



# AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, January 25, 2008

## TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

### POLITICS

#### 1. PROCESSION OF FIRST ARMENIAN PRESIDENT'S SUPPORTERS PASSES WITHOUT INCIDENTS [Aravot, 01/24/08]

After the January 22 rally in Yerevan's Freedom Square, there was a procession headed by the first Armenian president, candidate for RA presidency Levon Ter-Petrossian with the participation of thousands of people. The chairman of People's Party of Armenia Stepan Demirchian, the leader of "Republic" Party Aram Sarkissian, the owner of SIL concern, National Assembly deputy and famous businessman Khachatour Sukiassian, the chairman of the Armenian National Movement (HSH) Party's board Ararat Zurabian, representatives of other political forces moved in the front line side by side next to L. Ter-Petrossian. The procession made its way along central streets of Yerevan, through Republic Square and back to Freedom Square. Throughout the procession, participants kept chanting "Levon".

Despite traffic jams, drivers did not show any signs of intolerance, no incidents took place, and the procession went peacefully as was envisaged by the organizers. It is noteworthy that the number of law enforcers was much smaller this time as compared with the previous similar events.

It somehow reminded the start of the Karabakh movement in late 1980's.

#### 2. RA PRESIDENT GIVES STATE PRIZES TO AUTHORS OF WORKS RECOGNIZED BEST IN 2007 [Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, 01/24/08]

On January 23, RA President Robert Kocharian gave state prizes to authors of works in the sphere of culture recognized the best in 2007. Thus, in the sphere of literature and art poet Davit Hovanness received a prize for his book "New Chronicon," in the sphere of music composer Ruben Sarkissian for his series of orchestra works "What Was Left," "To Its Range," "Requiem for a Ghost," "Der Zor," in the sphere of painting painter Paravon Mirzoyan for 12 landscapes, portraits, miniatures dedicated to Armenia. In the sphere of architecture and urban development, for the building of Yerevan Mayor's Office, a state prize was given, in particular, to structure's architect Jim Torossian. No prize was given to any of seven works presented in the sphere of cinematography and theater.

During the solemn ceremony of giving prizes the RA President said that raising the living standards is impossible without formation of proper cultural atmosphere. For all countries experiencing a transitional period it is important that culture be in the focus of state's special attention. According to him, it is the second time no prize is given in the sphere of cinematography and theater, therefore, one forms an impression that system changes should be made in that sphere.

Touching upon the building of Yerevan Mayor's Office, R. Kocharian estimated it as "impressive, beautiful, and functional" and gave assurance that there are much possibilities for implementing development work in Yerevan center as successfully as possible.

#### 3. PACE DELEGATION TO VISIT ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

On January 28 members of the pre-election mission of the PACE ad hoc Committee on Monitoring of the Presidential Election in Armenia headed by John Prescott will arrive in Yerevan.

On January 29 they will have meetings with the Special representative of the Council of Europe Secretary General Bojana Urumova and members of the OSCE/ODIHR Observation Mission. At the National assembly they are expected to meet with Speaker Tigran Torosian and members of the Armenian parliamentary delegation to PACE.

The same day members of the mission will be received by the President of the Constitutional Court of Armenia Gagik Harutunian and Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission Garegin Azarian. The delegation will also meet with Ambassadors of CoE member states accredited in Armenia.

January 30 individual meetings with presidential contenders are expected. These will be followed by roundtable discussions featuring representatives of non-governmental organizations and mass media. The same day the delegation will be received by President Robert Kocharian.

January 31 the PACE delegation will meet with members of the National Committee of the Television and Radio Company and the Council of Public Television and Radio Company of Armenia.



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The delegation will be received also by Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian and Chief of Police Hayk Harutunian. The same day the PACE delegates will again meet with CEC Chairman Garegin Azarian.

Before to leave they will have a press conference at the National Assembly. The delegation will leave Yerevan on February 1st.

## 4. OSKANIAN MEETS IRANIAN NEWLY APPOINTED AMBASSADOR [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Iranian newly appointed ambassador Seyed Ali Saghaiyan handed over today the copies of his credential to the Armenian Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian.

Armenian Foreign Ministry press service told Armenpress that during the meeting the minister wished success to the ambassador in the implementation of his high mission and noted that Armenia underscores the close partnership between the two countries.

Referring to the current level of Armenian-Iranian relations Oskanian noted that Armenia highly assesses the development of bilateral relations. The sides noted that in this respect the visit of the Iranian president to Armenia in October 2007 gave new impetus to the development of Armenian-Iranian relations.

During the meeting the ambassador also expressed his pleasure over the partnership between the two countries and assured that he will do his best for the consolidation and more development of relations.

## 5. PRIME MINISTER SARKISIAN CAMPAIGNS IN SYUNIK [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

"I want to become president of Armenia with your support because I want to make this country a better place for my and your grandchildren to live in," prime minister Serzh Sarkisian told a crowd in Spandarian village of the southern province of Syunik on the second day of his election campaign on Wednesday.

Sarkisian said 20 percent of Armenians are still poor but he added if a comparison is made with an Armenia 5-10 years ago the differences are tangible. He said the government will eradicate poverty by 2012.

In the town of Sisian the prime minister told a crowd of local residents that a month later they will go to polling stations and before they cast their ballots they should recall what each of the presidential candidates has done for this country.

Sarkisian pledged to help double household incomes within five years in the event of his victory in next month's presidential election.

"That pensions, wages and all other social expenditures, our GDP and state budget will double by 2012 is beyond doubt," he said.

Sarkisian then traveled to Goris and Kajaran. The latter is home to the biggest metallurgical plant in Armenia producing molybdenum and copper. Today he will meet with voters in Meghri, Agarak and Kapan.

## 6. OSCE OFFICE SCREENS TRAINING FILM ON ELECTION PROCEDURES [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

An OSCE-sponsored training film for precinct electoral commission members was presented in Yerevan today.

The film explains election procedures in line with the Electoral Code and Central Electoral Commission (CEC) decisions. It was produced under a project of the OSCE Office in Yerevan together with the Armenian Public Relations Association (APRA) and with the help of the CEC.

The Head of the OSCE Office, Ambassador Sergey Kapinos, the Chairman of the CEC Garegin Azaryan, and the Chairman of APRA, Ara Saghatelyan, took part in the event.

## 7. TAMAZIAN PRESENTED THE FUNCTIONS OF A WORKING GROUP SET UP BY PROSECUTOR [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

The deputy of the Armenian chief prosecutor Aram Tamazian presented today the functions of a working group set up for prosecutor control of the elections. He noted that all the grounds exist to say that on the basis of gathered positive experience of the working group set up during parliamentary elections the new one will give an opportunity to quickly respond to the reports, statements about frauds, their discussion and right evaluation.



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The working group has been created with the January 21 decree of the chief prosecutor Aghvan Hovsepien.

A. Tamazian also informed that 6 officials have been sent to USA to study their experience in election frauds their disclosing.

## 8. ARMENIA RESPONDS TO AZERI WAR RHETORIC BY EXERCISES AND REFORMS [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Chief of the general staff of the Armenian army said today Armenia should not underestimate Azerbaijan's military potential, but he added that unlike Azeris Armenians are working constantly to beef up their armed forces.

Colonel-General Seyran Ohanian, a former chief of Nagorno-Karabakh defense ministry, said Armenia responds to unceasing war rhetoric of Baku by conducting military exercises to raise the army efficiency and enforcing reforms.

Seyran Ohanian was speaking at the meeting of the scientific board of the Yerevan State University. He reminded that on January 28 Armenian armed forces will mark their 16-th anniversary.

## 9. LORD RUSSELL JOHNSTON TO VISIT AZERBAIJAN AND ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Lord Russell Johnston, head of the sub-committee on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) will pay a visit Armenia and Azerbaijan in the first half of February.

"I am planning to visit Baku on 8 February, and later Armenia to observe the presidential election," Lord Johnston said Trend on 24 January.

The Sub-committee on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe was established in spring of 2005 as a body exercising control over the implementation of the Resolution (Resolution 1416) of the organization on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

The agenda of the meetings have already been coordinated with the presidents and parliament chairmen of both countries. He is expected to hold meetings with the leaders of the political parties. Though the election period is not suitable to discuss the regulation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict I am planning to discuss these issues with the leaders of the both countries, he said.

"We do not deal with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, it is the OSCE Minsk group that tries to solve the conflict," Johnston said.

"Our task is to improve relations between parliamentarians, especially to let them hold negotiations instead of accusing each-other. I want to make sure that the leaders of both countries consider our work useful," Lord Russell Johnston said.

## 10. SERZH SARGSIAN CONTINUES MEETINGS IN SYUNIK [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Armenian Prime Minister, candidate for presidential elections Serzh Sargsian continued today his meeting with the people of the Armenian province of Syunik. In Meghri S. Sargsian said that by arriving in Meghri in the beginning of the campaign he showed that the province is very important for him.

"Our country has a brilliant future, people are worthy to have a better life, I am sure that together we will be able to build a better Armenia. I am fully sure that there exists an important condition for building a better Armenia— we must believe in that idea," he said.

According to him, the biggest issue of people of Meghri is that they are cut from the capital.

"Time will come when other Armenian towns and Yerevan will be connected with a shorter road, for that we must also regulate our relations with neighbors," he said.

