

# DAILY NEWS REPORT ON GEORGIA

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Date: **May 29, 2019**

## ❖ Occupied Regions

### 1. Election of the President of Abkhazia will be held on August 25

Permanent Representative of President in the Parliament Dmitry Shamba presented the draft Resolution of the National Assembly of Parliament "On the appointment of election of President of the Republic of Abkhazia". According to the document, the election of President of Abkhazia was proposed to be postponed from July 21 to August 25 (Apsnypress, May 28, 2019).

### 2. The Foreign Ministry of Abkhazia sent a congratulatory note to the Syrian Foreign Ministry on the occasion of diplomatic relations establishment anniversary (Apsnypress, May 28, 2019).

### 3. RA MFA: historical experience has taught the people of Abkhazia not to rely on Georgia's care

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Abkhazia commented on the speech of Georgian President Salome Zurbishvili, on the occasion of Georgia's national holiday - Independence Day, in which she expressed regret that the Abkhaz language "is on the verge of extinction, despite the Georgian care. According to Zurbishvili, this is due to the fact that Russia "is pursuing a policy of Russification towards the Abkhaz people, the Abkhaz culture and language."

- Historical experience has taught the people of Abkhazia not to rely on Georgian care. This experience should also convince Georgian leaders to rethink their ideas about the events of the recent past. Without abandoning mythologization and labeling, it is impossible to adequately assess contemporary realities and to conduct a constructive dialogue about the future," - the commentary says (Apsnypress, May 28, 2019).

### 4. Valery Bganba and Vitaly Mutko discussed the implementation of investment program

A meeting of the Co-Chairs of the Intergovernmental Commission for Socio-Economic Cooperation between the Republic of Abkhazia and the Russian Federation was held in Moscow. The meeting discussed the implementation of Investment Program to promote the socio-economic development of the Republic of Abkhazia for 2017-2019, development of current financial assistance. The parties also discussed the agenda of the upcoming meeting of intergovernmental commission (Apsnypress, May 29, 2019).

## ❖ Foreign Affairs

### 5. Ukraine's President returns Ukrainian citizenship to Saakashvili

Ukraine's new president, Volodymyr Zelensky, has returned Mikheil Saakashvili, ex-president of Georgia and former governor of Odessa region, the Ukrainian citizenship. Former President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko deprived Mikheil Saakashvili of the Ukrainian citizenship in July of 2017 (IPN.ge, May 28, 2019).

### 6. Brother of MP Vano Zardiashvili's wife released from Norwegian prison

Grigol Abalava, brother of MP Vano Zardiashvili's wife, who was arrested for thievery in Norway, has now been released. The Ministry of Internal Affairs released information about the arrest of Grigol Abalava and two other Georgians in February (IPN.ge, May 29, 2019).

### 7. Saakashvili plans to arrive in Ukraine tomorrow

Tomorrow, I will arrive in Kiev and assist the new president, Zelenskiy and the Ukrainian people, former president of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili stated. According to the ex-president of Georgia the Georgian people will flick Georgia

out of Ivanishvili. He said that Ivanishvili does not allow him to enter his mother country, but it is “temporary” (IPN.ge, May 28, 2019).

**8. Ukrainian expert : I think Saakashvili’s appointment to any position is not on the agenda**

I think that appointment of Saakashvili to any particular position is not on the agenda and to my mind, it would have been wrong, especially for Zelenskiy, - Ukrainian expert Vitaliy Bala stated (IPN.ge, May 28, 2019).

**9. Davit Sakvarelidze: Saakashvili's party will take part in the elections**

Mikheil Saakashvili’s party will take part in the elections of the Ukrainian parliament, – one of the leaders of the party and former deputy prosecutor of Ukraine, Davit Sakvarelidze stated. Snap elections of the Ukrainian Rada were called by the newly elected president of Ukraine. The elections will be held on July 21 (1TV.ge, May 29, 2019).

**10. Chairman of Seim of Lithuania – We know how and why we should help Georgia**

Lithuania passed the same road about 25 years ago. Therefore we know how and why we should help Georgia, which is our best friend – Viktoras Pranckietis, Chairman of Seim of Lithuania said after the meeting with Irakli Kobakhidze, Chairman of Georgian Parliament. Discussions were held about Georgia’s security and the country’s aspiration to become a member of the European Union during the meeting. Chairman of Georgian Parliament is being on an official visit in Lithuania (1 TV.ge, May 29, 2019).

