

## Masked Violent Group Attacks UNM Office; MIA Launches Investigation for Property Damage

By Liza Mchedlidze

On June 1, the United National Movement issued a statement reporting that late at night their central office was "attacked by a group of people". Party leader Levan Khabeishvili stated that as a result of the attack, the windows and inventory of the office were damaged.

"For a few minutes, employees, security service, men and women, young people had to hold back these individuals at the door. They attempted to break in; there were about 100 of them, masked, who were likely mobilized from the Special Tasks Department," Levan Khabeishvili stated.

According to UNM, aside from attempting to break in through the main entrance, this group also tried to break in through the kitchen and the front door. They were armed with wooden bats. UNM members had to physically resist and defend themselves for several minutes to prevent this violent group from breaking in.

"It's regrettable that I was there with my 14-year-old child. It's so hard to watch this madness when you have a young child with you. This is what Ivanishvili's Russian law looks like. This man will continue to use such tactics throughout his tenure," the UNM leader said.



The Ministry of Internal Affairs has launched an investigation into the attack on the central office of UNM under Article 187, which pertains to intentional damage to property.

According to Levan Bezhashvili, deputy chairman of the United National Movement, the Ministry of Internal Affairs

initiated the investigation cynically, charging the incident as damaging someone else's property. Bezhashvili alleged that the ministry is the "real protector" of the bandit groups that have been terrorizing Georgian society for the last two months.

Khabeishvili urged non-governmental organizations and

ambassadors to voice their stance on the attack. The UNM leader emphasized the need for collective action, expressing concern that the attacks may persist and target various political, civil, and activist groups.

"I would like to appeal to non-governmental organisations and ambassadors to express their

position regarding this attack. We must understand that they will not stop; their targets will include various political, civil groups, and activists. We must all work together to ensure that the fearful government is removed; otherwise, they will not work in favour of the people..." Khabeishvili said.

## Lelo Leader Mamuka Khazaradze Accuses Irakli Gharibashvili of Obstructing the Anaklia Project

By Liza Mchedlidze

Lelo leader Mamuka Khazaradze accused former

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili of blocking the Anaklia project and labeled him as a "budget thief" and "corrupt".

The opposition leader wrote that it was Gharibashvili and Ivanishvili who deprived the Georgian people of the prospects

that the Anaklia project was offering in partnership with the European Union and the USA.

Khazaradze emphasized the significance of the Anaklia port project within Lelo's agenda, stating that its construction is a priority for the party. He accused Gharibashvili and Bidzina Ivanishvili of obstructing the project, insinuating that their actions are motivated by a desire to hinder Georgia's alignment with the West. Khazaradze further criticized the decision to hand over the project to a Chinese company sanctioned by the United States for corruption, labor rights violations, and project abandonment.

"You have taken away the prospects of the Georgian people, the hundreds of thousands of jobs that the Anaklia project, in partnership with the European Union and the United States, was providing. If it weren't for

your attack on us and the project, the first ship would have arrived in Anaklia in 2020, and Georgia would be a different country.

This is what I have been working on for years, and that is exactly why the construction of the Anaklia port is a priority in the Lelo program. However, your Russian Dream blocked this project with evil intentions because your boss Putin does not want a modern port built in partnership with the West in Georgia.

That's why you handed over this project to a Chinese company that has been exposed for corruption, labor rights violations, and project abandonment. I promise, you will be held accountable for all crimes with the full strictness of the law, and for betraying the country, our people, and the future, will respond strictly!" Khazaradze wrote.





The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Girchi - More Freedom Member Attacked by Two Persons with Electric Shock Devices



Tshotne Koberidze, a member of the opposition party Girchi - More Freedom, said that two persons armed with electric shock devices were waiting for him

at the bus stop near his house.

Koberidze connects the attempted attack with his criticism of Georgian Dream MP Dito Samkharadze.

