



Today Defence

Artillery Day



Artillery has always played an important role in the wars and conflicts of all time. The effectiveness of this combat arm is based on accuracy and specific instructions that finally are decisive for the fate of the distance battle.

The Georgian Armed Forces celebrate the Artillery Day on March 15. In 1993, that day started with bombing of the Georgian units in the vicinity of Sukhumi. The Georgian troops were attacked by the Russian aviation and artillery. After several hours the Georgian troops faced the threat to fall under the siege of the enemy. The Abkhazian units started a massive attack on Sukhumi. The Georgian artillery played a crucial role to win this battle. Since this day the professional day of the Georgian artillery is celebrated each spring.

Nowadays the Georgian artillery is equipped with modern technique and Georgian artilleers are able to undergo the professional trainings abroad.

New dislocation place for the first Artillery Brigade of the Georgian Armed Forces was opened in the beginning of December 2009. President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili, Defence Minister Bacho Akhalaia, Chief of Joint Staff of GAF, Major General Devi Chankotadze attended the opening cere-

mony of the base. "There is an important fact that we were able to rebuilt infrastructure ruined during the war. This is a new base for the First Artillery Brigade, which was created after the war when the existent only one artillery brigade was divided in two new brigades," the Defence Minister said.

The new base was built in compliance with international standards in the course of 8 months. The complex of the base includes barracks, canteen, training centre, gym, stadium, medical centre and administrative building. The infrastructure buildings are equipped with cutting edge technologies.

On March 15th, the Georgian Artillery celebrated the 17th anniversary. A solemn ceremony specially dedicated to the Artillery's Day has been organized at the military base of the 1st Artillery Brigade. Defence Minister Bacho Akhalaia as well as Mod and armed force's leadership congratulated the militaries with this important occasion. During the ceremony artillery subunits' personnel were adequately awarded for the faithful and meritorious service in the army. The soldiers were handed over the medals after "Kakutsa Cholokashvili", "Devoted to Homeland", "General Kvinitat-

dze" and "General Mazniashvili". Within this occasion the militaries were also granted with special certificates and expressed appreciation officially. Along with MoD and JS representatives, awarding ceremony was attended by the Defence and Security Committee members of parliament.

In the course of the solemn ceremony, Deputy Chief of Joint Staff Colonel Arsen Tsukhishvili made an address and expressed his thanks to the artilleers for the successful accomplishment of the assigned mission - "I would like to congratulate all of you and Artillery subunits' servicemen with the 17 years anniversary, who continue fulfilling their tasks even for the present moment". In an interview with journalists Minister Bacho Akhalaia commented as well underlining the high level of preparedness of Georgian Artillery units: "Georgian armed forces has always been distinguished with strong artillery, contribution of which was always huge in all the combat operations known to us. As time passes on, Georgian artillery units become more effective and powerful, which is itself is a continuous process".

The ceremony attendees held a minute of silence in memory of the killed artilleers.

Tea Ivanishvili



New Bill under Discussion

An outdoor session of Defence and Security Committee of Parliament held at the territory of Vasiani Military Base. Members of Parliament dealt with new legislative initiatives proposed by the Georgian government together with Defence Minister Bacho Akhalaia and MoD leadership.

Topics of discussion at the session included several amendments to be made to the Draft Law "On the Defence of Georgia" introduced to the Parliament upon the initiative of the government and Defence Ministry. The Bill envisages improvement of armed forces' structure, control and management capabilities.

In accordance with the applicable formulation of the Georgian Law, national army is composed of Land Forces and Military-Air Forces. Under the Bill presented during the Committee session, Military-Air Forces will be abolished as a separate structural component and integrated with Land Forces. The goal of

the proposed amendment is to enhance interoperability of the two components.

The draft law does not impose financial obligations or any other additional expenses upon the state. Pursuant to the discussed amendment Georgian Armed Forces consist of the following components: Land Forces; Military-Air Forces as integrated with Land Forces and Military Servicemen of MoD, among them the LEPL servants of MoD.

Following the Committee Session, Defence Minister Bacho Akhalaia declared in an interview with journalists that the joint discussions included improvement of army's overall control and management system. "There is a need of speed, flexible and operative troops triggering the necessity of merging these components together to ensure the better coordination under a single staff. Inter-agency discussions over these topics have already been finished and

is ready to be introduced to the parliament", said Minister.

