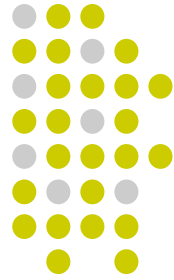




# Newsletter №8



## Main findings of the week

The tendencies observed over the period from between 27 May and 2 June are the following:

- The main topic of the week was the restriction of the right to pray to local Muslim residents of the Samtatskaro village, Dedoplistskaro district, which media covered in a fragmented and superficial manner. The news programs of Imedi TV and Channel 9 violated articles 12 and 13 (Due Accuracy) as well as article 18.2 (Impartiality) of the Code of Con-

duct for Broadcasters. The only TV channel which reported about illegal actions of representatives of local self-government was Rustavi 2;

- Hate speech was used both by a respondent (Luka Kurtanidze, Vice Rector of Police Academy of the Interior Ministry) and a journalists (Alia newspaper) towards the United National Movement) and also towards sexual minorities (Petre Mamrad-

Continued on p. 12

## The Samtatskaro incident

### The topic of the week

The newsletter was made possible by the generous support of the American people rendered through the USA Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of the newsletter are the responsibility of Media Development Foundation (MDF) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the USAID or the USA.

The main topic in the reporting week was the restriction of the right to conduct prayers to local Muslims of the Samtatskaro village, Dedoplistskaro district, which was covered by media in a fragmented and superficial manner. The news program of Imedi TV reported misleading information whilst news program of Channel 9 included speculative assessments. Both TV companies violated articles 12 and 13 of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters, which oblige broadcasters to provide reliable and accurate information, and also paragraph 2 of article 18 of the same Code, which reads that “The programme or report will be considered biased if it lacks comprehensive information on important facts, is based on minor facts, misleads the audience intentionally or unintentionally, or conveys biased views of a person in a hidden form.”

The only TV channel which reported about illegal actions of representatives of local self-government was Rustavi 2. This fact was not mentioned in the publication of Rezonansi newspaper, reprinted from the news agency Iveroni.

Continued on p. 2

27. 05 –02.06.2013



## MONITORING

### Inside this issue

Hate Speech	4
Discrimination of religious ground	4
Sexual minorities	6
Manipulating public opinion	9
Anti-western attitudes	12



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## The Samtatskaro incident

### Imedi, news program, 31 May

Continued from p. 1

In the report of Imedi TV news program, the focus is shifted from the right to pray, which is the real reason of conflict, onto the hypothetical construction of mosque (based on rumors of local populations), thereby distorting the essence of the conflict. The report contains two comments of local residents speaking about unacceptability of the construction of mosque. Reporter Nutsa Kavtaradze also quotes a local resident as saying: *“pray at home, you will not be allowed to build a mosque here”* and engages in misleading generalization: *“locals voice their protest against the construction of a mosque.”*

The reporter did not try to find out the real essence of locals' protest. The arguable issue in reality is not the construction of the mosque but the exercise of the constitutionally guaranteed right to pray in a private building purchased as a praying house by Muslims. Whether Georgian citizens pray at home or in a building owned by a legal or private person is not a topic of discussion.

The balance in the report is observed formally and does not provide opinions of local Muslims whose right to pray was restricted. If these people refused to comment, the reporter should have stated that. This would have been an indication that local Muslims shun to express their opinions publicly. The report included comments of the head of Muslim union, Taniel Nakaidze, and the deputy mufti of Muslims, Adan Shantaidze, though neither of them represent the local community.

Even though the report provides the position of an employee of the public defender's office, Beka Mindiashvili, that the responsibility to ensure the constitutional guarantee of the freedom of religion lies with the law enforcement bodies, the reporter does not cover the issue from this angle; nor does she seek comments on this topic from the local police. The only official position provided in the report is that of the chair of parliamentary committee on human rights and civil integration, Eka Beselia, who says that a dialogue needs to be established between the two conflicting groups. Based on this comment, the reporter makes an unjustified generalization and completes the report with the statement that the government awaits the dialogue whilst the public defender's office awaits recommendations.

The Imedi TV violated articles 12 and 13 of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters, which oblige broadcasters to provide reliable and accurate information, as well as paragraph 2 of article 18 of the same Code, which defines the rule of impartiality for news programs.

