

Politics

Public Defender's report on the general condition in the Russian occupied territories of Georgia

Enzel Mkoyan's life is allegedly in danger



FULL STORY ON Page 2

Economics

Partnership Fund announces auction for alienation of Telasi shares

FULL STORY ON Page 3

The government declares lockdown in Svaneti Region



Ushguli, Svaneti.

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

Due to the worsening of the epidemiological situation in Mestia, Ushguli, and Lendjeri (Svaneti Region), the gov-

ernment of Georgia has decided to impose restrictions to avoid further spread of the infection. Preventive measures include restrictions on movement within the Mestia Municipality and in the direction

of the Municipality as well. Only pharmacies, banking facilities, grocery stores, and open-space restaurants will be permitted to operate. In the settlement of Mestia, Ushguli, and Lendjeri.

Out of 37 biological samples taken in the Municipality of Mestia, COVID-19 was confirmed in 17 cases, 7 of which are local individuals and 10 people are the visitors of the site. A man from Tbilisi who was visiting the Municipality is considered to be the source of the confirmed cases. Currently, 5 epidemiological groups are operating on the location and carry out active testing and thorough epidemiological studies.

On August 10th, the members of the Coordination Council gathered to declare locking down of the Municipality. According to the Ministry of Healthcare, Ekaterine Tikaradze, a significant increase in the number of the COVID cases in Mestia is not predicted, "since, proper measures have been implemented on time." Tikaradze stated that the probable term of lockdown will be 28 days, however, the term might be revised according to the decision of epidemiologists.

On the briefing at the government's administration, PMs stated that to avoid further spread of the infection, the relevant authorities will ensure the placing of the tourists from every settlement to the quarantine zones. It was also mentioned that every citizen that leaves the municipality will also have to undergo mandatory quarantine procedures.

As of August 10th, 25 new coronavirus cases have been confirmed and 10 infected patients have recovered. In total, there are 1250 confirmed cases in Georgia, with 1010 recoveries and 17 deaths. 41 infected Georgian citizens have been transported to Georgia to be treated for Covid-19.



37 contacts of the infected people have already been examined.

Public Defender's report on the general condition in the Russian occupied territories of Georgia

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

Regarding the 12th anniversary of the 2008 Russia-Georgia war, Public Defender (Ombudsman), Nino Lomjaria published a report on general social conditions in Russian occupied territories of Georgia. The ombudsman states that even after 12 years from the war, conflict zone dwellers, Georgian as well as Ossetian and Abkhazian people, still suffer from the devastating consequences of the war.

According to the statement, facts of unlawful deprivation of

life in occupied territories are rather alarming, demonstration of which is a violation of the right to life of David Basharuli in 2014, Giga Otkhozoria in 2016, Archil Tatumashvili in 2018 and Irakli Kvaratskhelia in 2019. The ombudsman stresses the fact that "direct partakers in every one of these killings were the representatives of the occupation regime." Besides, the Ombudsman considers the facts of detention of citizens and unlawful deprivation of their liberty on the occupation line, also facts of the beating of inmates, mis-



"12 years have passed since the 2008 August war, regardless, the occupation regime still proceeds by illegal borderisation" reads the statement.



According to the Public Defender, the issue of rehabilitation/compensation of the houses destroyed during the war remains a problem.

treatment, and torture in temporary wards or cells as alarming.

The statement reads that freedom of movement is a severe challenge as well and an example of that is the so-called arbitrary closure of the checkpoint in the occupied Akhgori region, which resulted in the death of persons living in the occupied territory as they were denied the access to proper medical care.

According to the statement, the quality of healthcare and education in the occupied territories deteriorates year by year.

"Improper medical services and infrastructure, unfavourable level of medical staff's qualification and high prices on services, as well as complications regarding patients'

movement on the dividing line, negatively affects the community's right to access the highest standard of health protection," reads the statement. The majority of the residents of the occupied territory seek to receive medical care elsewhere.

As for education, Lomjaria states that the restriction on education in the mother tongue in the Gali region in 2015 and Akhgori municipality in 2017, led to a decrease in knowledge of mother tongue for ethnic Georgians and distinct deterioration of the education system, in general.

The ombudsman also paid attention to the harsh condition concerning human rights, particularly against the background, when international

organisations working on human rights issues are not allowed to enter occupied territories.

Considering the above-mentioned facts, Lomjaria calls on the government, together with the assistance and involvement of the International Community to try their best and protect the honor and rights of people affected by the conflicts and change the attitude between confronting communities.

"Therefore, Public Defender welcomes any initiative of the Government of Georgia, which is aimed towards protecting the rights of people living in the occupied territories and rebuilding faith between communities separated due to conflicts," reads the statement.

Enzel Mkoyan's life is allegedly in danger

BY ANASTASIA SOKHADZE

According to Taniel Murmanishvili, the lawyer of Enzel Mkoyan and the human rights activist, Ninotsminda-Akhalkalaki majoritarian MP of the Georgian Dream, Mkoyan is being blackmailed, threatened with death to extort \$5 million from him. According to the lawyer, Enzel Mkoyan is scared and he demands a meeting with the

US ambassador.

Enzel Mkoyan asked his lawyer to make a statement on his behalf. The case concerns threats, blackmail, and extortion. The first incident took place on July 20th, 2020, in the evening. Mkoyan was called on his mobile phone via Messenger. The caller spoke to him in Russian, with a Caucasian accent. Mkoyan said the caller told him to leave politics altogether, otherwise, the person closest to him would be taken away from him.

A few days later, on July 24th, in the evening, the second call was made through Whatsapp, also in Russian. Mkoyan believes that the incoming call was from

Moscow, according to the index. He said the caller demanded \$5 million.

