



FINAL REPORT

on Pre-electoral Environment

Monitoring of the 2020
Parliamentary Elections in Georgia

(15 June - 24 October)

**Tbilisi,
Georgia
2020**

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INTRODUCTION

The PMMG was founded in 1999. The Organisation protects the interests of the minority communities and non-governmental organisations, who are involved in defending the rights of the ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities living in Georgia. The Organisation is mainly operating in Tbilisi, as well as in the regions of Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Shida Kartli and Adjara, densely populated with ethnic minorities. The PMMG is a partner organization of the Council of Europe. It observes the interests of the international coalition against the hate speech in the South Caucasus. It is also a member of the Federal Union of European Nationalities and of the international organization Minorities of Europe.

Since 2005 the PMMG has been undertaking election monitoring programmes in the regions of Georgia densely populated with ethnic minorities. Election observation programme aims to promote transparent and fair elections, as well as to consolidate the trust of the ethnic minorities in the political and electoral processes.

In the run up to the Parliamentary elections on 31 October 2020, the PMMG is implementing a monitoring programme of the pre-electoral environment in Tbilisi and the following regions of Georgia: Samtskhe-Javakheti, Shida Kartli, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti. The monitoring is expected to reveal electoral shortcomings, needs and challenges, as well as to deliver concrete recommendations to improve the electoral environment.

The monitoring of the pre-electoral environment is implemented with the support of the USAID.

The present Summary Report covers the period from 15 June 2020 to 31 October 2020. The organization will inform the public regularly about the findings with regard to the electoral campaign.

CHAPTER I

The present report summarizes the pre-electoral environment and covers the period from 15 June 2020 until 31 October 2020.

The organization has observed the electoral and political processes before the official start of the pre-electoral campaigning on 1 September, as well as throughout the period following its official launch.

Since 1 August 2020, 21 long term observers of the Organisation has been monitoring the pre-electoral environment and the process of electoral campaigning in Tbilisi and the Georgian regions of Samtskhe-Javakheti, Shida Kartli, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti.

Before that, pursuant to the goals of its observation mission, the Organisation started to monitor the pre-electoral environment on 15 June 2020 in 4 municipalities:

- Ninotsminda – Samtskhe-Javakheti region;
- Akhalkalaki - Samtskhe-Javakheti region;
- Marneuli - Kvemo Kartli region;
- Gardabani – Kvemo Kartli region

From 1 August 2020, the Organisation expanded the coverage of the monitoring of the pre-electoral environment to include 17 other municipalities, namely:

- Isani, Krtsanisi and Samgori – in Tbilisi;
- Kaspi - in the Shida Kartli region;
- Aspindza, Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni, Borjomi – in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region;
- Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tsalka, Tetritskaro – in the Kvemo Kartli region;
- Lagodekhi, Sagarejo, Kvareli, Akhmeta –in the Kakheti region;
- Mtskheta – in the Mtskheta-Mtianeti region.

The constituencies [covered within the programme] include:

- 1) Mtatsminda and Krtsanisi;
- 2) Isani;
- 3) Samgori;
- 4) Telavi, Akhmeta, Kvareli and Lagodekhi;
- 5) Gurjaani, Sagarejo, Dedoplistskaro and Signaghi;
- 6) Rustavi and part of Gardabani (administrative units of Norio, Martkopi, Akhalsopeli, Sar-titchala, Gamarjveba, Akhali Samgori, Lemshvenieri, Teleti, Kumisi and Krtsanisi);

7) Marneuli and part of Gardabani (excluding administrative units of Norio, Martkopi, Akhal-sopeli, Sartitchala, Gamarjveba, Akhali Samgori, Lemshvenieri, Teleti, Kumisi and Krtsanisi);

8) Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tetrtskaro and Tsalka;

9) Mtskheta, Dusheti, Tianeti and Kazbegi;

10) Kaspi and Gori (excluding administrative units of Variani, Nikozi, Tirdznisi, Skri and Shindidi);

11) Akhaltsikhe, Borjomi, Adigeni and Aspindza;

12) Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda.

Consequently, the Organisation covers 12 single member majoritarian constituencies out of 30 created under the new electoral system.

To ensure successful implementation of the observation mission, the long-term observers of the Organization gathered information about the electoral processes and alleged violations: from media (TV, radio, online media); by requesting public information; from local self-government bodies and their web-sites; from parties, candidates and party activists; from NGOs and citizens, as well as public meetings. The long-term observers monitored and studied:

- Political and electoral activities of the political parties and candidates;
- Use of the hate speech in the pre-electoral campaign;
- Use of the social media for disinformation and discreditation in the pre-election period;
- Interference with the political/electoral activities;
- Use of the administrative resources;
- Pressure/intimidation/threat/physical violence;
- Vote buying and violations of the financing rules;
- Statements and complaints;
- Activities of the Election Administration;
- Voter literacy, including awareness of the ethnic minorities;
- Obstacles caused by the pandemic in the implementation of the political/electoral activities and holding/preparation of the elections.

CHAPTER II

MAIN FINDINGS

The Parliamentary Elections of 2020 are held under the new electoral system. As a result of the constitutional and legislative changes, the threshold for the political parties to be elected in the parliament was significantly decreased (1%). Consequently, despite the pandemic, a big number of political parties and candidates entered into the pre-electoral campaigning offering diverse electoral programmes to the voters.

In general, the pre-electoral campaigns proceeded in a calm atmosphere, however, since the second half of September the incidents of violence started to grow and the pre-electoral environment became more polarized. A big part of identified incidents of violence took place in the Kvemo Kartli region. Signs of polarisation were seen in the media as well.

Incidents observed in the reporting period include: the use of the administrative resources – 8 incidents, violation of rules of agitation and participation in the pre-election campaign – 8 incidents, interference with the pre-election campaign – 9 incidents, several incidents of damaging the electoral posters and 3 incidents of damaging the election banner, threats – 7 incidents, physical violence – 10 incidents, alleged vote buying – 4 incident, allegedly unlawful collection of the voters' personal data – 3 incidents, interference with the activity of media – 4 incidents. In addition, 2 incidents of hate speech, 5 incidents of disinformation and attempted discreditation, 4 incidents of public statements instigating ethnic strife between the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities were observed.

In August 2020 the Government of Georgia initiated a number of large scale financial projects to address the effects of the economic crisis, few weeks prior to the official launch of the pre-electoral campaign. The projects target wider electorate and foresee certain funds to be allocated to voters in the pre-electoral period. In addition, the Government personified the assistance by affiliating itself with these projects thus blurring the boundaries between the activities of the State and the party. Therefore, the steps made by the Government in some cases formed a part of the electoral campaign and served as a leverage to manipulate with voters' will.

Besides the financial assistance, few days prior to the official start of the pre-electoral campaign, the Government of Georgia initiated several other large-scale projects, which presumably served to enhance voters' satisfaction with the Government's activities just before the elections.¹

High-ranking officials from the central and local government were actively involved in the presentations of the majoritarian candidates of the "Georgian Dream" in the majoritarian constituencies. The representatives of the local government were personally present at the meetings of the "Georgian Dream" candidates with the electorate, listened to their concerns, needs, and promised to solve them as soon as possible.² People working at the local self-government bodies, staff of the public schools and kindergartens and, in some instances, clergymen were also present at the presentation ceremonies of the ruling party candidates.³

¹ See detailed information about the projects in annex.

² See detailed information about the meetings of the "Georgian Dream" candidates in annex.

³ It is unknown to the observers of the organization whether the people working in the public institutions were present voluntarily at the presentations of the ruling party candidates.

Though, involvement of the high-ranking officials in the pre-electoral campaigns is not against the law, yet, presentations of the majoritarian candidates of the “Georgian Dream” in the majoritarian constituencies were often held against the background of the projects implemented by the state funds, which raised the risk of the use of state funded assets in the ruling party campaign. The state funded projects were also used in the campaign by the “Georgian Dream” majoritarian members of the Parliament, who run for other electoral subjects in the 2020 elections.⁴

In the run up to the 2020 Parliamentary elections the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia developed a Code of Conduct for political parties.⁵ 40 political parties signed the Code of Conduct.⁶ By signing the Code the political subjects have agreed to conduct ethical election campaign. They refrained from using violence, hate speech and xenophobic attitudes during the pre-election campaign. However, several incidents of the violation of rules of conduct, violence and physical confrontation were observed in the second half of September. The pre-electoral environment became much more tense and polarized. Violence against the journalists and observers and interference with their work were also observed.

10 incidents of violence and beating were observed in the reporting period, 8 of which took place in the Kvemo Kartli region, namely: 2 - in Dmanisi, 2 – in Bolnisi, 3 – in Marneuli and 1 – in Gardabani.

In some cases, the law-enforcement bodies reacted effectively on several incidents of violence, which mainly related to violence against the supporters of the “Georgian Dream”. As for the other instances related to the supporters of the opposition candidates, by the time the present report was published the law-enforcement bodies have not identified the offenders involved in the incidents and the investigation is still on.

In the pre-electoral period, the electoral subjects shared information about the incidents of threat and pressure against their supporters; they also related that representatives of the “Georgian Dream” threatened the voters with the dismissal from the work and terminating their social assistance, because they supported the opposition. In some cases, the candidates stated that they were subject to unlawful surveillance by the law-enforcement bodies.⁷

Out of 9 incidents of interference with the pre-electoral campaigns, 5 incidents were related to the pre-electoral meetings and campaigns of the candidates of the united opposition “Dzala Ertobashia” (Strength is in Unity) and 2 – to Zaur Dargali, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in the Marneuli-Gardabani constituency.

During the pre-electoral period, several statements were made about the incidents of dismissal from the work, allegedly, on the political grounds, including one incident in Kvareli and two – in Mtskheta. In August 2020, personnel reshuffling took place in Ninotsminda municipality that involved over 20 employees, who were subject to changes. The persons dismissed were believed to be associated with Mr. Mkoyan.

Several incidents of damaging or tearing down the electoral posters of the political parties and political subjects were identified in the pre-electoral period. In 3 cases election banners were damaged. There were also frequent cases of pasting a poster over another.

While undertaking the pre-electoral monitoring, it was revealed that persons employed at the local municipality bodies/public sector took a leave to participate in the electoral cam-

4 Kakha Okriashvili and Enzel Mkoyan. See detailed information about the meetings of these candidates in annex.

5 <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120167-gantskhadeba-2020-tslis-parlamentis-archevnebisvis-politikuri-partiebis-qtsevis-kodeqsis-shesakheb->

6 <https://cesko.ge/res/docs/Parties-2020Geo29.09.pdf>

7 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/624250-xatia-dekanoize-ukanonod-sheagcies-chvens-shtabshi-sus-i-aparaturis-dasaqeneblad-shevida>

paigned of the ruling party. In some cases, unlawful participation of the members of the election commission in the campaigns raised a concern.

The Central Election Commission (CEC) was prepared for the electoral process and employed particular efforts to carry out preparations for holding the elections during the pandemic. The CEC made efforts to put in place a normative base for holding the elections during the pandemic. To that end, in the pre-electoral period, it adopted several important decrees through the wider public discussions establishing the regulations of the election administration in the times of pandemic. The PMMG welcomes the efforts of the CEC in this direction, with the exception of the CEC Decree #48/2020 of 21 October, which was adopted without the involvement and notification of the stakeholders. The decree allows a possibility of transforming the PECs into the special groups, without any reason, on the E-Day, if the number of PEC members is less than 7.

The process of setting up the election commissions proceeded, in some cases, against the heated argument and verbal confrontations. The UNM expressed its distrust of the composition of the election commissions. According to the party representatives, the DECes selected the members of the PECs among the activists of the “Georgian Dream”. Among others, one incident of physical violence was observed in Marneuli.⁸

The PMMG observers assessed positively the theoretical as well as practical aspects of the trainings organized for the PEC members.

The PMMG monitored the ethnic composition of the electoral lists submitted by 11 electoral subjects. These are: “Nino Burjanadze – United Georgia-Democratic Movement”, “Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze”, “Girchi”, “Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens”, Electoral Block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli”, “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia”, “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom”, ““Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia”, “David Tchitchinadze Tribune – Christian-Democratic Movement”, “United National Movement – United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia” and “David Tarkhan Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia”.

According to the monitoring results, of all party electoral lists studied, “Nino Burjanadze – United Georgia-Democratic Movement” has the largest number of candidates (8) belonging to ethnic minorities, including one among the top 10 candidates; whereas “Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze” has the lowest number of the ethnic minority candidates – 1 candidate placed 115th on its list. The political parties “Girchi” and “Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens” have no candidates belonging to the ethnic minorities on their lists. 6 ethnic minority candidates figure on the lists of each - the Electoral Block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli” and “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia”. ““Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia” and “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom” have 5 ethnic minority candidates on their lists, each.

During the pre-electoral monitoring process, the Interagency Commission for Free and Fair Elections (ICFFE) focused its efforts on analysing the information disseminated through media. According to the ICFFE, a number of incidents of disinformation were revealed. However, the stakeholders’ trust in the ICFFE is not high. Majority of the political parties and local observer organisations are permanently absent from the Commission meetings, which can be explained by ineffective work of the Commission to prevent the violations.

8 <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120582>

CHAPTER III

ACTIVITIES OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION

The CEC was prepared for the electoral process and employed particular efforts to carry out preparations for holding the elections during the pandemic. The CEC made efforts to put in place a normative base for holding the elections during the pandemic. To that end, in the pre-electoral period, it adopted several important decrees through the wider public discussions establishing the regulations of the election administration in the times of pandemic. The PMMG welcomes the efforts of the CEC in this direction, with the exception of the CEC Decree #48/2020 of 21 October, which was adopted without the involvement and notification of the stakeholders, whereas decrees #45 and #46 were adopted with wider public involvement on 19 October. The mentioned decree allows a possibility of transforming the PECs into the special groups, without any reason, on the E-Day, namely, if on the E-Day the number of PEC members happens to be less than 7, the PECs are regarded as the special groups and entitled to conduct voting similarly to the PECs with 12 members. We believe that the decree #48 should have set out precise reasons (e.g. infection of the PEC member with the new COVID-19 virus), based on which the PEC would be transformed into the special group and the commission composed of less than 7 members would be entitled to carry out voting as the special group.

The PMMG observers assessed positively the theoretical as well as practical aspects of the trainings organized for the PEC members. Trainings were held for the PEC members in Georgian language in the constituencies with ethnic minority population, where the language barrier is not a problem, whereas in other constituencies, which still face the language barrier problem, trainings were held in Georgian and ethnic minority languages. For instance, in Akhmeta, trainings were held for the Kist community in the Georgian language; likewise, trainings were held in Georgian for the Armenian community representatives in Tsalka, whereas trainings were held in Georgian and Azerbaijani languages in Dmanisi and in Georgian and Armenian languages in Ninotsminda. As for the training material, the Kist community received the documents prepared in Georgian language only, while in Dmanisi the documents were disseminated both in Georgian and Azerbaijani languages and likewise, in Ninotsminda - in Georgian and Armenian languages, and in Tsalka – in Georgian/Armenian and Georgian/Azerbaijani languages.

Since mid-July, the election administration launched active voter literacy campaign. The election administration actively disseminated information to voters, including ethnic minorities and the youth, about the parliamentary elections, the legislative amendments and the regulations developed by the election administration to prevent the spread of the infection, as well as about the voting procedures and the importance of participation in the elections.

We welcome the development of a Code of Conduct of the political parties through the facilitation of the CEC at the start of the pre-electoral campaigning. It is a complex document and focuses on many important issues, especially on the ethical principles and standards, which the parties have voluntarily subscribed to adhere to. 40 political parties signed the Code of Conduct. However, in some cases certain political parties and their supporters did not abide by the rules established in the Code of Conduct. In the period of pre-electoral campaigning the CEC opened an Information Protection Centre aimed at unveiling the spread of the disinformation and fake news and disseminating objective information.⁹

⁹ <https://cesko.ge/>

In the reporting period, there were several statements made by the CEC about attempts by certain persons to damage the image of the Election Administration.¹⁰ One of such statements was published on 8 October, which spoke about several unknown persons, who contacted the PEC members on behalf of the PEC chairperson and gave false information, as well as instructions, inadequate to the commission member.

The process of setting up the election commissions proceeded, in some cases, against the heated argument and verbal confrontations. The UNM expressed its distrust of the composition of the election commissions. According to the party representatives, the DEC members selected the members of the PECs among the activists of the “Georgian Dream”. Among others, one incident of physical violence was observed in Marneuli, which involved the DEC member as well.¹¹

CHAPTER IV

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE ELECTORAL LISTS SUBMITTED BY THE ELECTORAL SUBJECTS

- **Monitoring of the party lists submitted by the political parties**

The PMMG selected 11 electoral subjects to analyse the ethnic composition of the electoral lists, including the number and sequence of the ethnic minority candidates on the party lists submitted to the CEC. These electoral subjects are: “Nino Burjanadze – United Georgia-Democratic Movement”, “Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze”, “Girchi”, “Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens”, Electoral Block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli”, “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia”, “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom”, ““Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia”, “David Tchitchinadze Tribune – Christian-Democratic Movement”, “United National Movement – United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia” and “David Tarkhan Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia”.

