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WEEKLY BILINGUAL
NEWSPAPER IN GEORGIA

ANAKLIA PORT NAMED AMONG WORLD'S 100 MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

P. 8

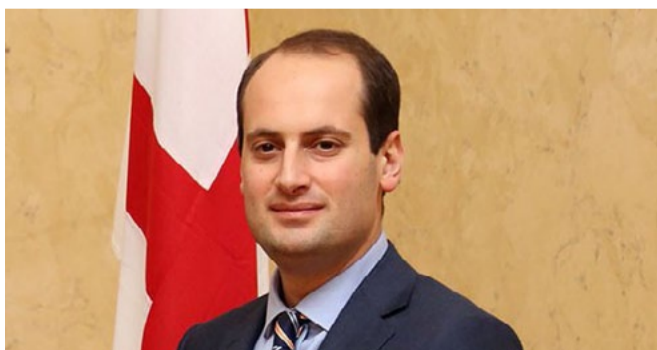


The theme of this year's Forum was "Strategic Projects - Creating the Foundation for Global Prosperity" and featured projects from countries that are establishing themselves as competitive nations with a developed or developing infrastructure vision. Projects selected for presentation are those that contribute to the competitiveness of their country and the region, offer strong business opportunities, and contribute to job and opportunity creation for their city, state, province, or country.

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The Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued a special guide book for the diplomats working on economic diplomacy. The guide book summarizes the purpose of Georgian economic diplomacy that is tailored to promote Georgian investment capabilities and the environment on an international level, attract foreign capital and technical support, involve Georgia in international projects, implement regional and international transport and energy projects, and establish preferential export conditions for Georgian goods on diversified markets.



STOLTENBERG SAYS RUSSIA TRYING TO DIVIDE NATO

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Furthermore, he made clear that the Kremlin's aim to divide NATO and its alliance and intimidate neighbors is not successful and effective since NATO is responding in a very unified way. Earlier in February, NATO approved expanding its military presence near Russia's borders. The military-political group of the twenty-eight states of the Euro-Atlantic Alliance has decided to provide a serious response to the provocative challenges of a modern world that is changing, the challenges coming from outside the Bloc's eastern and southern borders.



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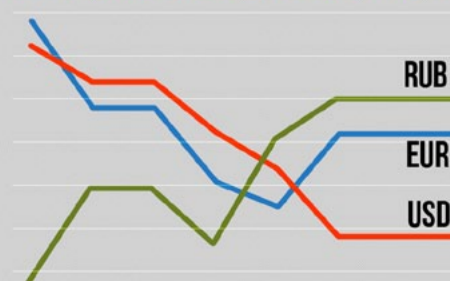
ALL STUDENTS ARE EQUAL, BUT SOME ARE MORE EQUAL

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OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATE OF LARI AGAINST FOREIGN CURRENCIES

\$	1 USD	2.4258
€	1 EUR	2.6943
£	1 GBP	3.4677
F	1 CHF	2.4573
₺	1 TRL	0.8427
₹	100 RUB	3.4836
₴	10 UAH	0.9366
₸	1 AZN	1.4565
₾	100 AMD	0.4940

FOREIGN CURRENCIES' RATE CHANGES DURING LAST WEEK



STOLTENBERG SAYS RUSSIA TRYING TO DIVIDE NATO

GURAM PTSKIALADZE

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stated that Russia has made numerous attempts to intimidate its neighbors and split NATO.

In a live interview with CNN, Stoltenberg made an announcement that despite “numerous attempts by Moscow to intimidate its neighbors and break up NATO, the alliance will respond with strengthened unity and by adapting our military concepts.”

Stoltenberg stressed that strengthening the alliance’s eastern borders with NATO troops “makes it possible to keep an assertive Russia under control.”

He also said that NATO is concerned about the presence of Russian military in Syria and the Mediterranean, asserting that NATO, seeing Russia’s acts and steps, was forced to upsurge the number of militaries in Turkey and the eastern Mediterranean as NATO is worried about the significant Russian military buildup with air forces, ground troops, and also the naval presence in the eastern Mediterranean. The Alliance is therefore responding with assurance measures, increased military presence in the area.

Furthermore, he made clear that the Kremlin’s aim to divide NATO and its alliance and intimidate neighbors is not successful and effective since NATO is responding in a very unified way.

Earlier in February, NATO approved expanding its military presence near Russia’s borders. The military-political group of the twenty-eight states of the

Euro-Atlantic Alliance has decided to provide a serious response to the provocative challenges of a modern world that is changing, the challenges coming from outside the Bloc’s eastern and southern borders. The new threats relate primarily to the overly self-confident Russia’s actions that contradict international law, the spread of terrorism, and the migrant and refugee crisis caused by displacement of the huge masses of people.

At the ministerial meeting of NATO defense ministers in Brussels in early February, it was decided to strengthen defenses and deterrence predominantly in Eastern Europe. The decision is based upon the article of the Washington Treaty for the Protection of an Ally in case a non-member state attacks its member.

Solidification of NATO’s military presence on eastern borders was backed up by many Allies. Ahead of the Brussels meeting, officials in Washington stated that it would quadruple the funding for the European Reassurance Initiative up to 3.4 billion U.S. dollars. It goes without saying that the White House’s decision was mostly caused by Russia’s aggressive politics. The funds will be spent on infrastructure improvements to airfields, training centers, and ranges throughout Europe.

At that time, Stoltenberg claimed that there was not any imminent threat to any member states of the Alliance, but the system of collective security must deter any danger and



ensure strong defense of each member state. He also said that NATO would respond to any aggression against any ally.

Recently, Allies have openly been expressing their dissatisfaction with the actions of the Russian Federation. This is not only due to the fact that Russia tries to change the borders of some independent states, namely Georgia and Ukraine, with the help of military forces, but as it does not take into account on purpose the position of international society for a political settlement in Syria.

Speaking of the influence of Russia over its neighbors yearning to enter NATO, the Kremlin attempts to use its levers to make them rethink their decision joining the organization, but it does not make sense; soft power is replaced by hard power as it oc-

curred in the case of Ukraine and Georgia. The last instance is Montenegro, that is on the verge of joining NATO, that indisputably concerns Russia.

The Kremlin tries to bring into force their “weapons” by using local Montenegrin pro-Russian powers to make the government change their mind. Moreover, Russia warns Montenegro that if the country joins NATO, many mutual projects and plans will be canceled. But unlike Ukraine and Georgia, Russia has fewer levers vis-à-vis Montenegro and while soft power might have no power, hard power is very hard and unimaginable to be used by Russia for certain reasons (Montenegro is far away from Russia, it is less important than Ukraine, Georgia, and other neighbors, etc.). As for NATO’s concerns in

the Middle East, in Syria, there we have a tough and tangled situation. Bashar al-Assad wants Russia’s help to stay the head of the country; at the same time, the airstrikes target mostly not the Islamic State terrorists but rather the opposition forces, and it affects civilians making them head for the EU. So, in addition to troubles initiated by Russia, the Alliance faces some other difficulties, such as a vast number of migrants. That is a headache not only for the EU but also for NATO, as it creates security problems within the organization. Prior to the next NATO summit, taking place on July 8-9 in Warsaw, the Allies are preparing for the adoption of an ambitious strategic plan aimed at enhancing and strengthening the system of collective security.

THE WINTER MILITARY AND MOUNTAIN TRAINING COURSE IS OVER

In the framework of NATO program - “Partnership for Peace” (PfP), the Basic Mountain Training Winter Course officially ended on March 11. The closing ceremony was held at Colonel Besik Kutateladze Sachkhere Mountain Training School. Chief of General Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces, Major-General Vakhtang Kapanadze and military attaches accredited to Georgia attended the event.

At the ceremony, the soldiers were awarded with certificates and badges.

“The course prepared inter-

national students, which were presented from the Baltic states, as well as Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkey. We are pleased that all military personnel peacefully and successfully completed the course. Most importantly, they have acquired the knowledge and skills that will be useful for military activities,” said Major-General Vakhtang Kapanadze.

After skiing tracks Ministry of Defence, Tinatin Khidasheli talked to the soldiers and congratulated the successful completion of the course. Sachkhere Mountain Training School is a

pioneer in the Georgia-NATO relations. The school has 10 years anniversary this year. Throughout the year we want to hold many events in this school, so that more people can learn about it and the success that these guys have,” said Khidasheli.

Winter Basic Course began on February 21 and lasted for three weeks.

Military from NATO and partner countries, mastered basic skills for winter conditions, including skiing, overcoming obstacles and to make security dots in the snow.



SAVCHENKO TO BECOME A SYMBOL OF HOPE AND RESISTANCE AGAINST RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

SALOME KHVEDELIDZE

Savchenko to become a symbol of hope and resistance against Russian aggression

Salome Khvedelidze

Russian court has set a date of March 21 for issuing the verdict in the case against Ukrainian pilot Nadezhda Savchenko. If found guilty, she will be sentenced to 20-25 years in prison.

Nadezhda is a very well known figure in Ukraine – considering recent events, she has become a true hero for Ukrainian nationalists. Savchenko joined the army at the age of sixteen and served as the only female soldier among the Ukrainian peacekeeping troops sent to Iraq in 2004. She petitioned the Ministry of Defence to admit women to the prestigious Air Force University of Ukraine. Later, she also became a first lieutenant and a gunner and navigator on Mi-24 helicopter gunships. Since 2014 she is a Verkhovna Rada MP and a delegate to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The Russian side claims that on June 12, 2014, Savchenko took part in the murder of two Russian journalists, Anton Voloshin and Igor Kornelyuk. Moreover, they accuse her of deliberately directing artillery fire at the men. They also claim she crossed the border voluntarily and thus was accused of entering the country illegally under the guise of a refugee. According to her lawyers, mobile phone records prove her innocence. More specifically, it proves she was not present at the time of the bombardment and had been captured an hour before the actual attack. After three weeks, Nadezhda, who is

accused of murdering two, appeared in Russian prison, where she has been staying for twenty months.

The Ukrainian pilot has been in pre-trial detention for a long time. Although she holds immunity as a Verkhovna Rada MP and a delegate to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Moscow Court tossed out her complaint over her alleged immunity and did not free her. On July 8, 2014, President Petro Poroshenko instructed the General Prosecutor of Ukraine to take all measures to release Savchenko. In response, head of media liaisons for the Russian Federation Investigative Committee, Vladimir Markin, said that the chances of her being released were on par with those of Petro Poroshenko replacing Barack Obama as President of the United States.