"I also want that people get rid of the psychology of poor people. Here not only financial issue exist but first of all psychological and it must be overcome. Today in Armenia men do not have problems with having work but with our activity we must create relevant working conditions. The state will do everything to make people live a worthy life," Sargsian said.

Serzh Sargsian also met people of Kapan, Agarak, and Tsav village.



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## 11. ARMENIAN DELEGATION ADDRESSES QUESTIONS TO PACE [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

The delegation of the Armenian National Assembly participated in the works of the PACE session and directed questions to the Slovak Foreign Minister Yan Kubish.

Armenian National Assembly press service told Armenpress that member of the Armenian delegation Raffi Hovhannissian asked to present the position of rapporteur of PACE culture, science, education affairs commission on circumstance that Azerbaijan is hindering the visit of fact-finding mission to Nakhijevan to study the condition of cross stones in Jugha.

In response Y. Kubish said that the issue of destruction of cultural heritage in Nakhijevan and Karabakh has many times been raised by the Ministers' Committee which has made statements and called on Armenian and Azerbaijani authorities to establish a dialogue for the solution of the existing issues. The Ministers' Committee has reconfirmed its readiness to support in establishing peace and mutual trust in the region.

During the session the members of the Armenian delegation directed a number of questions to Secretary General of the Council of Europe Terry Davis.

## 12. GHARIBJANIAN MEETS DEPUTY HEAD OF CIS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Armenian deputy foreign minister Gegham Gharibjanian received today the deputy head of the CIS Executive Committee V. Garkun who is in Armenia to observe the coming presidential elections.

Armenian Foreign Ministry press service told Armenpress that greeting the guest the deputy minister underscored the participation of diplomatic missions in the elections and reconfirmed the readiness of the authorities to conduct free and transparent elections.

Speaking about the pre-electoral processes taking place in Armenia, V. Garkun said that he is impressed with the transparency of the political processes and opportunities provided by legislation. He also said that around 150 observers from CIS will monitor the elections.

## 13. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE VAZGEN MANUKIAN TO VISIT MARZES LATER [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

At the initial stage of his pre-election campaign, the candidate for presidency of the RA, chairman of the National Democratic Union (NDU) Vazgen Manukian will present his program provisions and ideological approaches to the public on television and through the mass media, after which he will meet with voters. In his opinion, "the current period requires sensible, well thought-out propaganda". Like in the previous elections, he will pay visits to marzes at the last stage so that voters will be familiar with his program and be interested in meeting him and asking him questions. As for rallies, according to V. Manukian, although rallies are important in terms of conducting propaganda, this importance should not be overestimated as the actual impact of rallies on the final results are less than is assumed. He said that the experience of the previous elections shows that "our people is quite curious, also hospitable", and for this reason Armenians go to listen to the person who has visited them but each of them has his own opinion and is usually determined beforehand whom to elect.

In parallel with organizing the pre-election campaign, the pre-election headquarters of V. Manukian are clarifying the list of persons empowered to act for the candidate. In order to control efficiently the process of elections, the NUD, which has no authority to appoint its members in electoral commissions, has applied to the "Heritage" party, presenting a list of candidates for membership in nearly 100 local electoral commissions. The formation of local electoral commissions will begin on January 24, and "Heritage" has in advance expressed a willingness to provide extraparliamentary parties with places in local electoral commissions, in which the party has no opportunity to appoint members because of insufficient number of qualified candidates for commission membership.

## 14. ARMENIAN MPs PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSION OF KOSOVO PROBLEM AT PACE SESSION [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

The first part of the PACE session started on January 21. The RA National Assembly's delegation composed of Davit Harutyunian, Avet Adonts, Raffi Hovannisian and Vahe Hovhannisian are taking part in the session.

According to the press service of the RA National Assembly, based on the agreement reached by the PACE political groups, Luis Maria de Puig (Spain) was elected as new president of the PACE. In



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accordance with the rotation order of the PACE vice presidents' election, the head of the Armenian delegation Davit Harutyunian will be included in the PACE Bureau in 2008 (the total number of vice presidents is 20).

Lord Russel-Johnston's report on the future status of Kosovo was on the January 22 agenda of the PACE session. In his speech concerning the report, Raffi Hovannisian expressed his disagreement with the rapporteur's idea that Kosovo may not establish a precedent for resolution of other conflicts. In his words, the constitutional and legal bases of Nagorno Karabakh are indisputable. R. Hovannisan called on the say "no" to the use of multiple standards and "yes" to the pivotal principles stated in the report, underlining the necessity for relation of democratic standards and political status. Avet Adonts pointed out in his speech that all conflicts are unique by their nature, require specific solution and may not be a precedent for other conflicts. Conflicts should be settled based on international law, without using double standards. He also spoke about the opinions expressed in the speech of the Azerbaijani delegation's member Ganira Pashaeva and the parallels with the Nagorno Karabakh conflict indicated by her, saying that G. Pashaeva's views have no relation with the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and the Kosovo problem should not become a subject of speculation in discussion of other conflicts.

Raffi Hovannisian was elected a member of the PACE Monitoring Committee by the European People's Party (EPP) group. As a result, Armenia will be represented by three members in the committee.

## 15. RA FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON REFUTES DPA AGENCY'S INFORMATION [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

Vladimir Karapetian, the Spokesperson of the RA Foreign Ministry, refuted the information of the DPA German agency, according to which, the diplomats representing Armenia in Buenos Aires appeared on the list of diplomats of more than 30 countries, against which the Foreign Ministry of Argentina started examination on the suspicion of illegal import of cars. "No Armenian diplomat has ever purchased a car for personal use in Argentina and taken part in any deal pursuing profit," he said to Radio Liberty.

## 16. NO CANDIDATE IS ABLE TO WIN IN FIRST TOUR, ZHARANGUTIUN REPRESENTATIVE CONSIDERS [Aravot, 01/25/08]

At present the political resource of opposition candidates is sufficient for the elections to be held in two tours. Hovsep Khurshudian, the Spokesperson of the Zharangutiun (Heritage) party, said at the January 24 press conference. He said that if the elections end in one tour, it will mean that the authorities have rigged them, as there is no candidate, pro-governmental or opposition, who is able to win in the first tour. Zharangutiun's Spokesperson reminded the journalists that lately the party has called the opposition candidates for unity. "It will be a big mistake if that victorious unification does not take place, as there is a danger of dispersion of votes," he said.

H. Khurshudian said that they will give Zharangutiun's seats in electoral commissions to extra-parliamentary opposition forces, the Armenian National Movement, Hanrapetutiun, People's Party of Armenia, National Democratic Union parties. He added that Zharangutiun declined the request of giving seats to the People's Party, as PP leader Tigran Karapetian has repeatedly declared his being non-opposition but centripetal.

According to Zaruhi Postanjian, a member of the NA Zharangutiun faction, the atmosphere of fear created in the country before the start of the official election campaign preserves up to this day. Besides, she mentioned, the Republican Party of Armenia has started spreading printed materials for the purpose of agitation long ago, which is a violation of law.

## 17. PROCESS OF FORMATION OF POLLING STATION COMMISSIONS STARTS ON JANUARY 24 [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

According to the schedule of preparation and holding of the main events of the February 19 presidential elections, 1923 polling station commissions are to be formed on January 24-27. Commissions' chairmen, vice-chairmen, and secretaries will be elected at their January 28 first sitting.

The authority of formation of polling station commissions is reserved for the higher district electoral commissions, each of members of which appoints one member of the respective polling station commission. Like CEC and district electoral commissions, the polling station commissions are to consist of eight members. In case of not being formed in the established term the vacancies of polling station commissions will be taken by the chairmen of the respective district electoral commissions in a three-day term. The citizens having the suffrage, who have passed professional courses of holding elections by the



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order established by CEC, can be included in the electoral commissions. In difference to CEC and district electoral commissions working permanently, polling station commissions are formed before the elections, in the term established by the Electoral Code and the powers are stopped 14 days after the voting day.

## 18. 14 LOCAL AND 4 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ACCREDITED IN CEC AS OBSERVERS UP TO PRESENT [Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, 01/25/08]

In total, 6928 representatives of 14 local NGOs and 4 international organizations, OSCE/ODIHR, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, CIS Executive Committee, and the Interparliamentary Assembly have been accredited in RA Central Electoral Committee (CEC) as of January 23 for the purpose of carrying out an observation mission in the February 19 presidential elections. NT correspondent was informed about it by Tatev Ohanian, the CEC Spokesperson.

Six out of the 14 local organizations have been accredited in the last 21 days. They are Syunik Civil Society Development Center (80 observers), Youth Scientific-Cultural Center (43 observers), Association of Women with University Education (206 observers), Apaven (210 observers), Unison (13 observers), Helsinki Committee of Armenia (153 observers). The deadline of observers' accreditation is February 9.

## 19. ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE AGAINST KARABAKH [Azg, 01/25/08]

Delegation of Azerbaijani Milli Meclis will raise the issue of Karabakh conflict in the Summit of Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to focus the attention of the Islamic world on the issue, Azerbaijani mass media reported.

It's worth to mention that official Azerbaijan has many times used the tribune of the above-mentioned organization to make anti-Armenian statements.

## 20. KOCHARIAN RECEIVES OUTGOING BRITISH AMBASSADOR [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

President Robert Kocharian had a farewell meeting today with outgoing British ambassador Anthony Cantor.