"Consideration over the abolishment of Air Force and unification with Land Forces is underway. The proposition does not envisage dismissal of the military personnel. As there is no need of operating surplus of military staffs, it would be better decision to cancel Military-Air Forces as a separate structural component of army. If relying on the experience gained during the war, Air Forces plays an important role in the operations of Land Forces. For example, Canadian Air Forces Aviation Command does not operate, though Canada has a strategic aviation. We are pioneers in this undertaking and believe that this kind of change will facilitate the management process during military operations. These are the basic motives why the Parliamentary Committee welcomes the proposed initiative", stated the chief of Security and Defence Committee of Parliament Givi Targamadze.



INSIDE

▶ **Minister's Vision 2010**

▶ **Funding for Coalition Troops in Afghanistan**

▶ **The Seventeenth Anniversary of Victory**

▶ **Instructors Preparation Course Finished in National Guard**

▶ **Seminars in Public Affairs**

▶ **Contract Service Ensures Successful Military Career**

Minister's Vision 2010



The Minister of Defence of Georgia has worked out the new document of "Minister's Vision 2010" that provides general guidance for the Ministry of Defence, Joint Staff and Georgian Armed Forces for 2010 and highlights main prospect for the next year. "Minister's Vision 2010" intends to meet simultaneously, several issues - answer the demands of established reality, consider learned lessons and present important decision for long-term development.

The present document "Minister's Vision 2010" is a part of Georgia's de-

fence planning cycle, aiming to set specific priorities for gradual development of Georgian Armed forces (GAF) to ensure the most efficient response to security challenges facing the nation.

After the 2008 Russian aggression it became imperative for the Ministry of Defence to take immediate actions and eliminate identified shortfalls resulted from the August war, and this need was reflected in "Minister's Vision 2009"

Because of the new realities emerged after the war, review and update of all existing strategic documents for defence planning (National Security Concept,

Threat Assessment Document and Strategic Defence Review) have become vitally important. Until the process is completed, the "Minister's Vision" has gained particular significance, serving as a guiding document that sets specific goals for the defence system development within a short-term period.

The Ministry of Defence realizes the decisive importance of systematic and balanced approach towards reforms for successful defence transformation process to take place that addresses constant and gradual development of all defence system components.

The efforts of the Ministry of Defence are directed towards strengthening peace, modernizing Georgian Armed Forces and contributing to NATO integration process. Incorporating these priorities into the current year planning process is the primary goal of the "Minister's Vision 2010" document.

In the elaboration of the document, the Ministry of Defence took into consideration the Lessons Learned from the previous years whose thorough analyses and subsequent recommendations will significantly contribute to successful implementation of the defence transformation process.

"Minister's Vision 2010" identifies four fundamental directions for defence system development (*defence capabilities, defence system management, education and human resource management, NATO integration and international cooperation*). Fulfillment of specific priorities within these directions will considerably contribute to meet the objectives set for the Georgian Armed Forces.

Enhancement of defence capabilities and development of GAF capabilities are critically important for peaceful development of Georgia. The GAF should be capable of accomplishing the missions and tasks defined by the Georgian Constitution and "National Military Strategy". Therefore, the primary mission for Georgian defence policy is enhancement of deterrence capabilities that will support effective defence of the state from external threats and thus will

contribute to peaceful development of the country.

Improvement and refinement of defence management system is an important component of Georgia's defence transformation, i.e. transformation of GAF into a force suitable for responding to modern challenges and tasks. In this respect, in order to steadily develop the defence system, it is crucially important to maintain "institutional memory" in MoD and GAF. It is necessary to conduct institutional reforms in the field of defence management that will ensure GAF development and support for NATO interoperability. In this direction, the most important priorities are Lessons Learned System, Strategic Defence Review (SDR), Interagency Coordination, and Structural optimization, Cooperation with the Civil Society, Evaluation and Reporting System etc.

Human resource management, establishment and development of an effective education system are among the main factors for effective functioning and development of the defence system, and serve as a necessary precondition for GAF modernization and transformation processes.

NATO integration represents one of the main priorities for Georgia's national security policy. In this regard, effective functioning of all state institutions is of great importance. One of the main priorities for the Ministry of

Defence is ensuring NATO interoperability of Georgian Armed Forces. Additionally, successful implementation of the commitments undertaken in the framework of the ongoing cooperation formats (NATO-Georgia Commission and Annual National Program - ANP), enhancing bilateral cooperation with NATO member states and active participation in international peace support and stability operations are among top priorities for Georgian Ministry of Defence.

