



# Today Defence

## 16th Anniversary of the Georgian Artillery

The Georgian Armed Forces celebrates the Artillery Day. 16 years ago on March 15, 1993 Georgian artillerymen could successfully repel one of the most large-scale attacks on Sukhumi. For commemorating this significant date, March 15 was decided as Georgian Artillery day.

The celebrating ceremony was held in the yard of the Ministry of Defence. After playing the national anthem of Georgia, a minute of silence was held in honor of the Georgian military servants who made a supreme sacrifice for the territorial integ-

Together with you, I had an opportunity to witness fighting of Georgian Artillery against the occupants on the front line. The Capital of Georgia and the whole country would have been undefended without your assistance. We should keep on our preparation for improvement. We acquired and will acquire new equipment again. We will improve our social conditions and education level. However, neither weaponry nor preparation will change your aspiration. This is the most significant thing. Georgia is gradually rising.

gian officers managed to establish Georgian military tradition you are the ancestors of. You'll always be a significant part of those traditions."

President Mikheil Saakashvili, Defence Minister, Davit Sikharulidze and Chief of the Joint Staff of GAF, Major General Devi Chankotadze awarded a total of 67 artillerymen, who participated in the Georgian-Russian war with medals of "Kakutsa Cholokashvili", "Devotion for Homeland", "General Kvinitadze" and "General Mazniashvili".



city of their country in the Georgia-Russia war.

Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Georgian Armed Forces Mikheil Saakashvili congratulated the Georgian artillerymen. The President of Georgia once again highlighted the invaluable service of the Georgian artillerymen during the August war and commended their bravery. Mikheil Saakashvili delivered a speech and talked about defensive capabilities of the state - "I want to express my compliment for everything you did.

Hence, it should always care about its defensive capacity and Army forcefulness. I appeal to you to care of improvement, smarten and coordination of combative preparation together; all of us should work for a better goal achievement and for better preparation of combative, physical and other trainings you undergo currently. Tbilisi Artillery Institute was the best tradition of the military trainings. It was the only military institution in Georgia, accepting Georgian officers, even rarely. Those scanty Geor-

The Georgian Artillery marked its 16th anniversary with two brigades. The Second Artillery Brigade was created in autumn, after the August war. This brigade is located in the western part of Georgia and the First Artillery Brigade remains in the East.

The solemn ceremony was attended by the leadership of MOD and Joint Staff, commanders of GAF and the military and defence attaches accredited to Georgia.

*Rusudan Tsimakuridze*

## Recruits Take Military Oath



On March 20, 864 recruits took a military oath at the Training Center "Krtsanisi". The recruits underwent a five-week, initial course including fire, drill, surveillance, first medical aid and tactical trainings. The basic seven-week training stage began from March 23. During the training the recruits focused on communication, topography, engineering and other main military skills. After the exercise the recruits will be allocated in different units. After the ceremony a concert was dedicated to the military servicemen.

The solemn ceremony was attended by First Deputy Defence Minister, Vladimer Chachibaia, and Chief of the Joint Staff of GAF, Major General Devi Chankotadze, Land Forces Commander, Col. Koba Lachkepiani and other representatives of the leadership. The leadership of the GAF were satisfied for the preparation level of the recruits. The parents of the recruits attended the ceremony as well.

After the August War, several changes were made in the curriculum. More attention is paid to individual preparation for recruits. The recruits are enrolled

in the Training Centre "Krtsanisi" after an elaborate medical examination. In the event they undergo the five-week training successfully, they move to the second stage, where they have possibility to choose and concentrate on a definite military speciality. Quite a lot recruits are from the occupied territories. Tamaz Metreveli is from the village Nikozi. As he told us, he decided to join the army after the August events. "Despite physical difficulties, I am very satisfied that I serve in the Georgian Armed Forces. Here are a few boys from my region, thus all

volunteers couldn't pass exams. I have great desire to master artillery. If I have the possibility, I want to enter Defence National Academy to become an officer".

After the August War the number of volunteers in order to serve in the army has significantly increased. So competition has increased as well and the selection of recruits is being carried out according to strict parameters.