Russian authorities rejected the offer of Ukrainian officials to swap Savchenko in prisoner exchange with separatists supported by Russia. According to them, she is a suspected criminal, and not a war prisoner. President of Russia Vladimir Putin stated that if found guilty, “she will serve her sentence in accordance with the court decision”. Mark Feygin, from the defence team of the Ukrainian pilot, stressed that “the case of Nadezhda Savchenko is political” – it is decided outside the court room, in Kremlin.

The trial of Savchenko attracted the attention of the world’s media. She also received support of the international community. On March 7, John Kerry released a statement on the of-

ficial webpage of the United States Secretary of State: “I am deeply concerned about the health and welfare of Ukrainian pilot and Rada Deputy Nadezhda Savchenko, who since Friday has refused food and water to protest her continued detention by the Russian Federation. In the twenty months since she was captured in eastern Ukraine and taken to Russia, Ms. Savchenko has reportedly endured interrogations, solitary confinement, and forced “psychiatric evaluation.” Her trial and continuing imprisonment demonstrate disregard for international standards, as well as for Russia’s commitments under the Minsk agreements. The United States once again calls on Russia to immediately release Ms. Savchenko and return her to Ukraine.”

President Petro Poroshenko discussed the issue with Western leaders, including Angela Merkel and Barack Obama. Both leaders support Ukraine and called for Russia to immediately release Savchenko. The same purpose serves the petition, which has spread on the internet and was signed by famous figures – members of the European Parliament, MPs, diplomats, Nobel Prize winners, writers, journalists, and other public figures from all over the world.

At the same time, Georgia demands release of Savchenko side by side with the rest of the world. Gathering in front of the building that once housed Moscow’s embassy in Tbilisi, Georgians protested her two-year imprisonment and demanded her release. Protesters lit lanterns with images of Savchenko’s face.



On March 9, Nadezhda Savchenko gave an emotional address in Russian court, blaming Russian authorities for bloodshed not only in Ukraine, but in Abkhazia, Chechnya, Syria, and Dagestan as well. According to her, her case is ruled by Kremlin and the verdict will be delivered by them; the events showed the true face of Russian government to the entire world. At the end of the speech, she said she would return to her homeland, whether alive or dead.

The Ukrainian pilot began her hunger strike on March 3, after accusing the court of denying her the chance to make a final statement in her trial for abetting the killing of two Russian journalists. As her lawyers claim, on March 10, she stopped dry hunger on Poroshenko’s request. It

should be noted that the state of her health is getting worse, but she is denied an access to doctors. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Sergey Lavrov, revealed that such a decision was made by the court due her “insolent behavior in court”.

It is note-worthy that Ukrainian prosecutors have decided to open a case against seven Russians: their judges, two investigators, and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, for providing false evidence.

34 year-old Nadezhda Savchenko, who has been imprisoned for twenty months, became a national hero. On March 2, 2015, Poroshenko awarded her with the Hero of Ukraine title. For people fighting against Russian aggression, she has become a symbol of national resistance and fight.

GEORGIAN AND RUSSIAN ENVOYS TO MEET IN PRAGUE ON MARCH 16

Another meeting of the Georgian envoy on relations with Russia Mr. Zurab Abashidze and Russia’s Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Grigori Karasin will take place in Prague on March 16, the Georgian envoy told TASS, Russian News Agency on Monday.

According to Mr. Abashidze, during the meeting the parties will discuss “traditional for this format detailed issues of coop-

eration in trade, economy, transport, culture and in the humanitarian sphere.”

This format of Russian-Georgian Dialogue exists since 2012 and it undergoes much criticism for being unproductive. On November 20, after the latest meeting of Abashidze- Karasin, the press service of Georgia’s government said that “the latest Prague meeting resulted in con-

crete agreements, in particular expanding the list of Georgian products presented in the Russian market and increasing haulage capacity.” Georgian Media also spread the information that the sides will discuss possible meetings of the President of Georgia Giorgi Margvelashvili with Russian President Vladimir Putin, however, Mr. Abashidze did not confirm this information.



QUOTAS FOR WOMEN IN THE PARLIAMENT – SOLUTION OR DISCRIMINATION

EKA PKHOVELISHVILI

Gender quotas are an effective way to achieve gender equality. Quotas aim at defending women from political isolation. Because half of the world's population is women, it is logical that this group should have appropriate representation in the decision-making process. This argument immediately won the support of the majority; therefore, the quota system for women has been successfully used in almost every country around the world.

Georgia has the lowest rate in the OSCE region in terms of representing women in the Parliament. Women's participation index is on a very low level in various governmental organizations and their representation should be increased from the current level. Most of the women work on low-level work, while the majority of decision-making positions are occupied by men.

In 2003, the idea of gender quotas failed to gain support in Georgian Parliament, regardless of the elimination of the 29th, 34th, and 35th women's discrimination committees' recommendations, which requires the Georgian government to make special measures; in particular, the imposition of quotas for

women in political life.

In 2016, before the election, Georgian Parliament may make a change in the electoral code and law about gender equality in order to eliminate gender imbalances, which shows in local, legislative, and executive levels. The main issue is the mandatory gender quotas, which serves to increase women's participation in the governing structures.

Even in 1980, the world's leading countries, such as Norway, Denmark, and Sweden, voluntarily imposed a quota system for women. Over the past decade, there were quotas imposed in France, Spain, the Netherlands, and eleven Latin American countries. In 2002, Norway has developed even more rapidly from this point of view, when in 2008, Norway established 40% quotas for company board directors.

Effective and successful examples are internal party quotas. Such practice is frequently used in Nordic countries, where women's representation in political life is the highest. Norway and France have gone so far. As for Norway's quota system, 40% of ruling positions should be filled by women. The same rule ap-

plies to the Parliament and the government. The Socialist Left Party has introduced 40% quotas for women since 1975. They also carry the changes of different candidates in a list (zipping system).

The Norwegian Labor Party also has 40% quota for women since 1983, the Center Party since 1989, and Christian People's Party since 1993.

It is also necessary that in the constitution, as well as in the local election's law, there be women's representatives, clear examples of which are Norway's and France's quota systems.

Due to the work of the women's political activity group, the idea of introducing gender quotas became a bill mode. The member of the Fair Elections and International Democracy Society Lawyer Nino Janashia hopes that the Parliament will consider the bill, which is represented in the form of recommendations.

At the same time, it seems that an important part of the society is in favor of increasing the representatives of women in party lists, and generally in the government. According to the National Democratic Institute's (NDI) survey, which was conducted in

2014, 70% of voters would like to see more women in politics. Increasing the number of women in Parliament and introducing quotas was fully supported by 45% of voters, and partially by 25%. This trend remained in 2015 as well. According to the NDI research, "Women's Political Participation in Georgia" which was conducted at the end of the last year, 68% of the voters support the idea of introducing gender quotas in the Parliament.

As Baia Pataraiia, representative of the women's movement pointed out, "This project is actually suspended, they are neither taking away, nor implementing, and international organizations are told that Georgian government is working on this issue. If the electoral code would not be amended in March, gender quotas in 2016 can no longer act, because the changes must be done more than six months before the elections. This process is stopped. Neither is fully cast, but it is frozen. It may remain in this position, or move forward."

If only 12% of members of parliament are women, an even more acute situation is in the local authorities. From fifty-nine municipal authorities, only two

are women. None of the mayors, nor the governor, is a woman; in addition, according to an NDI survey, after a 2014 Parliamentary election, out of seventy-one self-governing bodies of the city council's 2,083 members, only 11% are women.

It should be noted that half of the non-governmental organizations and populations do not agree with the creation of quotas and consider that this may have bad results, and sexist stereotypes and discrimination against women which cannot be eliminated. Quotas can be considered an artificial mechanism that cannot answer the problems and challenges.

The quota system is a necessary requirement for Georgia. This will be an effective, temporary provision to increase women's political participation. World experience has shown that 30% is a critical mass in the representative bodies. This system will be successful in Georgia because many examples have shown that balance is not adequately protected; not only in parties, but also in the Parliament as well. The establishment of quota systems will be a step ahead on the road to strengthening gender equality.

SALOME ZURABISHVILI PRESENTED A NEW INITIATIVE TO THE PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili met the head of UN Security Council Iran Sanctions Committee Experts Salome Zurabishvili. The former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia presented her own initiative regarding the "citizenship law" and the amendments to the Constitu-

tion. In particular, Salome Zurabishvili believes that Georgian citizens, who get foreign citizenship, their Georgian citizenship should not automatically ceased, as it is in accordance with the Georgian legislation. According to him, this is a common practice in European countries and simi-

lar decision should be taken in Georgia, as well.

"It was very interesting meeting. Many issues were discussed. We talked about the current developments and possible future cooperation", – she said. The prime minister declared that the new initiative will be discussed.



INVESTIGATION ON PRIVATE LIFE VIDEO FOOTAGE IS UNDERWAY

On March 11, a video was released on youtube, which supposed to contain one of the politician's private life depictions. Before the relevant services were trying to block the video, some journalists (a news agency Inter Press News and Radio "Fortuna") did not want to wait and quickly spread information about the video, they also mentioned the name of a person who

was affected. The action itself as well as a video footage and upload was condemned by the government circles, opposition parties, journalists and civil society members.

"Each state should guarantee the human dignity. What happened today, is not an attack against one person, but against the whole society. This action will get adequate response from

the state!" said Prime Minister of Georgia, Giorgi Kvirikashvili.

The Prime Minister instructed the relevant agencies – prosecutors' office, the State Security Service, and Interior Ministry to promptly investigate the case. "This is a test of investigative agencies, which they must pass. We are committed to the process of investigation involve any organization, group of people who

can support with relevant expertise.

Chairman of the Parliament Speaker also called for the involvement of a technical assistance to the international anti-terrorist networks. This action is directed against the whole society as a moral act of terror. "It is impossible in our case to fight alone, but international experts will easily identify the origin

and distribution of materials and other details," said Speaker.

For the effectiveness of the investigation, the chairman demands to impose one million Lari and protecting confidentiality who will lead the investigation to the guilty people. Usupashvili also notes that the Parliament will be ready to make a serious contribution to the budget for these purposes.

