Amidst growing local and international speculation as to its fate and actual purpose, the Government in Georgia has decided to take full control of the Richard G. Lugar Public Health Research Center in Tbilisi. By government decree, the $150 million facility has been closed and its assets handed over to the Georgian National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC).

Margvelashvili Nominated as Presidential Candidate of Georgian Dream

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
Guram Odisharia: There are no cultural issues which cannot be resolved by negotiations

NEW RESEARCH:
GROWING OBESITY EPIDEMIC IN GEORGIA

Should Georgia outlaw Abortions in dealing with its Demographic Crisis?

Indians in Georgia: Victims of Trafficking or Cheap Land Seekers?

“The path to EU is not paved with flowers” - Georgia Celebrates European Week

GROWING OBESITY EPIDEMIC IN GEORGIA
U.S.-funded Biological Research Lab placed under NCDC Control

BY LIKA MOSHASHVILII

Amidst growing local and international speculation as to its fate and actual purpose, the Government in Georgia has decided to take full control of the Richard G. Lugar Public Health Research Center in Tbilisi. By government decree, the $150 million facility has been closed and its assets handed over to the Georgian National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC).

The decree, dated May 7, has been published on the official webpage of the Government of Georgia. However, Gigi Gamkrelidze, Head of the NCDC, says that it only concerns the centre’s legal status. “The research centre was a legal entity of private land, and the NCDC is a legal entity of public land. We had to change its legal status to make it NCDC property,” he told The Georgian Times. “This doesn’t mean that the laboratory will be sold off or that its profile will be changed. It will keep its old name, but will merge with the NCDC and have a multi-sectoral supervisory board, chaired by the Health Ministry,” he added.

The Central Public Health Reference Laboratory, as it was also known, was created by a decision of the previous government on July 25, 2011 and financed by the United States Government. Its operations were overseen by the US Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

“The U.S. Government has contributed $150 million to the construction and operation of the Lugar Center,” stated Jeremy Richart, Press Attaché of the Lugar Center, “It’s early to think about it. Today I’m considering the election campaign, which will start very soon and it will of course be a very intensive process,” Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili said.

“We had one position to fill and all supported Giorgi Margvelashvili,” the Prime Minister said.

Ivanishvili thanked the PM and the Georgian Dream coalition for their active effort between the U.S. and Georgian governments. “I think the Lugar Center is a cooperative effort between the U.S. and Georgian governments.”

The Richard G. Lugar Center has been the subject of much speculation in the Russian media. In 2011 the Chief Sanitary Inspector of Russia, Gennady Onischchenko, accused Georgia of spreading African swine flu in Russia from a “secret laboratory.” In April, Georgian newspaper Kvefa Siaqbe published an interview with US citizen, Jeffrey Silverman, introduced as “the Georgian President’s former advisor,” who stated that the laboratory is designed to conduct dangerous experiments with viruses which could lead to the spread of such dangerous illnesses as swine flu and anthrax. These allegations were flatly denied by both the U.S. Ambassador to Georgia and Georgia’s Health Minister.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Giorgi Margvelashvili Nominated as Presidential Candidate of Georgian Dream

Giorgi Margvelashvili, current Minister of Education and Sciences and first Vice-Prime Minister is now the presidential candidate of Georgia’s ruling Georgian Dream coalition. The decision was announced by Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili at a press conference on May 11.

“We have one position to fill and all supported Giorgi Margvelashvili,” the Prime Minister said.

Ivanishvili spoke about Margvelashvili’s positive qualities. He assessed that Margvelashvili is experienced in management and politics, is a good analyst and expert.

Prior to the nomination, consultations of the political council of the coalition were held at Ivanishvili’s business center. Parliamentary majority members were then informed about the decision.

Margvelashvili thanked the PM and the Georgian Dream coalition for their trust.

“I want to thank Mr. Ivanishvili for their praises and the coalition for its trust. Of course it is a huge responsibility and honor. I would like to once more thank the team for the trust in supporting this position and I hope I will not disappoint these people, and the in the future, the hope of Georgian voters,” Margvelashvili said.

As Margvelashvili said, he will try to improve and increase his rating. The Presidential candidate was asked about the Georgia’s foreign political course but Margvelashvili said that he is now focused on the election campaign.

“It’s early to think about it. Today I’m considering the election campaign, which will start very soon and it will of course be a very intensive process,” Margvelashvili said.

