

Levan Vasadze: The strange circumstances of my illness

Before embarking upon the main part of what I have to tell you today, I would like to stress the fact that I do not intend to speculate upon the outcome of my sudden and absolutely strange illness. Nor am I looking to court sympathy. There are so many people in our country who suffer from severe diseases, so many children undergoing chemotherapy, so much distress and mischief around, that under ordinary circumstances I would not even mention my own illness.

But the fact is that this is not a matter only of my personal condition; it has to do with the social and political situation of our country. That is why I feel myself obliged to report to the public, trying thus to preempt idle speculations on the one hand, and on the other hand to allow citizens to make up their own minds based on information from the primary source.

So, to begin: I cannot say with certainty whether this rarest disease, which so strangely coincided with my entering politics, is either definitely random, or definitely artificially caused. I cannot exclude either of these possibilities. And I have already accepted that there is no real hope ever to know the entire truth. But, that does not mean that I don't have obligations towards my family and my country to recall in detail what has been going on during these difficult months, and to reveal circumstances about which the public knows almost nothing.

My confirmed diagnosis is AL type amyloidosis (acquired amyloidosis with myocardial infarction), with a possible secondary diagnosis (multiple myeloma). For final confirmation of this second diagnosis a PET scan with contrast of the skeleton would need to be done, which is impossible at the moment due to my kidney analysis.

In the main, however, whether myeloma is confirmed or not, the severity of my diagnosis will not change a bit. AL type amyloidosis is much more aggressive than myeloma and, according to specialists, the number of plasma cells characteristic of myeloma which have already been discovered in my analyses (I do not give the exact percentage on purpose) already makes quite likely the existence also of myeloma which, as we all know, can be caused by (among other things) radiation and poisoning.

I am talking about all these details, because today I want to catalog the symptomatic and clinical circumstances of my illness. This, together with the facts mentioned above, should leave a trace for those investigators or medical specialists in the future who might be charged with studying my case. I am not a doctor, but I will try to be as specific as possible in describing things, while also doing so in a simple manner so that everyone may understand.

Precisely in the same period of March-April, 2021, when I had begun discussing entering politics (including on the phone), I developed a strange persistent cough. This has continued since, and has become ever more severe.

At first, I did not pay much attention to it, but soon my cough got very grievous, suffocating me, interfering with my speech and sleep, and it was not helped by any medicines I tried.

In April, while I was attending a meeting of the board of directors of our business company in Moscow, my wife asked me to undergo a complete medical examination there. I visited the Treatment and Rehabilitation Center run by Professor Lyadov. The examination lasted two full days and included a complete set of studies, including analyses of all major organs, using all of the most modern equipment and testing procedures. The results are documented.

All my tests returned normal results, except for the decrease in breathing rate during movement. It was therefore recommended that I visit a pulmonologist (a respiratory system expert).

I took my flight back to Tbilisi and went to a very prominent pulmonologist, who prescribed a course of treatment for my cough. But this did not help. On a second visit, which took place a bit later than scheduled, he changed some of the drugs; but my cough only got more severe.

It was already May by this time, after my announcement of entering politics.

Meanwhile, my general condition worsened. I was short of breath at night as well as while walking and climbing the stairs. I had movement restrictions, and finally the swelling of my lower limbs, starting from calves to feet. These conditions progressed steadily throughout May and June. Although I did my usual exercises outside in the fresh air of Kiketi, and observed a healthy diet and lifestyle, nothing improved. Due to lack of air during sleep, I would often spring up in bed, breathing heavily. Soon this became a regular occurrence.

After my second visit to the pulmonologist, my wife asked me to get an abdominal X-ray as well. There, at the hospital, one of the doctors, who also happens to be our relative, did not like something about my liver; however, this was later deemed to be no cause for alarm.

In the meantime, we were traveling around Georgia for regular meetings with our supporters. During this time, I really was not feeling well, and I determined to make a trip to Istanbul for another medical examination at Acibadem Clinic, which I know well. Before I could, however, an incident occurred.

