

## Kobakhidze Announces Anaklia Port Consortium Lost International Arbitration Dispute

By Liza Mchedlidze

Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze announced that Georgia has secured a victory in an international arbitration case concerning the Anaklia Port project. The arbitration, which began in 2020, involved a lawsuit filed by Mamuka Khazaradze, Badri Japaridze, and other foreign investors following the Georgian government's suspension of the port's construction.

In a broadcast on Imedi TV, Kobakhidze praised the ruling as a testament to Georgia's adherence to legal principles. "In this case too, Georgia emerged victorious because the state consistently operates by the rules," Kobakhidze said. He emphasized that the country's legal system and its commitment to fairness were key to this outcome. The Prime Minister also criticized Khazaradze and Japaridze, suggesting that their motivations were politically driven.

"Khazaradze and Japaridze



are part of a political faction that sought to use international arbitration against Georgia. However, justice prevailed because the state acted according to fair

rules," he added.

Khazaradze responded to the arbitration decision with strong criticism. In a statement posted on social media, Khazaradze ex-

pressed disappointment and frustration, stating, "The decision made by the arbitration is disappointing as it resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of jobs

for Georgians. The Anaklia Port, which was to be built with Western investment, would have provided substantial opportunities for the Georgian people." He accused the ruling Georgian Dream party of deliberately stalling the project. "The government, under pressure from Russia, delayed and ultimately blocked the project, depriving Georgia of significant economic benefits," Khazaradze claimed.

Khazaradze criticized the government's approach to infrastructure projects, especially its reliance on Chinese contractors.

"We've seen issues with Chinese firms on other projects, such as the East-West Highway, including labor problems and environmental concerns." He called for a shift in government strategy and promised that a new, pro-European coalition would revive the Anaklia project. "We will restore Western investment and complete the project to high standards, creating thousands of jobs as part of our Marshall Plan," Khazaradze stated.

## Kupradze Claims International Arbitration Court's Ruling Favors Neither Georgian Government nor Anaklia Consortium



By Liza Mchedlidze

Irakli Kupradze, the Secretary General of Lelo, has sharply criticized the recent ruling by the international arbitration court regarding the Anaklia port project. According to Kupradze, the court's decision failed to sup-

port either the Georgian government or the Anaklia consortium. Instead, the ruling narrowly focused on the terms of the legal contract and did not take into account the significant political factors that he believes were crucial to the project's failure.

Kupradze argues that the

Anaklia port project was sabotaged by political interference, specifically from Russia. He claims that Bidzina Ivanishvili, a key figure in Georgian politics, was involved in carrying out Russia's agenda, which led to the project's downfall. Kupradze is frustrated that the arbitration did not address these political issues, focusing solely on the contractual aspects of the dispute.

"The arbitration court's decision didn't consider the broader political context that played a major role in the failure of the Anaklia port project," Kupradze said. "Instead, it only looked at the terms of the legal contract. This is a significant oversight."

Kupradze also criticized the decision for its financial implications. He pointed out that the only cost resulting from the arbitration ruling is the fee for arbitration services, which will be borne by the Anaklia consortium. "This additional financial burden highlights a major flaw in the arbitration process. By ignoring the political dynamics that affected the project, the court failed to address the root causes of the issue," he added.

The Lelo Secretary General emphasized that the failure to account for political interference has not only deprived Georgians of potential economic benefits but has also demonstrated how political agendas can derail important development projects.

"The Anaklia port could have created numerous jobs and provided significant economic opportunities for the country. However, political actions have undermined this potential," Kupradze concluded.

### The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

**Georgian Prime Minister Attends Inauguration of Iran's New President Masoud Pezeshkian**



The Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Kobakhidze, attended the inauguration of Masoud Pezeshkian as the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The ceremony took place in the Iranian Parliament, or Mejlis, in Tehran.

Before the official event,

Kobakhidze met with Pezeshkian, congratulating him on his electoral victory and wishing him success in his new role.

Alongside Kobakhidze, Levan Davitashvili, the First Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, was part of the Georgian delegation in Tehran.

**Chairman of the Parliament Shalva Papuashvili Criticizes President's Lawsuit Against**

**'Foreign Agents' Law**  
Chairman of the Parliament Shalva Papuashvili has criticized President Salome Zourabichvili's recent lawsuit filed with the Constitutional

**MORE NEWS IN BRIEF ON P. 2**

# Georgian Dream Launches Election Campaign

By MALKHAZ MATSABERIDZE

On July 16, Georgian Dream launched their election campaign from their new, costly party office. Bidzina Ivanishvili and his team declared themselves the presumptive winners of the upcoming parliamentary elections and threatened to prosecute the opposition, which they labelled the “collective National Movement.”