The "Minister's Vision 2010" document defines the main priorities and directions for the MoD of Georgia and serves as the guiding document for the leadership of the Ministry of Defence and the Georgian Armed Forces.

After the "Minister's Vision 2010" enters into a force, relevant structural units of MoD and GAF will elaborate action plans needed for implementation of this document. The status and progress of those plans will be reported to the MoD leadership on a regular basis.

Document says that MoD will pay particular attention to the implementation phase of the guidelines provided by the "Minister's Vision 2010" and welcomes involvement of wider society in ensuring that ongoing reforms in GAF are done successfully.

Irakli Gurgeni



Funding for Coalition Troops in Afghanistan



United States Department of Defence announced official statement. DoD has notified Congress about list of countries which will receive special financial aid. These countries are Georgia, Croatia, Estonia, Lithuania, Hungary, Latvia, Yemen and Philippines. Georgia, with above-mentioned countries will receive funds to improve their military capabilities to support troops in Afghanistan. Yemen and the Philippines will receive money to strengthen their militaries inside their countries.

As the Deputy Defence Minister of Georgia Nikoloz Vashakidze stated assistance, which is mentioned in U.S. DoD statement means to support Afghanistan mission by carrying out effective trainings and equipment process. "This is an aid which will be used to conduct Afganistan mission successfully", stressed Nikoloz Vashakidze. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates notified Congress in a March 22 letter of the 10 programs that will receive funds this year.

The Seventeenth Anniversary of Victory

Deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze and the chairman of the Legitimate Government of Abkhazia Giorgi Baramia paid a tribute to the memory of Georgian heroes fallen for the territorial integrity of our country. They laid a wreath at the memorial of the Georgian heroes who made supreme sacrifice for the territorial integrity of Georgia.

On March 16-17, already seventeen years have passed since the Georgian Army showed a steady resistance to the

full-scale attack on Sukhumi by the Russian military forces, Kazaks and hired North Caucasian fighters. In 1993 Georgian Armed Forces successfully repulsed the attack along the river Gumista. "17 years ago, on this day Georgian Military Forces achieved a serious victory. Of course, this day is very important for the entire Georgia; but this event deserves special attention from the Ministry of Defence as it refers to the military victory. This example, this event is such a psychological and spiritual ba-

sis, on which we build our military forces up. It also gives us hope that we will have strong and effective Armed Forces - always ready to protect our homeland," stated Nikoloz Vashakidze.

According to the statement of Giorgi Baramia, this date has a historical importance for the whole Georgia - "In 1993 our honourable patriots put up worthy resistance to the enemy which was mobilized with relatively more forces. I want to pay a tribute to their memory once more".



Instructors Preparation Course Finished in National Guard



As a result of experience received in 2008 Russian-Georgian War, the existed reserve system became necessary to be reviewed, which will be oriented to quality and effectiveness rather than quantity of reservists. Reservists as assistance and qualified force have to take important part in development of armed forces, protection of state territory and population, also helping civil society during various ecological disasters. In order to achieve the above mentioned aims, number of personal and structural changes took place in the National Guard Department. The new document "National Guard's Vision" was elaborated and training programs were sophisticated. According to the new struc-

ture, reserve includes two – voluntary and compulsory reserve system, which will be prepared for combat, relatively equipped and effective. Both kinds of reserve systems will be called up for instruction gathering, during war time and emergency situations.

National Guard Department firmly cooperates with the Guard Commands of NATO member and partner countries. Within cooperation the counterparts share experience and inculcate new elements. National Guard Department establishes tight relations with Danish Internal Guard. Within the bilateral cooperation between Georgian and Danish Defence Ministries, the first stage of instructors' preparation initial

course was undergone. Under the program Danish instructors delivered both theoretic and practical trainings for the Georgian militaries aimed at acquiring the necessary skills in the methods of instructor training, as well in shooting, communication, installation program and military service regulations.

At the end of the training program the closing ceremony was held in the 2nd Infantry Brigade's military base located in the town of Senaki. The servants successfully completing the course were granted with certificates close to the NATO standards. The event was attended by the National Guard Department Chief Zurab Arsoshvili, as well as the MoD and JS leading officials.

"Guards of Georgia and Denmark have established firmly and friendly relationship. We have planned joint trainings; one of which was the trainings on Senaki military base. The aim of the training was to prepare instructors, so they will be capable to prepare Georgian servicemen in the future. The certificates they were granted close to NATO standards. Danish instructors have carried out the same kind of course in many other countries; among them are NATO member countries. I would like to congratulate participants on the successful completion of the course. I also would like to express my gratitude to our Danish guests, as they have shared their experience and skills," Zurab Arsoshvili said.