We were in the Guria-Adjara region, on the Black Sea. One morning, I decided to take a swim... and nearly drowned. I only hardly made it back to the shore; I could barely move, and felt as if my heart had stopped, along with feeling all the other above-mentioned symptoms

acutely. My eldest son, Shio-Irakli, stayed with me in the hotel room that night, and he called my wife telling her that I was breathing so rapidly at night, he wondered how I was even able to sleep.

It is noteworthy that three of my friends and political colleagues with whom I was spending time in Guria-Adjara for the last three days of my trip also started coughing. Their cough was suffocating, they were choking while talking, and absolutely at a loss how it all started. Thank God, as soon as I took my flight to Istanbul and they drove back to Tbilisi, I am told their coughing stopped without any trace.

Only my wife and a small circle knew about my trip to Istanbul. I booked my flight ticket immediately beforehand. I was planning to undergo the medical examination and hurry back to Tbilisi for the events on 5th July. [*The author refers to the “Pride” events in the city, and their counter-protests.* — Editor.]

Strangely, however, the very same morning I boarded the plane, all the liberal media outlets were somehow announcing that I had been poisoned and had gone to Istanbul! How the denizens of the liberal echo chamber got this information, what exactly they knew, and why they made such a fuss, would require investigation. I understand that in our country, the State Security Service of Georgia and higher authorities abroad can acquire all kinds of data from individuals' cell phones, with no regard to rights and privacy. But the way information about my illness found its way to the media must certainly be investigated.

I landed in Istanbul on 23rd June and went to the hospital the next day. I had a whole schedule of examinations, and it just happened that the cardiologist was first on the list. According to the medical checkup that had been done in April, you will recall, my heart was supposed to be completely healthy...

I lay down on the table and the doctor started his examination. Suddenly I realized that he was startled, as he left the office and came back with two of his colleagues. They stared at my picture on the device for a long time, agreeing with one another and seemed to look at me sympathetically as a hopeless, desperate patient.

The doctor asked me to get dressed while trying to put on a cheerful face. He told me there was suspicion that I had one of the most severe, incurable and rare diseases there is, called amyloidosis. “I am not a specialist of this disease,” he said, “but I’m sure that you need further medical examination. Even now I can tell you that you have severe heart failure, caused by deformation/thickening of the walls of your heart. There is the glow characteristic of crystals of toxic proteins on the walls and the ejection fraction of the heart (or rate of oxygenated blood release) has decreased to a critical margin [*I again do not mention the exact percentage on*

purpose]. You might suffer cardiac arrest at any time. A more accurate picture can be obtained by contrast-enhanced MRI, which I will schedule immediately.”

He also had for me the news that I might need an urgent heart and liver transplant, and that the patients with such a diagnosis generally have very short life expectancy. He changed the schedule of all my appointments with other doctors and directed me first of all to a nephrologist and a gastroenterologist, so that they could check if deposits of the toxic proteins that he saw in my heart had already spread to other organs, such as the kidneys, liver, and other places. He did not prescribe any drugs, except for a common diuretic, to which I will return later.

And this is where my new path began: the past month and a half full of suffering, of difficult analyses and procedures, of doubts and vain hopes. Another hospital in Istanbul, and three more in Moscow.

Because of the initial fear of cardiac arrest, I immediately turned to much respected Dr. Leo Bokeria. The A.N. Bakulev National Medical Research Center of Cardiovascular Surgery, headed by him, performs the largest number of operations in the world on cardiac arrest – 6,000 a year. I thought that at least in this case I would be able to have confidence in my care while undergoing all necessary medical examinations.

Dr. Bokeria returned my call immediately. He asked me to come for further examination, and, as it is characteristic of him, paid great attention to me, inviting and involving all necessary specialists in consultation. I cannot go without mentioning our great cardiologist, Dr. Ismet Mikeladze, a portly and wise “gurji” man, who, together with his friends showed me and Nino great hospitality and friendship in Istanbul. About my other physicians, headed by a doctor from Israel and including a good friend—a Kakhethian living in America—I will perhaps have more to tell sometime later.

