

Politics

Registration for Pfizer second dose begins as the country awaits more doses of the vaccine
Health officials say Georgia is waiting for vaccines from several developers

6 MPs leave Georgian Dream to join Gakharia's future party
Gakharia resigned on February 18

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Economics

Person responsible for hostage-taking and attempted robbery of Bank of Georgia to remain in pre-trial detention

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BY VERONIKA MALINBOYM

On Saturday, April 18th, the ruling Georgian Dream party agreed to sign the agreement which was first proposed by the EU mediator Christian Danielsson. The newly signed agreement addresses issues such as the large-scale reform of the judicial and electoral systems as well as the amnesty to the individuals whose had cases launched against them in relation to June 2019 protests in Tbilisi – including the opposition leader Nika Melia, who currently remains in detention.

Following the signing of the document, speaker of the Georgian Parliament and member of the ruling Georgian Dream

Georgian opposition refuses to sign the EU-proposed agreement despite repeated calls from the country's Western partners. Hartzell renews the document



party Archil Talakvadze stated that by doing that, ruling party showed its high degree of responsibility, and added that it was now the opposition's turn to show that "it can put the interests of the state above their personal interests".

A number of the country's opposition parties have already rejected the possibility of signing the agreement along with the ruling party. Member of the United National Movement party Koba Nakopia stated that while the chairman of the UNM remains in detention following his 'illegal' arrest, "no agreement with the Georgian Dream is possible." Nakopia added that Melia should not only be let free but should also participate in the

process of negotiations with the ruling party. As of right now, the opposition Girchi- More Freedom, UNM, Lelo for Georgia, European Georgia and Strategy Agmashenebeli have already refused to sign the agreement proposed by the EU. In response, the chairman of the ruling Georgian Dream party Irakli Kobakhidze told Imedi TV that the opposition's decision is "illogical but expected":

"It's illogical [for them] to refuse [signing the agreement], but it was probably expected, given that, unfortunately, the opposition very often takes illogical steps."

Meanwhile, in order to help bring the ongoing crisis to the conclusion, several

high-ranking Western politicians have already called for all MPs to sign the agreement. The Spokespeople of the High Representative of the European Union and Vice-President of European Commission as well as the United States Department of State, in their statement urge the parties to sign the agreement drafted by the President of European Commission Charles Michel and address the needs of Georgian people:

"After nearly six months of negotiations, the citizens of Georgia have made clear that they want the political stalemate to end, and for all elected Members to work together in Parliament and address the serious challenges facing the country, including the regional challenges, COVID-19, and the economic crisis. With this in mind, we call on all Members of the Parliament of Georgia to sign the agreement that President of the European Council, Charles Michel, will propose today", the statement reads.

Earlier today, in another attempt to assist Georgia out of the political crisis, the head of the EU delegation to Georgia Carl Hartzell proposed a renewed version of the agreement which accommodates one of the oppositions main demands-snap elections. According to the renewed document and based on the ruling party's previous offer, the early parliamentary elections will be held in 2022 if the ruling Georgian Dream party fails to obtain 43% of votes during the self-government elections of October 2021. With an updated version of the agreement in hand, Carl Hartzell stated that the mediators are now "looking forward to convincing political parties to with the view to finalising this process as a way forward and end Georgia's current political crisis."



Registration for Pfizer second dose begins as the country awaits more doses of the vaccine



Gamkrelidze stated that Georgia is discussing getting more doses of Covid vaccine from several developers, including Pfizer, Sinopharm, and Novavax

By NIKA GAMDSEMLIDZE

The National Center for Disease Control and Public Health published a statement regarding vaccination in the country. According to the statement published by NCDC, more than 8,000 people have registered for

their second dose of Pfizer. However, on the first day of registration, a number of people who wanted to register for their second dose of the Pfizer vaccine, weren't able to do so. According to NCDC, they were not able to register as the system was overbooked. "Some of

the technical issues are connected with the pause of vaccination from 30.04 to 3.05 due to the Easter holidays," reads the statement of NCDC.

