



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Monday, May 12, 2008

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

AGBU NEWS

1. ANOTHER VILLAGE IN ARTSAKH PROVIDED WITH WATER *KEBABDJIAN IN MARTAKERT* [Azg, 05/06/08]

"Femmes Courage" charity organization has been implementing benevolent projects in Artsakh for 10 years now. The main destination is Martakert, which has suffered much during the Artsakh war. The fund is distributing two cows to every family of wounded freedom-fighters, which is truly a tangible support for the villagers. As the President of the Fund Nadya Kebabdjian said it gives an opportunity to the needy families to take care of their everyday problems with their own hands and not wait for new donations from other people. Today, thanks to "Femmes Courage" a lot of families in Artsakh have more than 10 cows and are able to solve their problems on their own.

In the past 10 years the fund distributed cows to more than 300 families. It means that 300 families of Martakert have solved their living problems thanks to "Femme Courage",

Visiting Artsakh in 2007 together with her husband Levon Kebabdjian, who is also famous for his several benevolent initiatives in Artsakh, the couple went to Garnakar to distribute cows to families and learned with pain in their hearts that the village has a problem of drinking water. They promised to help the villagers and upon their return to France they raised 20,000 euros (about 11 million AMD) for this purpose. Now the people of Garnakar have water.

The opening ceremony of the water pipeline took place on May 4. Nadya and Levon Kebabdjian were also present at the ceremony. People of Garnakar were happy and thankful to receive the benefactors and asked them to pass their gratitude to all those who participated in the fundraising.

This ancient Armenian border village was in danger of isolation especially after the Artsakh war. Today it has 170 residents. 20 children study in the school. The solution of the water problem was of great importance for the village with so many social-economic problems. We all express our gratitude to French-Armenian benefactors.

To our question of what new projects the fund will implement Mr. Kebabdjian answered that they will continue what they have been doing for 10 years now.

2. DETROIT TEKEYAN HOSTS OUTREACH ARMENIA FORUM [Azg, 05/05/08]

Approximately 200 people attended the Outreach Armenia Forum hosted by the Tekeyan Cultural Association on Saturday evening, April 12 at the AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School here. Spearheaded by Edmond and Nora Azadian, the forum was an effort to familiarize the community with the numerous non-political organizations which are extending financial aid and services to Armenia and Karabagh.

There are many organizations in the community sponsoring projects in Armenia, but many were unaware of the others' activities. This was an opportunity to view and recognize communitywide support to Armenia.

Nora Azadian extended her appreciation to Edgar Hagopian for hosting the initial meetings of the various organization chairs at his World of Rugs Showroom, Leslie Balian Bush for her technical assistance and the entire committee for their help in presenting the forum.

Contributions of 20 charitable organizations and individuals were featured and recognized. Each representative briefly outlined the mission, objectives and history of their organization during a Powerpoint presentation. A few of the organizations, such as the AGBU and Knights of Vartan have long histories, while others were developed following the earthquake and Armenia's independence to alleviate new problems, encourage self-sufficiency and strengthen ties with the diaspora.

All of the humanitarian and research projects represented were well received by the audience. In closing, Master of Ceremonies Edmond Azadian introduced Hagopian, who commended the participants for their commitment to Armenia. Hagopian added, "We are fortunate that the Diaspora has prospered and it is now our obligation and privilege to provide aid to sustain our ancestral homeland."

A lavish reception chaired by Taleen Hagopian followed, where guests mingled with representatives of the featured organizations.



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POLITICS

3. HOT LINE OF LEGAL INITIATIVE PROGRAM CONTINUES OPERATING [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The Institute of Civil Society, the Armenian Committee of Helsinki Civil Assembly, and the Free Chair of Civil Initiatives implemented the Legal Initiative program during the RA presidential elections. As Gayane Markosian, a member of the initiative, said at the May 7 press conference, the program was to have finished on March 1, but it was delayed until late May due to the well-known events. In her words, the 080-080-804 hot line continues operating within the framework of the program.