Dr. Bokeria explained to me that since a diagnosis of AL amyloidosis is so very rare, he doubted whether this would be confirmed. With half a century of experience behind his back, he said, he had seen no more than two patients with the condition in his entire life. The primary acquired type of AL amyloidosis (*i.e.*, non-genetic) occurs mainly in older people after undergoing dialysis treatment for many years or suffering from multiple myeloma. It usually manifests itself initially in the kidneys; and my kidneys were clean. Amyloidosis is often found only after death, in corpses during autopsy; and therefore the development of such a disease in a healthy patient in just two months made the diagnosis very doubtful, especially on the basis of only one examination of the heart.

Eventually, however, after the extraction of heart tissue for testing and extensive analyses of blood and urine, the diagnosis would come to be confirmed. But while all these tests were being done, in the meantime, strange things started happening to me.

In spite of a severe psychological blow—imagine my feelings, what it means for a father of eight children, a perfectly healthy man, to hear such a diagnosis—from the day of my arrival in Istanbul my physical condition improved significantly and continued to do so in Moscow.

It all started with the fact that on the first night of my arrival in Istanbul I slept perfectly well. The cough, which had been choking me for three months, completely disappeared. The swelling of my legs also totally vanished, whereas before I hadn't been able even to wear my shoes.

Despite these improvements, unfortunately the terrible diagnosis was confirmed. So, paradoxically, during the past two months, while I have had rather severe psychological stress and have heard nothing but dire warnings about the prospects of my overall health and condition, the feelings and symptoms that I described previously have continued steadily to improve.

The strangest thing is not that my cough has completely gone, nor that my breathing during sleep has normalized, nor that the swelling of my limbs has disappeared, but that my heart's ejection fraction (i.e., oxygen secretion) has also significantly improved in Moscow, compared to what it had been in Istanbul. I do not really believe that it all happened solely due to the single diuretic drug I was prescribed. Indeed, according to the general opinion of absolutely all of the specialists I've consulted, it is totally impossible to explain these effects by that one single medication, which I was taking all the time.

Initially this fact gave rise to hope, among my council of doctors, that perhaps I had already passed the peak of some *other* disease. The first suspicion fell on myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle). Perhaps my heart had overcome myocarditis due to strong physical indicators; the deformation of the inner wall could then be explained by the so-called phenomenon of “a sports heart”—that is, a heart that is used to great physical exertion. Sometimes myocarditis can take such a course.

I was tested for the antibodies indicative of myocarditis but, unfortunately, this theory was not confirmed. The analyses instead rather confirmed the worse diagnosis of amyloidosis. And thus the self-regulation of my cardiac output fraction (i.e., the release of oxygen), along with the disappearance of my cough, the passing of the swelling in my limbs, and the cessation of sleep disturbances, remain unexplained in light of my serious illness.

This is not the only mystery, though. I realized from the very beginning that, perhaps, what happened to me was not accidental; and so, while still in Istanbul, I asked for an in-depth toxicological analysis. I realized that if I was dealing with a high-tech attack, it must be something much more complex than could be ascertained by analysis of liver functions or an imbalance of bilirubin level. But in Turkey I was told that this kind of examination required a court decision, so I let it go.

It's noteworthy that my doctor in Turkey, despite his high level of qualification, seemed somehow reluctant to go further with the case. Maybe, having heard the theory of poisoning from me, he Googled my name, saw my protests against the construction of the Namakhvani Hydro Power Plant (in accordance with the current terms of the HPP contract), which our liberal media had dubbed anti-Turkish, and decided to only be involved with me as far as absolutely necessary and to avoid further engagement. How should I know? Would someone really want a patient to suffer cardiac arrest simply because he'd opposed the construction of a power plant? In any case, I would still like to express my gratitude to my doctor in Turkey who, after only one examination, came to the most accurate yet parlous diagnosis, and thereby pointed me in the right direction for all further medical examinations. However, it is remarkable that I can distinctly remember his insistence that they had no treatment centers for this rare disease in Turkey and that I should consider going to other countries for treatment.

