

NEWS DIGEST ON GEORGIA

July 13-16

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❖ Occupied Regions

❖ Abkhazia Region

1. Saakashvili, Akhalaia, Kezerashvili, Okruashvili included in black list of occupied Abkhazia

The "Organization of War Veterans" of occupied Abkhazia has presented "Khishba-Sigua List" to the de-facto parliament of Abkhazia. The following persons are included in the list set up in response to Georgian central government's so-called "Otkhozoria-Tatunashvili List" :

Ex-president Mikheil Saakashvili, former defence ministers – Bacho Akhalaia, Davit Kezerashvili, Irakli Okruashvili, Tengiz Kitovani and Gia Karkarashvili, former secretary of the National Security Council Irakli Batiashvili, former internal affairs minister Vano Merabishvili, Former head of the Joint Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces Zaza Gogava, former Defense Ministry senior official Megis Kardava, Brigadier General Mamuka Kurashvili, leader of "Forest Brothers" Davit Shengelia, former employee of the MIA Roman Shamatava and other persons are included in the list (*IPN.GE, July 15, 2018*).

2. Sergi Kapanadze says "Khishba-Sigua List" by de-facto Abkhazia is part of internal game and means nothing for Georgia

There is no need to make a serious comment about "Khishba-Sigua List" as this list cannot have any effect on the public life of Georgia, Sergi Kapanadze, member of the "European Georgia" party, told reporters. The lawmaker believes that the list will not have legal or political consequences. (*IPN.GE, July 15, 2018*).

❖ Foreign Affairs

3. Jens Stoltenberg – We agreed to continue working together to prepare Georgia for NATO membership

"We also met with the Presidents of Georgia and Ukraine. Together we discussed shared concerns. Including Russia's threats to their sovereignty and territorial integrity. Today, we agreed to continue working together to prepare Georgia for NATO membership" – said Stoltenberg (*IPN.GE, July 13, 2018*).

4. Davit Zalkaliani: All expectations for NATO Brussels summit have been "reached"

"This summit was held on the background of very serious geopolitical challenges. Despite the serious challenges in the NATO area, we have managed that all our expectations for the NATO Brussels summit have been reached," Zalkaliani said (*IPN.GE, July 13, 2018*).

5. PM meets with European Commission's Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management

According to the Administration of the Government, the parties discussed the priorities of Georgia-EU cooperation and emphasized Georgia's progress toward European integration and in the implementation of reforms.

According to Christos Stylianides, the EU visa-free waiver and the DCFTA are clear demonstration and confirmation of the country's success (*IPN.GE, July 13, 2018*).

6. Italian President arrives in Tbilisi

Italian President Sergio Mattarella has arrived in Tbilisi together with his Italian state delegation.

According to the Administrative Office of Georgia's the President of Georgia, the two Presidents will initially hold a face-to-face meeting, which will be followed by a meeting in an extended format.

President Margvelashvili and President Mattarella will sign documents of cooperation and hold a joint press conference (*IPN.GE, July 16, 2018*).

❖ Internal Affairs

7. Georgian Dream may support Salome Zourabichvili in presidential election

According to the information obtained by InterPressNews, Salome Zourabichvili has already decided to run for the presidential election as an independent candidate.

The above-mentioned is one of the scenarios considered by the ruling party regarding the forthcoming presidential elections, but Salome Zourabichvili refuses to comment on the issue and says it is too early to talk about her participation in the presidential election (*IPN.GE, July 13, 2018*).

8. We have many worthy candidates, our team will name our presidential candidate in a very short time - Eka Beselia

"Naturally, we look at this process with very high responsibility. Of course, we will discuss and talk about various versions. So far the consultation continues. I cannot rule out any candidate. Let's wait for the final decision that will be made by the ruling political party in the nearest future," Eka Beselia said (*IPN.GE, July 13, 2018*).

9. Giorgi Kvirikashvili says he has finished his public activity

Kvirikashvili was asked by the journalists to evaluate the economic team nominated by Prime Minister Mamuka Bakhtadze and whether the former chairman of the government would continue public activity at the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral.

"I came here to celebrate the holiday. I will not make any other comment. I have repeatedly stated that I have finished my public activity," Giorgi Kvirikashvili said (*IPN.GE, July 13, 2018*).

10. Giorgi Margvelashvili: "I still don't know why the Prime Minister resigned"

"All the opposition parties, regardless of their political platforms, have equally expressed concern about these resignations without any explanation or reason being given by either official This is insulting to the public .

I still do not know why the Prime Minister resigned, and what the basis for such an important decision was," Giorgi Margvelashvili said (*IPN.GE, July 13, 2018*).

11. European Georgia says their presidential candidate will be pleasant surprise for public

"The European Georgia will have a very strong candidate. Active consultations will soon be over in the party and on July 21, we will name our candidate. European Georgia's presidential candidate will be a

pleasant surprise for the public and one of the favorite presidential candidates. I can tell you that this person is engaged in active politics," said Otar Kakhidze (*IPN.GE, July 13, 2018*).

12. Giorgi Gakharia denies reports saying that some members of Kvirikashvili's team were prohibited from leaving country

According to Minister of Internal Affairs Giorgi Gakharia, reports saying that some members of Kvirikashvili's team were prohibited from leaving the country and that investigation was launched against TBC Bank are not true.

Gakharia made the comment in response to MP Roman Gotsiridze's question at the joint sitting of the parliamentary committees (*IPN.GE, July 13, 2018*).

13. Majority leader says society wants Bidzina Ivanishvili to be involved in the presidential campaign

Of course, the team of the "Georgian Dream" holds consultations over the presidential elections. In addition, society wants Bidzina Ivanishvili to be involved in the presidential campaign, - Archil Talakvadze, leader of the parliamentary majority, told Imedi TV.