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2054852](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2054852); [http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2054847](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2054847)

### Georgian Public Broadcaster (GPB), news program, 27 May

In contrast to Imedi news program, the GPB, in its news program, provides the audience with accurate information about the essence of the conflict and despite claims in comments of local populations about the construction of a mosque, both the presenter Eka Mishveladze and the reporter Ketil Beraia clearly state that the incident concerns the thwarting of Muslims' prayer and unacceptability of the praying house by the villagers. The report notes that the conflict is about the purchase of an abandoned house where Muslims intended to pray whilst a representative of Muslim Administration, Suliko Khozrevanidze, denies the information about constructing a mosque and explains that it was not planned to transform the existing building into the one characteristic for Muslim sacred buildings (dome, minaret).

The report also includes comments of both local opponents and proponents of Muslim prayers. However, one of the comments of a local, Otari Putkaradze, *“what shall we tell our ancestors who are buried there, who preserved the Christianity to these days”* is discriminatory towards Georgian citizens practicing different religions and exacerbates the religious conflict. The reporter should have reported the essence of the conflict without allowing this opinion to be reported as it does not add anything to the report either information- or content-wise.

Moreover, similarly to the Imedi report, the GPB report does not cover a legal aspect of the issue nor provide the position of public defender or any other human rights defender; whereas the discriminative position of local self-government is offered as an attempt to regulate the situation between two conflicting sides. In particular:

## The Samtatskaro incident

**Gulo Nadirashvili, Governor of Samtaskaro village:** *"We offered them, if the local population agrees to the praying house, no one will impede them... Their mufti, Jemal Adadze, entered that building without the consent of the population and started a prayer."*

**Avto Shanidze, member of local council:** *"People are very aggressive for one thing: officially, a mosque must not be built; there is one common opinion that it must not be officially."*



**Gulo Nadirashvili, Governor of Samtaskaro village:** *"We offered them, if the local population agrees to the praying house, no one will impede them... Their mufti, Jemal Adadze, entered that building without the consent of the population and started a prayer."*

Discriminative statements of representatives of local self-government, which suggest that the exercise of constitutional rights of minorities must hinge upon the will of the majority, should not have been left unchallenged by the reporter and she should have asked the respondent about those legal grounds that support the statement that the issue must be settled according to the will of the majority; she should have also asked which institution is responsible, in such a situation, to ensure the constitutionally guaranteed rights of minorities.

Moreover, the GPB report did not cover the fact that the representative of village self-government Gulo Nadirashvili, along with local residents, committed an illegal act by restricting the right to free movement to representatives of Muslim Administration.

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2051056](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2051056)



### Channel 9, news program, 30 May

Channel 9 covered the incident in Samtatskaro in an absolutely different context. A presenter of the news program, Levan Javakhishvili, raises the question: *"who will benefit from the exacerbation of religious conflict?"*, and the reporter Tamta Janadze, based on comments of respondents, engages in speculations that this is in the interest of external forces.

The report starts with the address of one of locals to the representative of Muslim Administration, Tariel Nakaidze: *"Do not provoke people to oppose each other."* Tamta Janadze generalizes this comment and declares that this is how representatives of Muslim Administration are greeted in the village. The reporter, referring to a comment of an expert, calls opponents to the government, along with representatives of Muslim Administration, as "external forces."

**Ramaz Sakvarelidze, expert:** *"There are political forces today who are interested in this type of exacerbation."*

Based on a general, unspecified opinion of a single expert, the reporter makes unjustified assessment which does not match even the statement of the expert Ramaz Sakvarelidze:

**Tamta Janadze, reporter:** *"In the expert's*

*opinion, opponents to the government need the exacerbation of situation in order to accuse the new government for its inability and undermine its image internationally."*

The entire report is of speculative nature. True, the reporter quotes the Constitution on the equality but does not cover the incident from a legal point of view. The report also includes the position of that self-government representative whom representatives of Muslim Administration blame for exacerbation of the situation and who hinges the freedom of religion of the minority upon the will of the majority.

**Gulo Nadirashvili, Governor of Samtaskaro village:** *"They [Muslim Administration] want to engage these two segments of the population into conflict with each other and to arrange a Muslim praying house, but 85% of the population is against that."*

The report also includes a passage about signatures being collected for the permission to pray, which has no legal ground although this issue is not covered from this angle. Comments of law enforcement officers are not provided in the report of Channel 9 either. Instead, the report says in conclusion that *"the population intends to settle the problem themselves."*

Like Imedi, Channel 9 also violated articles 12, 13 (Due Accuracy) and 18 (Impartiality) of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters.