The analysis of the sequence of the ethnic minority candidates revealed the following picture: in one instance, the ethnic minority candidate is among the top ten candidates on the party list, in four cases – ethnic minority candidates are among top twenty and top thirty candidates, and in most cases, they come after the 50th candidate on the party list.

As for the number of ethnic minority candidates, monitoring revealed that, of all party electoral lists studied, “Nino Burjanadze – United Georgia-Democratic Movement” has the the largest number of candidates (8) belonging to ethnic minorities, including one among the top 10 candidates; whereas “Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze” has the lowest number of the ethnic minority candidates – 1 candidate placed 115th on its list. The political parties “Girchi” and “Aleko Elisashvili - Citizens” have no candidates belonging to the ethnic minorities on their lists.

Six ethnic minority candidates figure on the lists of each - the Electoral Block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli” and “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia”. Ethnic minority candidates appear at the end of the top 40 and further down on the lists of “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli”. As for “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of

¹⁰ <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120904?fbclid=IwAR222eyQCsxvaVwZYdkPvyO4YrVRGWtZ10hXr-glSONwkhUjtL9GaW3NHv8M>

¹¹ <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120582>

Georgia”, one ethnic minority nominee figures in the second half of top 20 candidates and others further down after the 60th candidate.

““Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia” and “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom” have 5 ethnic minority candidates on their lists, each. Two ethnic minority nominees appear in the third set of top 30 candidates on the party list of the ““Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia” and the other three – in the final set of top 60 candidates and further. As for the “European Georgia”, two candidates figure in the last set of the top 40 candidates, one – in the fifth part of top 50 and two candidates are placed at 127th and 134th on its party list.

- **Ethnic composition of majoritarian candidates**

Of all electoral subjects monitored (11), four subjects have not nominated a majoritarian candidate from ethnic minorities. These are: “Nino Burjanadze – United Georgia-Democratic Movement”, Electoral Block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli” “Aleko Elisashvili – Citizens” and “Girchi”.

Two candidates were nominated by each: “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom”, “United National Movement – United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia” and “David Tarkhan Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia” and ““Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia”.

“David Tchitchinadze Tribune – Christian-Democratic Movement”, “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia” and “Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze” each nominated one ethnic minority majoritarian candidate.

As for the initiative groups, of all 11 initiative groups participating in the elections, only one initiative group – Evgenya Karapatyan, Shorena Tetvadze, Arageghetsik Sanosyan, Armine Minasyan and Roza Aslanyan, nominated Enzel Mkoyan as an independent majoritarian candidate.

CHAPTER V

INTER-AGENCY COMMISSION FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

The ICFE was established by the decree of the Minister of Justice on 30 June 2020. The Commission aims to prevent the use of administrative resources and the violation of the electoral legislation by the civil servants in the period of pre-electoral campaigning and agitation, as well as to react on the identified violations and to ensure in this way a free and fair electoral environment.

The Commission held its first meeting on 14 July 2020. It held 10 meetings during the reporting period. The PMMG representative was present at five meetings. In total, the Commission issued four recommendations.

During the pre-electoral monitoring, the ICFE focused its efforts on analysing the information disseminated through media. According to the ICFE, a number of incidents of disinform-

mation were revealed.

Pursuant to its format, the Commission provides a platform to facilitate a dialogue between the Government and all stakeholders involved in the elections, in order to avoid violations of electoral legislation.

The stakeholders' trust in the ICFE is not high. Majority of the political parties and local observer organisations are permanently absent from the Commission meetings, which can be explained by ineffective work of the Commission to prevent the violations.

CHAPTER VI

USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES

In August 2020 the Government of Georgia initiated a number of large scale financial projects to address the effects of the economic crisis, few weeks prior to the official launch of the pre-electoral campaign. The projects target wider electorate and foresee certain funds to be allocated to voters in the pre-electoral period. In addition, the Government personified the assistance by affiliating itself with these projects thus blurring the boundaries between the activities of the State and the party. Therefore, the steps made by the Government in some cases formed a part of the electoral campaign and served as a leverage to manipulate with voters' will.

Besides the financial assistance, few days prior to the official start of the pre-electoral campaign, the Government of Georgia initiated several other large-scale projects, which presumably served to enhance voters' satisfaction with the Government's activities just before the elections.¹²

High-ranking officials from the central and local government were actively involved, though observing fully the requirements of the Electoral Code, in the presentations of the majoritarian candidates of the "Georgian Dream" in the majoritarian constituencies. The representatives of the local government were personally present at the meetings of the "Georgian Dream" candidates with the electorate, listened to their concerns, needs, and promised to solve them as soon as possible.¹³ People working at the local self-government bodies, staff of the public schools and kindergartens and, in some instances, clergymen were also present at the presentation ceremonies of the ruling party candidates.¹⁴

Presentations of the majoritarian candidates of the "Georgian Dream" in the majoritarian constituencies were often held against the background of the projects implemented by the state funds, which raised the risk of using the state funded assets in the ruling party campaign.

The state funded projects were also used in the campaign by the "Georgian Dream" majoritarian members of the Parliament, who run for other electoral subjects in the 2020 elections.¹⁵

¹² See detailed information about the projects in annex

¹³ See detailed information about the meetings of the "Georgian Dream" candidates in annex.

¹⁴ It is unknown to the observers of the organization whether the people working in the public institutions were present voluntarily at the presentations of the ruling party candidates.

¹⁵ Kakha Okriashvili and Enzel Mkoyan. See detailed information about the meetings of these candidates in annex.

CHAPTER VII

VIOLATION OF RULES OF PARTICIPATION IN THE PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The changes made to the Election Code prior to the start of the pre-electoral campaign expanded the list of persons, who are not eligible to participate in the campaigns and agitate during the working hours or when performing official duties. These changes have to be positively assessed as they prevent in a way the use of state-funded human resources for electoral purposes. For instance, persons, who fall under these limitations, include the staff of the LEPL (except for higher and vocational education establishments, religious organisations and Georgian Bar Association), non-commercial legal entities established by the state or municipality, public school teachers.

While undertaking the pre-electoral monitoring, it was revealed that persons employed at the local municipality bodies/public sector took a leave to participate in the electoral campaign of the ruling party. As for the unlawful participation in the electoral campaigns, the PMMG observers identified 8 incidents of violation of rules of agitation, which included unlawful participation of 7 electoral commission members in the pre-electoral campaign, namely in the events dedicated to the majoritarian candidates of the “Georgian Dream”. In two cases, there were public school teachers present at the pre-electoral meetings of the ruling party candidates during the working hours.

CHAPTER VIII

PERSONNEL RESHUFFLING AND CASES OF DISMISSAL FROM THE WORK

During the pre-electoral period, statements were made by the former director of the Kvareli Music Schools Union and two former school directors in Mtskheta about being dismissed from the work, allegedly, on the political grounds.

In August 2020, personnel reshuffling took place in Ninotsminda municipality that involved over 20 employees, who were subject to changes. According to the opposition, the reshuffling served to strengthen the position of the ruling party before the elections and to weaken those of Enzel Mkoyan, a majoritarian member of the Georgian Parliament, as the persons dismissed were believed to be associated with Mr. Mkoyan.¹⁶ In the beginning of October, two vacancies in the Ninotsminda municipality City Hall – head of the Culture, Sport and Tourism department and head of the Social Service - were filled in by the “Georgian Dream” coordinators.

¹⁶ <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=28948>

A new position of a specialist in the Commission of Spacial-territorial Infrastructure and Natural Resources was created at the Lagodekhi municipality Assembly to give a job to a distinguished supporter of the “Georgian Dream”.

CHAPTER IX

INTERFERENCE WITH THE PRE-ELECTION CAPAIGN

Nine incidents of interference with the pre-electoral campaigns were identified in the reporting period, of which 5 incidents were related to the pre-electoral meetings and campaigns of the candidates of the united opposition “Dzala Ertobashia” (Strength is in Unity) and 2 – to Zaur Dargali, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in the Marneuli-Gardabani constituency.

CHAPTER X

INCIDENTS OF THREATS AND PRESSURE

In the reporting period, the PMMG observers identified 7 incidents of alleged threat and pressure.

In the pre-electoral period, the electoral subjects shared information about the incidents of threat and pressure against their supporters; they also related that representatives of the “Georgian Dream” threatened the voters with the dismissal from the work and terminating their social assistance, because they supported the opposition. The electoral subjects did not reveal the persons, who threatened or those, who were threatened. Only “European Georgia” shared the concrete information to the PMMG representatives about such persons.

In some cases, the candidates stated that they were subject to unlawful surveillance by the law-enforcement bodies. One of them was Khatia Dekanoidze, majoritarian candidate in Isani, who stated that the Government through the State Security Service was conducting illegal surveillance of her family members and herself.¹⁷ According to Khatia Dekanoidze, on 17 October several unknown persons entered her electoral office to install listening devise in her room.¹⁸

¹⁷ <https://1tv.ge/news/nacionaluri-modzraobis-wevri-khatia-dekanoidze-ackhadebs-rom-masze-ukanono-tvaltvali-dafaruli-miyuradeba-khorcieldeba/>

¹⁸ <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/624250-xatia-dekanoize-ukanonod-sheagcies-chvens-shtabshi-sus-i-aparaturis-dasaqeneblad-shevida>

CHAPTER XI

INCIDENTS OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

10 incidents of violence and beating were observed in the reporting period. Since the second half of September the incidents of violence started to grow and the pre-electoral environment became more tense and polarized. In some cases, firearms were used in the incidents to intimidate the opponents. Out of 10 incidents 8 took place in the Kvemo Kartli region, namely: 2 - in Dmanisi, 2 – in Bolnisi, 3 – in Marneuli and 1 – in Gardabani.

In three cases violence was used against the supporters of the “United Opposition”, in another one – against the “Georgian Dream” supporter and yet in other two incidents – against the supporters of the “European Georgia”.

In two cases physical confrontation took place between the supporters of Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition” and the “Georgian Dream” majoritarian candidate Gogi Meshveliani, while another case involved supporters of the “Georgian Dream” and the European Georgia.

Physical violence was used against the journalists and an observer.

In some cases, the law-enforcement bodies reacted effectively on several incidents of violence, which mainly related to violence against the supporters of the “Georgian Dream”. As for the other instances related to the supporters of the opposition candidates, by the time the present report was published the law-enforcement bodies have not identified the offenders involved in the incidents and the investigation is still on.

CHAPTER XII

DAMAGING THE CAMPAIGN MATERIAL AND OBSTRUCTION IN THEIR DISSEMINATION

Several incidents of damaging or tearing down the electoral posters of the political parties and political subjects were identified in the reporting period. In three cases election banners were damaged. There were also frequent cases of pasting a poster over another. According to the PMMG observer, the “Georgian Dream” election posters were pasted over those belonging to the UNM, while the UNM posters were pasted over the election poster of the European Georgia.

CHAPTER XIII

ALLEGED VOTE BUYING

Four incidents of alleged vote buying was identified in the reporting period,¹⁹ including two - in Lagodekhi, 1- in Akhaltsikhe and 1 – in Ninotsminda. Of these facts, three related to hosting the voters for election purposes and one – to offering clothes on preferential terms. An interesting trend was revealed in the pre-electoral period with a ruling party using the rugby bases for its pre-electoral campaigns. As seen in the pre-electoral advertisement of the “Georgian Dream”, the development of the bases was financed by the “Cartu Fund”, which spent millions of GEL on their construction and technical equipment.²⁰

The changes made to the Criminal Code in July 2020 impose stricter liabilities for vote buying by fully criminalizing the act. Pursuant to the previous version, transferring an advantage to a voter, if the advantage does not exceeded 100 GEL, was subject to administrative fine. With the new changes to the law, the act of vote buying became a subject of criminal liability, if the value of the advantage does not exceed 100 GEL.²¹ According to the Georgian legislation, criminal liability arises when an advantage is transferred to a voter for electoral purposes and when a voter knowingly accepts such offering. Consequently, revealing and bringing to public knowledge the fact of vote buying became much more difficult. People tend to hide alleged vote buying facts from a fear of being charged, which makes it virtually impossible to inform the relevant services about such facts.

CHAPTER XIV

ALLEGEDLY UNLAWFUL COLLECTION OF VOTERS' PERSONAL DATA

Three incidents of allegedly unlawful collection of voters' personal data was identified in the reporting period. Incidents involved collection of copies of voters' IDs and the relevant personal information.

19 Pursuant to the Criminal Code of Georgia: “For election purposes, offering, promising, transferring or redereing, directly or indirectly, money, securities (including financial instrument), other property, title on property, service or any other advantage or knowingly accepting such offering, or entering into fraudulent, sham or other transactions to avoid statutory restrictions shall be punished by imprisonment for up to three years or with a fine.”.

20 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/623406-kartuli-ocnebis-liderebma-aspinzashi-pond-kartus-dapinansebit-shekmnili-saragbo-baza-daatvalieres>

21 Pursuant to Article 164 of the Criminal Code, the criminal liability arose only if the value of an advantage transferred to a voter for electoral purposes exceeded 100 GEL.

CHAPTER XV

INTERFERENCE WITH THE MEDIA ACTIVITY, PRESSURE AND THREATS

Four facts of interference with the media activities, attempts of pressure and threats were identified in the reporting period.

On 29 September, in Marneuli, the “Georgian Dream” activists interfered with the professional activity of the crew members of “Mtavari Arkhi” and the GPB operator and assaulted them physically. They damaged the equipment of the TV companies. The law-enforcement bodies have not charged anyone so far. Calls were made by Kakha Okriashvili on closing down the GPB and Grigol Vashadze on closing down the TV Channel “Imedi”.²² “Girchi” proposed to sell the GPB.²³ In the pre-electoral period, the local government opposed the activity of the Pankisi community Radio.

CHAPTER XVI

HATE SPEECH AND DISINFORMATION IN THE PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The PMMG observers identified public statements in the reporting period, which aimed to discredit the political opponents and served to instigate interethnic strife. The PMMG called on all parties involved in the elections to respect the Code of Ethics and observe the highest ethical standards.

The organization revealed several Facebook pages promoting the Alliance of Patriots of Georgia and conducting discreditation campaign against the opposition parties, namely the UNM and “European Georgia”.

Four public statements were identified in the reporting period, which implied attempt to instigate interethnic strife and confrontation between Armenian and Azerbaijani communities. The PMMG believes that such statements also aimed at gaining support from voter of the relevant ethnic group in the run up to the Parliamentary elections on 31 October 2020.

²² <https://metronome.ge/story/303824>

²³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKLSuHjvMU&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR2B-MKRL-LuzdrxgB-XXfx4Yqgh1IYSQf5VgXP6_oXCZC6rkQBkpWp3kfU

ANNEX -

Activities of the Election Commissions

PREPARATIONS FOR THE ELECTIONS AMIDST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The CEC adopted, through wider public involvement, two decrees, which regulate activities of the election administration amidst the pandemic. The CEC held discussions on both draft decrees with the CSOs within the CEC-initiated platform “Discuss Together”.

One of the decrees relates with the activities of the election commissions in the pre-electoral period, namely the rules regulating the sanitary and hygienic requirements, entrance and movements in the election administration premises to prevent the spread of infection. The other decree relates with the rules of voting process and the activities of the PECs amidst the pandemic.²⁴

The CEC incorporated the recommendations of the PMMG in the former decree with regard to the 1st, 2nd and 6th articles concerning the observance of the sanitary-hygienic requirements in the election administration buildings, including the rules of reviewing the complaints, the work of election commissions, etc..

On 18 September, the CEC adopted a decree,²⁵ establishing certain election measures and sanitary and hygienic requirements for the persons authorized to enter/exit and to stay/move in the polling stations on the polling day. The decree aims to prevent spread of the infection when voting.

We regard positively the adoption of the mentioned decree, although certain regulations may pose problems. For instance, open cabins carry a risk of violation of secrecy of vote on purpose. Furthermore, refusing an authorized person enter the polling station without a facemask can be a cause for provocations. Therefore, it is important that the PECs, DECes and the CEC be extremely vigilant to ensure that the elections are held in sound environment.

CODE OF CONDUCT OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ITS SIGNATURE

The CEC of Georgia, with the support of Switzerland, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the International Republican Institute (IRI), developed a Code of Conduct of the political parties in the parliamentary elections of 2020, which reflects the recommendations found in the reports by the international election observation missions, international stakeholders and the Public Defender of Georgia. The Code of Conduct is a compilation of voluntary norms of ethics, which aims at observing the democratic values and fundamental rights, conducting meaningful, programme-oriented and inclusive election campaign, which ensures equal opportunities for all involved parties in the elections.²⁶

The Code of Conduct, signed by 40 political parties, entered into force on 12 September

²⁴ <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/4982188?publication=0>

²⁵ <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120330-dadgenileba-38/2020-18092020>

²⁶ <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120167-gantskhadeba-2020-tslis-parlamentis-archevnebis-tvis-politikuri-partiebis-qtsevis-kodeqsis-shesakheb->

2020.²⁷

We regard the development of the Code as a positive act. However, we regret that a number of political parties and their supporters do not observe the rules established by the Code and in some cases, resort to violence.

