

POLITICS

US Acting Assistant Secretary to visit Georgia



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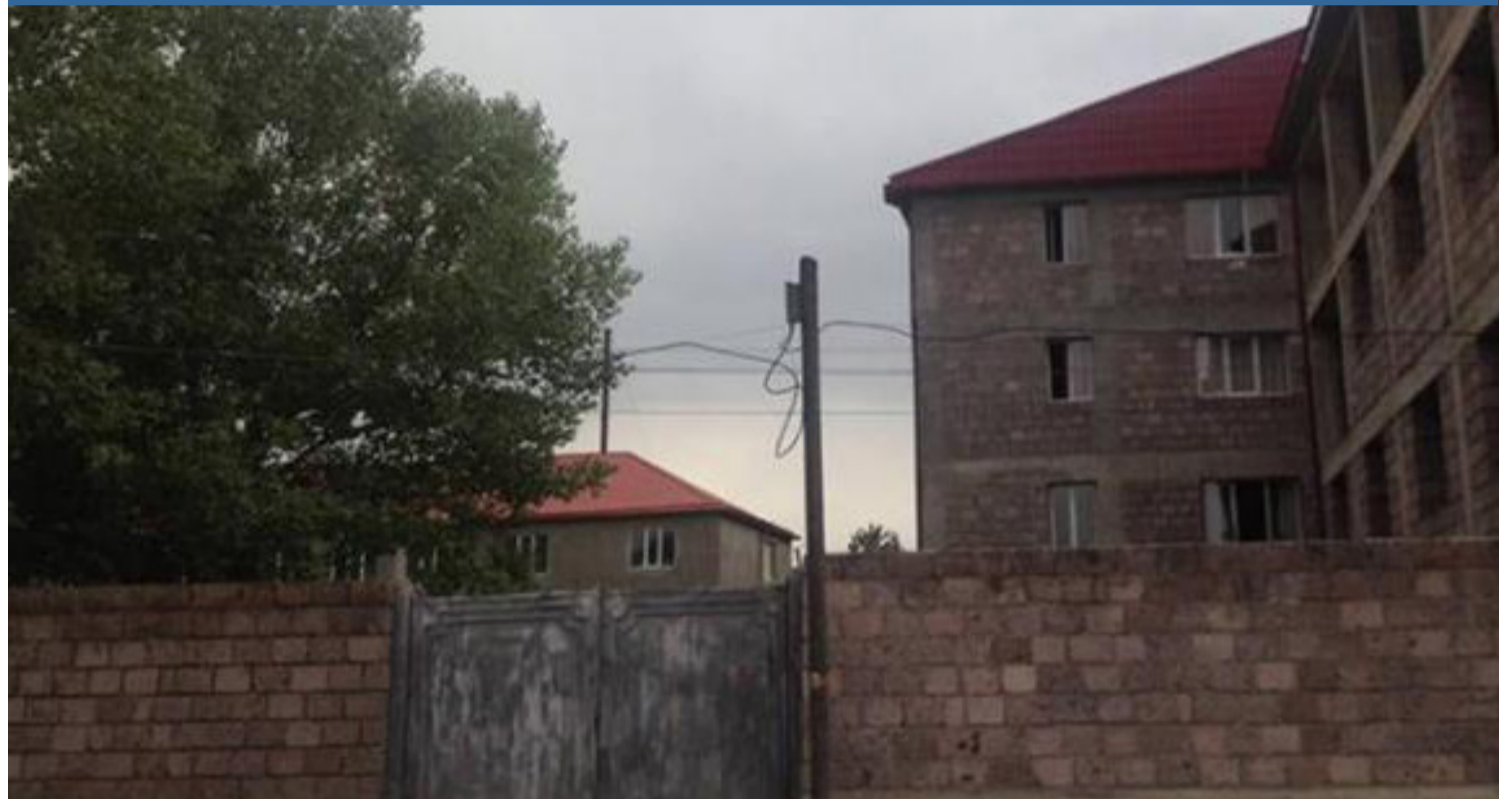
Rati Ionatamishvili: Upcoming elections will be the first and last for Gakharia's party