"Defence Today" wishes great success to the recruits who are making the first steps in the Georgian Armed Forces.

*Malkhaz Topuria*



Major General Devi Chankotadze awards artillerymen

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# “We should concentrate on improving our defence capabilities”

## Interview with Mr. Vladimer Chachibaia, First Deputy Minister of Defence of Georgia

*In modern life in Georgia the role of Defence Ministry has dramatically increased. The future of every citizen depends on peaceful development of events in our country that are in proportional quantity with Georgia's defence capabilities. Last month, Mr. David Sikharulidze, Minister of Defence presented general guidelines and a plan of action proposed by the Ministry of Defence, appropriately named “Minister's Vision 2009” document. We decided to discuss some aspects of the document as well as other very important issues with Mr. Vladimer Chachibaia, First Deputy Minister of Defence of Georgia.*

For a long period of time our nation fought against the Russian Military presence in Georgia, and when it has almost achieved this greatest goal, now, unfortunately, we have to start this very difficult way from the very beginning. Large parts of our homeland are occupied, Russia is building military bases in our territories, a huge number of our citizens are displaced, those who still live near the conflict zones are under consistent pressure and the overall situation is quite vulnerable. Does the Government of Georgia have a comprehensive and all encompassing plan to meet all these challenges, put country back to normal ways of development and, what is the most crucial, to restore its territorial integrity?

I am hardly authorized to talk by name of the whole Georgian Government, but I can express my own opinion on this issue. After the August war very hard period of time for our country has begun, especially since it was accompanied by world economic crisis. But every problem has its solutions. In our case, when we have very strong and big rival, we should put emphasis on diplomatic and political aspects of problem-solving. Also it is very important to pay an essential attention to the economic development, because strong economy is always most important basis for strong army. Economically powerful Georgia will be attractive for Abkhazians and Ossetians as well. As it was said by Sun Tzu, the Chinese Philosopher, good commander wins war without fight. Economic development is exactly the mean, by which we can win the war without fighting. I want to mention that big ongoing process of state degradation is now in Russia. We should use this moment - create strong economic basis in our country, provide our citizens with better way of life and became interesting and good-looking place to live. Simultaneously, we should concentrate on improving our defence capabilities, in order to answer any possible threat properly.

“Minister's Vision 2009” is a very rare, if not unique, exception among conceptual documents, which gained the unequivocal approval of society. Politicians, as well as diplomats and experts, noted that there are very clear and exact targets laid in this document out. Everyone expressed hope for realization of priorities put in the document that will certainly enhance country's defence capabilities and security situation. What do you think? Do we have all the necessary resources to realize the stated proposals?

This document was based on the analyses of our abilities, of what can be exactly done for development of our country and its Armed Forces. Neither of the articles or priorities, presented in the “Minister's Vision 2009”, is without very real calculation. Every priority pointed in the document – education, defence management, enhance of GAF

capabilities or NATO integration, is financially estimated and allowed by the Defence budget. We will soon find the tangible outcomes of these proposals. For example, to talk about the education, that is my special sphere of interest, we have very ambitious plans, result of which will be seen for everyone in the nearest future, and, I hope, we will

Georgia's North-Atlantic integration?

NATO doors are always open for any country. About us the main point is to meet NATO standards by both - civil and military - aspects. Concerning the military and defence sector, we do our best to enhance our interoperability with Alliance demands by improving technique, armament, education, social issues, and personnel management and so on. We have different issues in this direction and work to accomplish them. Besides, we always try to participate in NATO-led operations and trainings. So, we continue our effort to integrate into North-Atlantic Organization and hope to achieve this goal in mid, if not near, future.

The Ministry of Defence also emphasized the importance of bilateral

partnerships and Georgia's increasing role in international peace-support operations. Now it is already been decided to send a Georgian military in Afghanistan, taking into account the very difficult situation in this region, I hope, our effort will be properly appraised. Do we expect some real outcomes from this decision?