Lawyer Ani Nersisian said that after the March 1 events they receive up to 10 telephone calls daily, part of which regard cases of illegal arrests. According to the program's initiators, legal security and protection of citizens in Armenia should be done permanently. They said that in most cases citizens prefer rather obeying than protecting their rights. According to the initiative's members, in that respect also there is a need to continue the program.

It was also mentioned that during the presidential elections the hot line received 475 calls on technical details of elections turnout, as well as on the violations having impact on the voting process and the total normal electoral process.

4. SINCE ARMENIA'S INDEPENDENCE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL ELITE IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE DISQUALIFIED, LARISA ALAVERDIAN CONSIDERS [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

Since Armenia's independence country's political elite is becoming more and more disqualified. Larisa Alaverdian, a member of the RA National Assembly Zharangutiun (Heritage) faction, expressed such an opinion at a discussion organized on May 7 at the National Press Club. According to the deputy, those who are called up for being elite, in most cases even do not realize their own responsibility. While it is them who should have assumed the mission of building a free person, which has failed in Armenia so far. L. Alaverdian affirmed that one of the reasons of the situation formed in the country today is that many of members of society still "bear a slave in themselves."

According to Alvard Petrosian, a member of the NA ARFD faction, her contemporaries are mostly situation politicians. "Time compelled the active part of people to be engaged in politics. I consider my presence in politics as much accidental," the deputy said. In her words, in 1988 people took to the streets thinking that they carried out a revolution, but the Communist Party leaders remained country's rulers. Today also former communists or leaders of the Young Communist League remain in politics passing on from one party to another in many cases.

In the opinion of Heghine Bisharian, the Chairwoman of the Orinats Yerkir (Country of Law) Party faction, representatives of the political elite should have principles, morality, and sense of responsibility. While people deprived of the above mentioned traits receive the right to decide people's fate. And such people often become a political elite just with "people's hands."

According to Ruzan Khachatryan, a representative of the People's Party of Armenia, today's Armenian political elite is represented by people, who have appeared there thanks to not their merits, but posts they take. In her words, the things were not this way even in the Soviet years when not communist leaders but dissidents enjoyed more authority in society. R. Khachatryan affirmed that the country should be quickly relieved from today's political elite. In her words, rules of natural selection should work in politics, which can be guaranteed only through holding of democratic elections.

5. EXAMINATION ON CASE AGAINST VARDAN JHANGIRIAN SCHEDULED FOR MAY 19 [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

Yerevan Criminal Court, presided over by judge Vazgen Rshtuni, under the May 7 judgement sentenced Armen Movsisian accused of mass disorders to 3.5 years' suspended imprisonment with 3 years' probation term. Noyan Tapan correspondent was informed about it by Alina Yengoyan, the Spokesperson of the RA Cassation Court. The examination of the case was held by a speeded-up order.

In the same court, presided over by judge Mnatsakan Martirosian, the court sitting against Karen Tarkhanian with the accusation of mass disorders did not take place due to the lawyer's illness, the court sitting was postponed until May 21. According to Noyan Tapan correspondent's information, in Yerevan Criminal Court, presided over by judge Mnatsakan Martirosian, examination on the case against Vardan Jhangirian accused of using violence to a power representative dangerous for his life or health is



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scheduled for May 19: the latter is the brother of Gagik Jhangirian, the former RA Deputy Prosecutor General accused on another case.

The court sittings on cases against Misak Hovakimian and Soghomon Yeritsian accused of using power to a power representative not dangerous for his health or life did not take place in the general jurisdiction court of Yerevan Kentron and Nork-Marash communities due to the absence of the prosecutor and the lawyer, respectively.

