

Transparency International Georgia boycotts election of the Supreme Court judges

BY VERONIKA MALINBOYM

Transparency International Georgia boycotts the parliamentary procedures for the election of the Supreme Court judges, the organization's head, Eka Gigauri has announced:

"Transparency International Georgia will not participate in this process either as part of a coalition or individually. We have too many questions about this process. We demand to carry out a reform first and then elect the Supreme Court judges," Gigauri added.

Head of TI Georgia also noted that the processes that can be witnessed right now have nothing to do with an in-depth reform, but can rather be described as a "superficial":

"They have not stopped specific trials in court. There is a demand not only from the local non-governmental organizations, but also from our Western partners that certain processes and the appointment of judges should be suspended until the reform is carried out, to which the Georgian government does not pay attention. This is a very big problem," Eka Gigauri told the reporters.

According to the EU-brokered agreement of April 19, under the current rule, the High Council of Justice should have refrained from appointing judges to the Supreme Court. However, it is indicated that the draft law on appointment to the Supreme Court should be submitted to the Parliament, which will take into account the conclusion of the Venice Commission published in 2019, open voting in the High Council of Justice, and the need to substantiate the latter's nominations.

There should also be substantial reform of the High Council of Justice for transparency, integrity and credibility, including appointments, evaluations, promotions, transfers, measures and complaints to the Venice Commission and the OSCE / ODIHR and the ODIHR which must be fully performed.

The election of judges outside the EU-brokered agreement has also been condemned by the US Ambassador to Georgia.



Eka Gigauri



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL GEORGIA

Politics

1 million doses of Covid-19 vaccine arrive in Georgia

1 million doses of Sinopharm and Sinovac arrived in the country on July 2



FULL STORY ON Page 2

Politics

Georgian Patriarchate issues another statement condemning international support for Tbilisi Pride

FULL STORY ON Page 2

Politics/Economics

Inflation to 9.9%, Economy Minister cites imported products as the reason

Report on inflation was published by GEOSTAT

FULL STORY ON Page 3

1 million doses of Covid-19 vaccine arrive in Georgia



Georgia will receive additional 1 million doses of Pfizer in July

By NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

Two Chinese vaccines, Sinovac and Sinopharm arrived in Georgia on Friday, July 2. The registration on the vaccines should have started on Saturday, but due to the problems with the registration portal, many people could not access it.

As of now, the portal is up and running. The Deputy Health Minister of Georgia, Tamar Gabunia, said that the reason for the website not working was an attack on the server by hackers. The country is also awaiting another million doses of the Pfizer vaccine. This vaccine

should arrive in the country throughout July. This was discussed by the Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Garibashvili on Friday at a special press conference.

He also noted that the mass immunization process will start on Monday and an additional one million doses of Chinese vaccine will be introduced in the coming weeks. Commenting on Pfizer, the Prime Minister said that as a result of successful negotiations between the authorities, an agreement has been reached, a contract has been signed and a million doses have been paid for already.

According to him, by the end

of the year, Georgia will have a total of 4 million vaccines. Other than that, the Prime Minister of the country also said that the country should also receive several hundred thousand doses of Pfizer vaccine from the United States, however, he noted that he would talk more about it later.

“According to the decision of the US government and specifically by the president of the country, several hundred thousand doses of Pfizer vaccine will be given to Georgia as a gift. We will inform you about this later, as we discuss the final details with our friends and colleagues,” said Garibashvili.

The Georgian Prime Minister also discussed the intensity of vaccination in the country, claiming that Georgia should

manage to conduct 20-25 thousand vaccinations in a day.

The Deputy Health Minister, Tamar Gabunia talked about the available vaccines in the country and the plans. According to Gabunia, Georgia has completed negotiations with Sinopharm, Sinovac, and Pfizer. According to her, part of the vaccines will be available in the country through the Covax platform.

She also noted that the country had negotiations with Moderna and Johnson & Johnson, however, the agreement could not have been reached because some conditions were not acceptable for the country.

As of July 2, a total of 266,161 vaccinations had been administered. 104,196 people are fully vaccinated.