Such issues always need political decision. Nowadays this decision is not completely received. If it will be decided we will send company-size unit in Afghanistan. For Georgian soldier Afghanistan will not be assignment of special difficulties. I mean, our soldiers have already received similar and very important experience in Iraq and now Afghanistan will become for them just another place to develop their knowledge and abilities. What about situation in Georgia, I may say that we don't have today such an alarming situation in the county that doesn't allow us to send our company in foreign operations. Georgian Armed Forces today are able to protect their homeland and answer adequately to anyone, who will try to disturb our sovereignty. I can't say that our participation will provide tangible assistance to our North-Atlantic aspirations, but still it will be the one small step to our way of NATO integration.

One more question about Afghanistan. Lately, after closing Manas mil-

itary base in Kyrgyzstan, we hear very lot about possible routes for US convoys. One of alternative ways goes through Georgia. Does our government consider agreeing on such proposal; and if we really host NATO base in our country, does it increase our security or enhance risks?

Issues like this should be treated by the state as an act of international partnership. This fact may have double outcome – on the one hand it may enhance our security, while on another hand it may increase some risks as well. In particular, threats from the North will certainly reduce; what about increased risks, it will depend on the policy of the country, or organization, which will decide to put its military base in Georgia.

Our Army was always preparing for stabilization operations that needs particular specific. Nowadays our threat absolutely differs from what we had earlier. This means that GAF is moving on preparation for defence operations. Our soldiers are practicing with whole desire and we also are doing our best to prepare an appropriate infrastructure. This will give us the ability to be always ready and organized for an attack. Today the military commodities available for us satisfy vital demands to protect country. We have in Georgia very difficult terrain. It gives us possibility to achieve maximal effect by economizing strength, especially as we have some technological advance in number of spheres. Today really a lot depends on a country's defence. It is obvious that nothing can be developed in ill defended country. Today, Russia fights with us by informational and physiological means. Even if we had an absolutely perfect defence system, hi-tech technologies and capabilities, just the presence of Russia near our borders would have created problems for our security. Especially when they are standing in Akhgori and building bases in Abkhazia and South Ossetia; it is trouble not only for our security, but for economy as well, as it prevents incoming of foreign investments that is very important for Georgia's development.

Finally, what are your predictions, for nearest future? Some analysts say that there are big chances for conflict escalation in this spring. Should we expect further provocations from separatists and the Russian side and how much is the Georgian State ready to answer such aggravations?

My opinion is that we can't work out anything. But, there always exists “but”. In this case “but” concerns a huge amount of problems that will soon appear in Russia. This, to my mind will force it to concentrate on its internal problems, and even ask for aid to solve them. It tries to catch small, when it loses big. Russia contains approximately 82 subjects, among of which 21 are autonomous republics. Many, if not all, have the ambition to gain independence, especially now when Russia created such a precedent and recognized independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Russia will soon face big problems in Tatarstan, Ingushetia, Chechnya, Dagestan and lot of other republics, which have desire to be independent from Russian Federation. What Russia did in August, was a big mistake that will return to them by the principle of boomerang. I want to remind you of the war in Abkhazia, when they trained Chechen people to use against us, but finally Chechens used gained practice in order to use it against Russia. So, taking into account very painful economic crisis in the country as well, I think that Russia today has the enough problems, not to bolster them. That's why I think that possibility of military conflict escalation with Russia is now very minimal. The fact that Russia talks with us with military and threatening language, it is part of their strategy, to keep us in defensive position, not to have a need for mobilizing additional strength against us, because it doesn't have such strength to meet all the challenges same time.

Ana Alania



have the strongest military educational institute in the region.

That is exactly the subject of my next question. The most appreciated issue highlighted in the document appeared to be the focus on education. What kind of measures are planned in order to improve level of education in Georgian Armed Forces exactly?

First of all we need to settle problems of infrastructure and attract qualified personnel. We plan to develop operative level institute on the basis of Defence Academy that should be Staff and Command College equivalent course. NATO special group, who will arrive in Georgia in June-July period, will help us to fulfill this idea. We will allocate special resources for this course and intend to invite foreign professors. Besides, the serious working has started in order to establish 4 year studying program in Defence Academy. We plan to cooperate with public sector very effectively and support our officers to gain Master's and PhD degrees in civil sector. What about Master's programs on the basis of Military Academy, I hope we will be available to offer this in few years.