The main highlight of Georgian Dream’s pre-election announcement was, unsurprisingly, Bidzina Ivanishvili’s speech. His official title today is “Founder of Georgian Dream, Honorary Chairman of the Party.” Ivanishvili expanded on his April 29 speech with new messages, which had previously coincided with the passage of the “Russian law” and significant protest rallies.

Georgian Dream has been in power since 2012, having won three consecutive 4-year parliamentary elections. No previous government - neither Shevardnadze’s nor Saakashvili’s - has been in power for more than two parliamentary terms. However, Georgian Dream is preparing for victory in the fourth election and confidently states that this will not be their last win. According to Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze, Georgian Dream plans to avoid losing any elections for at least the next 12 years.

Regarding the 2024 elections, recently the leaders of Georgian Dream have been talking about

their unprecedented 60% rating. It is not known what research their statement is based on. On the other hand, opposition representatives claim that Georgian Dream’s rating has sharply declined and stands at around 30%. They assert that achieving a ‘higher’ figure would only be possible through various methods of election result falsification.

Georgian Dream can count on the anti-Western and, consequently, pro-Russian electorate. Anti-Western propaganda has been intensively ongoing in Georgia for years; nonetheless, the number of people who hold a negative attitude toward the West is approximately 30% for various reasons. Therefore, Georgian Dream is cautious with the “anti-Western” votes and, under the conditions of the 5% barrier, tries to prevent any other political force from claiming the votes of this electorate. It was noted on July 16 that People’s Power, supposedly separated from Georgian Dream, will run in the elections with a joint list alongside Georgian Dream. The reason for the separation was the desire to freely criticise the West, but now it’s hard to distinguish where People’s Power ends and Georgian Dream begins in this regard.

Ivanishvili also mentioned Georgian Dream’s 60% rating, but according to him, simply achieving a “majority of mandates” will not be enough. Georgian Dream must secure a victory equivalent to a “constitu-

tional majority”. This statement once again highlights that only such a majority can ensure the seamless maintenance of the current power system, meaning Ivanishvili’s governance.

Much like Ivanishvili’s April 29 speech, it was emphasised again that a constitutional majority is needed by Georgian Dream primarily to eliminate the current opposition. The configuration of the opposition forces today is of no significance to Georgian Dream. The entire opposition is labelled as the “collective National Movement. According to Ivanishvili, to “ensure the further development of the country,” it is necessary to prosecute them for crimes committed while in power, especially for following “external orders” in 2008, which led the country into war and resulted in the “temporary loss of two historic regions of Georgia.”

In a country where a large portion of the population lives in economic hardship, Ivanishvili and his team have not made any specific economic promises ahead of the new elections. The focus is on international issues, though their perspective on the world appears unusual. Ivanishvili did not mention Russia even once, extended special thanks to China, and continued to criticise the “global war party” that, according to him, is trying to drag Georgia into a conflict against Russia. Ivanishvili claims that his government is being told, “either you go to war or you leave,” and he urged the people of Georgia to make the

“right choice” between the “war party”, meaning the opposition, and the current government, which he claims brings peace.

The leaders of Georgian Dream have repeatedly been told to stop spreading such falsehoods; no one is trying to drag Georgia into a war. In fact, since coming to power in 2012, Georgian Dream has done little to strengthen the Georgian military, and it is more in Russia’s interest than anyone else’s to see Georgia involved in a conflict.

A recent development clarified who is meant by the “global war party”. Ivanishvili explained that this “global war party” holds significant influence over the current American and European bureaucracies, creating the perception among the Georgian public that Georgia is at odds with the U.S. government and the European Union. In reality, the Georgian government only needs to hold on for one more year. According to Ivanishvili’s forecast, the war in Ukraine will end within this year, and if Trump wins, it could happen even sooner, in January. After that, the criticism of Georgia will supposedly stop, and the “Chinese vector” in its policy will be accepted without issue.

Under constant criticism from the West, Georgian Dream is perpetually waiting for favourable changes. They have pinned their hopes on various outcomes: the victory of sympathetic forces in the European Parliament elections, the rise of the ultra-right in France, and

now, Trump’s return to power. Although their predictions have not come true, they are banking on the “Trump narrative” to navigate through the October 26 parliamentary elections.

