

Saakashvili Transferred to Vivamed Clinic

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The third President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, has been transferred from the Rustavi Penitentiary to the Vivamed Medical Center in Tbilisi.

After visiting Saakashvili in late April doctors of the council set up by the ombudsman said that his condition had worsened due to anorexia and depression and required timely and complex neuro-psychological and physical rehabilitation. Following the publication of the group's report, members of Mikheil Saakashvili's family, supporters and members of the United National Movement (UNM) began rallies demanding his transfer abroad for medical treatment.

On May 10, the Ministry of Justice of Georgia offered Saakashvili to be transferred to the Vivamedi Clinic. On the same day, the ex-president's lawyer Nika Gvaramia stated that he would agree on the condition that his family members, personal physician Nika Kipshidze, and experts from the Empathy Center be

allowed to visit him regularly, as well as lawyers and MPs. Among the conditions it was also named that all examinations, diagnostics, prescribing and determination of the next stages of treatment or recovery for Saakashvili are done on a parity basis, with the involvement of Empathy Center and, with the consent of the members of the Council created by the Public Defender.

On May 11, the Ministry of Justice called on Saakashvili to use the medical services offered for his health care without reservations in his own interests. On the same day, after meeting with him in prison, Eka Kherkheulidze, UNM member told the media that no bargaining or preconditions should take place at such a time.

Vivamedi multidisciplinary clinic, located at the 12th kilometer of Agmashenebeli Alley in Tbilisi, is one of the medical clinics where the Penitentiary Service transfers prisoner patients for treatment on the basis of a cooperation agreement.



TSU Agrees to Holding Spring Semester in Hybrid Format



By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

Tbilisi State University released an announcement, according to which the educational process in the spring semester of the 2021-2022 academic year will be held in a mixed (hybrid) format from May 13.

A corresponding change was made in the Rector's order of August 2, 2021 on determining the terms of the study process.

"According to the rector's order, the decision on the format of the educational program or its components is made by the relevant faculty taking into account the specifics of the programs. In addition, the final and additional exams for the spring semester of the 2021-2022 academic year will be conducted in a non-distance format. Exceptions will be allowed for those students who are in the occupied territory of Georgia," the statement reads.

The student movement has responded to the administration's decision

According to the statement, the new wording of the rector's order, on the one hand, provides for the provision of hybrid

teaching, although the proposed format of the exams is fully in auditoriums, which is unacceptable to them, because 'it incurs costs, which, given the difficult social background, will make it impossible to attend the final exams'.

From May 2 (or the remaining half of the semester) at TSU, by the decision of the University, the teaching process was fully transferred to the auditorium.

Students demanded to have an opportunity to study remotely during the remaining period, as returning to the auditorium is associated with many socio-economic barriers that cannot be addressed during the period given to students. They say students living in the region are unable to arrive for only 2 months, facing many barriers due to increased rents. Students also raise the issue of housing policy at the university.

According to the university, full auditory studying is a necessary decision to improve the quality of education, because, they say, no other format - neither fully remote nor hybrid - can provide the necessary quality of teaching.

Patriarchate of the Georgian Orthodox Church Releases Statement Regarding May 17

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The Patriarchate of the Georgian Orthodox Church has released a statement on the events scheduled for May 17.

According to the statement, on May 17, the 'Day of Protection of Family Purity and Strength' established by the Patriarch, 'prayer procession will be dedicated this year, on the one hand, to Family Day, and on the other hand - to peace in Georgia, Ukraine and around the world.

"We have repeatedly stated that our greatest heartache is the hostilities that Russia is carrying out in Ukraine. The war is terrible; It's sacrificing the lives of thousands of people, it's sacrificing family

happiness." In addition, according to a statement issued by the Patriarchate, it is planned to bring the Atskuri icon of the All-Holy Virgin from Turkey to Tbilisi.

An exhibition of children's paintings on the theme of family and peace is planned for the same day in the yard of Sioni Cathedral.

In 2014, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia Ilia II established May 17 as Family Holiness Day.

May 17 is the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia. Usually, LGBTQ+ people in Georgia do not get to celebrate this day properly because violent groups prevent them from doing so.



