

# DAILY NEWS REPORT ON GEORGIA

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## ❖ Occupied Regions

### ❖ Tskhinvali Region

#### 1. **Occupied Tskhinvali to close so-called border with Georgia for three days**

"On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of recognition of the independence of the Republic of South Ossetia, from 8:00pm on August 24, movement of the citizens will be temporarily suspended on simplified crossing points at the state border with Georgia," the de-facto agency stated. According to the de-facto security committee, the mentioned crossing points will resume work from 6:00am on August 27 (IPN.ge, August 16, 2018).

## ❖ Foreign Affairs

#### 2. **European Parliament to listen to New Head of EU Delegation in Georgia**

The Foreign Relations Committee of European Parliament will listen to Carl Hartzell, new Head of the EU Delegation to Georgia today. The foreign Diplomat will present himself before MEPs on September 3. Hartzell will assume his official duties in Georgia starting September. Carl Hartzell served as Senior Foreign Policy Adviser in the Cabinet of the President of the European Council (1 TV.ge, August 15, 2018).

#### 3. **First footage from Turkey, where three Georgian citizens were injured**

First footage from Turkey, where 3 Georgians were injured today - one of the citizens of Georgia who was injured in the accident has already been undergone surgery. The representatives of the consulate were on the spot. The accident occurred in Trabzon. 21 citizens of Georgia were travelling for seasonal works in a car with Georgian plaque(Rustavi2, August 14, 2018).

#### 4. **Georgian law enforcers help French police detain Georgian citizen**

Georgian law enforcers have supported French law enforcement officers detain a 36-year-old Georgian citizen who committed robberies in French cities between 2017 and 2018. The man was detained and has been sent to prison for six months by a French court (Agenda.ge, August 15, 2018).

## ❖ Internal Affairs

#### 5. **Presidential candidate Davit Bakradze met with population in the village of Giorgitsminda, Sagarejo region**

Davit Bakradze, presidential candidate of "European Georgia" met with population in the village of Giorgitsminda, Sagarejo region. Davit Bakradze got acquainted with their problems. (Rustavi2, August 14, 2018).

#### 6. **Grigol Vashadze, the presidential candidate of the United Opposition met with locals in Lentekhi**

Grigol Vashadze, Presidential Candidate of United Opposition "Strenght is in Unity" and other leaders of the union arrived in Lentekhi and talked to the population about the problems in the region. According to locals, their main concern is the growth of unemployment and the population outflow. The mountainous regions are virtually empty. (Rustavi2, August 14, 2018).

#### 7. **Changed military balance in the Black Sea Region is stressed - Border Police explains document signed by Trump**

The border police responds to the signed by Donald Trump document , which implies significant assistance in the security sphere for Georgia, Temur Kekelidze, the head of the Border Police, explains that after the entry into force of the decision, Georgia and Ukraine will increase the number and frequency of NATO and other multinational exercises on the Black Sea. According to him, the Alliance's decision is to develop practical cooperation with Georgia and the main role in this process lies with the police coast guard. The President of the United States signed a document that envisages the allocation of US \$ 716 billion for strengthening of the US defense capabilities (Rustavi2, August 14, 2018).

#### **8. Selection of Chairperson of the Supreme Court - Opposition believes that "Georgian Dream" will not support candidate nominated by Margvelashvili**

The opposition and the non-governmental sector connects the decision of the parliamentary majority on non-participation in the selection process of the Chairperson of the Supreme Court to the political plan. According to the opposition members, the ruling team's refusal to hold a consultation with the president on the candidacy of the Supreme Court Chair is a political decision of the Georgian Dream, which means that the government is not going to elect the independent candidate. Opposition members are going to take part in the selection process of the Chairperson of the Supreme Court. According to the opposition, any candidate nominated by Margvelashvili will not be supported by the Georgian Dream (Rustavi2, August 14, 2018).

#### **9. "Giorgi Margvelashvili's attitude to the court is non-state" - Irakli Kobakhidze**

"Giorgi Margvelashvili's attitude towards the court is unfortunately not that of the state," the parliament speaker stated. The parliamentary majority will not take part in the selection process of the chair of the Supreme Court, because the ruling team declares mistrust. Irakli Kobakhidze accused Giorgi Margvelashvili of expressing sympathy towards the "National Movement" and openly rebuked him for this (Rustavi2, August 14, 2018).

#### **10. Investigation accuses Malkhaz Machalikashvili of preparing a terrorist act**

Malkhaz Machalikashvili, father of 19-year-old Temirlan Machalikashvili who was killed during the special operation in Pankisi, is suspected in preparation of a terrorist act. The lawyer of the Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center, Ketil Chutlashvili stated. Malkhaz Machalikashvili was asked questions about the May 31 statement when Machalikashvili talked about exploding himself in front of the State Security. Malkhaz Machalikashvili said that this statement was made on a hot heart and there was no real intention (Rustavi2, August 14, 2018).

