



**FAREWELL TO "THE WHITE FOX"**

**Eduard Shevardnadze Will Embody Georgia's Best and Worst Long After His Death**

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**O**n July 7th, at the age of 86, arguably Georgia's most renowned and controversial politician Eduard Shevardnadze died peacefully in his Tbilisi residence. Many Georgians and Russians felt he did not deserve the tranquility he enjoyed in his final years. Yet even by his resignation, he shaped the future of the country, as indeed, without Shevardnadze there would have been no Saakashvili: Most have forgotten that President Shevardnadze recruited and brought back to Georgia the very man who would later overthrow him in 2003. And of course without Saakashvili, there would be no "Georgian Dream" movement – as the tumultuous cycle of Georgian politics carries on – "borne back ceaselessly into the past," as Fitzgerald put it.

**DAVID SLAYS GOLIATH IN STRASBOURG COURT**



Expert analysis: "Russia will do its best to draw out the process and refuse paying the compensation in its due time"

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**"SHEVY"**



**NUGZAR B. RUHADZE**

The news about his death, even long-expected, might not have been shocking but it gave a sensation of reminiscent tendencies and the desire to know exactly what the man had done for his country

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"Bidzina was a very serious boy... never fancied anyone..."

"Bidzina always wore a well-ironed Pioneer tie, but after the end of lessons, he would crumple it in his pocket" See p. 13



## Comment

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## "SHEVY"



One of the most controversial men of our roaring times has passed away! His name is Eduard Shevardnadze – Georgia's number one decision maker for many tens of years. Literally, every refer-

ence book around the globe carries an article about this doubtlessly significant political animal of the world renown. His sinuous way from the dusty relinquished roads of a remote Georgian village to the glamorous halls and murky labyrinths of intergovernmental schemes and conspiracies was marked with a bittersweet glory of a politician who made a sharp difference anywhere he went and found himself engaged. On the international playground, he was affectionately nicknamed as SHEVY, which befitted him perfectly well. President Shevardnadze's political career vacillated between the two edges – on the global arena, he was a politician who had a very serious say in the termination of the infamous Cold War, and in his native land he was the person whose resignation as president was wildly greeted. His political fate had it that Shevy metamorphosed from a national leader into a shining international personification of Gorbachev's perestroika. Later, his political efforts led to the fall of the notorious European eyecore – the Berlin Wall. Shevy managed to normalize relations with the United States of America for the Russian government of that time. Following the well-known political ups and downs in the erstwhile USSR, Eduard Shevardnadze returned to Georgia to lead his newly-born country, having replaced the ousted President Gamsakhurdia, but during his leadership, corruption became ubiquitous in Georgia. The nation felt exhausted of his leadership and became furious about his style of ruling the country, which ended in the bloodless revolt, known as Rose Revolution. Shevardnadze stepped down under the pressure of tens of thousands of protestors. This is the briefest possible presentation of Shevy's intrinsic and knotty mode of life. His biography could be looked up in any encyclopedia, and this article is not his obituary of course. This is an unassuming attempt to give a way to a deeply personal opinion of what might have changed had President Shevardnadze not been born into this arch-suffered but extremely lovable land of Georgia. Both answers – 'not much' and 'too much' – might be legitimate and justified. Shevy was born a natural leader and stepped very gingerly up the momentarily ascending scale of his career. His watchers and promoters had all maintained that he was a talented young man who adapted himself masterfully to what you may call a communist party-oriented protocol and mien, which at that time used to be absolutely indispensable for making a safe path towards the soviet higher echelons. This feature of his strong character was already a clear sign that the buildup of a career of a typical soviet communist cadre was al-

most guaranteed. To wit, there was no doubt even in his salad years that Georgia was receiving a leader whose grasp on life was tight and whose professional calling was powerful. I have never seen or heard of a person who had a stronger ability of adapting to a change than this giant of a man. Shevy's ideology and political beliefs proved to be so flexible that he had no misgivings or inhibitions at all in turning himself from a communist authoritarian manager into an autonomous democratic leader of a free nation. This would have been utterly impossible had he not been the man he was. When we are talking about politics, we certainly do not mean that the doers of politics are purified winged angels, who only do good and right. Politician is a politician is a politician, including Eduard Shevardnadze, who may change faces myriad times, depending on what the situation is dictating at the moment. Lying is also a regular thing. Unfulfilled promises sound natural too. But Shevy's case is outright unique! He was always able to do the impossible. I have worked for the guy and I have many times written about him. I have also made several TV stories and had many personal meetings with him. I know his family, his children and grandchildren very well, and I now well what I am writing. I have seen the original of his full-size painted portrait, predominantly in grey color, which has impressed me forever as an image of a powerful personality with unmitigated desire to fight and be victorious. And Shevy had many notable triumphs in life, but not without failures either. He was recognized and denounced, lauded and vilified, followed and rebelled against, loved and hated, trusted and doubted, carried in hands and trodden down, venerated and deprecated, listened to and ignored, his council accepted and rejected, his word believed and mistrusted, both badly misunderstood and understood accordingly. Shevy has gone through every possible vicissitude of life and has always emerged dry out of those treacherous political waters. He has worked hard day and night, but many of his efforts have given precarious and doubtful results. And it is almost impossible to know for sure whether this nation is thankful to him or not. Nobody knows if his people will ever build a memorable monument to glorify his life. What is this country ready for when it considers and reconsiders the life and work of the late President Eduard Shevardnadze? Unclear so far! The discussion will continue for a long time to come, but nobody knows for sure whether the controversy about him ends up in his favor or against him. Knowing that President Shevardnadze will postmortem receive all the honors that the presidents of a regular modern democracy deserve is very gratifying. His role is definitely tremendous in the history of this nation, and if we want to criticize his deeds, we are free to do so, but we will also have to be careful about being fair and cautious about the evaluation of this unusual man's legacy. The news about his death, even long-expected, might not have been shocking but it gave a sensation of reminiscent tendencies and the desire to know exactly what the man had done for his country. Repeating the question about the difference he had made by his birth, I am inclined to confirm that yes, his life made a remarkable difference – just as it was lived, felt and understood.

## ■ Georgian Lari to have its own symbol

Georgian national currency, the Lari, will have its own symbol. Georgia's National Bank declared a contest to select the symbol in December of 2013. "From now on, Georgian national currency, the Lari, will have its own symbol, like the majority of the world's leading currencies. It doesn't look significant, but it is actually part of a very important process of popularization of national currency and gaining trust. I am proud to be a witness to this process coming to a



rightful conclusion," – Giorgi Kadagidze, President of the National Bank told journalists.

The symbol that won the contest was created by an artist Malkhaz Shvelidze and depicts a stylized letter "ლ" (lasi).

## ■ Merab Zhordania sentenced to perform community service by Dutch court

The Dutch court has sentenced Merab Zhordania, the former owner of the Arnhem "Vitesse", to perform community service.

According to sportall.ge, Zhordania was sentenced to the above-mentioned for the threat he made against current director of the "Vitesse" football club.



Zhordania threatened to cut off the director's fingers, while the latter made the threat public and forbade Zhordania to approach the stadium for 3 years. Merab Zhordania apologized to him and said it was just a joke.

The case was closed on June 17 since the former president of the Georgian Football Federation did not appeal against the judgment. Zhordania himself has not commented on this issue.

## ■ "Justice should not be politically motivated" - James Appathurai

"The bottom line for NATO is that the judicial processes need to be independent of any political interference," - the special representative of NATO Secretary General in South Caucasus and Central Asia James Appathurai told reporters in response to the question about detention of the opposition leaders in spite of the moratorium.

"The law needs to be respected and as the Secretary General has said many times,

we need to avoid politically motivated interference and politically motivated political prosecution. Justice should not be political-



ly motivated, but I cannot comment on an individual case," – James Appathurai said.

## ■ Bidzina Ivanishvili to launch his own TV talk show

GDS TV confirms that former Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili is the writer and co-anchor of one of their talk shows.

"We want to respond to public reports about our renewed broadcasting from the new season. We confirm that Bidzina Ivanishvili is the writer and co-anchor of one of our talk shows," - the GDS statement says.

According to the TV station, the idea and the project are being developed now. "Any necessary information will be made public and available for everybody. Prior to that the TV company asks everybody to refrain from releasing unconfirmed information," - the statement reads.

According to the statement, the project is approved and the talk show will be broadcast on GDS from October.

## ■ Moscow consents to Tefft's appointment as new US ambassador to Russia

Moscow has consented to the appointment of John Tefft as the new American ambassador to Russia, ITAR-TASS has spread this information according to a diplomatic source.

"Russia has officially agreed to the appointment of John Tefft as the new head of the U.S. diplomatic mission in Moscow," the Russian information agency has cited the source's comment.

According to ITAR TASS, the New York Times wrote that naming Tefft as a candidate head of the mission caused some suspicions initially, as there is the danger that Russia is



annoyed because of his experience in the former soviet republics.

The USA addressed Russia in relation to consent of John Tefft's appointment.

65-year-old Tefft served as the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine from November 2009 till August 2013. In 200-2003, he headed the American diplomatic mission in Lithuania and in 2005-2009 in Georgia. In 1996-1999, he was deputy U.S. ambassador in Moscow.

[www.interpressnews.ge](http://www.interpressnews.ge)

on Agency of Georgia IPN. Information in three languages.

## Media House PALITRA

49, Iosebidge str., Tbilisi, Georgia.

HOT LINE: (+995 32) 2 19 60 13; (+995 32) 2 19 60 53

## Advertising Department

Tel: (+995 32) 237 78 07; (+995 32) 2 38 78 70

E-mail: georgianjournal@palitra.ge

[www.georgianjournal.ge](http://www.georgianjournal.ge)

## EDITORIAL STAFF:

Consulting Editor NUGZAR B. RUHADZE  
Editor-in-Chief Vazha Tavberidze  
Executive Editor Nino Akhaladze  
Editor Will Cathcart

Designer

Desktop Publisher

Advertising Manager

International Observer

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Sopho Kakhiani





# FAREWELL TO "THE WHITE FOX"

## Eduard Shevardnadze Will Embody Georgia's Best and Worst Long After His Death

BY WILL CATHCART  
LALI PAPASKIRI  
LADO GOGOLADZE

**W**hatever you think of him, Shevardnadze personified Georgia's international image for decades. For a man of such humble beginnings who attained such Soviet stature, he ironically embodies a decline in Russian power at several key moments in history. Shevardnadze was revered for his political prowess and for his diplomatic "White Fox" chops, as his nickname implies. And regardless of his intentions, as he left his most important posts, Western influence always prevailed in his wake - in the fall of the Soviet Union and in the rise of Mikheil Saakashvili.

mately will be up to historians to determine. Alexander Rondeli, president of the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies recently stated in an article for the BBC, "Eduard Shevardnadze was a born politician. He was a talented man, with a very good sense of humour. But he was the son of his epoch, the Soviet epoch." Mr Rondeli explains, "Georgia was not a sweet home at that time. Georgia was in a disastrous situation, it was practically a failed state... Shevardnadze came to help his country and he did his best and did what he knew... The Russian establishment hated him because they believed he contributed to the division of the Soviet Union and he was a bit unhappy with the West. I think he was hoping that Georgia would receive greater help from the West because of his contribution to world peace." "I would say he was very tragic person," Alexander Rondeli concludes for the BBC.

mained loyal to Shevardnadze till the end. Many have interpreted it both as political near-sightedness and expression of humanly friendship.