VOTER LITERACY AND AWARENESS RAISING ABOUT THE ELECTORAL PROCESSES

In the reporting period, especially since mid-July, the election administration launched active voter literacy campaign. The election administration actively disseminated information to voters, including ethnic minorities and the youth, about the parliamentary elections, the legislative amendments and the regulations developed by the election administration to prevent the spread of the infection, as well as about the voting procedures and the importance of participation in the elections. Among others:

- The Adigeni DEC conducted an educational campaign “A Voter’s Voice” in Adigeni. The DEC representatives informed the voters about the rules of voting and regulations to be observed at the precinct on the E-Day. During the meeting, voters received pens and election booklets.
- Representatives of the Adigeni DEC held meeting with the voters in Adigeni. They disseminated information booklets about the rules of participation in the elections and explained them the meaning of a mixed election model.
- The Dmanisi election administration held trainings and educational projects. An information banner with hygiene measures during the pandemic was posted in the election district.
- On 3-4 September, Tetritskaro DEC held meetings with voters in the village Tsintskaro and town Tetritskaro within the project “Talk to Voters”, where the DEC members, while observing the regulations established by the Ministry of Health, shared the information with the voters about the upcoming elections and electoral procedures.
- On 14 August 2020, the Gori DEC finalized the CEC educational project “Electoral Development School”. The aim of the project was to facilitate civic engagement of the youth and promoting the elections.²⁸

SETTING UP ELECTION COMMISSIONS

In the reporting period, the PMMG undertook monitoring of setting up the election commissions. The process, in some cases, proceeded against the heated argument and verbal confrontations, while, in few cases, it grew into physical confrontation

MARNEULI

On 29 September, in Marneuli, the UNM held rally near the DEC protesting the selection of “Georgian Dream” supporters as the PEC members. Lasha Kveladze, DEC member on behalf of the UNM declared that the DEC did not notify the PEC members appointed by the UNM about holding the first meeting. Later, the rally continued into verbal confrontation

²⁷ https://cesko.ge/res/docs/Parties-2020_Geo29.09.pdf

²⁸ https://www.facebook.com/SAOLQO/posts/283511_5023385664/

during which several persons attempted to enter the DEC. At that moment, a contracted employee of the DEC, who was enquiring with the persons present there the reason why they were video recording him without permission, was beaten in response. There was also an instance of unauthorized persons attempting to break in the DEC.²⁹

The CEC released a statement regarding the fact, whereby it clarified that allegations as if the DEC did not notify the UNM-appointed PEC members about the first meeting, was ungrounded and false, because all members were notified through the contacts (telephone numbers) provided by them. Some of them did not appear at the meeting and there were problems in contacting some others, including due to wrong telephone numbers indicated. At the same time, UNM-appointed 26 members took part in the relevant PEC meetings, while some of them, as elder members, presided over the meetings. The CEC also underlined that, upon convening the first meetings, the DEC Chairman's Act was made public by posting it in a visible place in the DEC building.³⁰

On October 4, Marneuli DEC member Lasha Kvelidze was charged on the fact of beating a contracted employee of the Marneuli DEC under the 1st part of the Article 162 of the Criminal Code of Georgia (violence committed at the location of the election commission from the moment of declaration of the election date up to the summarizing the final results of the elections).³¹

ADIGENI

On 5 September, the CEC elected Ketevan Obolashvili as a temporary member of the Adigeni DEC. Head of the UNM Adigeni office David Oganessian expressed concern over the fact and questioned Ketevan Obolashvili's impartiality. According to David Oganessian, Ketevan Obolashvili is a cousin of the "Georgian Dream" majoritarian candidate in Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni, Borjomi and Aspindza – Anton Obolashvili, and therefore cannot be an unbiased member of the commission.³² Based on the information collected by the PMMG longterm observer, Ketevan Obolashvili is indeed a cousin of the "Georgian Dream" majoritarian candidate Anton Obolashvili. Ketevan Obolashvili was a member of the DEC during 2012 and 2016 elections as well.

AKHALTSIKHE

On 13 September, Akhaltsikhe #37 DEC elected the PEC members. According to UNM representative Vakhtang Kvatadze, the meeting proceeded with numerous violations as persons, who represented the "Georgian Dream" in the past elections and were accused of disciplinary misconduct, were named as non-partisan members of the commission. As he also noted, he was forced to leave the meeting after he protested. Tea Gavasheli, Chair of the Akhaltsikhe #37 DEC, said the obstruction of the meeting and verbal assault on the participants were the reasons why Mr. Kvatadze was ousted from the room.

MTATSMINDA

On 13 September, UNM member Levan Merebashvili left the Mtatsminda DEC meeting in protest, saying that the members of the commission were being elected on the grounds of profession, friendship and kinship, which he did not want to be part of. MPs from the UNM: Tina Bokuchava and Levan Kharatishvili came to the Mtatsminda DEC meeting at 13:20 wishing to attend the meeting. TV channels (Mtavari Arkhi, Rustavi 2, Formula and GPB) also attempted

29 https://www.facebook.com/aktualge/videos/12101927_49365235

30 <https://cesko.ge/geo/list/show/120582>

31 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/621812-marneulshi-momxdar-zaladobis-paktebze-sam-pirs-braldeba-caredgina>

32 <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=29202>

to screen the meeting. Since the MPs and media representatives had not the necessary accreditation and therefore were not authorized to be in the Mtatsminda DEC building, the DEC Chair Giorgi Zirakishvili stopped the meeting and called for patrol police. The commission meeting stopped at 13:30 and resumed at 14:22. The commission members were elected after the meeting resumed. The composition of the PECs at the four precincts in Mtatsminda (#9, #10, #22, #30) and one in Krtsanisi (#26) was not complete and therefore, a new competition was announced for these precincts.

AKHALTSIKHE

According to Tea Gavasheli, Chair of the #37 Akhaltsikhe DEC, the DEC representatives resigned from four precincts in Akhaltsikhe and one in Borjomi. The DEC filled in the vacancies through interviews with contestants from previous competition. According to the DEC Chair, the DEC representatives were appointed at #2, #13, #24 and #34 precincts in Akhaltsikhe, as well as at #11 precinct in Borjomi.

BORJOMI

On 8 October, Vakhtang Kvatadze, head of the UNM Borjomi Office, accused the Borjomi DEC Chair of pursuing the interests of the ruling party. It refers to the case of the election banner of Anton Obolashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, which was erected close to #1 precinct in Borjomi within 25 meter range, which goes against the rules, however, according to the political party, the DEC did not react on the violation.³³

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE ELECTORAL LISTS SUBMITTED BY THE ELECTORAL SUBJECTS

1. “Nino Burjanadze – United Georgia-Democratic Movement” has 142 candidates on its electoral list, including 7 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear at , 28th, 37th, 40th, 71st, 91st, 114th, 135th positions on the list.
2. Electoral block “Giorgi Vashadze – Strategy Agmashenebeli” has 152 candidates on its electoral list, including 10 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear at 36th, 48th, 51st, 60th, 92nd, 96th, 117th, 118th, 129th and 140th positions on the list.
3. “Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia” has 169 candidates on its electoral list, including 8 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear at 19th, 42nd, 68th, 83rd, 114th, 115th, 116th and 136th positions on the list.
4. “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom” has 150 candidates on its electoral list, including 5 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear at 28th, 29th, 57th, 71st and 100th positions on the list.
5. ““Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia” has 150 candidates on its electoral list, including 7 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear at 35th, 37th, 50th, 115th, 119th, 127th and 134th positions on the list.
6. “David Tchitchinadze Tribune – Christian-Democratic Movement” has 167 candidates on its electoral list, including 12 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear at 7th, 13th, 22nd, 27th, 32nd, 68th, 103rd, 112th, 132nd, 152nd and 154th positions on the list.
7. “United National Movement – United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia” has 150 candidates

³³ https://borjomi.tv/axali-ambebi/article/11831-sadavo-baneri-ras-ithkhovs-nacionaluri-modzraoba?fbclid=IwAR3HGIIcMxbtp_d1b-gHGiffLfDEecwDh-BQVCV2Senn3_WMPQg1dtkLm9I

on its electoral list, including 6 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear at 17th, 38th, 50th, 51st, 80th and 102nd positions on the list.

8. "David Tarkhan Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia" has 132 candidates on its electoral list, including 6 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appear at 8th, 14th, 21st, 22nd, 56th and 123rd positions on the list.
9. "Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze" has 139 candidates on its electoral list, including 5 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appears at 19th, 26th, 74th, 82nd and 127th position on the list.
10. "Girchi" - has 129 candidates on its electoral list, including 6 belonging to ethnic minorities, who appears at 6th, 35th, 60th, 73rd, 84th and 100th position on the list.
11. Aleko Elisashvili - has 138 candidates on its electoral list, and none of them is belonging to ethnic minorities.

Majoritarian candidates:

"Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria – European Georgia – Movement for Freedom" – Akmamed Imamkulyev and Arsen Karapetyan;

"David Tchitchinadze Tribune – Christian-Democratic Movement" – Ashot Myradyan;

Electoral block "United National Movement – United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia" – Azer Suleimanov and Melik Raisyan;

"David Tarkhan Mouravi, Irma Inashvili – Alliance of Patriots of Georgia" – Makhir Yusubov and Artashes Hakobyan;

"Shalva Natelashvili – Labour Party of Georgia" – Ali Badirov;

"Georgian Dream" – Democratic Georgia" – Zaur Dargali and Samvel Manukyan;

"Lelo – Mamuka Khazaradze" – Murad Muradov;

Initiative group "Evgenya Karapatyan, Shorena Tetvadze, Arageghetsik Sanosyan, Armine Minasyan and Roza Aslanyan" - Enzel Mkoyan.

ANNEX -

Use of the administrative resources

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 3RD PHASE OF THE ANTI-CRISIS PLAN

On 6 August 2020, during the Cabinet meeting, the Prime-Minister of Georgia announced the start of the 3rd phase of the comprehensive social assistance package for the Georgian citizens to help counter the economic crisis.³⁴ The 3rd phase of the Government's anti-crisis plan foresees mainly provision of the social assistance to the youth.³⁵ The ruling party "Georgian Dream" – Democratic Georgia" created a political advertisement about the 3rd phase of the anti-crisis plan and placed it in social media, on the party's Facebook page.³⁶ The political advertisement was shared via Facebook by the majoritarian candidates of the "Georgian Dream".³⁷ The political advertisement of the ruling party uses the state coat of arms of Georgia, while it presents and explains every element of the wide-scale social assistance package under the 3rd phase of the Government's anti-crisis plan against the party symbolic colours (blue and yellow), including the information about the assistance provided to concrete beneficiaries, the number of beneficiaries and the amounts allocated.³⁸ The political advertisement shared through the Facebook is accompanied with a small text, which reads: "The social assistance package developed under the 3rd phase of the Government's anti-crisis plan is another proof of the commitment of the "Georgian Dream" as a united team to ensure the health and economic prosperity of the population of Georgia. This was achieved thanks to the Government, unity of the citizens and the financial contributions from Bidzina Ivanishvili".³⁹

We believe that by creating such political advertisement and sharing it by persons, who are associated with the leadership of the ruling party and the party itself, the measures implemented under the Government's anti-crisis plan are used solely to the benefit of this party and serves the electoral goals of gaining voters' support to the "Georgian Dream" in the upcoming parliamentary elections. Apart from this, the activities of the State and the political party are mixed and the boundary between them is blurred, which is incompatible with the international standard: according to the Copenhagen document on "Human Dimension" elaborated by the OSCE member states in 1990, the participating states ensure that the political parties are not merged with the State and that there is a clear separation between the State and political parties (Article 5.4).⁴⁰

Use of the registration web-page - daxmareba.moh.gov.ge - for the pre-election campaign

A special registration system was set up at the web-page "daxmareba.moh.gov.ge" to avail distribution of the social assistance of GEL 200 to the children up to 18 years of age. Through this web-page a parent can register the child in the system of the Social Service Agency before December 1, 2020. It must be noted that the registration page includes the Facebook

34 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=76959

35 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=76959

36 <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgianDreamOfficial/videos/325492188604065/?v=325492188604065>

37 <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgianDreamOfficial/videos/325492188604065/?v=325492188604065>

38 <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgianDreamOfficial/videos/325492188604065/?v=325492188604065>

39 <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgianDreamOfficial/videos/325492188604065/?v=325492188604065>

40 The Copenhagen Document on Human Dimension, elaborated by the OSCE member states, 1990, accessible at: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/14304?download=true>, renewed: 31.08.2020.

page of Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia showing his picture, which, in some way, is an invitation to a parent to like Giorgi Gakharia's Facebook page.

We believe that the mentioned fact represents the use of administrative resources for the campaign purposes. In particular, the communication means – a registration page of the Social Service Agency, which is financed from the state budget, is used for the campaign of the ruling party – “Georgian Dream”.

Large-scale projects and initiatives launched by the Government of Georgia

Besides the above mentioned projects, few days prior to the official start of the pre-electoral campaign, the Government of Georgia initiated several other large-scale projects, which target wider range of voters. The projects aim to improve their social and economic conditions and presumably serve to enhance voters' satisfaction with the Government's activities just before the elections.⁴¹

LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS ANNOUNCED FEW DAYS PRIOR TO THE OFFICIAL START OF THE PRE-ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN:

- All self-employed citizens, who were unable to present all necessary documents at the first stage, will receive, before September, assistance of GEL 300 without any delay. It makes 80 000 citizens in total.⁴²
- Utilities expenses support programme was extended to another four months (November, December, January and February). Consequently, the Government will cover the expenses for up to 200 kilowatts of electricity and 200 cubic meters of gas consumed by households per month.
- The Georgian citizens 17 years of age and under will receive a one-off assistance of GEL 200 at the start of the academic year.⁴³ Parents can register their children before 1 December 2020, while the assistance will be delivered from September.⁴⁴
- The Government will cover fully a semester tuition fee in 2020-2021 for all socially vulnerable students (having up to 150 000 social points).
- The Government will cover the education fee for 2020-2021 – GEL 2250 for all socially vulnerable students (having up to 150 000 social points), who had their student status suspended due to unpaid education fees. By the decision of the Georgian Government, in total, more than 33 000 students will be eligible to benefit from these measures.
- On 20 August 2020, the Prime Minister of Georgia announced during the Cabinet meeting about the start of a new programme “State as your Partner”⁴⁵. The presentation of the programme was held in Ambrolauri. As the Prime Minister stated, the new programme will give each citizen a possibility to get involved in the state-funded programmes and launch their own businesses.

41 See detailed information about these projects in annex #1

42 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=76959

43 The Georgian Government together with the banking sector decided that the social assistance transferred to beneficiaries' accounts shall not be used to cover their liabilities. In case of a bank debt, these amounts shall not be used to cover the debt and the bank cannot automatically take the amount away from the parents' accounts. Similarly, no other enforcement mechanism or measure will be applicable to the social assistance.

44 On August 20, the Prime Minister of Georgia stated at the Cabinet meeting that some individuals are trying to collect financial and sometimes political gains by helping children and their parents to receive the Government's assistance. http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=77065

45 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=77065

- On 20 August 2020, by the Governmental decision, a new farmer-support component was added to the state programme – “Plant your Future”. The programme will primarily help peasants, who suffered damage after 15 July 2020.⁴⁶ The programme aims at assisting Georgian farmers, who suffered damage from natural disasters or whose seedlings were destroyed, by getting new and quality seedlings with the help of the State.
- On 20 August 2020, the Government decided to expand the list of medicines for cancer eligible for financing under the Universal Healthcare Programme and to increase the annual limit on medicines by 8 000 GEL. The programme will avail the oncology patients to undergo full treatment with the state support. 1972 Georgian citizens are beneficiaries of the programme. In total, the new programme will cover about 40 thousand Georgian citizens in need of oncological treatment.⁴⁷
- On 13 August 2020, the Georgian Government decided to subsidize the purchase of non-standard apples until December 2020. Amount of the subsidy was set at 10 tetri, after which the minimal price for farmers on non-standard apples was set at 22 tetri.⁴⁸ Based on the Government’s decision, all companies, which will be engaged in the procurement headquarters, will receive a subsidy of additional 10 tetri.

Involvement of high-ranking officials in the pre-electoral campaign and the use of the state funded projects

High-ranking officials from the central and local government, including Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze and other members of the political union ““Georgian Dream” – Democratic Georgia”, were involved in the presentations of the majoritarian candidates of the “Georgian Dream” in the majoritarian constituencies.

People working at the local self-government bodies, staff of the public schools and kindergartens and, in some instances, clergymen were also present at the presentation/electoral ceremonies of the ruling party candidates.⁴⁹ According to the PMMG observers, not all willing could attend the presentation ceremonies of the majoritarian candidates. Attendance was managed by the lists prepared in advance.

