

SSS dismisses information about presence of person in Georgia connected with Russian military company Wagner



"No Russian citizens connected with the Wagner Group are in Georgia," SSS stated.

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

The Georgian State Security Service (SSS) has dismissed the information spread by the opposition-minded Mtavari Arkhi about the presence of a Russian citizen in Georgia in connection with the Russian private military company Wagner. According to the SSS, "individuals linked with the Russian paramilitary group have not been detected at Georgian borders over the past several years". Mtavari Arkhi has accused the Georgian

State Security Service of not taking relevant steps against Russian citizens connected with Wagner, as well as against the 4 Georgian members of the Wagner group. The Wagner Group is a paramilitary company founded in Russia, whose alleged head is a close ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

SSS stressed that there are no individuals or organizations in Georgia that may be connected with the Russian private military company "Wagner", or pose a threat to state security in any



The Georgian State Security Service says that spreading 'disinformation' is aimed at discrediting the state and the SSS.

way. SSS also dismissed allegations by the same media outlet about the possible Georgian citizens living in the occupied territories, who may also have been affiliated with the private military company Wagner. The statement stresses that the majority of the persons named by Mtavari Arkhi are connected with the occupation regime of Abkhazia and they are not in the territory

controlled by the Georgian government. As mentioned in the statement, if any of those people attempt or cross the territory controlled by the central government of Georgia, appropriate measures will be taken against them. SSG states that persons related to the mentioned group manage to cross not only into the territory of Georgia but also different countries of the world and

once they are identified appropriate measures are taken. According to the agency, Georgia has put such persons under control since 2019, they are not on the territory of Georgia now and 'will not be able to enter in the future'. According to the SSS, all the 'disinformation' that have been spread serves the purpose of discrediting the State Security Service.

UNDP and Social Service Agency of Georgia start new initiative to eradicate extreme poverty

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with financial support from the Government of Sweden, is expanding cooperation with the Social Service Agency (SSA) of Georgia's Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from

the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs to eradicate extreme poverty and support the most vulnerable population in Georgia.

According to the official statement of UNDP, following the Memorandum of

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Within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNDP and the Social Service Agency of Georgia, UNDP will study the cause of unemployment among socially vulnerable populations in Georgia.



The new initiative of UNDP and SSA is aimed at empowering vulnerable families in Georgia.

Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 3.1170; Euro - 3.6768; GBP - 4.2874; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.2381; Swiss Franc - 3.4077

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

WHO and UNICEF call on schools to open up in a safe environment

Deputy Minister of Health of Georgia Tamar Gabunia announced that against the background of the difficult epidemic situation in the country, they will not make a decision to open schools until the infection rates stabilize.

“Continuing education in the classroom is a preferred model for everyone. Both UNICEF and WHO support this approach - the last thing that needs to be regulated is education,” she said, noting that this issue will be discussed with the Ministry of Education and then the decision will be made by the Coordination Council. As Gabunia stated at the briefing after the end of the Vaccination Council, the number of vaccinated teachers should be taken into account in order to create a safe environment in schools and, consequently, to continue their education in the classrooms.

Despite the worldwide spread of the coronavirus delta strain, the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia are urging schools to open up and create a safe environment by taking steps to minimize the spread of the virus.

Organizations say creating a safe environment in the school can be achieved by involving

teachers and other school staff in the national immunization target groups and vaccinating them along with other vulnerable groups.

“Children aged 12 and over whose medical history significantly increases the risk of severe Covid-19 disease should be vaccinated. It is also important to improve the school environment with better ventilation of classrooms, segregation of children as needed, physical distancing and regular testing of children and staff.” read the UNICEF statement.

According to Gabunia, the vaccination of citizens aged 16 to 18 is quite high. As for the vaccination of children over 12 years of age, discussions are underway in this regard and Georgia is waiting for the recommendation of the WHO.

According to Hans Kluge, Regional Director for Europe at the WHO, it is vital that education in classrooms continues uninterrupted in the European region.

