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Kobakhidze Explains Decision to Ban Commercial Surrogacy in Georgia

By Messenger Staff

Georgian Dream Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze has defended the ruling party's decision to completely ban commercial surrogacy in Georgia, saying the move was based on ethical concerns, particularly the exploitation of women, and could not be addressed through regulation alone.

Speaking to journalists, Kobakhidze said Georgia was among seven countries worldwide where commercial surrogacy was permitted, but the number would fall to six following the ban.

He acknowledged that the sector contributed to the country's economy but said the government had prioritised ethical considerations over its economic benefits.

"An essential element of surrogacy is the exploitation of a woman. No matter how you regulate it, exploitation remains exploitation, and therefore regulation does not solve the fundamental problem," Kobakhidze said, explaining why the government had opted for a complete ban rather than partial restrictions.



Asked why the government considered surrogacy problematic while allowing the gambling industry to operate, Kobakhidze said the two sectors were different, arguing that strict intervention in gambling could have serious consequences for the economy and tourism.

He noted that casinos had operated in Georgia for many years and had become part of the country's tourism sector. He also rejected claims that the government had eased regulations on gambling, saying changes had instead brought the industry under a specific regulatory framework.

Kobakhidze further confirmed that the government had consulted the Georgian Orthodox Church on the surrogacy ban, saying the Patriarchate had expressed support for prohibiting the practice.

He added that while the government makes independent decisions, consultations with the Church and consideration of its position remain an important part of the decision-making process.

EU Proposes Removing Georgia's Kulevi Refinery from Sanctions List

By Messenger Staff

The European Commission has proposed removing Georgia's Kulevi oil refinery from the EU sanctions list, citing its reported compliance with demands to stop processing Russian crude oil.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced the proposal on Monday as part of the EU's upcoming 22nd sanctions package against Russia. Kulevi and its parent company, Black Sea Petroleum, were conditionally sanctioned in July and given six months to end their dealings with Russian oil.

Black Sea Petroleum says it stopped processing Russian crude in late October. Since then, the refinery has imported approximately 352,000 tonnes of Libyan crude over three months, with another shipment expected in December.

Irakli Kobakhidze welcomed the European Commission's proposal on Tuesday, saying it confirmed the government's earlier position on the refinery's sanctions.



"This is a specific decision by the European Commission that can only be assessed positively. You may remember that we discussed this issue before. At the time, opposition politicians and their affiliated media outlets welcomed Kulevi's inclusion on the sanctions list. We said then that the decision was not based on facts but on false information, and the latest developments confirm our position," Kobakhidze said.

He added that removing the refinery from the sanctions list was a logical decision and welcomed the Commission's proposal.

Former National Bank Governor Roman Gotsiridze also welcomed the development, saying the refinery appeared to have fulfilled its commitment to stop using Russian oil and had begun importing crude from Libya.

The European Commission cited Kulevi as an example of how the threat of sanctions can encourage compliance, contrasting its case with Kyrgyzstan, which it accuses of helping Russia circumvent international restrictions.

The proposal must still be approved unanimously by EU member states, meaning Kulevi's removal from the sanctions list is not yet final.

The News in Brief

Prepared by Messenger Staff

Botchorishvili Meets Aliyev During Baku Visit

Georgian Dream Vice Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Maka Botchorishvili met with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev in Baku on Tuesday, with talks focusing on the strategic partnership between the two countries, regional developments and cooperation on economic and energy projects.

Following the meeting, Botchorishvili described the talks as substantive and interesting, noting that both sides discussed the importance of peace and stability in the region, as well as new opportunities to develop the Middle Corridor.

"Our countries are bound by many common interests. It is important that we develop this strong partnership and friendship even further," Bochorishvili wrote on social media.

The meeting marked the beginning of her official visit to

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