After the presentations of majoritarian candidates were over, the pre-electoral campaigns continues with visiting the state funded projects and places. Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze together with the majoritarian candidate visited the infrastructure projects in the relevant electoral constituency to examine the implementation of the state funded facilities.⁵⁰

Besides the high-ranking officials of the central government, the representatives of the local government were actively engaged in the electoral campaign of the ruling party and their majoritarian candidates. They were personally present at the meetings of the “Georgian Dream” candidates with the electorate, listened to their concerns, needs, and promised to solve them as soon as possible. The social networks offer plenty of information about the participation of the local self-government officials in the electoral campaign.⁵¹ The PMMG observers were also present at these meetings.

46 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=77065

47 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=77065

48 http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=geo&sec_id=541&info_id=77026

49 It is unknown to the observers of the organization whether the people working in the public institutions were present voluntarily at the presentations of the ruling party candidates.

50 Upon nomination as the majoritarian candidates by the “Georgian Dream”, Governors Giorgi Khojvanishvili - in Shida Kartli, Shalva Kereselidze – in Mtskheta-Mtianeti and Irakli Kadagishvili – in Kakheti left their posts on the same day - on 1 August 2020, and started the pre-electoral campaign.

51 See detailed information about the meetings of the “Georgian Dream” candidates in annex #2.

The state funded projects were also used in the campaign by the current majoritarian members of the Parliament, who run for other electoral subjects in the 2020 elections, for example majoritarian members of the parliament – Kakha Okriashvili and Enzel Mkoyan.⁵²

2 incidents of the use of the administrative resources were observed in the pre-electoral campaign in Dmanisi and Ninotsminda, whereby the organisers of the state funded activities used the administrative resources for the benefit of certain candidates.

MEETINGS HELD BY THE MAJORITARIAN CANDIDATES OF THE “GEORGIAN DREAM” WITH THE ELECTORATE AND THE USE OF THE STATE-FUNDED PROJECTS IN THE CAMPAIGN:

On 21 September, in the village **Khanchala**, in the Ninotsminda municipality, member of the Georgian Parliament and the “Georgian Dream” majoritarian candidate Samvel Manukyan participated in the opening of the newly rehabilitated road together with the authorities of the Ninotsminda municipality.⁵³

On 10 September, in the **Dmanisi** municipality, the Dmanisi Mayor opened a new park together with the majoritarian member of the Georgian Parliament and the majoritarian candidate of the opposition political block Kakha Okriashvili.⁵⁴

On 9 October in **Mtskheta**, Acting Mayor of Mtskheta-Mtianeti Givi Berberashvili gave bonus of 1000 GEL and Certificates of Excellence to 7 gold medalist graduates of municipality public schools of 2019-2020.⁵⁵ The PMMG long term observer inquired whether it was a usual practice and found out that the monetary reward was given for the first time and did not have a precedent in previous years.

On 13 October in **Aspindza**, according to the information circulated by the “Georgian Dream” press office, Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, “Georgian Dream” Secretary General Kakha Kaladze, “Georgian Dream” Executive Secretary Irakli Kobakhidze and majoritarian candidate in Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni, Borjomi and Aspindza Anton Obolashvili visited a rugby base in Aspindza. According to the press office, the construction of the base was financed by the Cartu Fund, which spent more than 4 million GEL on the construction and technical equipment of the base.⁵⁶

In **Lagodekhi** municipality, on 11 August, when presenting majoritarian candidate of the ruling party – Irakli Kadagishvili Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, Party Secretary General Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze together with the candidate visited Hereti Football Academy, where they met with young sportsmen and wished them success.⁵⁷ Also, in the village Kabal, in the Lagodekhi municipality, they checked the ongoing construction of the public school that will house 300 pupils.⁵⁸

In **Marneuli** municipality, on 22 August, Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, Party Secretary General Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze and majoritarian candidate of the ruling party in Marneuli and Gardabani – Zaur Dargali visited the ongoing construction site of the Marneuli vocational school, which is being constructed with the state

52 See detailed information about the meetings of the non-ruling party candidates in annex #3.

53 http://nor.ge/?p=154654&fbclid=IwAR2nJXteJJ7_tgF4MWhafpaozbq7n1m5TePqMco_ZAOp28oRp9ZDgTTxqDc

54 https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.330433_2273015600&type=3

55 <https://www.facebook.com/TianetisMeria/photos/a.3521657271234628/3521658617901160/>

56 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/623406-kartuli-ocnebis-liderebma-aspinzashi-pond-kartus-dapinansebit-shekmnili-saragbo-baza-daatvalieres>

57 <http://frontnews.eu/news/ge/69304/?fbclid=IwAR0YN3DiDOIG7USRGtUuyzhxODOXJfgZ3nUBLrj1uzDLnexO9k0KeSuMJQ8>

58 <https://knews.ge/?p=52635>

funds and with the involvement of the local self-government.⁵⁹

In **Samgori** municipality, on 17 August, majoritarian candidate of the Georgia Dream Sozar Subari visited the new rehabilitated sports complex in Varketili together with the Chairman of the Tbilisi City Assembly Giorgi Tkemaladze.⁶⁰ The project was implemented with the financial assistance of the Tbilisi City Hall.⁶¹

On August 17, in **Akhmeta** municipality, Irakli Kadagishvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, together with Majoritarian deputy of Akhmeta-Telavi Gela Samkharauli and geologists, travelled to the Tusheti road for a preliminary study on the construction of a road.⁶²

On 19 August, in **Aspindza** municipality, Anton Obolashvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the electorate of the Aspindza municipality villages together with Aspindza Mayor Rostom Magrakvelidze.⁶³

On 23 August, in **Mtskheta** municipality, Shalva Kereselidze, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the internally displaced persons living in Prezeti, together with Nugzar Tinikashvili, Governor of Akhlagori.⁶⁴

On 19 August, in **Adigeni** municipality, Anton Obolashvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, together with Adigeni Mayor Zakaria Endeladze and Imeda Mghebriashvili, Head of the Adigeni municipality Assembly, met with the population of the villages in Adigeni municipality – Mlashe, Gorguli, Ijareti and Imertubani.⁶⁵

On 5 September, in **Lagodekhi** municipality, the ruling party majoritarian candidate Irakli Kadagishvili met with the population of the villages: Matsimi, Shroma, Gurgeniani and Ninigori. Kakha Jamburia - head of the Lagodekhi municipality Assembly, Mayor Jondo Mdivnishvili and his deputy Zurab Japaridze, Lika Samkurashvili – representatives of the Public Relations Division were also present at the meeting.

On 13 September, in **Aspindza** municipality, Anton Obolashvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, together with Mayor of Aspindza municipality visited ongoing construction site of the dispensary and a boiler room, as well as the rehabilitation works of the water supply system and old mud huts in the Aspindza municipality villages: Saro, Khizabavra and Nijgori. The majoritarian candidate together with Mayor of Aspindza met with school and kindergarten teachers in the Aspindza municipality.⁶⁶

On August 21, in **Borjomi** municipality, Anton Obolashvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the electorate in the Borjomi municipality villages: Akhaldaba, Kortaneti and Zanavi, together with Governor of Samtskhe-Javakheti Besik Amiranashvili, acting Mayor of Borjomi Davit Zaalishvili, Deputy Mayor Buba Beridze, acting head of the Borjomi municipality Assembly Otar Arbolishvili and Irakli Kvirkvelia, member of the Borjomi municipality Assembly on behalf of the “Georgian Dream”.⁶⁷

59 <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgianDreamOfficial/photos/pcb.3295325347194054/3295323923860863/?type=3&theater>

60 <https://www.facebook.com/SubariOfficial/photos/pcb.10157230435645248/10157230432895248/?type=3&theater>

61 <https://www.facebook.com/SubariOfficial/photos/pcb.10157230435645248/10157230432895248/?type=3&theater>

62 <https://www.facebook.com/GDIrakliKadagishvili/posts/127171542417668>, <https://www.facebook.com/GDIrakliKadagishvili/posts/127257199075769>

63 <https://www.facebook.com/GDAntonObolashvili/photos/pcb.131159875355023/131159302021747/?type=3&theater>

64 [https://www.facebook.com/GDShalvaKereselidze/?__cft__\[0\]=AZXh52q5Pt9Y4ZnX0P8FeX4mAHAS_W-nPLNHVR0rxKLQTPdbbywUeKz3hcyRiF4SHOQZ4dU2s8em4B7xB71VSqK-AkyFuMc5jMfePjIWjoBOKZdGJsRnsWe8m38ZSU1HnROLGBa8G8euu7LotQ2p8hFQ_125CZ6chyqCFBIY8bP16A&__tn__=-UC%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/GDShalvaKereselidze/?__cft__[0]=AZXh52q5Pt9Y4ZnX0P8FeX4mAHAS_W-nPLNHVR0rxKLQTPdbbywUeKz3hcyRiF4SHOQZ4dU2s8em4B7xB71VSqK-AkyFuMc5jMfePjIWjoBOKZdGJsRnsWe8m38ZSU1HnROLGBa8G8euu7LotQ2p8hFQ_125CZ6chyqCFBIY8bP16A&__tn__=-UC%2CP-R)

65 <https://www.facebook.com/101409224996755/posts/128215088982835/>

66 https://www.facebook.com/GDAntonObolashvili/posts/142492667555077?__tn__=-R

67 <https://www.facebook.com/101409224996755/posts/131677455303265/>

An incident was identified in **Ninotsminda** municipality, whereby the Mayor advised the local population to appeal to Samvel Petrosyan, a ruling party majoritarian candidate, to have their problem solved. On August 10, residents of the village Eshtia, Ninotsminda municipality, appealed to the Mayor of Ninotsminda with a request to solve a problem with pastures. Mayor Anivar Mosoyan advised them to turn to Samvel Manukyan, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, with the same request, who resides in Akhalkalaki. According to the observer, the residents of the village Eshtia went to see Samvel Manukyan.

On August 30, Anton Obolashvili, a candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, was accompanied by Mayor of Adigeni Zakaria Endeladze and Head of the Assmebly Imeda Mghebrishvili, when meeting with the electorate in **Adigeni**.

On September 6, Anton Obolashvili, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” held meetings in the villages Sadgeri, Tsemi and Tba in the Borjomi municipality. Deputy Mayor of the municipality Buba Beridze and acting Mayor of Borjomi Davit Zaalishvili⁶⁸, as well as members of the Borjomi municipality Assembly from the “Georgian Dream” were present at the meeting.

On September 4, in the **Dmanisi** municipality, Gogi Meshveliani visited the villages: Mashavera, Didi Dmanisi and Vardisubani, during his pre-electoral campaign. Muraz Abramishvili - a member of the municipality Asssembly, Arif Suleimanov – deputy Mayor of Dmanisi, Paata Kuliashvili – Head of the Administrative Service, Kakha Petriashvili – chair of the Commission of Mandate, Procedure and Ethics of the Dmanisi municipality Assembly were accompanying him.⁶⁹

MEETINGS HELD BY MAJORITARIAN CANDIDATES KAKHA OKRIASHVILI AND ENZEL MKOYAN AND THE USE OF THE STATE-FUNDED PROJECTS IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGN

On July 26, during the public festival Dmanisoba, majoritarian member of the Parliament Kakha Okriashvili together with the Mayor of Dmanisi Giorgi Tatuashvili opened a newly-rehabilitated park and a sports square in the village Vardisubani.⁷⁰ On 3 August 2020, he posted an address to the electorate in the social network assessing the work done by him and noting a large-scale project of elevators in Kazreti, implemented, as he said, with his significant involvement.⁷¹

On 15 June, in the Akhalkali municipality, Enzel Mkoyan together with Nairi Iritsiyan – head of the Akhalkalaki municipality Assembly, Mayor Iurik Unanyan and his deputy Shalva Balakhadze was visiting territorial unit of Kama to see ongoing rehabilitation of the Vachiani-Okami road.

68 <https://www.facebook.com/GDAntonObolashvili/photos/pcb.139599667844377/139596954511315/>

69 <https://www.facebook.com/GDGogiMeshveliani/photos/pcb.4866101246746802/4866056220084638/>

70 <https://www.facebook.com/kakhaberokriashvili/videos/615460092737727/>

71 https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=321064642_636418

ANNEX -

Allegedly unlawful participation in the pre-election campaign

ADIGENI

On 5 October, Anton Obolashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the public school directors in the Adigeni municipality, congratulated them with the professional day and talked about future plans in the education system.⁷² According to the PMMG long term observer, the mentioned meeting was held during the working hours, although the resource centre explained that working hours of the teachers present at the meeting were already terminated.

ADIGENI

On 4 October, Anton Obolashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the electorate in Adigeni. Rusudan Khobiashvili, chair of the Varkhani PEC was also present at the meeting. Photos from the meeting were placed on the Facebook page of the majoritarian candidate, but were deleted afterwards. The PEC chair declared that she was not attending the meeting, but was there on a business for a couple of minutes. Rusudan Khobiashvili was also present at the meeting of Anton Obolashvili with the public school directors in Adigeni. But Khobiashvili denied it as well. “I was not there for the official meeting. I just went there to see my relative and left soon.” – Chair of the Varkhani PEC said.⁷³

DMANISI

On 5 October, Gogi Meshveliani, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” met with the public school teachers in Bolnisi on the occasion of Teachers’ Day.⁷⁴ According to the PMMG long term observer, the mentioned meeting was held during the working hours, although the local resource centre explained that working hours of all teachers present at the meeting were already terminated.

⁷² <https://www.facebook.com/GDAntonObolashvili/photos/a.103047158166295/150063523464658/>

⁷³ <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=29667>

⁷⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/GDGogiMeshveliani/photos/pcb.4964863940203865/4964862406870685/>

ANNEX -

Personnel reshuffling and cases of dismissal from the work

INVOLVEMENT OF THE THIRD PRESIDENT OF GEORGIA IN THE PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

In the reporting period, numerous instances were observed when the 3rd President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili got actively involved in the pre-electoral campaign supporting the political union United National Movement.⁷⁵

Mikheil Saakashvili is a citizen of Ukraine. Pursuant to sub-paragraph f) of paragraph 4 of Article 45 of the Election Code of Georgia, a foreign citizen cannot conduct or participate in the pre-electoral campaign.

MARNEULI

On 20 September, Zaur Dargali, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in Gardabani and Marneuli, held a meeting with the local population in the village Saimerlo, in the Marneuli municipality. Initially, he wanted to meet with the people in the yard of the St. Nino Monastery, although Father Giorgi Chikovani and other clergymen did allow the meeting to take place. Representatives of the local self-government and 5 members of the Marneuli #22 election commission were present at the meeting.

AKHALTSIKHE

On 5 September, Naira Samsonidze, a member of the Akhaltsikhe DEC attended a meeting of Anton Obolashvili with electorate of the villages in the Akhaltsikhe municipality. Photos from these meeting were published on the Facebook page of the candidate and removed later. Naira Samsonidze is a member of the Akhaltsikhe DEC from the “Georgian Dream”⁷⁶ and pursuant to sub-paragraph a) of paragraph 4 of Article 45 of the Election Code of Georgia, a member of the election commission is not entitled to participate in the pre-electoral agitation.⁷⁷

ASPINDZA

On 14 September, news were published on the Facebook page of the “Georgian Dream” candidate – Anton Obolashvili, saying that he met with the electorate from several villages in the Aspindza municipality, including teachers of the public and nursery schools. Information about the meetings was published on the Facebook page of the candidate, which was shared through the Facebook page by Aspindza V. Maghradze Music School in the Aspindza municipality⁷⁸ which does not comply with the provisions of the Electoral Code. Pursuant to sub-paragraph j) of paragraph 4 of Article 45 of the Election Code of Georgia, a person can participate in the pre-electoral campaign and agitation during non-working hours or performing non-official duties only.

⁷⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/SaakashviliMikheil/videos/370897357372627>

⁷⁶ <https://tv9news.ge/ka/akhali-ambebi/archevnebi/article/21280-saolqo-komisiis-tseveri-ocnebis-saarchevno-agitaciashi-monatsileobs>

⁷⁷ Sub-paragraph a) of paragraph 4 of Article 45 of the Election Code of Georgia.

⁷⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/GDAntonObolashvili/photos/a.103047158166295/142489110888766/>

DMANISI

On 4 September, Gogi Meshveliani, majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”, visited the villages Mashavera, Didi Dmanisi and Vardisubani in the Dmanisi municipality, where he was accompanied by Deputy Mayor Arif Suleimanov at the meetings.⁷⁹ According to the information received from the municipality City Hall, Arif Suleimanov was on leave from 24 August through 11 September 2020.

NINOTSMINDA

In the beginning of October, changes were made to the personnel in the Ninotsminda municipality. Levon Vartania was appointed as the head of the Culture, Sport and Tourism Department, Armen Darbinyan – as the head of the Social Service of the City Hall and Edgar Stamboltsyan – as the head of the newly created Division for the Rights of Child. According to the PMMG observer, Levon Vartania and Armen Darbinyan had been working as coordinators in the “Georgian Dream” office, before they were appointed to the mentioned positions.

MTSKHETA

In the beginning of October, 6 public school directors were dismissed from work in Mtskheta. Only two directors out of the six said that they were dismissed on political grounds.

