

Politics

The European Union holds a closing event of the project supporting the Georgian State Electro system

The event was held on November 26, 2020



FULL STORY ON Page 2

Economics

Business sector reacts to new restrictions in the country

Restrictions were adopted to slow down Covid spread in Georgia

FULL STORY ON Page 3

More than 132,000 cases reported in Georgia in total



In just two days over the weekend, 8898 cases were reported in the country

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

In just two days over the weekend, a total of 8898 cases of Covid-19 were reported in Georgia. Recently, the government of Georgia has announced new restrictions on mobility to lower coronavirus cases in the country.

On Saturday, coronavirus cases in Georgia increased by 4472. Most of the cases were still reported in Tbilisi - 1784. Adjara had 683 Covid-19 cases on Saturday, while the Imereti region of Georgia reported 662 cases. The number of reported cases is increasing in other regions of the country as well.

On Sunday, Georgia reported 4426 new cases. On Sunday, Adjara reported 554 new cases. In the Imereti region,

637 new cases were confirmed on Sunday.

The number recovered from the Covid-19 is also increasing fast. A total of 110,049 people have recovered in the country as of Sunday.

The government of Georgia has recently announced restrictions on mobility in the country. A curfew restricts moving around the city between 21:00-5:00. Also, in big cities of Georgia, public transport is not operating.

The government of the country noted that there should not be an illusion that the coronavirus will go away after the restrictions.

The health sector approves of the restrictions, saying that the help they

can provide is not unlimited, and in case the virus continues to spread at such a high rate, the situation will become dire.

Around the world, more than 62 million cases have been reported. About 1.5 million people have died, and 43 million have recovered.

The number of cases around the world is increasing at a much faster pace than it was during the first wave. In the United States of America more than 13.5 million cases have been reported since the beginning of the

virus.

The first case of the Covid-19 was reported in Georgia several months ago, on February 26. Since then, the virus has spread throughout the country. The virus spread significantly faster after Summer 2020.

At first, the cases started increasing in the Adjara region of Georgia. Soon after, the virus spread further into the country as well. As of today, most cases are reported in the capital Tbilisi, followed by the Adjara and Imereti regions of Georgia.



Tbilisi is leading with the most reported coronavirus cases



Death toll reaches 1230

The European Union holds a closing event of the project supporting the Georgian State Electro system



The results of the 21-months project was revealed at the event

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

The closing event of the EU-funded project, which lasted for 21 months and aimed to support the Georgian Government and the Georgian State Electro system, GSE, was held on November 26. The project aimed to help the Georgian government and GSE to meet the electricity market legislation of the European Union.

The event was attended by the main representatives of the Georgian energy sector, who discussed the importance of the project and its outcomes. The event intended to discuss the results and achievements of the project and to raise awareness of the energy community in the country, as well as for the public. The participants discussed the benefits and impact of the project on Georgian consumers.

Zurab Ezugbaia, a member of the Management Board of GSE, noted the project was a large step forward for Georgia to ensure “effective functioning of the Georgian power system and increase its reliability.”

Alexandre Darras, Team Leader Connectivity, Energy, Environment and Climate Change, of the EU Delegation to Georgia noted that this project was a part of the large-scale support of the EU, and aimed to further modernize the Georgian energy sector.

The project launched in February of 2019, lasted for over 21 months and was funded by the EU.

The energy sector stands to be one of the priorities of the cooperation between Georgia and the European Union, which is Georgia’s largest donor with more than 160 active projects in the country.

The projects tackle several different sectors, including economic development, education, justice, environment, culture, energy, and many more.



The project was funded by the European Union

NEWS IN BRIEF

PREPARED BY
THE MESSENGER STAFF

Zurab Girchi Japaridze rents a gym in protest of fining the facility

Zurab Japaridze, the leader of Girchi, is renting the gym Reformer Fitness as a residential apartment and anyone can visit him to work out.

“I am renting this whole hall, via an oral agreement, as my residence. I will have an apartment here in Batumi as long as the regulations are in effect. Here I will have exercise equipment, which is rented by Giorgi

(gym director), and whoever would like to train, you can come by as a guest to house and work out,” said Japaridze in a Facebook live.

ReformerFitness was fined by the Labor Inspectorate for violating the regulations imposed due to the coronavirus. The fitness center, despite the ban, did not stop its activities.

Japaridze says that the reason for fining the facility was its economic activity, the fact that the cash register is working. According to him, after he rents the hall as a house, the labor inspectorate can check that the cash register will no longer work here and no regulation is violated.

European Georgia responds to Japaridze’s will to negotiate with the government

Representatives of the opposition and the Georgian Dream responded to Zurab Japaridze’s statement that the alternative to

early elections should be ‘substantial’ to end the boycott, and for him, such an alternative is judicial reform.

Levan Tarkhnishvili, a member of European Georgia, believes that the only solution is new elections and that a reform of the judiciary is not enough. According to him, there is no sign that the Georgian Dream is going to make any proposal. Tarkhnishvili said the party does not believe in any of the promises of the Georgian Dream as they did not fulfill any of the promises made to the public.

Giorgi Amilakhvari, a member of the Georgian Dream, says that the judiciary is independent under this government and that discussions on future reforms should continue in parliament.

Georgia wins Eurobasket match against Finland

The qualifying match of the

Eurobasket of the Georgian and Finnish national teams was held on November 28; the Georgian team defeated Finland 91-85.

With this, Georgia gained the third victory and became the sole leader of the group.

It should be noted that Georgia is also hosting the 2022 championship, so it will play in the tournament in any case.

Georgia will play its next match on November 30 against the Swiss team, which in turn defeated Serbia on November 28.

