

By MESSENGER STAFF

SSS Arrests Two on Espionage Charges

The State Security Service of Georgia (SSSG) announced on May 30 the arrest of Irakli Chikhladze, reportedly a founder and head of the Caucasian Center for Civil Hearings, on espionage charges. The foreign country allegedly involved was not identified.

SSSG First Deputy Head Lasha Maghradze said Chikhladze had "systematically obtained and transmitted intelligence-related information" to a foreign intelligence service through "personal contacts in journalistic, expert, and other professional circles."

According to Maghradze, the suspect used encrypted communications and met representatives of the foreign intelligence service at various locations under strict security protocols, transmitting information both electronically and in person. The information allegedly concerned "political and economic processes in Georgia and the region, including neighboring countries, as well as the situation within law enforcement agencies and security structures."

Maghradze further alleged that Chikhladze operated "under the cover of an online platform" and managed an intelligence network by coordinating its members, distributing funds received from the foreign intelligence service, and monitoring the execution of assigned tasks. He also allegedly traveled abroad periodically to collect intelligence through existing contacts.

Hours before announcing Chikhladze's arrest, Maghradze disclosed the detention of Gulbaat



Rtskhladze, described as a pro-Russian figure and head of an NGO, on suspicion of spying for the intelligence services of two unnamed countries.

The arrests are the latest in

a series of espionage cases announced by the SSSG. On April 22, the agency arrested Tamaz Goleev, a resident of occupied Akhalkalaki, alleging that he had spied for Russian intelligence.

On May 5, it arrested Giorgi Udzilauri, a former Cartu Group official, on allegations of spying for an unnamed European country.

The investigation into

Chikhladze is ongoing under Article 314 of the Criminal Code, which criminalizes espionage and carries a prison sentence of eight to twelve years.



Lelo Says Zakharova's Remarks Confirm Georgia's Growing Dependence on Russia

By MESSENGER STAFF

When Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova claimed that Georgia had chosen a "multi-vector policy" rather than a confrontational course toward Moscow, describing it as Georgia's own sovereign decision made despite what she called "the EU's brutal attempts to impose a confrontational course on Georgia in relation to Moscow," Lelo-Strong Georgia leader Grigol Gegelia said she had unwittingly proven exactly what his party had been arguing for years.

Gegelia said Zakharova's framing of Georgian Dream's approach as a free choice was in reality an acknowledgment of Georgia's deepening drift toward Rus-

sia under the ruling party. "Zakharova, a propagandist of the fascist regime, very clearly confirms what we all say and see, which is that under the rule of the Dream regime, Georgia is immeasurably more economically dependent on Russia, immeasurably more politically tied to the Russian fascist federation, and increasingly less independent and with fewer prospects in the direction of the Euro-Atlantic space," he said.

He said the pattern was consistent across every measurable indicator: whatever Georgia had lost in its relationship with the West had been gained in its relationship with Russia and the broader CIS space. To support this, he pointed to

CONTINUED ON Page 2