SOME THOUGHTS ON DEEPENING GEORGIAN ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

GIORGI CHAPIDZE

Georgian foreign minister Mikheil Janelidze has stated that economic diplomacy is among the core priorities for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. He believes that Georgian embassies should work in the economic field since the attraction of direct foreign investment is the tool for stabilizing Georgian national currency. The Minister declared that the economic department works with the embassies to coordinate and advance Georgian economic diplomacy.

One of the obvious reasons for appointing current Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili as the country's foreign minister in September 2015 was his experience as a proficient manager during his tenure at the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development. Georgian Foreign Ministry organizes the Ambassadorial once a year for Georgian diplomats to discuss the ways in which the embassies should serve the country's focal foreign policy objectives. During the latest Ambassadorial one of the prime concerns was economic diplomacy. Georgian ambassadors were given the definite orders to rearrange their agenda and start working with local business sectors in their respective countries to strengthen the bond with businessmen and make them more enthusiastic in investing in Georgia.

The Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued a special guide book for the diplomats working on economic diplomacy. The guide book summarizes the purpose of Georgian economic diplomacy that is tailored to promote Georgian investment capabilities and the environ-

ment on an international level, attract foreign capital and technical support, involve Georgia in international projects, implement regional and international transport and energy projects, and establish preferential export conditions for Georgian goods on diversified markets. Georgian diplomats should cooperate with international financial institutions and other entities working on the relevant issues to improve the Georgian social environment and attract funds for infrastructural projects.

Despite the explicit aim to encourage the inflow of foreign investment in Georgia, several conditions of targeted policy remain quite vague. Some diplomats have neither the practice nor the competence to promote Georgia's investment environment. This consideration is mainly true for the diplomats who only have political profile. Furthermore, disregard of the Non recognition Policy of occupied Georgian territories is a reasonable issue that may emerge when diplomats' basic objective is to convince foreign business sectors to allocate money for Georgia's economy or invest in Georgia's market. Also the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia should not evaluate ambassadors' success based on the number of investments coming from the country where they are in charge of embassies. In some cases, ambassadors may promote Georgia's economic environment and create the basis for investment but this can't be done in remote countries, where citizens are not interested in the Caucasus region.

Former deputy foreign minister of Georgia Sergi Kapanadze

articulates his position towards economic diplomacy that is believed to be the foremost priority of Georgian embassies. Kapanadze thinks that working with respect to economic diplomacy, ambassadors should pursue traditionally crucial policies simultaneously such as de-occupation, integration in the Western political institutions and relations with the Russian Federation. He also outlined the importance of economic diplomacy within the context of hyperinflation of the national currency. Foreign investments are considered to be a cure for unconfined inflation rate. Kapanadze also stated that economic diplomacy is not a new tool for normalizing the economic situation in the country.

Former governments have advanced economic diplomacy after the August War when the embassies were given the directives to promote Georgian investment environment. The foreign ministry started sending more and more economists to work in the embassies.

Former deputy foreign minister declared that the main problems with investments do not stem from embassies' unfruitful policies but from the Georgian government's inconsistent regulations that discourage foreign businessmen from putting a large sum of money in unstable Georgian economy. He also fears that the foreign ministry would demand real result with regard to investment from ambassadors and they will be forced to withdraw their attention from the above-mentioned foreign policy issues that are also crucial for the country.

What kind of economic diplo-



macy would not intercept political framework of Georgian embassies? Some ambassadors even during the Ambassadorial have stated that this kind of diplomacy would be effective if the relevant framework is created within the embassies. This branch should consist of economists who know the characteristic of local business sectors and their possible interests in investing in Georgia. These groups are expected to promote Georgian investment environment on business meetings and conferences. Even though this distinction is connected with additional expenditures, it could still be beneficial not only for economic diplomacy but also for political objectives of Georgian embassies.

Having commercial missions in certain states is atypical characteristic of successful economic diplomacy. For instance, Israel has a special commercial mis-

sion in its embassy in the United States, aimed at promoting and facilitating trade and investment between the countries. This commercial mission helps to establish bilateral commercial relations with American governmental institutions, such as United States Trade Representative (USTR), and also with the private sector. If Georgian foreign ministry considers opening such economic branches in certain countries where Georgian market may seem attractive (most probable: USA, Turkey, Ukraine, etc.), economic diplomacy will be more targeted and presumably successful. Despite economic diplomacy and its tools, Georgia should have a stable political climate and economic regulations that do not change every month. Unless these conditions are provided, big investors will hesitate to invest in Georgia's turbulent economy.

GEORGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER TO PAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO US

On March 14-18, 2016, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mikheil Janelidze will pay official visit to the United States. The minister will meet with the US Executive and Legislative authority Representatives.

Foreign Minister will meet with the US Secretary of State John Kerry. During the visit, meetings will be held with representatives of the White House.

Mikheil Janelidze will hold

meetings with the members of Senate and Congress. Among them he will meet the friends of Georgia (Georgia Caucus) co-chairs.

He will also hold meetings with the United States leading Research centers and non-governmental organizations. The Minister will also deliver a speech at the Atlantic Council.

Janelidze will give interviews to the US leading media outlets.



ARIA ABOUT ARYAN, OR EUROPE DOESN'T WEAR BLACK

TEIMURAZ SHA

On March 6, 2016, the Parliamentary Election were held in Slovak Republic, where the governed party won with 28.3 percent of the vote. The elections of this central European country would not be very interesting for international society, if not for the fact that 14 seats out of 150 in the Slovakia's People Rada have been taken by the far right neo-Nazi political movement; "Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia". They were elected to the Parliament by 8% of the voters, and it is the first time in the history of the country when the party with such a kind of ideology has entered the Parliament.

Party "Kotleba – Our Slovakia" was founded in 2010 by a young neo-Nazi group, and since the establishment, it was widely known with its racist and xenophobic statements, which actually were based on the typical primordialistic populism. It should be mentioned, that Slovak Republic is not the first EU member-state, where neo-Nazi/neo-Fascist groups enter the Parliament of country. Far right powers are presented in different parliaments of the Central and Eastern European states, particularly in Greece ("Golden Dawn"), Austria (Freedom Party), Denmark (People's Party),

Bulgaria ("Attack"), Croatia (HČSP), Germany (National Democratic Party), Hungary ("Jobbik"), Estonia (EKRE), and Latvia (National Alliance). In many of those counties, the far right parties have so many seats, that automatically make them deputy representative in the European Parliament. According to a different source, at least 21 out of 751 EU Parliament members are of far-right or neo-Nazi political party. Sure, it is not even 3%, but still.

European Integration, as one of the world's most fruitful political processes, was found as an idea in Europe ruined by Nazis and Fascists. In 1930s idea and the propaganda of the "White Europe" became one of the most actual among the far right groups on the West of Europe. As a result, it brought millions of victims, mass terror, and radical ethno/racial-centrism, which broke up the national borders for that time and provoked World War II.

Besides the historical memory of Europeans, far right movements still exist across the Europe, including Russia and Georgia. Moreover, in many countries they have special military groups. Though, there is not any European union of such

political organizations, but there are some regional, ethnic-based, language-based transnational unions as are Scandinavia's People Front, Fund of the Purity of Celtic Race, and etc. The interesting fact is that in all countries or regions, neo-Nazi or neo-Fascist groups use the same cliché populism – "Save [particular] ethnos/nation through the exclusion and persecution of others [ethnic minorities, religious minorities, migrants and etc.]" They also lift the topic of local problems, which population faces every day, and blame all failures on those "others".

Should be mentioned that far right groups have their specific symbols. In major cases it is the same conceptually, and represented as the ethnic solar symbol (symbol of sun, cross, other kind of graphemes which have astrological origin), that is used in the traditional clothes of particular ethnic community was discovered by archeologists, was an old spiritual symbol, or simply associated with the group of people. For example, still now German neo-Nazis use the swastika – Aryan symbol of Sun and Productivity; Greeks use the Meandr – ancient ornament, which is affiliated to the solar symbolism; Russians use the "Kolovrat", the



Slavic wheel of Sun and Life. According to different internet portals, Georgian neo-Nazis use ancient Georgian symbol "Borjghali", which is a kind of swastika and was used by Caucasians thousands years ago. Besides the solar symbols, neo-Nazis also use the image of Eagle, as a symbol of freedom and strength.

Such unusual activism of the neo-Nazis and far-rights in Europe can be provoked from one side by the globalization and pan-European idea, where the key identity is based on the European citizenship, and from the other side – by the refugee crisis and two million migrants, who already crossed the borders and

are seeking asylum. According to the polls and elections, the support of the far right political powers is bigger in Central and Easter European countries, where the number of refugees is small, but there is a perspective of refugee distribution that actually scares the majority of the local population.

In the frame of European legislation, were the Human Rights to have a key place, such kind of group will have not big results, though of course the danger exists. Especially nowadays, when the refugee flow has no finish, and the attitude of Europeans towards this topic becomes more negative.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION PROPOSES TO LIFT VISA OBLIGATIONS FOR CITIZENS OF GEORGIA

The European Commission is today proposing to the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament to lift visa requirements for the citizens of Georgia by transferring Georgia to the list of countries whose citizens can travel without a visa to the Schengen area.

The proposal comes after the Commission gave a positive assessment last December, confirming that Georgia successfully met all benchmarks under the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan.

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos said: "Today we follow up on our commitment to propose visa-free travel for Georgian citizens to the EU. Visa free travel will further facilitate people-to-people contacts and strengthen business, social and cultural ties between the European Union and Georgia – it is an important achievement for

the citizens of Georgia. Today's proposal recognises the efforts of the Georgian authorities to carry out far-reaching and difficult reforms with a significant impact on the rule of law and the justice system. I am very satisfied with the progress achieved, and I hope that the European Parliament and the Council will adopt our proposal very soon."

Once the proposal has been adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, Georgian citizens with biometric passports will no longer require visas when travelling for up to 90 days to the Schengen area. The visa-free travel will apply to all EU Member States except for Ireland and the UK, as well as the four Schengen associated countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland). The exemption concerns only short-stay visas valid for up to 90 days of travel in any 180-day period for

business, tourist or family purposes. The visa exemption does not provide for the right to work in the EU.

