

Kelly Degan - Ivanishvili is a very influential Georgian - he decided to leave politics and as a result, we are no longer involved with him

By THE MESSENGER STAFF

“Mr. Ivanishvili is a very influential Georgian - he has decided to leave politics and, as a result, we are no longer involved with him,” Kelly Degan, the US ambassador to Georgia, told VOA on Vision America from Washington.

As Degan explains, many Georgians respect the former chairman of the Georgian Dream.

“In all countries, we mainly cooperate with elected leaders, but we also talk and meet all influential Georgians in the whole spectrum of society, be it business, culture, media or other.

Mr. Ivanishvili is obviously a very influential Georgian, he made his contribution to business, education as a philanthropist and founded the party that runs the country today.

Many Georgians respect his contribution. “He decided to leave politics, and as a result, we are no longer involved with him because of his personal decision to leave politics,” Degan said.



Davit Kirkitadze: Freedom to Mikheil Saakashvili, we are leaving the courtroom in protest!



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Davit Kirkitadze, a member of the United National Movement and the

Parliament, left the ongoing trial on his own criminal case in protest.

Kirkitadze's friends and supporters also left the courtroom.

As the accused MP said, “Georgian court is not a place where a person can find justice.”

I would like to remind you and the

public of the factual circumstances. I'm the person whose statement started this criminal case, I'm the person who called the police from his own phone when we's office was attacked.

Peaceful people were attacked, I apologize to these people that then I could not defend their dignity. Police did not show up and reasoned that the office had been broken into and they had gone elsewhere. We show the public how they were insulted by the police there and how they got out of there, instead of protecting people. I would like to thank each member of the City Council for not agreeing to blackmail and bribery of the “Georgian Dream”.

Here, the Georgian people were sentenced by the Georgian Dream and lost the elections. I defended my dignity by my behavior. I'm not going to participate and listen to what is going to happen here. The Georgian court is not a place where one can find justice, as evidenced by the trials of Mikheil Saakashvili. “Freedom to Mikheil Saakashvili, we are leaving this hall,” Kirkitadze said.

Georgian reality: Growing Population Dissatisfaction and Distrust of Parties

BY MALKHAZ MATSABERIDZE

A survey commissioned by the NDI in December 2021 once again showed the severe social and political crisis in Georgia: a large part of the population dissatisfied with their lives, a sharp drop in trust in government and leaders, and a disappointment with opposition political forces - most people do not see the party. Which expresses his interests.

Economic hardship remains a major challenge. This is clearly seen in the list of the most important problems that have not changed since 2009 - poverty, rising prices/inflation, jobs. About a third of respondents name each of them.

At the same time, according to the majority of the population, during the last 10 years (ie during the rule of the Georgian Dream) the situation has not improved but has worsened. Increased poverty (75% of respondents), crime (58%), corruption (44%), deteriorating education (51%) and prospects for territorial integrity (51%) Opinion). At the same time, the deterioration of the situation is observed not only by the supporters of the opposition but also by the supporters of the government.

The main economic problems were: unemployment (49%), price increase / inflation (42%), poverty (23%), GEL depreciation

(14%) and so on. Sh. Only 1% of respondents think that the country's economy is not facing any problems. The majority of respondents are dissatisfied with institutions and leaders.

52% of the respondents evaluate the activity of the government negatively, 35% of the respondents evaluate the activity of the Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili negatively, 46% of the activity of President Salome Zurbashvili, the same number are dissatisfied with the activity of the Parliament. A large part of the population does not believe that the parliament is working on important issues for them (this is the opinion of 53% of respondents).

Most of the citizens in economic poverty think that no one acts in the interests of the people and the country. 51% think that the ruling party does not act in the interests of the people, and even more - 53% believe that neither the representatives of the opposition parties elected in the parliament nor local self-government act in the interests of the people and the country.

Most of the citizens in economic poverty think that no one acts in the interests of the people and the country. 51% think that the ruling party does not act in the interests of the people, and even more - 53% believe that neither the representatives of the opposition parties elected in

the parliament nor local self-government act in the interests of the people and the country.

The results of the survey show that there is a desire for change in the society along with dissatisfaction, however, these people are frustrated with political leaders who are tired of socio-economic problems, suppressed by the pandemic, and in the opposition spectrum. The public wants to change but has not yet taken action to make it a reality. A large portion of people does not see a leader who will be associated with the hope of a better future.