#### **11. Investigation Commission questioned uncle of accused murder attempt of Davit Saralidze**

A temporary investigative commission set up on the murder case on Khorava Street questioned the businessman who was in the US. The questioning of Ivane Nakaidze lasted for about an hour by skype. Nakaidze is the uncle of the juvenile, GJ, who is accused of attempting murder of Davit Saralidze. Commission members say that due to his influence on the business sector, Nakaidze was asked a lot of questions about whether or not he was connected to covering up of the crime. MPs will evaluate businessman's answers in the final part of the commission (Rustavi2, August 14, 2018).

#### **12. Constitutional Court will start consideration on merits of the lawsuit filed by Giorgi Mamaladze's lawyers**

The Constitutional Court will begin consideration on merits of the lawsuit of Giorgi Mamaladze's lawyers in the nearest future. The authors of the claim are demanding recognition of the article of the Code of Criminal Procedure and a number of norms as non-constitutional provisions. According to them, the norm on non-disclosure obligation is unconstitutional and must be abolished. Attorneys also want to make sessions public (Rustavi2, August 15, 2018).

#### **13. Taxi registration - House of Justice will be involved in issuance of licenses**

Kakha Kaladze started today's sitting of the government of the capital with the issue of registration of taxes. According to Tbilisi Mayor, more than 200 permits have already been issued by the municipality in two weeks. According to Mayor, since August 21, the House of Justice will be involved in the issuing of licenses. (Rustavi2, August 15, 2018).

#### **14. "Journalists use your brains," - Salome Zourabichvili**

"Journalists use your brains," - has declared the independent presidential candidate Salome Zurabishvili. The statement was an answer to the question, whether she would enter Avlabari's residence in case of victory. "It's already said, and you journalists use your brains and find where it was said. I said that Orbeliani Palace is perfectly suitable for me, for the new president, a woman President. I feel very comfortable in this kind of palace, and secondly I said that I will live in my home and walk from my home and this is a new form of presidency. I am ready to repeat everything but it is true that it was said," Salome Zurabishvili stated (Rustavi2, August 15, 2018).

#### **15. "Such a remark is unacceptable" - "Charter of Journalistic Ethics" responds to Salome Zurabishvili's statement**

Georgian Journalistic Ethics Charter" responds to the remark of the presidential candidate Salome Zurabishvili to journalists - "Use your brain". According to their assessment, similar remarks are not acceptable to media representatives, especially from the acting MP. Nata Dzvelishvili, director of the Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics said that the presidential candidate is obliged to answer the questions of journalists. In case similar statements towards media representatives are repeated, Dzvelishvili does not exclude that the Charter will publish a statement. (Rustavi2, August 15, 2018).

#### **16. Will "Georgian Dream" support Salome Zurabishvili - ruling party has not yet made a decision**

The ruling team does not speak about the support of presidential candidates so far. Members of the parliamentary majority say that there is a difference of opinions among them. Part of the ruling party believes that "Georgian Dream" should name its own presidential candidate, while some support independent candidate. "Georgian Dream" does not yet specify whether or not Salome Zurabishvili will be supported. The decision on this issue will likely be known next week (Rustavi2, August 15, 2018).

#### **17. Final stage of multinational military exercises was conducted at the Vaziani polygon**

The final stage of multinational military exercises was conducted at the Vaziani polygon. Besides European and American armored vehicles, American air aviation also participated in the exercises. Two-week training "Noble Partner 2018" was conducted by Georgian, German, American and British military servicemen. In the frames of the training, the first anti-tank missile system "Javalin" appeared on the Vaziani polygon. Multinational military training "Noble partner 2018" lasted for two weeks (Rustavi2, August 15, 2018).

#### **18. 13 million spent on salaries and services - Opposition responds to the audit report on expenditures of presidential administration**

Opposition estimates that every institution should pay special attention to spending budget funds. According to the representatives of "European Georgia", it is unacceptable to grant bonuses and supplements without any justification both by the "Georgian Dream" as well as the Presidential Administration. The part of the opposition speaks about the political motives According to the "National Movement", audit conclusion may contain political motives. According to the audit conclusion, in 2017, GEL 13 million was spent on salaries and services in the presidential administration, including two million GEL as bonuses (Rustavi2, August 15, 2018).

#### **19. "The president's administration had much more expenditures than 150 MPs from the entire Parliament," - said Akaki Zoidze**

Audit Office studied expenditures of the Administration of the President of Georgia in 2017. Assessments were made by the majority representatives of the president's administration.

Akaki Zoidze, chairman of the Committee on Health Care and Social Issues, believes that while the country can not get a concrete result, the president should refrain from such expenses (Rustavi2, August 15, 2018).