Innovation was also planned during the course. Not only militaries but also civilians were able to participate there. This time four collaborators of National

Guard Department underwent the instructors' preparation course. As the colleague of Guard Department Administration Giorgi Gomarteli noted the course was very interesting. They mastered in planning and training methods. They underwent theoretical and practical exercises. They would use the received experience for reservists' preparation.

"I find the course very important. Instructors delivered new methods of training and necessary skills. We have shared our own practice and experience to Georgian colleagues", stated the Head of Danish Instructors Group, Captain Karen Pedersen.

The training course covers four stages and will successively last during the whole year. For Future, Danish instructors also plan to deliver Georgian militaries platoon commanders' course.

Eka Gakhokidze



Seminars in Public Affairs

On March 17, the Public Affairs Seminar was opened at the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. Trainings were organized within the frames of bilateral cooperation ongoing between Georgia and Estonia under the auspices of Ministry of Defence and Embassy of Estonia to Georgia. The three-day seminar hosted by the Georgian Defence Ministry was conducted under the guidance of the Estonian public affairs specialists. The main goal of the training was to prepare staff officers and civil servants in Public Affairs for the Georgian mission in Afghanistan and sharing Estonian experience. Opening of PA seminars was attended by Military Attaches of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Republic of Estonia. The workshop was opened by the Estonian Ambassador to Georgia H. E. Mr. Toomas Lukk. In the course of the event Estonian diplomat touched upon the importance of delivering the accurate information to the society.

The introduction part of the seminar was followed by a video statement of the Minister of Defence of Estonia. Estonian Minister of Defence Jaak Aaviksoo greeted the participants and wished them fruitful training. In his remarks, the Estonian Defence Minister outlined the importance of the ISAF mission and the role of communication in this regard. "In modern world it is complicated and Defence forces are the parts of securing our country's security as well as that do our allies. In increasingly important role is taken by communicating what the military do, what their aims are, how they do, how

they behave, what their problems are. So it is a topic of communicating, talking to your people –both in the areas of your mission as well as back on. It's increasingly clear that the success of the allied forces in Afghanistan is depended on the support back on. How Americans, Germans, French, Estonians and Georgians back at home support the military missions in Afghanistan is an important part of your mission in Afghanistan as well as that do our allies. It has to be an active position. In modern world, people expect to get the news first and as fast as possible, as openly as possible. Military of course is about military secrets but it has also TV accompanied by openness to tax pays to your people, to the peoples of your allies as well as Afghan people and asks from the military to be able to communicate, to be open and at the same time to secure your military interests as well as secrets. So the information officers, public relation officers in the ranks of military carry out very, very important role. This is our experience both back at home as well as in the missions and on the shoulders of those people for one of the heaviest loads all together because military missions are always accompanied by losses. Communicating the losses, people, to your fellow military as well as the relatives – is an important task that has to be carried out by the militaries themselves of course in addition to the political issue of your country. We know here in Estonia that you are going to Afghanistan, in the southern part of Afghanistan which is the hardest part



in that complicated area. We are going to fight there together. We know it is not going to be easy. Fortunately, we can ensure that success will be achieved in short perspective. Your commitment, your understanding how complicated the situation is, your ability to communicate both to your military as well as to your people back home to the families of military is utmost importance. I wish you every success in developing your capabilities of strategic commu-

nication, of practical PR work in the ranks of military as well as in the Ministry of Defence. We are glad that we can fight side by side with you and more than forty other nations in Afghanistan. I wish you every success on behalf of the Estonian Ministry of Defence and the Estonian government".

The program participants were representatives from Public Affairs offices of Ministry of Defence, Joint Staff, as well as from various governmental

structures, military servants and journalists working on military issues. The topics of the seminar included the role of media in conflicts, NATO public Affairs, ISAF public affairs structure, Estonian experience, governmental communication and crisis communication. During the first two days the participants received the theoretical training in public affairs field that was followed by the practical part on the third day. The seminar was closed on the 19th of March.

Contract Service Ensures Successful Military Career



Major Irakli Tavdgiridze.