Lelo’s Khazaradze says Georgian Dream stole elections and funding meant for the opposition

“Georgian Dream stole the elections and the funding that belonged to the opposition,” Mamuka Khazaradze, chairman of Lelo, said while speaking about party funding.

According to him, the legisla-

tion in the country regarding the financing of parties must be changed, because, as of today, it does not correspond to the structure of a democratic state.

The ‘Dream party,’ which stole the votes, received more funding from the budget, and if all the other parties fighting for the rigged elections and the seized votes refused to provide funding, it would be taken over by the Georgian Dream. Today, the Georgian Dream appropriated not only the votes, but also funds that were meant for these votes. We are refusing parliamentary funding and not party funding. Refusing the party funding means that only one party can remain in the country. There is nothing unclear here as it is provided by law. What the parties agree on means that they will still receive minimal funding from the stolen votes. This is necessary for political parties in Georgia to continue developing,” stated Khazaradze.

Weather

Monday, November 30

Day Cloudy

High: 8°C

Night Mostly Cloudy

Low: 4°C

Tuesday, December 1

Day Showers

High: 7°C

Night Mostly Cloudy

Low: 2°C

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Business sector reacts to new restrictions in the country



Representatives of shopping centers address the government

By NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

Last week, the government of Georgia announced new restrictions in the country to slow down the spread of the virus. To address the challenges that the country is facing, Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia announced new restrictions last week.

The restrictions are in place to limit the mobility of people across the country. However, multiple experts claim that this could severely hurt the economy. Initially, the government of Georgia has very actively said that there were no plans of total lockdown in the country.

As of today, the restrictions limit the movement of public transportation,

working of big malls, and winter tourist season.

Representatives of several malls held a special press conference and addressed the government with a request to lift the restriction not from December 24, but from December 15.

From 28 November up until the end of January, malls in Georgia will be closed. However, because of the New Year's season, the malls in the country will be open from December 24 to January 3.

Representatives of the malls are asking the government to lift the restriction temporarily starting from December 15. They have also noted that it would be better if the restriction on mobility is lifted during this time as

well. As the representatives are saying, customers should have the ability to use transportation to buy the products that they might need.

The Finance Minister of Georgia Ivane Machavariani noted that the self-employed should address the government agency as soon as possible to receive the 300 GEL assistance from the government of the country.

According to the Minister of Economy Natia Turnava, the increase in the number of infected people in terms of economic impact, and the epidemic will affect the economy much more than short-term and local restrictions.

As of Sunday evening, there are more than 130,000 cases of coronavirus reported in the country.



Turnava said the further spread of the virus would have a worse economic impact than short-term, local restrictions

Georgia hosts first-ever European Researchers' Night

On 27 November 2020 for the first time Georgia joins, other 29 countries in celebrating European Researchers' Night – a Europe-wide public event that brings researchers closer to the public.

Since 2005, European Researchers' Night supports the popularisation of science and innovations via large-scale events. Financed by the EU's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovations programme, in 2019, European Researchers' Night attracted 1.6 million visitors across more than 400 cities in Europe and beyond.

The event showcases the diversity of science and its impact on citizens' daily lives, stimulating interest in research careers - particularly among young people. This year, children, young people and families will meet researchers and discover research, science and innovation through hands-on experiments, science shows, games, quizzes, competitions, exhibitions, and digital activities.

This is the first time that Georgia has joined the "European Researchers' Night" celebrations. Participation is or-

ganized in the framework of the EU funded "Science is the Captain" project, implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia. The project supports the development of science and research by making the public better aware of the positive impact the science has on their daily lives as citizens, to encourage young students to choose a science/research career and to strengthen the image of a scientist in our society.

Research – just like education - is an investment in the future and needs to be put at the heart of any blueprint for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs. Georgia became an Associated Country to Horizon 2020 in April 2016, which opened up new prospects also to Georgian scientists and researchers. By assisting in investments into human capital we hope to contribute to further unlocking Georgia's economic potential.

Georgia should strive to make maximum use of the opportunities that Horizon 2020 and Europe offer; for the sake of economic growth and jobs, for the sake of getting its rightful place in the world economy; and for the sake of an even stronger EU-Georgia relationship in the

future. stated Sigrid Brettel, Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Georgia

On November 27, 2020 as one of the events of the "European Researchers' Night" celebration in Georgia is the award ceremony of the following groups of Georgian Scientists' grantees of various Horizon2020 grant competitions:

- National Center for Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (NCTBLD)
- The Center for Social Sciences (CSS)
- Biological Farming "Association Elkana"
- (Gala) Georgian Association of Landscape Architects

Certificate of Acknowledgment was awarded to the National Center for Disease Control and Public Health.

Additional Information

Marie Skłodowska Curie "European Researchers' Night" competition of The European Scholarship and Innovation Framework Program "Horizon 2020" is announced every two years, and only the EU member states and countries associated with the "Horizon 2020" program have the right to participate in it.

Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever, with nearly 80 billion Euro of funding available over 7 years – in addition to all the private investments that this money helps to attract.

It was designed to facilitate, stimulate and enable great ideas and innovations getting from the lab out to the market. The goal is to support world-class science, removing barriers to innovation and making it easier for the public and private sectors to work together in delivering innovation.

Horizon 2020 has the full political backing of Europe's leaders and the European Parliament and is seen as a key tool in our toolbox to drive economic growth and creating jobs.

Initially, the CAPTAIN project envisaged the series of indoor and outdoor events in 6 different cities (Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Telavi, Batumi, Akhaltsikhe and Zugdidi) across Georgia like EU corners, awareness-raising events (story writing on science topics/scientific discoveries behind which there are researchers funded by EU), Due to the COVID-19 vast majority of in-person activities have been converted into the online/virtual events.