

## Covid-19 update: Total of 253 988 people vaccinated

By VERONIKA MALINBOYM

As of June 27, a total of 253,988 people have been vaccinated in Georgia, while the daily vaccination rate has reached 2, 267. The nationwide vaccination program began on March 15; as of right now, the country is using AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Sinopharm, and Sinovac vaccines. Earlier this week, the country's Head of National Center for Disease Control Amiran Gamkrelidze announced that a total of 20 cases of the new Indian Delta strain of Covid-19 were confirmed in Georgia. Gamkrelidze added that the previous, Wuhan strain, has decreased drastically in the country, noting that if everyone is vaccinated, none of the strains will pose any real danger to society. The Head of the National Center for Disease Control also announced that children aged 16-17 will also be allowed to get vaccinated with the Pfizer vaccine.

On July 1, Georgia will lift the mandatory curfew, which first lasted



from 21.00 – 04.00 and was later pushed back to 23.00-04.00. It is no longer mandatory to wear masks outdoors in public places, although the requirement remains in place for public transport and indoor public facilities. Restrictions also apply to the restaurants and catering services, as they can only operate until 22.00.

As of the last 24 hours, Georgia has recorded 585 new cases of COVID-19, 370 of which have been registered in Tbilisi, bringing the country to number 21 in the world in cases per million population. A total of 953 have made a recovery and 11 patients have died. Georgia has not reached 363,522 confirmed Covid-19 cases since February 2020, as well as 349,658 recoveries and 5,266 deaths. As of June 27, 2,101 PCR tests and 9,972 rapid tests have been conducted in Georgia.

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The association agreement was made in 2014

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# 7 years of Association Agreement with EU



The Ambassador of the EU to Georgia issued a special statement

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

7 years have passed since the Association Agreement between the EU and Georgia. The monumental step was signed by Georgia and the EU in 2014. The agreement includes the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with the European Union. The agreement has been regarded as the historic step of Georgia towards becoming a closer ally of the EU.

Celebrating seven years since

the signing of the agreement, the Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia, Carl Hartzell issued a special statement. He once again reiterated the support that the agreement provides to Georgia in its way to EU integration. He said that although it is a technical document, it resembles the same interests and aims of the two sides.

“While it is a technical document, it embodies our shared values and ambitions. And it is the key to unlocking the poten-

tial of what we have set out to achieve together.

Happy anniversary to both Georgia and the EU! I look forward to continuing our joint efforts to further deepen our partnership and bring us even closer together in the years to come,” said the Ambassador of the European Union.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia also issued a statement discussing the seven-year anniversary of signing the documents. The statement talks about the progress achieved by Georgia over the past seven years in terms of integration. The statement also reads that Georgia continues adhering to the highest standards of Euro-

pean regulations and directives.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Association Agreement, which includes free trade with the European Union (DCFTA), gave a new impetus to the development of Georgia-EU trade and economic relations, including increased exports of national products from Georgia (15%). According to the statement of Georgia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the EU became Georgia’s main trading partner. (24%).

According to the ministry, the agreement also helped the country improve the investment climate. In particular, the statement focused on the fact that by investing in the Georgian terri-

tory and producing, companies are able to export their products to the EU market without tariffs. Another aspect discussed in the statement is Georgia becoming part of the European Energy Union and the cooperation with the EU in the energy sector that started in 2016.

The increased support to Georgia from the EU was also discussed. In particular, the statement indicates that the financial aid from the EU to Georgia over the past 7 years was over 1 billion Euros.

According to the statement, by 2024, Georgia plans to ensure 60-65% fulfillment of the agreement and apply for full membership in the EU.



The agreement between the EU and Georgia was signed in 2014, 7 years ago

# PM Garibashvili delivers a report in Georgian Parliament

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

The Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili delivered the government performance report at the Plenary Session of the Parliament of Georgia. Garibashvili talked about the challenges that the country faced over the past year, including the Covid-19 pandemic.

The PM talked about Georgia’s relations with its international partners, saying that the country has managed to raise

\$2.1 billion from international financial institutions for providing funding for the coronavirus response measures and for maintaining macroeconomic stability.

He also stated that the following year will be dedicated to decline the impact of the pandemic and economic recovery. Talking about the relations with international partners, the prime minister of the country noted that Georgia is closer to the Euro-Atlantic integration than ever before. Garibashvili said that he believes that Georgia is fully ready to become a NATO member.