One of the two callers stated that he has been in prison for 15 years and that if Mkoyan didn't not transfer \$5 million to the countries listed on the account numbers provided by the two, they would kill him and go to prison for another 20 years. This caused concern and intimidation.

A few months ago, Mkoyan was attacked during the day, he was shot 3 times but survived. For months, opposition members blamed him for getting into such trouble.

CONTINUED ON Page 3



Enzel Mkoyan demands a meeting with the US ambassador

Weather

Tuesday, August 11

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 31°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 20°C

Wednesday, August 12

Day Mostly Cloudy

High: 31°C

Night Partly Cloudy

Low: 20°C

published by

The Messenger

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

Zaza Gachechiladze

Tamar Gachechiladze
Publisher

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

Nino Metreveli

Commercial Director

Mariam Mchedlidze

Editor-in-Chief

Khatuna Gogichaishvili

Layout Designer, Photographer

The Messenger welcomes your contributions. If you are interested in submitting an article or news item please contact.

All contributions should be submitted by e-mail.

The Messenger Georgia's English language daily is an independent newspaper, and,

therefore, the opinions expressed in some articles do not necessarily coincide with those of the newspaper. We take no responsibility for any claims made in advertisements.

The Messenger preserves the style of a source written in English where possible.

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 3.0743; Euro - 3.6138; GBP - 4.0061; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.1709; Swiss Franc - 3.3504

Partnership Fund announces auction for alienation of Telasi shares



საპარტნიორო ფონდი



The Partnership Fund is announcing a public auction to sell its 24.5% stake in JSC Telasi.

BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The Partnership Fund is announcing a public auction to sell its 24.5% stake in JSC Telasi.

The starting price of the public auction is the equivalent of \$10,511,211.08 in GEL. The mentioned share was evaluated by one of the big four audit companies, which is not named. The amount of the step is ₾ 50,000. The price recorded during the auction will be converted into US Dollars at the exchange rate set by the National Bank on the day of the auction announcement. It should be noted that the winner of the auction will not be able to purchase shares if he fails to obtain the consent of the Georgian Energy and Water Regulatory Commission following the rules established by the Law of Georgia on Energy and Water Supply.

The public auction was an-

nounced on 10th of August, 2020 and will be held on 9th of September at the office of JSC "Partnership Fund" at the following address: Tbilisi, Vukol Beridze Street N6. Any interested person can get acquainted with the terms of the auction at www.eauction.ge, application #: 117207RBS67189920, auction #: 117207, lot #: 671899

According to the Partnership Fund the decision to sell Telasi shares was made based on a government decree. As a result, the Georgian state-owned company will no longer have shares.

Meanwhile the process of reforming the Partnership Fund has started. It is planned to change the management structure of the fund and transfer it to the government to manage the state-owned enterprises. Presumably, this is related to the alienation of Telasi shares, however, no official statements have been made on this issue so far.

Telasi serves the capital of Georgia. Annual electricity consumption in Tbilisi is about 2935 million kWh. The company serves more than 600 k. subscribers.

In October last year, the Minister of Economy Natia Turnava did not confirm the information about the selling shares of 'Telasi'. According to media reports, businessmen Khvicha Makatsaria and Vano Chkhartishvili wanted to buy Telasi shares.

At the end of last year, Davit Saganelidze, the head of the Partnership Fund, said in an interview with bm.ge that in his opinion, the Partnership Fund

should manage investment projects after the reform and should not own Telasi shares, gas and oil corporation, state electricity system.

The largest state-owned investment fund, the 'Partnership Fund' (which owns shares in several loss-making state-owned enterprises) may move to budget funding after the reform. Saganelidze, says that he does not support the maintenance of the existing model of financing

the fund and believes that it would be better if the partnership fund is financed from the state budget.

At this stage, the Partnership Fund has limited access to new investment projects. In July, it became known that the Partnership Fund had handed over the state electricity system and 'Esco' to the Ministry of Economy. The fund has also been selling the Borjomi-Likani hotel for several months.

Enzel Mkoyan's life is allegedly in danger

CONTINUED FROM Page 2

Mkoyan and his lawyer appealed to the prosecutor's office on July 30th. The Samtskhe-Javakheti regional police launched an investigation into the case and questioned the MP two days ago. Mkoyan demands that the case be investigated by the prosecution and wants to meet with the US Ambassador, Kelly Degnan, otherwise, he will request the appointment of protection from the state.

Enzel Mkoyan's name is associated with several high-profile cases, including one of alleged sexual harassment. The last high-profile story took place on March 26th, when Mkoyan and Samvel Petrosyan, a member of the Patriots Alliance, shot each other in Akhalkalaki.

Mkoyan and his lawyer want the General Prosecutor's Office to investigate the case.



Local EU statement on 12th anniversary of conflict between Russia and Georgia

On 7 August, the EU Delegation to Georgia issued a statement in agreement with the EU Heads of Missions in Georgia on the 12th anniversary of the conflict between Russia and Georgia.

"Despite the many global challenges, the European Union's commitment to a peaceful resolution of the conflicts in Georgia remains as strong as ever," stressed the statement.

"Unfortunately, tensions have remained high over recent months and the Russian military presence in both Abkhazia and South Ossetia continues in violation of international law and commitments undertaken under the 12 August 2008 agreement," the EU delegation added.

The statement reiterated that "fundamental human rights of the conflict-affected population continue to be violated, including through restrictions on the freedom of movement by so-called 'borderisation' policies, temporary closures of controlled crossing points and illegal detentions".

The EU reaffirmed its full commitment to the stabilisation and conflict resolution efforts in Georgia, including through its engagement as co-chair in the Geneva International Discussions, the efforts of the EU special representative and the crucial role played on the ground by the EU Monitoring Mission.

(euneighbours.eu)