- Yes, and I didn't regret it for a second. When I think about the past, I think that I'd do the same thing again, despite knowing what people were coming to lead the country. Georgia had and will have many politicians before and after him, but no diplomats who would be his match.

**Shevardnadze - Architect of Perestroika, Demolisher of Berlin Wall**  
Memories From Petre Mamradze, Former Head of Eduard Shevardnadze's Governmental Chancellery

"Even before 1985, when Eduard Shevardnadze was appointed Soviet Union's Minister of Foreign Affairs, in Politburo's circles he developed a reputation of a man who gets things done, and so, with the beginning of so-called perestroika, he was appointed Minister. Then a different world order was established, which was, in many ways, connected to Shevardnadze's name. Years later, well-known Russian diplomats such as Tarasenko, said that he was a world class politician who saw all the inevitable events in the world with utmost clarity. He had a very well-formed opinion on what the world would be like after dissolution of the Soviet Union.



py that he was able to witness that historical day."

Koba Narchemashvili, Minister of Internal Affairs under Shevardnadze, remembers the ex-President as the bravest man he has ever seen. Koba Narchemashvili remained loyal to Shevardnadze to the end - in the year after the "Rose Revolution," the new government

■ "With Shevardnadze's help, Germany managed not only to reunite peacefully, but present a new image to the world"

Among Shevardnadze's greatest legacies are the foundation of Georgia's Western path, the reunification of Germany, stabilizing his own country after ethnic conflicts and tragic civil war and for setting up the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipelines which gave his country a strategic significance that has carried it into the 21st century. Much like Shevardnadze's life the late president's greatest faults and failures are complex and complicated, and as Shevardnadze's presidential successor recently stated, his legacy ulti-

"But now we have to remember him as the man who helped Georgia as much as he could."

**A happy and proud man - the last days of Eduard Shevardnadze**

Marina Davitashvili, the ex-President's assistant says, "He was a happy and proud man, especially on the day of signing the Association Agreement with the European Union. Despite his weakness, he gifted everyone - his bodyguards, his house's staff and family members with the books he wrote... I am hap-

■ "After drawing up a plan of how NATO would develop, he said that in time, Georgia would have its place in it too..."

arrested Narchemashvili at the funeral of Shevardnadze's wife, only releasing him on a sizeable bail.

- You were the only person who re-

Later, when we worked in newly-liberated Georgia, he used to tell me 'Petre, God forbid the people miss the Soviet Union...'

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# DAVID TAKES DOWN GOLIATH IN STRASBOURG COURT

BY MAKHA LOMADZE

**O**n July 3, at the European Court on Human Rights, the judges delivered a verdict in favor of Georgia. This is the case between two states, namely Russia, which violated 6 articles of Euro-convention on Human Rights against Georgia. More concretely, this is a matter of oppressing Georgians living on the territory of Russian Federation and their massive deportation in 2006. The Georgian side sued Russia on March 26, 2007 in Strasbourg Court. Georgian Journal discussed these matters with Amiran Giguashvili, Director of Politics and Law Center.

**6 years in the making... Georgia finally won the case against its northern neighbor in European Court of human rights**

## ■ First state-to-state Suit Ends with Positive Verdict for Georgia

**G.J:** What is the importance of this decision and to what events would you compare it from the perspective of the international law?

A.G: It is a very important decision. This was the first state-to-state dispute that Georgia sued and that ended successfully. Generally speaking, there are quite few state-to-state cases in the history of international law. I can name the dispute between Turkey and Cyprus, which was also successfully settled. There are some individual cases against Russia that have not yet been discussed. However, this particular case will boost their further chances as well. This was the reason why Russia was irritated and the Kremlin declared that this is a provocative decision against Russia, directed to degrade the image of the country. Therefore, the Kremlin and Duma would not accept it, calling it "unjust."

**G.J:** The verdict says that Russia is obliged to pay the compensation to Georgia. Will Russia agree to fulfill this duty?

A.G: Depends how active the Georgian government will be. If Russia and Georgia do not manage to solve this issue of compensation during 12 months, then the matter will go into the hands of Ministerial Committee in Europe-



Amiran Giguashvili,  
Director of Politics and Law Center

## ■ Russia will do its best to draw out the process and to refuse paying the compensation in its due time

an Court. Russia will do its best to draw out the process and to refuse paying the compensation in its due time. Then, it will take quite a long time to define the amount of compensation. So,

it is very important for Georgia to demand support from our partner European countries on Russia's agreement on paying the compensation. Georgia should use all international instruments in order to protect the interests of the state. Russia will have to pay a big political and economic fee if it does not meet these terms. It is important how actively Georgia asks for help from the international community and as Russia will not pay a single kopeik (penny) by its own will.

**G.J:** What precedents do we know in this respect – how has Russia acted in other cases?

A.G: Russia is on the list of the countries with the lowest compliances in terms of meeting the Strasbourg Court decisions. However, any country even with a facade pretence to be an European country cannot escape this. Putin, in spite of his dreaming of restoring the Soviet Union, still has such pretence. Georgia, on the other hand, should try its best to follow this path and to show to the European Community the real image of Russia.

**G.J:** What about the supposed sum of money for the compensation?

A.G: It depends on Georgia's suit, what is the number of the people to whom the court should pay damages? How well will Georgia manage to convince the judges and how many people receive a compensation, etc, and then, what will be the final decision of the Ministerial Committee in the European Court? But I want to underline that the compensation is not of paramount importance. The main thing is that a tiny state like Georgia won a case against a giant country like Russia and justice has been accomplished! It shows why European values are so important for us – you can be small country and still find your own bit of justice in this unjust world. Russia has carried out a number of ethnic cleansings against Georgia but this is the first case when it will have to pay a due. So Georgians will once again realize the importance of the European court.

**G.J:** Will it really stop Russia from doing similar things in the future?

A.G: It will. I do not know what the Russian President lacks for becoming Saddam Hussein, but I know that it is another strong blow against the image of Russia as the state.

# “WE THOUGHT WE WERE BEING LED TO BE SLAUGHTERED...”

## First hand accounts from victims of 2006 deportation

BY NANA PITCKHELAURI

*“People were dying of trauma in the Moscow airport; two men died before my eyes from a heart attack. We were herded into planes like cattle, and those for whom there weren't enough seats had to stand. Nobody told us anything; we thought we were being led to slaughter; it felt as if they were going to toss us from a cliff or bury us somewhere. We didn't even know if we were flying to Georgia” – recalls Davit Latsabidze, who ended up among numerous Georgians who were deported from Moscow in 2006.*

Due to these incidents, the Georgian government filed a lawsuit against Russia on 26th of March, 2007. A few days ago European Court of Human Rights ruled in favor of Georgia on the case titled “Georgia versus Russia.” The case concerned the humiliation and mass deportation of ethnic Georgians living in Moscow in 2006. The European Court found Russia guilty of violation of clause 6 of the European Convention and obliged it to pay compensation for this. Georgian and Russian Ministries of Justice have a year to agree on the sum to be paid as compensation. According to currently existing information, European Court will soon start reviewing complaints and appeals made by the deported. “Kviris Palitra” has managed to interview some of them:

Davit Latsabidze: “I am a father of three children and since I failed to make to anything here, I went to Moscow in 1993 to do construction work. Every year I sent \$2000 to my family and left \$1000 for myself. In October of 2006, I was apprehended and detained by the

police; they didn't even let me change out of my working fatigues. I spent the next 10 days in Serpukhov prison, locked in a cell, not allowed even to access the restroom. The colonel of the police kept telling us that our condition was our President's fault and that we should go to Georgia, remove Saakashvili from power and only then we would be free to come back to

## ■ The European Court obligated Russia to pay a compensation for mistreatment, humiliation and mass deportation of Georgians

Russia. When I responded to him, he kicked me and had me thrown to a punishment cell. I was given only a dirty bucket to relieve myself...

I almost went insane with joy when I exited the plane and found myself on Georgian soil. I



■ *“The colonel of the police kept telling us that our condition was our President's fault and that we should go to Georgia, remove Saakashvili from power and only then we would be free to come back to Russia”*

said to myself, damned be those who look to Russia for anything ever again. I used to have my own workshop in Moscow – only the tools were worth \$5000. I left 13 years of my hard work to the Russians.”

Ia Salakaia: “I am a refugee from Abkhazia. I came to Russia in 1994. Initially we were accepted well in Moscow, but gradually we saw more and more malicious looks aimed at us. I lost my husband in Sukhumi during the war – he went to get our documents and I do not know what happened to him after that. Deportation began at the end of October; I was apprehended in the beginning of December and sent straight to Butirka prison, where they

forced me to remain for a month. There were four Georgian women in the cell, me included. Thankfully, one of them had a cell phone. I called my daughter in Tbilisi and told her about what had happened. Back then, the chairman of the commission that managed deportations was Nika Gvaramia, and my daughter contacted him. But during that, deported Georgians were being gradually sent away from Moscow via three cargo planes. Gvaramia sent me a plane ticket, which was given to me by Zurab Pataridze, the consul. And so I managed to fly to Tbilisi through Baku. As I was told, my case has been sent to Strasbourg under serial number “84.”



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# THE SAGA OF THE MAYOR: UGULAVA IN JAIL

BY NINO AKHALADZE

**T**he former mayor of Tbilisi was charged with money laundering in particularly large amounts and falsifying legal documentation committed together with Giorgi Ghoniashvili and other parties. He is also charged with participation in the Marneuli incident on 5 June 2014, namely organizing group activities and exerting pressure aimed at the chairman of Marneuli voting district's election administration with the purpose of disrupting the administration's functionality.

Ugulava was apprehended at Tbilisi International Airport on July 3rd when trying to fly to Kishinev, Moldova.

Commotion followed outside the city courthouse after the preliminary imprisonment sentence for Gigi Ugulava was announced. Upon declaration of the sentence, the four prosecutors attending the case had to be escorted from the court by a reinforced team of bodyguards.

The prosecutors were verbally attacked by Ugulava's supporters. Patrol police had to be mobilized and had to intervene. As a result of the clash that took place at Tbilisi City Court, eight people were detained.

The incident resulted in the apprehension of Former Tbilisi Mayor and the former Ambassador to Germany and Poland Kote Gabashvili, who got subsequently seated in a patrol car and taken away by the police. Aleks Bedoidze, cameraman of "Free Zone", was also apprehended, along with two more



people, National Movement member Levan Bezhashvili being one of them. He was later released. "They found out after a three-hour-long questioning that I was an MP and they did not have a right to arrest me and they released me," he said.

