

By KHATIA BZHALAVA

Saakashvili is Feeling Weak and Can Barely Walk, Says his Lawyer

It has been 49 days since the third president of Georgia went on hunger strike, taking only liquids and vitamins. Georgian Justice Minister Rati Bregadze has stated that a group of physicians will report on ex-president Saakashvili's health daily to eliminate misinformation, claiming that the former president is receiving 'all necessary medical services' in Gldani Prison No.18 hospital.

According to the Special Penitentiary Service of Georgia, the health condition of former president Mikheil Saakashvili is stable and as Deputy head of the Medical Department of the facility, Giorgi Chidrashvili reports, major parameters such as blood pressure, pulse, respiration are within the norm.

Saakashvili's lawyer, Nika Gvaramia, told the journalist later that the ex-president feels very weak and can barely walk. "He felt dizzy and could not stand steadily. Saakashvili feels very bad. I think the countdown is already on," Gvaramia claimed.

As the press release of the Strasbourg court reads, the European Court of Human Rights has decided to indicate interim measures in the case Saakashvili v. Georgia concerning the applicant's health situation. The ECHR has requested that the Georgian government inform them about Saakashvili's health situation, ensure his safety in prison, and provide him with appropriate medical care. The Court has also urged the applicant to call off his hunger strike.

Meanwhile, opposition parties and Saakashvili's supporters are holding regular rallies demanding Saakashvili's transfer from a prison hospital to a civil clinic. The former president released a letter from the prison hospital on November 11, saying that he is ready to call off his hun-



The third President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili was arrested in Tbilisi on October 1, after being in political exile for eight years.

ger strike if taken to a multifunctional clinic for rehabilitation. On November 15, the ex-president's son, Eduard Saakashvili, released a video address, in which he notes that his father is 'in danger' and urges the government to place him in a civil clinic.

"When my father was arrested, I sincerely thought that he would be given

proper conditions, treated with dignity and that his health would not be threatened but we saw what happened," said Saakashvili, claiming that he is startled by the way his father was treated following his arrest. According to him, what is happening now has gone beyond political justice and turned into very dangerous retribution. "We face either indifference

or, in the worse scenario, premeditated murder," he said.

Yesterday, a trial hearing was held which concerned Saakashvili's illegal border crossing from Ukraine to Georgia. The Special Penitentiary Service of Georgia has refused to bring him to the court, citing 'prevention of provocations by opposition activists', as well as complications in Saakashvili's health. The former president has refused online participation in the trial hearing, stating that he wishes to attend it in person.

Saakashvili was convicted in absentia in 2018 for abuse of power and was sentenced to six years in prison. He has also been charged with five other offences, including misuse of state funds and illegal rally dispersal. He was arrested in Tbilisi on October 1.



Saakashvili released a letter from a prison hospital on November 11, saying that he is ready to call off his hunger strike if taken to a multifunctional clinic for rehabilitation.

Politics

Irakli Kobakhidze Says We Must Separate Saakashvili's Friends from the Country Allies



Parliament Suspends Two Opposition MPs' Mandates at Their Requests

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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 3.1489; Euro - 3.5762; GBP - 4.2359; 100 Russian Ruble - 3.0419; Swiss Franc - 3.3928

Irakli Kobakhidze Says We Must Separate Saakashvili's Friends from the Country Allies

By THE MESSENGER STAFF

“We must separate the friends of Mikheil Saakashvili and the friends of the country,” Chairman of the Georgian Dream party, leader of the parliamentary majority.

“We are talking about a small group. The vast majority of our international partners see and assess everything, including Mikheil Saakashvili's past, present, and future. There is a small group of lobbyists, including one of the MEPs who arrived in Georgia.

They have long been lobbyists for the criminal political force and share responsibility for crimes committed before 2012. We are talking about the following crimes: - Torture, inhuman treatment, handing over territories, and so on. They were lobbyists even at that time. Of course, if they continue such lobbying activities, we will have to call them patrons of criminals,” Irakli Kobakhidze said.



Georgian Public Defender Nino Lomjaria

“This is very disappointing. We recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the ombudsman of Ukraine. She also had a very good working meeting with the Minister of Justice. Nino Lomjaria stated that “it is disappointing that the Public

Defender of Ukraine was not allowed to visit the prison of the former President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili.”

It is very unexpected and unacceptable that the ombudsman of Ukraine was denied permission to visit her citizens and enter the prison.

I would also like to say that the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine is a National Human Rights Institute, which means that this institution is recognized by the international community as fully complying with international principles and standards, which should be guided by the National Institutes of Human Rights.

I support the office of the ombudsman of Ukraine, and I think that Georgia, not only as a friendly country but also as a country that respects human rights organizations, should promote the transparency of this process as much as possible,” Lomjaria said.

Parliament Suspends Two Opposition MPs' Mandates at Their Requests

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The Georgian parliament has suspended the MP status of Lelo party founder Mamuka Khazaradze and leader of the Girchi-More Freedom opposition party Zurab Japaridze prematurely with 79 votes in the 150-member state legislature. The discussion of the issue was based on the appeal of the deputies themselves.

After the second round of local self-government, Khazaradze initially announced on October 31 that he would leave parliament because, he said, ‘it makes no sense to deal with people who stab them in the back and cut off their voices’. He will not have a deputy in the parliament, as the party's electoral list has been removed from the register at the CEC.

On November 1, Zurab Japaridze announced his resignation from parliament. His re-



Zurab Girchi Japaridze and Mamuka Khazaradze decided to leave the parliament following the 2021 self-government elections.

placement will be Herman Sabo, a member of Girchi, who told the public that he would run for parliament if Japaridze was ousted.

Both MPs submitted an official request to parliament to have their status terminated in

protest of what they claim were the ‘fabricated’ results of the recent municipal elections in October. They are demanding the annulment of the election results as well.

It should be noted that 2 fac-

tions will be disbanded - Lelo and Reform Group. According to the regulations, 7 deputies are needed to form a faction, and without Japaridze and Khazaradze, 6-6 members remain in the factions.

Nona Mamulashvili, Ana Tsitlidze and Levan Varshalomidze, members of the United National Movement, announced their resignation after the local elections, but did not make an official statement, as Mikheil Saakashvili sent a letter on November 2 stating that the faction should participate in the draft amendments before leaving office. Until then, the faction remains in boycott mode. Currently 147 MPs remain in parliament as the state legislature also suspended the status for the head of the United National Movement opposition party, Nika Melia, in early October.

Although Khazaradze has left the parliament, the Lelo faction remains in the legislature, which boycotted the parliamentary activities, but clarified that it will take part in the voting on the constitutional amendments. Recall that Lelo received 2.71% of the vote in the proportional part of the race, came fourth after the GD, the UNM and the Gakharia's For Georgia parties. Lelo had won four seats in parliament in the 2020 parliamentary elections.

Weather

Wednesday, November 17

Day Mostly Cloudy

High: 6°C

Night Clear

Low: 0°C

Thursday, November 18

Day Partly Cloudy

High: 11°C

Night Mostly Cloudy

Low: 2°C

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