Kocharian's press office said the president thanked the ambassador for the productive cooperation and wished him success in future.

Robert Kocharian assessed the current level of Armenian-British cooperation as steady and positive.

Ambassador Cantor said he is leaving Armenia with great impressions and intends to return in future.

## 21. AZERBAIJAN HANDS OVER CAPTURED SOLDIER TO ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

Azerbaijan has repatriated today an Armenian soldier who was captured last summer. The repatriation was mediated and supervised by the International Red Cross Committee.

The Armenian soldier, Ambartsum Asatrian, had been in captivity in Azerbaijan since August 2007.

The soldier was handed over to Armenia at 1.00 pm local time at a border section near Armenian Ijevan and Azerbaijani Kazakh.

## 22. SERZH SARKISIAN PROMISES TO TURN ARMENIA INTO "BRILLIANT" COUNTRY [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

Armenian prime minister Serzh Sarkisian promised today a crowd of his country fellows in a Yerevan district to turn Armenia into 'a brilliant' country saying if thy vote for him in the February 19 presidential election, five years later they would be living in a quite different land.

Addressing people in Nor Nork district Serzh Sarkisian said the country made tangible progress in the last seven years, but added it faced also serious shortcomings.

"But when we look into things from the perspective of comparing what we have now and what we had seven-eight years ago, the progress is beyond doubt, although not all Armenians have benefited from it," he said.



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"This sort of meetings inspire me and fill me with warmth, they give me extra strength, but they also panic some people. I urge all of you to avoid being dragged into provocations, I ask you not to retaliate to evil by evil, because our goal is not to get as more ballots as possible, but to take Armenia forward after the election,' he said.

The prime minister cited a string of macroeconomic figures, such as a \$2.8 billion budget, 13.8 percent economic growth last year and increased subsidies to education, health and other social sectors, envisaged by this year's budget, saying these numbers inspire hope that the government is resolute to continue to improve the living standards of all.

Before meeting with voters in this district Serzh Sarkisian visited a local church to light candles. On January 26 he will be meeting with voters in Kentron district of Yerevan.

## BUSINESS

### 23. RUSSIAN-ARMENIAN BUSINESSMAN BORIS PETROSIAN INTENDS TO SET UP VENTURE FUND IN ARMENIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/23/08]

Boris Petrosian, a Russian-Armenian businessman, chairman of Sapphire company (Armenia) and co-founder of Mshak company intends to set up a venture fund in Armenia. Informing NT correspondent about it, he added that he has assisted with development of science and science-intensive technologies in Armenia for 15 years. In Russia he engaged in science-related business, construction and lease of commercial facilities. So far B. Petrosian has invested more than 10 million dollars in Armenia. Besides, the businessman provides assistance to two departments of Armenian technical universities by financing training of students abroad.

In his words, development of Sapphire plant's production is equivalent to Armenia's having large oil resources as the market of this plant is increasing by 40% with every passing year. "I strive so that Sapphire's output will make up 10-20% of the world market. 30 units for artificial growth of sapphires operate at the plant".

"There are plans to synthesize new artificial sapphire-based substances to be used in energy saving and alternative energy technologies," he said. (Substances obtained on the basis of artificial sapphire are also used in mechanisms and optical electronics). He envisages launching production of 5th generation incandescent lamps with the use of new artificial sapphire-based substances. Such lamps use 20 times less energy than similar ones with the same capacity, which are currently in use.

Speaking about the policy conducted by the state, B. Petrosian said: "Unfortunately, after the incorrect privatization process, all wealth that our fathers left for us has been scattered. A state is rich when it has production and exports. Whereas, 90% of the RA National Assembly's businessmen deputies are importers who work for their own profit and against the Armenian economy". In his opinion, a holding to unite non-food industrial plants should be founded in Armenia in order to solve problems related to the use of local raw materials, reduction of production's power intensity, introduction of science-intensive technologies, promotion of exports and ensuring a higher degree of production transportability. "At present, instead of domestically produced molybdenum being bought for 27 dollars a kilogram, it is bought abroad for 250 dollars a kilogram and then brought back to Armenia," he said.

B. Petrosian expressed an opinion that in order to develop science-intensive technologies in the country, the state should apply some assistance mechanisms, particularly, in the form of privileges used in many countries. "In making some investments, I am aware that their result may be seen in a hundred years when I will be no longer alive. However, I do so in the name of the future, and the state should realize that investments in science are made for the future," he underlined. Besides, the businessman pointed out the necessity to create legislative mechanisms banning brain drain and unlicensed transfer and export of intellectual property, particularly, technologies.

### 24. COMMISSIONER OF U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION VISITS ARMENIA TO FAMILIARIZE HIMSELF WITH PROJECTS ON CONSTRUCTION OF NEW NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN ARMENIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/23/08]

The Commissioner of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Dr. Peter Lyons paid a visit to Armenia on January 21-22 in order to see the current state of the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant and to familiarize himself with the Armenian projects on construction of a new nuclear power plant with the aim of replacing the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant.



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NT was informed by the U.S. embassy in Armenia that Dr. Lyons and Armenian officials discussed the ways, by which the U.S. NRC may help Armenia to create a regulated infrastructure necessary for licensing the new nuclear power plant. During his visit, Dr. Lyons met with officials of the RA energy ministry, the RA ministry of foreign affairs, the RA ministry of environmental protection, and the Armstateatomcontrol. He also visited the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant.

## 25. DESPITE HIGH ECONOMIC GROWTH RATES, INFLATION RELATIVELY LOW IN ARMENIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/23/08]

The high economic growth in Armenia in 2007 was accompanied by macroeconomic stability. Particularly, inflation was lower than in regional countries and Armenia's main trade partner states, the RA minister of trade and economic development Nerses Yeritsian stated at the January 23 press conference. In 2007, Armenian GDP grew by 13.8% compared with the previous year, while inflation made 6.6%.

According to N. Yeritsian, industry started developing at high rates: there was a 2.6% growth in 2007, whereas a 0.9% decline was registered in 2006 on 2005. Industrial production without diamond production grew by 8.8% in 2007.

The ministry's monitoring of industrial enterprises showed that in 2007 high growth rates were registered in mining industry - 106.6%, machine-building and instrument making - 128.4%, chemical industry - 120.4%, and in woodworking industry - 103.1%.

## 26. ACCORDING TO MINISTER, ARMENIA'S SHADOW ECONOMY MAKES OVER 30% [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/23/08]

The Armenian minister of trade and economic development Nerses Yeritsian considers that the data on Armenian GDP's growth published by the RA National Statistical Service corresponds to reality. At the January 23 press conference he said that these indices also include the shadow economy (by rough estimates).

In the minister's opinion, the matter concerns a shadow economy of over 30% which is an extremely high index. "By not understanding these figures, one can form a myth which will later result in frustration, as people may have expectation that there are quite large incomes they know nothing about," N. Yeritsian said.

In his words, the promises to "double budgets and increase fourfold salaries", which are stated in various pre-election programs, may result in high inflation if these promises are kept.

## 27. MINISTER EXPECTS FOREIGN INVESTMENT GROWTH [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/23/08]

By the programs on development of Armenia's information technologies, tourism, chemical and mining industries, the RA ministry of trade and economic development expects a growth of investments in these sectors, the RA minister of trade and economic development Nerses Yeritsian said at the January 23 press conference.

According to him, foreign investments amounted to over 600 million dollars in 2007. The foreign investments increased by 58% in nine months of 2007 on the same period of 2006. During this period, the largest investments were made by Russia (175.9 million USD), Lebanon (134 million USD), Argentina (24.9 million USD), the U.S. (21.3 million USD) and Germany (20.4 million USD). Considerable foreign investments were made in the communication sector (VivaCell and ArmenTel companies), air transport (Armenia International Airports), mining industry and metallurgy (ArmenAl and the Zangezur Copper and Molybdenum Enterprise), gas and electricity supply (ArmRusgazprom, the Electric Networks of Armenia).

The minister informed those present that a pilot program has been launched with the aim of encouraging investments in the IT sector. In particular, a program on distant interactive education at schools is being implemented in Syunik marz, with the participation of Microsoft that started operating in Armenia in 2007. A network has been set up between one of the best schools of Kapan and the schools of 5 border villages. The program's results will become evident in 4-6 weeks, while the experience gained will be used throughout Armenia in 1-2 years.

In the words of N. Yeritsian, the creation of Gyumri technopark will be a program aimed at developing a science-based economy. This program with state participation is envisaged by the RA state budget, and agreements on joint creation of the techopark have been reached with the State Engineering University of Armenia, the Armenian State University of Economics, the American University of Armenia, private companies and NGOs. Finnish and Dutch technoparks have given their preliminary agreement on assisting with Gyumri technopark's program.



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## 28. VAHRAM BARSEGHIAN: MANY COMPANIES TRY TO EVADE TAXES THROUGH THEIR BRANCHES [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/23/08]

In 2007, 284 billion 781.5 million drams (by the average annual exchange rate, about 833 million USD) was transferred to the Armenian state budget by tax authorities, which exceeded the 2006 index by about 65 billion drams. The head of the RA State Tax Service (STS) Vahram Barseghian said at the January 23 press conference that particularly, in the third quarter they succeeded in ensuring a monthly tax collection growth of 7-10 billion drams.