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Patriarchate to appeal court decision to remove children from Ninotsminda boarding school

SEVERAL CHILDREN HAVE ALREADY LEFT THE BOARDING SCHOOL



► Patriarchate statement reads that the court did not have enough evidence to make the decision

BY NIKA GANTSEMLIDZE

The Georgian Patriarchate will appeal the court decision regarding the process of removing the beneficiaries from the Ninotsminda boarding school. According to the statement of the Patriarchate of Georgia, the court did not have enough evidence to make the decision.

"We would like to mention that no one has addressed us about the Public Defend-

er's problem getting into the Ninotsminda boarding schools. The information about it became known through the mass media. Because of this, we got involved later. As of now, the situation has changed. Social workers are there, and the beneficiaries are being monitored around the clock," reads the statement of Patriarchate.

They also noted that the accelerated process of withdrawing beneficiaries from the boarding school is not "in the best in-

terest of the children". Tbilisi City Court has decided to remove children with disabilities from the Ninotsminda boarding school on June 5.

As Ana Arganashvili explained, according to the law, their organization is a special plaintiff for children with disabilities and that is why the decision was made regarding them. However, according to her, the main idea of the decision is that there is a danger for all children's lives.

According to PHR, Judge Ivane Glonti agreed with the existence of a risk to life and health in the boarding school, which is why his decision should be extended to each child living in the boarding house.

According to the lawyers, the appeal will not hinder the execution of the court's decision.

Former beneficiaries of the Ninotsminda boarding school are publicly talking about the facts of physical and psychological violence. In recent years, 4 investigations have been launched into allegations of violence, including sexual assault at the boarding school.

The Metropolitan of Poti and Khobi expressed his hopes that the court's decision will be executed without any objections. He said that the fact that people were not allowed in the boarding school ended up creating a lot of questions.

Priest Zaza Tevzadze also said that it is extremely important to enforce the court's decision regarding the immediate removal of children from the boarding school. He added that there are a lot of questions that must be answered. He also assessed the position of the Georgian church ignoring the government agencies of the country, stating that the church has a rude and brutal approach to the issue, which hurts both itself and the state. Tevzadze also noted that he criticizes the institution he represents but can't stay silent.

The situation escalated on April 15, when the representatives of the Public Defender of Georgia were denied entry into the boarding school after several beneficiaries spoke about the physical, psychological as well as sexual violence taking place in the Ninotsminda boarding school.



► Tbilisi City Court has decided to remove children with disabilities from the Ninotsminda boarding school on June 5

US Acting Assistant Secretary to visit Georgia

By VERONIKA MALINBOYM

Acting Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip T. Reeker will be visiting Georgia, the US Embassy in Tbilisi has announced. Reeker will also visit Azerbaijan and Armenia between June 6-13 “to advance bilateral and regional priorities and to express U.S. support for democratic and economic development across the region.”

“Acting Assistant Secretary Reeker will the Georgian government, opposition, and civil society leaders to discuss the full implementation of the April 19 agreement among Georgian political parties as well as Russia’s ongoing aggression against and occupation of Georgia.

In Armenia and Azerbaijan, Acting Assistant Secretary Reeker will meet with the Georgian government, civil society, and business leaders to discuss bilateral priorities and issues related to the Nagorno-Karabakh con-



flict,” read the statement of the US Embassy.

The announcement came shortly after the completion of the US

delegation led by Senators Jean Shaheen and Rob Portman’s visit, during which the Senators visited the occupation line and

met with the government officials, members of the opposition, and representatives of the civil society. Senators reiterated the US’

unwavering support for Georgian democracy and reinstated that Russia is attempting to intimidate those countries that have chosen the Euro-Atlantic path, which is why the US Congress Delegation is eager to support such countries in the region:

“It is clear that Russia is trying to intimidate the countries of the region that have chosen Euro-Atlantic integration and the Western path because they see a better life than Russia can offer them,” Senator Shaheen said.

