

Another Rally Held in Support of Ex-President Saakashvili

The rally was held in Rustavi, near the #12 penitentiary institution

By NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

A rally in support of ex-President Mikheil Saakashvili was held yesterday in front of the Rustavi #12 penitentiary institutions. Citizens, including politicians and activists, gathered to encourage Saakashvili and protest his imprisonment.

Such protests, according to Rustavi mayoral candidate Davit Kirkitadze, will in the end yield results, and Saakashvili will soon be released. The day before, a protest in support of Saakashvili was also held in Batumi.

The protests come after weeks of Saakashvili's arrest. Since being imprisoned, the ex-president has been starving in protest.

Yesterday, Saakashvili's ex-teammate and ex-prime minister Davit Bakradze visited him in the prison.

"He is looking forward to the second round of the elections, he is hopeful about the Georgian people's unity, and he is optimistic about the opposition's win in the second round. However, the three-week starvation has taken its toll on his physical condition, and as the doctors say, his health could critically worsen at any moment," said Bakradze.

The doctors and attorneys of the former president warn that his health is rapidly declining, and he has to be hospitalized in an outside clinic since the prison hospital is not well-equipped to handle patients in his condition.

"Saakashvili's greatest risk right now is heart failure; consequently, there should be a second level of cardiology service in the prison hospital, specifically interventional cardiology. Although there



Since being imprisoned, the ex-president has been on a hunger strike

are doctors of various profiles in the prison hospital, different types of services cannot be provided. Saakashvili's health concerns encompass a very wide range of medical needs," Nika Gvaramia, Saakashvili's attorney and the director of TV Mtavari, explained.

On October 23, Saakashvili's personal

doctor, Nikoloz Kipshidze, said that the doctor's council agreed that if necessary, the ex-president should be transferred to a multi-profile, high-class clinic. He also noted that the Ministry of Justice officials that he met were open to such consideration. Later that day, Minister of Justice Rati Bregadze called the doctor's remarks

untrue, and that Saakashvili would not be transferred to an outside hospital.

The leaders of the ruling Georgian Dream party are calling Saakashvili's health concerns 'simulation' and 'clownery'.

"These speculations will increase in the coming days, as we get closer to the elections. ... One of Saakashvili's plans is to simulate something as if he is sick and so on. We will be witnesses to this clownery before the elections at the end of the day, everyone is very tired of it," said the ruling party leader Irakli Kobakhidze.

He added that Saakashvili is just another prisoner and therefore should be treated like the other inmates.

Ex-President Saakashvili, according to Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili, has an illusion that if he is transferred to a private clinic, his supporters will mobilize and release him on October 30, the date of the second round of the local elections.

"Saakashvili's direct order was that he would start, let's call it what it is, simulation as if his condition was getting worse, etc. so that he would somehow be transferred to a private clinic. ... He's under the impression that on October 30 his supporters will mobilize and release him from the prison," said Gharibashvili.

Gharibashvili further commented on the possibility of transferring the former president to a private hospital, saying that "if prisoner Saakashvili requires more tests, all of the necessary equipment is available in the prison hospital. This is our decision, and it will not be reconsidered."

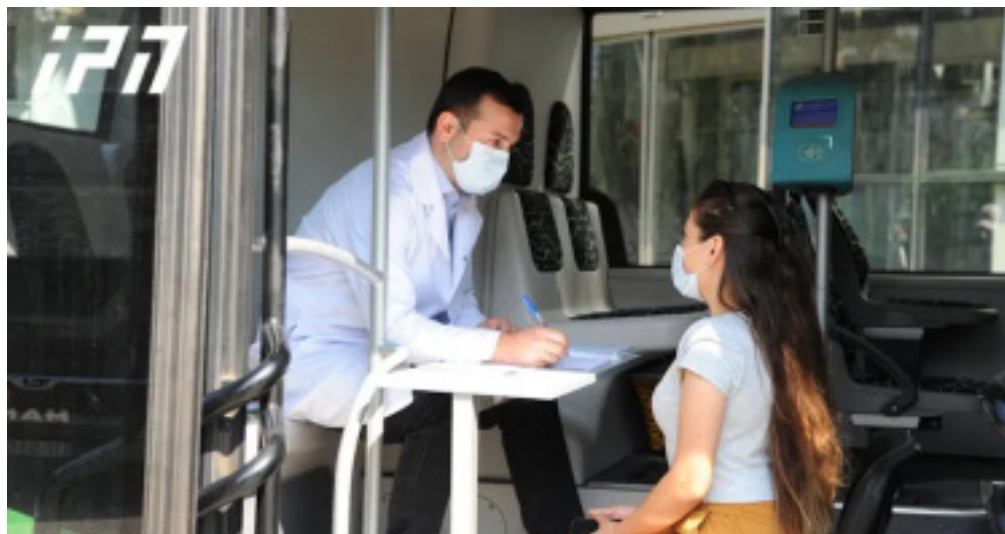
Saakashvili was arrested on October 1. He has been on a hunger strike for 25 days. The doctors' council working on his case recommended his hospitalization. It is still unknown when and where Saakashvili will be transferred for further medical testing.