Georgia’s presidential election will be held in October 2013. An exact date has yet to be set.

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What about Georgia's cultural relations with Armenia?

There are unresolved issues with Armenia associated with the preservation and ownership of cultural monuments. The Armenian government needs repair work done. We have some Armenian churches in Tbilisi, and although we are of the opinion that they belong to Georgians before this category are actually Armenian. During the Georgian Prime Minister’s visit to Armenia, it was agreed that these religious sites will be restored. A special commission was created, consisting of Georgian and Armenian archaeological groups. The minister of culture and foreign affairs and the corresponding state officials met on this issue. We have already taken some steps towards restoring churches in Armenia. There are a few large churches in Armenia and in the same meeting with our Armenian colleagues it was agreed that the certification of these churches will be carried out. Representatives of the ministry will work in Ar- menia in late May to explore the Georgian churches on what is now Armenian territory. All good neighbours, we need to resolve these issues based on mutual agreement, through dialogue.

So you’re saying that the state protected against the national minorities of Geor- gia, provoked by these problems with cultural monuments, will stop?

Unfortunately, in this regard, a very unpleasant situation has developed. Of course, we have to resolve this problem. Our goal is not only to finance theatres and other cultural activities. The Ministry of Culture should set an example of how to conduct cultural activities in the interest of the public, all its citizens and other stakeholders. It is better to let the restoration of the Ca- thedral proceed slowly if we can be sure that it is being done in a proper manner and to a high standard.

How about the funding of theatres? Will there be any changes here?

The funding of theatres will continue. Financing musical theatre is also important; we are going to publish a magazine which will discuss the success and popularity of Georgian theatre. We also want to create a cultural channel, which will show all the cultural achievements of the country.

Recently a new monument to Heydar Aliyev was inaugu- rated. Considering his past, in- volvement with the KGB and documented human rights vi- olations, how can Georgia jus- tify such a monument?

Also, the monument to Na- rimanov, one of the “Commis- sars from the 26” (a well-known Bolshevik revolutionary group which introduced communism to Azerbaijan), who was exe- cuted by the British during the civil war in 1918, is also still standing in front of the house of culture in Narin-Khali. Why, when tourist attractions like the Stalin statue in Gori have been pulled down?

For more than seventy years we were part of the Sovi- et Union. Whether we like it or not, this is our history. During that time, the country was ruled by communist leaders. Nazi- manov was a communist, but at the same time there was a link between Georgia and Az- erbaijan. He is respected in his country, which is our partner and friendly neighbour.

One of the biggest economic projects in Georgia, the Baku- Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, is connected with the name of Heydar Aliyev, and people should remember this. It is im- possible for us to change history, which includes Lenin, Stalin and other such leaders. All the leaders who linked our two peoples, and played an impor- tant role in our nation’s history were communists, because we recorded on May 19, “If we wish to build democracy, it is better to let the restoration of the statue of Stalin in Gori, our home town, we need to study this matter carefully and determine how many people are in favour of this. We must also take into account the opinion of the local authority. The previous government demolished many buildings and monuments which meted people of the past, such as the massive “Andropov’s Ears” arches in Rose Revolu- tion Square. Are there any plans to destroy monuments erected by the former gov- ernment?

We have no such plans: we have come as builders, not de- stroyers. However, we will analyse what went wrong with various projects, as we do not want to make the same mistakes. The former government did everything in a hurry. We think that if proper construc- tion processes are used, mistakes can be corrected. I per- sonally like the new Justice House but it would have been better if it had been construct- ed in Gldani Tbilisi suburb rather than the historic part of the city. It would be better if beautiful buildings were built on the perimeter of the city, not just in the centre. But, in gener- al, we are not going to ruin or tarnish anything!
The Best Company & Best Businessmen in Georgia of XIV Business Rating