I didn't abandon the idea of a toxicology analysis. Arriving at the Bakulev Center in Moscow, I had a talk with one of my fellow-countrymen who is the head of a leading toxicological service there and a great authority worldwide. He explained vividly how the discovery of "such things" is indeed very difficult. He said: "Imagine that you were hit by a car and the driver ran away, and now you are looking at the fractures trying to understand how this or that happened." He explained that in the case of such an attack, traces of the chemical agent in the body disappear really quickly. Theoretically, something could remain in the hair for a couple of months, but only if some heavy metal salts had been used; however this was no guarantee. I realized that this line of investigation was hardly one I could pursue. I was, first of all, already very bad physically, and secondly, who in Georgia would believe a toxicology analysis carried out in Moscow? So, I abandoned the idea. Besides, I had several even more difficult decisions imminently awaiting me.

Which method of treatment should I choose? Whose care should I pursue, and how? Should I wait for a Covid vaccination before starting treatment, as had been recommended to me, which would mean losing another three weeks while waiting for the vaccine? Or was this too risky, as the disease might spread to other organs in that time? But, then again, I had been warned that in my condition of a weakened immune system and a compromised cardiovascular function, I would likely not survive a Covid infection. On and on, these and other decisions now weighed on me, on top of the very shocking month and a half I'd already had. These were the hardest days.

When I realized that I could not cope with all this, I prayed and asked the Lord to lead me in what to do and how to do it. And so it happened. By the grace of God and with the help of my friends, I was able to come to all the necessary decisions, and so here I am now in the middle of the second week of my treatment. I trust the Lord and gather all my strength for the battle against this disease. I will not give up and will not give in, and I will fight with all my strength. My chemotherapy treatment is a difficult path, but it is one I must take. Your prayers, my dear fellow Georgians and friends from around the world, encourage me and help me gain spiritual strength. They give me the energy to go on. I read comments from you like “everything will be all right, I know for sure!” with a smile and a glad spirit. It is so characteristic of our beloved culture.

One thing I can say for sure: if I had stayed in Tbilisi or, as I had planned, returned from Istanbul before the 5th of July, there is the possibility that all the inexplicable improvements in my health described above might not have occurred. I cannot help thinking that, with the turn of events that took place on the 5th of July, had I been in Georgia, all of the events that happened there would almost certainly have been blamed on me (rather than on the just anger and emotion of our people), regardless of what I did, and I would probably have been arrested. [*The author refers to outbreaks of violence between LGBT demonstrators and counter-protesters during the “Pride” events that day.—Editor*] My heart failure would have worsened, and who knows what the outcome would have been? It is obvious that no one would have seen the poisonous light of the microflora of amyloidosis on the inner wall of my heart in a prison hospital. And then my wife Nino could shout as much as she wanted that her husband had been absolutely healthy....

I thought a lot about whether to share these details publicly or not.

If this has been an attempt on my life, then for whoever tried to kill me, my sharing of these details is instructive for them in the future, as they will learn what they failed to do this time. If, on the other hand, my illness is merely an accident, it’s uncomfortable for me to disturb people by talking about my ordeals.

But in the end I decided I must speak out. First, for security purposes if ever an investigation is undertaken, and second, to reduce the swirl of gossip and second-hand chatter about the whole affair.

Is it possible that in our ill-fated country someone deliberately brought this about? Who would take such a radical action to try to destroy my fledgling political movement? Who would benefit from the continuance of the liberal dichotomy of “natsebi” and “kotsebi” (meaning the United National Movement and the “Georgian Dream”), the perpetual political swinging from side to side all while the country perishes? Is it possible that I and people like me, who oppose the radical LGBT propaganda that is causing so much harm to our country, are viewed as such

a threat to the Left that they would go to such lengths to plan such a thing as a high-tech attack like this? Quite possibly. If this is the case, does it mean that there is still an outstanding order for my liquidation? I ask again, who benefits? Had this attempt worked, how might things develop differently for our country? Nobody knows.

