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Number of Covid-19 cases increases in Tbilisi, situation in Adjara improves



Over the weekend, 1042 new cases of Covid-19 were reported in Georgia

BY NIKA GANTSEMLIDZE

Over the weekend, 1042 new cases of Covid-19 were reported in Georgia. As the official data indicates, the situation is getting better in the Adjara re-

gion of Georgia, while the number of cases in Tbilisi is increasing significantly.

The number of people dying as a result of the complications because of the Covid-19 is increasing as well.

Over the weekend, only in Tbilisi, 419

cases were reported, out of which, 222 was reported on Saturday and 194 on Sunday. In total, there have been 11794 cases reported in Georgia, and 6327 have recovered.

According to one of the leaders of the Hospital for infectious Diseases Marina Endeladze, on Sunday, 194 cases were reported in Tbilisi, 172 in Adjara region of Georgia, 117 in Imereti.

According to statement of the Health Ministry of Adjara, at least two people have died in the region from the virus.

At the moment, 5590 people are in quarantine mode, and 836 are under hospital supervision. 1393 people are being treated at so-called Covid Hotels.

It was reported yesterday that 30 out

of 32 members of the youth team of the Rustavi folk ensemble Tutarchela, including the head of the ensemble, were tested positive for Covid-19. The infected are being treated in Tbilisi clinics and hospices. The first case of coronavirus transmission among members of the ensemble was recorded on 3 October. According to Tamar Buadze, the head of Tutarchela, the infected have weak symptoms of the disease.

The first case of the Covid-19 was reported in Georgia in February. For most part, the virus did not spread around the country, however, recently, the number of people infected with the virus has increased significantly.



Marina Endeladze: on Sunday, 194 cases were reported in Tbilisi, 172 in Adjara region of Georgia, 117 in Imereti



Total of 11794 cases of coronavirus were reported in Georgia

Khazaradze: We should transform Telavi into 11th wine capital



At the pre-election meeting of Lelo in Telavi, the chairman of the party, Mamuka Khazaradze addressed the population



Lelo for Georgia is a political party in Georgia that was created at the end of 2019 by businessmen Mamuka Khazaradze and Badri Japaridze

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

Yesterday, in Telavi, within the pre-election campaign of Lelo, the party chairman Mamuka Khazaradze, the general secretary Badri Japaridze and the party leaders met with the population. Irakli Talakhadze, Telavi majoritarian MP candidate was introduced to the population during the meeting.

At the pre-election meeting of Lelo in Telavi, the chairman of the party, Mamuka Khazaradze addressed the

population and said that every single direction that Georgia has should be moved for the better future of the country. According to Khazaradze, the Marshall Plan of Lelo indicates that Telavi should be registered as the eleventh wine capital, and the party is already working in this direction.

During the meeting, the General Secretary of the party Badri Japaridze addressed the people and called on the population to participate in the elections and make the right choice.

Telavi majoritarian MP candidate Irakli Talakhadze addressed the residents of his constituency and thanked them for coming to the meeting. As for his membership in Lelo, according to Talakhadze, he shares the same ideas with the team and "he will fight with the party for beneficial changes in the region."

Lelo for Georgia is a political party in

Georgia that was created at the end of 2019 by businessmen Mamuka Khazaradze and Badri Japaridze. The party has attracted a number of prominent political figures and parties, including David Usupashvili's Development Movement, the New Rights Party and Pikria Chikhradze.

Germany hands over five ventilators for the treatment of Covid-19 patients to Georgia



The Federal Government of Germany has provided five ventilators to the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia for the treatment of people suffering from Covid-19. The German Ambassador, Hubert

Knirsch, handed over the devices to the Deputy Minister, Tamar Gabunia, during an official ceremony on October 7, 2020.

The five ventilators of the manufacturer Draeger were financed and provided by the German Federal Foreign Ministry from funds to support the East-

ern Partnership countries in the Covid-19 pandemic with the intention to provide adequate assistance in coping with the infection on the ground.

The devices are to be used immediately at the Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center of

the Hospital for Infectious Diseases, Tbilisi. The ceremony was also attended by Marina Ezukbaia, Medical Director of Infectious Diseases Hospital, and Shota Gogichaishvili, Executive Director of the Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center.

Weather

Monday, October 12

Day Partly Cloudy High: 22°C
Night Clear Low: 12°C

Tuesday, October 13

Day Clear High: 23°C
Night Clear Low: 11°C

published by **The Messenger**

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 3.2172; Euro - 3.7966; GBP - 4.1647; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.1679; Swiss Franc - 3.5253

The future of Anaklia Port – What does the government plan to do?



In January 2020, the Georgian government terminated its contract with the Anaklia Development Consortium

By NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

Many experts have said over the last few years that the Anaklia Port is one of the most important projects for the future of the country had, giving Georgia a lot of great and important opportunities. However, because of the problems that the project had, its future seems to be very uncertain at this point.

The new budget adopted by the government gives some hope for this project, and many are saying that there are some signs for it to continue in the future. Re-

cently, the Anaklia Development Consortium released a statement on Georgia's 2021 draft budget.

The statement says that according to the draft budget proposed for 2021, the government is questioning the success of the new tender related to the port project.

The consortium believes that no credible investor will participate in the tender amid arbitration disputes over how the government treated ADC (Anaklia Development Consortium) and foreign investor Bob Meyer.

The statement reads that the Consor-

tium is still ready to continue working on the project, to attract more investors, so Georgia can use it at its best.

