

'Home to Europe' Demand Resignation of Prime Minister and Government

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

Rally 'Home to Europe', which started in the evening of July 3, in front of the parliament in Tbilisi, ended in the morning of July 4, at the government administration building. Shota Digmelashvili, one of the organizers of the rally, told a few people who remained on the spot about the end of the gathering.

"At the session of the government today, we don't see the government and Gharibashvili, instead we see many policemen - there were 100 of us, there were 500 policemen. We call you all within the limits of individual responsibility to gather sometimes and disturb the government as much as possible... the government session could not take place today," he said.

A small group of participants of the mass action held in front of the Parliament of Georgia on July 3 spent the



night near the government administration building. They were waiting for the government meeting and the arrival of the government members, shouting and whistling.

The participants of the movement 'Home to Europe' demand the resignation of Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili and his government because they could not ensure that Georgia receives the status of a candidate for EU membership. The representatives of the popular movement believe that a government of national consensus government should be created, which will fulfill the 12 recommendations of the European Commission in order to obtain the status. The movement demanded the resignation of the government for the first time on June 24, at a mass rally held near the parliament, and gave 'Georgian Dream' a deadline until July 3.

The organizers and participants of the protest consider the plan published by 'Georgian Dream' on July 1 to fulfill the recommendations of the

European Commission a farce. Digmelashvili, said on July 3, at the rally held near the parliament, that the society is old enough not to get cheated by the ruling party. On July 3, non-governmental organizations also presented a plan to fulfill the requirements for the EU membership candidate status.

On June 24, the European Council granted Ukraine and Moldova the status of candidates for EU membership with mandatory conditions, and Georgia - the European perspective. To get candidate status, Georgia must implement 12 recommendations by the end of the year. Among them are overcoming political polarization, proper functioning of institutions and their independence, real independence and impartiality of the court, effective investigation of cases of elite corruption, de-oligarchization, free media environment, etc.

Ukraine, which is at war with Russia, submitted its application for EU membership on February 28. Georgia and Moldova did this on March 3.

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.8762; Euro - 3.0062; GBP - 3.4888; 100 Russian Ruble - 5.1945; Swiss Franc - 2.9973

17 Individuals Arrested at Anti-Pride Rally in Tbilisi



The rally participants claimed that they did not trust the Tbilisi Pride organizers, who pledged not to hold a parade at the central avenue, and gathered to 'protect the territory'.

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

On July 2, police arrested 17 participants of a right-wing rally against the Tbilisi Pride Week on the territory of Mtatsminda district in Tbilisi. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), all 17 persons were arrested under Article 173 of the Code of Administrative Offences of Georgia, which pertains to disobedience to the lawful order or request of the police.

As Interpressnews reported,

members of the Conservative Movement and other participants of the rally had gathered in anticipation of the planned event in the early hours of Saturday. The rally participants claimed that they did not trust the Tbilisi Pride organizers, who pledged not to hold a parade at the central avenue, and gathered to 'protect the territory'.

This year, LGBT+ rights group Tbilisi Pride was organized without a public March for Dignity due to safety concerns in the face of "government-encouraged

violent groups". Instead, The Pride Week consisted of three primary events in closed venues - the screening of a new Georgian movie about "homophobia, fight, and survival," a regional conference that brought together LGBTQ activists from Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Belarus, as well as a "Grand Pride Festival" which brought together local and international artists. In the run-up to this year's event, the Interior Ministry had said it would ensure the

safety and freedom of expression and assembly of each individual.

Earlier on Saturday 26 more participants of the right-wing rally were arrested near the location of a closed event for Pride Week. Among the arrested individuals are Zurab Makharadze and Irakli Martinenko, two leaders of the Alt-Info right-wing media platform that had announced planned action against Pride Week. Alt-Info was involved in last year's attack on reporters ahead of planned

Tbilisi Pride events in Tbilisi, which eventually had to be canceled as dozens of reporters were left injured at the violent anti-Tbilisi Pride rally.

On Saturday an incident took place near the parliament building as one of the protesters tried to burn himself. However, the police diffused the tension and the injured person was taken to a hospital. The rally participants also burned Tbilisi Pride and European Union flags.



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Economy Minister Says 11.2% Growth in Past 5 Months

By MESSENGER STAFF

At the conclusion of the Government meeting, Georgia's Minister of Finance Lasha Khutsishvili stated that the economy is rebounding more quickly than we had anticipated.

Expectations are significantly greater than a 6 percent economic growth rate, as

Khutsishvili argues.

"The economic growth of 11.6% was observed in May, the economic growth of 5 months amounts to 11.2%, which is a significantly increased indicator compared to the positive expectations that we had.

You know that this year we are projected to have 6% economic growth.

This prediction was made in conditions when there was not yet the current geopolitical in the region, namely Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Naturally, this changed our plans, however, according to the



data of the first five months, the pace of economic recovery is faster than we had predicted at the end of last year, at the beginning of this year. In this direction, we may revise our predictions when we have a draft of changes in the current year's budget. This will probably be the month of September.

We monitor the pace of economic development by sector. Expectations are much higher than 6% economic growth. At the end of August, we will have a corresponding prediction for the current year," Khutsishvili stated.

Weather

Tuesday, July 5

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 30°C

Night Clear
Low: 18°C

Wednesday, July 6

Day Clear
High: 31°C

Night Clear
Low: 18°C

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Last week marked the opening of the V4 Festival in Tbilisi with various cultural events organized by the Embassy of Hungary Tbilisi and its partners. The events took place on June 30, July 1-2. V4 Programme was opened via a lecture by Professor Csaba Hidan about the meeting of 3 Central-European Kings in Visegrad in 1335 and the introduction of medieval armour. It was followed by a lecture about Georgia in 14th century history and a short-film festival. The screenings took place at Amirani Cinema in the capital. On Saturday, July 2 the world-famous folk musical ensemble 'Muzsikas' performed for event guests at New Theatre.



H.E. Ms. Anna Siko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Hungary to Georgia (Right)



Folk musical ensemble 'Muzsikas'