One of the priorities put in “Minister's Vision 2009” is the continuing effort to meet NATO standards. Many analysts speculate that the brief August war closed NATO door for us, at least for the nearest future. How do you evaluate the real prospects for

partnerships and Georgia's increasing role in international peace-support operations. Now it is already been decided to send a Georgian military in Afghanistan, taking into account the very difficult situation in this region, I hope, our effort will be properly appraised. Do we expect some real outcomes from this decision?

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## Family Members of Georgian Heroes Killed in the Russian-Georgian War receive Apartments

170 families of Heroes killed in the August war, will receive flats by the initiative of the Georgian Government. The apartments are located in the Samgori region. Construction of Military Town started two years ago, in the framework of the officer's program, the building is already completed; only intercommunication jobs remain. President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, announced this initiative while visiting fatally wounded Leri Lagurashvili's family. It was pleasant surprise for the large family of the soldier. Captain Leri Lagurashvili was a doctor of II Brigade and was killed near Tskhinvali border performing his duty on August 9. His brothers, Levan Lagurashvili and Aleksandre Lagurashvili, serve in Georgian Armed Forces presently.



Family Members of Georgian Heroes will live in new apartments

After visiting Leri Lagurashvili's family, Supreme Commander-in-Chief visited Military Town, where he remembered once again Georgian soldiers fallen in the August war:

"The families of those Georgian heroes who defended our homeland, bravely sacrificing their lives really deserve to have housing in the capital. According to the decision of the Defence Ministry and the Chairman of Parliament, the families of the Georgian heroes will receive apartments... The nation that has such heroes is undefeated."

Heros' family members shared their feeling regarding this new initiative. Thea Tabatadze, the wife of Ushangi Sopromadze (Junior Sergeant, Served in Gori Tank Battalion) said, "We are very grateful to this initiative of President. Our husbands left great pain to us. We,

whose families underwent this pain will live together, it's very good. We will share our emotions, our children will play together, they will know about their fathers and about their heroes. Our sons and daughters will always be proud of it." Shorena Mshvenieradze, the wife of Elgudja Inauri (Sergeant, served in Gori Tank Battalion) is very thankful to the Ministry of Defence of Georgia for finding a job for her. Marina Gzirishvili, mother of Vakhtang Gzirishvili (Corporal, served in the 42<sup>nd</sup> battalion of IV brigade) also shares her feelings. "I welcome, such great attention paid by government to the families of heroes. Current developments are not same as it was during Abkhazian war. I lost my husband there. The government didn't help me then. My Vakhtang was 4 years old.

I grew him up alone. I was both, father and mother. Now he sacrificed his live to his homeland... We welcome this new initiative of government. We express our appreciation to their attention. My Vakhtang had no child, but those children, whose fathers fell as heroes, need care and housing. They must become such heroes, as their fathers. Not only government, but also each citizen should think about it."

The family members of the Georgian heroes will receive flats in November. They will be granted apartments for permanent possession. Heros' families will surely try to ease each others suffering while living together. The State will continue to take care and concern themselves with killed soldiers' families.

*Nino Gogochishvili*

## Defence Minister meets Representatives of NGOs



The usual meeting of the Civil Council on Defence and Security took place at the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. Mr. Davit Sikharulidze, Defence Minister, received the representatives of several non-governmental organizations.

One of the main issues of today's meeting was the prospect of cooperation between the Defence Ministry and NGOs. In accordance with the signed "Memorandum of Cooperation" between the Ministry and civil sector, sides discussed outlooks of further enlargement of the Council format with inclusion more non-governmental organizations in its activities.

As the military expert and journalist, Koba Liklikadze explained after the meeting, the participants discussed feasible projects that can be implemented

in the sphere of civil-military relations. "I had one concrete proposal and everybody shared my ideas. As far as the subject of military journalism has been added to the curriculum at the State University I asked the leadership of Defence Ministry to assign one of the high ranking officials who will deliver the public lectures for the students and talk about the military issues. They will answer all questions and discuss the existing challenges. I think it will be very useful for future journalists to visit the training grounds and see real military life."