The City Court fined Kote Gabashvili and Davit Gogokhia 100 Lari. They were given a fine according to the 166th article of hooliganism, while the charge of 173rd article of preventing police from performing their duty was ceased.



**Tbilisi City Court sentenced Former Tbilisi Mayor Gigi Ugulava to preliminary imprisonment as a "restrictive measure"**



*Passion or calculated gamble? – Ugulava and his wife Lela Kiladze's kiss went viral*

Irakli Gharibashvili, the Prime Minister of Georgia, called the court's decision on Gigi Ugulava's imprisonment "a celebration of justice."

■ **Catherine Ashton of the EU: "We call once more upon the Georgian authorities to ensure that the judicial process is fully independent, transparent, and free of political influence"**

But the EU's response was different: "We note that Mr. Ugulava, previously suspended as Mayor of Tbilisi, is the opposition's chief campaign organizer during the ongoing municipal elections in Georgia. We recall the Prime Minister Gharibashvili's announcement on 14 April about a moratorium on the arrest and prosecution of opposition figures during this election period. We call once more upon the Georgian authorities to ensure that the judicial process is fully independent, transparent, and free of political influence, in line with the commitments undertaken by Georgia when it signed the Association Agreement with the European Union last week on 27 June 2014," the statement of the

■ **Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt - "The arrest of Mr. Gigi Ugulava in Tbilisi seems to run contrary to previous commitment to the rule of law"**

EU High Representative of Foreign and Security Policy press-speaker of Catherine Ashton reads.

The Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt



*The City Court fined Kote Gabashvili and Davit Gogokhia 100 Lari. They were given a fine according to the 166th article of hooliganism*

responded to the former Tbilisi mayor's imprisonment via Twitter: "The arrest of Mr Gigi Ugulava in Tbilisi seems to run contrary to previous commitment to the rule of law."

A Georgia's former president Mikheil



Saakashvili said in 2012 there was a few dozen million "money-laundering cases" against Bidzina Ivanishvili and Irakli Gharibashvili in the prosecutor's office.

As the former president said in a Rustavi-2 TV program, there was a credit cards case against Gharibashvili, namely, money was transferred through credit cards with violation of the law.

"They should have been arrested, espe-

cially Gharibashvili because he was directly involved in this case. There were incontrovertible documentary evidences. The then justice minister and I decided not to touch any of them and not to start consideration of this case in public," he said.

He said that then Bidzina Ivanishvili was fined for 80 million but no one was sent to prison: "It was our decision not to fight with our political opponents with these methods, though political opponents have had an incredible amount of money."

At the moment video monitoring is be-

■ **Saakashvili: "In 2012, there were a few dozen million money-laundering cases against Bidzina Ivanishvili and Irakli Gharibashvili"**

ing carried out in the Gigi Ugulava's cell to ensure his safety. He agreed to the video control himself. Ugulava was on hunger strike with the demand of moving him from Gldani #8 prison to the so called Matrosov detention facility. His request was satisfied.

Gigi Ugulava's lawyers have already appealed against the City Court's decision.

*Photos by Interpressnews.ge*



Continued from p. 3

– Both Russian and Western press have frequently called him a ‘yes-man.’

– Yes, but this title has zero basis in reality. I was myself witness to numerous diplomats and politicians thanking him, as well as a military marshal telling him that he was the only person who fought for maintaining Soviet Union’s potential for self-defense to the end. And besides, Shevardnadze managed to get a huge monetary compensation (\$13 billion, if I’m not mistaken) paid to Germany. With Shevardnadze’s help, Germany managed not only to reunite peacefully, but present a completely new image to the world. Let me remind you that France and Britain didn’t want a united Germany because they were afraid it might become one of the most powerful players on the political field again. As a sign of gratitude, when newly independent Georgia was in turmoil in 1992, Hans-Dietrich Genscher visited and became the first foreign leader to appoint an ambassador to Georgia.

However, it also needs to be said that Shevardnadze was not pleased with NATO’s expansion. George Kennan, whose policy had changed America, used to say that strengthening of NATO will incite aggression from Russia, who feels endangered from the West. Shevardnadze shared this sentiment and, after drawing up a plan of how NATO would develop, he said that in time, Georgia would have its place in it too...

Simultaneously, he worked together with his group in close contact with Russian government to take steps that would both be beneficial for Georgia and not cause Russia’s irritation. At meetings with highest-ranking members of Russian government, where I was present as well, he said many times that Georgia welcomed Russia’s good relations with NATO. Few people remember it, but thousands of Russian officers were trained by NATO instructors. There also was talk about Russia becoming a member of NATO... Shevardnadze talked about that with Russian government and said that it would be a step in a correct direction. The background created by such daring diplomatic statements saw Georgia get easily accepted into European Council in 1999...

– How did he take civil unrest during the ‘Rose Revolution’ period?

– Initially there was no unrest to speak of, but let’s start from the beginning. Shevardnadze planned to leave by himself, right after removal of Russian military bases and construction of two oil and gas pipelines – Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum. ‘‘After that I’ll leave’’, he used to say.

He called me five minutes prior to his last speech at the Parliament and asked me what I thought about the situation. I said that the protestors might invade the Chancellery and it would better to say that the Constitution has to be changed and parliamentary system has to be implemented. ‘‘Interesting’’ – he replied. We all saw how he held himself to the very end.

– What about his wife? It is known that Nanuli Tsagareishvili, a daughter of a formerly repressed family, played a major role in his life...

– Yes, it is true. Mr. Shevardnadze wrote about how much he loved her. When he asked for her hand, she replied that this decision would wreck his entire career because she came from a repressed family. I know that her father was executed by firing squad, but I don’t know what happened to her mother...

**The War in Abkhazia**

Levan Kiknadze, former Security Minister of the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic:

# FAREWELL TO ‘THE WHITE FOX’

– I can say nothing about his direct contribution but the main mistake he made was sending armed forces on the Abkhazian railway instigating a criminal situation. It was not a successful decision to send unprepared soldiers there, as Abkhaz leader Ardzinba needed an excuse to provoke the Georgian side. He successfully used this step in his favor. Naturally, it is hard to say whether it was possible to lose Abkhazia then, but if he had arrived in Abkhazia himself and negotiated with Ardzinba, he would not have agreed to send armed forces there.

**Flight 6833: Exclusive Account From the Mother of Soso Tsereteli**

In November 1983, the case of ‘‘Flight 6833’’ became the center of attention for the entire Soviet Union. Several youths attempted to hijack a plane – an action so unprecedented and shocking that for a long time there were those who wouldn’t believe that it happened. The youths had only one goal – crossing the Iron Curtain and getting to a country that wasn’t under a communist regime. Therefore, they tried hijacking a plane.

Seven people participated in the action – Gega Kobakhidze, Tina Petviashvili, Davit Mi-

kaberidze, Soso Tsereteli, Gia Tabidze and brothers Kakha and Paata Ivereli. Unfortunately, their idea ended in a terrible tragedy. One of the hijackers died during the plane’s takeover and Soso Tsereteli was wounded and bled to death (later it was said that paramedics weren’t allowed to help him), while Gia Tabidze, upon seeing the plane return to the airport and become surrounded by KGB’s Special Forces agents, committed suicide. The rest were captured, taken to court and sentenced to execution by firing squad, with the only exception being Tina Petviashvili, who was sentenced to prison. The sentence was carried out, giving birth to numerous rumors and discussions about Eduard Shevardnadze’s role in this case. Many people said that he insisted on death penalty to prove his loyalty to Moscow and that he could save the youths if he wanted to, while others said that he wouldn’t have been able to change anything, etc. The fact remains that 7 extremely talented youths were executed simply for their attempt to leave Soviet Union for another country. The boys quickly became heroes, with their names on everyone’s tongues, although it was a poor consolation for their families. Mrs. Leila Tsereteli, mother of Soso Tsereteli, comments on his role in this ordeal.

‘‘News of Shevardnadze’s death upset me. Despite what he did to my son and my family; I never cursed him...’’

– Do you think he could have saved the youths involved in ‘‘Flight 6833’’?

– Today many people think that Shevardnadze could change the boys’ sentence, but it’s hard to say. Back then was a different time and a different situation; Shevardnadze wouldn’t have changed anything alone. Many people had their stake in those events, both in Georgia and Russia, although it is impossible to say whether Moscow would have arrived at such a sentence without Shevardnadze – this is also a fact. The process lasted for a year. However, I still think that the boys could have been saved. I kept saying ‘‘my son died, so at least do not kill these boys, give them 20, 25, even 30 years, but do not execute them’’, but who would listen to me? In the end, the communist government decided on execution by firing squad anyway. These people were murdered by the communist regime, not by Eduard Shevardnadze. Back then you could get sentenced for going to church, let alone hijacking a plane...

– Still, Shevardnadze was quite close to your husband. Haven’t you tried to meet with him later? Didn’t any of you have a desire to say anything to each other?’’

– Eduard’s son, Paata, used to be my husband’s student, and Kote kept saying that he was the best of his students. Paata’s wife, Nino, was among my son’s closest friends. When Shevardnadze returned to Georgia and was about to be elected President, both me and my husband were invited to the ceremony. There, I said to Eduard: ‘‘Today all of us believers have the right to freely go to the church and pray, yet my son died simply for wanting to possess this right’’ He nodded, came up to my husband, shook his hand and told us to come to his residence in the nearest future.

Indeed, several days later a car came for us and took us to his home. When we entered, he stood up and said: ‘‘In my life I did many good things as well as bad things, but this (Flight 6833) will remain on my conscience even when I’m put into the ground’’. Much later, one journalist asked me whether I had forgiven Shevardnadze. I replied ‘‘Yes, I forgave him for everything, because both me and Kote live by the principle of forever remembering the people’s good deeds and forgetting the evil ones.’’



**MIKHAIL GORBACHEV:**

‘‘We have always been friends, and this friendship continued to the last. Shevardnadze was a talented and remarkable person, indeed. A gifted politician, too – he played a great role in reuniting Germany and other European matters, such as our relationship with USA and China.’’ When asked what he would say to those who blame Eduard Shevardnadze for losing Abkhazia and so-called South Ossetia, Gorbachev replied that these people simply don’t know history.



**ROSE REVOLUTION, 2003**

‘‘Then members of the opposing group came to his residence; they looked more emotional and worried than Shevardnadze himself. Saakashvili and Zhvania were in tears, for example... They had a hard time talking to Shevardnadze; they all had a very close relationship, after all. Saakashvili displayed the most familiarity of them all – he simply told him ‘‘Mr. Shevardnadze, I baptized my child recently and named him Eduard in your honor.’’ – Petre Mamradze



**SHEVARDNADZE - THE SURVIVOR**

Shevardnadze survived two assassination attempts in 1995 and 1998. He had a remarkable resilience but also physical support from the United States. In an interview with Natalia Antelava for BBC in December 2003, the recently ousted president said to the Antelava, ‘‘You know, Americans actually built this house for me. The walls are bullet proof. You are very safe here.’’ Remarkably, the ‘‘White Fox’’ died of natural causes.



