

BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

Ministry of Justice Develops Plan for Delinquent Children's Housing

According to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Vakhtang Gomelaury, child crime is a significant concern. He stated that the Ministry of Justice, in collaboration with other agencies, is developing a plan based on the German model, which involves providing separate housing for delinquent children in isolation.

"Finally, we have agreed on implementing the German model, which entails establishing separate dwellings for these children," stated Gomelaury.

He further explained that unlike traditional orphanages, children in these institutions will not have the right to leave without the permission of a judge.

"It will not be a prison, but rather conditions similar to those of an ordinary home: schooling, teachers, educators, education, sports... It could be for three months, six months, or even one year. We are actively working with the justice system on this model. We have not seen any other solution," said Gomelaury.

According to the Minister of Internal Affairs, there are cases where children attack tourists and rob them. Also, minors arrive from neighboring countries without documents, without a guardian, and Ministry of Internal Affairs employees often have to return them to their home countries.



"There is definitely a problem with minors. I also do not want to arrest these children and put them in prison, especially if they are under the age of 15. For ex-

ample, there is one child, I will not mention his last name, he is 13 years old, he has committed 32 robberies - entering a pharmacy, entering with a knife, ex-

tortion, etc. There is no such thing in the history of Georgia, and I don't think it will happen abroad or in Russia. The whole police knows this child, I already

know this kid. We will bring this kid, mother will come, she will write a statement, sorry, crying, and we let her go. We can't do anything," said Gomelaury.

IPRM Meeting in Ergneti: Concerns Over Murder Investigation and Illegal Borderization



BY LIZA MCHEDLIDZE

The Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) meeting lasted for several hours in Ergneti. Deputy Director of the Information and Analytical Department of the State Security Service, Irakli Antadze, stated that they heard a cynical position from the representatives of the Russian occupation forces regarding the murder of Georgian citizen Tamaz Ginturi.

"First of all, we were interested in what steps were taken by the Russian Federation regarding the murder of Tamaz Ginturi and whether we should expect that the law would be enforced. Unfortunately, we heard the same cynical position that was repeatedly voiced by the representatives of the Russian occupation forces. Unfortunately, we heard the same narrative today regarding the killing of Tamaz Ginturi by the representatives of the Russian occupation forces, stating that the border guards "acted in full compliance with the regulations," Antadze stated.

Antadze stated that illegal borderization was discussed at the meeting, with extensive con-

versation and identification of affected locations. He criticized the unchanged stance of the occupying forces, who seek to legitimize the process with baseless arguments. Antadze emphasized that illegal installations lead to further injustices, such as the unlawful detention of civilians. He highlighted the ongoing victimization, noting that six citizens remain in illegal detention.

"As for the process of illegal borderization, there was also a rather extensive discussion on this. We identified the locations where the process of illegal borderization was observed during the period between the meetings. Unfortunately, the position of the occupying forces remains unchanged; they are attempting to legitimize this extremely destructive process with absurd arguments. What we always emphasize is that erecting illegal installations does not simply involve putting up a fence or barbed wire; first and foremost, it serves as a precursor to subsequent processes, such as the illegal detention of civilians. This victimization is still evident today, with six of our fellow citizens remaining in illegal detention in the occupied territory," Antadze said.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

47 Civil Organizations Address Georgian Dream on Vetting, Emphasizing the Importance of Verifying Judges' Integrity



Members of civil society responded to the statement made by Georgian Dream regarding vetting and emphasized that the issue of verifying the integrity of judges cannot be dismissed. They stated that the mandate from the Georgian people, which is to enhance the judiciary and pursue membership of the European Union, supports this stance. 47 organizations have signed this statement.

"Today, there are fundamental questions about the integrity of the persons in leading positions in the judicial sys-

tem and their possession of property incompatible with official duties. Additionally, it is significant that several influential judges are sanctioned by Georgia's strategic partner, the United States of America.

We think, first of all, it should be in the interest of the government and the

judges themselves to remove all the questions in the society that are related to the problems of justice and the integrity of the judges. It is not clear to us, if there is no problem with the integrity of the judges, why the political and judicial authorities oppose this process," the statement reads.

Civil organizations assert that by closing this issue against the will of the Georgian people, the government puts the European integration process at risk. According to their assessment, verifying

the integrity of high-ranking court officials will remain relevant to society until the goal of establishing an independent judiciary and securing Georgia's accession to the European Union is achieved.

Government Allocates 7.5 Million GEL for Gelati Monastery Complex Restoration



7.5 million GEL was allocated to finance the restoration, reconstruction, and conservation works of the Gelati monastery complex.

Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze signed the government's decree, which

was issued on March 18.

According to the same decree, the transfer of this amount to the Orthodox Church is entrusted to the National Agency for the Protection of Cultural Heritage.

"In order to finance the expenses related to the restoration, reconstruction, and conservation works of the Gelati monastery complex, the Ministry of Finance shall allocate 7,500,000 GEL from the fund of projects to be implemented in

the regions of Georgia, as provided for by the Law 'On the State Budget of 2024', to the Agency for the Protection of Cultural Heritage operating within the sphere of governance of the Ministry of Culture," the decree reads.

EU awards Euro150,000 for cultural grants to five cities in Armenia, Georgia, and Moldova

The EU-funded EU4Culture project has awarded grants of Euro30,000 each to five municipalities participating in its Regional Cities Network. These are Charentsavan and Sevan in Armenia, Kutaisi and Poti in Georgia, and Orhei in the Republic of Moldova.

The network aims to increase the sustainability of the cultural development strategies created in 2022 with the support of EU4Culture. The strategic plans of the five municipalities stimulate the regional economy by promoting the development of local creative and cultural industries.

In 2024, the selected municipalities will use the newly

awarded funds to implement various cultural activities, such as art events and training. One

municipality will also produce a publicly accessible database on local culture. As members of the

EU4Culture Regional Cities Network, the municipalities will also share their experiences in

implementing their Cultural Development Strategies within and beyond the Network.

"The new package for the five municipalities can serve as additional encouragement to create development opportunities in the regions of Armenia, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova, hence establishing new models for strengthening the resilience of cultural and creative sectors in the countries," said EU4Culture Team Leader, Anatoli Beifert.

With a budget of Euro7.85 million, EU4Culture is a four-year project funded by the European Union to support the cultural and creative sector with a special focus on non-capital cities and towns in the Eastern Partnership Countries. The project is implemented by Goethe-Institut (Lead), Czech Centers, Danish Cultural Institute, and Institut Français de Géorgie.

(euneighbourseast.eu)



Weather

Thursday, March 21

Day Partly Cloudy High: 15°C

Night Light Rain Low: 6°C

Friday, March 22

Day Light Rain High: 8°C

Night Light Rain Low: 6°C

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Dance Performance "The Color of Pomegranate"

The Embassy of France, Ambassador H.E. Sheraz Gasri, the Embassy of Armenia in Georgia, Ambassador H.E. Ashot Smbatyan and the Institut Francais de Georgie, in partnership with TBC, had

invited spectators to discover the performance "The Color of Pomegranate", choreographic show by Mourad Merzouki on an original idea by Saté Khachatryan, a unique choreographic show in tribute to

the centenary of the birth by the great filmmaker Sergei Parajanov on March 18.

This show was immersed in scenes inspired by Parajanov's cult film, "The Color of Pomegranate". It combines hip-

hop movements with traditional Caucasian dance, creating a fusion between Caucasian sounds and electro music. A unique poetic approach to celebrate the artistic legacy of Sergei Parajanov.