**11. 5-year-old Georgian dies in Spain while swimming in the sea**

The accident occurred in one of the beaches of Spain, where the family were spending their holidays (IPN.ge, May 28, 2019).

## ❖ Internal Affairs

**12. Incident occurred after protester tried to take photo on non-agreed section of Georgian-Azerbaijani border**

An incident occurred near the “Chichkhituri” tower in Davit Gareji after one of the demonstrators expressed his wish to take a photo on the non-agreed section of the Georgian-Azerbaijani border and Georgian border guards did not allow him to do it. The incident was de-escalated after the intervention of the clergy (IPN.ge, May 28, 2019).

**13. Parliament rejects establishment of fact-finding commission into Temirlan Machalikashvili's case**

The Parliament has rejected an initiative relating to the establishment of a fact-finding commission in connection with the murder of Temirlan Machalikashvili.

Only 30 lawmakers voted for the resolution drafted by the National Movement faction, while three members of the parliament voted against it (IPN.ge, May 29, 2019).

**14. Salome Zourabichvili: Nobody can stop us on our way to Europe**

The President attended the Cultural Routes - Georgia and Europe event at the Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia. According to Zourabichvili, European cultural routes provide Georgia with various opportunities.

"I would also like to remind you that the Council of Europe’s 11th Cultural Routes Forum will be held in Kutaisi in 2021, which is important for Kutaisi and the whole Georgia," Salome Zourabichvili stated (IPN.ge, May 29, 2019).

**15. President Zurabishvili congratulates Azerbaijan on Independence Day and Israel – on 71st anniversary of independence**

Georgia’s President Salome Zurabishvili congratulated Azerbaijan on Independence Day - “May is a very important month for the countries of the Caucasus region. Today, Georgia’s friendly nation- Azerbaijan is celebrating the Day of Independence. We congratulate our brother nation, the people of Azerbaijan, on this remarkable day”(1 TV.ge May 28, 2019).

**16. Salome Zurbashvili - Political manipulations hurt both countries as it affects stability, peace and development of the Caucasus**

Relationship between the Georgian and Azeri peoples is primarily based on love and the Georgian nationals living in Azerbaijan, – Georgia’s President Salome Zurbashvili said at the official reception dedicated to the Day of the Republic of Azerbaijan. As Georgian President noted, Georgians and Azerbaijanis are moving towards Europe together. According to Zurbashvili, Georgians and Azerbaijanis have common culture and common interest to protect each other’s sovereignty and territorial integrity (1 TV.ge, May 29, 2019).

**17. MP Samadashvili: Today, an invisible Russian flag is flaying in Davit Gareji**

Today, an invisible Russian flag is flaying in Davit Gareji, because where there's a problem between Georgia and Azerbaijan there's a Russian flag flying, -Salome Samadashvili, member of the opposition “National Movement” party stated. The lawmaker also commented on the waving of the Russian flag in Batumi on May 26 and noted that the government is responsible for the incident (IPN.ge, May 28, 2019).

**18. Mikheil Saakashvili : I am ready to get involved in negotiation process in connection with Davit Gareji**

As Saakashvili noted, fundamental negotiations should be held and both sides should take each other's interests into consideration. According to the ex-president, under his presidency, Georgia has brotherly relations with Azerbaijan. “Even under this government, I'm ready to get involved in the negotiation process with Azerbaijan”, - Saakashvili said (IPN.ge, May 28, 2019).

**19. Acting US Ambassador : The bilateral commission is working on the demarcation issues - we hope that there will be good results**

The bilateral commission is working on the demarcation issues and they are really working too much in this direction - we hope that there will be good results, - Acting US Ambassador to Georgia Elizabeth Rood stated (IPN.ge, May 28, 2019).

**20. Second round of midterm elections to be held on June 9**

The second round of midterm elections will be held on June 9 in the Mtatsminda constituency. The decision has been made at the Central Election Commission meeting.

