



The initiative of the Ministry of Defense is to manipulate the citizens with difficult social conditions and use administrative resources prior to elections

According to the statement of the Ministry of Defense of Georgia on August 31st, 2020, the citizens will be written off the debts accrued for various services to the LEPL "Giorgi Abramishvili Military Hospital of the Ministry of Defense of Georgia" since 2009. [1] About a thousand citizens will benefit from this relief. [2]

The government's initiative to alleviate the financial pressure on the citizens is welcomed, but taking this step before the elections leave the impression of manipulation aimed at winning the hearts of the voters. The Minister could do so even

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after the polling day. It should be noted that the time for announcing this initiative is the day before the official start of the election campaign. [3] This is another manipulation. The government thus avoided regulations that prohibit it from using administrative resources at this time. [4] GYLA considers that the use of severe social conditions of citizens for electoral purposes is unacceptable.

[1] "By the decision of the Minister of Defense, the citizens will be written off the medical debt to the Gori Military Hospital" The official website of the Ministry of Defense, 31.08.2020, is available at: <https://bit.ly/32N6A3p>, updated: 01.09.2020.

[2] Ibid.

[3] According to Article 45, Paragraph 1 of the Election Code of Georgia, the pre-election campaign (agitation) starts 60 days before the polling day. Elections will be held on October 31st.

[4] Paragraph 1 of Article 48 of the Election Code of Georgia.