

Epidemiological situation deteriorates in Georgia, facemasks to become mandatory outdoors

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

Every indicator defining the epidemiological situation in the country has worsened, Head of the National Center for Diseases Control and Public Health (NCDC) Amiran Gamkrelidze has reported. According to him, Georgia has become a 'red zone'. "The situation is alarming, and relevant measures must be taken", he stated.

Concerning the deteriorated epidemiological situation, Gamkrelidze stressed the importance of face masks, social distancing and vaccination. He announced yesterday that wearing facemasks might become mandatory again in groups of 5-6 people. As Gamkrelidze stated, if the situation further deteriorates, additional measures will be reintroduced.

The head of NCDC especially stressed the importance of getting a coronavirus jab. The country has a variety of available vaccines, including AstraZeneca and Chinese Sinopharm and Sinovac vaccine. According to Gamkrelidze, Georgia will soon obtain a sufficient amount of Pfizer vaccine as well.

The government of Georgia plans to vaccinate 60% of the population by the end of the year. So far, 374,685 persons have received at least a single dose of coronavirus vaccine and 113,895 people are fully vaccinated, which amounts to only 3% of the country's population.

Gamkrelidze also stressed that 30-40% of Delta variant has been confirmed in the country and this figure is "increasing rapidly." On Tuesday, a newborn died of Delta variant in Tbilisi. The newborn was transferred from Russia-occupied Abkhazia to Tsitsishvili Children's Clinic with respiratory complications.

On Tuesday, the Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili warned the citizens that the country would not endure another lockdown.

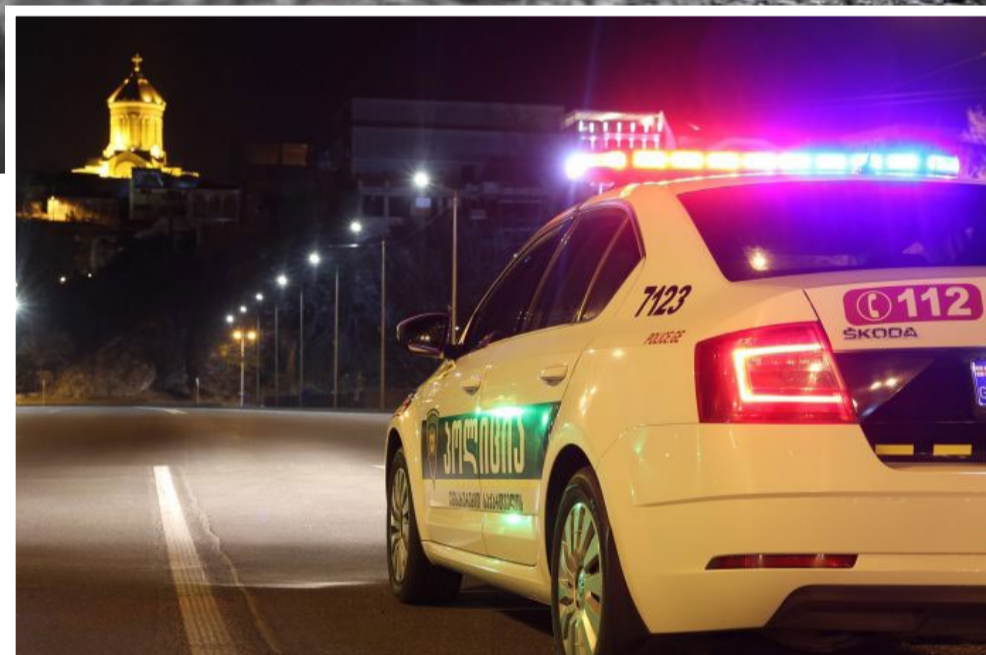
"If we are forced to resort to lockdown again, people will lose jobs, and it will be unbearable...next, the country will be forced to obtain an additional loan, a heavy burden on the shoulders of our citizens and country, something that



► "If the situation continues to worsen, the National Center for Disease Control will appeal the Coordination Council with a recommendation to further tighten regulations," the Head of NCDC Amiran Gamkrelidze said.

will make things extremely difficult," he stressed.

On Wednesday, Georgia reported 2,415 new cases of coronavirus, 943 recoveries and 26 deaths. Since the detection of the first coronavirus case in February, Georgia reported 393,360 cases, 368,073 recoveries and 5,618 deaths. Currently, 19,643 people remain infected with Covid-19. The daily test-positivity rate, which should not exceed 4%, stands at 6,42%, while 5,03% in the past two weeks.