TOP 25 Companies in Georgia
Named by The Georgian Times and GORBI

This list of companies is in alphabetical order

- Bank Constanta
- Bank of Georgia
- Company Aversi
- Company Natakhtari
- FlyGeorgia
- Gas-Energy
- Geocell
- Geoplant
- Georgian Industrial Group
- Georgian American Alloys
- Georgian Beer Company
- Georgian Carriage Building Holding
- Georgian Sugar
- Georgian Water and Power
- Goodwill
- Healthy Water
- PSP Group
- Rustavi Azot
- Rustavi Metalurgical Plant
- Sarajishvili
- Smart Retail
- Socar Energy Georgia
- TBC Bank
- VTB Bank Georgia
- Wissol Group
Dharmjit Saini maintains silent until recently. Not much reported on Indian TV, but the Saini family discovered that the soil was not chased a rather large plot of land an Indian farmer who had purchased the land. Saini came to the quality and what they have found in Georgians. However, not all are eyeing Georgian property locals. The presence of migration Consultancy Services our source continues to our collection of “reliable data” on the migration rate in Georgia is based on the number of crossings but so far no steps have been taken to part in the process. The United Nations call that by 2050, Georgia will have a demographic crisis. Families among top officials, only Tito Vladimir, a Russian Justice Minister ventured to express outright skepticism, saying that the ban could transform abortion into an underground business. “Prohibiting parents from being informed about the sex of a future child is as far as she is personally willing to go in preventing selective abortions, which favor boys,” she commented.

In October, 2011 the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe adopted a non-binding resolution condemning the pro-life stance and in the section of female sex selection is commonly practiced in India, most couples choose to have only one child policy to deal with overpopulation. In recent years, a departure from the natural sex ratio at birth has been observed in a number of Council of European member states and has reached worrying proportions in Albania, Armenia and Azerbaijan, where the demand for female babies is for 100 girls and in Georgia where female sex selection is still in the MIA's archives. The Patriarch of Georgian Dharmjit Saini admits in Georgia in search of a better life, many Indians have found in Georgia, especially when it comes to the quality of agricultural land. It was recently revealed that an Indian farmer who had purchased a rather large plot of land in Georgia in autumn 2012 had discovered that the soil was not as fertile as had been represented back home in Punjab. In India, Realising he had been cheated into buying a site, the man committed suicide. This was reported on Indian TV, but the Georgian government and Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) remained silent until recently. Much about the case is clear: the MIA says that it remembers the case but can’t say anything about it as the evidence was either destroyed or very controversial. Georgia is one of the most developed countries, in terms of human development and economic indicators but so far no steps have been taken to part in the process. The United Nations call that by 2050, Georgia will have a demographic crisis. Families among top officials, only Tito Vladimir, a Russian Justice Minister ventured to express outright skepticism, saying that the ban could transform abortion into an underground business. “Prohibiting parents from being informed about the sex of a future child is as far as she is personally willing to go in preventing selective abortions, which favor boys,” she commented.

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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
NEW RESEARCH: GROWING OBESITY EPIDEMIC IN GEORGIA

From May 7-11, meetings, exhibitions, marathons and different contests were held in frames of European Week in Georgia. The events were dedicated to foundation of the EU and took place in the capital city of Tbilisi, as well as different Georgian regions.

European Week is traditionally held on the 9th of May, on the eve of Europe Day. This year’s event started on May 7 at the National Library of the Parliament with an exhibition of schoolchildren’s paintings on “Georgia-EU” integration theme. Those students having the best photos and paintings were presented with awards by Philipp Dimitrov, Head of the EU Representation in Georgia Alex Petriashvili, State Minister for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Davit Zurabishvili, Deputy Minister of Education and Science.

“Georgia strives to EU integration and from this perspective it is very important to increase our society’s level of awareness of the European Union and its functions. The event organized by the Information center on NATO and EU started from the most important group – the next generation,” Petriashvili declared during the opening of European Week.

Dimitrov in his turn said “the path to EU is not paved with flowers”; it’s a rather difficult route. However, he mentioned that when his colleagues visit Tbilisi, they say that it is a European city, and even “more European than some cities of EU member states”. Dimitrov emphasized.

As he said, children have shown in their works that there are complicated issues, which Georgia needs to solve but the country on the whole is on the correct path, which will sooner or later bring it to European Union. Alex Petriashvili and Latvia’s Ambassador to Georgia Elita Gavele held a meeting at the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) the next day. They talked with students about the perspective of Georgia in joining the EU and shared the Latvian experience in this direction.

The apartment is located on the fifth floor of the 11th building in Tbilisi’s prestigious Vake district. Totaling 114 square meters, the apartment is fully furnished, and includes internal decoration and furniture, central heating system and a comfortable veranda.

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Georgia’s Agriculture Minister Dismissed in First Major Staff Change for Government

**By LIKA MOSHASHIVILI, GT**

Georgian Agriculture Minister Davit Kirvalidze has tendered his resignation, down from his post after several of his ministry’s top officials were detained on corruption charges.