As of July 2, only about 105,000 have been fully vaccinated

Georgian Patriarchate issues another statement condemning international support for Tbilisi Pride

By VERONIKA MALINBOYM

As Tbilisi Pride week is coming to an end, Georgian Pa-

triarchate has issued another statement condemning the international support for Tbilisi Pride week:

“In the statement issued on 29 June of the current year, the Patriarchate of Georgia addressed the organizers of “Tbilisi Pride” and the heads of embas-



Weather

Monday, July 5

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 32°C

Night Clear

Low: 19°C

Tuesday, July 6

Day Clear

High: 37°C

Night T-storm

Low: 21°C

CONTINUED ON Page 3

published by
The Messenger

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All contributions should be submitted by e-mail.

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 3.1593; Euro - 3.7375; GBP - 4.3412; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.2920; Swiss Franc - 3.4132

Inflation to 9.9%, Economy Minister cites imported products as the reason

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

The National Statistics Office of Georgia, GEOSTAT, has published a report on the inflation rate in Georgia for June 2021. The report shows that the Consumer Price Index in the country has increased by 0.7 percent compared to the previous month.

As for the annual inflation rate, the GEOSTAT report shows that it has amounted to 9.9 percent in June. The report also indicates the changes in annual core inflation. As the report shows, prices in the country have increased by 5.9 percent. As for the annual core inflation without tobacco, it is 5.8 percent. The biggest contributors to the changes were housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels, as well as food and non-alcoholic beverages, and recreation and culture.

Georgian Economy Minister Natia Turnava spoke to reporters on July 4 about rising prices and inflation, calling it a “serious challenge.” According to the Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, the main cause of inflation was imported products.

According to Natia Turnava, the reason for the increase in prices for imported products was the depreciation of the Georgian Lari and the increas-



The inflation has not been this high in over a decade



The NBG's target inflation is 3 percent

ing prices around the world in general.

Speaking about the depreciation of the Lari, the Minister of Economy said that “the problem has been more or less eliminated” and that “the price increase for imported goods will decrease by the end of the year.”

Speaking about the increase in prices on the world market, Natia Turnava noted that Georgia is launching a new program to replace imports and will try to encourage local production through special programs - grants and subsidies. “Wherever we have the potential to produce ourselves and reduce imported goods in our market, this is exactly what will happen,” Natia Turnava said.

Inflation is one of the main challenges for the Georgian economy today. A report has been released showing that inflation, which had already risen to 7.7%, rose even further in June to 9.9%. Georgia has not had such high inflation in the last 10 years.

In Georgia, the National Bank is responsible for the overall level of prices, and to achieve this goal, the NBG uses the inflation targeting regime, for which it increases or decreases the refinancing loan rate as needed. By 2021, the NBG target inflation was 3%, so the current inflation rate is exactly 3.3 times higher than the target.

Georgian Patriarchate issues another statement condemning international support for Tbilisi Pride

CONTINUED FROM Page 2

sies accredited in Georgia with a call to refrain from supporting LGBTQ+ propaganda activities in order to maintain stability and civil peace in the country.

We were hoping that they would not ignore the choice of the vast majority of our society, but the events of recent days have clearly shown the intense pressure which is being exerted on the country.

The drastic interference of certain embassies and some members of the European Parliament in our public and spiritual life is a matter of severe concern and unacceptable for our Church and our citizens, and we believe that it is an abuse of their authority.”

In addition, Georgian Patriarchate reinstated that it believes that “the goal of the so-called “Pride” is to propagate a

TBILISI
PRIDE

perverted lifestyle that damages the consciousness of the young generation and the generations to come, causing “tension and unrest among our people”.

The statement goes on to urge the Georgian population to “not to follow deliberate provocations” and gather at Kashueti Church of St. George on 5 July, at 5 pm, to hold a prayer service to “show the world that we are defending our dignity and that any attempt to degenerate our people are utterly unacceptable to us.”

Georgia's Equality Movement has already responded to the statement of the Georgian Patriarchate, calling it alarming and even referring to it as a “threat”:

“We consider the statement of the Patriarchate to be dangerous and indirectly calling on the citizens to mobilize against the participants in the solidarity march”, the Equality Movement's statement reads.