They did not mention that the European Union has halted Georgia’s integration process. Instead, there were continued promises that Georgia would join the EU, but move towards Europe “with peace, dignity, and prosperity,” as Ivanishvili put it. However, if they manage to get through the elections, a different rhetoric is likely to emerge. An organisation called “Neutral Georgia” has already been established, and a person close to Bidzina Ivanishvili, the owner of the TV company “Imedi”, has demanded the removal of Article 78 from the Constitution, which states Georgia’s desire for Western integration in its politics.

They did not mention that the European Union has paused Georgia’s integration process. Instead, promises persisted that Georgia would eventually join the EU, but it would do so “with peace, dignity, and prosperity,” as Ivanishvili stated. However, should they navigate successfully through the elections, a shift in rhetoric is anticipated. A new organisation called “Neutral Georgia” has been established, and a close associate of Bidzina Ivanishvili, who owns the TV channel Imedi, has called for the removal of Article 78 from the Constitution, which enshrines Georgia’s desire for Western integration.

## The News in Brief

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Court to suspend the “Foreign Agents” law. Papuashvili stated

that by applying to the Constitutional Court, Zourabichvili acknowledged its legitimacy, despite the court’s previous verdict that she violated the Constitution. He argued that if Zourabichvili had political integrity, she should resign.

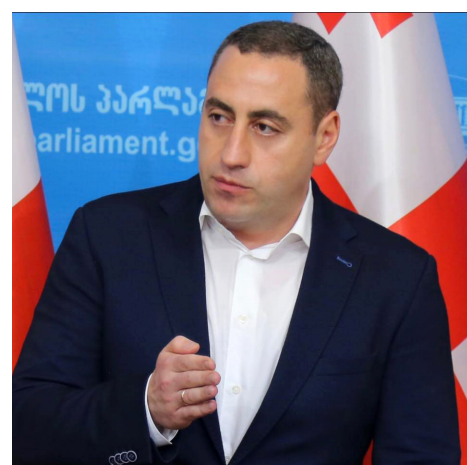
Papuashvili described the lawsuit as hypocritical, noting that the opposition and Zourabichvili had previously questioned the legitimacy of the Constitutional Court. He pointed out their inconsistency, stating, “Just a few months ago, they referred to the judges of the Constitutional Court with different epithets.

Today, they turn to the same judges to find justice.”

According to Papuashvili, the United National Movement strategically maintained Zourabichvili in her position, preventing her impeachment. He implied that there are underlying political motives behind their actions, saying, “The only reason why the impeachment did not take place is that the National Movement saved her and kept her in this position.”

### Giorgi Vashadze Accuses the Government of Misleading International Partners

Giorgi Vashadze, leader of the Unity Platform, criticized the Georgian government’s approach to EU integration following a meeting at the Ministry of For-



eign Affairs on July 29. Vashadze accused the government of misleading international partners about fulfilling the nine steps required for EU accession, calling the behavior “rude” and “shameful”.

“The position of the European Union is very clear, and it is very sad that the European integra-

tion process of Georgia is halted,” Vashadze stated.

“Do you think they are small children that you can lie to that the 9 steps have been fulfilled? Or is the Foreign Minister not ashamed? I don’t think there is such a precedent anywhere in the world.”

He highlighted the European Union’s clear stance and expressed concern over the stalled integration process under Georgian Dream’s rule. Vashadze urged for a change in approach by October 26, emphasizing the need for honesty and integrity in dealings with the EU.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ meeting with EU member state representatives concerned the implementation of the nine steps for Georgia’s EU accession.

## Weather

Wednesday, July 31

Day Partly Cloudy  
High: 28°C

Night Clear  
Low: 18°C

Thursday, August 1

Day Clear  
High: 28°C

Night Partly Cloudy  
Low: 19°C

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# Festival "Night Serenades"

International Festival "Night Serenades" has been named after its founder, the greatest violinist and conductor Liana Issakadze.

This year marks the 16th edition of the festival since its revival, and will be held in three cities: Borjomi, Batumi, and Tbilisi.

The festival will open on August 21 with an open air gala concert in Borjomi at Borjomi Likani Hotel.