According to the Chairman of Civil Council on Defence and Security, Irakli Mchedlishvili, this was a regular meeting that has become a good tradition. "We discussed a variety of issues in-

cluding the ongoing reforms and the prospects of development of our future relationship. This was a very useful and fruitful meeting."

Representatives of MOD and NGOs will continue collaboration on development of strategic documents. The Civil Council will be actively involved in PPBS process (Planning, Programming and Budgeting System), while proposing its recommendations.

The main target of cooperation between MOD and the Civil Council on Defence and Security is to provide democratic control of civil sector over the Armed Forces.

Similar meetings between Ministry of Defence and non-governmental organization will be organized regularly in the future.

## Matthew Bryza meets Georgian Defence Minister

At the meeting with the Georgian Defence Minister, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Matthew Bryza declared that Georgia will enjoy the active support from the new administration of the United States of America.

Mr. Matthew Bryza held meeting with the Georgian Defence Minister, Davit Sikharulidze. The meeting at the Defence Ministry was attended, by Ambassador of the USA to Georgia, H.E. Mr. John F. Teft and US Defence and Army Attache Col Matthew Brand from the US side and by the Deputy Defence Minister, Giorgi Muchaidze from the Georgian side.

At the meeting the sides discussed the Charter on Strategic Partnership

signed by Georgia and the USA, also, issues related to the defence and security cooperation between the partner countries and assistance programs in this field. One of the topics of discussion was current security environment as well.

The sides talked about the process of Georgia's integration into NATO and means of implementation of the Annual National Program. The Georgian Defence Minister reviewed mechanisms for increasing the defence capabilities and defence priorities.

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs has several meetings on the agenda. Mr. Matthew Bryza will meet the President of Georgia and the Catholic-Patriarch of all Georgia Ilia II.



H.E. Mr. John F. Teft and Matthew Bryza

## Conclusive Meeting of NATO Experts

A fifteen-person delegation of NATO experts paid a visit to Georgia. The experts held the conclusive meeting at the Defence Ministry. First Deputy Defence Minister Vladimir Chachibaia and Deputy Minister Giorgi Muchaidze received the experts from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The main purpose of the visit was to render assistance to the Georgian Armed Forces in the improvement of training process.

As the sides decided at the meeting, the NATO experts will elaborate the action plan according to which NATO carries on cooperation with MOD in the educational field.

After the meeting Deputy Defence Minister Giorgi Muchaidze made the

following comment, "We had a very interesting meeting with the NATO experts on educational and training issues. In the framework of the visit the experts were informed about the existing educational system. The appropriate assessments will be presented in several weeks, according to which the definite actions plan will be created".

In the framework of three-day visit, the NATO representatives held meetings with the leadership of MOD and the Joint Staff of GAF. The experts also visited the National Defence Academy and the Krtsanisi Training Centre and got acquainted with the training processes.

NATO experts are expected to visit and give consultations to Georgia regularly.

## "Cooperative Longbow/ Cooperative Lancer" Planning Conference

The Final Coordinating Conference, (FCC) for Multinational Training "Cooperative Longbow/ Cooperative Lancer" convened at the Courtyard Marriot Hotel.

The final details for the staff and field training were being discussed at the con-

ference. The conference lasted for three days and was officially closed on March 19. The multinational training will be conducted in Georgia with active participation of the host nation. Field and staff trainings are scheduled to launch in spring.



# Mountain Training Winter Course



According to the principal plan that is signed by Georgia and France, and mainly covers the arrangements for 2009, the winter preparation course for mountain instructors was conducted at Sachkhere Mountain Training School.

Fifteen instructors took advantage of the first training in Sachkhere, and the following exercises were conducted in Bakuriani and Gudauri.

Georgian instructors were trained in skiing techniques and technical skiing, and mastered rescuing the snow slide

victims and crossing the rock obstacles.

The staff of Georgian instructors was manned by two groups. The first group, with nine persons has already undergone three years of mountain preparation courses; hence, the exercises, which started on February 16 was just practice for them. However, it was the first training for the second group, with the number of six instructors.

