

PM Gharibashvili pays official visit to Turkey

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The state visit of Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Gharibashvili to the Republic of Turkey took place on 1st of June. The PM held a meeting with the President of the Republic of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, within the framework of a one-day visit. Before meeting with the Turkish President, Gharibashvili visited the mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, laid a wreath at his grave and left a note in the book of remembrance in the mausoleum.

The leaders of partner countries held a joint briefing after the meeting, where the president of Turkey emphasized that this year is important in the sense that the Georgian diplomatic mission in Ankara was opened 100 years ago and marks the 30th anniversary of Georgia's independence.

Erdogan focused on trade partnership relations with Georgia and noted that Turkey has been Georgia's number one trade partner for 14 years. According to him, in 2020 there was a slight decrease in trade volume, but the goal is to increase the figure to three billion dollars in the shortest time possible. He also remarked on the work on expanding the free trade agreement, adding that countries are working hard to increase trade potential and expand customs cooperation in this area.

Turkish president also underscored that in the field of energy, as well as in all other spheres, Turkish investments have been made in Georgia, the volume of which is \$214 million. "We have implemented great, important projects with Georgia, which completely changes the face of the region. One such strategic project is the Southern Gas Corridor, on which we have created this platform.



"Turkey sees Georgia as the key to regional cooperation," Erdogan announced.

Through connecting mechanisms and various combined corridors, we have initiated multifaceted cooperation," Erdogan said.

In this context, he also noted the East-West Corridor, which connects China and Turkey from the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea - one of the components of the Silk Road, the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, transports cargo from both our country and Russia. The meeting also dis-

cussed how to increase the railroad through the use of the Marmara Tunnel.

According to him, leaders, as well as delegations discussed important issues of bilateral relations and shared views on regional issues. Erdogan also spoke of strengthening the importance and peace of the region, referring to the trilateral cooperation with Azerbaijan in this regard: "Turkey supports all trilateral cooperation, be it Georgia-Azerbaijan-Arme-

nia or Georgia-Azerbaijan-Turkey. We decided to hold a meeting of the Supreme Strategic Council as soon as possible too."

Erdogan emphasized Turkey's support for Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty at all levels, on all platforms, as well as Georgia's integration into Euro-Atlantic organizations.

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"Mustafa Kemal Ataturk has left an indelible mark not only in the history of Turkey, but also in the history of mankind. His name as a progressive leader and the founder of the modern Turkish state is immortal and will never be forgotten," the statement said.

Georgia celebrates International Children's day



City hall organized a special event for children in Mziuri Park.

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

Georgia celebrated International Children's Day on June 1. In this regard, PM Irakli Gharibashvili initiated doubling assistance to socially vulnerable children from July 1 to ₾ 100 instead of existing ₾ 50. The number of children receiving assistance will also increase, the head of the government said in his address, reiterating that the poverty among children remains a challenge in Georgia, especially in pandemic conditions.

In addition, instead of the existing 100,000 social points, children living in families with less than 120,000 points will receive ₾ 100 assistance. This decision will affect more than 215 000 children. ₾ 145 million will be allocated annually from the budget to finance this program.

Various entertainment events

for children were held in Mziuri Park, Tbilisi, jointly organized by the Culture, Education, Sports and Youth Affairs Municipal Service of the Tbilisi City Hall and the Vake District Board.

"A concert of children's studios, puppet theater performances for children and various entertaining activities presented by fairy tale characters will be presented on the stage. During the day the events will be held in open space. Within the World Book Capital, there will be an exhibition-sale of children's literature and handicrafts, a storyteller's corner and various activities," the Tbilisi City Hall said, inviting children at the event.

Georgian officials, including Minister of Education Mikheil Chkhenkeli and Speaker of the Parliament Kakha Kuchava congratulated children with the day. "Children are our primary

concern. It is the responsibility of each of us to create a healthy and safe environment for their development, to give them a better future. Children should have equal opportunities for education and healthy living. Raised in a

