

Gov't to start constructions of Anaklia Port with state participation, PM Gharibashvili announces

By Liza Mchedlidze

Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili announced at the government meeting that based on the decision of the Government of Georgia, Anaklia port will be built with state participation. According to Irakli Gharibashvili, the state will own 51% and tenders will be announced for the rest.

"According to our decision, the port of Anaklia will be built with the participation of the state, where the state will own 51%, and we will announce an international competition for the rest and select partner companies.

This project is abandoned, the place is desolate. They turned the place into a nest of dust. Therefore, it is categorically unacceptable. We should urgently select international partner companies and we should also start investing in this project. This project will be implemented with our participation, the state will implement this project together with foreign or other companies," said the Prime Minister.

Gharibashvili added that he has already instructed the Ministry of Economy to prepare a new invitation to tenders, for the construction of Anaklia port.

"Everyone is aware that the decision to build this port was made back in 2016. Before that, even during my first premiership, we openly talked about this issue, we used all tribunals and platforms for this, including from the UN tribune, we stated that our stated interest and priority is the construction of this port.

In 2016, a contract was signed, an investor was selected, who failed to fulfill this obligation, meaning, he did not build this port. Under this commitment, we were to receive the first ships in 2020. The government postponed the obligation several times, three, four times, and de-



spite this, the investor was still unable to attract investments. According to my information, Mr. Khazaradze and his partner, Japaridze, have spent three million dollars.

The remaining amounts, approximately 20-25 million have been attracted from investors. Instead, they demanded a guarantee of cargo from the government. The land was ours, we had to hand it over and we did. They demanded the construction of roads and railways. The

government had to spend hundreds of millions and not get anything in return, that is, in fact, it was a gift to Mr. Khazaradze.

After dropping this project after 4-5 years and failing to implement it, these people decided to rob our country and why? They sued the country for arbitrage and today they are disputing 1.5 billion dollars. Can you imagine what is happening? In 5 years, a person failed to fulfill any of his obligations, abandoned the

project, did not build a port, and today he owes the country and our people 1.5 billion," said Irakli Gharibashvili.

The Prime Minister accused Mamuka Khazaradze and Badri Japaridze of creating a 'classic robbery scheme' and said that their intentions of building the Anaklia port were never 'sincere'. According to Irakli Gharibashvili their intention was "the idea of getting rich and robbery."

Badri Japaridze of Lelo responds to PM Gharibashvili and accuses him of lying about Anaklia Port

By Liza Mchedlidze

Badri Japaridze, the leader of the Lelo party, responded to the statement made by the Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Gharibashvili who accused Mamuka Khazaradze and Badri Japaridze of 'robbing' the country and said that behind the construction of the port, their intention was 'the idea of enrichment and robbery.'

"Actually, 75 million dollars were invested in Anaklia, which is confirmed by the international audience, and this figure and this documentation are in the Ministry of Economy. The Prime Minister should have bothered and requested the real investment amount from the Ministry of Economy, which has been confirmed by a highly reputable auditing company.

It is a lie that he told today as if the investment was 25 million and not 75. The second big lie he told was that Khazaradze



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Exchange Rates: US Dollar - 2.6773; Euro - 2.8283; GBP - 3.2899; 100 Russian Ruble - 4.2707; Swiss Franc - 2.8714

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Badri Japaridze of Lelo responds to PM Gharibashvili and accuses him of lying about Anaklia Port

and Japaridze had invested 3 million, but in reality, it was 40 million dollars invested, which is also confirmed by the documents which have been submitted to the Ministry of Economy for several years and are stored there," Japaridze said.

According to Japaridze, three years ago, the government confiscated 75 million dollars from an investor.

The leader of Lelo noted that the legal prosecution of him and Mamuka Khazaradze has been going on for the fourth year already. According to him, this is

happening precisely in order to damage their reputation, in order to stop the Anaklia project at the right time, and in Japaridze's opinion, all of this has caused great harm to the country.

"What stood out from Gharibashvili's speech today was another lie that he told, that as if they were asking for a guar-

antee from the state at the time, the consortium was asking for a guarantee, but did not offer anything in return. In fact, the truth is that we agreed with the EU commissioner that the EU would provide a 50 million Euro guarantee for the Anaklia project.

"We hear from Gharibashvili that he has decided that now the

state will invest in the project in Anaklia, i.e. it will invest five times more in Anaklia, at the time when he refused the 50 million guarantee, he refused the proposal of the European Union," said the Lelo leader.

According to Japaridze, under the conditions of the Georgian Dream, the Anaklia deep water port project will not be imple-

mented:

"The investment he's talking about is about \$200 to \$250 million, which is not in the budget. Therefore, this is another lie. Therefore, of course, under the conditions of the Georgian Dream, the Anaklia deep water port project will not be implemented," Japaridze said.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Archil Talakvadze says PM Garibashvili 'put an end' to speculations by announcing Anaklia Port construction



Archil Talakvadze, the Vice Speaker of the Parliament told reporters that Prime Minister Gharibashvili has put an end to the speculations that the Geor-

gian government did not want the Anaklia Port implementation:

"In the conditions of this economic growth, while the security and peace of Georgia are protected, it is possible to make a decision on such strategic and long-term projects - the Prime Minister put an end to the specu-

lation of direct flights between Georgia and Russia, and this issue cannot be solved unilaterally.

"The Prime Minister made a strategically correct and very important decision for Georgia regarding the construction of Anaklia port. This decision was based on the correct economic and security policy of our government, because it is in the conditions of this economic growth, while the security and peace of Georgia are protected, that it is possible to make a decision about such strategic and long-term projects, and the Prime Minister made this decision. This, of course, is a future-oriented project, which will be very useful for Georgia both in terms of security and economy, and the government has full political support from the Parliament in the implementation of the project. This put an end to speculations that the government did not want to implement the Anaklia project. The society and all interested parties were convinced that as soon as Georgia was given the opportunity to do so, Georgia made this decision." Archil Talakvadze said.

Russia has not officially applied to Georgian gov't regarding flight regime restoration, Economy Minister says



According to the Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Levan Davitashvili, the Russian Federation has not officially applied to the Government of Georgia regarding the issue of restoring direct flights to Georgia.

According to the minister, there are many difficulties and challenges regarding the resto-

ration of direct flights between Georgia and Russia, and this issue cannot be solved unilaterally.

"Regarding this matter, there are many technical issues, many difficulties, and many chal-

enges, and this is not an issue to be resolved unilaterally, although we do not have such an official address yet, but there are certain restrictions from various international aviation organizations in relation to Russian airlines, so this issue is so easy today It cannot be resolved," said Levan Davitashvili.

Council adopts decision not to accept Russian documents issued in Ukraine and Georgia

Weather

Tuesday, December 13
Day Mostly Cloudy
High: 5°C
Night Mostly Cloudy
Low: 2°C
Wednesday, December 14
Day Partly Cloudy
High: 12°C
Night Partly Cloudy
Low: 3°C

On 8 December, the Council of the European Union adopted a decision on the non-acceptance of Russian travel documents issued in Ukrainian



and Georgian territories occupied by Russia.

Russian travel documents is-

sued in, or to persons resident in, Russian-occupied regions in Ukraine or breakaway territo-

ries in Georgia will not be accepted as valid travel documents for obtaining a visa or crossing the borders of the Schengen area.

"This decision is a response to Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine and Russia's practice of issuing Russian international passports to residents of the occupied regions. It also follows Russia's unilateral decision to recognise the independence of the Georgian territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 2008," says a press release by the Council of the EU.

This decision aims also to set out the EU common visa policies and ensure the proper functioning of its external border.

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