According to him, last year the STS managed to refund the whole amount of excess payments owed to tax payers - 21 billion 318 million drams. V. Barseghian stated that a growth in revenues from all taxes, except excise tax, was registered. Simplified tax revenues grew by 30.8% to 10 billion 39 million drams, which, according to him, is much less than the expected index. In 2007, the number of companies liable to this tax (envisaged for small enterprises) grew 13fold, while tax revenues increased only twofold. According to the STS head, a considerable number of these 26,325 organizations are not those liable to simplified tax because these are branches set up by big companies which try to evade taxes in this way.

## 29. 190 ORGANIZATIONS CURRENTLY WORKING IN ARMENIA'S IT SPHERE [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Around 190 organizations are actively working today in the Armenian Information Technology sphere. In 2007 the volume of their production increased by 30 percent and the volume of foreign investments comprises 10 million USD.

Armenian Trade and Economic Development Minister Nerses Yeritsian said at the meeting with the reporters that for eliminating the obstacles drafts on making changes in laws on "State Tribute" and "On-Line Communication" have been developed.

Among the success in the international cooperation sphere, the minister pointed out to the opening of new building of "Synopsys" company. Currently "Synopsys Armenia" has 500 workers which comprises 10 percent of the total number of workers of the company and prepares 250 students both in Yerevan and Zelenograd.

According to Yeritsian, during the year a number of meetings on international and telecommunication technologies, business forums have been conducted, besides Armenia has participated in a number of exhibitions, a number of agreements and memorandums have been signed and pilot programs have been implemented.

## 30. ARMENIA'S MINING INDUSTRY, CONSTRUCTION, TRANSPORT, SERVICES AND TRADE SECTORS ARE SHADOW [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

Tax bodies envisage to collect 365 bln 859.9 mln drams (at the current exchange rate - about 1,19 bln USD) this year, which is more by 81 bln drams as compared with last year. The head of the RA State Tax Service Vahram Barseghian said at the January 23 press conference that this growth in tax collection will be mainly ensured at the expense of big enterprises. According to him, there are 120 thousand tax payers in Armenia, 270 of which ensure 70%, while 2 thousand - 90% of tax collection.

V. Barseghian said that tax administration will be tightened this year: tax bodies will not limit their activities to examination of the submitted accounting documents but they will also check realization volumes. In his words, at present the country's mining industry, construction, transport, services and trade are the main shadow sectors.

As for checkings conducted at Sil Concern last year, V. Barseghian said that these checkings are continuing and until now facts of tax evasion of 1.5 billion drams have been registered. As regards "Bjni" factory of mineral waters, according to the STS head, the company did not install a water meter at the source and failed to make the respective environmental payment, for which a fine of 3 billion drams was imposed on it. The same problem exists in Dilijan Frolova company, which did not make an environmental payment of 300 million drams.



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## 31. ABOUT 19.6 THOUSAND NEW JOBS CREATED AT SMEs IN 2007, THEY ACCOUNT FOR 41% OF GDP [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

Consistent work has been done in Armenia for development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the RA minister of trade and economic development Nerses Yeritsian said at the January 24 press conference.

According to him, SMEs should become a driving force of productivity and economic growth. "Armenia has the opportunity to increase the share of small and medium enterprises' production in GDP to up to 60%," the minister said, adding that SMEs with rapid growth of production which are likely to enter international markets will help achieve this index.

By preliminary estimates of the ministry, the share of SMEs in GDP grew from 40.3% in 2006 to about 41% in 2007, exceeding twofold the 1999 level. The number of newly founded SMEs made over 14 thousand, thanks to which about 19.6 thousand new jobs were created, 52.8% of which or 10.3 thousand jobs were created in marzes.

The share of SMEs in the country's exports made over 17%, while the number of employees of SMEs made up nearly 35% of the total number of the employed persons. The SMEs receiving state assistance (of a total of 400 million drams) transferred taxes, duties and other compulsory payments of more than 604 million drams (about 1.8 mln USD) to the state budget.

## 32. ACTION PLAN DEVELOPED FOR IMPROVEMENT OF BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

During a recent consultation conducted by the RA prime minister Serge Sargsian, instructions were given to work out a working program on identification of obstacles to business in tax, customs, property registration, municipal services and other sectors, the RA minister of trade and economic development Nerses Yeritsian announced at the January 23 press conference.

According to him, the prime minister has proposed that "Doing Business" International Group should decide what actions shall be taken in Armenia for improvement of the country's business environment. Proposals for actions to be taken in the short and medium term (by sectors) have been made. N. Yeritsian said that an action plan will be published soon.

To recap, by Doing Business 2008 Report of the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation, Armenia ranked 39th, according to the 2007 report, Armenia ranked 34th, according to the 2006 report, the country ranked 46th.

By the 2008 Index of Economic Freedom published by the Heritage Foundation and the Wall Street Journal, Armenia ranked 28th among 162 countries (41st in 2005, 27th in 2006, and 32nd in 2007). By the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index published by the World Economic Forum, Armenia ranked 74th among 124 countries. Armenia was for the first time included in the list of countries assessed.

## 33. CENTER OF MILITARY NANOTECHNOLOGIES UNDER CONSTRUCTION ON MOSCOW REGION ON INITIATIVE OF ARA ABRAHAMIAN [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

On the initiative of the chairman of the Union of Russians of Armenia (UAR) Ara Abrahamian, a center of military nanotechnologies is being constructed with attracted funds in the city of Zelenograd (Moscow region). Medical studies on vital capacities of soldiers under extreme conditions will be done in rooms of one of the floors of the 7-storey building of this center, NT correspondent was informed by Vyacheslav Beklemishev, the director general of the Zelenograd Institute of Applied Nanotechnologies.

According to him, the president of the RA Academy of Medical Sciences Levon Mkrtychian will participate in these studies. L. Mkrtychian has a considerable reserve of developments of nanosubstances for enhancing human immunity. The joint work with him on development of these technologies with the use of the potential, which was created by Armenian scientists over 20-30 years, started in 2007.

V. Beklemishev said that Armenia will have intellectual and technological input to the creation of this educational and technological center to be built in the next three years. Armenian specialists will have the opportunity to work at this center, while students may do practical work there for getting educational and scientific degrees. At the Zelenograd Center of Military Nanotechnologies, nanotechnologies will be used for enhancing the immunity of servicemen, creation of high-quality fatigue-dress, and development of technologies for control of servicemen on the battlefield. The number of Armenian experts will depend on the amount of work to be done by them.

A. Abrahamian also plans to build 500 apartments for employees of the center.



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## 34. IN 2009 ARMENIA MAY MOVE INTO GROUP OF COUNTRIES WITH UPPER-MIDDLE INCOMES [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

Nominal GDP made 3 trillion 140.4 billion drams in Armenia in 2007. Per capita GDP made 981 thousand drams or 2,848.4 USD, the RA minister of finance and economy Vardan Khachatrian said at the January 24 press conference. According to him, per capita GDP as expressed in dollars grew 3.3fold compared with 2003 and 4.8fold compared with 2000.

It was stated that in 2007 Armenia's real GDP exceeded 1989's GDP index by 47%, the 2000 index - threefold.

In his words, Armenia is among countries with low-middle incomes by its per capita GDP. The minister explained that countries with per capita GDP of up to 650 USD are considered countries with low incomes, those with the index of 650-3,611 USD - countries with low-middle incomes, those with the index of 3,611-11,111 USD - countries with upper-middle incomes, and countries with per capita GDP of over 11,111 USD are considered as countries with high incomes.

The minister expressed an opinion that in 2009 Armenia may move into the group of countries with upper-middle incomes.

He said that in 2003 the dollar's purchasing power parity made 3.3, while in 2007 it made 3.

## DIASPORA

## 35. JOE BIDEN COSPONSORS ARMENIAN GENOCIDE RESOLUTION [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

The highly regarded and influential chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Democrat Senator Joseph Biden, a longtime supporter of U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide, officially announced his support yesterday for the Armenian Genocide Resolution, reported the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA).

Chairman Biden has long been a supporter of proper U.S. reaffirmation of the Armenian Genocide, cosponsoring legislation in successive sessions of Congress.

Last year, he introduced legislation "condemning the murder of Turkish-Armenian journalist and human rights advocate Hrant Dink and urging the people of Turkey to honor his legacy of tolerance."

Earlier this week, Democrat Senator Barack Obama called for Congressional adoption of the Armenian genocide legislation. "America deserves a leader who speaks truthfully about the Armenian Genocide and responds forcefully to all genocides. I intend to be that President," noted Sen. Obama.

## 36. HILLARY CLINTON PLEDGES TO RECOGNIZE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AS PRESIDENT [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

Democratic Presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton called for Congressional passage of the Armenian Genocide Resolution and pledged that, as President, she will recognize the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) reported.

"Armenian Americans from across the United States welcome Hillary Clinton's strong support for the adoption of the Armenian Genocide Resolution, and her pledge to recognize the Armenian Genocide as President of the United States," said ANCA Executive Director Aram Hamparian.

"Hillary Clinton's statement, which reflects her consistent track record of support in public office, speaks powerfully to our community's deeply held concerns regarding the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, the expansion of the U.S.-Armenia relationship, and a fair and democratic resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict."