6. CHANGES TO BE MADE IN STAFF OF RPA, BARGAVACH HAYASTAN AND ORINATS YERKIR FACTIONS OF RA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN NEAR FUTURE [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The RA Central Electoral Commission envisages to register Ishkhan Khachatryan as an MP from the electoral list of the Orinats Yerkir (Country of Law) party by the proportional system of the National Assembly in the May 8 sitting. This information was provided to a Noyan Tapan correspondent by Tatev Ohanian, the Spokesperson of the Commission. The deputy mandate remained vacant as a result of the fact that Arthur Baghdasarian, the Chairman of the party and the Head of the parliamentary faction, was appointed Secretary of the Security Council.

One by one change will be made in the staff of the Republican Party of Armenia and Bargavach Hayastan (Prosperous Armenia) factions of the National Assembly in the coming days. Armen Danielian, a member of the RPA faction, was appointed Deputy Prosecutor General of the Republic of Armenia on the eve, therefore he will stop his deputy commissions ahead of time. 33-year-old Armen Danielian, who, by the way, is the son of the brother of Gevorg Danielian, the Minister of Justice, is a lawyer, a candidate of law sciences. He was also an MP in the National Assembly of the third convocation (2003-2007). As a result of the May 12, 2007 elections, he was elected MP of the National Assembly of the fourth convocation by the proportional system from the electoral list of the Republican Party of Armenia. According to the Electoral Code, the proportional vacant mandate will be handed to the regular next candidate of the same party, in this case it will be handed to 49-year-old Republican Sukias Avetisian. Sukias Avetisian was an MP of the previous three convocations: 1995-99, 1999-2003, 2003-2007.

The change in the Bargavach Hayastan faction is conditioned by the resignation recently officially submitted by non-party MP Vahe Hovhannisian on the occasion of starting to work in a private sector.

7. NATIONAL MOVEMENT PARTICIPANTS VISIT YERABLUR [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

On the occasion of Day of Yerkrpah (Land Defender), the first Armenian president Levon Ter-Petrosian, the leader of People's Party of Armenia Stepan Demirchian, and the chairman of "Republic" Party Aram Sargsian on May 8 went to Yerablut Pantheon and laid flowers at the graves of the Artsalh war martyrs. They were accompanied by representatives of the other parties and NGOs - the participants of the National Movement, and hundreds of supporters.

During a talk with reporters, A. Sargsian said that out of the war participants who have been remained alive, it is the chairman of the Yerkrpah Union of Volunteers (YUV) Manvel Grigorian who deserves a title of hero. According to the chairman of "Republic" party, political figures will come and go, while the feat of M. Grigorian is eternal. "Manvel Grigorian is the chairman of YUV, and he will remain as chairman, no one, including Robert Kocharian, will succeed in breaking up the Yerkrpah Union of Volunteers".

8. EXAMINATION OF ISSUE OF CHANGING PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE WITH RESPECT TO ARAM KARAPETIAN POSTPONED FOR ONE WEEK [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

Based on the petition of lawyer Harutyun Baghdasarian, the court of general jurisdiction of Yerevan's Kentron and Nork-Marash communities on May 8 decided to postpone examination of the issue of changing the precautionary measure with respect to the chairman of "New Times" party (NTP) Aram Karapetian for a week, NT correspondent was informed from the NTP office.

To recap, A. Karapetian's lawyer H. Baghdasarian applied to court with the request to replace arrest with pledge as a precautionary measure.



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9. DESPITE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENTS ABOUT "OPEN WORK" OF GOVERNMENT, REPORTERS COVERING ACTIVITIES OF EXECUTIVE BODY MEET NEW OBSTACLES [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

Despite the assurances of the newly elected prime minister Tigran Sargsian that the government should work openly and transparently, while reporters should act freely, the latter ones' opportunity to work is increasingly being restricted. It turns out that the reporters accredited to the government to follow its sittings (by live broadcast, in a room allocated to reporters) have to be in the building at 11 am - from the beginning of a sitting, and even in case of arriving 5 minutes late, they are deprived of the right to cover the sitting that sometimes lasts several hours.

The fact of being specially accredited to cover government sittings is of no importance: the guards of the building allow to enter only those on the lists of the given day. In addition, different lists are required for coverage of sittings and briefings.