**TOO LATE?**

‘‘If he had arrived in Abkhazia himself and negotiated with Ardzinba, he would not have agreed to send armed forces there.’’



**FLIGHT 6833**

‘‘In my life I did many good things as well as bad things, but this (Flight 6833) will remain on my conscience even when I’m put into the ground.’’ — Eduard Shevardnadze



# DETESTABLE CRIME IN KAKHETI

## 40-year-old father sexually abused his daughter

BY ETER ERADZE

**T**he incident took place in Village Tsiteltskaro, Kakheti region. A girl living with her father and stepmother ran away from home because of his father's violence, and addressed police. Many residents of the village threatened to lapidate the violent father but some of them thought the story was not true. They asserted that the girl and her mother spread such rumors deliberately for the purpose of revenge.

As the investigation showed this was not the case. In addition, the latest reports inform that the girl's grandmother (mother of abusive father) was none other than infamous "Eliko" who ran so-called Eliko brothel in Dedoplistskaro. Girls were brought here from every part of Kakheti. Today the whole village population opposes the return of the violent father to the village. He has two more children: a daughter and a son.



**K.L., a Dedoplistskaro resident:**

– We have heard many stories, we have heard information about pathologies, but what happened here is most outrageous: a drunken father tried to molest his daughter...

■ **“When he realized his wife and children were out, he wanted to rape his elder daughter”**

■ **“A drunken father tried to molest his daughter”**

– But the girl's stepmother denied all these and calls it a slander. According to her, the girl spread this rumor deliberately...

– She's not a bad person; she has two children and still looked after his stepdaughter. And of course it is really hard for a woman to believe that her husband was going to rape his daughter. The man is immoral; he tried to do it stealthily. When he realized his wife and children were out, he wanted to rape his elder daughter. This is true and we just hope somebody will kill him in prison or one of us will do it.

**M.M., a resident of Tsiteltskaro village:**

– We will not allow him to live here anymore. When his daughter ran away from home to Tbilisi and turned to police, he still called her asking to go back. And the girl responded: “Why should I be back when you are going to rape me when you are drunk?” In response he told her very bad words. We found out what the criminal expertise established: that the girl managed to avoid being raped by her father. But is this a real escape? What power could cause such evil?



**Erika Kvapilova,**  
Country Director of UN Women

## “ZERO TOLERANCE IS NEEDED TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN GEORGIA”

as a private matter. What needs to be yet improved is cooperation between the public and relevant parts of the system, such as the police, social and health care workers, in detecting the cases of domestic violence, in order to protect victims and persecute and punish perpetrators. Also investing in prevention, especially in general education and awareness rising of human rights and violations, deserves more attention. To put it simply – what is needed is zero tolerance to violence, especially to violence against women and girls, who are victims in disproportionate numbers of cases.

**G.J: Psychologists name unemployment as one of the factors of the men's severe attitude towards their wives. However, this is not the problem that emerged yesterday – unemployment is the problem present since 1990. In your opinion, what can be the probable causes of increasing the aggression level of husbands towards their wives, including pregnant ones?**

E.K.: The evidence supported by numer-

■ **“Primary Cause of Violence Lies in the Urge to Dominate”**

ous studies confirms that dramatic social changes in the 90s, when men who were perceived as breadwinners had massively lost their jobs, had negative implications on many families: increased number of divorced couples, increased alcoholism and drug abuse, decreased economic status and poverty. Georgia also experienced conflicts, which have changed many people's lives. Yet, to make a simple link between men's unemployment and increased violence against women would be misleading. Violence against women takes place also in well-off families. The problem is more complex and it begins with low and unequal respect for women, who are seen by some as inferior to men and destined to serve them. The primary cause of violence lies in the urge to control and dominate and gender inequality represents fertile soil for such oppressive practices as society perceives men to be superior. Until this attitude

changes and until we have full gender equality, we may still, unfortunately, witness cases of brutal violence against women.

**G.J: Where the solution to the problem is and what can we consider from the international experience?**

E.K.: Again, simple solutions do not exist.

■ **“2013 World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index places Georgia on the 86th position out of 136 countries and the latest UN Gender Equality Index lists the country on 72nd place out of 195 countries.”**

Yet, international experience shows that if zero tolerance towards violence against women and girls is a top priority for governments, relevant laws and implementation mechanisms are in place and working, human rights are part of general education system, then the public attitudes and tolerance to violence is changing too. It goes without saying, that media and the way they report on cases of domestic violence and violence against women and girls is of tremendous importance and may significantly contribute to positive change in this area.

**G.J: How are all these aforementioned linked with the level of gender balance in Georgia?**

E.K.: According to different indices Georgia's position compared to other countries in terms of gender equality is not extremely favorable; for example the 2013 World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index places Georgia on the 86 position out of 136 countries and the latest UN Gender Equality Index lists the

country on 72 place out of 195 countries. These complex measures show positions of women relative to men and among the countries in respect to their economic status, educational attainment, health, political participation and other similar dimensions. Countries ranking high in gender equality indices are those, where violence against women and girls is politically unacceptable and where discussions if domestic violence is or is not a private business, are matter of past history. So, yes, de facto gender equality or lack of it has implications on how violence against women and girls and domestic violence are perceived and dealt with.

BY MAKHA LOMADZE

**T**he facts of domestic violence are increasing. However, this is also due the fact that the media coverage is increasingly covering these matters.

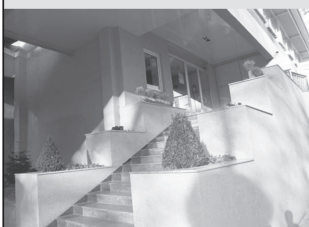
The positive story out of it is that there is much more control from the side of the NGOs, international organizations and much more media coverage. Georgian Journal talked with Erika Kvapilova, Country Director of UN Women.

**G.J: Georgian society seems quite indifferent towards the subject of domestic and gender based violence. It was “proved” by the staged video where there was a quarrel between a couple and a man beats a woman. Hardly anybody helped the latter. What can it be attributed to? Please, give us an expert's view about it – what are its main factors – national, social, etc.**

E.K.: I would not be that pessimistic. The attitudes of people in Georgia towards violence in family have been, in fact, changing. A comparison in public perceptions of domestic violence in 2009 and in 2014 studies show that less and less people regard domestic violence as a private matter, and more and more perceive it as a crime that has to be properly investigated and punished. There have been several positive changes in laws in recent years, which help changing public views on domestic violence

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# BANK REPUBLIC: SPOTLIGHT ON CORPORATE BANKING

**T**his is the second installation in a series of articles that highlight the Bank Republic Société Générale's corporate banking philosophy. Last month I had a chance to sit down and speak with Chief Commercial Officer of Bank Republic Mr. Ramaz Kukuladze and discuss how the bank's emphasis on relationship banking has helped Georgian companies achieve success. This month I met with Mrs. Ia Gabunia, Head of the Corporate Banking Division of Bank Republic and discussed with her the bank's corporate banking strategy and achievements.



## Société Générale Group celebrates 150 years of excellence

The Société Générale Group (SG) is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. In Georgia, SG is represented by Bank Republic. Currently, the Société Générale Group owns 93.64% share in the Bank Republic stock, with the EBRD holding the remaining 6.36%, making Bank Republic Société Générale Group a purely European-owned bank. Reporting total assets of more than one billion Lari, the bank enjoys a status of one of the most successful financial institutions in the country. Thanks to its universal business model, the Bank Republic Société Générale Group remains a reliable long-term financial partner for individuals, micro, small and medium-sized organizations, as well as large corporations. Today, the Bank Republic Société Générale Group ranks fifth on the Georgian market in total assets and is third in lending, generating a hefty GEL 88 million Net Banking Income (net interest income + net fee income)

Mrs. Ia Gabunia, Head of Corporate Banking Division of Bank Republic explains that this anniversary is a remarkable event. As such, on this momentous occasion, Société Générale wanted to provide an additional dimension to its traditional corporate responsibility practice by expanding it to include a solidarity-based challenge, which is open to employees worldwide.

"With its emphasis on commitment, team spirit and solidarity, this event embodies the values that Société Générale wants to promote on its 150th anniversary. Team spirit is in fact one of the key aspects to our success with regard to building close relationships with our corporate banking clients. This is our number one value. We have always been convinced that a team's strength does not come solely from its members' individual talents but rather from its collective spirit.

Keeping with the entrepreneurial spirit of many of the top corporate entities in the world, corporate responsibility is a facet of business that Bank Republic takes very seriously.

"We make a great effort to contribute to the development of small and medium sized businesses in Georgia. We aim to accomplish this by implementing and sponsoring projects directed at assisting Georgia's business community," Gabunia said.

Gabunia explains that aside from the traditional projects it implements, BR recently decided to establish a newly created pro-bono-business forum to assist local small and medium businesses.

"The pro-bono forum was a one-day interactive event with the participation of our business clients. During the forum, senior management of Bank Republic and specialists from

various fields share their expertise with local businesses," Gabunia said.

"By offering our financial consultancy, we are then able to contribute to the development of local businesses. Why is this so important? Because of the expertise we offer. By sharing the wealth of knowledge the bank has accrued over the last 150 years, we are able to offer small, medium and corporate clients financial insight that might not otherwise be readily available to them. We hope that the experience, expertise and insight we provide will help them grow and achieve greater success in their business pursuits."

## A Relationship is Born

Gabunia points out that Bank Republic's dedication to assisting the client is not just relegated to corporate responsibility projects. The bank understands that each and every business is unique, and attributes significant importance to understanding the characteristics and intrinsic details of each company. This approach includes a detailed study of the client, after which the bank advises its clients on best possible solutions, services and products, which are made tailor to the company's individual needs. The Georgian-based Borun Agro-Chemistry LLC is no exception.

"Borun Agro-Chemistry recently approached us with a financing request. The move was made to better accommodate the company's needs and to position it for greater market success in the future. One of the chief reasons that Borun Agro-Chemistry selected Bank Republic as its financial partner was due to the emphasis Bank Republic places on relationship banking," says Gabunia.

Borun Agro-Chemistry LLC is a member of the Borun Group. The company is involved in the import and distribution of a wide array of agro-chemical products. Among other well-known brands, Borun Agro-Chemistry owns the rights to distribute such prominent manufacturers' products as Agro-Sciences (US), Scotts International (The Netherlands) and Agrofili (Italy).

Borun Agro-Chemistry LLC was originally part of Agro Georgia LLC, a company that had been operating on the Georgian market since 2002. During this period, Agro Georgia LLC was a leading force in the industry, covering 30-40% of the Georgian agro-chemical market.

In 2009, the Borun Group purchased 50% of Agro Georgia, becoming a managing partner in a group that would later be renamed to Borun Agro-Chemistry. Soon after the merger, the company began to expand its product range and classification. Currently, the company imports products from 14 countries and offers the widest range of products and services on the Georgian market.