#### **20. Drug policy does not help the users and, on the contrary, is harmful to them - HRW research**

According to Human Rights Watch, drug policy in Georgia is still repressive and should be changed. The authoritative international organization has been preparing a report for the last two years and has described the current challenges as well as specific recommendations. Rachel Daniels, deputy director of Europe-Central Asia Division of Human Rights Watch speaks repressive drug politics in Georgia. According to him, the current drug policy is harmful to consumers. Guram Imnadze, coordinator of the "Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center", says that tightening of drug policy can not help reduce drug users. According to him, there are some examples in the world that, on the contrary, liberalization bore a positive result in reducing the number of consumers (Rustavi2, August 13, 2018).

#### **21. Father, who kept 8 children locked up in home in Svaneti , was detained**

The father, who kept 8 children locked in home in Svaneti has been detained. Amiran Devnozashvili has 8 children - three boys and 5 girls. Father's reasoning for locking up his children at home was the fact that they learned only bad things from the public (Rustavi2, August 16, 2018).

#### **22. Shepherd charged with murdering the Smith family claims he is virgin**

Alexandre Kobaidze, the lawyer of the 19- year- old shepherd accused of killing three members of the Smith family in Georgia, says his client claims that he has never had a sexual relationship. Kobaidze stated that a relevant examination will be conducted in the nearest future (IPN.ge, August 16, 2018).

#### **23. Vano Merabishvili hospitalized due to respiratory problems**

Vano Merabishvili, former Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia, has undergone medical examination due to deteriorated health conditions. According to lawyer Giorgi Chiviashvili, Merabishvili had been suffering respiratory problems for about two weeks, after which he was transferred to the clinic. At this stage Vano Merabishvili is back to the penitentiary establishment (IPN.ge, August 16, 2018).

#### **24. State Security Service detained person charged for contribution to terrorism**

Officers of Counter-Terrorism Center of State Security Service detained the wanted person Ruslan Shavadze, born in 1977, charged for contribution to terrorism into August 9 Batumi case. The operative-investigation activity was conducted together with employees of Adjara Police Department and Special Tasks Department. Shavadze has been sentenced to 13 years imprisonment in absentia (1 TV.ge, August 10, 2018).

## **❖ Economy and Social Affairs**

#### **25. National Bank established a new rate of GEL**

The national currency rate has been strengthened against the dollar. The new exchange rate of the National Lari has been established. The official price of the US dollar was 2.6074 GEL.

The course, which was operating today, was GEL 2.6343.

As for the euro, the gel is also slightly strengthened against the euro. The value of 1 euro is 2.9495 GEL according to official data and the current rate was 3.0047 GEL. Amendment to the euro adjusted to 0.0552 GEL (Rustavi2, August 15, 2018).

#### **26. OPIC intends to extend its investments in Georgia**

Overseas Private Investment Corporation intends to extend its investments in Georgia, - the representatives of the corporation said at the meeting with Mamuka Bakhtadze, Prime Minister of Georgia. Meeting between the Prime Minister of Georgia and Executive Vice President of OPIC was attended by Ministers (IPN.ge, August 16, 2018).

#### **27. Foreign direct investments in 2017 amount to \$1.88b**

Geostat published the adjusted data of 2017 and gave the corrected details about FDI inflow in Georgia. The adjusted data show that in 2017 FDI in Georgia amounted to \$1.88 billion, up 20.6 per cent from the same data of 2016 and up 1.4 per cent from the preliminary data of 2017.

The top three countries that invested the most in Georgia in 2017 were:

- Azerbaijan: \$482.1 million (24.6 percent)
- The Netherlands (18.9 percent)
- Turkey: \$279 million (15.2 percent) (IPN.ge, August 15, 2018).

**28. Georgia receives \$144m in remittances in July 2018**

Georgia received \$144.2 million from abroad in July 2018, while remittances leaving Georgia totalled \$ 18.9 million, says the National Bank of Georgia. Last month Georgia received 19.3 percent more in remittances than in July of 2017. Russia (\$43 million), Italy (\$16.3 million) and Greece (\$15 million) were the largest remittance senders in July 2018.

Overall, the vast majority (92.8 percent) of all money transfers from abroad came from 16 countries (Agenda.ge, August 15, 2018).

❖ **Sports and Culture**

**29. Georgia’s Nana Dzagnidze defeats world chess champion Tan Zhongyi.**






Georgia’s European Women Chess Champion Nana Dzagnidze defeated China’s former World Champion Tan Zhongyi in a friendly contest in Wenzhou, China. Dzagnidze claimed her win with an emphatic score of 3:1, after four rounds (Agenda.ge, August 15, 2018).

 **Additional Information**

**August 16, 2018**  
**OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATES**

1 USD - 2.6074 GEL	1 GBP - 3.3124 GEL	100 RUB - 3.8839 GEL
1 EUR - 2.9495 GEL	1 TRY - 0.4224 GEL	100 JPY - 2.3463 GEL

**25 day forecast**

Thursday 16 August	Friday 17 August	Saturday 18 August	Sunday 19 August	Monday 20 August
				
<b>17° 28°</b>	<b>19° 31°</b>	<b>19° 30°</b>	<b>18° 27°</b>	<b>17° 25°</b>

- **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](#)**