The enhanced mobility of citizens in a secure and well-managed environment is one of the core objectives of the Eastern Partnership. To this end, the EU carries out Visa Liberalisation Dialogues with interested partner countries.

The main tool of the dialogue is the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan (VLAP) which is tailor-made for each partner country and structured around four blocks concerning i) document security, including biometrics; ii) integrated border management, migration management, asylum; iii) public order and security; and iv) external relations and fundamental rights. In the context of the visa liberalisation dialogue, each country is assessed on its own merit and a proposal to lift



visa requirements is taken once all benchmarks set out in the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan have been fulfilled.

The EU-Georgia Visa Liberalisation Dialogue was launched on 4 June 2012 and the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan was presented to the Georgian authorities on 25 February 2013. Benchmarks were set with a view to adopting a legislative, policy and institutional framework (phase 1) and ensuring its effective and sustainable implementation (ph. 2).

In its first progress report adopted in November 2013 the Commission made a number of recommendations for completing the first legislative and planning phase. In October 2014, the

Commission adopted its second progress report which concluded that Georgia had fulfilled the first-phase benchmarks of the VLAP and was ready to be assessed on the second-phase benchmarks. In its Conclusions of 17 November 2014, the Council concurred with the Commission's assessment.

The Commission adopted the third progress report on Georgia's implementation of the VLAP on 8 May 2015. The report took note of significant progress made by the Georgian authorities in implementing the second phase of the VLAP and acknowledged the fulfilment of many benchmarks under the four blocks.

LARI CONTINUES TO STRENGTHEN – ESTIMATES AND FORECASTS

NATA BITSADZE

Lari Continues to Strengthen – Estimates and Forecasts

According to “Bloomberg”, Georgia’s national currency exchange rate has begun to strengthen in the last few days. It may turn out to be the beginning of a big appreciation of the national currency and keep up the current trend. The Minister of Finance, Nodar Khaduri, has positive predictions too. On March 7th, the Minister noted with journalists that he estimates stabilization of GEL exchange rate in the short-term and appreciation in the medium-term. The expectation of Khaduri is based on investments in a private sector. As Khaduri said, new tourist facilities are being built in the field of energy, transport, and communications, as well as the Millennium project of Anaklia water port.

Furthermore, the Minister is talking about state implemented investments and gives the example of Khashuri-Zestaponi highway construction, which was funded by the Japanese government through 38.5 million USD. The Minister of Finance expects that these plans, oil prices stabilizing, and do not pressure from the state budget to the GEL exchange rate, will promote the country’s economic development and will appreciate the national currency.

The Minister’s thoughts are shared by some economists. They say that devaluation of the national currency against the dollar imbalance has already passed and resolved, but now the major challenge is to keep up the trend and appreciate the GEL even further.

In this regard, it’s important to know what policy the next president of the National Bank will have, but it is still unknown when Giorgi Kadagidze will be replaced by a new president. Economists are hoping that the new president will be more effective than the former.

Kadagidze’s seven-year governance period turned out to be negative for the Georgian economy. Economists said that the reasons were: the banking system, which has become a mechanism that extorted money from the Georgian economy; an undeveloped capital market; unlimited ownership by the Bank to have non-core assets; the bank’s huge profits against the background of problems in business and economics; the fact that the banking sector has issued 17 billion loan return for 300 billion worth of property, at the period of GEL devaluation inefficiency of restructuring loans; and etc.

Economic expert Nodar Kapanadze said in an interview with “Observer” that GEL exchange rate stability appreciates and falls depending on many aspects. Among them are the factors, that country’s influence is minimal, for example - external factors. However, he said, when we understand all the potential risk factors, it is possible to reduce adverse effects in such conditions.

Kapanadze considers that the National Bank under the orders of Kadagidze was already complicating the situation for the worse and his share of GEL depreciation is quite large. An economist thinks that for currency devaluation, it is enough to

loan refinancing one billion GEL for once, but the central bank repeated it several times.

The chairman of the International Council of Economics and Law (ICEL), Irakli Todoradze, says to “Observer” that the Prime Minister, Giorgi Kvirikashvili, quite adequately and effectively tried to obtain investments and he encourages new business projects too, it is also important that in the National Bank changes take place in the new election of the President. Todoradze said that these reasons give the basis for the stability of the GEL and the currency rate will be more acceptable to the population, but it does not automatically mean that GEL will return to the past level - 1.67 s.

The government has developed reforms to regulate the exchange rate: an untapped tax of profit exemption for companies and with 300 million reductions of budget spending. However, it should consider that the reform about an untapped tax of profit exemption will take effect from July 1st, 2016, while in previous years, one of the budget cuts to the Ministry but its growth in other agencies, so it is necessary to come up with this reform more effectively. Nevertheless, such initiatives will provide benefits and stabilize the exchange rate in the long-term, but it cannot cause significant changes in October.

Todoradze talks about four basic components of the exchange rate stability: the National Bank’s adequate financial, monetary, and credit policy; large-scale foreign investments; and positive external trade balance to



accumulate financial resources. An economist has proposed a concrete plan for the government to keep up a stable rate of the national currency. As Todoradze said, it is necessary to put large investments in agriculture and to use the opportunity of a relationship with Iran, which create jobs. However, it’s important that investments in the agriculture sector are not more than 10% of the total investment while the share of agriculture in the total employment is more than 50%. Economist Nodar Kapanadze said this means that in this distribution, the majority of the population, as before, remains out of the game. An expert explains that it is an important part how many investments will go to the real sector of the economy and what conditions will be, otherwise, only appreciate GEL rate cannot be a positive development.

Irakli Todoradze offers to the government that liberalization of tax for small and medium businesses, and simplified record-keeping and accounting, also, should enact an insurance system of industrial and agricultural business risks. Todoradze notes that it will be a good move if the government will review regulatory laws of credit and standards because impaired people do not get heavy burden anymore. In this regard, ICEL proposed the bill. Todoradze said that the bill will appreciate GEL and pro-

vides economic stability for each citizen. However, an economist also pointed out that it is important to Georgia that all credits will be issued in GEL according to dollar equivalent.

Irakli Todoradze supposes that if the government’s economic team will be able to do all these issues, then the new exchange rate will be acceptable and it will begin appreciating.

Expert Nodar Kapanadze believes that it is realistic to substantially improve economic and social conditions for a five to seven year period, but it is unclear what time the Minister of Finance means in the medium term period. But an economist explains that he does not see the real, feasible and reasonable strategy today.

The government and economic experts believe that nothing is impossible to stabilize the national currency, but everything depends on the government’s measures, external factors, the National Bank’s right policies, investments, the new reforms, etc.

It is necessary that the government foresee assessments and recommendations of economic experts in order to continue the upward trend of GEL, to increase country’s economic strength, do not become a subject of various speculations and instead of banks, citizens find out favor.

GEORGIAN WINE COMPANIES GOT THE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION AWARDS

Food and drink 41th International Exhibition FOODEX JAPAN 2016 is currently being held in Tokyo, where 8 Georgian wine companies are presented with support of the National Wine Agency and the Embassy of Georgia in Japan.

At the opening day Georgian wine companies got awards of international competition Sakura. “Georgian wine exports to Japan has great potential. As well as the East-Asian region, Japan represents a growing export mar-

ket for Georgian wine”, - said the head of the National Agency.

The head of Competition Sakura, Japan’s top-class sommelier Tanabe Yumi said that Georgian wine gave her the desire to visit Georgia.

FOODEX JAPAN has been held since 1976 and is one of the largest exhibitions in Asia.

It should be noted that in 2015, 138 290 bottles of wine were exported from Georgia to Japan, which is 5% higher than the 2014 export.



ANAKLIA PORT NAMED AMONG WORLD'S 100 MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Anaklia Deep-Sea port named among world's 100 major infrastructure projects

9th Global Infrastructure Leadership Forum took place in Washington on March 9-11. 400 executives from the public and private sector gathered to discuss infrastructure projects. The Forum is a dynamic infrastructure marketplace designed to facilitate business and promote projects across the globe, as well as showcase the cities, provinces, countries and regions with the most innovative infrastructure plans. Project sponsors delivered targeted presentations focused on project scope, timelines, and specific business opportunities in the next 3-18 months. Deep-dive workshops and roundtable discussions were led by Forum Partners and public sector officials, focused on key policy issues surrounding project finance and delivery.

The theme of this year's Forum was "Strategic Projects - Creating the Foundation for Global Prosperity" and featured projects

from countries that are establishing themselves as competitive nations with a developed or developing infrastructure vision. Projects selected for presentation are those that contribute to the competitiveness of their country and the region, offer strong business opportunities, and contribute to job and opportunity creation for their city, state, province, or country.

Georgian projects: the Anaklia Port and the East-West Highway were selected in top 100 World infrastructure projects. The Anaklia Port is to be located near the Anaklia resort on the Black Sea coast of Georgia, and has received funding interest from both Chinese and American investors. It will accommodate vessels of up to 6,500 TEUs, and will be part of the Caucasus nation's effort to develop logistics and natural gas export capacity in the region.

A result of China's new "Silk Road" strategy, more and more shipping companies have shifted their businesses to the Black

Sea- indeed, cargo demand increased by 12% between 2012 and 2013. However, Georgia lacked the deep-sea ports and logistics infrastructure necessary to accommodate larger container ships, effectively barring it off from economic opportunity in its backyard. The Anaklia deep-sea port looks to change this with a facility featuring a 1,800 meter-long berth, a minimum depth of 15 meters, and 100 hectares worth of reclaimed land with modern utilities. Further integrating east and west, this would allow Georgia to benefit from the expected 1.4 million TEU expected to cross its path by 2030.

Vice Prime Minister of Georgia and Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Dimitry Kumsishvili spoke about the reforms being implemented to improve Georgia's economic situation, attract foreign investment, business incentives and increase the country's international recognition. Minister stressed the importance of Georgia as a potential regional transport and

logistics center.

"We are sure that Anaklia Deep-Sea port is a strategic project, which will change the relationship between Asia, China and Europe. This will be a significant door, which should serve freight traffic" - said Kumsishvili.

Deputy Prime Minister appreciated the fact that the US Commerce Department supports the implementation of this project.