The company also runs 10 farming centers

where it offers agro consultations for farmers, laboratory services for plant and land testing, as well as the rental of heavy equipment. Covering nearly 85% of the total Georgian market, Borun Agro-Chemistry has 80 sale-points throughout the country.

"At the beginning, when we receive all the information on a specific client, we carefully structure the deal according to the client's needs. And because agricultural industry is often seasonal with regard to peak output, Borun Agro-Chemistry approached Bank Republic with a fixed timetable for which it needed financing. So, from the very start, we set out to address this need along with the company's desire to secure financial terms that suit-



ed its immediate and long-term interests," Gabunia underlined.

"The main issue and number one point was flexibility. Our business is seasonal, so each day is important for us. There was an urgent need to receive an answer in a short period of time, and they came through for us," explains Levan Aroshidze, the Director of Borun Agro-Chemistry, adding that "the cooperation between us and Bank Republic on each detail of the loan agreement, as well as our need to receive additional financing, went very smoothly. We were very satisfied with the Bank Republic's relationship-approach to corporate banking."

Because time was absolutely critical to Borun Agro-Chemistry, Bank Republic worked very hard to accommodate the company's specific timetable. In the end, the client's satisfaction can be attributed to Bank Republic's corporate banking philosophy that aims to tailor its products and services to the client's particular needs.

Asked if there was a particular aspect about working with Bank Republic that stood out in the process, Aroshidze underscored that it was the quickly-established relationship the bank brokered between them that was so remarkable.

"First of all, from a business-to-business point of view, our cooperation started very smoothly. However, if you put aside the business aspect, it was the personal relationship that they fostered between us that really stood out. The banking managers who worked on our loan had a very friendly approach, and

this made things very easy. What I want to emphasize is that, we did not just become business partners, we also became friends," said Aroshidze.

Reiterating again how crucial the company's timetable was in the loan structuring process, Aroshidze explained that "each issue during the process that would normally take at least two weeks or one month at other institutions, was solved in one week's time working with Bank Republic."

Aside from its aim to develop close, long-term personal relationships with its clients, Bank Republic also seeks to provide its clients with terms that will ultimately assist them in achieving greater business success.

"Because of Bank Republic's international presence, we offer flexible terms to our clients with regard to international trade finance. Given the fact that the client's main activity is import and trading, it was important for them to receive terms that were not only favorable but also structured in a way that mitigates risks associated with international trade. Our experienced and professional corporate banking staff provided a payment method that corresponded to these needs exactly," Gabunia said.

This ease of doing business can be attributed to the fact that Bank Republic maintains a direct channel of communication with other international branches of Société Générale. So, their products are much more flexible and attractively priced than other local Georgian banks.

According to Aroshidze, the biggest issue in Georgia is time.

"Businesses may ultimately receive the loan and finance terms they desire but they lose too much time in communications with the international banks that are also involved in the process. In our case, flexibility of the Bank Republic's international network made the whole process move quickly," Aroshidze explained.

Aroshidze says that his company's experience with Bank Republic has been a very positive one but the Bank Republic's relationship approach is what really sets it apart.

"At the end of the day, our decision to partner with Bank Republic was not just based on the favorable interest rate they offered us. It's not about this. You feel protected with a good partner, and a bank must be a real partner. There are many important business details that require a bank's close support. So, it is important to know that the bank is together with you. This is much more important than simply financial aspects. Working with Bank Republic provided us with all of these things," Aroshidze said.

## Looking to the Future

With another client satisfied with the Bank Republic's personalized corporate banking approach, I asked Ia Gabunia how the bank achieved the success that it has and where the bank stands to go forward.

"If we have succeeded in making our bank into what it is today, after successfully navigating through even the turbulent times, it is largely due to the strength of our universal banking model, our capacity to maintain our clients' trust, our ability to learn from our mistakes and our exceptional determination and commitment. We hope that we can continue moving forward by improving the products we offer and fostering personal relationships with our clients. Entrepreneurial spirit, innovation and teamwork... These are our historical strengths that provide us with the momentum to project ourselves into the future. Added to this is Société Générale's expertise, and our ongoing commitment to the service for our clients," said Gabunia.



## CHEF'S COMMENT



Karlo Dvalidze, Chef at the Chashnagiri restaurant: "This is an amazing dish that blends several types of meat and is balanced with vegetables. Frying the ingredients in traditional Georgian way - on dried grapevine sprouts adds special piquancy to the dish"

**Ingredients:**

Pork – 350g  
Beef – 300g  
Chicken – 300g  
Quail – 2  
Sulguni cheese – 150g  
Field mushrooms – 350g  
Potatoes – 500g  
Satsebeli – 150g  
Tkemali – 150g  
1 eggplant  
1 tomato  
1 red bell pepper  
3 green peppers  
Salt (optional)  
Onions (optional)



# "CHASHNAGIRI"

## PERFECT MIX OF MEAT AND VEGETABLES

**Step-by-Step Instruction:****Preparation:**

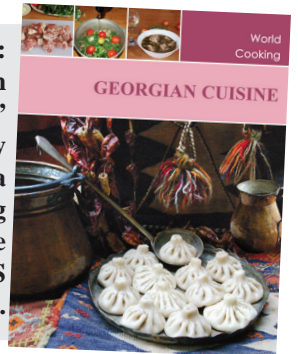
Cut up all the meat you have and skewer it along with vegetables, add salt if needed. Roast it on an open fire, preferably on dried grapevine sprouts.

Sprinkle caps of field mushrooms with salt, pour oil on top of them, put them on a dish and into the oven. After they are half done, cut Sulguni cheese into cubes, add it to the mushrooms and let them fry. Slice the potatoes and fry them in oil.

**Serving:**

Heat a clay pan in the oven, then arrange prepared ingredients on it as follows: put mushrooms with cheese in the middle, surround it with fried potatoes, meat and vegetables. You can also add sauce, onions, pickles and lettuce leaves.

The source:  
"Georgian  
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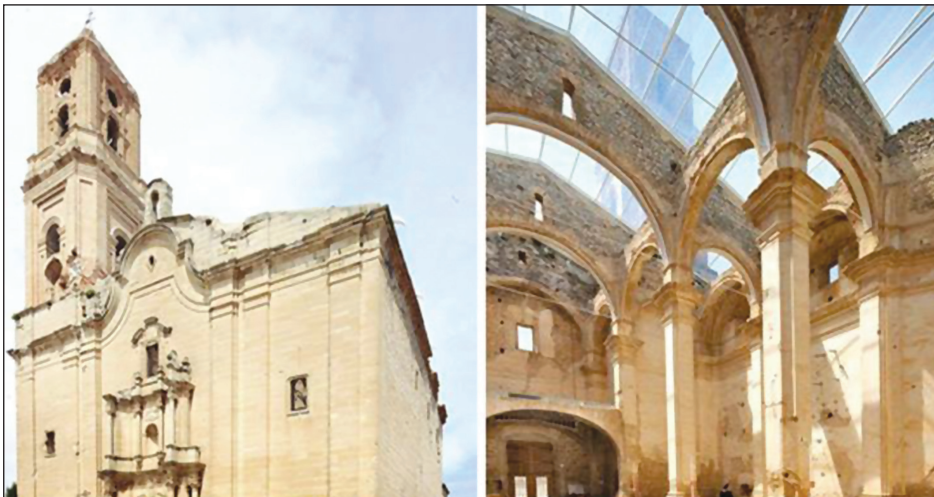
## BAGRATI - NEW LIFE FOR THE OLD HISTORIC CHURCH?

BY NINO KHORAVA

The Bagrati Cathedral is frequently used as the symbol of the city of Kutaisi in the Imereti region of Georgia. It was built during the reign of king Bagrat III (hence the name) in the early 11th century. Throughout the centuries the church has been ruined during numerous attempts of foreign invasion. It is a rightful masterpiece in the history of medieval Georgia. In 2009, Mikheil Saakashvili, former president of Georgia, initiated the restoration works for the church as an ambitious attempt of cultural upheaval in the country. The intent was to give new life to the deteriorating building and at the same time preserving its unique look and character. It did not exactly work out as intended but more on that below.



■ “A horrible green roof, metal constructions and glass covered elevator on exterior. Nothing left from that old Bagrati, nothing left to be proud of” - Architect Gega Batiashvili on Bagrati restoration



■ How it should have been done... restoratin of Corbera D'ebre, a medieval spanish church. Design by Ferran Vizoso team

Restoring the Bagrati Church had a great significance for political, cultural and even symbolic reasons. Bagrati is a symbol of the unification of Georgia, restoring it would mean a rise and rehabilitation of Georgian influence in the country that is torn apart by ethnic conflicts.

Apart of that, the reputation of Georgian Orthodox church would get a major boost, having a functioning church instead of ruins; a place which attracted thousands of believers for centuries.

“The restoration of a church is a great event for any Georgian. I am happy to have a chance to make my modest contribution. I am happy to represent the generation which restored the Bagrati temple,” said Saakashvili in 2012 year.

The most significant feature of the restoration was the construction of the dome and roof, which would protect the church from the elements.

The restored church was blessed by the Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II in a ceremony in September. The leader of Georgian Orthodox church also blessed a huge metal cross and an antique well - the first symbolizing the dominant role of Christianity and religion in Georgia and the second an infinite source of faith and hope flowing from the churches to the people.

The Bagrati Cathedral sits on a hill just above Kutaisi and offers a magnificent view of the city. It was included in the UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE site list in 1994 and re-

turned to the Georgian Orthodox Church in the 2001. But the former government in the deeply religious former Soviet republic has defied the world heritage body UNESCO by rebuilding the 11th century monument in a way that was not exactly appreciated by UN's highest cultural outlet.

“The monument was collapsing and would fall apart without urgent intervention. The temple was restored to a very high standard and the report of the UNESCO expert indicates this,” said Georgian art historian Dimitri Tumanishvili as first criticism came from international bodies and opponents of previous government.

Popular architect Gega Batiashvili has a different view altogether:

“The Bagrati cathedral was one of Georgia's glorious monuments. We were proud of it and when I visited the restored Bagrati, I was appalled. A horrible green roof, metal constructions and glass covered elevator

on exterior. Nothing left from that old Bagrati, nothing left to be proud of” – states the architect.

Those who criticize Bagrati restoration for ruining the sites original style and feel, bring in an example of a Spanish Church. For example, in Spain, a medieval church by the name of Corbera D'ebre. The designing team, Ferran Vizoso was challenged to improve the building without changing its aged appearance. Therefore, the church was renovated to include a new transparent roof that brings in an abundance of natural light. The most important thing is though that it still looks like it's from the past.

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# WORLDWIDE HAZELNUT EXPORT - GEORGIA HOLDS THIRD PLACE

BY EMA TUKHIASHVILI

*In several months, the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with the European Union will come into force. It implies free export of the Georgian agricultural and industrial production to the EU market.*

We are interested in what kind of production is exported to the EU market and what will change for the local exporters as a result of DCFTA? In each issue, we will review each such product.