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2055869](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2055869)

## The Samtatskaro incident

### Rustavi 2 news program, 31 May

The only TV company which comprehensively covered the incident, showing, among other things, an illegal action of the representative of Samtatskaro village self-government, was Rustavi 2. None of other TV companies, either visually or verbally (via respondent's comments), has reported that it was precisely the representative of village self-government, Gulo Nadirashvili, who was among the local residents mobilized on the scene of the incident and did not allow representatives of the Muslim Administration to enter the village. The footage of Rustavi 2 report clearly shows how the representative of village self-government tell representatives of Muslim Administration sitting in a mini-bus that "the village is against" and tell them to "go away," whilst the addressee of these words says that a physical violence and threats were also used against him.

At the same time, however, the report does not show the position of either human rights defenders or law enforcement bodies which, as the footage shows, only tried to disengage conflicting parties. Only a representative of the public defender's office, Beka Mindiashvili, speaks about the necessity of legal response.

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2055852](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2055852)

## Hate Speech

### Alia, 30 May

Vice-rector of the Police Academy, Luka Kurtanidze, incites hatred towards representatives of the United National Movement (UNM), and refers to President Saakashvili as Saakov (an Armenian form of surname). Journalist Gela Zedelashvili, instead of focusing on the unacceptability of hate speech, recalls an identical statement made by the respondent earlier, in which Kurtanidze threatens UNM representatives with skinning them like mice.



**Luka Kurtanidze, vice-rector of the Police Academy:** *"I keep a close watch on every nuance. Did I not experience huge pain myself? Yes, Chiora Taktakishvili, Ako Minashvili, Goka Gabashvili and others represent a rotten segment of society; these people created a system under the leadership of Saakov."*

**Gela Zedelashvili, journalist:** *"That means that you no longer intend to remove their skin and have entrusted all this to courts?"*

## Discrimination of religious ground

### Kavkasia, talk-show Spektri, 31 May

When a guest of the talk-show, one of the founders of the Georgian-Russian charity organization, Gross, speaks about that stereotyped perception Russians have about Georgia ("In Russia many think that Georgia is a Muslim country"), the presenter Davit Akubardia, in response, speaks of the prospect of Islamization of Georgia as a threat.

**Davit Akubardia, anchor:** *"There are no factories in Georgia any longer. I pity people. If this continues for another 15 or 20 years, we will have a Muslim country. Look to the East, more and more are coming."*

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2055888](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2055888)

### Alia, 31 May - 3 June

Expert Mamuka Areshidze views the construction of mosque in Ponichala as a threat for the country.

**Mamuka Areshidze, expert:** *"I am not and will not be against the construction of a mosque, in general, but this concrete mosque contains threats. The point is that that conflict which exists between local Shia and Wahhabites may break out in our territory. If Wahhabites turn the house of Islam into their stronghold tomorrow – today it will be an educational center, tomorrow a venue for political debates, the day after tomorrow a place for keeping arms. Chechnya and Dagestan have already went through that."*



## Discrimination of religious ground

Asaval-Dasavali, 27 May – 2 June

Representative of the People's Council, Elizbar Javelidze, discriminates the Public Defender Ucha Nanuashvili on a religious ground, portraying him as an enemy of Orthodox Christianity because his wife is a Baptist. Religious belief of Ucha Nanuashvili or his wife, is a private matter and since they do not speak about it publicly, this is a pure religious discrimination and moreover, unethical.

**Elizbar Javelidze, People's Council:**

*"Let anybody explain to me why should Orthodox Christian Georgia have a Baptist public defender?! No wonder that this Ucha Nanuashvili is an enemy of Orthodox Church because his wife, Maia Mamasakhlisi, is a member of the congregation of Malkhaz Songulashvili's Baptist church..."*

In the same interview, Elizbar Javelidze calls Malkhaz Songulashvili, Archbishop of the The Evangelical Baptist Church, a torturer and questions his Georgian origin.

**Elizbar Javelidze, People's Council:**

*"How dare this torturer speak about Georgian ethnicity? Malkhaz Songulashvili is as much Georgian as I am a native of Burkina Faso!"*

Obiektivi, talk show Gamis Studia, 28 May

A guest of the talk show, the leader of Patriots' Alliance, Soso Manjavidze, sees the way of preservation of Georgian identity in banning "Turkish" in the country.