“The pandemic caused a catastrophic disruption of the educa-

tional process, which history does not remember. Consequently, it is vital to continue teaching in the classrooms smoothly in the European region. It is extremely important for children’s education, mental health and social skills that schools promote in children, for them to be happy and productive members of society. The pandemic will be forgotten after a while, but before that our main task should be to educate the children in a safe environment in the school building. We should not take away the opportunities we deserve.” he said urging all countries not to close schools, and all schools to take the necessary measures to reduce the risk of the spread of coronavirus and its various variants.

The joint statement also notes that the rapidly expanding Delta variant has created new challenges for this school year. An increase in coronavirus cases in the community also increases the likelihood of its spread in school. Therefore, everyone should contribute to reducing the spread of the virus.

“The available data show that complete vaccination against Covid-19 significantly reduces the risk of acute illness and death. That is why when they call for vaccination, everyone should be vaccinated and take the full course of vaccination,” the statement reads.

According to Klug, to end the pandemic, we must rapidly and evenly increase vaccination rates in all countries. This includes supporting vaccine production worldwide, sharing vaccine doses, and assisting the most vulnerable groups of the

population. We also need to continue to take proven public health measures, such as testing, identifying, tracking, isolating and quarantining.

According to Philippe Corey, UNICEF Deputy Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, it is unacceptable for children and adolescents to run the risk of missing another school year.

To ensure the openness and safety of schools, the WHO, the UN Children’s Fund, and UNESCO have approved 8 recommendations for the school learning process developed by the WHO Regional Office for Europe during the Covid-19. These recommendations are intended for the 53 member states of the WHO European Region, which include the following:

- 1.Schools should be the first to open and the last to close;
- 2.Develop a testing strategy;
- 3.Develop effective measures to reduce risk;
- 4.Protect the mental health and social well-being

- 5.Protect the most vulnerable and marginalized children;
- 6.Improve the school environment;
- 7.Involve children and adults in the decision-making process;
- 8.Actively vaccinate to keep children in schools.

The coronavirus detection rate for the last 7 days in Georgia is 10.04%. The current positive rate is 8.94%, and the last 14 days - 10.44%.

As of August 30, a total of 1,164,402 vaccinations were administered in Georgia, according to the National Center for Disease Control.

According to them, 383,454 people - 13.4% of the adult population - have been fully vaccinated, and 780,948 people - 27.3% of the adult population have been vaccinated with a single dose.

According to the Deputy Minister of Health the epidemic indicators indicate that the spread of coronavirus in the country has already reached its peak and now the main thing is how fast the rate of decline will be. Gabunia says, this depends on the intensity of preventive measures, activity in the vaccination process and where the virus transmission chain will be interrupted.



Gabunia says that it will not be decided to open schools until the epidemic situation stabilizes.



The coronavirus detection rate for the last 7 days is 10.04%.

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Understanding signed on 30 August, UNDP will help the SSA design new evidence-based

solutions to increase access to employment and support the vulnerable populations. The process will include the examination of the social status of the families registered in a social vulnerability database to reveal the causes of unemployment. As the UNDP statement stresses, emphasis will be made on the rural communities across Georgia.

“Effective and targeted social

aid offers immediate relief to the most vulnerable families. To leave no one behind, such service must ensure that people fall out of poverty and enjoy the benefits of economic and social development. Achieving this goal is the focus of our strategic partnership with the Social Service Agency,” announced UNDP Acting Head Anna Chernyshova. “Social service is one of the crucial functions of the state,” she

added.

According to the SSA Acting Director Levan Gogodze, UNDP will assist the SSA to carry out a functional assessment of the institution’s work and will also research the families registered in a social vulnerability database. “This memorandum is important to each of our beneficiaries because improved services for the most vulnerable will help reduce extreme poverty in

Georgia,” he said.

According to the statement, UNDP will continue assisting the SSA’s institutional strengthening in terms of improving critical services for the most vulnerable groups of Georgia’s society. UNDP will also help the SSA to assess its institutional capacities, reveal the gaps and implement a staff training program.

Weather

Tuesday, August 31

Day ☀️ Clear High: 36°C

Night 🌙 Clear Low: 22°C

Wednesday, September 1

Day ☁️ Partly Cloudy High: 35°C

Night 🌙 Clear Low: 21°C

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