"We hope that this support will, in the end, transformed in the financial instruments to develop and attract funding for the consortium, which is important for the project," said Kumsishvili.

Within the forum, Dimitry Kumsishvili held the meeting with Bruce Andrews, Deputy Secretary at U.S. Department of Commerce, where the sides discussed issues of bilateral cooperation. Kumsishvili spoke about the ongoing reforms in Georgia and the Prime Minister's proposed 4-point plan for government reform. Kumsishvili invited Bruce Andrews at the second Silk Road forum that will be held

in November.

"I'm glad to be here to see my friend, the Vice-Premier. When I visited Tbilisi in 2015 to attend the Silk Road Forum, Georgia made a lasting impression on both current and planned infrastructure projects," said Andrews. Bruce Andrews said he was impressed by the efforts the government is trying to use the country's geographical location, to the economic benefit of its people.

"Countries of the region are well aware that if you set up a common economic interest-bearing block, each country will be able to bring more benefits for the people. But for this, they should create a common infrastructure to be able to connect markets and make it possible for goods and services between the countries are free to move," said US Commerce Deputy Secretary, and added: "We are convinced that the American companies in the region will apply modern technology, service, proper experience and knowledge."



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NEW DEPARTMENT BEGINS “RESTORING JUSTICE” IN GEORGIA

IRAKLI PAVLENISHVILI

Justice restoration was called as one of the main pre-election promises and slogans of the ruling coalition Georgian Dream. Its essence was the punishment of the victims of the crimes committed by the former government and rehabilitation of victims of these crimes. Criminal prosecutions against representatives of the previous government served as a restoration of justice, too. However, this process has resulted in a very tough assessment of the international community and some of them have been estimated as a politically motivated process and prisoners as political prisoners.

Under the process of restoration of justice, last year the government set up a new Department of the Prosecutor's Office that works on the crimes committed by the previous government during the proceedings.

The Prosecutor General's office said that his office has been addressed by thousands of applications about torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, coercion, as well as the assignment of the alleged facts foreclosure against citizens during the proceedings.

In the Prosecutor's office, it was said that the newly established department not only ensures investigation of the above mentioned crimes but also prosecutorial supervision of investigation and supporting state charge on trial.

Several cases have been opened during the last months by the department of the investigation of crime committed in the criminal proceedings. Namely, the conducted investigation revealed that on September 6th, 2010, the Chief Prosecution Service had

detained the director and founder of the Construction Company Builder XXI Century Merab Lursmanashvili and Nugzar Barbakadze, who were accused of fraud and illegal usage of the meeting protocol of the partnership in the process of the construction.

During the investigation the representatives of the Chief Prosecution Service called the spouses of the detained constructors, Marine Ruadze and Marine Mamatsashvili, and declared to them that if they wanted a plea agreement to be concluded with their husbands, it was necessary to give up the residential apartments which had been in their legal ownership, located at 39 Tskneti Road, free of charge. Otherwise, Nugzar Barbakadze and Merab Lursmanashvili had to stay in prison longer. As a result of the mentioned pressure and numerous calls at the Prosecution Service, Marine Ruadze and Marine Mamatsashvili felt compelled to accept the illegal request of the Prosecution Service and reregistered their own apartments to the ownership of the state.

Only after that did the Prosecution Service concluded a plea agreement with the accused, where the “shadow condition” of the agreement – concession of the apartments, was not reflected and the suspended sentences were determined for the defendants, the penalties were imposed, and they left the detention facilities. As for the illegally confiscated apartments, they were recorded on the balance of the Prosecution Service and the Ministry of Defense.

Due to the special cooperation

with the investigation, discretion was used towards the former prosecutor accused of depriving the men of their apartments, and he was not prosecuted. As a result of the cooperation, investigation will be continued towards the former head officials of the Prosecution Service.

Two apartments, one 166 square meters and the other 87, worth up to 1500 000 USD, located at 39 Tskneti Road, currently being owned by the state, will be returned to the affected citizens Marine Mamatsashvili, Merab Lursmanashvili, Nugzar Barbakadze, and Marine Ruadze.

In addition, the department of the investigation of crime committed in the criminal proceedings of the Chief Prosecution Service of Georgia managed to restore the infringed right of one more affected citizen, Ramaz Totladze. Tbilisi Court of Appeals unreasonably found Ramaz Totladze guilty of money laundering and prescribed nine years of imprisonment, a fine of 50,000 GEL as punishment, and confiscated his residential apartment and his office space. On January 14th, 2016, a newly established department of the Prosecution Service, addressed the Court of Appeals with a request to review the judgment due to the newly discovered circumstances, and requested Ramaz Totladze's rehabilitation, his acquittal, and return of the confiscated residential apartment and the office space back to him.

It should be noted that the Court of Appeals has fully upheld the petition of the Prosecution Service and considered that Ramaz Totladze was illegally disputed acquisition of large sums through

purchasing the residential apartment and the office space, on the basis of which he had been deprived of the mentioned real estate, regarding which the Court of Appeals acquitted Ramaz Totladze on February 29th, 2016 and cancelled nine years of his imprisonment and the fine of 50,000 GEL.

Based on the mention, the Prosecution Service of Georgia addressed to the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, in order to return the 535 square meters duplex apartment, worth up to half a million USD, currently under the ownership of the state, located in Tbilisi, Janashia street and 57.04 square meters of office space, located on the same street, to the affected citizen Ramaz Totladze.

The activities of the Department of Investigation into Crimes Committed throughout the Judicial Process of the Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia are regulated by its by-laws. Pursuant to the by-laws, the Department shall pursue its activities by observing the principles of lawfulness and fairness, objectivity, impartiality, and political neutrality. Its key tasks are to investigate crimes which may have been committed throughout the judicial process, and to pursue criminal prosecution.

The by-laws stipulate as well that the Department fully investigate and pursue criminal prosecution “of cases as determined by the Chief Prosecutor of Georgia”. The meaning of this wording in the by-laws, and limitations that it sets for the Department, are vague.

It is unclear also if the Department investigates and pursues

criminal prosecution on all cases within the scope of the by-laws, or if only certain cases will be selected. Even if selected, the criteria that the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia will be guided by are unknown.

Categories of cases within the scope of the Department's activities require further specification, and the case selection criteria must be made publicly available. Given the principles guiding the Department's activities, namely to ensure objectivity and impartiality, it is important to define the procedure for recruitment and appointment of the staff, as well as securing maximum openness and transparency of the Department's operations.

The general prosecutor's office has made a statement which underlined that “The process, which was started by the new department, established at the Prosecution Service and which is associated with the return of confiscated property of the affected citizens in the period until October 1st, 2012, is actively underway and it will have an irreversible character.” It is unclear why the department rules out the existence of similar crimes under the leadership of current government. This raises the question of reasonable doubt in the by-law mentioned departments principle of political neutrality.

It should also be noted that from the above mentioned thousands of cases, only very few cases were investigated. All of this raises a reasonable doubt that the Georgian Dream native performance about systemic crimes of illegal seizure of private property under the previous government is false.

ABKHAZIA AND SOUTH OSSETIA DE FACTO AUTHORITIES RELEASED GEORGIAN PRISONERS

Near Enguri bridge, in the framework of peace process among Georgian and de facto authorities of Abkhazia and South Ossetia prisoners were released.

According the agreement of Abkhazia and South Ossetia de facto authorities, Georgian side handed over 13 citizens having been under illegal arrest by de

facto Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In return Georgian side released 4 persons.

“It is a real valuable decision. I can give you an example of Israel, when in return of 1 person one side released 1000 people. These people, who are accused having been participated in the terrorist act were under arrest

during 11 years served, they were sentenced to life in prison. We were responsible to do everything what the state could do to release them”,- Paata Zakareishvili said.

Prisoners release was agreed on the basis of the negotiation with de facto Abkhazia and South Ossetia authorities.



“MIKVARKHAR” WITH FRENCH ACCENT MEANS BEIGBEDER VISITS GEORGIA

TAMAR UMPRIANI

Frederic Beigbeder, the author of the worldwide bestseller 99 Frank arrived in Georgia on March 11th. An eccentric and notorious French author, Beigbeder met readers in Biblus Gallery.

Readers who came to meet with their favorite writer had a chance to see him comfortably sitting on the chair rail and drinking Georgian red wine. After a while, Frederic aimed to show off his

and has a notorious lifestyle, has been raised in a family of French aristocrats. While his big brother had been becoming a part of the French business elite, Frederic had been studying political sciences. Though, after graduation, he continued working in a different direction. He has built a successful career as an advertisement screenwriter. In the end, after having ten years' experience in the advertisement indus-

tograph in the Biblus Gallery.

The experience he gained while working on advertisements helped him to become a bestselling writer. He knows the tastes of the book buyers as well as he remembers people's taste in yogurt. "I write and you read, I write and you buy my book. It happens because I know how to sell my books to you," says Frederic.

During the meeting, he men-

towers on September 11th, 2001. During the process, Frederic was a regular customer in a café which is located in Paris, at 56th grade of Monpasan Tower. "I used to sit in the café every day, trying to imagine myself as one of the workers in the Twin Towers when the plane crashed and collapsed the building. I had been planning to write about the topic since 2001. For me, as a writer, it was a moral duty to write about it. Though it took several years to find out the right way of writing it, one day I woke up and realized the day had come," says Beigbeder.

Critics often mention that there is an obvious connection between the author and his books' lead characters, as they claim most of his books contain autobiographical moments. During the '90s he published three autobiographical romances (Holiday in a Coma, Love Lasts Three Years, and Romantic Egoist).

On March 12th, the movie made about Love Lasts Three Years was shown on the big screen at Amirani cinema. Beigbeder attended it as well and after the movie he didn't refuse taking selfies and giving autographs to fans. The main lead of the book has the same type of lifestyle as the author. Both of them are addicted to drugs and sex. "Maronie is the same kind



of hedonist and narcissist like I am. Although he is a real tyrant with women, am I not the same kind? Maybe my wife left me for this reason, too," says Frederic.

In 2008, once again people started gossiping about his notorious and crazy lifestyle, when police arrested him for possession of three grams of cocaine at his home. Though it is a painful memory for him, he still jokes around and says that having powerful friends and his brother, who was close to the French president, can really do magic.