**Soso Manjavidze, Patriots' Alliance:**

*"When the same people say that as if religious minority is oppressed and that because of religious minority we must construct a mosque as big as the Trinity Cathedral in the center of Batumi... We want our cities to look in a way it looked before and to develop our tradition in order to be a Georgian country and not to allow Turkish."*

At the same time, the respondent suggests that a public opinion poll, analogous to the one this organization conducted in Batumi and showed a negative attitude of people towards the construction of mosque, must be carried out in regards with the propaganda of sexual minorities. Deciding the issues related to the right of minorities in accordance with the will of the majority is a discriminatory approach because the obligation of the state is to protect minorities from the dictat of majority. However, the respondent expresses the fundamentally opposite views.

**Soso Manjavidze, Patriots' Alliance:**

*"If we see that 99% or 98% or 97% of the population is against that and some 2% or 1% imposes that on us, who will be then the one speaking totalitarian language and hate speech - we or they?"*

<http://obiektivi.net/tv1.php?id=12147>

Asaval-Dasavali, 27 May – 2 June

Tea Asatiani's interview with the actor, Davit Giorgobiani, who views that electronic ID cards as the preparational stage for the appearance of Anti-Christ, is riddled with prejudices. In the same interview, the respondent whips up anti-American sentiments and portrays it as an alternative to the path towards God.

**Davit Giorgobiani, actor:** *"By prayer of Father Paysse, an American ran out of the church and a Georgian entered it. This is also a sign that our salvation is not in American orientation but in embarking the path of God. We must be afraid of not the West but the God."*

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/971/971.pdf>



**Elizbar Javelidze, People's Council:**

*"How dare this torturer speak about Georgian ethnicity? Malkhaz Songulashvili is as much Georgian as I am a native of Burkina Faso!"*

## Sexual minorities

Alia, 28 May

A lawyer, Shalva Khachapuridze, who ran for parliamentary elections as a candidate from the Georgian Dream, links unsubstantiated facts, namely the birth of infants as a result of artificial insemination and their adoption by homosexual couples, with Georgia's first lady, Sandra Roelofs.

**Shalva Khachapuridze, lawyer:** *"I am talking about one of the clinics. I do not want to name that clinic now. This clinic is engaged in artificial insemination of women and thereafter taking infants born as a result of this insemination abroad and selling them to homosexual couples. I have actually collected the documentation proving that. As the case reveals, Sandra Roelofs had a very close ties with that clinic. Now it is being studied whether Sandra Roelofs was engaged in this business, namely, in selling Georgian infants to homosexual couples."*

A version offered by the respondent (*"This clinic is engaged in artificial insemination of women and thereafter taking infants abroad to sell them to homosexual couples. Sandra Roelofs had a very close ties with that clinic"*) is used as the title of the interview without the journalist even trying to verify the facts. In the same interview, the respondent engages in other speculations too, saying that the UNM leaders masterminded the rally against homophobia and transphobia on 17 May.

Asavali-Dasavali, 27 May – 2 June

Journalist Tea Asatiani also engages in speculations about 17 May rally saying, based on the assumption, that organizers of 17 May rally intended to stage an action in Kashveti Church similar to the one Pussy Riot staged in the cathedral in Moscow. The journalist arrives to such a conclusion based on a photo featuring a young person in a church. The journalist maintains that this photo was taken in the Kashveti church, though she does not specify where the photo came from, who is featured in it and what this photo has in common with the rally organized by Identoba NGO which made the aims of the rally public well before the date of the rally. In parallel, for the sake of dramatization, the article, in which organizers of 17 May rally in Tbilisi are pejoratively called "herd of sexual perverts," "diseased people," "a crowd of mutants," "pederasts," is illustrated with a photo of Pussy Riot in Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral. The article, which is brimming with hate speech, also speaks about bloodshed thereby further dramatizing the situation.

**Tea Asatiani, journalist:** *"One cannot exclude that the Georgian LGBT intended to repeat the action of Pussy Riot and thanks god that the rally planned on Rustaveli avenue on 17 May*

*was thwarted or had this herd of sexual perverts stormed into Kashveti Church and started their antics there, neither the clergy nor the police would have been able to do anything and the blood would have been spilt...."*

*[Addresses human rights defenders]: Leave alone those diseased persons in their sin and do not encourage them towards blasphemy and perversion, and mind that those 30 silver pieces which you call garnts will prove useless!*

*Especially today, when Saakashvili and the UNM have turned into political corpses, they are left with this crowd of mutants alone and now use them for staging provocations, stirring up disorder and conflict.*