NT correspondent, who is accredited to the government and did not take part in the live broadcast of the May 8 sitting, along with several other reporters was not allowed to attend the briefing following the sitting as, according to the security guards, "there was not yet" a list of reporters permitted to briefings.

Thus, on the one hand, reporters are given the opportunity to follow government sittings on the spot by watching a live broadcast, but on the other hand, there is a strict time and "list" restriction, which in its turn limits reporters' freedom. Unlike these reporters, those accredited to cover National Assembly sittings (by the way, not in a separate room but immediately in the hall of sittings) are free - in terms of time - to enter NA building.

10. CEC REGISTERS ISHKHAN KHACHATRIAN AS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEPUTY FROM OYP'S LIST BY PROPORTIONAL ELECTORAL SYSTEM [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

At the May 8 sitting, the RA Central Electoral Commission (CEC) registered Ishkhan Khachatryan as a National Assembly (NA) deputy from the electoral list of the Orinats Yerkir Party (OYP) by the proportional electoral system. In making this decision, the CEC took as a basis the NA report on termination of deputy powers of the OYP chairman Arthur Baghdasarian who has been appointed secretary of the Security Council, as well as the applications of Victoria Harutyunian and Vahe Vardapetian (both from the OYP list) rejecting their nomination. By the Electoral Code, in case of the proportional electoral system mandate's remaining vacant, the CEC shall give it to the next candidate on the given party's list within 7 days.

Representative of "Heritage" party Zoya Tadevosian was the only one to vote against the CEC decision. She explained her position by the fact that at the previous sitting on April 23, the CEC published the applications of two candidates on the OYP list - Gegham Gasparian and Victoria Harutyunian about their refusal of nomination, whereas they had not signed these applications.

At the April 23 sitting, the CEC made a decision to send these applications to the RA prosecutor general's office. According to the CEC secretary Aram Bakhchagulian, if the authenticity of these signatures is not confirmed, the CEC will have to review the registration of the new deputy.

NT correspondent was informed by spokeswoman for the RA prosecutor general Sona Truzian that the prosecutor's office sent these applications to the Kentron police station, According to the prosecutor's office, the examination has not been completed yet.

11. ARMENIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS WITH OSCE SECRETARY GENERAL [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The Armenian foreign minister Edward Nalbandian on May 7 met with the OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut. During the meeting, the sides discussed issues related to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict's settlement, cooperation with the OSCE Yerevan Office, and the reports on the Armenian presidential election, which were published by the OSCE/ODIHR observer mission.

In connection with the solution process of the Nagorno Karabakh problem, E. Nalbandian informed the OSCE Secretary General about his meeting with Azerbaijan's foreign minister Elmar Mamedyarov and the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group the day before, noting that Armenia appreciates the co-chairs' efforts to solve the problem and is ready to continue the current process based on the proposals submitted by them at the ministerial meeting in Madrid, as these proposals offer an opportunity for progress. According to the Armenian foreign minister, Armenia is against all those steps which may contradict the Minsk Group's efforts and distort the essence of negotiations.



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NT was informed by the RA MFA Press and Information Department that E. Nalbandian presented Armenian political leadership's steps aimed at establishing public confidence and dialog of political forces on issues of common concern. In his words, by instruction of the Armenian president, a working group has been set up to coordinate the implementation of the proposals of the PACE resolution 1609.

12. ACCORDING TO EDWARD NALBANDIAN, ARMENIA PREPARED TO DEEPEN COOPERATION WITH EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The Armenian foreign minister Edward Nalbandian met with the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Thomas Hammarberg, then with the President of the European Court of Human Rights Jean-Paul Costa in Strasbourg on May 7, NT was informed by the RA MFA Press and Information Department.

During the meeting with T. Hammarberg, E. Nalbandian expressed satisfaction at cooperation on human rights issues with the Council of Europe, in particular, with the Commissioner for Human Rights, saying that the Armenian government has adopted a careful attitude to and took into account the proposals made by the Commissioner during his visit to Armenia on March 14-16.