On August 23 at 8 pm at the Batumi Professional State Drama Theater Mario Stefano Pietrodarchi (Bandoneon, Italy) and the festival Base Orchestra (concertmaster Lela Mtchedlidze) will perform the masterpieces of world-renowned composers: Ennio Morricone – Three themes, Nino Rota – Ommaggio a Federico Fellini, Khaled Mouzanar – Medley, Carlos Gardel – Volver; Por una Cabeza

Astor Piazzolla – Melodia in La minore; Adios Nonino; Vuelvo al Sur; Milonga del Angel; Le, Grand Tango.

On the second day of the festival, August 25 at 8:00 PM, the Ili Chavchavadze Professional State Drama Theater in Batumi will host Elvin Hoxha Ganiyev – Violin, Azerbaijan / Turkey and the Festival Base Orchestra GEORGIAN VIRTUOSI (concertmaster Lela Mtchedlidze). The concert program includes Antonio Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons," Astor Piazzolla's "The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires," and Niccolò Paganini's "Caprice No. 24."

Starting September 15, "Night Serenades" will move to Tbilisi. Beatrice Venezi (conductor, Italy), Sandro Nebieridze (piano, Georgia), and Georgian Philharmonic Orchestra will perform Ottorino Respighi's "Pines of Rome" and Sergei Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30.

On September 17 at 8:00 PM, an evening of Brazilian music will take place in the Tbilisi State Conservatoire Grand Hall. The concert will feature young, renowned Georgian soloists Lizi Ramishvili (cello), Mariam Roinishvili (soprano) and Giorgi Oikashvili (clarinet), with the Festival Base Orchestra GEORGIAN VIRTUOSI led by first violinist Lela Mtchedlidze. The program will include works by Brazilian composers such as Alberto Nepomuceno's String Quartet No. 3 "Brasileiro," Heitor Villa-Lobos' Five Songs, Chiquinha Gonzaga's "Corta Jaca," Zequinha de Abreu's "Tico-Tico no Fubá," and many others.

"Night Serenades" will continue with a Czech music concert on September 18 at 6:00 PM in the Recital Hall of Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

In celebration of the 200th anniversary of Bedoich Smetana, Giorgi Shaverzashvili (piano, Georgia) and Giorgi Khaindrava (violin, Georgia) will perform works by Bedoich Smetana and Antonín Dvořák. Attendees can look forward to many musical surprises throughout the concert.

This year's festival will be solemnly closed on September 20 at 8:00 PM at the Tbilisi State Conservatoire Grand Hall. Andres Gabetta – Violin / Conductor, France and Maurice Steger – Recorder, Switzerland with Festival Base Orchestra GEORGIAN VIRTUOSI (concertmaster Lela Mtchedlidze) will perform special program VIVALDI and Friends. The concert program includes:

Evaristo Felice Dall'Abaco's - Concerto a più strumenti in D major, Op.5 No.6 – Ciaconna

Pietro Locatelli - Concerto Grosso in C minor, Op.1 No.11, and concertos of Greatest Master Antonio Vivaldi.

Along with the concert program, within the framework of the festival, special attention will be paid to the cognitive-educational program for students and young people, including the disabled people, which includes master classes, workshops, open lectures and traditionally exhibitions by Georgian artists

Supporters: Ministry of Culture and Sport of Georgia, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports of Adjara, Tbilisi City Hall, Batumi City Hall, Borjomi City Hall, Embassy of Italy, Embassy of Brazil, Embassy of Czech Republic

Hosts: Hotel Borjomi Likani, Hilton garden Inn Tbilisi.

Partners: Georgian Philharmonic Orchestra,

Suppofurniture house "Nita" - best guarantee of quality and design, perfumery store chain "Lutecia", Yves Rocher, the founder of herbal cosmetics from France, Company "Sarajishvili", Brothers Khutsishvili Wine Cellar, HOTSAL.E.GE, "PSP" pharmacy.

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Tickets: tkt.ge

**21 AUGUST**  
**BORJOMI** | Borjomi Likani Hotel

**23, 25 AUGUST**  
**BATUMI** | Batumi Drama Theater

**15, 17, 18, 20**  
**SEPTEMBER**  
**TBILISI** | Tbilisi State Conservatoire

დასწინ სერენადები  
NIGHT SERENADES

Founder of the Festival  
**LIANA ISSAKADZE**

Artistic Director  
**GIORGI ISSAKADZE**

ALLIANCE ART  
არტ ალიანსი