NCDC also noted that for everyone who has received the first dose of the vaccine, there is a second dose set aside for them.

The director of the National Center for Disease Control and Public Health Amiran Gamkrelidze has recently discussed the vaccination process in the country. He noted that there are talks with several developers, such as Sinopharm, Novavax, and Pfizer. Gamkrelidze noted that the decision was made to open a registration website for the Sinopharm vaccine on April 27 for the vaccination process to start on May 4. According to him, the country has 100,000 doses of the Sinopharm vaccine, which should be enough to vaccinate 50,000 people. Further talks with Sinopharm envisages additional 500,000 doses of the vaccine.



As of today, Georgia has vaccinated 24,000 people

As for Noavavax, the country has a contract with the company for as much as one million doses, which should arrive in the country around July-August. The country is considering buying one million doses of the Pfizer vaccine.

Gamkrelidze noted that all of this is happening behind the Covavax platform, from which, the country should receive 1.4 million doses. From the platform, Georgia has already re-

ceived 43,000 AstraZeneca doses and 29,000 Pfizer doses. Additional 86 thousand AstraZeneca doses should arrive in the country near the end of April.

Health Minister Ekaterine Tkaradze stated that around 24,000 people have already received the Covid-19 vaccine.

In total, Georgia has reported 295,358 cases of coronavirus, and 3939 have died. On Sunday, 818 new cases were reported.

6 MPs leave Georgian Dream to join Gakharia's future party



The following MPs left the Georgian Dream: Giorgi Khojevanishvili, Ana Buchukuri, Aleksandre Motserelia, Beka Liluashvili, Shalva Kereselidze, Mikheil Daushvili



Talakvadze said that the decision equals an attempt to 'escape from responsibility'

By NIKA GAMDSEMLIDZE

A few days ago, several members of the ruling Georgian Dream party announced that they would be leaving the party. According to them, they will be joining the future party of

former Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia.

Among the MPs who left are Giorgi Khojevanishvili, Ana Buchukuri, Aleksandre Motserelia, Beka Liluashvili, Shalva Kereselidze, Mikheil Daushvili.

During the special press conference, Giorgi Khojevanishvili noted that the decision was made in coordination with Gakharia to work on building the new party.

According to him, they will continue their work in the parliament with the status of inde-

pendent deputies. Khojevanishvili stressed that those who left the party share the successes and failures of the Georgian Dream, and at the same time feel responsible for the mistakes.

The Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze talked about the decision of MPs called it an attempt to escape from responsibility.

"It is unfortunate that our colleagues chose personal relations instead of the state interests and the promises that we

gave to the society together and for which we took responsibility... We are sorry that Giorgi Gakharia made such a decision, and now, his friends followed," said Talakvadze.

GD Chairman Irakli Kobakhidze also talked about the decision made by the ruling party members, calling it 'wrong'.

Quotas for the number of members and proportional representation in parliamentary committees are being redefined and should be discussed in the

Parliament of Georgia today. After the six members left the party, Georgian Dream has 84 members in the parliament.

Former Prime Minister of Georgia Giorgi Gakharia announced his resignation on February 18. The reason for his decision, Gakharia announced, was the arrest of the UNM member Nika Melia.

After Gakharia's resignation, Irakli Garibashvili became the Prime Minister of Georgia for the second time.

Weather

Monday, April 19

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 25°C

Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 14°C

Tuesday, April 20

Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 26°C

Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 14°C

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Person responsible for hostage-taking and attempted robbery of Bank of Georgia to remain in pre-trial detention



By VERONIKA MALINBOYM

The man who, on Friday, April 16, attacked the Bank of Georgia branch near the Avlabari metro was sentenced to remain in pre-trial detention, as per the Tbilisi City Court ruling. The defense of the accused reportedly requested a bail of 30,000 Lari, however, its motion was denied.