After two days of journeying in Georgia, the beloved author left the country. I can't predict if he remembers the architecture of old Tbilisi, because he recalls "nightlife tourism" on his journeys, he goes out only at night to visit nightclubs. Though, maybe he won't forget the numerous Georgian fans, Georgian cuisine, and Chacha, which he tasted a lot during his stay here.



little Georgian and confessed his love to the readers.

Beigbeder, who is a famous lover of night clubs, glamour,

try he wrote 99 Frank, which has become his first bestseller. It was also the mostly common book which readers brought for an au-

tioned that working on "Windows on the World" was the most difficult. The book is about the terrorist attack on the Twins

GENDER EQUALITY CAMPAIGN #MYRUSTAVELI

On 9 March 2016, at Rustaveli National Theatre in Tbilisi, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia jointly presented the students' essay contest and gender equality campaign #MyRustaveli.

The initiative celebrates 850th anniversary of the iconic Georgian poet – Shota Rustaveli and once again draws public atten-

tion to the timeless values of humanity and equality.

Niels Scott, Head of the United Nations in Georgia; Tamar Sanikidze, Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, Mikheil Giorgadze, Minister of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, and representative of the Embassy of Sweden to Georgia – Helena Sancho, addressed participants and guests with opening remarks. The event also saw the recital of selected verses

from Shota Rustaveli's epic "The Knight in the Panther's Skin" performed by the actors of the Rustaveli National Theatre. Ketevan Makharashvili of UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality in Georgia spoke about the students' contest and a year-long gender equality campaign to be ongoing till the end of 2016.

The initiative is part of the Gender Equality Week 2016 which traditionally celebrates International Women's Women in Georgia.



NATIONAL TOURISM ADMINISTRATION HOLDS THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

On April 15, 2016 the National Tourism Administration will host an international conference on the topic: „Tourism development prospects in Georgia and the world experience.”

The conference is open to the students from accredited universities in Georgia and from other countries. The work should concern the tourism sector, however wine tourism directions and innovative ideas will be preferred.

The conference aims to promote the involvement of students in the country's tourism development.

Participants will be able to conduct individual research and offer new ideas to National Tourism Administration.

The winners will be awarded by special prizes, and the selected papers will be published together with the Tourism Administration annual report.



THE NEW LAW MIGHT END CHILD MARRIAGE IN GEORGIA

NINI JAPARIDZE

Early marriage and its consequences is a problem which modern society can't seem to solve even in the 21st century. Georgia is among those countries where this problem is still a big issue. According to the research made by UNICEF in 2015, the number of early marriages in Georgia was 14% more than in our neighbor country Azerbaijan (12%), and Armenia with the lowest indicator (-7%). It must be mentioned that Armenia differs from Georgia in that it doesn't have the law which would regulate the early marriage.

There are a number of reasons for early marriage, though lack of education and awareness are two of the main causes. In those regions of Georgia where part of the society has a lack of communication, people depend on old and torn perceptions and understandings.

Liana is a teacher; she is from the Kareli region. In her early age she was the victim of violence. Her husband kidnapped her when she was still at school. As she said, he never made a proposal to her, he just kidnapped her and imprisoned her at a house for forty days, warning if she wouldn't marry him, he would kill her and then committed suicide.

"In my own wedding, I was thirteen years old. Before my wedding, I met my future husband only one time. He was eighteen years older than me. After kidnapping me, he captured me for forty days. He said, 'If you don't marry me, I will kill

you and then I will commit suicide.' In the beginning I resisted, though later my husband's family tricked me. They told my family that I accepted his proposal, that I loved my husband and I was very happy with him. When my parents visited me I told my mom that I had been kidnapped and imprisoned against my will. I told her that I was not in love, but she answered that she was not able to take me back to my house as all my neighbours already knew that I got married. I had no other way but to accept the things that were going on in my life and I stayed. Soon after my marriage I gave a birth to a short-lived child who died, I think it happened because of my age. I was fourteen years old at that time. Now I have a girl, and I would like to ask every man not to marry a woman without permission. Forced marriage can ruin a whole life.

Last year, when my daughter was seventeen years old, a country man from a nearby village kidnapped her. I immediately rang the alarm. I was not interested in what my neighbours were thinking of it. I took my daughter back to my house. Now she is leaving and studying in the Capital. She must live a long and happy life. I hope that she marries the person she falls in love with, and I hope it happens when she is an adult," said Liana Osipova. In a civilized world, where early, forced marriage is supposed to be criminal, Liana's story would be named as an unbelievable tragedy, but in Georgia there is nothing special about it. Unfortunately it still happens; the rights of women are violated. There is a new initiative that became a law a year ago which can change everything, reduce the number of early, forced marriages and its consequences, including miscarriages and high mortality rates, both mothers and children.

Ekaterine Mskhiladze, the representative of the Ombudsman, said that the office tried its best to change the regulations for preventing the early marriage. From 2015, this act is criminal and is being punished.

"In 2015, Ombudsman applied to Georgian parliament with the initiative to change the regulations regarding marriages in adults from 16 to 18 years. Parliament accepted the initiative and converted it into law. Currently those people whose age varies from 16 to 18 can marry only if the court will accept this; moreover, this regulation will work until 2017. The only exception will be accepted for families with children. Now marrying an adult is the criminal and is being punished by an article," said Skhiladze.

According to the representative of Ombudsman, Office made a huge job in order to implement the law against early marriages. In order to find the cases, they have cooperated with the ministry of internal affairs, Ministry of Education, Health and Labor, social agency, and the prosecutor. Ombudsman works in regions as well; the main task for the office

is to raise the awareness in people about the possible tragic consequences of early marriages.

"Our job is very cohesive. In order to obtain the result, we collaborate with different institutions including the NGOs. We hold an informative meeting both in the Capital and the regions as well. We try to inform the society that early marriage might be linked to very bad consequences. For them it is very important to be aware about the results," said Skhiladze.

In an interview with "Observer" the representative of ombudsman said that the law was a strong tool in order to reduce the early marriage. When asked why Georgia has a higher number of early marriages than its neighbor countries Armenia and Azerbaijan, she said that the possible reason could be the law awareness about early marriages, except of that one of the main reasons is that the institutions which should be responsible for these types of marriages are not working sufficiently.

"I agree with you regarding the numbers. This is a statistics which is approved by the international organizations. Now, we do have a law which will prevent early marriages and the situation in Georgia hopefully will be better, though it must be said that the appropriate organizations which should be responsible for the process – for example, the police, educational institutions, and social agencies – are not working as well as they have to. People who live in regions

don't have enough information, services which can provide them the information aren't reachable for them – this is the problem. Ethnic minorities have the higher number of early marriages. This happens not because of the origin, it happens because they aren't informed as well as they have to be. Unfortunately, ethnic minorities and socially unprotected people belong to the crisis group, the situations in regions are also pretty difficult," said Skhiladze.

While speaking with us she also named the statistics, according to her in 2015 about six hundred adults quit studying at schools; the main reason for them was an early marriage.

"In 2015, 576 adults left their schools, the reason is that they got married. Among adults aged 13 to 16, the number of cases were equal to 225, among adults from 16 to 18, the number was equal to 611. Before the law was established, 1,500 mothers under age 18 were registered, so it clearly says that unregistered marriages were always taking place," said Skhiladze.

The representative of the office hopes that the law will become a strong tool which will be able to reduce the early marriages in Georgia. Ombudsman plans to raise the awareness of people both in the Capital and the regions with the help of both formal and informal education. Though according to her, the government is not the only institution to implement this law; society has to be helpful as well.



“SALVE”: NEW FOUNDATION TO PROTECT AND SUPPORT STREET CHILDREN

MARI TABATADZE

Georgia’s Justice Minister Tea Tsulukiani, in cooperation with the President of the Georgia-France Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Antoine Bardon, founded and recently officially registered non-profit organization: “Salve”.

According to the Ministry of Justice, the newly-established fund has two specific goals. One of them is planning, implementing, and financing a variety of projects for the homeless children living and working on the streets. In addition, the fund aims to eradicate malnutrition problems in newborn children from vulnerable families.

In order to realize the targets, the fund “Salve” plans to finance such projects which will help children living and working on the streets. As for the second purpose, the vulnerable infants will get special gift packages. Reportedly, in the package with other necessary things there will be vitamins, which are necessary for the elimination of malnutrition according to UNICEF standards.

According to statistics, there are more than 100,000 children suffering from malnutrition in

Georgia now. This, of course, prevents them from physical and intellectual development. As it is known, eradication of this deficit is the most difficult after the age of two. Therefore, according to the Minister of Justice, this is an important issue, explaining why she decided that one of the main purposes of the fund should be to eliminate food shortages.

Tea Tsulukiani emphasizes that it is necessary for the projects to be “created for the children working on the streets and they to be placed under care and avoided from the street, instead of this, they should be involved in a new community called a family.”

At the same time, the Minister of Justice is pleased that the fund was established with her French friends, going on to say, “I would like to thank Georgia’s French friends and especially Mr. Antoine Bardon for supporting the most vulnerable youth of our country.” Tea Tsulukiani added, “My only desire was to inspire the fund. With Mr. Bardon, the supervisor of UNICEF has also encouraged me to do so. Now I’m looking for people and organizations that provide support on specific projects.”

It should be noted that the head of international law firm “Descartes” in Georgia, Nicolas Mariani, has offered free legal services to the foundation.

On the other hand, the French co-founder, Antoine Bardon, said that the problem is actually in the country. He considers that it is totally impermissible that 12-year-old children are collecting money for food in the streets, and in order to eliminate the problem, he is willingly involved in the process of implementing different projects. In addition, the President of the Georgia-France Chamber of Commerce and Industry estimates the fact of establishing the fund as the first step and at the same time is confident that it will be successful.

It should be noted that the first people to donate to the fund have already appeared. They are the former French ambassador to Georgia, Renaud Salins, as well as French, Georgian, and American businessmen working in Georgia. Tea Tsulukiani and Antoine Bardon established the fund at a dinner held by the Georgia-France Chamber of Commerce in Kazbegi. Also the auction was held there where



the above mentioned contributors purchased the items given to Georgia-France Chamber of Commerce and Industry by the various organizations, artists, and athletes.

As a result, the Minister of Justice reports, “at first stage, the first ten thousand GEL have already been collected which gives hope to start implementation projects from June 1.” Consequently, by that time, the first

beneficiaries are scheduled to be financed.

