

PM Gharibashvili talks Economic growth, national security challenges and EU summit in Prague at the 'Wine Days' festival in Telavi

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Gharibashvili visited Telavi as part of the festival "Wine Days". Together with the members of the government, the Prime Minister hosted the representatives of the diplomatic corps accredited in Georgia in the framework of the festival. Prime Minister also responded to the questions from media.

The ambassadors picked grapes in the historical vineyard of Tsinandali and took part in a culinary master class. Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili introduced diplomats to the tradition of harvesting in Georgia and talked about the importance of viticulture and winemaking for Georgia.

As the head of the government noted, Georgia has an 8,000-year history of winemaking. He expressed his hope that even more tourists will visit not only Kakheti, but all regions where wine is produced.

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili gave a speech where he talked about the message of the festival and the history and importance of winemaking in Georgia:

"First of all, I want to wish you all a happy day. Today we officially started "Wine Days", and we wish to celebrate the wine festival every year, so we named it "Wine Days"" said Prime Minister.

"We have a unique 8,000-year history of winemaking, and my wish was that all those winemakers, be it large or medium-sized companies, small entrepreneurs, cellar owners, all presented their own wine production, and besides, we should make it a public holiday. It should be an annual festival, like in many successful countries in Europe. This is our main message."

Irakli Gharibashvili expressed hope that winemaking will attract more tourists in future:

"I believe that even more tourists will come, not only to Kakheti, but to all regions where wine is produced, and this should become our trademark, they say. The main message is that Georgia is the homeland of wine," said the Prime Minister.

As for the new initiative, which is the initiative of President Macron - the European union. I want to tell you that we had very interesting discussions in Prague, we gathered the leaders of 44 countries, then 4 working groups were created there, and I had the honor to lead one of them.

In response to a journalist's question, which was related to the first summit of the European political community initiated by the European Union, in which the prime minister took part in Prague.

According to him, the main challenges in Europe and the whole world today are of security.

"We heard a very interesting discussion, we all participated. The main challenge that exists today in Europe and around the world is naturally the secu-



urity challenges, this is the war in Ukraine that does not end, which finds even more dangerous expressions, and of course we are all interested in having peace in our country.

Our main concern is the peace and security of our citizens, of all of you, of all citizens of this country. The second main topic, which was this, is energy security.

Today there is a very acute crisis in Europe, an energy crisis because, as you know, Russia has cut off gas, it has already reduced its gas supply to Europe by 7%, and in fact European countries are now discussing how to replace Russian gas, which of course will not be very easy in the short term. In perspective - these topics were discussed, naturally, the war in Ukraine is a big challenge for the whole of Europe, there has not been such a crisis in the whole world since the Second World War".

He also emphasized the importance of peace in the region.

"Georgia, as one of the prominent countries in this region, is a participant in these processes, we take part in peace negotiations, there should be peace in our region.

In Azerbaijan, in Armenia, naturally, in our neighboring countries, in Turkey, we are interested in having a closer relationship, and the first steps of this were outlined because the first meeting was held, the Prime Minister of Armenia met with the President of Turkey and also with the President of Azerbaijan, and Georgia is also involved in the mediation process.

The main thing that I want to tell you

is that the country does not face any challenges, we very firmly follow our path, our chosen policy, it is a peaceful policy, and our citizens will not have any interruptions in the winter either in terms of energy supply," the Prime Minister said.

The head of the government paid attention to the reports of international organizations. According to him, Georgia has a record, double-digit economic growth.

"So we must continue to be calm and firm in the development of the country. As you know, the World Bank's assessment was also published and we have the

most record, double-digit economic growth throughout Europe and Central Asia. The situation in European countries is very difficult in this direction as well.

In this background, I would like to tell everyone that it is very important to maintain such a peaceful environment in the country, within the country. We have to be very calm, we certainly have our challenges - 20% of the country is occupied and with all this in mind we need reason, lack of emotions, more work, more economic development, more prosperity and more love and positivity," said Irakli Gharibashvili.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Georgian parliamentary delegation to participate in autumn session of Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

The Georgian parliamentary delegation went to Strasbourg to participate in the fall session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE).

According to the press service of the Parliament of Georgia, the head of the permanent delegation, Irakli Chikovani, members of the delegation, Irakli Kobakhidze, Archil Talakvadze, Givi Mikanadze, Levan Ioseliani and Khatia

Dekanoidze will attend the session of the Parliamentary Assembly scheduled for October 10-14.

Within the course of the session, the members of the parliamentary delegation of Georgia will make speeches at the plenary and committee sessions and bilateral meetings with their European colleagues are planned. The parliamentarians of the member states of the Council of Europe will hold a debate on the aggressive military actions carried out by the Russian Federation in Ukraine, the tense relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and current topics in the world.