On 12 October, media wrote about dismissal of Dodo Tchotorlishvili from the post of public school Director in the village Ksani, Mtskheta municipality. D. Tchotorlishvili believes that she was sacked on political grounds, because her family member Beka Liluashvili is in the team of Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the United Opposition “Dzala Ertobashia”. She said that she was an unwanted director, as she did not agitate for the ruling party majoritarian candidate.⁸⁰ On 14 October, majoritarian candidate Kakha Okriashvili also confirmed that Beka Liluashvili was part of his team and spoke about political grounds of dismissal of Dodo Tchotorlishvili.⁸¹ Statement was also made by Ramin Chitishvili on alleged political grounds of his dismissal from the post of public school director in Tserovani, who said that he was pressurized into making a list of ruling party supporters, which was unacceptable for him as he supported an opposition candidate - Tsezar Chocheli.⁸²

The Ministry of Education denied any political grounds behind the dismissal of the directors and declared that the 6-year term of the working contracts signed with the public school directors elected by the respective Boards of Trustees gradually expire from September 2020. According to the Ministry, it is well known to all public school directors, as they are elected on a 6-year term.

The dismissed directors do not deny that their contract terms have expired, but they note that the contracts were not extended with the directors, who support opposition candidates and most probably, will not be extended in future. Another dismissed director – Nana Taveluri, a former director of the Tsilkani public School, publicly declared that she is a support of the “Georgian Dream” and expects that her contract will be extended.⁸³

TSALKA

TV channel “Mtavari” circulated a feature story showing a UNM activist – Samvel Sarkisyan, who spoke about dismissal of his relative Nona Kurgenyan from her job in the kindergarten on political grounds. According to the PMMG observer, on 24 September, Nona Kurgen-

⁷⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/GDGogiMeshveliani/photos/pcb.4866101246746802/4866056220084638/>

⁸⁰ <https://droa.ge/?p=86815>

⁸¹ <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=422075338779527>

⁸² <https://mtavari.tv/news/19051-unda-gameketebina-siebi-vin-iqo-mkhardamcheri-vin>

⁸³ <https://droa.ge/?p=86873&fbclid=IwAR1nBhCy8cwSyyBYaUx8x1r6uNrAcOYTW1O1Zhpm0hps-h7KpVzuvX1q5l4>

yan was called by Melsida Mezirova, Director of the municipality Kindergarten Centre, and asked to sign a notification, which said that from 1st of October she was dismissed as the kindergarten might not receive children under 3 years of age. On the next day, she filed a complaint to the Police declaring that she was sacked on political grounds. Based on her statement, the Police questioned Mesida Mezirova, who stated that Nona Kurgenyanyan was not dismissed on political grounds.

According to Malkaz Mgeladze, head of the UNM Tsalka office, after the incident, they found out that due to the pandemic the personnel of the public schools and kindergartens was undergoing some changes. Hence, he could not confirm whether Nona Kurgenyanyan was dismissed on political grounds.

The local government denied any political grounds behind the dismissal of Nona Kurgenyanyan and noted that she received a salary for September. They also explained that from 1 October, due to the pandemic, 6 staff members (teachers and nurses) from kindergartens in three villages of the Tsalka municipality, including Nona Kuragyan, were given an unpaid leave.

NINOTSMINDA

In August 2020, personnel reshuffling took place in Ninotsminda municipality. Persons at managerial positions in different services of the Ninotsminda municipality left the work, Mayor's representatives and specialists in the municipality villages – over 20 employees in total, were also subject to changes. Deputy Governor of the Samtskhe-Javakheti and Ninotsminda Mayor Anivard Mosoyan were involved in the reshuffling process.⁸⁴

According to the opposition, the reshuffling served to strengthen the position of the ruling party and to weaken those of Anzel Mkoyan, a majoritarian member of the Georgian Parliament, as the persons dismissed were believed to be associated with Mr. Mkoyan.⁸⁵

To clarify the issue, we approached to the interagency commission on 28 September and requested to inquire into the case. According to the response received, 7 persons were dismissed based on their personal request. These persons included pensioners, who revealed to the media that they were asked to write resignation letters. Resignation letters were written by the employees of the Ninotsminda City Hall:⁸⁶ Zhora Snkhchyan, Head of the Division for Culture, Sport, Education and Tourism; Aragekhetsik Sanosyan, Head of the Social Service; Laura Varzhapetyan, Head of the Division for Culture, Education and Monument Protection; Mels Mnatsakanyan, Head of the Utilities Division; Sayat Gulasaryan, specialist of the Supervision Service; Andarik Tevanyan, Head of the Agriculture Division; Manuk Karakhanyan, Chief Editor of the newspaper "Arshalui". Vacancies were announced for these positions.⁸⁷

Deadlines of the work contracts of 10 representatives of the Ninotsminda Mayor in the villages expired, however only 3 representatives fell under the changes in the villages: Sakhta, Khanchali and Gorelovka. The representatives of the Mayor in these villages were not offered new contracts. Consequently, other persons took their positions.⁸⁸ As for the specialists, work contracts were terminated with several of them.⁸⁹ According to media, 18 new

84 <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=28948>

85 <http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=28948>

86 http://nor.ge/?p=152120&fbclid=IwAR2Qnk-O v-58r1H3WnuxCk84NSiNBZlaMt-Ini6zX1LhRUyWpeD_4eLpRx4

87 <http://nor.ge/?p=153357>

88 In Sakhta – a work contract was terminated with Gapust Paloyan and Andarik Tsarukyan was appointed instead; in Khanchali – a work contract was terminated with Armenik Avakyan and Sedrak Shakhpazyan was appointed instead; in Gorelovka – a work contract was terminated with Levon Arakelyan and Mnatsakan Babajanyan was appointed instead.

89 <http://nor.ge/?p=152909&fbclid=IwAR2ZPg1ZFeT-VXOSVQkM2VR5Es3eGL1n0pbTs7sZVfsFpfSqQrCJEifK93I>

specialists were recruited⁹⁰ on work contracts extended for the next 6 months.⁹¹

KVARELI

On 7 September, Kvareli Mayor Rostom Sesiashvili dismissed Tamar Gigiashvili, a director of the Music School Union and a mother with many children from work. Tamar Gigiashvili's husband Tornike Molashvili is a supporter of UNM majoritarian candidate Giorgi Botkoveli. Gigiashvili believes that this fact and a banner of Giorgi Botkoveli posted on the wall of her house became the reason of her dismissal.⁹²

Tornike Molashvili regards this fact as a politically motivated persecution and says that in 2017 Rostom Sesiashvili dismissed him from a post of director of the Cultural Centre without any grounds.

Giorgi Botkoveli, a majoritarian candidate in Akhmeta, Telavi, Kvareli and Lagodekhi, publicised a decree on dismissal of Tamar Gigiashvili from work when meeting with the media on 12 September. He called it a politically motivated persecution of his supporters.

Politically motivated persecution was dismissed as unserious at the "Georgian Dream" headquarters. Regarding firing Tamar Gigiashvili from work, Kvareli Mayor Rostom Sesiashvili clarified that he was entitled to dismiss the director of a non-commercial legal entity and he did so.⁹³

LAGODEKHI

A new position of a specialist in special-territorial infrastructure and natural resources was created at the Lagodekhi municipality Assembly. Nutsa Papava was appointed to the new position. Before that, she was Mayor's trustee in the administrative unit of the town, where she completed her contract term. On 1 September, her position was taken over by Vano Managadze, who was a head of the Supervision Division before. The latter position went to Valeri Khutsishvili, serving as a specialist in the same division. According to the PMMG long term observer, Nutsa Papava is a distinguished activist of the "Georgian Dream" and the new position was created specially for her, after her work contract for Mayor's trustee expired.

90 4 persons - in Khanchali; 1 – in Gorelovka; 4 – in Gondurini; 1 – in Eshtini; 2 – in Gandzini; 3 – in Poka; 3 – in the town Ninotsminda.

91 <http://nor.ge/?p=152909&fbclid=IwAR2ZPg1ZFeT-VXOSVQkM2VR5Es3eGL1n0pbTs7sZVfsFpfSqQrCJEifK93I>

92 https://heretifm.com/?p=136959&fbclid=IwAR3Zqdw0cSMI4gUaBLcK6ZtZ8bpNLRXtGzWkBV_MJizvuNLJ99I13MsuMvQ

93 <https://heretifm.com/?p=136959>

ANNEX -

Interference with the pre-election campaign

KASPI

On 11 October 2020, there was an incident of verbal confrontation in the village Khovle, Kaspi municipality, during the meeting of Nugzar Noniashvili, UNM mayoral candidate in Kaspi and Badri Basishvili, majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia” in Gori and Kaspi, with the electorate. According to Nugzar Noniashvili, UNM mayoral candidate in Kaspi, the incident took place between a UNM representative, Marina Kurashvili, and Bacho Khutsishvili, representative of the Mayor of Kaspi. Before the confrontation happened, they held a telephone conversation, during which Bachana Khutsishvili verbally abused Marina Kurashvili. As Bacho Kurashvili explained, there are witnesses, who saw Marina Kurashvili, together with two young individuals, tearing down electoral posters of Giorgi Khojevanishvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”. At the afore mentioned meeting, Marina Kurashvili demanded from Bacho Khutsishvili to produce a proof to justify his accusations, to which Bacho Khutsishvili responded that there were witnesses, who saw her in the act.

According to Noniashvili, the presence of Khutsishvili at the opposition meeting implied psychological pressure over the local population, as he watched all who came to the meeting. Noniashvili also noted that the process was observed from a nearby car.

According to Bacho Khutsishvili, he was not there to disrupt the meeting, he just drove his car on the road, where the meeting was taking place, because the school road was being rehabilitated and there was no other way to drive through.

SAGAREJO

On 29 September, there was an incident of interference with the meeting of Ekaterine Kvlividze, a majoritarian candidate of “Lelo” with the electorate in the village Sabatlo, Sagarejo municipality; her activists were also obstructed when they were pasting up electoral posters. “Lelo” majoritarian candidate told the PMMG long term observer that the disruption of her meeting was organized by the brother of the Sabatlo village trustee and his friend. According to her, later on they found out that there was a misunderstanding: the local population, who were ethnic Armenians, thought they came from the UNM party and protested against their arrival in the village Sabatlo, due to the public statement made by the third President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili regarding the Nagorno Karabach conflict.

AKHALTSIKHE

On 20 October, Goderdzi Kublashvili, a majoritarian candidate of “Free Georgia” in Akhaltsikhe district, held a press briefing at the Akhaltsikhe Democracy Involvement Centre, where he stated that on 25 September, the “Georgian Dream” supporter abused him verbally when he was meeting with the local population in the village Bolajuri. He lodged a complaint with the Police on the fact. According to Kublashvili, the Ministry of Internal affairs is still pending an inquiry into the incident. At the briefing, he also noted massive tearing down

of his electoral posters, which obstructs his pre-electoral campaign.⁹⁴

BOLNISI

On 14 October, an election office of Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia” was broken into late at night in Bolnisi. Offenders took computers, which contained information on the pre-electoral campaigns of the party.⁹⁵

According to Lali Tsikhelashvili, head of Okriashvili’s electoral office in Bolnisi, the back door with a high-resolution camera and the window were broken, two laptops were taken away and office cabinets were broken. The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched investigation into the incident under Article 117 about theft.

MARNEULI

In the reporting period, Giorgi Jamdeliani, Bishop of Marneuli and Hujabi preached against Zaur Dargali, Marneuli Mayor and “Georgian Dream” candidate,⁹⁶ and later, organized a rally in the centre of Marneuli.⁹⁷

The Bishop preached against the Marneuli Mayor in the church and demanded from him to remove the monument of Nariman Narimanov. The Bishop declared that the Mayor and the administration repaired the monument instead of removing it from the centre of Marneuli. According to Giorgi Jamdeliani, Zaur Dargali repaired the monument of Nariman Narimanov and by doing so, he violated the law.⁹⁸ The Bishop addressed Azerbaijani co-citizens asking not to support Zaur Dargali. According to him, all those directly or indirectly involved in electing Zaur Dargali in the legislative body had a stake in the crime, which as the Bishop said, Zaur Dargali had committed. The Bishop also denied an intention of instigating ethnic strife between Georgians and ethnic Azerbaijanis.

On 16 July, the leader of the Marneuli and Hujabi church held a rally nearby the Marneuli Cultural House, where the monument of Nariman Narimanov is erected.⁹⁹ Along with the local population, clergymen and representatives of the Georgian March participated in the action.¹⁰⁰ There were also people from Tbilisi among the participants, including Primakov Foundation representative Dimitri Lortkipanidze and Chair of the Georgian Idea – Levan Chichua.¹⁰¹ Speakers at the rally included Giorgi Jamdeliani and Erekle Saghlani, a member of the Alliance of Patriots of Georgia.¹⁰² Participants of the action counted 200 people. The participants’ principal demands was to remove the Narimanov monument and erect instead a monument to Borchali – an ethnic Azerbaijani soldier who fought side-by-side with King Erekle II. Police was there at the monument of Nariman Narimanov to ensure security during the rally.

The Bishop and the speakers at the rally protested against the Mayor of Marneuli and the restoration of the Monument of Nariman Narimanov and demanded to remove the monument. According to the Bishop and the speakers at the rally, Nariman Narimanov is the symbol of the Soviet times, as he facilitated establishment of the Soviet rule in Georgia.¹⁰³

94 http://sknews.ge/index.php?newsid=29809&fbclid=IwAR34weMp7DdzrbiZltmdcOq6mbByzQe0C4vR-AFFZkqe8BDu1eXxo-HH_DA

95 <https://rustavi2.ge/ka/news/178696>

96 <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=external&v=248311686396226>

97 https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=969902230125811&ref=watch_permalink

98 <https://24news.ge/read/id/33758>

99 https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=969902230125811&ref=watch_permalink

100 https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/609_767-marneulshi-nariman-narimanovis-zeglis-agebis-motxovnit-akcia-gaimarta/

101 <https://netgazeti.ge/news/468188/>

102 https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=969902230125811&ref=watch_permalink

103 https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=969902230125811&ref=watch_permalink

On 30 May, the State Security Service (SSS) launched inquiry under the Article on racial discrimination. According to the SSS, there are groups of persons and citizens in Georgia, who are involved in instigation of ethnic strife between Georgians and ethnic Azerbaijanis in Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti.¹⁰⁴ Activists and ordinary citizens were summoned for inquiry under the ongoing investigation. According to the Marneuli and Hujabi Bishop, he was questioned also at the SSS.

Tensions continue around the monument.¹⁰⁵

MARNEULI

On 22 August, the “Georgian Dream” held a presentation of its majoritarian candidate in Marneuli and Gardabani - Marneuli Mayor Zaur Dargali in the park of Marneuli. Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia, Party Secretary General Kakha Kaladze, Speaker of the Parliament Archil Talakvadze participated in the event. During the presentation, a group of people protested saying that Zaur Dargali violated the law when he repaired the monument of Nariman Narimanov and therefore, he should not be elected in the Parliament. The protesters held posters, which read, “Dargali is an offender and should not be elected in the Parliament”. They demanded a meeting with the Prime Minister. Their demand was not met and the participants of the action expressed their protests by sounding their car horns.

AKHMETA

On 27 August, Shakro Terterashvili, a representative of the UNM in Akhmeta municipality told the PMMG long term observer that he was being followed by the law-enforcement authorities to control his whereabouts, which obstructed him in his pre-electoral campaign.

AKHALTSIKHE

On 14 September, at 2 a.m., David Baliashvili, chairman of the Akhlatsikhe regional office of the UNM and Gela Demetradze, an active member of the election headquarters were quarantined. After PCR testing, they did not test positive on coronavirus. According to them, despite the fact that they met all requirements of self-isolation, they were transferred to the quarantine area without any lawful grounds. As for other 176 persons from the same burial event, attended by the UNM members, they were advised to self-isolate.¹⁰⁶ The Party qualified the fact as selected quarantine and declared that they were obstructed from campaign on purpose.¹⁰⁷

SAMGORI

On 18 September, at 2 a.m., the election headquarters of Levan Khabeishvili, a UNM nominated majoritarian candidate in Samgori, situated in the Africa settlement, was raided. The windows of the building were broken and Levan Khabeishvili's banners damaged. The police started investigation of the fact.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ <https://netgazeti.ge/news/456898/>

¹⁰⁵ On 19 May 2020, Zaur Dargali posted on his facebook web-page news about repairing the monument of Nariman Narimanov. On 24 May, Bishop Giorgi Jandaliani posted a video, where he accuses the Mayor and demands from him an apology to the population. According to the Bishop, Nariman Narimanov was an enemy of the people and his monument had to be removed immediately. Ethnic Azerbaijani activists started to oppose and demanded to leave the monument in place, while Georgian activists demand its removal, which causes aggression between the ethnic groups.

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/TvMtavari/videos/792834701551926>

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/TvMtavari/posts/416401159730000>

¹⁰⁸ <https://mtavari.tv/news/16211-gvian-ghamit-samgorshi-levan-khabeishvilis>

ANNEX -

Incidents of threats and pressure

ISANI

On 17 October, Khatia Dekanoidze, a UNM majoritarian candidate in Isani, held a press briefing,¹⁰⁹ during which she stated that her office was broken in to install a listening device. According to her, the power was cut intentionally before the incident. Khatia Dekanoidze blamed the Government in illegal entry into her office and attempted installation of the listening device and called on the Ministry of Internal Affairs to fully and timely investigate the matter. Investigation was launched on the fact under Article 99-177 about attempted theft.