Shalva Shavgulidze, candidate of the Georgian Dream-Free Democrats, and Lado Kakhadze, candidate of the Georgian Dream, will participate in the second round of elections (IPN.ge, May 27, 2019).

**21. Eka Beselia launches new political party “For Justice”**

Eka Beselia has launched a new political party - “For Justice”. The lawmaker said at a special news conference on Monday that restoration of justice was the main idea, uniting the political forces and society in 2012. The congress of the newly founded party will be held in June (IPN.ge, May 27, 2019).

**22. PM congratulates Ossetians, Abkhazians on Independence Day**

Prime Minister Mamuka Bakhtadze congratulated Ossetians and Abkhazians on the Day of Independence.

“I want to address our Abkhazian and Ossetian fellow citizens and congratulate them on the Day of Independence of our common homeland - this is the day that should unite us all,” Prime Minister Mamuka Bakhtadze said during his speech dedicated to Georgia’s Independence Day.

The Prime Minister also addressed to the international community that it will definitely come the day when the whole world will once again find out the most educated, peaceful, united and strong Georgia (IPN.ge, May 26, 2019).

**23. Kakha Kaladze: “Construction of Nenskra HPP will not increase the tariff – you’d rather investigate sources of funding of the NGOs that are against construction of this hydropower plant ”**

Kakha Kaladze, the Mayor of Tbilisi denies that Nenskra HPP contract is directed against the state and may cause increase of the electricity tariff. According to Kakha Kaladze, projects like Nenskra HPP are necessary for the country's energy independence. Kakha Kaladze advised journalists to investigate sources of funding of non-

governmental organizations that are against construction of Nenskra HPP. According to him, electricity tariff may change because investments in construction of new hydropower plants are taken into consideration (BM.ge, May 27, 2019).

#### **24. The road and railway design works in intensive progress**

The design of the road and railway accessing to Anaklia deep sea port is progressing actively. The design organization has submitted 4 alternative designs of the road and railway accessing to Anaklia deep sea port to Roads Department. The design of the road and railway accessing to Anaklia Deep Sea Port is provided by Australian Multinational Company – SMEC. SMEC must finish the design in October. The design contract price amounts to 7 million GEL (Roads department, May 28, 2019)

#### **25. Batumi Bypass Road Construction in active progress**

The construction of Batumi bypass 13km road section is provided by the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure. The project is financed under the loan agreements signed with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The cost of the agreement amounts to GEL 329 630 734. Period of construction works is 2017-2020 (Roads department, May 28, 2019).

#### **26. President of Eurojust to pay an official visit to Georgia**

The Prosecutor's Office of Georgia celebrates the professional day. Ladislav Hamran, President of Eurojust will pay an official visit to Georgia on this occasion. The agreement between Georgia and Eurojust was signed in 2019. After signing the document, Georgia, like the EU member states, appoints a Liaison Prosecutor to Eurojust (1 TV.ge, May 30, 2019).

#### **27. Former MP built a ship**

Omar Nishnianidze, Professor of Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University and former MP, built a ship and intends to set it to sail in the Rioni River on May 31. The ship "Argo" will be brought from Poti Port to Kutaisi. Former MP expressed the idea about building a port on the Rioni River in 2013 that caused his criticism by the public (1 TV.ge, May 29, 2019).

#### **28. Uniforms of Switzerland Police to be made in Georgia**

The uniforms of Switzerland Police will be sewed in Georgia. "Elselema" beneficiary company of "Produce in Georgia" Agency is making the order. The uniforms will be ready in one week. The company is producing special clothes and uniforms for Georgia's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Defense Ministry (1 TV.ge, May 28, 2019).

#### **29. Miners stopped strike in Chiatura**

Miners being on a hunger strike in Chiatura stop the protest and will return to their jobs from tomorrow – Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development Natia Turnava made this statement.

As Minister stated, the miners will enjoy paid leave and their healthcare conditions will be improved (1 TV.ge, May 27, 2019).

#### **30. Debates between Shalva Shavgulidze and Lado Kakhadze to be held on First Channel on June 6**

The debates between Shalva Shavgulidze and Lado Kakhadze, the two candidates who qualified for the run-off in May 19 by-elections in Mtatsminda Majoritarian constituency, will be held on Georgian First Channel on June 6 at 22:00. The candidates will have the opportunity to present their viewpoints to the audience, and answer questions of the presenter and one another (1 TV.ge, May 28, 2019).