"I was wearing headphones and I heard two people swearing. I removed them, and

they were swearing at me while holding electric shock devices in their hands. I wasn't startled, I dodged them and started swearing at them. When people around

saw what was happening, many of them gathered around. One person, who was trying to attack me, fell down, jumped up, and I ran after him. I am sure that all of this was because of my interview on Mtavari Arkhi, where I talked about Dito Samkharadze," said Koberidze.

Georgian Dream Chair Welcomes China's Interest in Anaklia Port



Irakli Gharibashvili stated that everyone should be pleased that China has shown interest in the Anaklia deep-sea port. However, when it comes to investments from Western companies, Gharibashvili expressed disappointment, noting that despite repeated appeals to

foreign partners, no Western company has expressed interest in the project.

"We are well aware that in terms of the development of this [Middle] Corridor, China's participation is of crucial importance. Despite our many calls to foreign partners, unfortunately, no western company expressed an interest.

According to him, the US and Europe both have economic activity and trade with China.

"We see many top European leaders

visit China and the visit of the Chinese President to France and the heart of Europe. This is normal. We should use every situation for our country. If there is any contract with China, the US, Europe and it benefits our country, everything is welcome," Gharibashvili said.

Ukrainian Entrepreneurs' Year-Long Journey in Georgia Germany, UNDP, and CARE Caucasus Empower Refugee Businesses Strengthening Economic Resilience and Justice

TBILISI. 31 May 2024 – Thirty-nine refugee entrepreneurs, primarily from Ukraine, established businesses in Georgia with the support of the German Government, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and CARE Caucasus. This support, which includes funding, consultancy, and technical assistance, is part of the broader Germany-funded project 'Improving the Rule of Law and Access to Justice for All'.



Operating in major cities like Tbilisi and Batumi, and small villages, these dynamic small enterprises span diverse sectors from hospitality and technology to services, trade, and crafts. They support refugee families who sought shelter in Georgia during the war, create sustainable employment for more than 80 people, and contribute to Georgia's economy.

Over 70 percent of these vibrant new businesses are led by women, highlighting the impor-

tance of promoting economic justice and women's rights in building resilient and sustainable economies.

On 31 May, the refugee entrepreneurs gathered in Tbilisi to celebrate the successes of their entrepreneurial journey in Georgia, discuss challenges, and plan the future.

Anna Chernyshova, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Georgia; Sarah Zielonka, the First Secretary and Head of Economic and Press Affairs at the

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany to Georgia; and Ketevan Khachidze, CARE Caucasus CEO, addressed the participants and guests of the event underscoring tangible results and broader implications of the initiative.

"Two years into the war in Ukraine, supporting Ukrainian refugees, especially women entrepreneurs, is one of our key priorities. This initiative showcases the resilience of the human spirit and the power of friendship and cooperation in the face of challenges," noted Anna Chernyshova, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Georgia.

"Germany is proud to support the refugee entrepreneurs in Georgia, whose efforts help rebuild lives disrupted by the war. We salute their courage, resilience and innovative spirit leading to success in the hardest times," said Sarah Zielonka, First Secretary and Head of Economic and Press Affairs at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany.

"Over the past two years, CARE Caucasus has led the way to a better life for Ukrainian women and children in Georgia, through cash assistance, legal aid, employment support, and entrepreneurship development. For many, income from these enterprises is their only financial lifeline. Our joint efforts are helping them rebuild their lives with dignity," added Ketevan Khachidze, CARE Caucasus CEO.

Background Information: The support provided to the refugee entrepreneurs in Georgia is part of the 'Improving the Rule of Law and Access to Justice for All' initiative, funded by the German Government and implemented by UNDP. Through this US\$1.62 million project, UNDP and Germany enhance the capacities of Georgia's rule of law institutions and promote legal empowerment and socio-economic resilience among disadvantaged communities.

Weather

Monday, June 3

Day ☀️ Clear High: 29°C

Night 🌙 Clear Low: 17°C

Tuesday, June 4

Day ☀️ Clear High: 30°C

Night 🌙 Clear Low: 17°C

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