During the US delegation visit, it has also been announced that the US will provide Georgia with the Covid-19 vaccines, however, the time of their arrival and the number of doses is still unknown: “The White House has officially confirmed that Georgia will be one of the countries that will receive Covid-19 vaccines from the United States. We do not know the exact numbers, but we are very pleased,” Senator Shaheen announced.

United Nations celebrates the World Environment Day

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY IS CELEBRATED ON JUNE 5

While celebrating the World Environment Day, the UN family has published a statement calling on Georgia for bold steps and practical measures aimed at preserving the fragile ecosystems and at protecting people and the planet from the effects of the climate change. We offer you the statement of the UN unchanged.

“As we celebrate World Environment Day, the flagship day of the United Nations for promoting worldwide awareness and action for the environment, the UN family in Georgia joins hands to call for bold steps and practical measures aimed at preserving fragile ecosystems and at protecting people and the planet from the adverse effects of climate change.

The United Nations General Assembly has declared the years 2021 through 2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. This theme underlines the urgency of action needed to address multiple harms to the natural environment mainly caused by human activity.



► The United Nations General Assembly has declared the years 2021 through 2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

It also serves as a reminder that our lives, well-being, economy and social development all depend on critical services provided by ecosystems, such as oxygen and freshwater.

By restoring and preserving ecosystems, conserving biodiversity, protecting the environment and introducing sustainable natural resource management, we can save the planet for future generations and ensure sustainable long-term economic growth that does not destroy our natural habitat.

These issues will be discussed at the COP26 summit in Glasgow on 1-12 November 2021, when all countries, including Georgia, will present their vision of greener

and more sustainable development for the years to come.

Georgia has taken important steps to fulfill climate commitments undertaken under the EU Association Agreement, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement and EU Energy Community membership. It has declared to apply eco-friendly principles of sustainable development while transitioning to the green economy and new, innovative solutions for low-emission investments. Georgia is progressing on this pathway as climate policies and strategies, related laws are being elaborated, adopted and applied.

As part of nature-based solutions to fight climate change, Georgia is progressing on the ban of harmful single-use plastic, has increased the area of protected territories to conserve its unique biodiversity and has pledged to unconditionally reduce national Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by 35 percent below its 1990 baseline by 2030, to name a few.

Georgia faces significant environmental challenges caused by both direct human activity and global consequences of climate change. To mitigate the impact of climate change by limiting global warming to 1.5°C, we need to decarbonize fossil fuel-based energy system and cut anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 45% by 2030 compared to 2010 levels. However, doing so would require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in every sector; devising low carbon supply and value chain models for a sustainable growth; restoration of ecosystems; introducing adaptive measures for changing climate patterns and reduce risk of climate-driven disasters, including use of climate information for forecasting and early warning systems; promotion of healthy, active and safe mobility and transport; healthy urban design; investment in renewable energy; the reduction of pollution by building circular economies

that drive down waste; boosting access to sustainable consumption and production; the development of incentive mechanisms for waste prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery; reducing the loss, fragmentation and degradation of the pasturelands and conventional tillage practices; using more organic fertilizers and integrated pest management; and taking stronger steps towards protecting Georgia’s rich and diverse forests, freshwater and sea areas. We are confident that Georgia will further address climate change and preserve the environment. Its long-term sustainable environmental management and disaster risk reduction commitments will be matched by climate-sensitive policies and immediate actions aimed at reversing the decline of nature while protecting Georgia’s people, their properties and livelihoods.

Underlining our shared commitment to a low-carbon, cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable post-pandemic future, we pledge our support to the Government, civil society and other partners in expanding access to green solutions and making environmental issues an integral part of the development, thus fulfilling the UNFCCC Paris agreement targets and Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.”