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The President of Ukraine will address the participants of the parliamentary ses-



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sion in the format of a video conference. The Presidents of the Swiss Confederation and Ireland, as well as the Prime Minister of Albania, will address the delegates of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe with a welcome speech.

PM of Estonia Kaja Kallas says Putin's next targets are Georgia and Moldova

The Prime Minister of Estonia, Kaja Kallas, said in an interview with the British "Telegraph" that Georgia and Moldova are the next target for Putin. Kallas in-

sights on Moldova. He is [Putin] targeting Georgia, the Baltic states. He is very open about it. The only way to stop this is to help Ukraine to win this war," Prime Minister of Estonia said.

Kaja Kallas insists her country will be targeted by Putin even if she stays "quiet" about Ukraine.

Kaja Kallas was the first leader who



sists her country will be targeted by Putin even if she stays "quiet" about Ukraine.

"After Ukraine, he [Putin] set his

congratulated Ukraine on the destruction of the bridge connecting Russia and the annexed region of Crimea.

Public Defender Nino Lomjaria says she was constantly a 'target' of ruling party in 2021

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Public Defender Nino Lomjaria stated during the presentation of the 2021 report to the Parliament that last year the Ombudsman Institute was the target of constant organized and political attacks by the 'Georgian Dream' government.

According to Lomjaria, at the beginning of 2021, a group of prisoners attacked the employees of the Ombudsman's Office on the territory of one of the penitentiary institutions, and according to the video footage, it can be seen that this illegal action was coordinated with the prison administration.

"Last year, the Public Defender was constantly organized, the target of disinformation campaigns, political attacks and threats from the leaders of the ruling party, or their represen-

tatives, persons related to them, and the media. Also, like in 2020, at the beginning of 2021, the representatives of the office became the objects of organized verbal attacks and threats in various penitentiaries on the territory of the institution.

We got acquainted with the archived video material on the territory of the penitentiary on one of the days of the attack, which proves that the illegal actions carried out by a small group of prisoners were directly or indirectly organized and coordinated by the prison administration. An investigation is underway in the prosecutor's office in connection with the mentioned case, but so far the guilt of the specific persons involved in the crime has not been identified," said Nino Lomjaria.

The public defender,



Nino Lomjaria, in response to the questions of the deputies in the parliament, also explained that the ombudsman filed a lawsuit in the constitutional court not against the Georgian Orthodox Church, but against the Parliament of Georgia, because in the opinion of the ombudsman, this normative act violated the principle of equality of religions protected by the constitution.

According to Nino Lomjaria, the Public Defender filed a lawsuit in the Constitutional Court regarding the law that gives the Orthodox Church the right to annex the forest area surrounding its property. The Public Defender states that the interpretation that the Public Defender is fighting the Orthodox Church is legally incorrect, because the defendant in this case is the Parliament.

Lomjaria also stated that the Public Defender has a unique mandate to submit the case to the Constitutional Court even if the Ombudsman's office considers that this normative act violates human rights, but there is no victim.

Weather

Monday, October 10

Day Light Rain High: 23°C

Night Partly Cloudy Low: 14°C

Tuesday, October 11

Day Partly Cloudy High: 21°C

Night Clear Low: 10°C

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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

Khatuna Gogichaishvili Layout Designer, Photographer

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Paradigms of American Architecture

Tbilisi Center of Architecture, Design and Creative Industries/TCADCI & Domus Georgia, through the support of the U.S Embassy in Tbilisi held the presentation of the project **Paradigms of American Architecture**, dedicated to the 30th anniversary of Diplomatic relationship between US and Georgia on October 7.

Presentation included reception and documentary film screenings from the series “Paradigms of American Archi-

itecture”.

The project is a documentary series of talks with well-known American Architects and Preservationists about various topics, challenges, developments and issues of contemporary architecture/post-pandemic future, sustainability, innovation, meaning of architecture today, etc.

The documentary film series consists of seven episodes featuring leading American architects and activists of cultural preservation: Christopher Shapless

(ShoP Architects), Billie Tsien and Tod Williams (Tod Williams & Billie Tsien Architects/Partners), David Rockwell (Rockwell Group), Christian Douvernois and John Fouskaris (Christian Douvernois Landscape Design Studio), Robert Whitlock (Kohn Pedersen Fox), Peg Breen (New York’s Landmarks Conservancy), Brad Vogel (New York’s Landmarks Conservancy, Archive Project).

Film screenings were accompanied with lectures, discussions and workshops

in Tbilisi and in the regions.

The event attended by Ambassadors, representatives of the Diplomatic Corps, various companies, architects, designers and artists.

The project is carried out by Tbilisi Center of Architecture, Design and Creative Industries with financial Support of the US Embassy in Georgia.

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