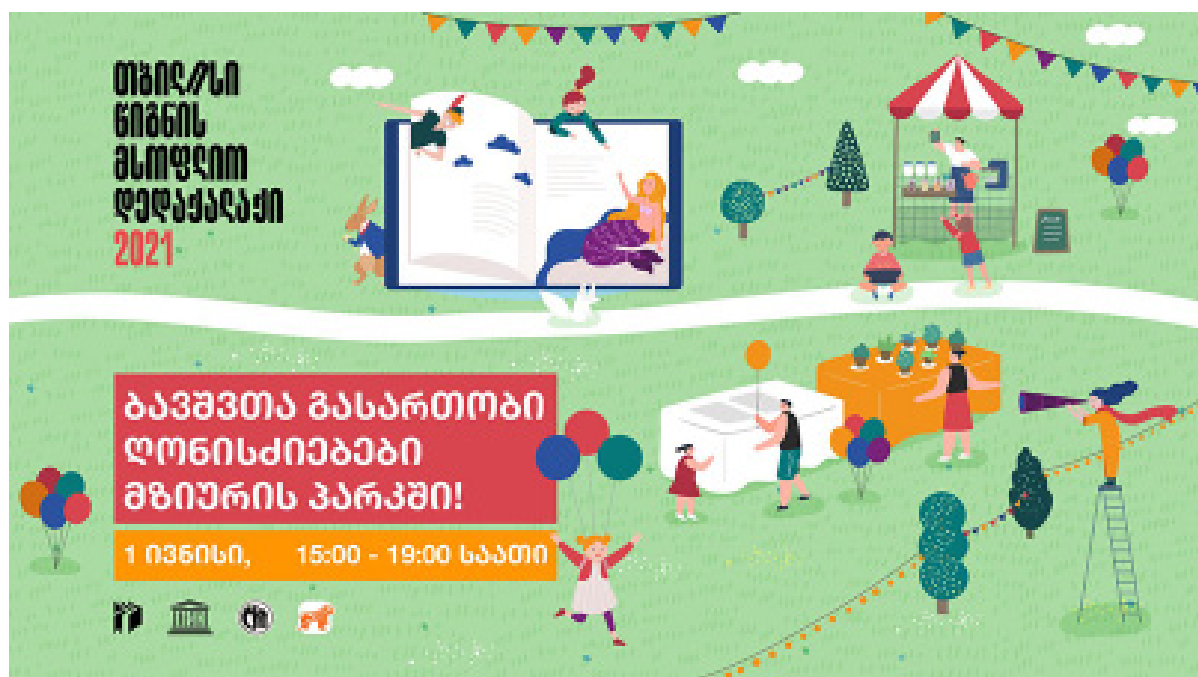
safe and peaceful environment, the educated generation is the best investment in building a better society and the proper development of the country," Chkhenkeli said, adding that pandemic posed challenges on educational system, however the ministry has managed to ensure providing children with education, for which he especially thanked teachers.

Georgian Public Defender and UNICEF Georgia also congratulated the youth with the day and stated that the coronavirus pandemic has further aggravated the situation of children's rights in Georgia. Ombudsperson Nino Lomjaria has stated that the risks of child abuse, poverty, violations of the rights to healthcare and education have increased amid the pandemic.

Against the background of the above-mentioned celebrations, children's rights activists have used the opportunity to draw attention to the Ninotsminda Children's Boarding School and

held a protest in front of the government administration building. Yesterday, Archpriest Tamaz Lomidze announced that the situation in Ninotsminda boarding house is alarming and the children urgently need help.

It's been months since the orphanage, which is subordinated to the Georgian Patriarchate, has been refusing to open its doors to either the social workers of the State Social Agency or the Public Defender's monitoring group. The refusal comes directly from the Archbishop of Skhelta, Spiridon, who says that "they will never enter." Public Defender has been writing for years that cases of violence against children and their punishment have been repeatedly reported at the St. Nino Children's Boarding School in Ninotsminda. Juveniles living in the boarding school are isolated from society. Lomjaria has repeatedly called on the Georgian government to respond to the condition Ninotsminda's children live in.



The National Archives of the Ministry of Justice has created a special webpage that contains informative and entertaining material such as Georgian cartoons, audio recordings and books, magazines and more for children and adults preserved in the funds of the National Archives.

PM Garibashvilis pays official visit to Turkey

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After expressing gratitude for a warm reception, PM Gharibashvili underlined that Turkey is a very important friendly state and strategic partner for Georgia. He spoke of the important projects of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars, Tbilisi-Erzurum. The PM

said he is looking forward to the next meeting of the strategic council, adding that 3 independent states of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey have very close cooperation with each other. According to Gharibashvili, the meeting also touched upon the humanitarian crisis in occupied territories of Georgia. At the end of the briefing, the PM invited Erdogan to Tbilisi.

The Georgian delegation included Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Economy and Sustainable Development, Environment and Agriculture, as well as Chairman of the Government of Adjara and Head of Government.

Weather

Wednesday, June 2

Day ☀ Clear
High: 28°C

Night 🌙 Clear
Low: 14°C

Thursday, June 3

Day ☀ Clear
High: 26°C

Night ☁ Partly Cloudy
Low: 14°C

GD to get 21% in upcoming elections, internal survey says

By MESSENGER STAFF

Formula TV obtained results of the Georgian Dream internal survey, according to which, the Georgian Dream won't manage to overcome the 43% threshold in the elections. It should be noted that the internal research of the political party is conducted by the company which the GD party trusts.

To the question "which party would you vote for if the elections were held tomorrow?" Georgian Dream is only named by 21 percent of voters. According to the same survey, 40 percent of the public has not decided who to vote for.