As a Senator, Hillary Clinton has, since 2002, has cosponsored successive Armenian Genocide resolutions. She joined Senate colleagues in cosigning letters to President Bush in 2005 and 2006 urging him to recognize the Armenian Genocide.

In recent weeks, the ANCA has invited each of the candidates to share their views on Armenian Americans issues, and to comment on both the growing relationship between the U.S. and Armenian governments and the enduring bonds between the American and Armenian peoples.

Questionnaires sent to the candidates have invited them to respond to a set of 19 questions, including those addressing: affirmation of the Armenian Genocide, U.S.- Armenia economic, political, and military relations, self-determination for Nagorno-Karabakh, the Turkish and

Azerbaijani blockades, and the genocide in Darfur. Presidential hopeful Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) issued a statement earlier this week.



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37. THE FUNDAMENTALS OF ARMENIAN IDENTITY OR WHO IS AN ARMENIAN? [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08] By Armen Ayzazian, Ph.D. in Political Science, Director of the "Ararat" Center for Strategic Research

In the current most complex period of development of Armenia and the Armenians, the problem of the Armenian identity represents not only an academic interest but has a serious practical significance. A strong national identity is a strategic asset in the process of building and strengthening a nation-state, while the dilution of national identity by no means facilitates but, moreover, hinders the consolidation of the individual and society around national goals and objectives.

After all, who can be considered Armenian today? As sensitive as this question is, since it touches the feelings of millions of people (especially our compatriots abroad), answering it is imperative. For an adequate illustration of the topic let us first present the state of affairs which the Armenian nation finds itself in today. There are some irrefutable realities which we must see and accept exactly as they stand, rather than turn a blind eye to them, as do a significant section of the Armenians, including its "elite".

Thus:

Fact 1: The Armenian ethnicity is under the threat of extinction on the territory of its own homeland - in the Republic of Armenia, Artsakh and Javakhk. This threat springs simultaneously from a number of interrelated sources:

- a) the possibility of military aggression by Azerbaijan;
- b) a critical demographic crisis (the exodus of over a million Armenian citizens and the ongoing emigration negatively impact the viability of all spheres of life in the country);
- c) the stalling of Armenian nation/state building process as well as the solidification of its political institutions;
- d) uncultivated state of Armenia's National Security doctrine ("The Armenian National Security Strategy" adopted in February 2007 is a declarative document, which, according to official announcements, has been written with the "methodology" and "editorship" of Moscow, Washington and Brussels experts). Consequently, there is a conspicuous absence of a clear Foreign Policy Direction based on national interests.
- e) Armenia's heavy dependence on foreign powers;
- f) social tension, including the class and regional aspects (inter alia, the artificially created but effectively maintained dangerous antagonism between "hayastantsi" and "gharabaghtsi", the total mistrust towards politicians and political institutions, the alienation of the people from the decision-making process);
- g) the complete absence of any struggle against corruption which pervades all spheres of public life in the republic;
- h) the lack of a consistent language policy in Armenia, resulting in a defenseless and vulnerable state of the Armenian language;
- i) The Georgian state policy of forcing out Armenians from Javakhk using administrative, economic, cultural, religious, linguistic and demographic pressures, and now even through open show and use of force.

Yet, the foremost threat is characterized by the highly probable Azerbaijani aggression, which is being methodically planned and scrupulously prepared, with Turkey's direct and indirect participation. If it were to succeed ending in the occupation of Artsakh and the liberated territory around it, the disappearance of the Republic of Armenia from the world map would be inevitable because the next, if not simultaneous, attack will be directed against Syunik - the last dividing bastion between these two Turkic allies. The existence of Syunik, without the shielding "barrier" of Artsakh, would become untenable. The weak communication links with central regions of Armenia, the absence of any defensive depth putting all of Syunik within range of Azerbaijan's modern artillery systems, as well as the psychological trauma from the fall of Artsakh would reduce the defensibility of this strategically vital region to nearly zero. The resulting encirclement of the remainder of Armenia in a Turkish-Azerbaijani ring, will transform it into a ghetto - a kind of Transcaucasian Swaziland. Subsequently, the obliteration of Armenia by Azerbaijan and Turkey, if not through military action, then through economic, political and psychological pressures, will simply be a matter of time. Thus being deprived of any prospects for sustainable development and losing its role as a potential safe haven for the millions of Armenians scattered throughout the world, the resulting geometrically progressed mass emigration would weaken Armenia to the degree of being divided by and absorbed into Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Although the



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Armenian nation succeeded in eliminating this very scenario in the 1990s, the Turco-Azeri alliance, far from forsaking it, will attempt to implement it if Armenians prove unable to mount an effective resistance.

Fact 2: Armenians can survive only if Armenia survives - as an Armenian state and the Armenian nation living within it.

Fact 3: Without Armenia, the Armenian Spyurk (Diaspora) cannot represent a nation, i.e., a viable entity ensuring national preservation and reproduction of Armenian race (let alone the preservation and development of the Armenian language and culture).

Fact 4: During the last decades the inevitable acculturation and assimilation processes in Spyurk have sharply accelerated to an unprecedented level. In particular, as a result of emigration, every year the ranks of the Armenian communities are thinning out in the Middle East, where until recently the percentage of mixed marriages were extremely low, and the Armenian schools and other community structures functioned effectively. In 20-30 years from now there will remain at best tiny islands of the once flourishing communities of Lebanon, Iran and Syria, similar to what has already happened to the Armenians of Iraq. As for the Armenians living in Russia and the developed West, they are subject to even faster acculturation and assimilation.

Fact 5: There is no Armenian culture without the Armenian language. Along with the statehood and the territory under its control, the language is the foundation and paramount means of preserving the Armenian ethnicity. The fact that many of our compatriots, especially in Spyurk, can feel and consider themselves Armenian without knowing the Armenian language, is possible only thanks to the people of Armenia who still speak, write and create in Armenian. Let us picture a hypothetical situation where Armenians in Armenia have forgotten their mother tongue and communicate with one another, are educated, write and create in a foreign language, no matter which - Russian, English or Chinese. This would signify nothing less than the end of the Armenian civilization, the end of the Armenian culture and the end of the Armenian ethnoses! Yet, today Armenia itself faces the full weight of the challenge of preserving and developing the Armenian language (i.e. culture). As was mentioned earlier, this is due to the decrease in the number of users of the Armenian language (including the potential users - children who received and receive non-Armenian education abroad) attributable to the emigration of our compatriots and the absence of appropriate protection of the Armenian language by the State. After 16 years of independence, it is high time that we duly acknowledge the fundamental role and place that language has in the life of a nation - something that the Armenian political elite and a significant portion of the intelligentsia fail to do. On the contrary, in the language policy, just like in certain other fundamental areas, attempts are still being made to regress the Armenian political thinking.

## Conclusions

Conclusion 1: The Armenian nation is in the active phase of the struggle for survival on a fraction of its own homeland, preserved at the cost of unimaginable sacrifices. In other words, the Armenian nation is a struggling organism whose main, vitally important function is the struggle for survival.

Conclusion 2: The frontlines of this struggle for survival stretch out not only along Armenia's borders with Azerbaijan and Turkey, but evidently also throughout the country itself, embracing the spheres of demography, economy, social life, science and education. Emigration, regardless of its reasons, removes Armenians, partially or fully, from the central battlefield for survival, that is - Armenia.

Repatriation, on the other hand, results in the replenishment of a vitally necessary reserve for the country.

Based on the above-mentioned strategic considerations I will attempt to answer the question: "who is an Armenian?" and in what way is s/he differentiated from an Armenian by birth.

One is an Armenian if s/he:

- 1) considers Armenia his/her only homeland within two dimensions of time and territory - in her historic and present boundaries;
- 2) has strong psychological attachments to his homeland - its territory, people, language and culture;
- 3) feels personal responsibility for Armenia's fate and assumes political obligations towards it;
- 4) if living abroad, seriously contemplates avenues for his and his family's repatriation;
- 5) either is or tries to become the bearer of the Armenian language and culture;
- 6) strives to maintain his offsprings Armenian, including by means of passing on to them the knowledge of the Armenian language and by bringing them into the realm of the national culture.

Those of our compatriots who consider the country of their birth or citizenship and not Armenia as their homeland, who do not feel psychological attachments and political responsibility towards Armenia, who do not wish to think about living in the Homeland, who do not seek to be the bearers of the Armenian language, who consciously or unconsciously have reconciled with and are not concerned about the inevitable assimilation of their offsprings, can be considered Armenians by origin only, because, in reality,



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they are already either cosmopolitans or representatives of another nationality. Indeed, it does not matter at all if they shout from the rooftops that they are the most real and authentic Armenians (a genuine self-deception!). The fact is that these individuals, regardless of the reasons, are beyond the nation's life-process and do not partake in its subsistence even at its most fateful moment.

It should also be emphasized that genetics are of a secondary importance in determining of an Armenian or any other national identity. The real identity of an individual is defined by his personal involvement in and contribution to the life processes of the relevant nation. Thus, we should differentiate between an Armenian on the one hand, and a person of Armenian origin on the other. This does not mean at all that the former is good and the latter is bad. Simply, the latter no longer can or wants to sacrifice anything for the sake of Armenia and already has a fundamentally different national self-consciousness.

