to more projects on a rolling basis.

The website will also provide regular news updates on projects, as well as a list of opportunities available via EU funding.

A Georgian language version of the website is planned to be launched this summer.

(euneighbours.eu)