

BY KHATIA BZHALAVA

## PM Marks 8<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Signing Association Agreement with EU

On Monday, Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili marked the 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Association Agreement with the European Union, calling it a 'historic date'.

According to him, a few tangible outcomes have been achieved by the country since. Firstly, he talked about the free trade agreement made with the EU, through which Georgian entrepreneurs are exporting their goods to the EU without any barriers. The second major achievement is visa-free travel, according to PM. All citizens of Georgia travel to EU countries without visas with Georgian passports, which, according to the PM, is also a tangible result. The third achievement is Georgia's European perspective as recently recognized by European leaders.

As Garibashvili noted, by granting Georgia a European perspective, the European leaders pledged that Georgia will become a member of the EU. The head of the Government stressed the ruling Georgian Dream

party had obtained these three 'main achievements' in 'just 8-10 years.'

Garibashvili also underlined that the process of Association Agreement negotiations was delayed under the previous authorities.

According to the Prime Minister, far-reaching human rights, penitentiary, educational, and science reforms have been implemented alongside those in the areas of innovations, agriculture, transport, public service, energy, and regional development.

"believe that we will receive the [EU membership] candidate status very soon and we will continue to advance and develop our country. This is that real thing that the country has been able to do under our governance", he stressed, adding that on the initiative of the ruling party Georgia's foreign policy was defined as Euro-Atlantic on a constitutional level.



Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili.

## Mikheil Chinchaladze Re-elected as Chairman of Tbilisi Court of Appeals



BY NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The High Council of Justice has re-elected Mikheil Chinchaladze as the Chairman of the Tbilisi Court of Appeals for a five-year term. Council members unanimously supported Chinchaladze's candidacy.

Prior to the session, Ana Dolidze, a former non-judicial member of the High Council of Justice, said that the obstacles to Georgia's European integration were the fault of the exist-

ing clan in the court.

Representatives of the civil sector criticized the candidacy of Chinchaladze as the Chairman of the Tbilisi Court of Appeal. Among them is Nazi Janezashvili, a former member of the High Council of Justice. Court Watch, the NGO chaired by her, was studying the process of electing the chairman of the Court of Appeal. Janezashvili announced after the trial that 53 judges of the Court of Appeals supported Chinchaladze's candi-

dacy during the consultations.

The President of the Court of Appeal shall be elected from among the judges of the same Court. He is appointed to the position by the High Council of Justice. Only Mikheil Chinchaladze applied for the post of the Chairman of the Court of Appeals in the High Council of Justice. He has been holding this position since 2017, and his 5-year term expired in May.

NGOs working on the judiciary and the court of justice called on members of the High Council of Justice not to support Chinchaladze's candidacy, calling him a 'clan member' in court and claiming that it will be harder to attain the EU candidacy status with 'Murusidze-Chinchaladze Clan' ruling the judiciary.

A few days ago, Elene Khoshtaria, the leader of the Droa party, called on Georgia's international partners to sanction judges, following the businessmen. 9 judges nominated by Khoshtaria included Chinchaladze as well.

### The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

#### Georgian Choir to Perform in Sistine Chapel

For the first time in the history of Georgia, the choir of the Trinity Cathedral is holding a concert at the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. Ancient samples of Georgian folklore, "You are the vineyard" and many other works will be performed at the event.

The concert will be attended by the President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili and the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, Tea Tsulukiani. The Patriarch expressed his desire to hold the concert and the event is supported by the Ministry of Culture.

Inviting musicians from other countries to the Sistine Chapel and St. Peter's Basilica is a rare occurrence.

On June 29, the team of the Trinity Cathedral will perform Ave Maria written by Ilia II.

#### Giuli Alasania Says Saakashvili's Feeling Weak

According to Giuli Alasania, third president Mikheil Saakashvili's mother, he still feels weak and finds it difficult to maintain balance.

As she told reporters, she provided Saakashvili with information about her visit to Brussels.

As Giuli Alasania notes, Brussels knows everything about the current situation in Georgia.

"He obviously has a weakness because as soon as he got up, he nearly fell down. In terms of health, he seems to be in the same situation. I informed him of my visit to Brussels, of course, because we had a very busy few days. There are a group of people who are actively working on the issue of Georgia. In some cases, they knew our situation better than we did. Their faces lit up as soon as they heard my son's name," Alasania said.



# Ship with Sanctioned Cargo Leaves Batumi Port

By NATALIA KOCHIASHVILI

The Revenue Service of the Ministry of Finance of Georgia disseminated information regarding the ship entering the port of Batumi and the sanctioned cargo it was carrying. According to the service, a Turkish-flagged ship entered the port of Batumi on June 26. During the inspection, it was found that neither the ship nor its owner were included in the list of international sanctions, 'therefore, the ship was allowed to enter the port of Georgia, which was clarified by the Maritime Transport Agency'.

As a result of the inspection, it was determined that the goods placed on the ship were cargo to be sent to Turkey, which was

also an oil product sent from a company under international sanctions. Hence, the shipowner was refused to unload the cargo and carry out further customs procedures.

"At the moment, the Turkish-flagged ship is leaving the port of Batumi with cargo," the Revenue Service of the Ministry of Finance said.

On June 27, the Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia Levan Davitashvili confirmed in a comment to the media in the government administration that a ship whose cargo belonged to a sanctioned company entered the port of Batumi, but the Georgian customs authorities did not approve the cargo.