According to the draft state budget for 2021, the Georgian government will invest 10 million GEL in the development of the highway and railway project connecting the Anaklia deep-water port. According to the same project, 225 million GEL is provided for roads and railways in 2022-2024.

In January 2020, the Georgian government terminated its contract with the Anaklia Development Consortium, following an appeal by both the consortium and one of its investors, Bob Meyer, to the Arbitration Court. In the process, the parties argue that the destructive steps taken by the Georgian government have

halted the implementation of one of the most important infrastructure projects for Georgia, which has caused significant financial damage to investors.

Although the budget envisages spending GEL 10 million on road construction in 2021, this is not really a guarantee that these costs will actually be utilized. In recent years, there has not been a case when as much has been spent on the development of this road as was planned in the budget.

For example, in 2019, 11 million was initially planned to be spent, but in fact the development amounted to 3.7 million GEL. According to the initial draft of the 2020 budget, 50 million was envisaged for the construction of the road, which was further reduced to 3.3 million GEL.



According to the draft state budget for 2021, the Georgian government will invest 10 million GEL in the development of the highway and railway project connecting the Anaklia

Crucial issues still need addressing over the appointment of Supreme Court judges in Georgia

Strasbourg, 09.10.2020 - Following yesterday's adoption by the Venice Commission of its opinion on the amendments to the Georgian law on the Common Court with regard to the appointment of Supreme Court judges, the Parliamentary Assembly's co-rapporteurs for the monitoring of Georgia, Titus Corlatean (Romania, SOC) and Claude Kern (France, ALDE), made the following statement:

"We very much appreciate the fact that, on our recommendation, the Georgian parliament asked for a Venice Commission opinion on these amendments. This could have helped ensure that all Venice Commission recommendations and concerns with regard to the previous version of the law were fully addressed. However, following the publication of the Venice Commission opinion on these amendments, it is clear that this has not been the case and we can only regret that the parliament did not wait with the adoption of these amendments until the Venice Commission's opinion was finalised.

While several recommendations from the previous Venice

Commission opinion, especially with regard to reasoned decisions by the High Council of Justice (HCJ), were implemented, a small but crucial number of issues remain to be addressed. This is especially the case with regard to the process for appealing High Council of Justice decisions and the need to disclose the names of the Council's members, together with their vote. These remaining recommendations still need to be implemented to ensure that the law provides a fully adequate basis for the sensitive issue of the appointment of Supreme Court judges in Georgia. We therefore call on all political forces in Georgia to commit themselves to addressing the remainder of the Venice Commission recommendations as soon as the new parliament has been convened."

The rapporteurs intend, if the sanitary situation allows, to make their next fact-finding visit in the framework of the monitoring procedure soon after the parliamentary elections on 31 October, which they also hope to observe as part of a Parliamentary Assembly observer delegation.

Georgia: Venice Commission says several recommendations on Supreme Court Judges appointment implemented, regrets speedy adoption of legislative amendments

Strasbourg, 09.10.2020 – Abolishing secret ballots and making more transparent the selection and exclusion of candidates for a Supreme Court's judge positions, as well as waiving the qualification examination requirement for non-judge candidates, are steps in the right direction. However, the procedure of a judicial appeal by candidates against decisions of the High Council of Justice must be improved, said the Venice Commission in its opinion on the amendments to the Organic Law on Common Courts in Georgia.

The opinion was requested by the Georgian Parliament on 22 September 2020, after the draft amendments had already been adopted in two readings. As the Venice Commission had an extremely limited amount of time due to the belated opinion request, it had to limit itself to analysing whether its recommendations of April 2019 had been met. On 30 September 2020, the rapporteurs were informed that the Parliament adopted the draft amendments in their third and final reading on that same day, which was the last day of the last session of parliament prior to the elections, without waiting for the requested opinion from the Commission. The Venice Commission regrets this.

On the substance of the draft

amendments, the Venice Commission commends the detailed work done to redesign the evaluation and voting process in the High Council of Justice selecting candidates for the position of a Supreme Court judge, to remove the secret ballot and provide more transparency by conducting candidate's interviews in public hearings and by providing written reasoning for each quote, which is made public. "This gives a considerable degree of transparency to the procedure and allows, in principle, to point to deficient, insufficient or contradictory motivation for the ranking of the suitable candidates," says the Venice Commission. "The decisions of the High Council will therefore be exposed to some public scrutiny," it adds, noting that these amendments "go in the right direction".

Yet, in order to meet the Commission's other recommendation "to provide for a judicial appeal" against the decision by the High Council not to select a candidate judge, it is further necessary to provide for the disclosure, of the identity of the Council member who cast the vote, together with the vote and the reasoning, as well as allow a second appeal, should the High Council again refuse the nomination. "Consideration could be given to modifying the composition of the Council for the sec-

ond decision by excluding those members who have been found to be biased against the candidate or for other reasons" provided under the new legislation, the Commission suggests.

The recommendations on reconsidering the requirement for non-judge candidates to have passed the judicial qualification examination and on excluding a member of the High Council of Justice who is a candidate for judges of the Supreme Court, from all procedures pertaining to the selection and nomination of these candidates, were taken into account through a legislative amendment enacted on 1 May 2019.

A recommendation to modify the eligibility criteria by introducing a higher age requirement and putting more emphasis on a candidate's experience was not taken into account.

The additional recommendation on initiating the procedure for the appointment of a Supreme Court judge in advance to prevent the deficit of sitting judges has not been followed either.

The opinion was prepared under the Quick Response Mechanism in the framework of the EU/CoE joint programme "Partnership for Good Governance", co-funded by the Council of Europe and the European Union and implemented by the Council of Europe.