Recently, hazelnut industry has turned into a profitable business in Georgia. Sever-



## EXPORT INCREASES

Foreign trade of Georgia was 2,879 billion USD with the EU countries. This is 27% of the whole foreign trade and exceeds the previous year's rate with 3%. Export to the EU has increased with 72% and became 608 million USD, i.e. 21% of the whole export.

The agricultural product of 183 million USD was exported to the EU – exceeding the previous-year's rate with 73% and the industrial production was 425 million – more with 72%.

al private investors purchased plots in Guria, some planted hazelnut trees instead of tea plantations. Trees were planted also in Kakheti. There are about 50 local companies purchasing hazelnut from people and export it. Georgia produces 40-50 thousand tons every year.

Turkey is the biggest exporter of hazelnut in the world. It produces more than 500 000 ton nuts every year. Its export potential is greatest covering 75-80% of the world

**“Georgia produces 40-50 thousand tons of hazelnuts every year”**

market. It's safe to say, Turkey establishes the price on market, too. Italy occupies the second place, Georgia holds the third place and Azerbaijan is fourth in the list.

90% of Georgian hazelnut harvest is ex-

## HAZELNUT - A LEADER

Hazelnut is a leader product among those exported to the EU. For example, in 2013, an export worth 116,4 billion USD was provided to the EU market in 2013. The basic export markets are: Germany (41%), Italy (16%), Czech Republic (&6%), Belgium (6%) and France (5%).

ported abroad. It is widely requested because of its unique taste, oil and size, but most Georgian farmers are nursing the trees with centuries old methods that are reflected on the harvest.

Aleksandre Motslerelia, Head of Hazelnut Exporters Association: - Georgian hazelnut is not taxed while being exported to the EU market. There will be Turkish standard TS 30-75 –The EU also uses this standard and Georgian hazelnut is exported according to the standard too.

Mariam Gabunia, the Deputy Head of Foreign Trade Department of the Ministry of Economy: - Georgia already takes advantage of tariff liberalization from the EU. Georgia uses the “GSP+” standard, which implies zero tariffs. Therefore, nothing will change in terms of taxation, but we should consider that “GSP+” is a temporary regulation and DCFTA will be permanent.

**P.S.** In July, 2005, Georgia became one of those 15 countries having the GST+ status. It means it is allowed to export 7200 kinds of production for free to the EU. 9 years have passed but the list of our products exported to the EU is less than 20...



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## “BIDZINA NEVER RECEIVED ANYTHING BELOW AN “A” – IVANISHVILI’S CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL YEARS

BY MANANA GABRICHIDZE

“Bidzina used to bring churchkheldas for the girls at school, while we brought fruit cookies for him. Whenever I came in front of the class to recite the lesson, he would take out a cookie and lick it. I almost choked on drool,” remembers Tinatin Gamagebeli, who studied at the same class as billionaire and former prime minister Bidzina Ivanishvili at the school at Chorvila village...

■ “He never liked public attention and he still gets nervous whenever he appears before the people”

– You and Bidzina Ivanishvili studied together since the first grade. Maybe you could recall something...

– I could recall so many things that they wouldn't fit in a newspaper... The only reason I finished school was because of Bidzina. I was quite weak at math, while our teacher, Ana Sadunishvili was very strict. Bidzina always sat either in front of me or behind me. Whenever he finished his math quiz, he would put his notebook close to me so that I could peek at it and copy, while he covered me with his body from the teacher's gaze... the teacher knew that my work was copied from Bidzina's, but still gave me a “B” or “C”, while Bidzina himself never received anything below “A”. He excelled not only at technical subjects, but at humanitarian ones too.

– Today though, Many people complain about his command of Georgian...

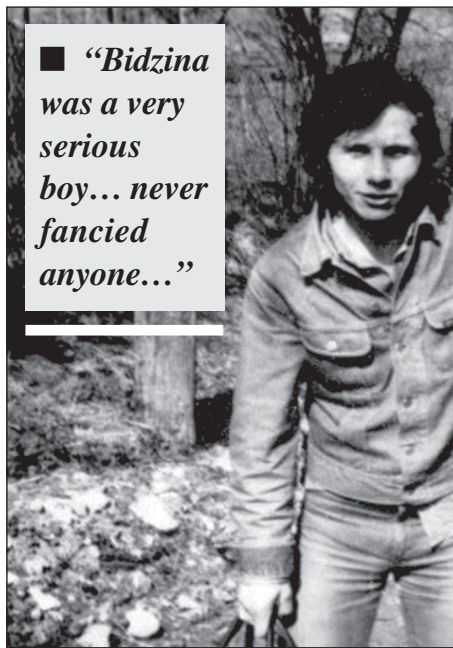
– When he graduated from the university, he went to Moscow and forgot much of the language it seems. I know how he learned Georgian language and literature. I was always surprised by how he could read a verse from The Knight in the Panther's Skin” once and instantly memorize it, while it took me an entire day to do the same. My father taught us music and drawing, while Bidzina didn't display any outstanding mu-



EXCLUSIVE

Tinatin Gamagebeli

■ “Bidzina was a very serious boy... never fancied anyone...”



sical talent and sang in a choir. He learned Russian with great fervor as well; whenever we needed something translated, we would ask for his help... During the last years in school, Bidzina wasn't given any chores to do at home, so that he could completely dedicate himself to studying.

– As far as I know, Bidzina comes from a poor family as well.

– Yes, they used to be in great need... Not only the Bidzina's family was in dire



■ “Bidzina always wore a well-ironed Pioneer tie, but after the end of lessons, he would crumple it in his pocket”

need back then; everyone was. But today in my Chorvila, thanks to Bidzina's efforts, we can have spring in January. I am proud of having grown by such a man's side. I walk around with my head high due to both him and my brother.

– Love stories are common in schools, and many people remember them and laugh later...

– Bidzina was a very serious boy. There were seven girls in our class. He treated all of us equally. Bidzina used to bring churchkheldas for the girls at school, while we brought fruit cookies for him. Whenever I came in front of the class to recite the lesson, he would take out a cookie and lick it. I almost choked on drool. We girls would reprimand him later for not letting us to recite the lesson normally. I was very mischievous back then, and whenever I overstepped my bounds I was seated next to Bidzina and told to take an example from him... In higher grades some older boy started stalking me. Bidzina would protect me from him, even escorting me home several times.

– Did your friendship continue upon finishing the school?

– We went to Tbilisi to continue our studies... We accidentally met at what is called

Freedom Square today and I asked him what he was doing here, surprised. He said that he was taking classes in rhetorics. He participated in poem recital contests.

– Did he invite his classmates to his wedding?

– No, and this offends me a bit. Bidzina was a rich boy by then. The entire Chorvila village heard the news about seven women carrying the train of Bidzina's wife's dress at their wedding. I was slightly hurt by not being able to attend the wedding, but this didn't affect my overall gratitude to Bidzina. The simple fact of my family existing and having a future is owed to him. A good half of Georgia subsists on his charity as well. He was always reserved, doing a lot of kind things to others since childhood but always asking not to mention it...

– Why couldn't you manage to meet him after student years?

– I tried many times to meet him in person. I even went to Mtskheta recently, tried to approach him, even called out to him but the bodyguards wouldn't let me close. I don't have anything to ask him. I don't need anything from him – I am grateful to him as is. However, I haven't seen him for 40 years; we would have had much to recall together...

## LERI KHABELOV OF GEORGIA IS

# 50

BY NUGZAR B. RUHADZE

The Georgian National Olympic Committee hosted a special conference dedicated to 50th anniversary of a Georgia's legendary athlete Leri Khabelov, who also happens to be the current president of GNOC.

Just as a brief reminder: Leri Khabelov is a famous freestyle wrestler who was born in Tbilisi on 5 July 1964. He is the champion of the XXV Olympic Games of 1992 in Barcelona and the silver medalist of the Seoul Games of 1988. Leri Khabelov is a five-time world champion, one-time world bronze medalist, four-time champion of Europe, three-time USSR champion and the champion of the 9th sports contest of the Soviet Union. He won the World Cup in 1991. He was the world champion among the youth and juveniles.



He holds the title of the USSR honored master of sports, which at that time, and even now, is considered the highest ranking sports title, equal to being an academician in science or a marshal in the military. Khabelov

was decorated with Vakhtang Gorgasali Order of second class and with Order of Honor.

The press-conference hall of the Olympic headquarters in Tbilisi was packed with Georgia's Olympians – both old and young.

Among the guests was the world-renowned wrestler from North Ossetia Soslan Andiyev – the super-heavyweight gold medalist of the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games. The warmest possible greetings were coming to Leri from everybody who was present at the event. The Georgian Olympic champions of the older generation - Robert Shavlakadze (high jump), Roman Rurua (wrestling), Mzia Jugeli (artistic gymnastics), Raphael Chimiskian (boxing), Guram Sagaradze (wrestling) and Davit Gobejshvili (wrestling)- cordially and proudly evaluated the Leri Khabelov's significant contribution to the world and national sports.

It is difficult to imagine but small-size Georgia has a considerable number of Olympic champions in every generation, which this nation is deservedly proud of. Leri Khabelov is among these famous Georgian athletes of the world fame.





## DRUGS & WARS & CHEAP SPIN-OFFS

### The sad decadence of Georgian filmmaking

BY BACHO ODISHARIA

**G**eorgia has been making films for one hundred years. Before the fall of the Soviet Union, Georgian cinema was known across Soviet blocs as being vibrant and creative. The Italian director Federico Fellini once described it as “a strange phenomenon, special, philosophically light, sophisticated, and at the same time, childishly pure.” But the economic breakdown which followed Georgian independence has made it very difficult to make films.

Georgian film production began at nearly the same time as European cinema. The first film festival took place in Tbilisi in 1896. The cinema of Georgia has been noted for its cinematography in Europe.

Experts widely consider 1908 as the year of birth for Georgian cinema, when film directors Dighmelov and Amashukeli made their first experimental shots. In 1912, Amashukeli shot the first full-length documentary movie - Akakis Mogzauroba (Akaki's Journey) - about the famous Georgian poet Akaki Tsereteli. The film was unparalleled by any other movie in the world at that time in terms of its theme, length and artistic level. The first full-range feature film in Georgia, “Kristine” was shot from 1916 to 1918. In 1924, “Three Lives” by Perestiani was a great success - the film was the first attempt to provide psychological insight into the heroes.

The great period of Georgian filmmaking (albeit overshadowed by Soviet ideology) was in 1960s and 70s, with worldly renowned filmmakers like Otar Ioseliani and Sergei Parajanov (arguably one of the truly great silent directors).

Notorious picture was Sherekilebi by Eldar Shengelaya shot in 1973. Under the cover of the comedy and double meaning the director managed to avoid the sharp-edged editing of Soviet censorship. The story is set up in unknown place, abstract country, where the majority of society is “normal” and people with different ideas are kept in isolation, treated as criminals or mentally ill, as a danger for others. Wonderful cinematography and soft, delicate humor of the film remains as an unforgettable journey of human spirit. Also it has slightly sci-fi elements.