#### **31. Independent MPs demand resignation of PM, Economy Minister**

Some independent lawmakers demand resignation of Prime Minister and Economy Minister. As MP Davit Chichinadze stated the only question he would ask the Prime Minister in Parliament is – "when he is going to resign." Another independent lawmaker Levan Gogichaishvili stated that he demands resignation of Economy

Minister Natia Turnava. According to MP Gogichaishvili, Turnava is a corrupted minister, who was appointed by a certain “business group” (IPN.ge, May 30, 2019).

### **32. Investigation launched into 19 criminal cases relating to alleged discrimination on sexual, ethnic and religious grounds**

According to the January-March data, investigation was launched into 19 criminal cases relating to alleged discrimination on sexual, ethnic and religious grounds. According to the MIA information 13 cases were related to intolerance on the ground of sexual orientation, 5 cases were related to intolerance on religious grounds and 1 – to ethnic grounds. As for the last year’s statistics, the signs of intolerance on sexual, ethnic and religious grounds were identified in 55 criminal cases (IPN.ge, May 29, 2019).

### **33. David Zalkaliani has met with the U.S. Congress Delegation**

Georgian Foreign Minister David Zalkaliani held a meeting with the U.S. Congress delegation consisting of representatives of the offices of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The delegation arrived in Georgia Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange programme (MECEA) (MOFA Georgia, May 28, 2019).

### **34. Diaspora Forum 2019 has opened in Tbilisi**

The Georgian Foreign Ministry hosts the annual forum “Strong Diaspora for United Georgia” dedicated to the Diaspora Day. The forum due to last for two days aims to deepen cooperation with Georgian citizens living abroad, to ensure their active involvement in efforts to further develop the country and to solve the problems facing the Georgian Diaspora abroad.

The forum was officially opened by Georgian Foreign Minister David Zalkaliani. The President of Georgia, Prime Minister, Chairman of the Parliament, Catholicos Patriarch of All Georgia, Chair of Parliamentary Committee on Diaspora and Caucasus Issues Beka Odisharia attended this event (MOFA Georgia, May 28, 2019).

### **35. Mamuka Bakhtadze, Prime Minister of Georgia congratulated the Day of First Republic of Armenia to the people of Armenia today.**

Friendship and close cooperation is underlined in the Letter of Congratulations, which was sent by the Head of Government of Georgia to Nikol Pashinyan, Prime Minister of Armenia (Government.gov.ge, May 28, 2019).

### **36. Mamuka Bakhtadze, Prime Minister of Georgia congratulated Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan with the Republic Day today.**

Head of Government of Georgia focused on the kind neighborly relations and fruitful cooperation in his Letter of Congratulations (Government.gov.ge, May 28, 2019).

### **37. Prime Minister Hosts Turkey’s Defense Minister**

As part of his visit to attend Georgia's Independence Day celebrations, the Defense Minister of Turkey Hulusi Akar was hosted by Bakhtadze at the Administration of the Government. The parties pointed out the importance of Georgia-Turkey defense relations in the context of Georgia's North-Atlantic aspirations (Government.gov.ge, May 28, 2019).

## **❖ Economy and Social Affairs**

### **38. Construction of E-Car Manufacturing Factory to Launch in Georgia in the Nearest Future**

The construction of an electric car manufacturing factory will launch in Georgia in the nearest future-this issue was discussed during today's meeting between Georgian Prime Minister Mamuka Bakhtadze and representatives of I Group and Chinese Changan.

According to the project, I Group will build an e-car manufacturing factory within 24 months on 100 hectares, in Kutaisi. The factory will employ almost 300 locals, and no fewer than 5,000 e-cars will be manufactured in 18 months after commissioning. After the meeting between the Prime Minister and the representatives of I Group and Changan, a memorandum on the construction of e-car manufacturing factory was signed between Minister of

Economy and Sustainable Development Natia Turnava, Head of the National Agency of State Property Giorgi Dugladze, and representatives of I Group and Chinese Changan (Government.gov.ge, May 27, 2019).