According to the formula, the party also measured the rating of possible mayoral candidates. The sympathy of the respon-

dents between Kaladze and Talakvadze shifted to the current mayor. Irakli Kobakhidze, the chairman of the party, confirms the research, but denies the data obtained by Formula TV.

If the ruling party gets less than 43 percent, it will have to hold snap parliamentary elections.

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Georgia reopens its land borders, modifies entry requirements

BY VERONIKA MALINBOYM

Today, on June 1, Georgia reopened its land borders which have previously been shut down due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. As is the case with the country's marine borders, in order to be granted entry, visitors will have to present the certificate of full vaccination and a negative PCR test conducted within the last 72 hours. Alternatively, only the negative PCR test can be presented at the border, however, in this case, a repeat test will have to be taken in three days after staying in the country.

On top of that, visitors will be required to obtain a health insurance which can be acquired both in their country of origin and in Georgia.

As for those who will be entering the country by air, only those who can confirm the full vaccination course will be allowed to enter the country.

Here's a breakdown of the



main traveling rules for the individuals who wish to enter Georgia:

Non-vaccinated citizens of Georgia can present a negative PCR test taken within the last 72 hours at the border and be placed in a mandatory 8-day self-isolation or take a repeat PCR test at their own expense on the third day of their stay in the country. If the Georgian citizen fails to present a negative PCR test at the border, they will be placed in a mandatory 8-day self-isolation or quarantine, if self-isolation is not a viable option for the individual.

Foreign citizens or residence permit holders of the countries which Georgia has granted entry will be required to fill in the form on the government's website prior to their visit, present a negative PCR test taken within the last 72 hours before the travel and retake the PCR on their third day of stay in Georgia at their own expense. On top of that, all individuals that have travelled to India within the last 14 days before the visit to Georgia will be asked to undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine at their own expense.

Georgia reduces curfew as previously vaccinated Minister of Health tests positive for COVID-19

BY VERONIKA MALINBOYM

A number of pandemic-induced regulations were re-

moved earlier today in Georgia. On top of reopening its land borders, the country removed restrictions on restaurants hosting

the visitors indoors during the weekend and reduced the curfew by one hour. Starting from today, the curfew will last from

23.00 – 04.00, Chief of the Operational Staff of the Interagency Coordination Council Giorgi Gibradze announced earlier today.

Amidst the easing of some of the restrictions, it has been reported that the country's Minister of Health Ekaterine Tikaradze tested positive for COVID-19, despite receiving the first shot of AstraZeneca vaccine on March 23. The minister's press service has reported that Tikaradze is feeling well, but will remain home until she makes a full recovery.

Head of the National Center for Disease Control Amiran Gamkrelidze has commented on the reopening of the country's land borders by saying that the country will have to be extra cautious with the inflow of visitors, which is why the Interagency Coordination Council

was proposed a number of additional recommendations that will help to regulate and monitor visitors in the country:

"Today we proposed additional materials to the Interagency Coordination Council, that might be implemented in two weeks. I cannot yet say what kind of regulations will be implemented, however, it all comes down to the monitoring and regulation of the people entering the country for the purpose of reducing the threat of the spread of the virus," Gamkrelidze explained.

As of June 1, a total of 1,233 new cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Georgia, as well as 1,002 recoveries and 31 deaths. A total number of confirmed cases in the country since February last year has now reached 345,196.



NEWS IN BRIEF

PREPARED BY
THE MESSENGER STAFF

Sinovac recognized by WHO

The World Health Organization has authorized the Chinese-made vaccine, according to AFP. A hearing on vaccine authorization was held at the World Health Organization today.

Sinovac is the second Chinese vaccine authorized by WHO, with the organization approving the Sinopharm vaccine for emergency use in early May.

Financial aid for vulnerable children raised from 50 to 100 GEL

According to the Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili, the assistance to socially vulnerable children will increase from 50 GEL to 100 GEL.

As Gharibashvili writes on Facebook, instead of the existing 100,000 points, children living in families with less than 120,000 points will also be able to receive 100 GEL assistance.

Curfew reduced by an hour

The curfew will run until 04:00 instead of 05:00 in the morning, according to the decision made by the Coordinating Council.

The reason was the support

of farmers in the process of selling agricultural products.

Two anti-HPP rally activists wounded by police

Irakli Mukbaniani, a participant in the anti-Namakhvani protest rally in the village of Sakulia, Imereti, was detained by force. Locals said one person was wounded by a rubber bullet and another by a bullet from a gun during the arrest. The two activists were soon taken to the

hospital.

MIA accuses Mukbaniani of assault and physical assault of a police officer during a rally on May 29. The detainee faces 4 to 7 years in prison.

According to locals, the accused was working with his accomplices at the cemetery when special forces approached them and shot at Mukbaniani during his arrest.

In a conversation with Formula, one of the locals says that the riot police carelessly shot the people gathered at the cemetery in the legs.