The doctors and attorneys of the former president warned that his health is rapidly declining

32.4% Vaccinated, PM Says No Need to Make Jobs Mandatory

The daily jabs administered in Georgia is around 5,000



The pace of vaccination dropped significantly in October

Georgia aims to vaccinate 60 percent of its population before the end of the year

BY NIKA GAMTSEMLIDZE

Over the past week, Georgia saw a surge in the daily Covid-19 cases. Although the number of confirmed Covid-19 cases has increased significantly over the past few days, the number of people getting vaccines has dropped.

Amiran Gamkrelidze, head of the National Center for Disease Control, believes that amid the background of the complicated epidemiological situation and the reduced pace of vaccination, vaccines against coronavirus should become mandatory for certain

groups at least.

By the end of the second year of the pandemic, he also talked about a lack of information among the population.

He said that the case about mandatory vaccination should be resolved in November. According to him, some people in the regions of the country have said that they will only get vaccinated if it becomes mandatory.

He said that there could be some kind of barriers and restrictions for people who are not vaccinated in the country. "We can vaccinate about 35-37% people without any restrictions

and force, but after that, it can get hard," said Gamkrelidze.

The number of vaccines administered in a day has decreased dramatically in November. There are about 4-6 thousand covid vaccines administered in the country a day.

The number of fully vaccinated people in the country has only increased by 3 percent. According to the plans of the government, at least 60 percent of the population should be vaccinated by the end of the year.

Amiran Gamkrelidze also came out with the initiative of imposing restrictions for the

unvaccinated people in August. The Minister of Health, Ekaterine Tikaradze, still believes that the current epidemiological situation does not provide grounds for imposing additional restrictions.

On the other hand, the Prime Minister of the country, Irakli Garibashvili opposes the idea of mandatory vaccination.

"I want to make it clear that I, as the Chairman of the Coordination Council and the Prime Minister, will not allow mandatory vaccination," said Garibashvili.

Garibashvili also said that

the citizens have the right to free choice. According to him, he did his best to get more than enough vaccines for Georgia on time. "We brought millions of doses of the vaccine; I was personally involved in the negotiation processes. We need to convince our citizens to get the vaccine, not force them", said Garibashvili.

On Saturday, October 23, 42 people have died because of Covid-19. On Sunday, 43 people died. A total of 7903 were reported in the country, out of this 3436 on Sunday, and 4467 on Saturday.

Hungarian Republic Day

You may have noticed that on the 23rd of October the famous TV tower of Tbilisi majestically overlooking this beautiful city was illuminated red, white and green. Red, white and green are the colours of the national flag of Hungary, the tricolour that was raised high by the freedom fighters on the streets of Budapest on 23rd of October, 1956. Red, white and green - a nation demanding to be free, independent and sovereign, values

that are worth standing up for, to fight for and, for many, even to die for. Without their bravery and sacrifice, we would not be free, independent and sovereign today. It is our privilege and duty to remember, to pass on our story and to learn from history.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for looking up to the Red, White and Green flag of Hungary and commemorating with us the Revolution of 1956. Georgia and Hungary – friends, partners, allies.



H.E. Anna Maria Siko



Weather

Monday, October 25

Day Overcast
High: 13°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 5°C

Tuesday, October 26

Day Partly Cloudy
High: 14°C

Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 5°C

Anna Maria Siko

Ambassador of Hungary

published by
The Messenger

43, Chovelidze st., Tbilisi, 0108, Georgia
Founded by Prof.

Zaza Gachechiladze
Tamar Gachechiladze
Publisher

Mob.: +995 599 565621; +995 577 760000
E-mail: messenger@messenger.com.ge
http://www.messenger.com.ge/

Nino Metreveli
Commercial Director

Mariam Mchedlidze
Editor-in-Chief

Natalia Kochiashvili
Executive Editor

Khatuna Gogichaishvili
Layout Designer, Photographer

The Messenger welcomes your contributions. If you are interested in submitting an article or news item please contact.

All contributions should be submitted by e-mail.

The Messenger Georgia's English language daily is an independent newspaper, and,

therefore, the opinions expressed in some articles do not necessarily coincide with those of the newspaper. We take no responsibility for any claims made in advertisements.

The Messenger preserves the style of a source written in English where possible.

The Friends of the Georgian Ballet (FGB) hosted a reception to celebrate the successful premiere of Pinocchio with State Ballet of Georgia Artistic Director Nina Ananiashvili, the production's internationally renowned Swedish Choreographer Par Isberg and French Costume Designer Jerome Kaplan, and the Ballet Company's Administrative Team.

The FGB Committee had the honour of welcoming Members of the Friends of the Georgian Ballet, Ambassadors accredited to Georgia, representatives of the diplomatic corps and the business community to the event held at the Wyndham Grand Tbilisi Hotel on Saturday 16 October 2021.





