

2020 Elections not rigged, Parliamentary Commission concludes

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The Parliament of Georgia has adopted a resolution according to which the parliamentary elections held in 2020 were not rigged. The document was supported by 79 deputies, opposed by 1. Voting was held at an extraordinary sitting on July 26, which was not attended by the majority of the opposition due to distrust in the commission.

The commission worked for about 3 months and found that 'the 2020 parliamentary elections were competitive and fundamental freedoms were respected.' The resolution was drafted by a document of the Parliamentary Temporary Commission of Inquiry, headed by ruling party MP Givi Mikanadze.

The commission selected the 41 most problematic polling stations, where cases of excess and lack of ballot papers were recorded, of which 3 were already recounted and thus 20 polling stations were chosen by random sampling method. The Investigative Commission held 16 working meetings, addressed 22 letters to various agencies, and received appropriate responses from them.

According to Mikanadze, all processes were carried out unprecedentedly transparently and were maximally accessible to any interested person and the recount process was carried out in public, at all polling stations.



Mikanadze said that NGOs' reports on pre-election period circumstances are presumed to be based on suspicions, and they have confirmed that they cannot talk about violations in an affirmative form.

According to the conclusion of the commission, the results of the recount

were compared with the official data of the CEC. As a result of this process, the

commission found that the data obtained by recalculating differed from the official figure 'miserably small' - an indicator of excess or deficiency was 0.01-0.02.

"We have detected particular problems and flaws, some technical errors, which the recount process has identified. They were due to a number of circumstances, such as a stressful environment, pandemic situation and in some cases the indifference to assigned duties or the lack of competence Commission's member, which had no significant impact on the election results," Mikanadze explained, adding that no significant shortcomings or acts of falsification were found - 'only minor flaws.'

Minakadze also said that the 'incorrect parallel counting' of the International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED) escalated the situation in Georgia, damaged the country's reputation, and tarnished the image of the organization. Recall that back in December 2020, the ISFED chair resigned following an error in parallel vote count data.

The Georgian Parliament established the Parliamentary Temporary Commission of Inquiry on 17 February 2021 to investigate allegations of parliamentary election violations, which caused a six-month political standoff in the country and was largely solved following the EU-mediated agreement on April 19.

The commission temporarily suspended its work during the mediation between the opposition and the gov't in hope that all parties would be involved.

However, the main part of the opposition did not participate in the commission's activities. Only 2 opposition MPs from 'European Socialists' that happen to be the former members of the pro-Russian Alliance of Patriots, worked in the commission of inquiry, while the other 2 members of the commission were from the Georgian Dream, including the chairman.

"Politicians must have the courage to admit their mistakes. Events have shown that the scale of election fraud was not as large as previously thought. We recognized it in time, others did not," Aleko Elisashvili, the leader of the party Citizens said.

Some opposition parties still believe that the 2020 parliamentary elections were rigged in favor of the ruling party. For this reason, they were in a boycott mode for 6 months and refused to engage in parliamentary activities until a deal was reached with the involvement of foreign partners. Finally, the parties that signed the document agreed that if the ruling party fails to get 43% of the vote in the October 2021 self-government elections, early elections will be called.



Commission revealed that incorrect results of the parallel counting by ISFED may have been caused by gross error and deliberate action. The formula was incorrectly used by the organization, after correcting the results of parallel count coincided with the results of the CEC.

Almost 20 tons of used hospital and school equipment from Denmark, donated by NGO Braedstrup Humanitaere Forening (BHF) arrived to Georgia and was delivered to beneficiaries/organisations/municipalities in the regions Racha, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Manglisi and Tbilisi!

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Our supporter: Bent Bjorlin Hansen and Charlotte Emborg for the coordination of the goods donation, Fair Trees Georgia Marianne Bols, Irakli Dvali and team with documents, customs and delivery to beneficiaries in Racha and a very big thank goes to Sandro Kharlamov and the GW team for their never ending support! Didi madloba!

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Mr. Alexander Kharlamov, Managing Director GW, Ms. Margret Schmidt, Head of IWA Georgia Charity Committee, Mr. Thomas Muehlmann, Ambassador of Austria in Georgia



Ms. Kharlamov GW, Ambassador Mr. Muehlmann and Ms. Schmidt at the handover to MAC Georgia and NGO Peristsvaleba Hospice/Mercy Center



GW team, special thank goes to Mr. Giorgi Kharshiladze and Mr. Irakli Dzmanashvili



Handover to privat beneficiary - the team learned the different model of wheel chairs, very ambitious support from Ms. Inga



Ms. Nana Dvali, IWA Charity Committee and Dr. Gubaz Sharashenidze M. Iashvili clinic

Weather

Wednesday, July 28

Day Rain
High: 23°C

Night Showers
Low: 19°C

Thursday, July 29

Day Light Rain
High: 25°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 17°C

News in Brief

PREPARED BY
THE MESSENGER STAFF

Only 5% of the population over 18 is fully vaccinated twice, official data says

According to official data, only 5% of the population over 18 years of age in Georgia is fully vaccinated, with doses. Of the total population, which includes citizens under the age of 18, the number of double vaccinations is 3.8%. 7.4% of the total population is vaccinated with one dose, and 9.7% of the population over 18 years of age.

The relevant data was provided to Amula Gamkrelidze, the head of the Center for Disease Control, in response to the question.

As of July 27, 3,666 new cases of coronavirus had been confirmed. 17 people have died in the last 24 hours.

The government's plan is to vaccinate 60% of the population by the end of the year.

Ombudsman: It is alarming that the attack on the media has, in fact, become a daily occurrence

The Public Defender responds to the frequent facts of attacks on journalists in the country and

calls the current situation alarming.

According to the ombudsman's statement, the cases of obstruction of journalistic activities, physical and verbal abuse of journalists, after the violent events of July 5, have become virtually daily.

"In this situation, when the society in the country has become even more intolerant of extremely polarized and dissenting opinions, political officials have a special role and responsibility.

"It should be noted that the organizers of the violence against journalists on July 5-6 have not yet been identified and appropriate measures taken to bring them to justice, which creates a syndrome of impunity."

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