Agriculture Ministry officials were accused of financial fraud, negligence, and the embezzlement of 2 million GEL (1.2 million USD) from the state budget. Tbilisi City Court handed down prison sentences to all accused, apart from one female employee who was released on a 3000 GEL bail.

Employees of the Anti-Corruption Agency under the country’s Interior Ministry detained several senior officials of the Agriculture Ministry in Georgia on May 1.

As the Interior Ministry explained after the arrests the public funds were misspent while procuring tractors and other agriculture equipment as part of the state-funded program to assist farmers in cultivating their agriculture lands.

According to the Ministry, the Head of one of the units within the Agriculture Ministry, director of a state research center Agriculture Mechanization Institute; director of the state-owned Mechanizator company, which was in charge of procuring the tractors, and two of his deputies were among those arrested. The Interior Ministry also accused several of the arrested persons of “pressuring” members of a group of experts, which was in charge before the truth is established,” Kirvalidze stated, adding that the Nano-Atlantic space. She said that EU membership with strict regulations can cause a country like Georgia economic problems; however, its positive influence still offsets possible negative effects and address ambiguous agreements.

The same day Alex Petriashvili attended another meeting – with teachers and school directors. They talked about Georgia’s perspectives for EU cooperation. The event was held at the National Centre for Teacher Professional Development. The parties discussed joint projects with the Ministry of Education and the EU.

The last day of the week was dedicated to sports and environmental events – with workers of the NATO and EU Information Center told students about the history of the European Union and the potential benefits of membership in both organizations for Georgia.

**“The path to EU is not paved with flowers”** Georgia Celebrates European Week

President Mikheil Saakashvili vetoed two bills on May 5. According to Andro Barov, Head of the President’s Administration, the President used his veto power regarding amendments to the Civil Code, which called for the legal status of the non-entrepreneurial legal entities to be transformed into legal entities of public law. Saakashvili also vetoed the amendments to the Law on Constitutional Court. This is the draft bill accepted by the parliament, according to which, if the constitutional court will stop the disputable acts and legislative norms, the final decision should be made within 30 calendar days, otherwise, the termination norms will start operating from May 31. This change is directly connected to the amendments to the Law on Common Courts as it is expected that the opposing side will appeal to the constitutional court, while the court will make the law invalid.

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Proud and Pioneering French Film Producer Feels the Magic on the Set of NEST’

By TAKO AGARASHVILI, GT

Sébastien Aubert a French film producer was present at Cannes (France) visited Tbilisi for his new project. He is young and handsome, a true gentleman, and very French. His accent is a killer, yet sweet. You can understand that he is a very busy man from the moment you begin talking to him; he is basically a workaholic. His pulse beats to something that deserves admiration. He is friendly, warm, kind and giving.

I heard a lot of stories about his birth, family and a cute house is Cannes. He had a couple of Georgian friends over (actress Tamri Bizava and a director Tomoki Bizava) for the International Cannes Film Festival in 2011. His sense of humor was the highlight. When I offered to chit chat after we were done with the interview at the café, he got off fended and asked me: “Do you know any French guy who lets you pay for coffees?” We laughed off, had a little walk, ‘made fun’ of our mutual friend Tomoki Bizava and I said goodbye giving him a big hug. The good news is that Sébastien will most likely be here in October for the International Festival of Arts in Honour of Master Tamanishvili – GIFT. I wrote about his persona, since you can’t possibly see who he is while speaking about the job. Sébastien is strict when he comes to work. So, here he is, talking about his career, projects and plans. I insist you try at least to read the article with a French accent so you catch his charisma.

What came first? Producing or distributing? I was a producer at first. I produced a short film “the Dan- ides’ Barrel’ and hired two dis- producers for the International Film Festival at the end of a month. So, here he is, talking about his career, projects and plans. I insist you try at least to read the article with a French accent so you catch his charisma.

What is your favorite film? It was a film I produced in 2010 titled ‘Strange Ones’. I only had three weeks to raise the money, otherwise I would lose the director. I managed to find the money in one day – 10,000 Euros. It was very challenging for me. We shot the film in Mexico, but it didn’t work out.

Which was your favorite successful project? It was a film I produced in 2010 titled ‘Strange Ones’. I only had three weeks to raise the money, otherwise I would lose the director. I managed to find the money in one day – 10,000 Euros. It was very challenging for me. We shot the film in Mexico, but it didn’t work out.