*Today, Saakashvili and UNM are relying on pederasts alone."*

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/971/971.pdf>

Maestro, talk-show Subiekturi azri, 28 May

In the talk show, presenters Teona Gegelia and Diana Trapaidze, argue with the guest, the leader of Free Georgia, Kakha Kukava, about his allegation that if the Georgian Dream presidential candidate, Giorgi Margvelashvili, wins the presidential race, he will legalize same-sex marriage. It is noteworthy that the presenter Teona Gegelia argues with the guest not over the fact that

### Newsletter №8



**Shalva Khachapuridze, lawyer:** *"This clinic is engaged in artificial insemination of women and thereafter taking infants abroad to sell them to homosexual couples. Sandra Roelofs had a very close ties with that clinic".*

## Sexual minorities

Margvelashvili did not make such a statement but cites MP Zviad Dzidziguri as saying that Kakha Kukava, in contrast to Margvelashvili, is not a religious person. This is discriminatory towards Kakha Kukava because no one has the right to speak about the degree of religiousness of this or that person. A person may, on religious grounds, oppose gay marriages, but posing the question in such a way as to who is more religious - a person who is engaged in political speculation about another person on a delicate issue or the one about whom wrong information is spread, is not correct.

As the monitoring conducted by the Media Development Foundation has shown, during the interim parliamentary elections (held on 27 April, in Tbilisi's Nadzaladevi district) Kakha Kukava also spread similar disinformation about his direct rival, the candidate from the Georgian Dream, Tamar Kordzaia. Back then, media, unfortunately released this misleading information, thereby helping shape the opinion as if Tamar Kordzaia supported the legalization of gay marriages (see Bulletin #2). It would have been good if the presenters of the talk show have recalled that episode thus enabling the audience to evaluate the degree of reliability of the statement made by the guest of the program.

When arguing with the guest, the presenters clearly explain that no gay pride was conducted on 17 May and that Kakha Kukava was spreading wrong information. At the same time, it is apparent that the presenters argue with the guest only with regard to his statements about the presidential candidate of Georgian Dream, whereas leave similar claims made by the guest about the UNM ("despite huge efforts undertaken by the Georgian Dream and the UNM, the first gay pride did not

take place in Tbilisi") unchallenged. In this case, the presenter Diana Trapaidze asks Kukava to clarify whether Ivanishvili's dream is analogous to Margvelashvili's "dream" [to legalize gay marriage] and shows no interest to find out how is the UNM linked to those events, as Kukava and certain media outlets speculate.

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2052359](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2052359)

Maestro, talk-show Subiekturi Azri, 30 May

The presenter of the talk show, Teona Gegelia, (who two days earlier in the same talk show challenged Kakha Kukava for the latter's allegation that the Georgian Dream presidential candidate, Giorgi Margvelashvili, intends to legalize gay marriage after he becomes the president) leaves unchallenged the assumption of philosopher Zaza Shatirishvili that the human rights defender Tamar Gurchiani supports gay marriage.

Supporting or opposing the same-sex marriage is an absolutely legitimate action. However, this is something that Tamar Gurchiani must state herself whilst the journalists, as she did in the case of Giorgi Margvelashvili and Tamar Kordzaia, must have challenged the respondent on this statement too in order to establish whether the spread information was right or wrong.

**Zaza Shatirishvili, philosopher:** "I am sure that Gurchiani thinks even more that [same-sex] marriage is allowed, et cetera. I do not think like that."

**Teona Gegelia, journalist:** "Neither do I."

The respondent also views homosexuality as a result of capitalism and the extreme expression of egotism.

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2054250](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2054250)

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2054251](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2054251)

Maestro, talk show Politmetri, 27 May

A guest of the talk-show, member of the Christian-Democratic party, Levan Vepkhvadze, misinterprets the European Convention for Human Rights and distorts the aim of the 17 May rally against homophobia by saying that

Continued on p. 8



**Tea Asatiani, journalist:** "thanks god that the rally planned on Rustaveli avenue on 17 May stormed into Kashueti Church and started their antics there, neither the clergy nor the police would have been able to do anything and the blood would have been spilt"...

## Sexual minorities

this rally was designed to promote the legalization of same-sex marriage and that the Convention restricts such type of free expression.