One of our most acclaimed movie director Tengiz Abuladze has shot many great films. His short “Magdana’s donkey” won best fiction film prize at Cannes in 1956. His works were like if Ingmar Bergman and Akira Kurosawa collaborated together. His surreal images and beautiful shots were hypnotic and



■ Masterpieces like “Akaki’s Journey”, “The Color of Pomegranates” and “Sherekilebi (Madmen)” are not made anymore... They are financially unstable, yield little commercial gains and require real creative talent

still after all this year stays exactly the same.

TV movies were highly popular in 70s and had the same quality as feature films. Huge success was “Data Tutashkhia” 7 series long TV movie and “Kukaracha”. First had great action scenes, deep character development and wise dialogues. Second was family movie, heartfelt and sweet with likable titular character and beautiful story. So big and small screens were in a big competition.

Temur Babluani’s film – “The Sun of the Sleepless” (1992, Gold Eagle at the I International Festival in Tbilisi; 1992 Silver Bear prize in Berlin) - captivates audience with the sense of embitterment as the hero who has lost his face and moral reference point is trying to find faith, hope for the better future.

Nowadays, Georgian cinema is in a very bad condition because our government puts little money into cinema. It is very difficult to revive after 15 years of falling and hard to imagine how we can overtake European cinema and even Russian cinema, as they have already produced hundreds of movies this

■ Almost every single movie shot after the 90s tells a story about street life, criminal culture and drug addiction or about war in particular

year because their government gives them enough money to produce films... Businessmen will never put money into this field because if they put money in, they will have to pay more taxes on it.

Of course, modern Georgian cinema is facing plenty of problems: commercialization, instability and many others but the main problem is a lack of original ideas. Almost every single movie shot after 90s tells a story about street life, criminal culture and drug addiction or about war in particular.

So today we have only two kinds of movies which are stubbornly trying to evoke emotions in the viewers not realizing these very emotions have long ago become cliché and have been used to death. They are not urgent anymore and it’s time for Georgian filmmakers to acknowledge it and move to greener pastures, unless they really have a big, big something to say on the matter. Georgian cinema is still in the process of search of its identity, of new possibilities and a new film language of cinema, and of new forms of expression.

Most of the new films tell the tragedy of Georgia in the beginning of 1990s and division of the country into conflict zones. There are some attempts in comedy genre, mainly focused on a commercial success. These are the failures of modern day Georgian cinema - filmmakers are trying to create and sell irrelevant movies. There are very few films whose narrative tells a story of today’s reality. Our cinema is stuck in 90s and doesn’t want to move forward to progress and gain popularity and attention of Europe.

I remember once Hollywood got obsessed with making World War II movies in 90s but when everything was said and done they moved forward. It’s important for Georgian filmmakers to free their minds from past and concentrate in present day or better look in the future. There are a lot of issues that is important to talk about and make a comment. Movie camera is a perfect weapon that can change people’s minds and their mentality, so Georgian movie directors should use this force they have and trigger it with a good cause.



# SHOCKING! BELARUSIAN PRESIDENT SPEAKS BELARUSIAN

BY ALYAKSANDRA DYNKO AND CLAIRE BIGG

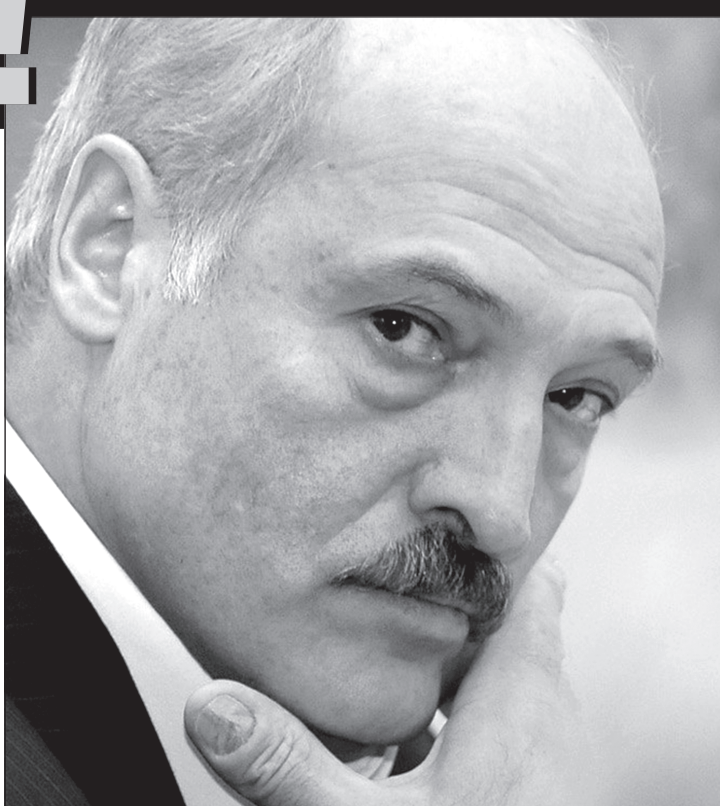
**B**elarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has stunned his nation by giving a speech...in Belarusian.

The speech, delivered to a packed audience ahead of the country's Independence Day, was a startling departure from his long-standing habit of belittling the language. It marks the first time in 20 years that the iron-fisted leader formally addresses his nation in Belarusian rather than Russian. The move has sparked intense speculation in Belarus, with some commentators suggesting that Lukashenka is seeking to assert his autonomy from Russia - a close trading and diplomatic ally - in the wake of Moscow's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.

The timing - one day before Russian President Vladimir Putin landed in Belarus to take part in celebrations marking the 70th anniversary on the country's liberation from Nazi troops - has certainly raised eyebrows.

But Alyaksandr Fiaduta, a former spokesperson for Lukashenka, says people shouldn't read too much into it.

"One shouldn't assume that he's turning his back on Russia," says Fiaduta, who parted ways with Lukashenka in 1995 and is now a respected political analyst. "He has his own course."



Fiaduta actually wrote the Lukashenka's first - and until now only - speech in Belarusian, which the newly elected president delivered on Independence Day in 1994.

But according to Fiaduta, the intense media scrutiny that followed had the effect of deterring Lukashenka from using Belarusian.

"Unfortunately, after the Alyaksandr Lukashenka's first speech in Belarusian, everyone started analyzing what it meant and how he performed," he says. "After reading all these comments, he refused to speak Belarusian again."

Since then, Lukashenka has done little to conceal his distaste for the language.

"People who speak in Belarusian cannot do anything other than speak it because you can't express anything lofty in Belarusian," he said in 1994. He went on to describe Belarusian as a "poor language" and hail Russian and English as the two only "great languages."

The next year, in 1995, he elevated Russian to the status of a state language, alongside Belarusian, following a controversial referendum.

Critics accuse Lukashenka of overseeing a clampdown on Belarusian language over the past two decades, with the number of Belarusian-language schools and publications plummeting under his rule. Belarusian has a long history of being frowned upon as a substandard language. In Soviet times, Belarusian was regarded as the language of peasants, and those who sought to climb the social ladder spoke only Russian, at least in public.

Nowadays, Belarusian is favored mostly by opposition sympathizers, nationalists, and intellectuals. Most other Belarusians tend to use a hybrid of both languages called "trasyanka."

Lukashenka's historical speech in Belarusian this week, although slightly accented, has disproved rumors that he can't actually speak the language. It has nonetheless sparked a barrage of sarcastic comments online.

Political analyst Fiaduta, however, urges Belarusians to be more lenient with Lukashenka this time around.

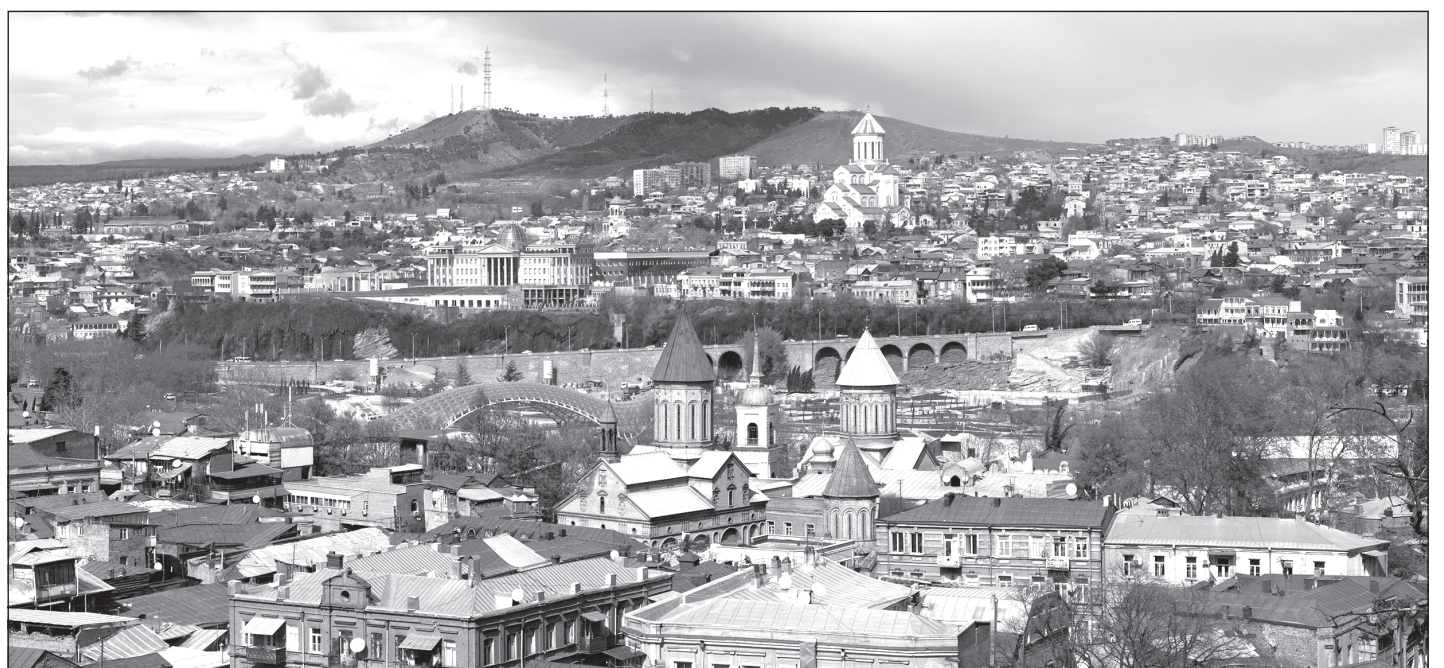
"Stop joking about the president's Belarusian," Fiaduta wrote on Facebook. "Don't scare him, or else we'll have to wait another 20 years."