What was your unsuc- cessful project? The main goal is to sell the film to a TV channel. My most successful project was my very first short film. I sent it to 400 festivals worldwide but it went to only 50 BFI festivals. I couldn’t sell it.

Tell me about working with Georgian directors?

The first Georgian director I worked with is Tina Katchris- hvili. It was a good experience. Tina Bizava as well – what I like about him is that he is very passionate. I need a lot of energy to control him, but in the end I am very happy with the outcome.

Who is your favorite direc- tor to work with? I can’t name one director, it would be unprofessional. I have to approach directors with the same attitude, that’s how I keep my job going on at a certain level.

How do you choose the film you want to work on? ‘April Chill’ by Tomoki Bizava. When I saw the opening of the film I was shaken to my core with the genius vision of directing. I could never forget the moment. It’s something that grabs you in a heartbeat. I was hooked. I also love to dis- cover a new culture on the back- ground of the film. Exotic cul- ture is very alluring for me. When you work with the direc- tor from a small and ancient country you would want to see the original culture, the soul of the country. I wouldn’t be inter- ested in film unless it is ex- tremely brilliant. If it’s some- thing that could have been shot in France as well; then why work with these foreign coun- tries. These places grab me with the authentic story and direct- ing. ‘April Chill’ opens the door of the country to see what is really inside it. It shows a lot about the nation, traditions, you can see the Georgian soul wide open on your screen.

How about other Georgian films? ‘Next’ by Tomoki Bizava is still playing in the festivals. It went to 15 festivals already, among which 3-4 were A-list festivals. The film has reached the world, was in Hong Kong and many other countries. France 3 bought it. It is a very interesting film but hard to sell. It is very Georgian, black and white and a bit slow. I love the film, I am proud of it. When I attended the shooting I could feel the soul. There is this scene with a father and his son when he fixes the tie and there was some magic happening on the set, we all got very emotional. It was in the air. Somehow it touched whoever was on the set. It is one of those moments you simply can never erase.

There is another movie by Tina Katchrishvili called ‘Black Mulberry’ it was bought by France 3 as well. It is on the festivals and it is still running.

Do you always attend the shooting? No, I’m useless on the set. ‘April Chill’ by Tomoki Bizava. When I saw the opening of the film I was shaken to my core with the genius vision of directing. I could never forget the moment. It’s something that grabs you in a heartbeat. I was hooked. I also love to dis- cover a new culture on the back- ground of the film. Exotic cul- ture is very alluring for me. When you work with the direc- tor from a small and ancient country you would want to see the original culture, the soul of the country. I wouldn’t be inter- ested in film unless it is ex- tremely brilliant. If it’s some- thing that could have been shot in France as well; then why work with these foreign coun- tries. These places grab me with the authentic story and direct- ing. ‘April Chill’ opens the door of the country to see what is really inside it. It shows a lot about the nation, traditions, you can see the Georgian soul wide open on your screen.

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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!

Every Sunday, 12:3 PM
Buffet - 47 GEL+VAT
Buffet, unlimited white and red wine - 59 GEL+ VAT
Children under 9 free of charge. Ages 9 to 13 - 25 Gel + VAT
Special discounts for the parties 10 and more
10% discount for our returning guests

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Open House

QSI International School of Tbilisi

All interested community members are invited to our Open House!

Come meet teachers, tour the school and learn about our admissions process, curriculum and graduation requirements

Tuesday May 21, 2013
5-7 p.m.

Website: www.qsi.ge

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“Aversi” Dove Card Lottery has begun!
The cumulative “Aversi” Dove card is 5 years already. Besides the fact that with the accumulated amount on the card a customer is able to choose a particular prize from a catalogue, he/she is given the opportunity to take part in the lottery.

This time, “Aversi” offers you the forth grand lottery.

$ Every owner of the “Dove Card” will receive 1 lottery ticket by paying 20 GEL for the product at any “Aversi” drug store and 10% of the amount paid will be returned on the card.

$ For every 50 “Doves” 3 lottery tickets will be given as a present.

$ For 10 “Doves” you will receive 1 lottery ticket.

The prizes are:

The main prize 5000 GEL to 5 winners
20 000 GEL 10 000 GEL to 5 winners

“Aversi”- Health and Peace of Mind
WWW.AVERSI.GE