**Levan Vepkhvadze, Christian-Democratic party:** *"Paragraph 1 of Article 10 of the Human Rights Convention has subparagraph two which allows for a certain type of restrictions on the freedom of expression... Such type of restrictions do not exist on the level of law in Georgia and naturally, I think that if certain restrictions are imposed in this respect, including a constitutional ban on the same-sex marriage, about which we also talked a year ago, I think many problems that preceded 17 May and also, related to this day, will be eliminated."*  
[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2051329](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2051329)

### Asaval-Dasavali, 27 May – 2 June

A former MP Petre Mamradze incites hatred towards sexual minorities. Both the respondent and the journalist consider homosexuality a disease.

**Giorgi Gigauri, journalist:** *"Thus, this means that this disease is really 'contagious!'"*

**Petre Mamradze:** *"During the Saakashvili rule, many entities, ministries, higher educational institutions or media were deliberately infected with the virus of homosexuality!"*

*Homosexuals are gravest patients and they need to be treated and not promoted....*

*Homosexuality is like a cancer – when cancer cells penetrate into a healthy organ, if not treated timely, they will spread all over the body, first, and then kill! The same holds true for a virus of homosexuality – if it finds a stronghold in the society, it will then infect the entire society and this will end in the death of the society!"*

### Asaval-Dasavali, 27 May – 2 June

Journalist Giorgi Gigauri divides the society into the Orthodox Christian Georgians and the promoters of sexual perverts whilst categorizes the historian Lasha Bakradze, because of him condemning the violent events of 17 May, under a group of people who "reek of anti-Orthodox and pro-sexual pervert United National Movement" and refers to him with offensive words.

**Giorgi Gigauri, journalist:** *"The conflict which broke out between the Orthodox Christian Georgians and the promoters of sexual perverts on the Rustaveli Avenue on 17 May, has once again gave an opportunity to a hollow person called Lasha Bakradze to resurface! Yes, Lasha Bakradze has emerged as one of the leaders of that movement which can be openly called an anti-Georgian, anti-Orthodox and anti-clerical front!"*

### Asaval-Dasavali, 27 May – 2 June

The newspaper denigrated the leader of the organization Patriots, Giorgi Mazmaniani, yet again on the ground of sexual orientation, by referring to him with a woman's name and calling him a hen.

**Goga Khaindrava, director:** *"The United National Movement has been left with the only candidate for presidency – a boss of hens Anjela Mazmaniani!"*

### Kviris Kronika, 27 May – 2 June

Journalist Nino Samkharadze commends the violent actions of the Church against the 17 May rally and wonders why the Church did not show "such a unanimous protest" in previous years in relation to political processes. The journalist's respondent, a cleric, makes homophobic statements

**Nino Samkharadze, journalist:** *"The Georgian Church showed strength, defended Christian traditions but many people wonder where were you when Saakashvili's regime was spilling blood, killing people? Why did the Church not show such a unanimous protest back then?"*

## Newsletter №8



**Petre Mamradze:** *"Homosexuality is like a cancer – when cancer cells penetrate into a healthy organ, if not treated timely, they will spread all over the body, first, and then kill!"*



## Sexual minorities

**Father Elizbar Diakonidze:** *"In Spain, when bull sees a red cloth in front of his eyes, it rips the bull apart if the bull is not skilled and quickwitted. Sorry, but when men start flashing their buttocks around in front of clergy... while we preach that male must be male and female must be female... and a man comes to me and says that he has sex with a man. Tell me, how should I tolerate that? Do we need a same-sex marriage?"*

The interview also notes that the newspaper is under the blessing of the Father Iobi.

### Kviris Palitra, 27 May – 2 June

In contrast to above cited newspapers, a column of Kviris Palitra's journalist, Merab Metreveli, touching upon the 17 May events, does not condone the violence and stresses the importance of peacefully expressing different opinions. However, a passage in the column - *"Does anyone prohibit you to voice protest against propaganda of homosexuality?"* - introduces an absolutely vague notion - "propaganda of homosexuality," which the journalist does not try to explain and specify.

### Imedi, talk show Gia eteri, 31 May

**Deacon Teodore:** *"Those who organized all this are all guilty. They knew full well that once the propaganda of immorality started that would cause aggression, of course.*

*No one prevents anyone to be free but the demonstration of immorality which offends feelings of the majority, I think, must not be allowed."*

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2057225](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2057225)

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2057211](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2057211)

## Manipulating public opinion

Media union Obiektivi constantly violates paragraph 4 of Article 18 of the Code of Conduct of Broadcasters, which require that *"Phone-ins during live broadcasts should be screened in a fair manner; the prominence of only one particular view should not be allowed to avoid the manipulation of public opinion by phone calls."*