► According to Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili, the country cannot endure another lockdown.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF

PREPARED
BY THE MESSENGER STAFF

Vaccination level in Georgia alarmingly low: the appeal of doctors and scientists

A group of Georgian doctors and scientists wrote an appeal about the current situation in the country regarding the alarmingly slow process of vaccination.

The appeal says that the level of vaccination is alarming and everything must be done to rectify the situation immediately.

Doctors and scientists are urging citizens to use any currently available authorized vaccine as they say it reduces both the severity of the disease as well as mortality in all strains.

"Neither the government, nor the doctors, nor the science and technology, nor the population will be able to defeat the Covid-19 pandemic on their own. A joint effort is needed to defeat the pandemic."

"The only way to defeat the pandemic is mass vaccination and personal protection of safety measures.

- The vaccine is safe and protects us from death and severe forms of the disease, as evidenced by the minimally

reduced hospitalization and lethality rates, according to data from the current 3.5 billion vaccinations.

- All authorized vaccines reduce the severity of the disease and mortality in all strains."

According to the order of the Minister of Health, Pfizer will be available in Georgia for those above 16.

Anyone above 16 will be allowed to be vaccinated with Pfizer

The relevant amendment was made to the Order of the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied

Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs 301-11 / N of February 3, 2021 on the Approval of the Rule for Introduction and Immunization of the COVID-19 Vaccine.

COVID-19 mRNA vaccine Comirnaty concentrate for injection dispersion:

The first paragraph should be formulated as follows:

Vaccination is given to persons 16 years of age and older, the course of vaccination consists of 2 injections, the interval between vaccinations is at least 21 days; "In order to complete the vaccination course, the second dose must be given with the same vaccine after 21 days," read the order.

EXCHANGE RATES: US DOLLAR - 3.0962 | EURO - 3.6492 | GBP - 4.2210 | 100 RUSSIAN RUBLE - 4.1569 | SWISS FRANC - 3.3695 |

German Archaeological Institute gifts Georgian National Museum fabric created based on joint study



► "The indicated fabric was created as a result of experimental research according to the fragment of fabric found in 2012 in Lagodekhi burial mound, dated from 3rd millennium B.C.," Georgian National Museum says.

a detailed reconstruction of the burial mound.

As the Georgian National Museum notes, cooperation with the German Archaeological Institute continues. Both institutions study great inventions of the pre-historic era, including the production of fabric, early agriculture, metallurgy, the wheel, etc. These scientific projects are supported by the German Research Foundation (GRF), Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation, and other donor organisations.

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

On July 20, 2021, the Director of the Eurasia Department of the German Archaeological Institute Professor Svend Hansen donated to Georgian National Museum a fabric made by German and Georgian specialists based on the results of joint researches.

According to the Georgian National Museum, the fabric was created as a result of an experimental study according to a fragment of fabric found in 2012 in Lagodekhi burial mound dated back to the 3rd millennium B.C. (The expedition was led by Zurab Makharadze).

Georgian National Museum and German Archaeological Institute have been collaborating for many years. In 2018-2019, Frankfurt Archaeological Museum hosted a large-scale exhibition "Gold and Wine - Georgia's Oldest Treasures". The exhibition displayed rich archaeological material, including fragments of fabric found in the N3 burial mound in Ananuri, dating back to the third millennium BC. The conservation of fragments was funded by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia. According to the Georgian National Museum, patterns from such an old era are very rare to find. The idea of making similar fabric by using modern techniques and technologies was born while preparing for an exhibition in Germany. An animation was also created for the same exhibition, which demonstrates



► Georgian National Museum notes that together with the German Archaeological Institute, they continue to study artefacts and inventions of the prehistoric era, including the production of fabric.

NDI Launches New Georgia Elections Data Website

ElectionsData.ge Offers Visuals and Downloads of Results, Turnout, and More for Every Contest since 2008

Tbilisi, Georgia - July 21, 2021 - The National Democratic Institute (NDI) has launched ElectionsData.ge, a new website that presents official results, voter turnout, and other data for every Georgian election since 2008. Through maps, graphs, and free downloads, visitors to the website can explore and analyze elections-related data, generously provided to NDI by Georgia's Central Election Commission (CEC).

Georgian and English language users can explore precinct, district, and national data for Georgia's presidential, parliamentary, municipal, and Adjara supreme council elections, including last year's parliamentary elections and the various interim and by-elections that take place between regular elections.

