

4 people detained for violent acts during pre-election campaigns in Marneuli and Bolnisi



“We have detained 4 people in connection with the events in Bolnisi and Marneuli,” says MIA.

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) detained 4 people on the facts of the violence that took place on September 27th in the village of Nakhiduri in Bolnisi Municipality and on September 29th in Marneuli. Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Vladimir Bortsvadze spoke about it at a briefing.

An activist of the Georgian Dream party, born in 1987, and the head of the car fleet of Marneuli Municipality Ltd., born in 1977, were arrested on the fact of violence in Marneuli. They assaulted the activists of the National Movement (UNM) and inflicted physical injuries on them.

On September 27th, in the village of Nakhiduri in the Bolnisi district, an activist of the UNM, born in 1986, was arrested for assaulting Georgian Dream supporters, using a blunt object. A member of the UNM, born in 1989, who physically assaulted an employee of the election commission, has been arrested on the fact of violence on the territory of the election commission. The crimes committed by the accused are punishable by up to 2 years in prison.

Activists of the UNM and the Georgian Dream clashed on September 27th in the village of Nakhiduri in Bolnisi Municipality. Both parties blame each other for the attack. According to Kakha Okriashvili, the majoritarian MP candidate of the UNM in Dmanisi, Tsalka, Bolnisi and Tetrtskaro constituencies, the attackers allegedly fired indiscriminately from a firearm.

According to Gogi Meshveliani, the majoritarian candidate of the Georgian Dream in Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tetrtskaro and Tsalka, up to ten Georgian Dream activists were injured in the physical con-

frontation, two of whom are in critical condition. According to him, the initiator of the attack was the local leader of the UNM, Arif Yusufov.

On the evening of September 29th, supporters of the National Movement and the Georgian Dream physically and verbally confronted each other in the 22nd constituency of Marneuli. At that time, the protest was led by members of the UNM. A hand-to-hand confrontation took place between members of the Georgian Dream and the UNM in Marneuli. In the

evening, the situation became tense again, during which UNM members were physically assaulted.

Two journalists and two cameramen of the main channel were later attacked, and the cameraman of the Public Broadcaster was also beaten.

Lasha Kveladze, an activist of the UNM and a member of the Marneuli District Commission, was detained due to the physical confrontation that took place on September 29th. According to the investigation, he “physically assaulted an



On the evening of September 29th, supporters of the National Movement and the Georgian Dream physically and verbally confronted each other in the 22nd constituency of Marneuli.

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employee of the election commission.” He was charged under the first part of Article 162 of the Criminal Code of Georgia, which stipulates violence at the polling station from the day of the election until the final results are summarized.

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Opposition party members detained and fined at protest

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

Opposition party Strategy Aghmashenebeli organised a protest on October 5th at Tbilisi city hall, demanding annulment of the fines that had been imposed on the party in August for putting up election posters on the locations where it is not permitted by law. During the rally, the party received another penalty of ₾1000. According to the Tbilisi City Hall, this time the party was fined for illegally putting up tents near Tbilisi City Hall territory.

The party members and supporters initially demanded a meeting with city Mayor Kakha Kaladze and an abolishment of the fines.

According to the representatives of the party, in the tents put up by protesters, party supporters were collecting signatures for legislative initiation on regulating banking loans (reduction of interest rates on bank loans). The party was fined ₾1000 under section three of article 150 of the Code of Administrative Offenses which implies the arbitrary placement of ventilation system, ATM, lattice, booth, stall and/or other light construction on the territory of Tbilisi Municipality. According to the Tbilisi City Hall, the party was fined under the same article a few months ago, which they appealed to the Legal Service of the City Hall, however, the appeal has not been satisfied.

During the rally, a physical and verbal confrontation took



Party members and supporters gathered at Tbilisi City hall on October 5th.

place between law enforcers and activists. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, 4 individuals are detained under article 173 of the Code of Administrative Offenses of Georgia, which means non-compliance with a lawful order or demand of a law-enforcement or commission of any unlawful act against such a person.

As Giorgi Vashadze, the leader of the party Strategy Aghmashenebeli reported, the police detained Secretary-General of the party, Paata Manjgaladze. According to Vashadze, Manjgaladze is a parliamentary candidate for the upcoming elections and is protected by the immunity. Vashadze stated that Manjgaladze's detention was an unlawful act and demanded his immediate release.



Four members of the party Strategy Aghmashenebeli arrested for disobeying the police.

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According to the MIA, on September 29th, 2 people attacked and confronted UNM activists in Marneuli. The investigation is underway under the first part of Article 126 of the Criminal Code

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of Georgia, which stipulates gang violence.

Police have overall arrested 4 persons for violent acts during the pre-election campaigns in Marneuli and Bolnisi Municipalities, out of which two persons were detained for "beating

of UNM activists and one of their companions" according to a October 3rd statement.