For Armenians by origin it would be useful perhaps to look at themselves honestly and without self-deception and hypocrisy: They have actually left the field of the nation's life activities. Nevertheless, the road is still open for them both ways - total and irreversible assimilation or the return to national roots, the rediscovery of the Armenian language and culture and participation in the nation's life. In this sense, a large segment of Spyurk are potential Armenians. Unfortunately, such alienated potential Armenians are not rare in Armenia itself, who are fully or partially cut off from the Armenian language, culture and politics and who fail to perceive the common threat of extinction facing all Armenians.

I would like to repeat what I have written about many times before. Preserving Armenianness abroad, "hayapahpanum", cannot be an end in/of itself. The true goal for the preservation of Diasporan Armenians is their reunion with their motherland under the auspices of an independent state, as of now on the territory under the control of Armenian armed forces. Considering the preservation of Armenianness an end goal (as a considerable part of the Armenians abroad does) severely weakens the most important elements of the same "hayapahpanum."

The struggle for physical survival is unfortunately the core function of life of the Armenian nation. It is this very function that determines and necessitates the fundamental pillar of the Armenian identity - direct and personal engagement in this struggle for the realisation of the national objectives, which presently are:

- the preservation at all cost of that territory, essential for security, on which Armenia (RA and NKR together with the liberated territory around it) has existed for the whole period of its latest independence;
- the increasing of the number of the Armenian population in the Homeland;
- the preservation of the Armenians of Javakhk on their lands;
- the building of a nation-state based on the principles of rule of law, social justice, democracy and protection of national interests and values, including the development of the Armenian language and culture.

There are tremendous practical, ideological and psychological obstacles and ossified stereotypes that must be overcome throughout this struggle. They emanate essentially from non-Armenian sources but are often coming in to the scene through those Armenian political structures which long ago or recently have fallen under the slavish dependence of foreign powers. The engagement in the struggle for the achievement of the above-mentioned objectives will underpin an Armenian's ethnic resistibility with such a breath of emotions, feelings and knowledge that he/she will indeed have the drive and the need to acquire and become the bearer of the basic elements of the national self-consciousness - the language, culture, customs and traditions. To sum up, we can conclude that as long as Armenia as a nation and state is drawn into a longterm struggle for survival against powers superior in terms of numbers, resources and territory (Turkey and Azerbaijan), the most natural and functionally strongest ethnically differentiating characteristic feature of an Armenian is the acknowledgment and assumption of personal responsibility - proportionate to his/her strengths and capabilities - for destiny of the homeland.

P. S. At the end I invite you to read an English translation of an excerpt from a poem by Raphael Patkanyan entitled "The Armenian and Armenianness" written back in 1855, and a quote from Garegin Nzhdeh. Both are most relevant to this discourse.

Who is an Armenian? Is he the one who speaks in Armenian?  
Or whose name ends with the suffix yan?  
The one who always eats tolma, pilav for lunch  
Or proudly always wears Armenian attire and hat?  
Who is an Armenian, is he the one who attends an Armenian Church  
And goes to confession at least four times a year?  
That has never ignored the lent and also fasts during that  
And when he yawns he crosses his open mouth?



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No, my dear, nationhood is not an external act  
Not even your Armenian birth will give you that right...  
If you are an Armenian, you must respect the Armenians for sure,  
Armenia for you must be the star of hope...  
Love your nation not by words but as you love yourself,  
For her sake if necessary, sacrifice all your self,  
Don't even save your life, give your blood to her  
Not with the hope that your nation instantly will appreciate you.  
(Translated from Armenian by Hratch V. Vartanian, M.D.)

Later, in mid-20th century the same concept is highlighted by Garegin Nzhdeh: "Armenia! He who did not know how to die for you in your hour of need and who will not want to die for you tomorrow - is not your son, is not an Armenian!"

This coincidence could testify only to the following: the struggle for survival of the Armenian nation has now been going on for over one and a half century.

## 38. THREATS AGAINST DINK FOUNDATION [Azg, 01/25/08]

"Hurriyet" newspaper reports that the "Hrant Dink" international foundation addressed the police in connection with threats received by e-mail.

The address, submitted to Sisli Prosecutor's Office, Turkey, says that the Foundation received a threatening and insulting message from M. Kemal Engjyun via e-mail, January 20, 2008. The message also contained praises to the murderer of Hrant Dink. The lawyer of the Hrant Dink Foundation demanded the author of the letter be brought to responsibility.

## 39. "HAYASTAN" ALL-ARMENIAN FUND LAUNCHES VETERINARY SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

The "Hayastan" All-Armenian Fund's Rural Development Program has announced the start of the program on improvement of the veterinary service in six border villages of Tavush marz. According to the Fund's PR department, these villages have been included in the program's pilot microstage. The program will be implemented with the assistance of "Strategical Development Agency" NGO, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Izmirlian Foundation.

In parallel with organizing training courses for veterinaries and residents of the six communities, the program will supply medical equipment and medicines for veterinary stations. After a one-month sponsorship stage, the service will operate by monthly payments of community residents. These payments make a small portion of the sum that rural residents spend on purchase of medicines from regional centers. These monthly payments will provide a stable income for veterinaries.

The "Hayastan" All-Armenian Fund is a noncommercial organization which was founded in 1992 and aims to promote humanitarian aid and development of infrastructures in Armenia and the NKR. The Fund has local bodies in 19 countries worldwide.

## 40. ANOTHER PROSECUTION AGAINST AGOS JOURNALISTS [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

Reporters Without Borders condemned the charges that have been brought against the owner of the Armenian-Turkish newspaper Agos, Serkis Seropyan, and its new editor, Aris Nalci, because of a 9 November editorial criticizing the one-year suspended prison sentences passed the previous month on Seropyan, former editor Arat Dink, and two other journalists, Aydin Engin and Karin Karakasli.

According to a press report on 16 January, Seropyan and Nalci were summoned by an Istanbul prosecutor and ordered to pay a fine of 23,500 euros because of the editorial.

When they refused, the prosecutor said they would be tried for "attempted obstruction of justice" under article 288 of the criminal code, which carries a maximum penalty of four a half years in prison.

Reporters Without Borders regards this prosecution as yet another case of improper use of the press law.

The one-year suspended sentence was imposed on the four journalists for reprinting an interview that Arat Dink's father, then Agos editor Hrant Dink, gave to Reuters in 2006 in which he said the massacres of Armenians from 1915 to 1917 constituted genocide. Hrant Dink was murdered in January 2007.



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## ARTS

### 41. ICOMOS TO HOLD ITS GA FROM SEPTEMBER 29-OCTOBER 4 [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

The Armenian committee of the ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) has discussed at its plenary session the works of the 16<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of ICOMOS which will be held from September 29 to October 4, 2008 in Quebec (Canada).

An official from the Armenian committee of the organization told Armenpress that in parallel with the Quebec assembly "Spirit of Sites: Between Material and Non-Material" conference will be conducted which will be dedicated to the issues of protection of not material cultural heritage – oral conversations, memories, traditions, holidays, song-music, dancing.

### 42. ARMENIAN STUDENTS PRESENTED ARMENIAN CULTURE IN EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF BRUGES [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

On the initiative of the students of the European college situated in the Belgian town of Bruges on January 19 an evening of traditions was organized.

Armenian Foreign Ministry press service told Armenpress that the event was aimed at giving each of the delegations having training there present their national cuisine and culture.

Representatives of around 55 countries are having training in the college among them Armenian students.

### 43. INTERACTIVE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM TO BE APPLIED IN ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

On the initiative of the "Harmonia" fund a new educational pilot program kicked off in the beginning of January in the Armenian province of Syunik.

Armenian Trade and Economic Development Minister Nerses Yeritsian told today the reporters that the program is included in a number of pilot programs initiated by the ministry in 2007 and is being financed by the Armenian government.

According to Yeritsian, within the framework of the program a projecting and creation of networks of internet communication in certain provinces will be carried out and through these networks a program of education of children of remote areas will be carried out with the help of specialists of schools of the capital and provinces.

By the school linking program one of the best schools of Kapan will be linked with the remote schools and in this way interactive educational system will be applied. In case of successful implementation of the program in 1-2 years it will be applied in all schools of the republic. The minister said that it is a serious state cooperation program.

### 44. NATIONAL LIBRARY ACQUIRES 51, 860 PIECES OF BOOKS LAST YEAR [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Armenia's National Library acquired last year 51,860 pieces of books. The press office of the Library said 20,980 pieces of books came from foreign countries, of which 3,310 are in the Armenian language.

In 2006 the National Library acquired 32,262 pieces of books.

### 45. MELIKYAN'S "MERMAID," TO BE SHOWN AT SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Russian Armenian film director Anna Melikyan's "Mermaid," will be shown in the World Cinema Dramatic competition this week at the Sundance Film Festival.

"Mermaid" is a film about a girl called Alisa, who was conceived underwater in a brief beach encounter and lives in a seaside village. She stops speaking after a difficult encounter with her mother and is sent to a special school. At the age of 17, she moves to Moscow with her mother and grandmother and finds a simple job that doesn't require her to speak to people: handing out leaflets inside an oversized cellphone costume. But when she meets the love-interest, Alexander, her life takes a different turn. Melikyan was born in Baku, but grew up in Yerevan. Like the heroine of "Mermaid," she moved to Moscow at 17. In 2004 she released her first film, "Mars," which was well received.



