

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Georgia Implements Visa-Free Regime for Chinese Citizens

The Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Gharibashvili, made the announcement during a government meeting that the visa-free regime for Chinese citizens will be implemented starting on September 11.

Gharibashvili stated that the government's primary objective is to enhance trade and economic relations with China, attract more investments from China, and increase the number of Chinese tourists visiting Georgia. According to the Prime Minister, Chinese tourists are widely regarded as some of the most desirable visitors in the world, and this decision is expected to benefit Georgia.

"Tourism is very important for us. Last year, we received direct income from tourism in the amount of 3 billion 500 million dollars. We expect even more this year. We work in other markets and aim to attract more tourists to the country.

I had a very successful visit to China, and China today is the second largest economy in the world, the strongest economy. One of our main interests is to strengthen trade and economic relations with China, attract more investments from China, and bring more tourists to Georgia. My visit served this purpose.

We have made a decision to start the visa-free regime for Chinese citizens from today. I will issue the relevant decree today. It will be a very important incentive for even more tourists to come to Georgia. I



want to say that Chinese tourists are considered one of the most desirable tourists in the world. We also have direct flights. I had a conversation with the Chinese Prime Minister about tourism and flights. I

want to highlight the effectiveness of the Chinese government and its system. In just a few days, a delegation came to the Minister of Economy specifically on the issue of direct flights. About two or three days after

my meeting with the Prime Minister, a delegation was already sent from China. We want to add more flights, direct flights to China. We want more tourists to come not only from China, but also from other

countries, more tourists to see our amazing, unique country, culture, our people, and I believe that all this is done for the benefit of our country and people," said Gharibashvili.

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There Will Initially Be One Flight a Day to China, Targeting Up to 10 Per Day, Economy Minister Says



Following Prime Minister Gharibashvili's announcement of the visa regime cancellation with China, Minister of Economy Levan Davitashvili stated that initially, there would be one daily flight to China. However, in his statement, Davitashvili emphasized the government's greater ambitions, asserting the possibility of operating up to 10 flights with China per day in the future.

As per Davitashvili's statement, Chinese nationals will have the opportunity to stay in Georgia visa-free for a duration of 30 days. He further noted that the initial flight routes will follow a three-way path, connecting Beijing, Urumqi, and Tbilisi.

"In the initial phase, we have agreed to have at least one daily flight with China, although our ambitions are greater. I can tell you directly that our target indicator may be up to 10 flights per day to various cities in China. This will enable us to cater to the specific flows that will yield a significant and tangible economic impact," said Davitashvili.

According to Davitashvili,

China is a 'desirable tourist market' for many countries, with Chinese tourists spending up to 300 billion in different countries every year.

China is a desirable tourist market for everyone. Every year, over 150 million Chinese tourists visit different countries, spending approximately 300 billion. It's crucial for us to capture a share of this market, even though our current share is minimal—virtually non-existent. However, we hope to attract significant flows. One critical factor in achieving this is the cancellation of the visa regime with China, a decision announced by the Prime Minister," said Davitashvili.

Davitashvili stated that following their visit to China, a comprehensive analysis was conducted to explore ways to optimize tourism potential. The minister identified the visa regime as one of the significant obstacles in this endeavor.

As noted by the Minister of Economy, they considered the successful experiences of several European countries that were able to boost tourist arrivals from China through the implementation of visa regime cancellations.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Irakli Kobakhidze Dismisses Opposition's Prime Minister Impeachment Demands as Speculation and Nonsense



ing with? This is shameful," said Kobakhidze. The Lelo party announced their intention to initiate impeachment proceedings against Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili, citing Article 48 of the Constitution as the basis for impeachment. This article reads that if the Prime

Minister's actions show signs of a crime, it is possible to raise the issue of impeachment.

In addition, the United National Movement party has applied to the prosecutor's office, requesting an investigation into possible abuse of office (Article 332, Part 2) and possible bribery (Article 338, Part 2, Sub-Clause 'A') on the part of Gharibashvili.

Prime Minister of Georgia Meets New Dutch Ambassador Meline Arakelian

Prime Minister of Georgia, Irakli Gharibashvili, held an introductory meeting with the new Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Georgia, Meline Arakelian.

According to the press service of the Prime Minister, the meeting, which took place at the government administration, involved a review of the main areas of cooperation between Georgia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

"Among the discussed issues

were the existing relations between Georgia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, characterized by increasing dynamics at both the bilateral and interna-

noted that Georgia anticipates obtaining candidate status by the end of the year.

The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of Georgia



tional organizational levels.

During the meeting, attention was focused on Georgia's European integration process. The head of the government informed the ambassador about the progress achieved by Georgia and the current situation regarding the implementation of 12 recommendations. He also

receiving candidate status and the support of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in this process.

Irakli Gharibashvili congratulated Meline Arakelian on the start of her diplomatic mission in Georgia and wished her success in her future activities," the Prime Minister's press office stated.

Irakli Kobakhidze, the chairman of the ruling party of Georgia, Georgian Dream, responded to opposition demands for the impeachment of Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili and assessed it as 'speculation and nonsense'.

According to him, Gharibashvili did not spend budget money while traveling to Munich on a charter flight, and the case does not contain any signs of crime. Kobakhidze stated that the opposition wants to "cover for their teammate, Salome Zourabichvili".

"What's with the impeachment? Read the Constitution. Not a cent of the budget has been spent, and they have been justifying spending budget money for their personal welfare. Talk of impeachment is speculation and nonsense. These people were justifying Saakashvili's spending of budget money for his own welfare. Irakli Gharibashvili has not spent a single tetri from the budget. Do you realize how much speculation we are deal-

Weather

Tuesday, September 12

Day Light Rain High: 21°C

Night Few Showers Low: 14°C

Wednesday, September 13

Day Partly Cloudy High: 24°C

Night Showers Low: 13°C

Advertisement for the XV International Festival 'Night-Serenades' featuring various artists and orchestras across different cities like Borjomi, Batumi, and Tbilisi.

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