BOLNISI

On 19 October, the TV channel “Mtavari” circulated news that the RMG Gold was allegedly collecting personal data of its personnel under the threat of dismissal from work to force them vote for the “Georgian Dream”. According to Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition – Dzala Ertobashia”, the company owners, who are mostly Russian citizens, made significant financial contributions to the ruling party in the pre-election period, which violates the Election Code as the involvement of the foreign citizens in the electoral campaigns is inadmissible.¹¹⁰

NINOTSMINDA

On 13 October, Ninotsminda Mayor Anivald Mosoyan met with the staff of the #2 kindergarten. He announced that the kindergartens will open shortly and reminded the staff not to forget in the elections who paid them salary. The PMMG long term observer was informed about this message of threat-containing warning from three different sources, who were present at the meeting. The PMMG is not revealing the identity of these sources to guard their interest. Similar meetings were held at #1, #2 and #3 public schools in Ninotsminda. To verify the information, the PMMG long term observer applied to the ruling party Ninotsminda office, where he was told that it was not a campaign but a working meeting with the teachers to discuss problems and needs. The PMMG observer also found out that Mayor Anivard Mosoyan was on leave at that time.

GARDABANI

On 10 October, Giorgi Kakhiani, a member of the “Georgian Dream”, stated that Rashid Musaev, a “Lelo” activist, verbally abused Savalan Mirzoev, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” and threatened to deprive of his life. According to Kakhiani, the reason behind the threats was the political belonging of Mirzoev.¹¹¹

109 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/624250-xatia-dekanoize-ukanonod-sheagcies-chvens-shtabshi-sus-i-aporaturis-dasaqeneblad-shevida>

110 <https://www.facebook.com/kakhaberokriashvili/videos/893415547731315>

111 <https://on.ge/story/66147-%E1%83%9A%E1%83%94%E1%83%9A%E1%83%9D%E1%83%A1-%E1%83%90%E1%83%A5%E1%83%A2%E1%83%98%E1%83%95%E1%83%98%E1%83%A1%E1%83%A2%E1%83%98-%E1%83%A9%E1%83%95%E1%83%94%E1%83%9C%E1%83%A1-%E1%83%93%E1%83%94%E1%83%9E%E1%83%A3%E1%83%A2%E1%83%90%E1%83%A2%E1%83%A1-%E1%83%A1%E1%83%98%E1%83%AA%E1%83%9D%E1%83%AA%E1%83%AE%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98%E1%83%A1-%E1%83%9B%E1%83%9D%E1%83%A1%E1%83%9E%E1%83%9D%E1%83%91%E1%83%98%E1%83%97-%E1%83%93%E1%83%90%E1%83%94%E1%83%9B%E1%83%A3%E1%83%A5%E1%83%A0%E1%83%90->

Lana Galdava, a majoritarian candidate of “Lelo”, spoke to the contrary saying that it was their activist, who was victim of the violence, and they intended to take the matter to the Police. However, according to Galdava, there was a leak of information and the “Georgian Dream” was first to hold a press conference.

According to the information collected by the PMMG long term observer, Rashid Suleimanov (a “Lelo” activist residing in the village Birliki), being under the influence of alcohol, abused verbally Savalan Mirzon in Facebook live and threatened to kill him. Savalan Mirzoev notified the Police on the fact. On 11 October, “Lelo” activist Rashad Musaev was interviewed at the Gardabani Police station. Investigation was launched into the incident under Article 151 of the Criminal Code about threat.

BOLNISI

On 19 October, Mamed Shamirov, a supporter of the “Georgian Dream” in the village Javshani, Bolnisi municipality, declared that Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition” asked to support him, but threatened with detention, when he was refused. Shamirov notified the Police on the fact. According to Shamirov, he was driving in his own car in the village Bolajuri, when Okriashvili, coming from a meeting with the electorate and accompanied with a convoy of cars, blocked his way. Okriashvili asked him, why he did not gather people for the meeting. Shamirov responded that he was not his supporter, to which Okriashvili replied with a threat of incarcerating him if he did not back him. Investigation was launched into the incident under following Articles of the Criminal Code: Article 151 about threat, Article 87 about damage caused to another person’s property and Article 236 about unlawful purchase/possession of a firearm.¹¹²

TELAVI

On 12 September, Giorgi Botkoveli, a majoritarian candidate of the UNM, released a statement about a pressure used against his supporters.¹¹³ According to Giorgi Botkoveli, his supporter Mamuka Tcharbadze, who owns Ltd “Limbo” in Telavi, received a notification from the Revenue Service, requesting documents to make an audit, just after the Ltd “Limbo” placed a billboard of the candidate - Giorgi Botkoveli, on the building of its trade centre.

NINOTSMINDA-AKHALKALAKI

In the reporting period, Enzel Mkoyan, majoritarian MP of the “Georgian Dream” in the Ninotsminda-Akhalkalki district, declared that he is a victim to criminals controlled from Russia, who extort money from him and pressurize him to leave the politics.¹¹⁴

On 10 August, Enzel Mkoyan told to the radio “Nori” that his family and himself are being threatened.¹¹⁵ According to Mkoyan, he is threatened with murder unless he pays 5 million USD. When commenting to the radio “Nori” the member of the Parliament said that he got two calls from Russian numbers in WhatsApp and Messenger during which callers spoke in Russian with Caucasian accent.¹¹⁶ According to the majoritarian member of the parliament, he was told to leave the politics and give up participation in the October Parliamentary elections, or else, he said he was threatened with losing something most precious, he was also threatened with a murder if he did not pay. According to Mkoyan, his family was under stress

%E1%83%99%E1%83%90%E1%83%AE%E1%83%98%E1%83%90%E1%83%9C%E1%83%98?fbclid=IwAR0ftzz_V3tCD9pQKtOG3e9jcByrvYwtky4xVSKcZiiHuiEFUxMiMzfZYVM

112 <https://www.facebook.com/GDGogiMeshveliani/videos/691538058160715>

113 <https://www.facebook.com/giorgibotkoveli555/videos/346026130089199>

114 <http://jnews.ge/?p=55749>

115 http://nor.ge/?p=151501&fbclid=IwAR1JxDP_7Spr6Yzejq-rLaRGNEXT7A_G9Wc32H-JjG1GQolcMUM7D-JxCJs

116 According to the majoritarian candidate, the first call was made on 20 July via Messenger, and the other – on 24 July via WhatsApp.

after these threats. He told the media that he had approach the Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia and was questioned on the matter.

On 21 August, there was an attempt to explode Mardun Mkoyan's car, a brother of Enzel Mkoyan. Enzel Mkoyan linked the fact with threats he had received and stated that it was meant for him, as someone wanted to kill him.¹¹⁷ According to the MP, his brother's car was parked during explosion and that the explosive devise was planted 2 meters away by the tree.¹¹⁸ The Ministry of Internal Affairs started investigation under the Part 1 of Article 229 of the Criminal Code.¹¹⁹

MTSKHETA

According to the information in media, on 17 September, Giorgi Khumarashvili, a driver of Tamaz Metchiauri, Mayor of Tianeti and a majoritarian candidate of the "Tamaz Metchiauri – for United Georgia" in Mtskheta-Mtianeti, attempted a suicide. Giorgi Khumarashvili was hospitalized and put to mechanical ventilation.¹²⁰

Later, Giorgi Khumarashvili said that Zurab Bekauri, a trustee in one of the villages of the Mtskheta municipality, applied a psychological pressure against him and requested to collect information about Tamaz Metchiauri and hand it over to him. The pressure continued over a year.¹²¹ In addition, Khumarashvili said that Zurab Bekauri was working for the majoritarian candidate of the "Georgian Dream". Khumarashvili explained that on 17 September Zurab Bekauri came to his house drunk and assaulted him physically and verbally before his mother and threatened. He could not bear this and decided to kill himself.¹²² Zurab Bekauri denied using pressure against Giorgi Khumarashvili, although he confirmed the fact of physical confrontation with him on 17 September.¹²³

MTSKHETA

On 13 October, Eka Beselia, a majoritarian candidate of a party "For Justice" in Mtskheta, held a press briefing about pressure from the local government over her supporters.¹²⁴ According to her, they contact the voters through different means of communication and threaten to deprive them of social assistance, to dismiss them or their relatives from work, if they publicly support the opposition parties.

AKHALTSIKHE

On 16 October, Gela Kvaratskhelia, a majoritarian candidate of "David Tchitchinadze Tribune" in Akhlatsikhe-Adigeni-Aspindza-Borjomi district, held a special press briefing and talked about intimidation of and pressure used on the voters. According to him, his office has difficulties in recruiting observers as they are threatened with deprivation of the social assistance and dismissal from work.¹²⁵

117 <https://tv9news.ge/ka/akhali-ambebi/samarthali/article/20962--naghmi-romelic-distanciurad-amoqmedda-khesthan-akhlos-mitsaze-ido-enzel-mkoiani>

118 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/614690-enzel-mkoiani-zmis-mankanastan-momxdar-apetkebas-mis-mimart-mukaras-ukavshirebs>

119 Which implies an explosion to cause severe injuries, significant damage of property or other kinds of serious effects.

120 https://www.facebook.com/tvpirveli/videos/77_0630516838255/

121 <https://web.facebook.com/TVFormula/videos/2515086032114686>

122 https://web.facebook.com/tvpirveli/videos/3332_58744666820

123 https://web.facebook.com/tvpirveli/videos/3332_58744666820

124 https://www.facebook.com/beseliaeka/posts/16_96420973854801

125 https://droa.ge/?p=87202&fbclid=IwAR3o49yW1IS8dUvhp1CsB8_AHYdDxS1pOAK-q1BY_9onhCGsTcOCzXZ3QsU

DMANISI

In the beginning of September, the PMMG long term observer was informed by a supporter of the “European Georgia” that the voters of the village Kizilajlo, Dmanisi municipality, were threatened by Juliaz Garaeva, spouse of Azer Aliev, who is a member of the Dmanisi Assembly from the “Georgian Dream” party, with the deprivation of social assistance. The PMMG does not reveal the personal data of the voters for the safety reasons.

AKHALKALAKI

On 7 October, Melik Raisyan, a majoritarian candidate of the UNM in the Akhalkalaki municipality, said that the ruling party was using pressure over their representatives in the PECs, agitators and personnel.¹²⁶ According to him, following the statement of the former President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili in the social media about the Nagorno Karabach conflict, saying that the Nagorno Karabach was the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan and nothing could change it, which caused a protest in the local population of Ninotsminda municipality, rumours started to spread in the population that the UNM office was closing down. “Our representatives and the Commission members are pressurized. They are telling everyone that our office is closing down and that we have to work on behalf of the “Georgian Dream”, – Takukhi Vardanyan, head of the UNM Office said.¹²⁷

AKHALKALAKI

On 16 October, Arsen Karapetyan, a majoritarian candidate of “European Georgia” in Akhalkalaki, spoke about the pressure on his supporters.¹²⁸ According to him, the “Georgian Dream” agitators are pressurizing agitators of the “European Georgia” in all villages. They spread disinformation as if the “European Georgia” is linked to Mikheil Saakashvili and in this way they are trying to win them over their side. On his part, Arsen Karapetyan noted the statement made on 1 October by David Bakradze, member of the “European Georgia”, who announced that the party was taking a commitment not to form a coalition with the “Georgian Dream” and not to support Mikheil Saakashvili on the post of Prime Minister.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ <http://nor.ge/?p=155920>

¹²⁷ <http://nor.ge/?p=155920>

¹²⁸ <http://jnews.ge/?p=60014>

¹²⁹ <http://nor.ge/?p=155469&fbclid=IwAR137qD3wnYDMRUUp8b-GWTF43EJoNPbAyCPuBMT7xbhRPsJ845pilt3q9NY>

ANNEX -

Incidents of physical violence

GARDABANI

According to the TV channels “Mtavari” and “Formula”, on 12 October, an activist of the “Georgian Dream” assaulted and beat Oktai Skandarov, a member of the “European Georgia”, who was pasting up election posters in the village Karajalari, Gardabani municipality. After being at the Police station, he said that he was drunk at that time and could not tell who attacked; he excluded that the attacker was the supporter of the “Georgian Dream”, as he himself also supported the same party.

Sergi Kapanadze, head of the electoral office of the “European Georgia” commented on the fact. He stressed that Oktai Skandarov was telling totally different story before he went into the Police station for questioning, namely, that he was attacked by a supporter of the “Georgian Dream”. After several hours of questioning, he denied being attacked and declared that he was a supporter of the “Georgian Dream”.¹³⁰

Gabil Gasanov, head of the Gardabani electoral office of the “European Georgia”, said that Oktai Skandarov changed his statement under the pressure of the State Security Service.

According to the PMMG long term observer, Oktai Skandarov is indeed an activist of the “European Georgia”, but the confrontation did not occur on political grounds. On 12 October, being under the influence of alcohol, he confronted verbally one of the locals and then attacked him. As a result, he received minor injuries on his face and took the matter to the Police. After being questioned, he declared that he did not know who had attacked him. He also declared that he was a supporter of the “Georgian Dream”.

SAMGORI

On 11 October, Levan Kartvelishvili, a member of the electoral office of Levan Khabeishvili, a UNM majoritarian candidate in Samgori, was attacked and beaten. According to him, he was wearing a UNM campaign T-shirt, which irritated the attackers, who started to abuse him verbally and then attacked him.¹³¹ Investigation was launched into the incident under Article 126 of the Criminal Code about violence.

GORI

On 16 October, confrontation took place between the representatives of the “Georgian Dream” and the “European Georgia” in the villages Mejvriskhevi and Akhalubani, Gori municipality. The parties blamed each other for the incident.¹³²

A member of the “European Georgia”, Eter Jalaghania, said a poster of Giorgi Khojevanishvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” was pasted over the “European Georgia” poster. As she explained, they started to clear away the posters, which were pasted

¹³⁰ <https://droa.ge/?p=86642&fbclid=IwAR0IUUA0sEIO6SBYcgWiaCtNna0an9560bl0K4NRDUpwZr1maSerZfa6iDzQ>

¹³¹ <https://mtavari.tv/news/18817-angarishscoreba-politikuri-motivit-levan>

¹³² <https://droa.ge/?p=87238&fbclid=IwAR3R3h5ZY02jw-UhOr8bmAqpgRBeQPd0Y0Awth3aF7vwddJcYeCu9Xns0>

over the majoritarian candidate of the “European Georgia” - Levan Tarkhnishvili. When the representatives of the “European Georgia” were screening the process, a drunken young individual approached them and physically attacked Eter Jalaghania. According to Levan Tarkhnishvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “European Georgia”, one of the activists of the “Georgian Dream” attacked Eter Jalaghania physically and broke her glasses, which developed into the physical confrontation between the sides.

According to Mikheil Goginashvili, an Executive Secretary of the regional office of the “Georgian Dream”, the incident took place when the representatives of the “European Georgia” were tearing down the posters of the majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream”. Some locals expressed disapproval on the happening. According to the “Georgian Dream” headquarters, following the incident, a representative of the “European Georgia” in the village Akhalubani, Gori municipality, threatened the locals with a firearm. The “Georgian Dream” representatives called on the Police to timely investigate into the matter. The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched the investigation under Article 126 of the Criminal Code about violence.