On Friday, 28-year old man named Nikoloz Tsurtsunia broke into the Bank of Georgia near Avalabari metro and took seven people hostage. As a result of negotiations carried out by the Ministry of Interior employees, an hour later all hostages were released, and the attacker was arrested.

In its official press release, the Ministry of Interior states that Tsurtsunia will be charged for the possession of the firearm and hostage-taking:

“The Ministry of Internal Affairs detained one person - N.Ts. (DoB 1993) - for attacking one of the branches of the Bank of Georgia located in vicinities of Avlabari metro station, Tbilisi as well as for taking hostages and illegal possession and carrying of a firearm.

The investigation established that the armed offender broke into one of the branches of the Bank of Georgia located on Dusheti Street, Tbilisi and took 7 people as hostages.

Relevant police units were mobilized at the scene and op-

erative-investigative measures have been launched.

As a result of negotiations between the representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the attacker, the accused person gradually released citizens from illegal captivity, after which the law enforcers arrested N.Ts. at the place of crime. In the course of the incident no one was injured.

Investigation is in progress on the fact of the attack, hostage-taking and illegal possession - carrying of a firearm- crimes envisaged under articles 144, Part II, Subparagraph C and 236, Part III and IV of the Criminal Code of Georgia”, read the official statement.

Memorandum of cooperation between Mountain Resorts Development Company and the French resort of Grand Massif



The memorandum was signed by Irakli Tchirakadze, Director of the Mountain Resorts Development Company LTD, and Frederick Marion, Director of the Grand Massif

On April 16 of 2021, a 4-year memorandum of cooperation was signed between the Mountain Resorts Development Company and the French resort of Grand Massif. The resort area of the Grand Massif is among the 5 best resorts in France, with 265 km of ski slopes and 5 ski resorts.

The Mountain Resorts Development Company has many years of experience working with the French company Des Alpes, a world-leading consulting firm in the field of tourism, including the management and operation of mountain resorts.

The purpose of the memorandum is to raise the qualification of the staff of the mountain resorts of Georgia, to share French experience and knowledge in all areas of operation of the ski resorts (sales, marketing, ice skating, ropeways, rescue, freeride rides, winter sports).

Within the framework of the memorandum, 15 missions will be carried out in France and Georgia (Gudauri, Bakuriani, Mestia, Goderdzi, Tbilisi). The term of cooperation is 4 years.

The memorandum was signed by Irakli Tchirakadze, Director of the Mountain Resorts Development Company LTD, and Frederick Marion, Director of the Grand Massif.



The memorandum was signed between the Mountain Resorts Development Company and the French resort of Grand Massif



Czech Development Agency Delegation to Visit Georgia

CZECH REPUBLIC



DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The delegation will be visiting Georgia on April 19-22, 2021.

Czech Republic continues supporting Georgia within its Development Cooperation framework. In this context, Mrs. Michaela Marksova-Tominova, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Mr. Jan Sliva, Head of the Czech Development Agency and their teams will be visiting Georgia on April 19-22, 2021.

As part of the official visit, Czech delegation will meet Georgian counterparts and Czech Embassy's local partners, including the project sites implemented with Czech support in Georgia.

On April 19th, the agency delegation will sign two Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia.

The MoUs cover two projects, implemented with Czech financial support in Georgia: Way to Home: Development of Adult Alternative Social Services in Georgia (Total budget: about 780 000 EUR) and Support to primary healthcare Strengthening in Georgia (Total budget 1 233 000 EUR).

In the coming days, the del-

egation will also attend the Opening Ceremony of Multifunctional Regional Beekeeping Center and visit the Rukhi and Batumi Hospitals. The newly built hospitals in Rukhi and Batumi were equipped with the modern technical appliances within the framework of Czech Development Agency's financial support.

The delegation will also pay the visit to the Zugdidi Screening Center constructed and equipped by Caritas Czech Republic (CCR) with the financial support of the Czech Development Agency. The visit will be concluded by the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Finance and Economics of Adjara on Quantification of Health and Environmental Risks and Support for the Rehabilitation of the Former Batumi Refinery Site.