In this situation, the rating of specific parties is noteworthy, which was as follows: 'Georgian Dream' - 24.3%, the United National Movement - 9.4%, and other parties - 8%. If we delve into the topic of these other parties, it turns out that 4 parties have a 1% rating or a little more: Georgian Patriots Alliance - 1.4%, Girchi - more freedom (Zurab Japaridze) - 1.2%, Lelo for Georgia - 1, 0% and for "Georgia" (Giorgi Gakharia) - 1.0%.

Two other parties have a 0.5% rating: this is Droa (Elene Khoshtaria) and the Georgian Labor Party. The NDI study was not criticized by government officials. On the contrary, they liked the sharp drop in the ratings of the National Movement and the opposition spectrum in general. "Georgian Dream has

the highest trust of the population compared to other parties," said Parliament Speaker Papuashvili.

The NDI poll was published in late January 2022 and naturally became the subject of extensive discussion by representatives of opposition parties and experts. The rating of the opposition parties has sharply decreased compared to the self-government elections held in the fall of 2021.

Here, of course, should be taken into account the fact that during the elections the ranking of parties is fixed from the number of participants in the elections, which is about half of the total number of citizens. The NDI survey takes into account the entire population. However, this will not be a big consolation for the opposition parties.

According to some leaders of the opposition parties, the results of the telephone poll do not reflect the reality, because a large part of the population (58% refuse to answer) does not want to name their own political preferences over the phone because they are afraid of an autocratic regime. Nevertheless, it is clear that the opposition spectrum has serious conclusions to draw.

According to Khatuna Samnidze, one of the leaders of the Republican Party, according to the ratings, "small parties will disappear altogether", while the

National Movement is approaching the situation as small parties had years ago. According to him, "this probably means that the opposition parties have made a lot of mistakes." According to expert Khatuna Lagazidze, the results of the NDI poll are a "complete disaster" for the opposition.

"In fact, the opposition is at the bottom in terms of support, and after that, either a total awakening must begin, or a large part of the parties will disappear from the political field." According to Giga Bokeria, the opposition parties are "supporting the Ivanishvili regime" with their 'inconsistent steps'.

What should the opposition parties do, which should seriously transform their activities? According to expert Vakhtang Dzabiradze, the petty opposition parties made a mistake when they did not even think about keeping their own voters but supported the National Movement. How correct this note it is hard to say. 'Strategy Builder' did not support the UNM, but it did not have an impressive result.

As for the main opposition party - the National Movement, its leader Nika Melia said that the party "should properly understand the people's order" and talk to people about the economy, social status, the future of the country, projects to be implemented.

It should also be noted that the vast majority of the population is irritated by the current polarization and 80% of respondents support cooperation between the parties. Whether the parties will be able or willing to do so is another matter.

EMBLAS-Plus: researchers discover antibiotic-resistant bacteria in the Black Sea

The antibiotic resistance genes (ARGs) were detected in all water samples from the Black Sea studied within the framework of the EU-UNDP project - 'Improving environmental monitoring in the Black Sea' (EMBLAS-Plus).

The distribution of ARGs was investigated in Black Sea water samples at a region-wide scale, including river banks and offshore areas - on a transect from the northwest bank (near Danube Delta) to the eastern bank (coast of Georgia). Researchers studied ARGs targeting a wide spectrum of antibiotics (beta-lactams, macrolides, glycopeptides, colistin).

The number of ARGs inactivating beta-lactams and vancomycin were the highest. The researchers paid special attention to the elevated number of the colistin resistance mcr-1 gene, as it was reported in Black Sea microbial communities for the first time. The scientists suspect that the potential sources of ARGs in the Black Sea are: the sewage inflow and, to a lesser extent, the use of veterinary pharmaceuticals. Other potential sources are riverine.

The results of the study are presented in the 'Antibiotic Resistance in Black Sea Microbial Communities' paper, accepted for publication by 'Frontiers in Environmental Science'.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest threats to global health, and will be emerging as one of the major causes of death in the coming decades.



Weather

Monday, February 7

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 7°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: -3°C

Tuesday, February 8

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 10°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 0°C

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43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia
Founded by Prof.

Zaza Gachechiladze

Tamar Gachechiladze
Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000
E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge
http://www.messenger.com.ge/

Nino Metreveli
Commercial Director

Mariam Mchedlidze
Editor-in-Chief

Khatuna Gogichaishvili
Layout Designer, Photographer

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