## TOP 10 SAFEST COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD TO LIVE IN

BY MIA AUTUMN

Georgia ranks # 9

**E**very single person dreams to find the safest place in the world for living, since natural disasters, terrorism, robberies and massacres made our planet a hell place to live. It is hard to find a country that satisfies all the criteria in everyone's mind while declaring a country as a safest country in the world. Most people like to live in peaceful countries with low crime rate. Crime is widespread almost everywhere. Every day we see it on the news and television. A place with high prevalent of crime makes it unsafe to live. Crime may lead to have anxiety, post-traumatic stress, physical pain, as well as loss of property and even life. Hence, crime becomes the most important aspect to state a country as a safe place to live. In fact, there are countries in the earth that are found to be low in the crime rate. In this article, we framed a list of countries in the world with lowest crime rates based on the statistical analysis of the site statistic brain. Just take a look on this post to have an idea about the top 10 safest countries in the world: Japan Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, United Arab Emirates, Malta, Luxemburg, Georgia, Bahrain and Singapore.



Georgia is ranking number eight on the list. Georgia is situated at the junction of Asia and Europe. Georgia is a country that shows the combination of diversity and uniqueness. The country offers its visitors Black Sea coastline, curative climate, national parks, Caucasus mountain range, mineral waters, delicious cuisine, rich culture, UNESCO Heritage Sites and popular Georgian hospitality. The crime rate in Georgia is very low and it makes it as one of the safest countries in the world. With 19.57 as the crime variable and 80.43 as the safety rate variable, Georgia occupies the eighth place

in the list of statistic report of statistic brain. In addition to the safety measures, the attractions in the county from Tbilisi's old town architecture to the beaches and nightlife make this as best place to live and attracts more tourists. The establishment of professional law reduces the overall crime rates in the cities of Georgia and it also increase the standard of living in the country. Georgia is now enhancing its tourism potential and offering its full range of attraction safely to visitors. Based on the investigation, 98 % of Georgians who took part in survey commented that they feel very safe

in the Georgia territory. Thus, the country goes one among the world leaders in the safety level. In the World Economic Forum honored the country by providing 34th rank in the national physical security. Once the corruption in Georgia was big annoy for tourist but now it becomes less visible due to Rose revolution. Now it is reasonable as well as safe to trust the police. Georgian police are patrolling every street in the towns and cities regularly; they can help the people in case of any problem.

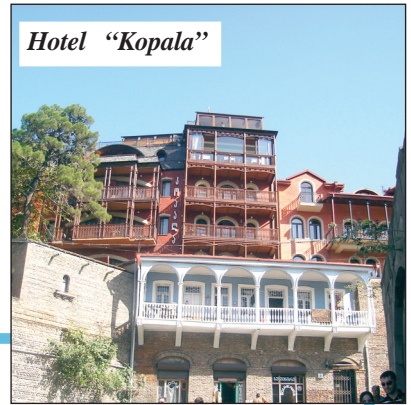
This page was prepared by NBR



BY MANANA GABRICHIDZE

“For foreign visitors, Tbilisi offers a picture of a Western city in the East – this is where their acquaintance with Tbilisi starts. I frequently bring guests from abroad and they return amazed by its strange beauty and layout – traits that few other big cities can boast. Some of the visitors have already purchased homes in Tbilisi and spend their vacations here” – says Lasha Oniani, a Georgian movie director, who has spend decades living and working in Europe.

# “TBILISI IS A WESTERN CITY, AND THUS STREAKS OF THE EAST SIT WELL WITH IT”



Hotel “Kopala”

“Which of Tbilisi’s hotels do you prefer?”

“Hotel “Kopala”. It offers a great view, especially at dawn, when most of Tbilisi’s millennia-old sights are at their most stark display. Then there’s also “Radisson Blu”, which allows guests to see the entire city’s contrast between modernity and antiquity. Its service is very nice as well.”



Aghmashenebeli Avenue

“Does Tbilisi or any of its streets remind you of any foreign cities?”

“Tbilisi is a very peculiar city; what I like about it is that it is a Western city, and thus streaks of the East sit well with it – motley bathhouses, Islamic and Jewish architecture create an interesting mix when coupled with European-looking central streets – Rustaveli and Aghmashenebeli.



“Literature Cafe”

“What about favorite restaurants and cafes?”

“I like “Literature Cafe” at Abashidze street as well as English Teahouse at Marjanishvili. I worked at many projects there, at the table by the showcase. I can also mention “Antre” at Rustaveli and “Four Seasons” in Saburtalo. As for restaurants, the ones in Dighomi district are fantastic when it comes to feasting.

“Do you do any shopping when you are in Tbilisi?”

“I don’t know whether this counts as shopping, but... I like the sports shop at Marjanishvili Street; it has a lot of interesting items for sale. I also like the “Adidas” shop at Rustaveli Street a lot.”



Sports shop “Master Sport”



Lasha Oniani with is son Luka

“There are parts of Tbilisi that exist even abroad.”

“Yes, in the city of Saarbrucken, where I spent decades of my life, “Tbilisser Platz” exists – a square dedicated to Tbilisi, bearing its name in both German and Georgian. This city has grown very close with Tbilisi over the course of 35 years... We opened a restaurant named “Tbilisi” at one of its streets in 2012, which is yet another symbol of German-Georgian relationship.



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BY TORNIKE KAJRISHVILI

Several months ago the whole city of Tbilisi started talking about a foreign tourist and his camel walking in the Saburtalo Street. Facebook went ablaze with post moaning about the fact that an exotic animal, which we don't have even in the zoo, is walking freely in central districts of Tbilisi. The photos of the animal nicknamed as the 'Camel from Vake' were spread in the social web but not many people know the story about how she hit Georgia... According to the spread information, several days ago the camel attacked a passer-by for the second time... Now the exotic animal lives on the hippodrome territory.

– Meet the 14-year-old Chinie – says Gorhan Ji Ta Haneda, the Swiss owner of the camel inviting me for tea in the stable. The whole 100-meter-long and 50-meter-wide roofed territory is completely utilized by the foreign traveler. First thing to spot inside the table is the camel lying on the sand in the center. The host explains that in the whole world there are only about one thousand animals of this unique species of the two-

■ “I want a camel caravan to walk again on the Silk Road”

■ “Due to the sexually active period she needs a male camel. She gets easily irritated because she can't satisfy her physiological needs”

## CAMEL FROM VAKE IS LOOKING FOR A 'HUSBAND' AND HER MASTER – FOR A WIFE...



Gorhan and his Georgian friend and colleague Akim, enjoying nomadic lifestyle

**Gorhan Ji Ta Haneda:**

– Due to the sexually active period she needs a male camel. She gets easily irritated because she can't satisfy her physiological needs’.

**Q.** – Is this the reason why she attacked the passers-by?

**A.** – No, it wasn't so. Somebody threw a stone at her and she got angry...

**Q.** – I learnt that she assaulted a man a couple of days ago...

**A.** – I've seen many times that people are throwing things at her. Drunk men come often and throw stones at me. For several times, vicious people gave Chinie to eat hot togs with needles inside and I saved her life... Once I took her out in the yard, tied her to a tree and went to a nearby WC. When coming back in about 15 minutes I saw somebody brandishing a stick. I told him to stop but he called the patrol... This happened three weeks ago. According to the spread rumors I was made to pay fine but it's a lie. I can sue that man for insulting my camel...

It wasn't my aim to settle in Georgia. I'd

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humped camel. As Gorhan was preparing tea I spoke with Akim, his Georgian friend:

Gorhan is 56 years old. He was born in one of the Gipsy camps in Switzerland. He says that the lust for roaming is in his genes.

He began ‘invasion’ of the Silk Road 24 years ago and pitched a tent in every country through which the Road passed. He has already visited 38 countries, Georgia being the 39th. Soon it will be two years since he arrived in Georgia. Gorhan has been bringing up Chinie since her young days. Their journey started from Turkmenistan. After a long trip they arrived in Georgia. He wanted to take her to Astrakhan where the two-humped camels live but he isn't allowed on the Russian territory. It's already one year since he's been in this stable; before that, together with his animals (Gorhan has goats, hens, dogs and cats), he lived under the open skies, even in winter. Then we asked some people to let him live here’.

Gorhan is a psychologist and veterinarian. After three marriages he has seven children. He met all his three wives in different countries. Now he's looking for a Georgian lady. While the Swiss traveler is looking for a Georgian wife, the ‘Camel from Vake’ is accused of attacking the people for the second time. Gorhan is explaining that at the moment Chinie has the mating period and she is a bit irritated... He is looking for her match in other countries because she is the only camel in Georgia but this is connected with high expenses and the traveler can't afford it.

■ “For the second time ‘Chinie’ is accused of attacking the people”

like to address kind people – my main goal is to revive the caravan rout of the Silk Road; I want Georgia to be the center of caravanse-rai. All this is connected with finances, comprising reproduction and taming of camels and many other issues. I want to see camel caravan on the Silk Road again. But before that I have to deal with the problem connected with Chinie.

I'd like to address every philanthropist to finance the Silk Road revival project and help me buy a male camel for my Chinie.

If nothing comes out of it here, I'll take Chinie to Azerbaijan and get a male there. “

Since coming to Georgia three members were added to Gorhan's animals. The name of one of the goats is Georgian ‘Gelodi’. The dog Bobi, cock Kikliko, camel Chinie and now goat Gelody are inseparable friends. The wooden cart that is the only means for the ‘animal camp’ to go from country to country is at present the owner's bedroom. The cart is so heavy that it can be drawn only by two camels. Gorhan had two camels but three years ago, in Turkey, the 28-year-old two humped camel died...

A representative of the species that are on the verge of extinction is having hard times. To find a male camel is of utmost importance for her.





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# AUTO BILD'S AUTO STOP JOURNEY FROM TBILISI TO BATUMI

"1000 kilometers in Georgia – this is the name of a new rubric, the premiere of which will be in the August issue of The AUTO BUILD Georgia. The new rubric unites two rubrics – Test and Reportage. The idea is that an automobile test should be more interesting and engaging – that's why we decided to travel in different parts of Georgia by this or that car, share our impressions about the car and tell you interesting stories from different parts of our country.



We have chosen Adjara for the rubric premiere as this region is very popular in August. As for the first automobile by which we covered 1000 kilometers, it is a Ford mini-van - Ford B-Max.

On 5 July, we filled the Ford B-Max luggage boot with new and old copies of The AUTO BUILD and Georgian Journal and went to Batumi. We had decided to take every passenger traveling by auto stop if only we could accommodate. There were foreigners too – for example, Danish tourists from Kutaisi Airport, for whom it was their first visit in Georgia. We took them in Batumi. We talked about cars, the magazine AUTO BUILD which is also issued in Denmark (AUTO BILD Denmark) and of course, about Georgia. We gave them an English newspaper Georgian Journal, by means of which they will receive interesting information about Georgia," said Shalva Buachidze, the Editor-in-chief of The AUTO BUILD Georgia.

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ISSN 1987 - 5096  
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