MONDAY		JUNE 7	
Day		Sunshine	High: 25°C
Night		Mostly Cloudy	Low: 12°C
TUESDAY		JUNE 8	
Day		Sunny	High: 27°C
Night		A few clouds	Low: 15°C

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EXCHANGE RATES:

US DOLLAR - 3.0791 | EURO - 3.7276 | GBP - 4.3477 | 100 RUSSIAN RUBLE - 4.2021 | SWISS FRANC - 3.4038 |

Rati Ionatamishvili: Upcoming elections will be the first and last for Gakharia's party

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

One of the leaders of the parliamentary majority, Rati Ionatamishvili, predicts that the upcoming self-government elections will be the last for the newly formed party of former Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia – For Georgia. According to him, Gakharia's attempt to enter politics is not convincing.

He also noted that Giorgi Gakharia ended his career when he left the Prime Minister's office. According to him, the reasons that Gakharia discussed were very "awkward and non-argumentative."

"I think that anyone who tries so hard to get into politics is in fact a project of other parties. Therefore, self-government elections will be the first for this party and probably the last," added Ionatamishvili.

Another leader of the Georgian Dream Mamuka Mdinardze said that the resignation of Gakharia worked only for UNM. According to him, people still have not heard a real, rational reason about what would changing the date of Melia's detention do.

"There are only two options: he could not analyze what was going on, he got scared and abandoned the team, or he deliberately played the game of the United National movement and betrayed his own team," added Mdinardze.

Recently, the chairman of Georgian Dream Irakli Kobakhidze said that prior to the detention of Melia, UNM had a special plan to create an alternative government. He said that the Georgian Dream already had that information, but did not share it with then PM Gakharia, because they 'had doubts about him'. He did not say directly that Gakharia had a connection with UNM.

IONATASHVILI IS A MEMBER OF THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY



► According to Ionatashvili, Gakharia's attempt to enter politics is not convincing

The representatives of Gakharia's party made comments about Kobakhidze's interview. One of the members of For Georgia said that such claims 'turn into gossips' as there is no evidence to support the claims.

Giorgi Gakharia presented his party For Georgia and his new team on May 29. In his speech, he said that the Georgian Dream had 'distanced itself from the real problems' of its citizens and considered that for the Georgian Dream fighting opponents was a much more important issue.

Gakharia left his position on May 18. At the time, the former PM said that the decision was made because of the difference in opinion between him and the team about the case of Nika Melia, the chairman of the United National Movement. After presenting For Georgia, Gakharia told reported that Melia should have been arrested, however, the problem was the form of the arrest.



► Gakharia presented his party, For Georgia, on May 29.

150 Indian students at Batumi State University to have their status suspended

BY VERONIKA MALINBOYM

150 Indian students of the Batumi State University, Faculty of Science and Education will have their status suspended due to the Covid-19 induced travel restrictions to India, the university has announced on April 20, adding that those students will still be allowed to participate in distance learning. Batumi State University resolution of the Academic Council notes that those students who have failed to sign the registration certificate at the Dean of the Faculty on May 13-14, 2021, will be subject to administrative proceedings for suspension of student status.

The Tolerance and Diversity Institute of Georgia has issued a statement condemning the incident:

"The Tolerance and Diversity Institute (TDI) responds to the

recent alarming decision of the rector of Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University (BSU), by which the university started administrative proceedings against foreign students of the Faculty

of Exact Science and Education to terminate their student status. By this decision, more than 150 Indian students, who can not arrive in Georgia due to the pandemic and the existing

restriction on travel from India, will be suspended from student status. Government restrictions have had a direct impact on the condition of students."

The statement of the TDI also

noted that the University's decision lacks objective reasoning, as it offers students an option of online learning but requires them to be present in the country nevertheless:

"The current decision of the University lacks objective and rational reasoning. It offers the students online learning, however, requires them to be present in Georgia and to turn up at the dean's office to sign the registration paper. BSU does not take into consideration the clearly objective circumstances that due to the harsh pandemic situation and the strict restrictions for students to travel from India to Georgia, they are unable to arrive in the country to sign the papers on time. The BSU does not allow the students to undergo registration online. The decision of the university is ungrounded and discriminatory."