Contract base military service lasts for four years, which includes two stages. Both of them are paid. The first one proceeds for nine weeks called Basic Combat Training (BCT), after which all recruits become corporals. In case the recruits overcome this stage positively, they move to the basic one. During four years military service recruits master in different specialities, including infantry, artillery, tank and so on. According to the decision of the commanders of each unit those servicemen who show their worth are sent to

NCO School where they undergo different trainings and are granted rank of Junior Sergeant, than they go through some other steps till they reach the rank of Senior Sergeant.

In accordance with the decision of commanders of each unit the worthy servicemen are proposed to learn any foreign languages on the local base or abroad. Mostly Georgian militaries get education in the USA, Baltic States, Turkey or other European countries. There they continue mastering in the same specialties they have learnt in Georgia. After courses abroad all soldiers increase their military level. "The most positive side is that after educating abroad, most servicemen are given possibility to participate in peacekeeping operations. Earlier

This year Ministry of Defence of Georgia once more announced manning of the Georgian Armed Forces and invited the citizens of Georgia to join the contract based professional military service, which lasts during four years. Only the citizens of Georgia within 18-35 ages are able to serve for the professional military service.

This year the number of volunteers to serve in the contract based professional army was quite high. The volunteers were chosen after examining physical tests and health conditions. The most important is that many females were also very interested in joining the contract military service

and all of them passed physical tests positively. They have great desire to serve for Georgian Armed Forces. "This year so high activity ensues from more interest to serve in the contract based military service. While conversing with recruits, all of them mentioned that first of all they aspire to serve in the Georgian Armed Forces. Except this, the messages in the announcement explained that joining the Armed Forces is perspective and stable job for future life. Military servicemen in Georgia have many perspectives like mastering in foreign languages or getting education abroad", said the commander of National Training Centre "Krtsanisi"

these missions were in Iraq and Kosovo, now it is in Afghanistan. Georgian soldiers go to peacekeeping missions by their desire. Serving in such operations it is huge experience for soldiers. The recruits who undergo this contract base military service will be sent to Afghanistan. Because first of all, they are formed as a person, then they serve for their homeland and are highly paid as well", mentioned Major Irakli Tavdgiridze.

During four years in service military servants receive high salaries, are provided with modern equipment and adequate nutrition, enjoy free medical service with whole family, social and legal guarantees. Military servicemen also get monthly salary within 600-700 GEL.

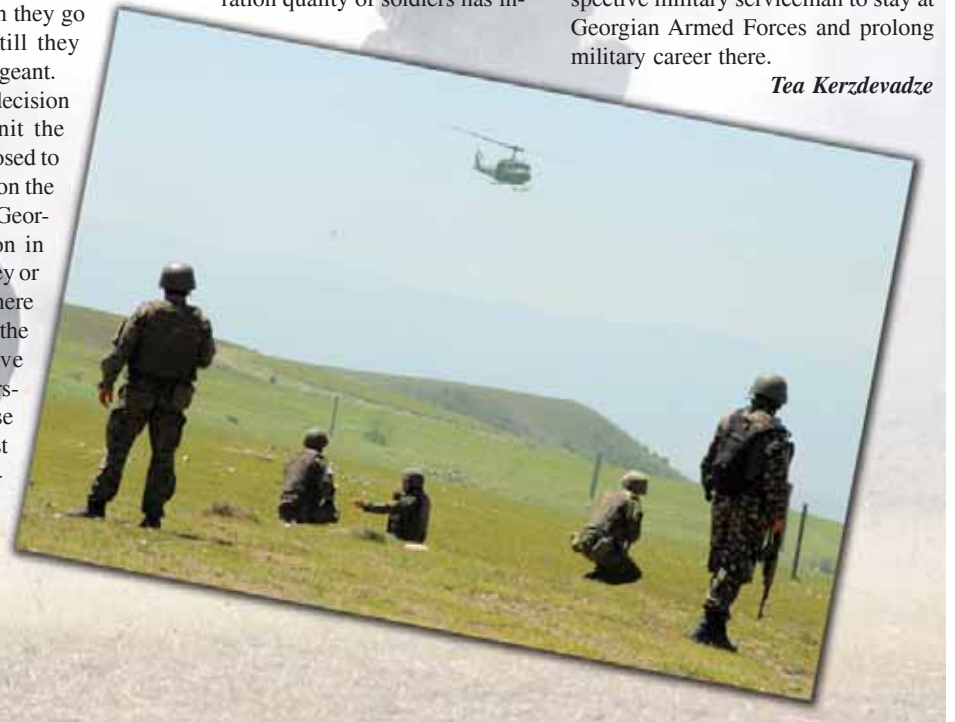
Contract base military service has been existed since August 2, 2002. The first combat base service was Commando Battalion. It replaced compulsory military service, after which the preparation quality of soldiers has in-

creased. By this kind of service Georgian Defence structure maintains professionals. As after year and half compulsory service, prepared soldier left the army. But nowadays during four years military service Georgian Armed Forces keeps professionals who get monthly reimburse.