Gamis Studia allows not only the phone calls of listeners with similar opinions but also these opinions, which are discriminatory towards various minority groups, are always in full conformity with the positions of respondents as well as the presenters. In this respect, Obiektivi breaches paragraph 3 of Article 18 of the same Code, which reads that *"If broadcasters choose to invite a single concerned party to a programme to explore its particular view, the invitee should not be allowed to use its own*

*position for attacking other parties not participating in the programme."* It also breaches paragraph 2 of Article 17 which requires that *"Presenters of authored programmes should not use their position to report opinions in a way that may violate the impartiality of the programme."*

Separate examples of the breach of these provisions are provided below. At the same time, it should be noted that discriminatory statements towards sexual minorities were made by respondents and viewers in the context of the 17 May events.

### Obiektivi, 27 May

**Malkhaz Gulashvili, People's Orthodox Movement:** *"I do not prohibit anyone to commit their immoral actions wherever they want, but let them refrain*

Continued on p. 10



**Malkhaz Gulashvili, People's Orthodox Movement:** *"I call on the state bodies to restrict the assembly of such people and those provocative actions which these or those people stage on purpose... Do not under-valuate those LGBT... They are an unseen army of Anti-Christ."*

## Manipulating public opinion

*from promoting that.. I call on the state bodies to restrict the assembly of such people and those provocative actions which these or those people stage on purpose... Do not under-value those LGBT... They are an unseen army of Anti-Christ."*

**Ilia Chachibaia, presenter:** "It is not desirable and good for the process of the reinstatement of justice to be necessarily started with the detention and charging of religious servants."

**Viewer:** "It appears that our Europeization will be that we become "successful" LGBT promoters, which is something shameful in the Caucasus. And how then we will talk to Abkhazia and South Ossetia on reconciliation and to Russia on the return of territories? This would be a total absurd. When before 2012, Russia's head postponed this problem for 100 years and said that he was not interested in that. That was a manly move."  
<http://obiektivi.net/tv1.php?id=12131>

### Obiektivi, 28 May

**Soso Manjavidze, Patriots' Alliance:** "I am categorically against of the spread of this [homosexuality], even more so, of describing it in a positive light, which were are forced to do by the West..."

*In a secular state the state justice drifts towards the point... when this justice reacts only to the violence and it does not have moral imperatives. It drift towards, no one knows why, the same-sex marriage and further to more perverted forms such as, for example, pedophilia or zoophilia."*

**Nino Ratishvili, presenter:** "Thanks to the clergy and the police that really terrible thing did not happen on 17 May."  
<http://obiektivi.net/tv1.php?id=12147>

### Obiektivi, 29 May

**Vazha Beridze, politologist:** "The reaction of the Georgian people was absolutely reasonable, logical... Naturally, the Georgian society will not accept an excess demonstration of such perversion in streets in the form of gay pride."

**Bodno Mdzinarishvili, presenter:** "Not only Georgian, but those from North..."  
<http://obiektivi.net/tv1.php?id=12161>

### Obiektivi, 1 June

**Manuchar Machaidze, Patriots Alliance:** "Nine years of the rule of United National Movement showed us that during those nine years the violence on sexual majority on the part of sexual minority took place, unfortunately..."

*I would cause them to adopt a law that would require that in such organizations which are masculine organizations [gender discrimination], for example, prisons or army, those persons, who are to undertake high positions in those organizations, are thoroughly vetted and that representatives of sexual minorities are not admitted to such organizations... When in a prison, where prisoners are there, the head of the prison is homosexual, a representative of sexual minority, who can abuse his official power, just like it happened in prisons and even in the army during nine years?! This is incorrect; this is already a violation of the rights of sexual majority..."*

<http://obiektivi.net/tv1.php?id=12207>

### Newsletter №8



**Manuchar Machaidze, Patriots Alliance:** "Nine years of the rule of United National Movement showed us that during those nine years the violence on sexual majority on the part of sexual minority took place, unfortunately"...

## Anti-Western attitudes

### Channel 9, talk show Mtavari Kitkhva, 27 May

Film director Goga Khaindraba draws an unjustified parallel between the events on 17 May in Tbilisi and a protest rally against the same-sex marriage in Paris, which were different both in the essence and the forms (violent in the former case and peaceful in the latter case). In addition to applying offensive terminology, the respondent speaks about homosexuality as about the threat having come from the West.