The instructor of Sachkhere Mountain Training School, SGT Major Paata Amkoladze, noted that the winter

course covered quite an important and inevitable complex program – movement in a hard weather conditions, skiing on a complex terrain and obstacle line arrangement among them.

“We have taken the training course for group leader last year. This year, the retraining course was conducted by the French trainers. They tested our skill levels and preparing quality. We were delivered the pedagogic training course, mainly concentrated on the logical thinking and ability to train another students”- Amkoladze declared.

The trainings were delivered in a rather hard weather conditions. In windy and snow-drifty weather, visibility didn't exceed 10 -15 meters. However, Mountain School instructors always managed to reach the place of destination in time.

Denis Duran – Chief of French instructors, National guide of France, skiing monitor, Instructor:

“We have been conducting those courses for already three years. I supervise winter courses mainly. I can firmly remark that the preparing level of Georgian instructors rises from year to year and is rather progressive. I'm very satisfied with our joint cooperation and results achieved.”

As Mr. Duran noted, in the framework of exchange program, instructors' exchange between Georgian and French mountain schools is planned in 2009 that will support professional level improvement.

From the Georgian side, the trainings are supervised by Major Vasil Kopeikin, 1<sup>st</sup> officer of collective trainings preparing division of Education department. According to him, this three-year course covers mountain training winter program as well as summer one.

“The Purpose of the course is for Georgian military servicemen to be pre-

pared up to the level, to be able to train Georgian units as well as the militaries from the partner countries through the mountain areas. As you know, France is known with its mountain training schools; hence, sharing their knowledge and experience is very important for our instructors” Major Kopeikin declared.

The next stage of mountain preparation program for mountain instructors was launched on February 16 and completed on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March.

David Jokhadze



## Flexible Insurance Service for MOD Personnel

Health is of vital importance to any individual. A lot of us have faced ailments and illnesses and felt their consequences, including the burden of financial expenses. Everyday activities of the military servicemen contain specific risk-factors for their life and physical conditions as well. Risk factors increase in the case of execution of military duty in a state of emergency and force-merger. Proceeding from above mentioned, the economic, moral and physical condition of military servicemen and members of their families' demands particular support and trusteeship.

The Ministry of Defence of Georgia attaches great importance to welfare of the employees, including their social security. MOD has made itself responsible to provide health insurance to the personnel and members of their families and since 2007 the employees have been given an opportunity enjoy the health insurance program.

The insurance company, “IC Group”

has participated in the tender declared health insurance of personnel by the Defence Ministry of Georgia successfully.

IC-Group offers comprehensive health care insurance programs, covering patient charges, payable health care services, vaccination, medications, dental services and other health care services.

**IC Group Offers the MOD personnel and its family members:**

Assistance – 24 hours consulting – free of charge

Ambulatory visit to the family doctor – unlimited - 100%;

Ambulatory visit to specialist – 1000 GEL – 100%

Emergency, acute care – unlimited – 100%

Hospital medical service – 5000 GEL – 100%

Emergency hospital aid – unlimited – 100%

Medicines (only in provider pharmacies) – unlimited – 12%-25%

Pregnancy/ delivery – 800 GEL – 100%

Emergency dental service – unlimited – 100%

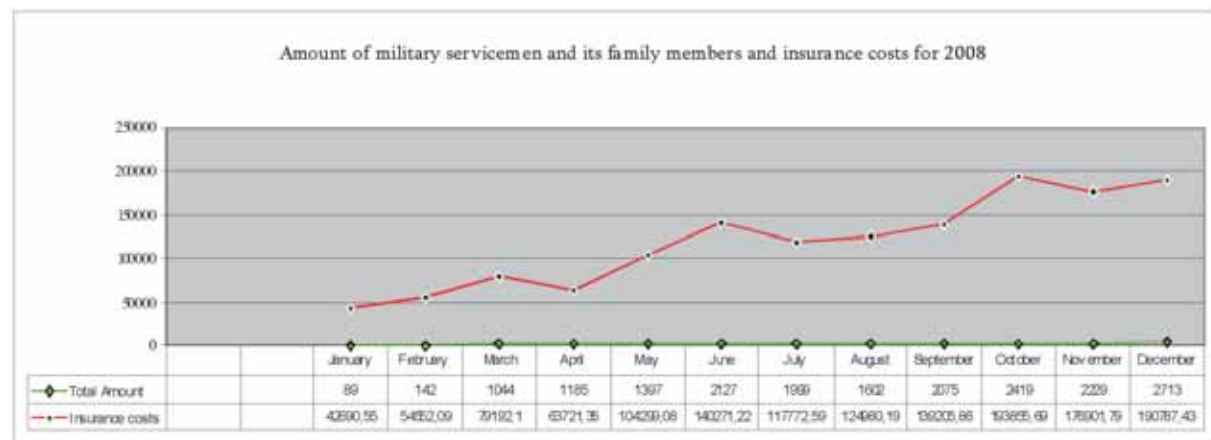
An ambulatory visit to dentist – unlimited – 20%