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## 46. "HERE, THERE AND YONDER": THE RECENT WORKS OF MISSAK TERZIAN AT HAIGAZIAN UNIVERSITY [Azg, 01/25/08]

On Friday the 18th of January 2008, under the high patronage of the Ambassador of Armenia to Lebanon, H.E. Dr. Vahan Der Ghevontian, opened the painting exhibition of Missak Terzian, at the Haigazian University Art Center, Matossian Gallery, amidst a big crowd of diplomats, religious leaders, artists, and media representatives and art appreciators.

After the ribbon cutting ceremony, Haigazian University President, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian welcomed the audience and explained the new vision of the recently renovated gallery.

"Named after the late Arthur Matossian, spouse of Maggie Matossian, founder of the University's Women's Auxiliary, Beirut Chapter, and longtime member its Board of Managers and Trustees, the Matossian Gallery operates under the supervision of a committee who's vision is to promote various forms of art, and to enrich the Center with an artwork collection, offered as a gift by exhibiting artists", stated Haidostian.

Ambassador Der Ghevontian delivered a short speech, congratulating Haigazian University for its leading role in promoting culture, as well as the artist for his creativity and the splendor of his work. Der Ghevontian added that the Embassy of Armenia is always ready to sponsor and collaborate in such activities, thus encouraging cultural interchange between the two countries, Lebanon and Armenia. Terzian, expressed of his pride and gratitude towards Haigazian University, for giving him the opportunity to introduce his recent works in the University's Art Center.

Terzian shared with the audience the spirit of his exhibition, "Here, There and Yonder", stating that it represents the reality of the Lebanese and the Armenian people, who, due to wars, are spread apart in various regions of the world. Basically these two populations are here and there and yonder.

"It is my wish to see Lebanon free, independent and stable, the Lebanese people and families reunited in their country, as my paintings of the different regions of Lebanon are united under one roof", Terzian concluded.

In his 52nd exhibition, Missak Terzian is exhibiting 50 oil and acrylic paintings of various sizes, in addition to limited editions of original lithographs.

Missak's (as he signs his paintings) favorite theme is the "Couples", presented in an abstract and semi-abstract style. After 25 years of his career, Missak reintroduces the different Lebanese heritage regions. The Citadels of Byblos and Sydon, the Ruins of Baalbeck, the Waterfalls of Jezzine, and the Pigeons Grotto of the Rock of Raouche were the highlights of this exhibition.

It is worth noting that right after this exhibition, Artist Misak Terzian will feature his works in the Jacob Javits Convention Center, Artexpo, in New York City, from February 28 till March 3, 2008.

P.S. The exhibition runs till Tuesday the 29th of January 2008, from 10:00 a.m till 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. till 7:00 p.m. including Sundays

## 47. POP STARS HAND 3 MILLION DRAMS TO CHILDREN CENTER [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

Three millions Drams (a little over \$9,000) raised as proceeds from SMS messages sent by TV viewers in favor of six pop stars who qualified for the final stage of a musical show-Two Stars- aired by Armenia's Public TV, were given today to a center for receiving and orienting street children run by the Armenian Relief Fund.

On this occasion the First Lady, Mrs. Bella Kocharian, paid a visit to the center together with the stars and the chairman of the Public TV and Radio Council Alexan Harutunian.

The First Lady went from one room to another to see the conditions in which the children are kept. Speaking to journalists she said the center has changed much after her last visit.

She also welcomed the Public TV's initiative for raising proceeds from SMS message for the center, which has so far took in 1,800 children lacking parental care with many of them being subjected to violence. Now there are 15 such children in it.

## **RELIGION**

## 48. BRITISH OUTGOING AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH CATHOLICOS [Hayastani Hanrapetutian, 01/24/08]

Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II received the outgoing British ambassador to Armenia Anthony Cantor.



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"We are glad that we have known you, cooperated with you boosting ties and relations," the Catholicos said.

On his part the ambassador said that he will miss Armenia and St. Etchmiadzin.

Catholicosate press service told Armenpress that during the meeting the sides also referred to the issues of cooperation between Armenian Apostolic Church and Anglican Church.

## SOCIAL

### 49. MOSCOW TEENS KILL ARMENIAN STUDENT [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

A 20 year-old Armenian student was stabbed to death last night in Russia's capital Moscow. Russian media reported that Vladimir Karamjian, a student of Moscow-based Auto-Road Institute, was attacked by a group of teens, one of whom stabbed the Armenian boy.

The Armenian student was assaulted after he saw off a girlfriend. Karamjian was taken to a Moscow hospital, but died today while doctors were trying to save his life.

The police was said to be looking for the attackers.

### 50. GREAT MASTER OF LAUGHTER OF ARMENIAN STAGE KARP KHACHVANKIAN WOULD TURN 85 ON JANUARY 23 [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

Karp Khachvankian, an incomparable comedian, honoured actor of the Armenian stage, would turn 85 on January 23. The great master of laughter or as his admirers and friends call him the Charlie Chaplin of the Armenian stage, served to the stage of Paronian and his loyal audience with faithful love and devotion for 54 years running.

On January 23, on the occasion of the 85th birth anniversary of Karp Khachvankian, Boris Papanian, who played at H. Paronian State Theater of Musical Comedy for many years and who was a playmate of the great comedian for 28 years, spoke about his memories and impressions concerning the master.

"Karp Khachvankian was a phenomenon in the history of the Armenian theater, a phenomenon, which, perhaps is not born once in a century: this is the secret. It is already 10 years that the theater has become an orphan. It is sad without Karp Khachvankian. There isn't his soul, round which creative flights took place. To speak about him is both difficult and too easy. It is very difficult without him and especially for me, and I think, for the theater and his loyal audience as well," said Boris Papanian.

According to him, there are many talented actors, but there are few actors who enjoy so much popularity: "Karp could control the audience with his wonderful magic play making it laugh and cry together with him."

"Karp was as much interesting and attractive on the stage as he was modest in his life. He never liked to celebrate anniversaries. He was walking in the streets in the way so as not to be noticed. In life he did not like mediocrity and mediocres in principle: he tried not to notice them, the reason of which, perhaps, was his supreme gift to see excellence in everything. It was all the same for him to play in a region, abroad or in the capital. Each time he was playing the way as if it was his first time on the stage," Boris Papanian told.

In the words of Boris Papanian, it was in 1973 that he played with Karp Khachvankian for the first time in the comedy "Love under the stars", taking the part of Karo. "I learnt much from him, I was his pupil and friend for many years. Today also I need him. I learned from him all the time as we worked together", said the actor.

Karp Khachvankian got his first professional education in the actor's department of "Georgian film" studio, after which, in 1944, receiving a job invitation from Artemi Ayzazian, he moved to Yerevan, where taking the part of Bony in Kalman's play "Silva", irrevocably got attached to the audience of Yerevan.

During his 50-year stage activity, the actor played more than 100 roles winning the audience's love. Some of that roles have much more popularity: Knyaz, in "Taxi-Taxi", Niko in "Eastern Dentist", Phillip in "Freedom Storm, Dzoneti in "Venice Twins"....

### 51. COOPERATION AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED BETWEEN YEREVAN STATE LINGUISTIC UNIVERSITY AND TALLINN UNIVERSITY [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

An agreement of cooperation will be signed on January 25 between Yerevan V. Brusov State Linguistic University and Tallinn University. Exchange of students and lecturers, elaboration and



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exchange of university curricula is envisaged within the framework of the cooperation. Suren Zolian, the Rector of Yerevan State Linguistic University, said this at the January 24 meeting at the University, where Rey Raod, the Rector of Tallinn University, gave a lecture on the subject "Establishment of Democracy and Civil Society."

According to Suren Zolian, the signing of the agreement will give a possibility to use Tallinn University's experience for establishment of the credit system at the Linguistic University. According to the Rector, teaching of Estonian at the Linguistic University and vice versa, teaching of Armenian in Tallinn University is envisaged within the framework of cooperation between the two Universities.

It should be mentioned that the Rector of Tallinn University has arrived in Armenia within the framework of the program under the title Human Rights and European Integration School being implemented at Yerevan State Linguistic University.

## 52. UNDP AND USAID TO HELP ISAHAKIAN VILLAGE CARRY OUT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

The UNDP and USAID will join efforts to help the village of Isahakian, located close to Armenia's border to Turkey in Shirak province, implement rural development programs.

As a result of a series of meetings and discussions with the community's people the priorities have been defined. According to the UNDP Armenia Office, the village mentioned as their priorities restoration of a 12 km long drinking water pipeline and a 10 km long natural gas network. They would like also to see their community road to be repaired and want also to establish a seeds fund.

The community has pledged to make its own input into implementation of these projects.

The village of Isahakian, located on the left bank of Akhurian River is the native village of a prominent Armenian poet Avetik Isahakian. It has 251 households, 1,225 people and the residents are engaged in farming and cattle breeding. The home of the poet has been preserved.

## 53. ARMENIAN DIPLOMATS HOLD POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS WITH BULGARIAN PEERS [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

Armenian foreign ministry said deputy minister Armen Bayburdian was in Bulgaria on January 23-24 for political consultations between the two countries.