EXCHANGE RATES: US DOLLAR - 3.0261 | EURO - 3.1934 | GBP - 3.7387 | 100 RUSSIAN RUBLE - 4.4197 | SWISS FRANC - 3.0567 |

Georgian Finance Minister to be Vice-Chair of EBRD Board of Governors Through 2022-2023



► Georgian Finance Minister Lasha Khutsishvili at European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Annual Meeting and Business Forum in Morocco.

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

Georgian Finance Minister Lasha Khutsishvili will hold the position of the Vice-Chairman of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Board of Governors for 2022-2023, the Ministry of Finance has announced. As the Georgian Finance Ministry reports, Austria will chair the Board for a one-year term, while the second Vice-Chairman will be selected from Jordan. The decision was made at the EBRD Annual

Meeting and Business Forum, hosted in Morocco.

Khutsishvili delivered a speech at the EBRD Annual Meeting and talked about Georgia's potential in generating green energy. He also reaffirmed Georgia's strong support for Ukraine, its sovereignty, and territorial integrity and stressed the importance of implementing international sanctions against Russia for its invasion of the country.

The theme of this year's meeting was 'Responding to Challenges in a Turbu-

lent World'. As the Finance Ministry reports, Khutsishvili focused on the package approved by the Board of Directors of EBRD in Ukraine and other countries, aimed at strengthening private sector support in areas such as trade promotion, energy security, and development of vital infrastructure, refugee support, and more.

The Finance Minister said that the latest developments in the world revealed that energy independence and security have become a priority around the world. In this context, he emphasized the importance of strengthening Georgia's energy independence and focused on the country's potential to generate green energy.

"We are ready to develop a legislative framework that encourages investment in renewable energy. The Black Sea floor cable project also has great potential, as it plays an important role in connecting Georgia to the European network," the Minister noted.

According to him, it is also necessary to continue structural reforms to strengthen the economic foundation of the country and increase resilience to shocks.

As part of the EBRD Annual Meeting, the Minister of Finance is scheduled to meet with the Bank's First Vice President Jürgen Rigterink. A meeting with representatives of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation is also planned.



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NEWS IN BRIEF

PREPARED BY THE MESSENGER STAFF

Georgian Citizen Sentenced to 5 years and 6 months of Illegal Imprisonment in Occupied Tskhinvali

Mamuka Chkhikvadze, illegally detained in occupied Tskhinvali, was sentenced to 5 years and 6 months in prison. According to the State Security Service, the illegal decision was preceded by the illegal detention of Mamuka Chkhikvadze by the Russian occupation forces and the fabrication of fabricated charges against him.

"The sentencing of Mamuka Chkhikvadze to unlawful detention has once again demonstrated the inhuman and criminal nature of the occupation, for which the Russian Federation has full responsibility as a force exercising control over the occupied territories.

"From the very first day of Mamuka Chkhikvadze's illegal detention, the 'hotline' has been regularly activated and the issue of his unconditional release has been actively discussed at the meetings of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism," the statement reads. Chkhikvadze was detained by the occupation forces near the village of Zemo Nikozi on December 12 last year.

European Council to Discuss Ukraine's EU Membership at June Summit

According to the French Foreign Ministry, the European Council will consider Ukraine's accession to the European Union at its June summit.

"The French president and foreign minister have repeatedly stated that Ukraine is part of the European family. Ukraine's application for membership is now being considered by the European Commission and will be discussed at a European Council summit in June," the French Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Arriving in Ukraine on April 8, Ursula von der Layen, President of the European Commission, handed over a questionnaire to President Zelensky on EU membership. According to Lain, this step has further accelerated the process of granting EU membership status to Ukraine. In a few days, Georgia and Moldova received the questionnaire as well. The countries have already submitted the first and second parts of the questionnaire to the European Commission.

FRIDAY		MAY 13	
Day	Partly cloudy	High: 21°C	
Night	Clear	Low: 10°C	
SATURDAY		MAY 14	
Day	Sunny	High: 25°C	
Night	Partly cloudy	Low: 13°C	

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