**Goga Khaindrava, director:** *“Now we are facing a very serious threat because this homosexuality is penetrating and is brought into Georgia and a serious fight is underway for its legalization from the West... A million-strong demonstration was held in Paris and a huge fight is underway in the entire developed world, Christendom, be it Catholic or Orthodox, in order to prevent this sodomite sin from dominating.”*

[http://www.myvideo.ge/?video\\_id=2051537](http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2051537)

### Alia, 29 May

An education expert, Manana Nikolaishvili, spreads misleading information about preconditions set to Georgia for the integration into the European educational space, as if this process was linked to a 12-year school education and the same-sex marriage, which was reported by the journalist and newspaper without any critical consideration.

**Manana Nikolaishvili, expert:** *“The government set the course that we want to be in the European structure. In order to be allowed to enter the European educational space, there must be a 12-year school education and the same-sex marriage.”*

### Asaval-Dasavali, 27 May – 2 May

A representative of the People's Council, Elizbar Javelidze, along with homophobic statements, makes anti-Western statements.

**Elizbar Javelidze, People's Council:** *“World preachers of sexual perverts try to persuade us that people must become monkeys and beasts instead of image of God...”*

*As I was told, LGBT rally was also conducted in Yerevan and Armenians have beaten perverts up!...”*

*Who the hell the ambassador of the US or Holland is to criticize us for defending our Georgian morals and spirituality and to lecture us...*

*If so far they claimed that Georgia's integration into NATO hinged on blood spilt by our soldiers in Afghanistan, now it turns out that this hinges upon the respect of buttocks of sexual perverts!”*

### Asaval-Dasavali, 27 May – 2 June

Giorgi Gigauri's article “No to Phallus-crazy” [mocking theocracy], which according to the journalist is the acronym for a non-governmental organization and does not at all means the male organ. However, the article has this very connotation and refers to philosopher Ghia Nodia as “phallusopher”. The article refers to representatives of non-governmental organization as liberal perverts because of the protest rally “No to Theocracy.” The journalist who calls non-governmental organizations as traitors selling the Orthodox Christianity for grants, incites hatred towards the United States by displaying its international peacekeeping missions as a massacre of children.

Continued on p. 12



**Giorgi Gigauri, journalist:** *“And how dare those scoundrels speak to me about hate speech and homophobia, who are fed for years by those who killed tens of thousands of civilians, including thousands of children, in Iraq and Afghanistan?! “*



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## Main findings of the week

Continued from p. 1

ze, Asaval-Dasavali newspaper);

- Discrimination on religious ground was observed with regard to politics in general as well as concrete individuals (discussion of the religious belief of the public defender and his wife; discriminatory talk about the Episcopo of Baptist Church);
- During the coverage of the topic of sexual minorities, unsubstantiated facts were reported by separate persons. It is worth noting that when misleading information was reported about the presidential candidate of the Georgian Dream, journalists (talk show Subiekturi Azri on Maestro TV) challenged respondents whereas in case of misleading information about other politicians and human rights defenders, they did not show similar criticism. Information concerning sexual minorities was also reported without criticism or double-checking by other media outlets (newspapers: Alia, Asaval-Dasavali);
- Homosexuality was portrayed as illness (former MP Petre Mamradze in Asaval-Dasavali newspaper) and anti-Western sentiments were incited;
- Media union Obiektivi manipulated with public opinion and violated articles 17(2) and 18 (3, 4) of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters.

## Anti-Western attitudes

Continued from p. 11

**Giorgi Gigauri, journalist:** *“And how dare those scoundrels speak to me about hate speech and homophobia, who are fed for years by those who killed tens of thousands of civilians, including thousands of children, in Iraq and Afghanistan?! “*

*sexual pervers around, men not desiring women, Georgian nation degrading and men wearing skirts, I do not want such a democracy.*

*Let them stop promoting this disaster; let gays and lesbians not get married and let them not impose all that on us!”*

[Kviris Palitra, 27 May – 2 June](#)

**Soso Tsintsadze, politologist:** *“Putin knows perfectly well what Europe does and is today. What should we hope for when two “pretty men” get married in France? Should we pin hopes on such a Europe?”*

[Asaval dasavali, 27 May – 2 May](#)

**Giorgi Gigauri, journalist:** *“They say either become sexual pervers or forget NATO!”*

*If our degree of democracy is gauged by the number of gay prides conducted and the number of sexual pervers getting married to “a man of his dream,” then Georgians will say out loud that they do not want such democracy!”*

[Asaval dasavali, 27 May – 2 May](#)

**Salome Gogiashvili, presenter:** *“If democracy means having many*