According to Bortsvadze, 'the task of the MIA is to maintain law and order and ensure free, democratic and secure elections'; The agency will not allow the

'election process to develop in a violent scenario' and will react strictly to 'any violation of the law.'

The prosecutor's office states that it is appealing to the court to detain Lasha Kveladze, who was detained as a precautionary

measure, on bail of ₾ 5,000. This means that the accused will remain in custody until the bail is paid. It is also demanding ₾5,000 bail for the two Georgian Dream supporters arrested on October 3rd.

Weather

Tuesday, October 6

Day Showers
High: 16°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 12°C

Wednesday, October 7

Day Clear
High: 18°C

Night Clear
Low: 10°C

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Ministry of Economy of Georgia holds an online meeting with the U.S. Department of Commerce Deputy Under Secretary for International Trade



The Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, Genadi Arveladze, and Georgian ambassador to the US, Davit Bakradze also participated in the online meeting.

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

The Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, Natia Turnava held an online meeting with the U.S. Department of Commerce Deputy Under Secretary for International Trade, Joseph Semsar. According to the press center of the ministry, the sides talked about bilateral trade relations and future plans of strategic partnership.

During the meeting, it was pointed out that the US is the major strategic part-

ner and ally for Georgia and its support and projects over the years have greatly contributed to Georgia's democratic development and the establishment of a free market economy.

As the Minister of Economy of Georgia stated after the meeting, Georgian and American sides hold regular High-Level Dialogues respecting various economic and trade topics. In this regard, Turnava pointed out the ongoing discussions within the frameworks of High-Level Dialogues as well as meetings of the economic

working group established under the US-Georgia Charter of Strategic Partnership, during which, parties thoroughly discuss reforms implemented in Georgia and future partnership plans.

According to the Minister, during the meeting, they discussed the importance of the conclusion of a free trade agreement between the two countries. Turnava stated that the US-Georgia free trade agreement would be a mixture of political and economic interests, also a clear signal of increasing US economic curiosity in the region, which would facilitate Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration and economic development, including the need

for trade diversification.

"There is a special format, within the framework of which, further dialogue and discussion on the future agreement are possible. We had a request, which was shared quite positively (by American side), to accelerate and activate this process, despite the global pandemic," noted Turnava after the online meeting.

As the Ministry informs, the sides also discussed how the Georgian government handled the pandemic situation. According to Turnava, the American side positively estimated the timely measures taken by Georgia against the pandemic and called them 'effective'.



It was noted during the meeting that at the initiative of the Georgian side, a survey had been conducted, which showed that concluding a free trade agreement between Georgia and the US would be beneficial for both countries.

Ilia II receives the title of Honor Cause of the Theological Academy



The president of Georgia congratulates the Patriarch on his honorary award.

By ANASTASIA SOKHADZE

On October 5th, Ilia II was awarded the honorary title which, according to Giorgi Zviadadze, the rector of Academy and Seminary, is the first time that the Academy has awarded such a high award and pre-

sented it to the Patriarch for his special merit before the country and the church.

"Your Holiness, on behalf of the Parliament of Georgia, congratulations on the title of Honorary Cause of the Tbilisi Theological Academy," the Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia,

Archil Talakvadze writes about this on the official Facebook page.

The Speaker of the Parliament speaks about the merits of the Patriarch and notes that His Holiness with his life, work and strength of faith gives us an example of how a person should meet modern challenges.

"Your merits before the nation and the homeland are unique and invaluable. Your life, work, and faith give people an example of how a person can meet modern challenges. In these changing and difficult times, you will be reminded of the importance of humanity, humility, selflessness, and love through kind words and Christian teaching. I wish you encouragement and longevity for the good of our homeland," wrote Talakvadze.

The President of Georgia spoke about the merits of the Patriarch and noted that the Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Georgia was reborn in the Patriarch's hands when he was resurrected as a full member of the family of world churches.

Zurabishvili also mentioned the on-going conflict between Azerbaijani and Armenia.

"Your prayers have great power today, when our two



Ilia II is the first person to receive such an honorary award.

brotherly countries are at war and the blood of the brothers is still shed on the Holy Land of the Caucasus. Your prayer for peace will make us believe, avoid trials and bring us peace," said the President of Georgia.

It is truly difficult to lead a community spiritually in a time of transition. Caring for the population's spiritual salvation, by adhering not only to Chris-

tian but also to universal humanistic ideas. He had to be the spiritual shepherd of Georgia during the time of trial.

According to Zurabishvili, the ordeal is not over, the world is entering a new turbulent era.

The event was attended by the enthroned Catholicos-Patriarch, Reverend Shio, the Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia and invited guests.