#### **39. NBG – Consumer credits keep reducing, mortgage loans – increasing**

The Financial Stability Committee of National Bank of Georgia (NBG) reports that regulations set on the issuance of loans to physical persons have reduced financial stability risks.

According to NBG, starting 2019, consumer credits keep reducing while mortgage loans continue increasing. The share of loans issued in the national currency Lari is characterized by the growing tendency.

The annual growth of loans issued to legal persons by April has reached 12.8%. The interest rates on credits issued in Lari are decreasing (1 TV.ge, May 29, 2019).

#### **40. Economy Minister says document of construction permit for Poti deep-sea port cancelled**

The document of construction permit for a new deep-sea port in Poti has been cancelled, - Natia Turnava, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia stated.

- ✓ "First of all, I would like to say that this document is not a construction permit. This is the document on the pre-conditions for land use issued by one of our agencies, namely, by the order of the Head of the Agency for Construction and Technical Supervision, so that this issue was not agreed with any member of the government or with me, personally. Anaklia port is of strategic importance for us. This project enjoys support from the government, including with GEL 300 million worth infrastructure, GEL 70 million for buying back privately owned land plots and with additional GEL 100 million worth of funds. We are actively working, including with international banks and have high hopes that a private investor – Anaklia Development Consortium will meet its obligations amid such support. We call on it, not to look for various reasons, but to concentrate on fulfillment of existing obligations in order the Anaklia project and the construction [of Anaklia deep-sea port] to be launched in time," Minister Natia Turnava said (IPN.ge, May 30, 2019).

#### **41. "Anaklia Development Consortium" says consortium and its partners "shocked over permission for construction of Poti deep-sea port**

"Anaklia Development Consortium", its partners and investors are shocked over the Information about issuance of permission for construction of a new deep-sea port in Poti, - reads the statement of "Anaklia Development Consortium".

"This information is shocking because the order was issued on May 2, while on 21 May, the government together with the consortium held negotiations with international financial institutions (EBRD, ADB, AIIB and OPIC) over the funding of the Anaklia Deep Sea Port and the government has reported nothing about this fact," - the statement says.

According to the "Anaklia Development Consortium", international partners have already made acute assessments regarding this fact and hiding it (IPN.ge, May 30, 2019).

#### **42. Mamuka Khazaradze: Anaklia project is threatened!!!**

Anaklia project is threatened!!!- businessman Mamuka Khazaradze has posted on the social networking site, commenting on the statement released by the "Anaklia Development Consortium" responding to the information about issuance of permission for construction of a new deep-sea port in Poti. "Anaklia Development Consortium", its partners and investors are shocked over the Information, since the order was issued on May 2, while on 21 May, the government together with the consortium held negotiations with international financial institutions (EBRD, ADB, AIIB and OPIC) over the funding of the Anaklia Deep Sea Port and the government has reported nothing about this fact. International partners have already made acute assessments regarding this fact and hiding it,-Khazaradze stated (IPN.ge, May 30, 2019).

#### **43. Cost of first phase for Poti deep-sea port construction is USD 250 million**

The construction of a new deep-sea port is starting in the city of Poti. The cost of the first phase of the project is USD 250 million, Poti City Hall has reported. The permit is issued by the Technical Supervision Agency of the

Ministry of Economy of Georgia. The construction of the new port will be carried out through the European investment (IPN.ge, May 30, 2019).

## ❖ Sports and Culture






### 44. Famous violinist David Garrett will hold concert in Tbilisi

David Garrett, famous violinist will hold a concert on September 13 in Georgia. The concert is organized by the Chamber of Culture of Georgia (1 TV.ge, May 23, 2019)

## Additional Information

**May 30, 2019**  
**OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATES**  
1 USD - 2.7997 GEL  
1 EUR - 3.1236 GEL  
1 GBP - 3.5408 GEL  
1 TRY - 0.4656 GEL  
100 RUB -4.2985 GEL  
100 JPY - 2.5605 GEL

**25 day forecast**

Thursday 30 May	Friday 31 May	Saturday 1 June	Sunday 2 June	Monday 3 June
				
15° 28°	15° 29°	16° 30°	18° 31°	19° 32°

- 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](#)