Initially, information about

the entry of a Turkish-flagged ship into the port of Batumi, which was allegedly loaded with 30,000 tons of vacuum gas from the Russian company Rosneft, was released on Sunday, according to its own sources, by the Main Channel TV. The link to the website of the publication 'Ukrainskaya Pravda' was shared on his telegram channel by the chairman of the Rada faction 'People's Servant' Davit Arakhamia, according to the Georgian authorities in helping Russia circumvent the sanction.

"When this information became available to the United States, we heard from Georgian officials that this was not true. But, over time, more and more objective information confirming my words emerges. Data on the

transfers and accounts of pro-government MPs and ministers from Georgia abroad will soon be available, and, of course, on Mr. Ivanishvili's connections, which are deeply involved in the country sponsoring terrorism to circumvent sanctions. But I want to disappoint those who decided to make money on the deaths of Ukrainians."

In response to a media question, Davitashvili said Arakhamia's accusations were insulting to Georgian citizens, irresponsible, and unfounded. According to him, such accusations have not been substantiated by any facts.

The Main Intelligence Division of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine has twice reported that Russia is trying to circum-

vent sanctions through Georgia.

On May 1, they announced that Russia was allegedly in talks with Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan to re-export Russian products to the international market. Earlier, Ukrainian intelligence reported that Russian agents were setting up smuggling channels through Georgian territory to circumvent sanctions.

The Ministry of Finance of Georgia called the statements of the Ukrainian authorities on April 4 'a completely unfounded and absurd accusation'. On May 2, Andriy Kasyanov, the Charge d'Affaires of Ukraine, was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia in connection with the above-mentioned information.

# 1st "Italian Embassy Cup" organized in Tbilisi

## Friendship between Italy and Georgia celebrated in the field of football.

A new initiative, consisting in two five-a-side football tournaments (respectively, for players under 15 years old and under 12 years old) has been organized jointly by the Italian Embassy in Georgia and the International Foundation of Sport, Tourism and Youth. Prizes for

the awarded teams include a dedicated trophy and Italian-branded sportswear made available by one of the Embassy's sponsors, including wonderful t-shirts with the Italian flag.

Renowned football academies for young generations active in Georgia, such as "Inter Academy

Georgia" - the first inaugurated in Southern Caucasus by the well-known Italian football club Internazionale Milano FC - Vikings FC, Sulkavelidze Football Academy and CFF Gldani, participate in the tournaments. Vikings FC won the 1st place in the under 15 years old division

after a hard-fought game with Inter Milan, while the final for the under-12 division will be held on Thursday at the Arena Sport Complex in Tbilisi.

Georgian young generations are showing the strongest enthusiasm towards the tournament, further highlighting the affection of

the Georgian public towards Italy's "calcio", and the interest towards the activities of Italian teams in Georgia, and the related cooperation aimed at strengthening the local football environment.

The Italian Embassy welcomes such enthusiasm, which adheres perfectly to the ultimate goal of the initiative: fostering links between Italy and Georgia in the field of sport and celebrating the already strong friendship between the two countries



### Weather

Tuesday, June 28

Day ☀ Clear  
High: 33°C

Night 🌧 Scattered T-storm  
Low: 18°C

Wednesday, June 29

Day 🌧 Scattered T-storm  
High: 29°C

Night 🌧 Scattered T-storm  
Low: 19°C

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# AFG Charity Event Held at Tbilisi Marriott Hotel to Help Ukraine Refugees and Georgian Elderly

A charity organization American Friends of Georgia (AFG) held a Special Charity Event on June 25 at Tbilisi Marriott Hotel to provide help for displaced Ukrainians and Georgian elderly in need.

According to AFG, the charity event included a special program with a live performance, raffle prizes, and an auction led by George Welton, Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce in Georgia.

With the support of partners: Exclusive Partner and Host of the Event Tbilisi Marriott Hotel, Platinum Sponsors Petrocas Energy Group and GULF, Gold Sponsor Adjara Group, Bronz Sponsor – PMCG, Corporate Sponsors – BDO, BLC, BGI, Dentons, Andersen, the event raised ₾ 80.600.

The auction presented works donated by prominent Georgian artists – Gia Gugushvili, Keti Matabeli, Daro Sulakauri, Tamuna Melikishvili, Maka Gotsiridze, Dmitry Gomberg, Mariam Shakarashvili, Beka Sakvarelidze, Julia Sanikidze. The culmination of the evening

was a musical surprise from the ambassadors in collaboration with Trio Balada and Nana Kalandadze.

The event was attended by the Ambassadors of the EU, US, and Turkey as well as the representatives of the business world, leading international and Georgian organizations, and corporations.

Many Georgian companies and individuals donated presents and raffle prizes including Rooms Hotel Kazbegi and Rooms Hotel Kokhta. Crown Plaza, Georgian Royal Wine, Sevsamora Hotel Resort and Spa, etc.

The charity event was supported by the EU Ambassador to Georgia H.E. Carl Hartzell and Mette Hartzell, Turkish Ambassador to Georgia H.E. Fatma Ceren Yazgan, the US Ambassador H.E. Kelly Degnan, and the American Chamber of Commerce in Georgia.

American Friends of Georgia (AFG) is a US-based non-profit, non-political public charity organization that has been implementing various projects in Georgia since 1994. The organization’s mission is to provide practical humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations of Georgia to improve educational, economic, social, medical, and environmental conditions. AFG also supports efforts to preserve and promote Georgian art and culture.

American Friends of Georgia has implemented several unique projects in Georgia. The projects always focus on vulnerable and high-risk groups: homeless children, children with disabilities, and elderly/children with Leukemia and cancer. Part of the foundation’s mission is to promote philanthropy in Georgia and increase public responsibility for solving social problems.

