As Senior Sergeant of National Training Centre "Krtsanisi" Koba Tsirekidze said, the contract base military service makes a person successful military serviceman. During four years one can improve his career as an officer by entering the National Defence Academy.

After finishing the first four years of combat base military service, volunteers are able to continue the same program for four or two years by their wish. In this case militaries undergo the same course but without BCT program. Generally, after finishing the combat service Commanders always offer perspective military serviceman to stay at Georgian Armed Forces and prolong military career there.

Tea Kerzdevadze



Bilateral Country Planning Conference



US-Georgia Bilateral Country Planning Conference finished in Tbilisi Marriott Hotel on March 19, where Georgian and US high-ranking officials discussed the issues over the cooperation in military and security spheres. During the three-day meetings the American side offered the presentations to the Georgian colleagues on assistance in military sphere, including training and equipping, ISAF deployment and security cooperation and assistance action plan for 2011 fiscal year. This meeting is held annually twice a year - in autumn and spring.

At the conclusive meeting of a three-day conference, the sides agreed on the concrete cooperation priorities for 2010. Education and coordination of management were considered the main issues, in which the American side will assist Georgian militaries. Following the meet-

ing Deputy Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze underlined that the US-Georgia's cooperation is basically orientated on the professional development of the Georgian militaries. "Our priorities for the next year will involve military education and improvement of Armed Forces' control and management capabilities", commented Deputy Minister.

At the conference Georgian side was represented by Deputy Defence Ministers Nodar Kharshiladze and Nikoloz Vashakidze, Mod and JS leadership as well as Border Police representatives. The US delegation members included officials from Defence Department, European Command, Defence Cooperation Service, as well as Marine Corps Trainings and Advisors' Group, the US military Attaché, Col. Matthew Brand and the US Ambassador to Georgia John R. Bass.

At the end of the conference the

American diplomat thanked the Georgian side for its contribution to the global security defence. "We are here to conclude this very important component of our defence and security cooperation and partnership between US and Georgia. We have concluded here today a work plan that focuses on the most important priorities jointly agreed between government of the US and Georgia, namely ensuring that the Georgian battalions that will be deploying to Afghanistan over the next two years have the proper training with proper equipment. I thank Georgia and the Georgian people for assisting us in carrying out this mission", John Bass said.

At the end of the bilateral seminar the sides once more estimated the main guidelines of cooperation in 2010 and planned the appropriate activities of the bilateral agreement directions in 2011.

Tournament in Fighting "Khridoli"

On March 25-26 the second series of team competition "Khridoli" was held in the Sport Complex "Orbi" of Defence Ministry. Various subunits of Georgian Armed Forces competed in seven categories and approximately sixty military servicemen participated in the tournament.

The aim of the competition organized for militaries is promotion and development of Georgian oldest mode of fighting "Khridoli". The tournament was organized with the support of sport-recreation service of Georgian Armed Forces and Georgian Martial Arts Federation. Sport team of Special Operational Forces of GAF deserved the 1st place in the tournament. The winners were awarded with gold, silver, bronze medals and certificates.

"Under the decision of Defence Ministry of Georgia, tournament in oldest mode fighting "Khridoli" started in Armed Forces. The competition makes Georgian soldiers strengthen combat

soul, physical preparedness in order to carry out task perfectly. It is very significant event where around 75 military servicemen from nearly all subunits take participation. The soldiers demonstrated enthusiasm of engaging with full forces in fighting. It is noteworthy, that the Georgian combatants express willingness to recover the ancient fighting traditions, being the main precondition for raising the overall combat spirit among the militaries", stated GAF Senior Sergeant Aluda Kopaliani.

The modern fighting system of "Khridoli" was restored in 1997. It combines several types of martial art like wrestling, boxing, fencing and archery. Fencing and archery additionally learn resistance to the rival with any kind of side and fire arms.

Ministry of Defence of Georgia holds tournament in two types of "Khridoli" - wrestling and boxing. Georgian Armed Forces continue to inculcate types of "Khridoli" gradually in future.