He introduced the Parliament with the 10-year development plan of Georgia, stating that the

finalized version of the plan will be available this autumn.

According to the PM, among the most important things included in the development plan are the economy, local production, promotion of small and medium-sized businesses, the attraction of foreign investors, and gradually integrating into the EU single market to make sure the economic development in Georgia benefits every citizen of the country.

After presenting the report, the Prime Minister also answered the questions of Parliament members. The Chairperson of the Republican Party of Georgia Khatuna Samnidze



Georgian PM talked about the past year and discussed the steps taken by the Georgian government

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## Weather

Monday, June 28

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 38°C

Night Mostly Cloudy

Low: 21°C

Tuesday, June 29

Day Mostly Cloudy

High: 35°C

Night T-storm

Low: 20°C

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## British Royal Navy destroyer HMS Defender enters Batumi port



of Crimea, it has been shot at by the Russian coast guards and aircraft, after allegedly ignoring the repeated demands to not violate what Russia considers its state border. In turn, neither the United Kingdom, nor the rest of the Western world recognises the legitimacy of the annexation of Crimea, and, therefore, consider it to be a part of Ukraine. The warship's crew decision to proceed with its route has been commended by many as a demonstration of the UK's respect for the international waters and intolerance towards Russia's "aggressive policy of expansion". This incident marks one of many tensions between the navy of NATO member states' navy and Russia in the Black Sea.

By VERONIKA MALINBOYM

British Royal Navy destroyer HMS Defender entered Batumi port on June 26 following an incident with the Russian military forces in the Black Sea, off the coast of Crimea. In response to the warship's arrival, the Embassy of the United Kingdom to Georgia tweeted:

"Welcoming HMS Defender in beautiful Batumi! Fantastic demonstration of the UK's work with Georgia on regional security".

Earlier today, the ship has hosted members of the government of Georgia and the government of Adjara's Autonomous Republic:

"Honoured to welcome guests from Government of Georgia on HMS Defender.

Great Britain is committed to Black Sea security, stability and prosperity, and to Georgia's ter-

ritorial integrity and sovereignty.

We'll continue to work with Georgia to safeguard democracy, international law and regional security," reads the UK Embassy's post.

Earlier this week, as the British destroyer was passing through the waters off the coast



Upon HMS Defender's arrival, British Embassy announced that its visit is a demonstration of the "close cooperation between UK and Georgia promoting defence and security in the Black Sea region."

## Germany signs landmark EUR 23.7 million grant financing agreement to support protection of biodiversity and forests in Georgia



On June 24, 2021, the Minister of Finance, Lasha Khutsishvili, and the Regional Director of KfW Development Bank, Klaus Veigel, signed a EUR 23.7 million grant financing agreement funded by the German Government to support protection of biodiversity and forests in Georgia. The agreement provides for the continuation of the German engagement in this field which began in the 1990s.

In its first part, the project supports the establishment of several new protected areas and strengthens the existing ones. This activity will also contribute to the development of rural areas, especially through the promotion of eco-tourism. The second part assists the Autonomous Republic of Adjara in the modernization of its forest management. A special focus is put on the sustainable use of firewood and on adaptation to the growing threats from climate change.

The German Ambassador, Hubert Knirsch, highlighted the importance of nature protection for the future development of Georgia: "By pursuing its ambitious biodiversity protection agenda, Georgia safeguards national treasures, precious resources that benefit both tourism and agriculture."



on July 1 and lasts until July 5. The LGBTQI+ activists and their supporters plan to gather and march in the center of Tbilisi, on Rustaveli Avenue.

On the other hand, ultra-right groups are also planning to gather on Rustaveli avenue to prevent LGBTQI+ activists from holding the march. While LGBTQI+ activists expect security guarantees from the govern-

ment, while the ultra-conservative groups are calling on the government to 'stop propaganda.'

The Prime Minister of Georgia talked about many other things while presenting his report to the parliament. This included the relations of Georgia with its international partners, the socio-economic situation in the country, as well as future prospects.

## PM Garibashvili delivers a report in Georgian Parliament

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asked the Prime Minister about the upcoming Pride Week planned in Georgia in July. According to the PM, Georgia law

guarantees the safety and security of every Georgian citizen.

"I would like to remind you that while we were working on the Visa Liberalization Action Plan, one of the requirements

was the adoption of an anti-discrimination law, which was adopted during my term as a prime minister," added Garibashvili.

Pride Week begins in Tbilisi



According to Garibashvili, Georgia is ready for Euro-Atlantic integration