At the same time, it is of course possible that I just happened to fall ill with this rare disease exactly when I entered politics. During all these months, while consulting with doctors, whenever possible I have asked—although I was hardly up to it—the same question: is it possible to cause such a disease so unexpectedly by artificial means? My doctors whom I managed to consult—in the US, Russia, Europe, Israel and Turkey—can neither confirm nor deny this, because the answer to this question belongs to a different field of competence. But the plasma cells characteristic of myeloma, found during perforation of the pelvic bone, and additional analyses of bone marrow, bone particles and blood, clearly show that I at least have symptoms of a disease which can definitely be caused by irradiation and radiation poisoning.

Judging from the very little that I have found out—my time for thorough research has been obviously limited—such poisoning often occurs by admixing isotopic substances in drinking water. After drinking such water, the body becomes susceptible to poisoning through irradiation. This irradiation can be carried out, say, by what seems only to be a video camera on a tripod, or someone with another device similarly disguised or camouflaged. While this irradiation can affect other people nearby, this is only temporary for one not predisposed to more severe effects by the prior isotopic spiking. This might explain, for example, the cough of my friends in Kobuleti that subsequently subsided. It all sounds like it comes from a cloak and dagger spy novel, and perhaps these are all simply fantasies, but is there not enough here to wonder what really happened? Let's summarize:

- How did I suddenly fall ill with this rare disease, that develops over many years, within a mere 2 months—and the 2 months that precisely coincided with my entering politics? After all, I was absolutely healthy in April...
- What explains the sudden onset and subsequent sudden disappearance of a cough very similar to mine in my friends in Kobuleti? What explains the sudden vanishing of my own cough, of the swelling of my limbs and of my inability to sleep, after I left my homeland, even though my diagnosis has been confirmed and all prognoses have been consistently dire?
- What caused the improvement of my heart condition without any new medication other than the one I'd already been taking for so long?
- And, most importantly, how did all liberal media outlets know about my health condition, announcing that I had been poisoned and had gone to Istanbul?

If, in light of all these circumstances, our state and the State Security Service of Georgia remain silent, this will be further proof that something nefarious may have happened.

For now, though, I have to undergo radical treatment for a very dangerous disease, and do it with a damaged heart. I have already lost 11 kilograms and so far I cannot walk much—and this is only the beginning of my chemotherapy treatment. There is no knowing what lies ahead. I have a long way to go and, as one of our fathers said, “on this path is a fairy tale of poetic courage” (Galaktion Tabidze, ‘The Moon of Mtatsminda’).

I feel amazing consolation and strength in my heart. I have experienced indescribable happiness these days. His Holiness called and blessed me. Anyone who has ever experienced this will understand what I’m talking about. (*The author refers to His Holiness and Beatitude Ilia II, Catholicos and Patriarch of All Georgia- Editor.*)

In this world nothing happens by chance: I am writing this letter on the day of remembrance of the chief healer, Saint Panteleimon. May the Holy Great Martyr Panteleimon help all the sick and those bearing burdens, tired and grieving, in our homeland and all over the world!

Forgive me if I have made you feel troubled. Throughout these days, we will continue our public work with our wonderful friends, I hope to share with you a lot of other interesting and encouraging things. I will be in this battle until the end, as my health permits. I refuse to remain in this state, accept the illness or retreat. This is not how a warrior in the heat of a battle to save our culture acts.

Regardless of the reason for my condition, I thank the Lord from the bottom of my heart for His help, and hope for the best. The doctors give me encouragement, and my family and friends support me with love. There is one thing our enemies simply do not understand: that for us, the most important thing is Eternity. Whom then shall I fear?