The ministry said Armen Bayburdian and other Armenian diplomats were first received by deputy foreign minister of Bulgaria Eugenia Koldanova for a discussion of bilateral, regional and international issues. They also exchanged ideas over developments in Kosovo and Nagorno-Karabakh.

On January 23 Bayburdian also delivered a lecture at a diplomatic school run by Bulgarian foreign ministry, on Armenia's European Policy.

Armenian diplomats also held consultations with Bulgarian minister for state administration Nikolay Vasilev, who is a cochairman of a bilateral commission for economic cooperation. Bayburdian also gave an interview to Bulgarian National Radio.

## 54. NATURE PROTECTION PROGRAM LAUNCHED [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

Nature protection minister Aram Harutunian presented today a program designed for creation of a special reserve zone in Armenia's northwestern part bordering Georgia and Turkey.

The program, to be supported by German KfW bank and WWF, costs 2.2 million euros and is supposed to last three years.

Under this program the basin of Lake Arpi and Akhurian River, situated in the Ashotsk mountains, close to the borders with Turkey and Georgia in northwestern Armenia will be turned into a national park.

The first phase of this program was supposed to kick off in 2002, but was delayed due to lack of money.

Lake Arpi is a natural wetland of botanical importance, although the water level has been raised by an artificial dam. It supports several plant species which are rare in Armenia. The lake is fed by several small rivers, springs and melt-water, and freezes over during the winter months.

Minister Harutunian said this program, developed by German, Armenian and WWF experts is unique as the German bank will for the first time fund a joint nature protection program together with Armenian government.

This program has several components and will embrace some 20 settlements located in the area. Similar programs are expected to be launched across the border in Georgia and Turkey.



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This specially protected area will help protect ecosystems, habitats and rare, endemic and threatened species and is expected also to give a boost to tourism development.

55. BUNDESTAG OFFERS THREE STIPENDS TO ARMENIAN GRADUATES [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

Germany's Bundestag International Parliamentary Stipend (IPS) has established three stipends for graduates of Armenian universities.

The Bundestag will give an opportunity to Armenian graduates to learn about the work of Germany's parliament and look into the process of political decision-making.

The Armenian foreign ministry said graduates under 30 are eligible to compete for this program. Fluency in German is mandatory.

56. CONSUMER RIGHTS NGO SENDS PROPOSALS TO PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES [ARMENPRESS, 01/25/08]

Abgar Yeghoyan, chairman of a non-governmental organization striving to defend consumers' rights, said today only two of nine presidential candidates-prime minister Serzh Sarkisian and deputy parliament chairman Vahan Hovhanesian- responded in a written form to his proposals on incorporating issues on consumer rights protection into their election manifestoes.

Abgar Yeghoyan said his proposals emphasize such issues as formation of a fair competition environment in consumer commodities market, crackdown on ungrounded price hikes and elimination of monopolies

He said he also proposed that candidates take measures against unfair advertising, underweighing and elimination of street sale of food products.

## SPORTS

57. TWO CHESS PLAYERS IN LEAD IN MAIN TOURNAMENT OF WIJK AAN ZEE INTERNATIONAL CHESS FESTIVAL [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/23/08]

The International Chess Festival is going on in the city of Wijk aan Zee, Holland. The games of the 9th tour took place on January 22. In the main tournament Levon Aronian shared his point with Pavel Elyanov (Ukraine) and now is at the top of the tournament table with Magnus Karlsen (Norway) with 5.5 points each. In the 10th tour Aronian will compete with Michael Adams (Great Britain). The latter shares the 3-6th places with 5 points.

In tournament B the leader is Sergei Movsisian (Slovakia), who has 6.5 points. Gabriel Sargsian is in the 13th place with 3 points.

58. ANASTASIA GREBYONKINA - VAZGEN AZROYAN DANCE PAIR DOES NOT QUALIFY IN EUROPE CHAMPIONSHIP DUE TO INJURE [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/23/08]

Europe Figure Skating Championship started on January 21 in the Croatian city of Zagreb. 21 pairs are to take part in the competitions of dancing pairs. When performing the compulsory program of Anastasia Grebyonkina - Vazgen Azroyan pair, Grebyonkina received injury and was not able to continue the competition. The Armenian figure skaters are unlikely to perform in the original and free programs, either.

59. ARMENIAN FOOTBALL NATIONAL TEAM TO TAKE PART IN MALTA INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/23/08]

International Football Tournament with participation of national teams of Malta, Belarus, Iceland, and Armenia will be held on February 2-6 in Malta. The national team of Armenia will start its teaching and training gathering from January 27. Then 20 football players will take part in Malta tournament. The national team's coach headquarters has already published the enlarged list of football players invited to the team.



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## 60. REPAIRS START IN VAZGEN SARGSIAN REPUBLICAN STADIUM [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/23/08]

Partial repairs have started in Vazgen Sargsian Republican stadium from January 20. It is envisaged to make changes in its service halls, security systems, and other infrastructures. The repairs are being done by the Football Federation of Armenia jointly with Israel's Green Diversified LTD. It is envisaged to finish the work in August 2008.

## 61. ARONIAN PLAYS DRAW WITH M. ADAMS [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Armenian grand master Levon Aronian played draw with Michael Adams from England in the tenth round of international chess championship held in the Dutch town Veik-an-Zee gaining 6 points.

## 62. ARMENIAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION PICKS A DANE AS HEAD COACH [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Ruben Hayrapetian, chief of the Armenian Football Federation, has introduced today a new head coach of the national team saying he has signed a contract with Danish Jan Poulsen who will be training the team until 2010 May.

Previous Scottish head coach of Armenia's national soccer team, Ian Porterfield, died last September at the age of 61 from colon cancer. Despite being diagnosed with cancer earlier that year, Porterfield carried on with his duties until just before his death.

Jan Borge Poulsen played most of his professional career at Boldklubben Frem. During the 1980s he coached Boldklubben Frem and Koge Boldklub. In 1990 he was named Richard Moller Nielsen's assistant for the Denmark national football team, and he was part of the team that won the Euro 1992.

After the win in 1992 he was promoted to head coach of the Denmark national under-21 football team. He had this job until 1999, when he was named new sporting director of the Singapore national football team.

In 2002 he returned to Denmark to a couple of minor coaching jobs. In 2006 he made an agreement with Greve Fodbold to become new head coach, but at the same time he got the offer to become coach of the Jordan national under-20 football team. In the end he accepted the job from Jordan.

Ruben Hayrapetian said today the Dane was chosen from a pool of several coaches because of his skills and international experience. He declined to reveal the new coach's salary.

## 63. ARONIAN LOSES LEAD AT WIJK AAN ZEE TOURNAMENT [ARMENPRESS, 01/24/08]

Levon Aronian of Armenia is now in second spot with 6 points in his kitty at the Corus international chess tournaments in the Dutch Wijk aan Zee. Norway's Carlsen thus regained sole lead with 6.5 points as most of the games in this section ended in draws.

A pack of five players Michael Adams of England, Vladimir Kramnik of Russia, Vassily Ivanchuk of Ukraine and Teimour Radjabov of Azerbaijan, as well as Vishi Anand of India are still in reckoning for top honors on 5.5 points each.

In the 'B' group P Harikrishna slipped to joint fifth spot after drawing with Gabriel Sarkisian of Armenia. Grandmaster Sergei Movsesian (ethnic Armenian) of Slovakia strengthened his position atop the tables in this section with an easy victory over Jan Smeets of Holland. Movsesian is now on 7.5 points, a full point clear of Nigel Short of England and Etienne Bacrot of France.

World Champion Viswanathan Anand was held to a draw by Hungarian Peter Leko in Premier Group 'A.'

## 64. ARMENIAN NATIONAL TEAM OF HOCKEY PLAYERS AGED 20 AND BELOW DEFEATS AUSTRALIAN TEAM IN 5th TOUR OF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

The group tournament of World Championship of hockey players aged 20 and below is going on in Belgrade. The Armenian national team defeated the Australian team in the 5th tour with the score of 6 to 5. In the last game the Armenian national team will compete with the Bulgarian team.



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65. TIGRAN L. PETROSIAN AND VARUZHAN HAKOBIAN GAIN VICTORIES IN FIRST TWO TOURS IN GIBRALTAR INTERNATIONAL CHESS TOURNAMENT [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

A big International Chess Tournament started on January 22 in Gibraltar. Tigran L. Petrosian and American-based Varuzhan Hakobian take part in it. In the first two tours they gained victories, gained two points each and are in the leaders' group with another 14 participants.

The tournament consists of 10 tours. The winner will be awarded 12 thousand pound sterling.

66. LEVON ARONIAN TAKES 2nd PLACE WITH 6 POINTS IN WIJK AAN ZEE INTERNATIONAL CHESS TOURNAMENT [NOYAN TAPAN, 01/24/08]

On January 23, in the 10th tour of the International Chess Tournament being held in the city of Wijk aan Zee, Holland, Levon Aronian drew the game with Michael Adams (England). L. Aronian gained 6 out of 10 possible points and is in the second place. The leader is Magnus Karlsen (Norway) with 6.5 points. In the 11th tour L. Aronian will compete with Luke Velly (Norway).

Sergei Movsisian representing Slovakia has 8.5 out of 10 possible points and is the only leader in tournament B. Gabriel Sargsian is in the 13th place with 3.5 points.

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