DMANISI

On 21 October, physical confrontation took place between the activists in the Dmanisi office of the “Georgian Dream”. According to the TV channel “Mtavari Arkhi”, activists of the “Georgian Dream” confronted each other with firearms. One of the participants of the incident is a criminal dignitary Zurab Okmelashvili.¹³³ According to “Newpost”, Zurab Okmelashvili is close to the brother of Gogi Meshveliani, a majoritarian candidate of the ruling party in Dmanisi, and has been tasked to supervise situation in the criminal world in the run up to the elections.¹³⁴ According to the same source, members of the Dmanisi office – Merab Khorguani and Lasha Vibliani got wounded in the feet and David Chkhetiani – in the waist. Investigation was launched into the incident under Article 117 of the Criminal Code about intentional damage caused to health and under Article 236 about unlawful purchase-possession of a firearm.¹³⁵

Gogi Meshveliani, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in Dmanisi called the case a provocation and blamed the UNM and Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the United Opposition in the district, in the incident. “This is a signature of the UNM and my opponent, which is very easy to detect,” – Meshveliani said. According to him, attackers came to the “Georgian Dream” office looking for the head of the district headquarters and intending to harm him, which eventually lead to the confrontation.¹³⁶

On 22 October, Dimitri Shashkin, a member of the UNM, commented on the fact. According to Shashkin, confrontation between the participants of the incident was caused by the money and fuel talons sent from the “Georgian Dream” head office, which they could not share among themselves. “They could not share money. Witnesses confirmed that before shooting started, loud arguments were heard from the “Georgian Dream” office about the money and fuel talons, which then continued into shootings,” - Dimitri Shashkin said.¹³⁷

Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the United Opposition also commented on the incident in the Dmanisi district. According to him, it was precisely Zurab Okmelashvili,

133 <https://mtavari.tv/news/19920-srola-garcheva-dmanisis-otsnebis-saarchevno?fbclid=IwAR1FAHLD3Hwu3s9384JV2IMsOyXRF3lvWq7bPxuGPn3ShmdokbPbSvI8U>

134 <https://www.newposts.ge/?newsid=243587>

135 https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/624_921-dmanisshi-kartuli-ocnebis-opisze-tavdasxma-moxda-arsebuli-informaciiit-arian-dachrilebi

136 https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/6249_31-gogi-meshveliani-dmanisis-incidentze-dachrilia-rogorc-chveni-aktivis-cevri-aseve-tavdamsxmelebi-es-nacionaluri-mozraobis-da-chemi-oponentis-xelceraa/

137 https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/6250_08-dimitri-shashkinis-gancxadebit-dmanisshi-ertmanets-cecxli-kartuli-ocnebis-cevrebma-gauxsnes-radgan-mat-shtabidan-gamogzavnili-puli-da-benzini-ver-gaiqvets/

who organized a group assault on the head of his electoral zone - Imeda Mamuladze on 15 September, in Dmanisi. As a result, Mamuladze's car was also damaged. As he also noted, Zurab Okmelashvili had not been charged so far, despite the existence of a video-recording proving the attack, which was duly handed over to the Police.¹³⁸

BOLNISI

On 19 October, Levan Mikeladze, a member of the head office of Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the United Opposition in Bolnisi, was followed by about 8 persons in two cars on the Bolnisi-Tbilisi highway. According to him, the mentioned persons firstly attempted to push him off the road and then fired six shots in his direction. Levan Mikeladze identified two attackers: Beka Tsakadze, a member of the Bolnisi Assembly from the "Georgia Dream", who is also a member of the electoral head office of Gogi Meshveliani, a majoritarian candidate of the "Georgia Dream" in Bolnisi, and Archil Mindiashvili, a member of the "Georgia Dream". According to "Mtavari Arkhi", a nephew of majoritarian candidate Gogi Meshveliani was presumably also among the attackers.¹³⁹ The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched investigation in the incident under Article on intentional damage caused to other person's property.

DMANISI

On 15 September, in Dmanisi municipality, Imeda Mamuladze, head of Kakha Okriashvili's electoral zone, was assaulted physically, which resulted in Mamuladze's serious health injury and damaging his car. According to Mamuladze, Paata Aslanishvili, member of Dmanisi DEC, and Zurab Okmelashvili, activist of the "Georgian Dream", were among the attackers. The incident is being investigated on the grounds of group violence and intentional damage of the property.¹⁴⁰

MARNEULI

On 30 September, Temur Shubitidze, electoral specialist of the "Georgian Dream", was attacked while driving in his car on the Marneuli-Tbilisi highway. Three unknown persons driving a car collided intentionally with Shubitidze's car, stopped him and assaulted physically in his car. Injured Shubitidze was hospitalized. He relates the incident to the elections and his political activity. The fact is being investigated.¹⁴¹ On 8 October, the Tbilisi City Court sentenced the four persons arrested for committing an attack on Temur Shubitidze to imprisonment as a preventive measure.

BOLNISI

On 27 September, in the Bolnisi municipality, a physical confrontation took place in the Tea House, situated in the village Nakhiduri, between the supporters of the "Georgian Dream" and the United National Movement. The UNM activists used physical violence against activist of the "Georgian Dream" - G. A. and agitator - I. A. The cause of the confrontation was presumably sticking the posters. On 4 October, the Prosecutor's office detained one person - A. I. on the ground of physical violence used against two persons during confrontation in Bolnisi over the election posters. He was charged on two episodes under the Part 1 of the Article 126 of the Criminal Code (violence resulting in physical pain committed against two persons).¹⁴²

138 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/6249> 88-kaxa-okriashvili-acxadebs-rom-ocnebis-aktivistma-zura-okmelashvilma-cecxlsasroli-iaragit-gushin-3-piri-dachra

139 https://mtavari.tv/news/19689-khelisupleba-oponenteb-tsetskhlis-ukhsnis?fbclid=IwAR1px6XEOHiJmN2roWEsM_bWqFFit9VLyWSxYpaylpT0azP70uxBHWCDJO8

140 <https://mtavari.tv/news/15957-kakha-okriashvili-mkhardamcherebeze>

141 <https://rustavi2.ge/ka/news/177168>

142 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/621803-bolnissi-saarchevno-plakatebis-gakvrastan-dakavshirebit>

MARNEULI

On 28 September, an incident occurred in the village Sadakhlo of Marneuli municipality. Ramin Abdulaev, one of the activists of the “European Georgia” was attacked by shooting from a sports gun while pasting up the election posters. The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched the investigation under Article 120 of the Criminal Code about causing intentionally minor damage to health.¹⁴³

MARNEULI

On 29 September, a physical confrontation took place between the supporters of the UNM and the “Georgian Dream”. The confrontation followed a verbal assault of Lasha Kveladze, UNM member of the Marneuli DEC against the “Georgian Dream” supporters that happened near the “Georgian Dream” regional office. Lasha Kveladze was on the location in his own car together with his father and accompanying person. The confrontation involved supporters of the UNM and representatives of the “Georgian Dream”, namely Amiran Giorgadze - Chairman of Marneuli municipality Assembly, Shermadin Botchoidze - lawyer at the Assembly, Lasha Chkhitunadze – representative of the Mayor’s office, Giga Jalaghonia – Director of the non-commercial legal entity “Auto Park”, Vazha Shubitidze – Head of the Service for Military Registration and Conscription. Amiran Giorgadze confronted also the crew of the TV channel “Mtavari Arkhi”. The “Georgian Dream” activists used physical violence against the crew members of “Mtavari Arkhi” and the GPB. According to “Mtavari Arkhi”, journalist Jeihun Muhamed Ali suffered head injury, the TV station’s camera and microphone have been also damaged. According to the GPB, the TV station’s camera was broken and the operator was beaten.

Giorgi Mumladze, a representative of the observation mission “2020” was also subject to physical violence, who accuses specifically Amiran Giorgadze, Giorgi Shubitidze and Shermadin Botchoidze in the incident. Lasha Kveladze, his father Givi Kveladze and their accompanying person were also seriously injured in the confrontation. Lasha Kveladze’s car was also damaged.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched investigation into the incident under Article 126 of the Criminal Code. As for the incident of physical violence against the “Mtavari Arkhi” journalist – Jeihun Muhamed Ali, the investigation was launched under Article 154 of the Criminal Code regarding the interference with the journalist’s professional activities.¹⁴⁴ On 3 October, following the operative-investigative activities, Marneuli regional office of the Kvemo Kartli Police Department under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, arrested two persons on the basis of a warrant issued by a judge, on violence charges.¹⁴⁵

momxdari-konfliktisas-ori-piris-mimart-zaladobis-paktze-dakavebuls-brali-caredgina/

143 <https://rustavi2.ge/ka/news/176989>

144 <https://mtavari.tv/news/17395-dzaladobis-zhur-nalisturi-sakmianobis>

145 <https://publika.ge/nakhidurshi-momkhidari-konfliktisas-ori-piris-dzaladobis-faqtze-dakavebuls-brali-warvudginet-prokuratura/>

ANNEX -

Damaging the campaign material and obstruction in their dissemination

ASPINDZA

Ramaz Beridze, head of the Aspindza office of the political union “Strategy Agmashenebeli” told to the PMMG observer that there is a little space assigned for the posters in Aspindza. Stands are erected only in three places, where other parties already pasted up their posters and there is virtually no place left for their posters.

AKHLATSIKHE

On 1 October, posters of the party “Strategy Agmashenebeli”, which were pasted on unauthorized places, were removed and the party was fined to pay 50 GEL. Party representative Koba Gorgodze spoke of selective justice and said that there were campaign material of the “Alliance of Patriots” pasted up just beside their posters, but they did not get fined. Mikheil Markidze, head of the Supervision Service of the Akhaltsikhe municipality City Hall, explained that they found a person on the spot pasting up the posters and therefore, he got fined.¹⁴⁶

ASPINDZA

According to the PMMG long term observer, the campaign material is damaged almost in all villages of the Aspindza municipality, however there is no evidence, who are involved in these incidents. In many cases, posters of the Georgian March are pasted over the campaign material displayed in the municipality.

TSALKA

A representative of the “European Georgia” head office told the PMMG observer that they are actively pasting up their posters, which are then torn down by unknown persons, which hampers their pre-electoral campaigning.

TETRITSKARO

On 19 October, the UNM head office noted that in Tetrtskaro unknown persons damaged electoral posters and banner of Kakha Okriashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition”.

AKHLATSIKHE

Zurab Chilingarashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “European Georgia”, told the PMMG observer that his posters are permanently damaged at the #17 electoral district, which is composed of four municipalities (Akhaltsikhe, Aspindza, Adigeni and Borjomi), while his office renews the posters. According to him, in some places of Akhaltsikhe the campaign material of the candi-

¹⁴⁶ http://toktv.ge/%d0%bd%d0%be%d0%b2%d0%be%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b8/%e1%83%a3%e1%83%99%e1%83%90%e1%83%9c%e1%83%9d%e1%83%9c%e1%83%9d-%e1%83%90%e1%83%93%e1%83%92%e1%83%98%e1%83%9a%e1%83%96%e1%83%94-%e1%83%9e%e1%83%9d%e1%83%a1%e1%83%a2%e1%83%94%e1%83%a0%e1%83%98%e1%83%a1/?fbclid=IwAR2BYHaYysCjy603BZTMj8rWoMpTiHDonH6XONC9Tn_deStmAB8Ux_0oYwQ

dates of the “Georgian Dream” and the UNM are untouched, whereas the posters of the “European Georgia” pasted just between those of the mentioned parties are damaged.¹⁴⁷

TBILISI

On August 29, an election banner of the Alliance of Patriots of Georgia placed on the Rose Revolution Square was damaged by the paint. The banner displays party leaders – David Tarkhan-Mouravi and Irma Inashvili.¹⁴⁸

TBILISI

On 20 September, an election banner of the “Strategy Agmashenebeli” was torn down.¹⁴⁹

LAGODEKHI

On 15 September, in Lagodekhi, posters of Giorgi Botkveli, a UNM majoritarian candidate, were pasted over the election posters of the “European Georgia”. The fact was noted by Gigi Ugulava on his Facebook page.¹⁵⁰ Later, Giorgi Botkveli also shared his statement on the matter via Facebook calling it a mistake of some persons and distanced himself from the fact.¹⁵¹

BORJOMI

During the reporting period, in Borjomi, the “Georgian Dream” placed its campaign material in violation of the rules established by the Borjomi municipality Assembly. Namely, the party put up the campaign material on the outdoor lighting poles violating the allowed height. According to the decree of the Borjomi municipality Assembly, after receiving a necessary permit from the Infrastructure, Spatial Development, Architecture and Construction Supervision Division of the Mayor’s Office, the banners are allowed to be put up on the outdoor lighting poles along the highway at no less than 3 meters above the ground.¹⁵²

TBILISI

In August 2020, the Tbilisi City Hall Inspection Service fined the political unions – “European Georgia”, “Strategy Agmashenebeli” – for pasting up pre-electoral posters, and the “Girchi” representative – for painting a stencil.¹⁵³ The fine was charged under the Article 150² of the Administrative Offences Code of Georgia,¹⁵⁴ which foresees a liability for the distortion of the appearance of the Tbilisi City Hall.¹⁵⁵ Representatives of the political parties pasted up election posters on the fences of the construction sites prior to the official launch of the pre-electoral campaign – 1 September, which was regarded as a violation by the municipal services.

According to the information shared by the “European Georgia”, in August 2020, pursuant of Article 150² of the Administrative Offences Code of Georgia, the Tbilisi City Hall Inspection Service draw up protocols on administrative offences against 23 representatives of the “Eu-

147 <https://tv9news.ge/ka/akhali-ambebi/archevnebi/article/21962-mkholod-chemi-plakatebia-chamokheuli-evropuli-saqarthvelos-kandidati>

148 <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/30809996.html>

149 https://mtavari.tv/news/16429-otsnebis-aktivistebma-isanshi-giorgi-vashadzis?fbclid=IwAR08vQo00UpZyypFftuYQxUcDpYhDtt0YLcqVm9B-UQfJesfbL_c2IZGDZc

150 <https://www.facebook.com/ugulavageorge/posts/3330992583661071>

151 <https://www.facebook.com/giorgi.botkveli/posts/3296178143752092>

152 <https://borjomi.tv/archevnebi/archevnebi-2020/article/11617-borjomshi-saarchevno-plakatebisthvis-adgilebi-ganisazghvra>

153 <https://mtavari.tv/news/14303-evropuli-sakartvelo-strategia-aghmashenebeli>

154 Article 150² refers to making various types of inscriptions, drawings or symbols on building façades, shop windows, fences, columns, trees or other plantings, roads for pedestrians and means of transport in the Tbilisi municipality without authorisation, also putting up posters, slogans, banners at places not allocated for this purpose, which foresees carrying a fine of 200 GEL and a fine of 1000 GEL for repeating same act.

155 <https://www.matsne.gov.ge/document/view/28216?publication=465#>

ropean Georgia” on the ground of pasting up the posters. The mentioned Article foresees a liability for the distortion of the appearance of the Tbilisi municipality, in other words for pasting up the posters in the municipality in places not assigned for this purpose. According to the party, protocols on administrative offences were also drawn up against the members of the Parliament – Khatuna Gogorishvili, Sergi Kapanadze, Irakli Abesadze and Gigi Ugulava, Secretary General of the party. The protocols were appealed at the Tbilisi City Hall, but were not satisfied. When drafting the present report, the party was planning to appeal the decision of the City Hall at the court.

In addition, it became known to us that the municipality Inspection Service drew up 17 protocols on administrative offences against the political union “European Georgia – Movement for Freedom” on the ground of pasting up the posters on the lighting poles in the regions (distortion of the appearance of the territory within the administrative boundaries of the municipality). The protocols were drawn up under the Article 150 of the Administrative Offences Code of Georgia in Gurjaani, Akhaltsikhe and Baghdati.¹⁵⁶

GURJAANI

On August 29, in Gurjaani, the patrol police officers did not allow Giorgi Ghviniashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “European Georgia”, to paste up election posters on the façade of the building of the company “Energy-Pro Georgia”.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Baghdati court did not satisfy the protocols drawn up by the Baghdati municipality Supervision Service. As for Gurjaani – the decision of the Gurjaani court is going to be appealed and in Akhaltsikhe, the activist charged with a fine did not appeal the protocol and paid the fine – 50 GEL.

¹⁵⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/GiorgiGviniashvili2/videos/231199744912513>

ANNEX -

Alleged vote buying

LAGODEKHI

On 3 October, late in the evening, Irakli Kadagishvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in Telavi, Akhmeta, Kvareli and Lagodekhi districts, met with local businesses, entrepreneurs and farmers in the open air at the restaurant “Kiramala”, within the pre-electoral campaign. After the meeting he invited them to meals. The information has been circulated by the radio “Hereti”.¹⁵⁸

Large-scale events and parties are banned in the pandemic, however, the majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” stayed in the closed space at the table with his guests for several hours.¹⁵⁹ Jondo Mdivnishvili, Mayor of Lagodekhi, his deputy Aleko Tchankvetadze and Guram Matcharashvili, a deputy of Lagodekhi were present at the event.

According to majoritarian candidate Irakli Kadagishvili, a meeting and a reception afterwards were party of the pre-electoral campaign. As he explained, it was the businessmen in Lagodekhi, who proposed to organize a reception after the meeting, which he agreed with and attended all receptions after the pre-electoral campaign meetings in the capacity of a guest.¹⁶⁰ Persons attending the reception denied paying the expenses of the reception. Businessman Jumber Goletiani said that he attended the meeting, but did not stay for the reception. He also said that he was not involved in the organization and did not pay anything. Another local entrepreneur Gocha Karalashvili, who was at both the meeting and the reception, said that he did not pay the reception expenses. Mayor of Lagodekhi, attending the meeting, also denied knowing anything about the expenses.

LAGODEKHI

On 5 October, media holding “Kvira” published an article telling about the distribution of second-hand clothes to the population at the UNM head office in the village Leliani, Lagodekhi municipality.¹⁶¹ A source of this information was presumably Inga Loladze, a local civic activist and a teacher, who told the PMMG observer that a big quantities of second-hand clothes were distributed free of charge to the UNM supporters at Chaladze’s house and called this act a vote buying. She justified her opinion by the fact that posters and banners of Giorgi Botkovieli, a UNM majoritarian candidate, were displayed in the yard and on the outer fence of Chaladze’s house, where voters received the second-hand clothes. Loladze underlined that there was a small room in the yard, which she thought was the party electoral head office.