More specifically, what projects the newly established fund “Salve” is planning to implement are still unknown. However, the founders from the two countries hope that the fund will be able to function well, and they also express readiness to implement a number of successful projects in the process of achieving their goals.

GEORGIA JOINS DOWN SYNDROME WORLD DAY WITH DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

“Our Children” marks the World Down Syndrome Day for the 5th time this year on March 21 in partnership with the International Organisation “Down Syndrome International”.

This week was officially opened on Sunday, March 13 at the exhibition center “Expo Georgia”, the 6th pavilion. The

photo exhibition “My friends”, which includes 25 pictures taken by professional photographers showed contemporary portraits of people with Down syndrome.

Photographers involved are: Guram Tsibakhashvili Goga Chanadiri, Djibouti, Tamar, Nino Baidauri, Daro Sulakauri, Marie Nakani and other photographers.

Within the week, is also planned:

March 15, 18:00 discussion on “Challenges of people with Down syndrome in today’s Georgia.” Vake Park, Media Center

March 18, 11:00 Conference on “Challenges of People with Down syndrome in today’s Georgia.” Justice Training Center, Sandroeuli 3a

March 19, 18:00 performance - “FriendART”. D. Shevardnadze National Gallery

March 21, 12:00 ‘procession from Vake park to Tbilisi State University Building

March 21, 19:00 ‘play “The Little Prince”.

Movement Theatre, Mushtaedi Park



GEORGIAN FREELANCER'S ROAD TO GERMANY

NINI MACHAVARIANI

EXCLUSIVE

Georgian National Museum held a presentation of Ketí Kapanadze's monograph named "What is love?" The book was published by the well-known German publishing house "Verlag Ketter", the editor of the book Gia Edzveradze invited foreign critics to write articles for this book: Noemi Smolik from Bonn, curator at Neuer Berliner Kunstverein Catherine Becker; Brooklyn Pratt lecturer Dominique Nahas; and David Lillington from the University of London.

Keti Kapanadze had worked on the problems of modern art during her study period at the Tbilisi Art Academy (1982-1990). In the beginning of the 21st century, she moved to Germany, where she actively continues those activities. In 2002 publishing house "Ketter" published her first book; Not Only Hands But Shoulders.

Keti Kapanadze became the owner of a number of grants and scholarships. In 2008-2009 she lived and worked with a scholarship of Baden Wutemberg in Paris.



"Observer" discussed the author's new book and her plans for the future.

You have lived in many countries, where do you work now?

I have worked as a freelance artist since 1983, the same time I was studying at the Art Academy in Tbilisi. After graduating I continued to work. In the '90s there were more opportunities to hold the exhibition. I have often had a variety of scholarships: 1992 in England, Switzerland, and from 2000 to Germany, where I used to live near the city Stuttgart. I stayed in Germany and have cooperated with various art galleries.

What is highlighted in the new book?

This is a monograph - it includes all the work that was previously created. Various kinds of works of art in one book: 1980s black graphics, photos taken in the 1990s, as well as works of 2012-2013.

Why the book is called "What is love?"

This was a name of one of the first installations I made. For a while, I worked a lot with texts and words, I was doing it with a nickel. The exhibition was held in 1998 in Georgia. I worked with the words, which are often used, for example: Angel, Love - and many others.

What is your work environment?

Basically, where I work, I live there. I had a studio in Germany, where I lived for a long time. Pictorial works of setting the time I am working during the day, sleep at night and in the morning I am

watching my work, if something needs to be added I immediately perform the work. During taking the photos, I go out. But in the early period I was taking photos from home. During the time of living in Kazan I made a cycle - a view of the city and the people in the house, a man whose face was not visible. Now I live in a big house, where I have my work room.

Did you find it difficult to get established in Germany, and what problems have you encountered?

Because of the fact that I had a scholarship, I have not had to start everything from scratch. Already arrived in some situations, however, after the graduation I should take care of my contracts, exhibitions, and many other things. I did not want to work in a foreign country, but without that I would lose creativity. When I went to Germany I was about thirty-six years old; this is an age when a painter may come across such difficulties that one might not expect. For example, in Georgia, at the beginning of the conversation with the person and his art, you are not interested in his age. Here it is different, hence different culture has different problems.

Are you going to return to Georgia?

From time to time I visit, but I'm not going to stay there. I got used to the life and the culture in other countries. I believe that Georgia is cut off from the cultural environment, that's why living as an artist is not interesting there.



In your opinion, how will the society react to the new book?

I hope they will finally see what was done and what cultural significance it has. So, that will be interesting to the public.

You're the first woman to make a modern art work, what kind of difficulties was it related to?

Because I was the first woman working in contemporary art, some people perceived it as feminism. Then it was very difficult to establish, or to comment on the sex of the individual communities. Often people were coming from the Ministry of Culture and bringing foreigners to show contemporary art created by a woman in Georgia.

What is your most successful work?

The exhibition at Hamburger Bahnhof Museum, which is located in Berlin. I remember many things were sold and some works were stolen.

When do you start working on a new book?

We already discussed the idea about a new book. Because I still have a lot of works that have not been included in the latest book.

What is your favorite phrase of Life?

Einstein's words; "Stay curious." I love this phrase, because in spite of all, the person can still be curious. If we believe that we know everything, then our business is gone.

AGENCY OF PROTECTED AREAS PARTICIPATES IN BERLIN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM EXHIBITION

Agency of Protected Areas participate in Germany in the international tourism exhibition-ITB Berlin, which is one of the largest international tourism exhibition and is held annually in Berlin. The exhibition covers all areas of tourism, including ecotourism, which is one of the main components of the protected areas.

"Eco and adventure tourism are the future of the industry. The exhibition hall hosts a separate

organizations working in these directions. Our stand is located in this space too. I think Georgia and the South Caucasus has a great potential for the development of ecotourism",- said the chairman of the Agency of Protected Areas Lasha Moistrapishvili.

In order to promote the protected areas, the agency is planning to participate in other international tourism exhibitions, as well.



GEORGIAN SPORT'S HISTORIAN AND THE MUSEUM GUARD

NINI MACHAVARIANI

EXCLUSIVE

The year 2015 was outstanding for the Georgian sport, the country has hosted several major international competitions, celebrated many famous athletes anniversary, Rugby players traditionally made us happy with the victory and the women chess players from Georgia became triumphant at the World Cup.

"The sport has never lacked the stars and great victories - we were always pampered with great football players, basketball, volley-ball, chess, judo wrestlers, bike riders, wrestling and other types of sport", - said the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs Tariel Khechikashvili.

Georgian Sports Museum shows a glorious past, confirmed by the Georgian sport cups, medals and numerous other awards that are exhibited. In 2015 the museum had its 50th anniversary.

During half a century sports museum gathered medals, ribbons or sports-related items. Here is the museum's first Olympic champion, David Tsimakuridze gold medal, the first international triumph of Georgian football "Columbus Karavela", various athletes' archives and history footage.

Because of space limit in the exhibition hall, only a small part of the protected 10 thousand exponents are exhibited. Here are the documents, which reflect the development of physical culture and sports in Georgia from ancient times to the present day. These unique photographs and documents, which are famous for world sport.

The Sports Museum is a long way until 2016, and it has come up with a special contribution by Mrs. Lily Lomsadze - loyal guard of the museum, which serves the museum since its inception.

"When people lose their past, the future disappears. In the meantime, this museum I had always remembered those words. Faithful to this place since its inception. I am glad that we have so many things. I spent my whole life in collecting these and it will be no exaggeration to say that this whole Georgian sport is my life", - said Lily Lomsadze to Observer.

On August 14, 1965 in Constitution Street, the Scientific Research Institute of Physical Culture was opened in the museum, where most young historians were Lily Lomsadze. Today the mu-

seum's most senior officer.

As the historian said, generations come and go, the main thing that they are currently dealing with remains. A lot of good things happened over the years, and despite the disappointments, all these challenges, They Never Gave Up.

2008 was a particularly difficult. The Museum was robbed in spring, unique items including Olympic gold medals were robbed. During this period, the museum's existence is endangered, but now the museum is still full of various awards, medals or publishing.

Georgia Sports Fame Museum was opened on March 6, 1985 at the Sports Palace. The idea belonged to the sports enthusiast, Professor Michael Giorgadze, who first started collecting exhibits. His work was continued by Levan Giorgadze.

However the museum did not have a building, Lily Lomsadze and Aza Mogeladze allocated a small room at Constitution Street and were able to bring everything in order. Museum funds had neither money nor property, which it holds today. The sportsmen had confidence in these two



girls and they were giving the most valuable things - the gold medals, cups, commemorative badges and etc.

Georgian sports museum keeps a treatise published in 1677 in Italy, in a commercial point of view this is priceless.

In this museum you can find out about the past of the athletes, their achievements. Here you can see the "Dinamo" players that obtained "Karavela" in Spain 1973, which was a deserved victory of Georgian team together with England, Portugal and Spain champions of the traditional four nations tournament against "Benfica" and "Atletico".

All Champions are presented in the museum. Here are the thematic stands: mountaineering,

football, chess and more.

Ketevan Losaberidze "gold" Olympic bow, the European champion, David Kvachadze boxer belt, the world champion, Irene Gabashvili ball and so on. The awards, which won Levan Tediashvili, Zurab Sakandelidze, Anzor Kiknadze, Alexander Metreveli, Omar Pkhakadze, Nana Ioseliani are also displayed.

Recent exhibits, which were added to the museum is the award by Sports Journalists Association of the "best athlete of XX Century", which is decorated with autographs of athletes and museum colleagues. The museum is continuously filled with awards, that is a merit of Georgian athletes and a female guard of this museum.