Life insurance – 7000 GEL – 100%

IC Group provides health care services by cooperating with more than 90 health care providers and PSP and Public Pharmacy drug stores.

According to the actual data provided by the Medical Support Division of the Logistic Support Department of the Joint Staff of GAF, 28 408 people were insured – in total worth of 28, 408 GEL. For the years 2008-2009, the number of insured employees increased and as of late, 31,796 people have an opportunity utilize 5,770,010 GEL for its healthcare.

Eka Komakhidze



## Concert at the Big Auditorium of the Conservatoire

The Demonstrative Military Orchestra of the Joint Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces arranged a concert in the Big Auditorium of the Conservatoire. The military brass band of MOD was conducted by the unique maestro of the Georgian Armed Forces, honored artisan, Col. Pavle Pirtskhalaishvili. Georgian and West European musical compositions were presented in the repertoire. The event was dedicated to March 8, the International Women's Day.

The performance was held in honor of and attended by the female members of the Georgian Armed Forces personnel.



## First Tournament in Judo

The first Judo tournament was held among the military servicemen of GAF at the MOD sports complex “ORBI”. The military servicemen of all units of the Georgian Armed Forces participated in the tournament. According to the Olympic system, win-

Muchaidze, Deputy Chief of JS, Major General, Devi Chankotadze and Land Forces Commander, Col. Koba Lachkepiani.

Khvicha Khaptani – Corporal, the V Brigade, the winner in judo: After being summoned to the army, I thought



ners were lighted in 7 weight classes among the wrestlers and Military athletes acquired medals.

Corporal of the V Infantry Brigade, Khvicha Khaptani won in 96 kg category, Special Operations' Forces Sergeant, Mamuka Mazmiasvili - in 66 kg category, Junior Sergeant of SO battalion, Zura Dogonadze overpowered in 73 kg class, Aleksandre Chakhunashvili, Lieutenant of the Second Artillery Brigade - in 81 kg category, Corporal of the First Infantry Brigade Mamuka Margiani - 90 kg category, Corporal of the Engineering Brigade Kakhaber Murachashvili won in 100 kg category. The winner in the heavy weight class was Battalion Commander of SO Forces, Lieutenant Davit Dardzuli.

The tournament was attended by Minister of the Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport, Nikoloz Rurua, Head of Sport's Department, Davit Namgalauri, Deputy Head of Judo Federation, Davit Berdenishvili and veteran sportsmen.

Winners were decorated with medals by Deputy Defence Minister, Giorgi

I would have left an active sport forever. However, establishment of the army combined team will give me a possibility to reveal my full potential and to defend the honor of the Georgian Army via judo kimono, as well as via military uniform.

Special Operations Forces Officer LTC David Dardzuli, won in the heavy weight class; together with Alexander Chakhunashvili, Lieutenant of the Artillery Brigade, he is the second officer who was granted the highest medal.

David Dardzuli, “For a benefit of professional referees, competition will be increased and the Brigades will gain stronger sportsmen. This fact will significantly assist the army combined team.”

Arbiters of the international category participated in the tournament as well. Head of Sport's Department, Davit Namgalauri on behalf of the Minister of Culture, Monument Protection and Sport, granted presents to the Defence Ministry.

Malkhaz Topuria