"NDI is proud to offer this website, which is both an analysis tool and a repository of data, to the Georgian public," said Alan Gillam, NDI Country Director in Georgia. "We look forward to introducing the site to our partners and seeing how political parties, civil society, and others make use of the site and its data."

Visitors to the website can customize maps and visuals to suit their analysis and interests. Down to the precinct, maps can display party and candidate results, as well as the number,

age group, and gender of Georgia's eligible voting population. Since 2014, the CEC has supplemented overall voter turnout data with the number of men and women voting in each election.

At a glance, users can compare high and low turnout districts or the popularity of a given political party through heat maps, a visualization technique that displays magnitude through the intensity of a selected color. And if one map isn't enough, users can compare two or more maps at the same time.

"NDI encourages everyone, in and outside of Georgia, to learn more about Georgia's elections through this new and interactive website," says Gillam.

ElectionsData.ge is another example of NDI's commitment to open data, and aligns with NDI's Open Election Data Initiative by sharing data in ways that make the election data freely and easily used, reused and redistributed by members of the general public.

NDI is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-governmental organization that works in partnership around the world to strengthen and safeguard democratic institutions, processes, norms and values to secure a better quality of life for all. NDI envisions a world where democracy and freedom prevail, with dignity for all.

EU and UNDP kick-off the Mayors for Economic Growth Facility in Georgia

Georgian municipalities explore new ways and tools to enhance inclusive economic growth and create jobs

TBILISI. 21 July 2021 – The European Union, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), launched the new Mayors for Economic Growth Facility (M4EG) in Georgia. Over the next four years, the M4EG Facility will build on and integrate lessons learned from the first phase of the M4EG (2017-2021) that saw high interest in Georgia among local authorities.

The current stage of the M4EG Facility will focus on intermediate cities in the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine), assisting them to emerge from the pandemic crisis and discover new opportunities for

sustainable growth and economic prosperity. Working closely with local authorities and communities, it will explore innovative approaches to development and will seek new ways to expand its network. The Facility will serve as a platform to empower municipalities, cities, towns and rural settlements through learning, exchange and strategic innovation.

"The pandemic is challenging cities around the world with the cascading impacts of the economic and social crisis. This new context highlights a 'radical uncertainty' that affects local authorities and citizens," said Evija Kotan, Deputy Head of Political Section at the EU Delegation to Georgia. "The EU is

supporting the M4EG initiative to assist cities and urban settlements in the Eastern Partnership countries to better adapt to this fast-changing reality and find effective solutions to the emerging challenges."

"In Georgia, municipal centres and settlements are facing multiple challenges associated with unemployment, underdevelopment and environmental threats," UNDP Acting Head in Georgia Anna Chernyshova noted. "Our new initiative will help them better understand complex issues they are dealing with, set out development goals and take bold steps to achieve them. The EU and UNDP approach tackles complex issues

from multiple angles and creates space for exploring innovative solutions to development challenges."

Cities and settlements to join the M4EG network will benefit from learning and knowledge exchange activities focused on the development of innovative growth strategies adapted to the local context. The EU and UNDP will support them in developing a new generation of local economic development plans (LEDPs), promoting strategic thinking, and building urban resilience. Local authorities will benefit from access to new capabilities and funding, including the upcoming Annual Portfolio Call for Interests and Annual Innovation Call for Proposals.

THURSDAY		JULY 22	
Day		Partly cloudy	High: 31°C
Night		Partly cloudy	Low: 22°C
FRIDAY		JULY 23	
Day		Mostly sunny	High: 31°C
Night		Clear	Low: 20°C

published by **The Messenger**

43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia
 Founded by Prof. **Zaza Gachechiladze**
Tamar Gachechiladze Publisher

Phone: +995 99 56 56 21; +995 77 76 00 00
 E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge
 http://www.messenger.com.ge/

Nino Metreveli Commercial Director
Mariam Mchedlidze Editor-in-Chief
Natalia Kochiashvili Executive Editor
Nino Kavelashvili Design and Layout

The Messenger welcomes your contributions. If you are interested in submitting an article or news item please contact. All contributions should be submitted by e-mail. The Messenger Georgia's English language daily is an independent newspaper,

and, therefore, the opinions expressed in some articles do not necessarily coincide with those of the newspaper. We take no responsibility for any claims made in advertisements. The Messenger preserves the style of a source written in English where possible.