THE EXHIBITION "NUMISMATIC TREASURY" WILL BE OPENED IN NATIONAL MUSEUM



The renewed exhibition of "Numismatic Treasury" will be opened on March 10 at National Museum. It showcases a long history of money circulation on the territory of modern Georgia starting from the 6th century BC. until 1834 year. The exhibition showcases up to 3.500 coins,

including unique pieces of Colchian tetri; stater of the Colchian king Akos; local imitations of Alexander the Great's and Lysimachus' staters, the denarius of the first Roman Emperor Octavian and Iberian imitations of the Roman Empire Aurei. The numismatic depository of the

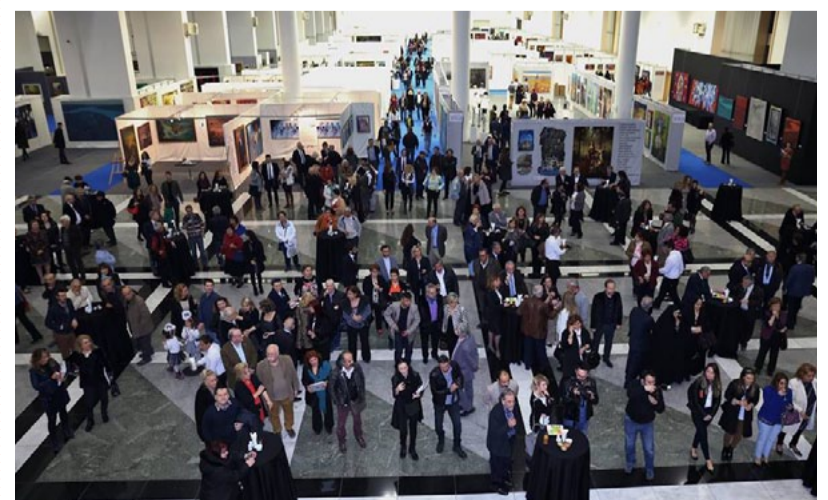
Georgian National Museum Simon Janashia Museum of Georgia contains up to 100 000 coins most of which were found on the territory of Georgia. It should be noted, that the Ministry of Finance delivered several models of Numismatics to the National Museum a few days ago.

GEORGIAN PAINTERS PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ART EXHIBITION

With support of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia 30 paintings of 3 modern artists - Guram Tsertsvadze, Avtandil Topuria and David Popiashvili are presented at the international exhibition-ART-ANKARA in Turkey. The event is being held from 9 to 16 March. ART-ANKARA is organized by Turkish exhibition com-

pany -ATUS and Turkish Artists Union, as well as Galleries Association (TUSGAD).

Turkish and other countries' galleries participate in the International Contemporary Art Exhibition. ART-ANKARA is one of the largest contemporary art platforms which promote the development and popularization of contemporary art.



ALL STUDENTS ARE EQUAL, BUT SOME ARE MORE EQUAL

GVANTSA SILIKASHVILI

“Destitute!”

“Real autonomy of university!”

On the 11th of March, using these slogans, students of Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University arranged demonstrative pacing with the live chain. They demanded reformation of the election of the chancellor and appealed to Giorgi Gaprindashvili to withdraw his candidacy.

Some lecturers of the university and students of Ilia State University joined the students.

The prime minister made a statement about current process. He asked Vladimir Papava to secure the transmissivity and independence of the election. He also asked Giorgi Gaprindashvili to withdraw his candidacy.

Lado Papava commented on his statement and said that he was ready to arrange transmissivity of the election.

“Every student is equal- no privileged self-government!”

With this title, on March 7th, students took action against self-government. Participants of the action protested against dissipation of the budget.

On the 10th of March, students presented a new slogan: “No to violator chancellor. Every student is equal.” They protested against the return only candidacy of Giorgi Gaprindashvili on the senate council.

The action went from the yard into the first building. Students demanded to attend the senate council. After members of the senate Irakli Kupradze and Shota Lortkipanidze refused admittance to them, students tried entering. Security obstructed

them. The university security and students confronted each other with force. Administrative police came to the location. After four hours of action, members of the senate couldn't enter the hall, and the meeting was canceled. Students slept all night in the university.

Gaprindashvili was a member of the first and second convocation of self-government. From 2010 until today, he worked as an assistant director of management. Students say that during his work in 2011, during the presentation of the students' movement “targmne”, members of the self-government confronted them by force. Giorgi Gaprindashvili said to journalists that nobody beat anyone.

“He is a member of a forcible system, who in 2011 restricted freedom of expression and confronted them by force,” says the organizer of the action.

Confirmation of this fact exists in the investigation of studio “monitori” and video, where students talk about violence.

Self-government back him up in public. Students have doubt; if he becomes a chancellor, self-government will be more privileged and increase students' inequality and expenses.

The original reason for the protest was the training of “management of projects and strategic management”, where seventy-five members of self-government participated. This training cost 24,600 lari.

On March 7th, the action started in front of the first building of Tbilisi State University. Partici-

pants of the action turned back to the members of the self-government and university. According to their explanation, the administration of the university behaved like this:

There were invariably demands of the action members:

1. We demand that self-government, management, and the rector take responsible for financing like this project. In our mind it is a senseless budget.

2. Fix the upper limit of financing projects.

3. The function of self-government should only be as a representative organ. Abolish its bureaucratic system.

4. During the election of self-government, don't use administrative and financial sources to support a so-called independent candidate.

The students' self-government refused the accusation and explained that they did not take part in such arrangements where a reward is prize.

If they plan to arrange such training next year too, Vice-president Paata Bakhturidze says that he expires that time in May and doesn't know anything about it.

The chairman of the faculty of humanities of self-government, Shota Kejerashvili, said, “The self-government has duties within the framework we work. For example, organization of arrangements. Concerning student demands – e.g. helping students with deactivated status –, this sum is controlled by administration and the rector, but not we. Students appeal to 24,000 lari, which was spent on the training.



This sum was consumed by the students of the self-government, who work without gratis, arranging projects for students. I can't say that it is an unneeded budget.”

Signed training was carried out four times in this year. In 2015, students demanded budget account of arrangement which were organized by the self-government. As it turned out, a training program, which was carried out in February 2015, cost 19,000 lari. After this, students met Vladimir Papava. He called this a “blemish” and promised them that such a thing wouldn't happen anymore. Although in 2016, the university has already used up 24,600 lari for such a project.

During the talk to students, Vladimir Papava said that last year from the sum for students, only 22% was spent on self-government. He also confirmed existence of so called “Special Operation Officer”. Student asked him to appeal Giorgi Gaprindashvili to withdraw his candi-

dacy. He expressed readiness.

Eight members of the senate met with students. Most of them said that after Ioseb ArChvadze withdrew his candidacy, they voted for Giorgi Gaprindashvili. Some of them had no information about him. Students were dissatisfied with this fact.

Later, one of the organizer of action, Irakli Kupradze, was talking about pressure. He said that police establishments were interested in his family after he had charged Giorgi Gaprindashvili.

State Security Service responded to the charge that, “diffused information that worker of State Security Service arrived Kupradze's family, we don't confirm.”

Among the students' demands, the main request is not to nominate Giorgi Gaprindashvili as chancellor.

We are waiting for the decision of the senate. Giorgi Gaprindashvili refuses withdrawing his candidacy. Results probably will be in this week.

INCLUSIVE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION WAS NAMED AS THE BEST INITIATIVE IN THE REGION

European Development Fund among dozens of European and partner country initiatives in professional education named Georgian Inclusive Professional Education as the best initiative in the region. At the basis of “Mermisi” professional school it was defined that Inclusive education is very successful in the whole Caucasus.

This initiative has opened the way for hundreds of people

outside the system to the labor market. Results-oriented, cooperative, effective and based on European values in practice – this is the assessment of inclusive professional education in Georgia. European Development Fund awarded Georgian delegation with honorary prize. The article about Georgia's successful inclusive education was published, which contains several Georgian cases.



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GEORGIAN "LELOS" DEFEAT RUSSIAN RUGBY TEAM ONCE AGAIN

VAKO KIPIANI

On March 12, Georgian National Rugby team defeated Russian opponents in Sochi by 7:24. Both got 2 yellow cards. Russian "Bears" had only one try and one conversion, while Georgian "Lelos" scored 10 half-time points, 3 tries, 3 conversions, and 1 penalty. Russians hoped that this time they would be able to defeat



Georgia, but again failed.

In the first fifteen minutes, our team struck twice. Merab Kvirikashvili was not able to make first penalty with a score, in the fourteenth minute Kvirikashvili, opened the report (0:3).

After the eighteenth minute, Levan Khmaladze brilliantly slung the ball, which Tamaz Mchedlidze took and grounded on the first try. Kvirikashvili scored transfigured (0:10). In the first half, the score was not changed.

After four minutes of the second half, Peikrishvili laid a try, conversion and report accurately performed Merab Kvirikashvili (0:17).

With sixty-two minutes played, the Russians were proved wrong. Kushnarevi confused, it was well used by Giorgi Nemsadze, who

made a third try fueling the Russian team. Merab Kvirikashvili again performed the conversion accurately and report has become 0:24. After seventy-one minutes, the Russians managed to reduce the score. "Lelos" soon transfigured it and also scored the final

score 7:24. Unfortunately, the team was not able to conclude and gain a bonus point for four tries. The next match Lelos will play against the Romania.

By this time, our team has 38 points from 9 games and is 4 points ahead of the nearest op-

ponent, Romania. Romanian "Oaks" also defeated their opponent, Germany, with the score 61:7. On March 19, the team Toulons: Mamuka Gorgodze, Levan Chilachava, and Konstantine Mikautadze, will also help the team.



WEEKLY SPORT NEWS

Wrestling

Georgian freestyle wrestling team completed the game with a triumph in Riga in the European Championships. Revaz Mindorashvili team gained 2 gold, 1 silver, and 3 bronze medals, the team took first place. European champions became Vladimer Khinchegashvili (61) and Geno Petriashvili (125).



Basketball

At the next round of French Ligue 1 JabaKankava "Reims" got one point. On March 11, 30th round of the meeting was held, where the "Monaco" hosted Kankava "Reims". The meeting ended with the score 2:2. Kankava played through the whole match.

National Basketball Championship Cup matches is known. The cup quarter-final match, in which the winner of the qualifying round "Vita" will play against "Dinamo". The game will be held on March 30, the Tbilisi Sports Palace, will be held at 19:45.

Beka Burjanadze played another successful match in the Spanish second league. It was his team's fifth consecutive victory. Georgian forward gained 7 two-points out of 13, 1 three points out of 5, and three 2-2 free throws. Burjanadze overall scored 19 points,

7 rebounds, 1 steal, and 1 block.

Handball

Georgian Handball Girls' youth team of defeated Belgium 18:14 at IHF / EHF's Cup semi-final and reached the final.

