

## **Archimandrite of David Gareji Monastery says Azerbaijanians closed monastery and do not allow clergymen to enter complex**



Archimandrite of Georgia's David Gareji Monastery Complex Kirion (Oniani) told InterPressNews that Azerbaijanis blocked the desert monastery and the clergymen are not allowed to enter the monastery.

"Border guards of the neighboring country work on the paths without warning and banning signs and the Georgia border guards observe this situation calmly. Today, the clergymen are not allowed to enter the monastery and temples. The Chief of our border sector talked with the chief of the border sector of Karaizi region, nearby Davit Gareji Monastery Complex. The Azerbaijanian explained that there would not be problem if the government of Georgia asked his "higher authorities" to change the situation. "If they call me, the border will be opne," he said. I have informed the representatives of the relevant services of Georgia, but nothing is changing. What is now happening across the unagreed border in Davit Gareji desert is in line of neither international law nor neighboring-friendly relations. The full silence of the government of Georgia and standing with head bowed is surprising. Has the issue of Georgian-Azerbaijani border been settled in this section and the citizens of this country know nothing about? " said Archimandrite Kirion.

According to him, the situation was escalated after the visit of the President of Georgia.

“Salome Zurabishvili, together with three representatives of the Azerbaijani state, visited the Gareji monasteries within the frames of “Europe Nostra”... We do not understand the explanation of the chief border guard, who said that his bosses planned to punish him because he did not was informed about the visit of the President of Georgia in the monastery and he closed the border to save his career,” the Archimandrite said.

— Source: [IPN](#)