¹⁵⁸ <https://heretifm.com/?p=140096>

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/%E1%83%98%E1%83%A0%E1%83%90%E1%83%99%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98-%E1%83%A5%E1%83%90%E1%83%93%E1%83%90%E1%83%92%E1%83%98%E1%83%A8%E1%83%95%E1%83%98%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98-%E1%83%9A%E1%83%90%E1%83%92%E1%83%9D%E1%83%93%E1%83%94%E1%83%AE%E1%83%A8%E1%83%98-%E1%83%92%E1%83%90%E1%83%9B%E1%83%90%E1%83%A0%E1%83%97%E1%83%A3%E1%83%9A-%E1%83%AC%E1%83%98%E1%83%9C%E1%83%90%E1%83%A1%E1%83%90%E1%83%90%E1%83%A0%E1%83%A9%E1%83%94%E1%83%95%E1%83%9C%E1%83%9D-%E1%83%A8%E1%83%94%E1%83%AE%E1%83%95%E1%83%94%E1%83%93%E1%83%A0%E1%83%90%E1%83%96%E1%83%94/30874321.html>

¹⁶⁰ <https://heretifm.com/?p=140096>

¹⁶¹ http://kvira.ge/599933?fbclid=IwAR1zzlR_xmUeHaA0LDMeoGC2xFX5bLaa8TXFPNfcYUnhv7ACygB6CSGEVJM

When speaking with the PMMG observer, Nugzar Chaladze denied distribution of the second-hand clothes free of charge and showed a so called debt registry booklet as a proof. He also denied that the clothes are sent from Ukraine and funded by the 3rd Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili. Spouses Nugzar and Tamar Chaladze are open about their support and positive disposition towards the UNM. There are posters and banners of a UNM majoritarian candidate Giorgi Botkoveli displayed in the yard of their house. There is also a small room in the yard, reconstructed as an office. According to Nugzar Chaladze, UNM activists gather there periodically to meet voters individually.

When speaking with the PMMG observer, Guram Kakalashvili, head of the UNM Lagodekhi head office, called the blame about vote buying ridiculous and refrained from making any more comments. The PMMG observer found out that the Chaladze family runs the business of second-hand clothes for many years. Apart from the village Leliani, they sell second-hand clothes in other villages of Lagodekhi municipality, including at the Bodbiskhevi and Apeni markets. The local population confirms the fact and also note that they sell good quality clothes at a very low price.

AKHALTSIKHE

According to the PMMG observer, on 11 October, in Akhaltsikhe, a staff member of the Akhaltsikhe City Hall took food products to the elderly people in one of the living blocks at Aspidza Street. The City Hall staff member is a resident of the same living block. He laid the table in the yard for 8 persons and told those present that the products were sent by Anton Obolashvili, a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” and Gia Kopadze, current deputy.

The PMMG observer also talked to the City Hall staff member, who denied the fact: “they paid their respect to the elderly people; they are very close and know each other. They asked for it and he fulfilled their wish. A vote buying?! Was it much?! Cheese, bread, come cucumbers and tomatoes?!”- he said. The PMMG observer tries to speak with Akhaltsikhe deputy Gia Kopadze: “Stop asking provoking questions, it is nonsense. May be it was Mera-bishvili, who did it,” – Kopadze answered over the phone and hang up. The PMMG observer got to know about this gathering from one of the persons sitting at that table, who did not want to reveal his identity and neither that of the City Hall staff member. According to that person, Obolashvili and Kopadze gave money to the City Hall staff member and asked to take some food to the elderly people. He also noted that on the following day the same staff member asked those present at the table the previous day to go to Obolashvili’s presentation ceremony, but, as he said, none of them went there.

NINOTSMINDA

On July 26, Enzel Mkoyan met with his supporters in the village Sakhta of the Ninotsminda municipality. The meeting proceeded in a celebratory mood with tables laid. According to the member of the Parliament, the event was organized by his supporters, who also undertook to host the guests.¹⁶²

When commenting with the media, Enzel Mkoyan declared that about 900 people was present at the meeting, including 200 persons from the village Sakhta and 700 from villages of Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda, around 15-20 persons from each village.¹⁶³

During the meeting, Enzel Mkoyan addressed his supporters and spoke about his deeds for the good of the region during his term in the Parliament. He tried to get an approval from his supporters whether to participate in the 2020 Parliamentary elections.

¹⁶² <http://jnews.ge/?p=54840>

¹⁶³ <http://jnews.ge/?p=54840>

Supporters of Enzel Mkoyan shared the video from the meeting in the social network as if the member of the parliament was unwilling to organize such a meeting and that he was invited by his supporters to the event as a way to show respect.¹⁶⁴

Despite this, the PMMG checked the information and found out that the meeting with the supporters in the village Sakhta was organized at the instruction of Enzel Mkoyan and with the financial help of his relatives.

GARDABANI

According to the TV Channel “Mtavari”, on 12 August, Gardabani 3rd public school teacher, Vagipa Rustamova, asked the parents in a social network group to support the “Georgian Dream” majoritarian candidate Zaur Dargali. According to the information shared by the TV channel, the teacher told the parents to take photos of the IDs of their family members, which was needed for the elections. Vagipa Rustamova is a relative of Zaur Dargali, who runs in the elections as a majoritarian candidate of the “Georgian Dream” in Gardabani-Marneuli district. When speaking to the media, the teacher explained she was unaware that such act was unlawful. According to the school director, he never gave such instructions to the teacher and that she was acting on her own will.¹⁶⁵

LAGODEKHI

Following the request from the representatives of the local self-government, in the period from 10 to 20 September, the population of the village Kabala in the Lagodekhi municipality, which is populated with ethnic Azerbaijanis, handed in copies of their banking accounts and IDs at the Kabala Social Centre to receive 300 GEL in compensation of a damage caused by the natural disaster. The local radio “Hereti” released the information about the fact and assessed it as the unlawful collection of voters’ personal data. According to the radio “Hereti”, part of the population included pensioners, who doubted that they would receive the monetary compensation. Some declared that the representatives of the Mayor’s office were cheating people as the registration of such category was over a month ago, and that the act of collecting the ID copies at the administrative body was nothing but an unlawful attempt of collecting the votes for the elections.¹⁶⁶ To verify the information, the PMMG observer contacted the representatives of the local self-government, who declared that they knew nothing about the mentioned and denied organizing collection of voters’ personal data.

¹⁶⁴ Enzel Mkoyan comes from the village Sakhta in the Ninotsminda municipality.

¹⁶⁵ <https://mtavari.tv/news/13192-archevnebis-gaqalbebis-mekanizmi-gardabanshi>

¹⁶⁶ https://heretifm.com/?p=136370&fbclid=IwAR0VnoCFO9AdrJ_yl6RAMsveecnH3EaEMlvCWILnMGhmtTKie0ORMxfqP8

ANNEX -

Interference with the media activity, pressure and threats

Action against the Pankisi community radio “RadioWAY” on 29 August and 5 September

The Pankisi community radio was threatened openly with breaking in and obstruction of journalists’ work at the rally protesting against the radio. Lia Margoshvili, head of the local non-governmental organization “Roddy Scott Foundation” was actively involved in the organization of rallies and instigation of hatred against the radio. To avoid the anticipated attack/violence, the radio stopped sending its journalists out to the gorge from September. According to the radio station, following the rallies against the radio, the local government planned to sell quickly the premises to leave the radio without an office, which is located in one small part of the building. Founder of the Radio, Gela Mtvlishvili, wrote to Prosecutor General on 4 September, requesting to react on the facts of threats. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has not launched an investigation so far.¹⁶⁷

On 7 October, at the Assembly meeting, Akhmeta municipality City Hall revoked the issue of selling a former administrative building in the village Duisi. The Pankisi community radio has been renting on lease a space in this building. The issue of this sale was the only agenda item of the Assembly meeting. None of the deputies asked why the City Hall was so eager to sell the building quickly or why they revoked the issue, for which they called an urgent meeting of 24 members of the Assembly.¹⁶⁸

Prior to that, the following events took place:

On 29 August, Lia Margoshvili, director of the Roddy Scott Foundation, organized an action against the Pankisi community Radio “RadioWAY” in the village Duisi, Akhmeta municipality. According to Lia Margoshvili, Gela Mtvlishvili, journalist and founder of the radio, planned to seize classrooms from the Foundation. She threatened him with damaging the RadioWAY studio and demanded from him to cease professional activities in the Pankisi Gorge.

Representatives of the RadioWAY call this fact politically motivated and relate actions against the radio to its criticism and unbiased approach towards the local government.¹⁶⁹ According to founder Gela Mtvlishvili, Lia Margoshvili is an activist of the “Georgian Dream” and its representative in Duisi precinct. He noted that the protest was organized at the instruction of the representatives of the Akhmeta Mayor’s office and the State Security Service.

Interference with the journalists’ activities and physical violence against the “Mtavari Arkhi” and GPB

¹⁶⁷ <https://radioway.ge/news/human-rights/item/999-xelisupleba-pankisis-satemo-radios-opisis-gareshe-tovebs?fbclid=IwAR2ZV5ZMiW3RRzylFqUQQNUIRLfbtFnFC4VArFVm8p7yPftCnixacsvGnSY>

¹⁶⁸ <https://reginfo.ge/human-rights/item/19477-axmetis-meriam-pankisis-satemo-radios-opisis-gaybidva-archevne-bamde-sheachera?fbclid=IwAR3bmdTofQmLVidMaFJU23WHkJUZY41EoS5dVsSx4k8xG3AWPxXu9K6UfA>

¹⁶⁹ <https://radioway.ge/news/people/item/985-pankisis-satemo-radios-sagangebo-ganzxadeba>

On 29 September, in Marneuli, a physical confrontation took place between the supporters of the UNM and the “Georgian Dream”. The “Georgian Dream” activists interfered with the professional activity of the crew members of “Mtavari Arkhi” and the GPB operator and assaulted them physically. According to “Mtavari Arkhi”, journalist Jaihun Muhamed Ali has suffered head injury, the TV station’s camera and microphone have been also damaged.

Also, according to the GPB, a camera of the TV station’s crew in Marneuli was damaged and the operator was beaten.¹⁷⁰

Kakha Okriashvili threatening the GPB

Kakha Okriashvili, the UNM majoritarian candidate in Dmanisi, Tsalka, Bolnisi and Tetrtskaro districts, was irritated by a journalist’s question regarding the confrontation, which took place in the village Nakhiduri on 27 September. In his interview, he stated that the Georgia’s Channel 1 (GPB) had to be cancelled after the October parliamentary elections.

“I think, the Channel 1, which is supported by the budget funds of 60 million GEL, should be cancelled after the elections. We are giving you 60 million and your ranking is zero”, - Kakha Okriashvili told the GPB journalist.¹⁷¹

170 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/620905-marneulshi-mtavari-arxis-gadamgeb-jgupebs-dasazogadoebrivi-maucqebli-operators-pizikurad-gauscordnen>

171 <https://1tv.ge/news/nacionaluri-modzraobis-madjoritarobis-kandidati-kakha-okriashvili-saqartvelos-pirveli-arkhi-archevnebis-shemdeg-unda-gavauqmot-video/?fbclid=IwAR0ww21O3EEgHKkXwHeCIU8SsQZ1COIBqHFTtNutzm8V-6dKv0q5pCNk40>

ANNEX -

Hate speech and disinformation in the pre-election campaign

STATEMENTS DISCREDITING THE OPPONENTS

- On 1 October, Irakli Kobakhidze called the UNM party list a list of degraded people: “We have many new faces, many new strong political figures, who will contribute significantly to the work of the parliament. On the contrary of this, you saw a list of absolutely degraded people, who the Georgian society cannot bear the sight of.”¹⁷² According to him, the UNM party list shows that they do not have resources for renewal.¹⁷³
- On 12 October, Gigi Ugulava’s video-address appeared in the media, where he is saying that “in fighting the monsters, Saakashvili became a monster himself... a way out is: a fist to Bidzina, a nudge to Misha.”. In his address, Ugulava blamed Saakashvili in acting against the unity of the opposition.

DISCREDITATION CAMPAIGN ON FACEBOOK

Facebook page “Political Observer“

On 14 August, a Facebook page “Political Observer” published an extract from an interview given by David Bakradze, one of the leaders of the “European Georgia” to the TV channel “Rustavi 2” in a TV programme “Night Courier”. In his interview David Bakradze spoke about the Council of Europe Resolution after the Russia Georgia War, namely about the 5th paragraph of the Resolution. The Facebook page used the interview to discredit David Bakradze, the “European Georgia” and the UNM by spreading disinformation as if David Bakradze acknowledged that it was Georgia, which started the August war. According to the web-page, the former Speaker of the Parliament confirmed during live broadcasting betrayal of the state interests and recalled as a “justification” the terminological part of the Resolution, which calls Russia an occupant.¹⁷⁴

As it appears, the goal of the posts made on the Facebook page “Political Observer” is to link all main opposition parties, except the “Alliance of Patriots of Georgia”, with the UNM and Mikheil Saakashvili and to showcase them in negative light. The declaration field of the sponsored posts on this page indicates the organisation “Davasrulot” as a payer. This organization is known for its critical statements against the UNM. According to the registry of Entrepreneurs and non-commercial legal entities, one of the members of the organisation’s Board is Roseta Jghamaia.¹⁷⁵ On 13 October 2020, she published a petition on Manifest.ge – “We demand to abolish the United National Movement”. As of 25 October, the petition was signed by 1279 persons.¹⁷⁶

172 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/621401-irakli-kobaxize-nacionaluri-mozraobis-mier-carmodgenili-partiuli-sia-degradirebuli-adamiane-bis-siaa>

173 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/621401-irakli-kobaxize-nacionaluri-mozraobis-mier-carmodgenili-partiuli-sia-degradirebuli-adamiane-bis-siaa>

174 <https://www.facebook.com/politikurimotvaltvale/videos/962724430838850>

175 <https://bs.napr.gov.ge/GetBlob?pid=400&bid=boVlyOwlsX3qmYsntmLmFHvADn6L4u1HgXEL%5bjaTX2g4egij0QvISkXsgyltDOks>

176 https://manifest.ge/main/item/3114?fbclid=IwAR0N73aRZnr-aW8g3Z7njchqsUjDQSQM-7_BP-Zj8CbB2K6AUXyBUjiiNOg

“Bakur Svanidze’s Internet TV and friend sites (new links)”¹⁷⁷ and “Dzaanpolitika”

Two Facebook pages were revealed in the reporting period, affiliated with and managed by Bakur Svanidze: “Bakur Svanidze’s Internet TV and friend sites (new links)”¹⁷⁸ and “Dzaanpolitika”.¹⁷⁹ The mentioned pages are busy with PR campaign of the “Alliance of Patriots” party.¹⁸⁰ It also devotes some efforts to instigate negative public attitudes towards the ruling party. These web-pages display all the activities of the opposition parties in the negative context, discredit and mock the opposition parties and their representatives. Often, the web-pages contain elements of the hate speech. It must be noted that subscribers of the page express aggression and protest against Mikheil Saakashvili in their comments, actively share articles, video and photo material about the injustice revealed during their rule, which drives the society to believe that all the opposition parties and their representatives are connected with Mikheil Saakashvili and the UNM.

Statements instigating interethnic strife and confrontation between Armenian and Azerbaijani communities:

- The third President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, posted the following statement on his Facebook page regarding the developments in Nagorno-Karabakh: “Nagorno-Karabakh is the sovereign territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and nothing can change this”.¹⁸¹ The statement was shared by the political subjects concerned.¹⁸²
- Melik Raisyan, majoritarian candidate of the “United Opposition – Strength is in Unity” in the Akhalkalaki-Ninotsminda district, in his Facebook post, called the developments that started on 27 September, “next brutal provocation by Azerbaijan” and thanked the Armenian armed forces for their fight.¹⁸³ “We are ready to take up weapon, if needed”, Raisyan wrote.
- UNM MP Azer Suleimanov wrote an open letter to President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, noting the necessity of making final steps to free the territories. In addition, the member of the parliament noted that Armenia committed crime against Georgia as well.¹⁸⁴
- ““Georgian Dream”” MP Ruslan Gajiyev also expressed his support for Azerbaijan and stated that the successful operations carried out by the Azerbaijani armed forces to recover country’s territorial integrity give a reason to believe that similar conflicts in the Caucasus should be resolved as soon as possible.

BORJOMI

Giorgi Giuashvili, an independent member of the Borjomi municipality Assembly, systematically uses hate speech in his Facebook speeches. He used obscene words when addressing Gedevan Popkhadze, a majoritarian candidate of “Our Georgia – Alliance for Solidarity” in Borjomi.

On 5 September, Giorgi Giuashvili, an independent member of the Borjomi municipality Assembly shared an address via Facebook against Irma Inashvili, one of the leader of the “Alliance of Patriots of Georgia”, which read: “Judah Inashvili, before God and nation, you have sold and delivered the single opposition Assembly of Borjomi municipality to the “Georgian Dream”.”

¹⁷⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/348865951977039>

¹⁷⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/348865951977039>

¹⁷⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/dzaanpolitika/>

¹⁸⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=992519264580617>

¹⁸¹ <http://ka.jnews.ge/?p=8086>

¹⁸² <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/371539>

¹⁸³ <https://civil.ge/ka/archives/371312>

¹⁸⁴ ibis