According to him, apart from the party chairman [Bidzina Ivanishvili] there are other strong candidates in the ruling party. "Our team also has other strong candidates. I would like to name Davit Sergeenko, Sozar Subari, Maia Tskitishvili, who can join the presidential campaign and win the elections. The decision of the "Georgian Dream" regarding the presidential candidate will be announced in the nearest future, after the consultations are over," Archil Talakvadze said (*IPN.GE, July 14, 2018*).

14. Reshuffled Georgian government wins confidence vote in Parliament

The Parliament of Georgia has confirmed PM Mamuka Bakhtadze's new cabinet composition and its program – "Freedom, Fast Development, prosperity" with 101 votes to 12.

The new government won a confidence vote following the recent structural and staff changes, which reduced the number of ministries from 14 to 11 (*IPN.GE, July 15, 2018*).

15. Nine opposition parties to name presidential candidate on Tuesday

The representatives of the the nine opposition parties say they do not support Giorgi Margvelashvili's candidacy in case he decides to join the race.

Reportedly, they will name their presidential candidate from the opposition "National Movement" party (*IPN.GE, July 15, 2018*).

16. Grigol Vashadze to be presidential candidate of 10 opposition parties

Grigol Vashadze, a member of the National Movement, has been chosen as the presidential candidate who will represent the union of the current 10 opposition parties, a source told InterPressNews.

The parties will officially announce the nomination of Grigol Vashadze tomorrow.

Opposition parties have formed a union - Power is in Unity, which is made up of representatives of the ten opposition parties: New Georgia - Nikoloz Vashakidze; Serve Georgia - Murman Dumbadze; National Democratic Party - Bachuki Kardava; State for People - Nika Machutadze; Christian Conservative Party - Shota Malashkhia; United National Movement - Nikanor Melia; Civil Alliance for Freedom - Zurab Kharatishvili; New Georgia - Giorgi Vashadze; Georgia among Leaders - Mamuka Gamkrelidze; Georgia's European Democrats - Paata Davitaia (*IPN.GE, July 16, 2018*).

17. Explosion at Mindeli mine kills 4 and injures 6

According to the Ministry, methane explosion supposedly caused the collapse of the ceiling in the tunnel.

The injured have been hospitalized. Investigation has begun into the violation of safety rules (*IPN.GE, July 16, 2018*).

18. Mindeli mine to be closed until the end of investigation

An investigation is ongoing into the tragedy that occurred at the Mindeli mine and all persons responsible will be strictly punished,- reads the statement of Prime Minister Mamuka Bakhtadze.

According to the PM, the mine will not resume working until the end of the criminal investigation and high quality international examination (*IPN.GE, July 16, 2018*).

19. Georgian Industrial Group expresses readiness to transfer Saknakhshiri company to state free of charge

The Georgian Industrial Group expresses its readiness to transfer the Saknakhshiri company to the state free of charge.

According to the statement of the Georgian Industrial Group, even though they have invested tens of millions since 2006, they are ready to transfer the company due to the failure to achieve safe working conditions at the mine (*IPN.GE, July 16, 2018*).

20. PM: Nothing is higher than the life of a human and a citizen, we need to meet European standards

"Today we have a mourning day in Georgia; our citizens have died in Tkibuli. We made a decision that every shaft will be closed. Nothing is higher than the life of a human and a citizen. These shafts will be closed until the completion of the criminal investigation and international technical examination. At the same time, we will establish whether the company implemented the recommendations. We gave relevant instructions to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs,"- stated Mamuka Bakhtadze (*IPN.GE, July 16, 2018*).

21. Shalva Tadumadze appointed as Chief Prosecutor

The Parliament has voted to select elected Shalva Tadumadze as Chief Prosecutor by a majority of votes. Tadumadze will hold the Chief Prosecutor's post for 6 years. 101 MPs voted for him and against 2 against him in a secret ballot (*IPN.GE, July 16, 2018*).

22. New Chief Prosecutor pledges to be as independent as possible

"Several principal issues are to be solved. This is primarily the formation of a fair prosecutor's office, creation of a confident prosecutor as an institution within the framework of the law. I will be as independent as it is guaranteed and secured by the Constitution of Georgia," Tadumadze said (*IPN.GE, July 16, 2018*).

❖ Economy and Social Affairs

23. Economy minister designate says Anaklia project should be reviewed

"A lot has been said about the Anaklia project. This is a matter of Georgia's logistic hub strategy. Anaklia port cannot exist separately. For us, as a government, it is important to get benefit for the whole country. The Anaklia project should be reviewed. This issue remains a priority for me, but situation changes fast with respect to trade turnover. So, we do not yet have an answer to this question, but we will have", Kobulia said at the joint sitting of parliamentary committees (*IPN.GE, July 13, 2018*).

Additional Information

July 17, 2018
OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATES

1 USD - 2.4479 GEL	1 GBP - 3.2462 GEL	100 RUB - 3.9322 GEL
1 EUR - 2.8660 GEL	1 TRY - 0.5052 GEL	100 JPY - 2.1778 GEL

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
17 July	18 July	19 July	20 July	21 July
				
17° 28°	21° 31°	21° 32°	20° 33°	21° 31°

- **Movie Events - English Sessions - [Tickets](#)**
- **Friends of Museum (Membership to access Georgian National Museums For free of charge after one payment) - [Membership](#)**
- **Marjanishvili Theatre – [Events and Tickets](#)**
- **Rustaveli Theatre - [Events and Tickets](#)**
- **Opera and Ballet – [Events and Tickets](#)**
- **Concerts – [Events and Tickets](#)**
- **Sports – [Events and Tickets](#)**