At the meeting with Jean-Paul Costa, E. Nalbandian assured him that Armenia is prepared to continue and deepen cooperation with the European Court of Human Rights. Speaking about Protocol 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which was adopted to provide the court with extra judicial means and flexibility and to create an opportunity to examine cases within a reasonable period and focus on important cases, E. Nalbandian pointed out that Armenia was one of the first countries to ratify Protocol 14 and attaches importance to its taking effect in a short time.

13. ALL NECESSARY STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO ENSURE SOCIAL SOLIDARITY [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

During the May 8 meeting, the RA deputy foreign minister Arman Kirakosian and the EU Special Representative for South Caucasus Peter Semneby discussed the postelection developments in Armenia. The sides underlined the necessity of taking steps in order to ensure social solidarity and pointed out that maintaining the stability in Armenia is a guarantee of the country's development.

According to the RA MFA Press and Information Department, the sides also discussed the Armenian-Turkish relations and the prospects of solution of the Nagorno Karabakh problem.

14. LEVON TER-PETROSIAN WILL GIVE UP POLITICS AND LEAVE ARMENIA, GALUST SAHAKIAN SAYS [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

Levon Ter-Petrosian is going to give up politics and leave the country, the deputy chairman of the Republican Party of Armenia (RPA), National Assembly deputy Galust Sahakian expressed an opinion at the May 8 press conference. In his words, the processes related to the first president are artificial and cannot last long. "The man had a task, he failed to carry out it completely and he will gradually leave the political field," the RPA member said. He reminded that as early as prior to the nomination of presidential candidates, he had said that L. Ter-Petrosian would not succeed and he would quit Armenia, which the first president now intends to do.

According to G. Sahakian, L. Ter-Petrosian's speech at the 2nd congress of the National Movement was a "retreat" as compared with his previous statements. In his opinion, the fact that for the first time L. Ter-Petrosian publicly stated the possibility of a dialog with the authorities shows that he repents. G. Sahakian said L. Ter-Petrosian is the main and only person responsible for the March 1 events, and "the ruse" is that he was not present at the scene and so cannot be subjected to criminal responsibility.

G. Sahakian stated that he is not in favor of dialog with L. Ter-Petrosian. According to him, the first Armenian president said that the current authorities should leave power and that the relations with Azerbaijan should be improved by returning Karabakh to it. "I do not think that there can be a dialog on these two subjects," G. Sahakian said.



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15. TERM OF ARREST OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEPUTY SASUN MIKAELIAN EXTENDED [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The court of Yerevan's Kentron and Nork-Marash communities granted the petition of the investigation body and extended the term of arrest of RA National Assembly deputy Sasun Mikaelian for another two months - until July 12. To recap, S. Mikaelian is charged with crimes envisaged by the RA Criminal Code's Article 300 part 1 - usurping state power and Article 225 part 2 - organization of mass disorder accompanied with murder. NT correspondent was informed about it by spokeswoman for the RA prosecutor general Sona Truzian.

The RA Criminal Appeal Court rejected the appeal of former deputy prosecutor general Gagik Jhangirian against the decision to extend the term of his arrest. He is charged with crimes envisaged by the CC Article 316 part 1 - violence, not dangerous for life or health, against a representative of authorities and Article 235 part 1 - illegal keeping of weapons and ammunition. The term of arrest of G. Jhangirian is until June 24.

According to Sona Truzian, as of March 8, 55 people are under preliminary arrest based on the case examined in connection with the March 1 events in Yerevan. 27 persons have given a written undertaking not to leave Armenia. 48 cases on 51 persons have been sent to court.

16. ONE OF FOUR CANDIDATES FOR POST OF NORK-MARASH COMMUNITY HEAD WITHDRAWS HIS CANDIDATURE [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/09/08]

Non-party man Melik Hovhannisian - one of the four candidates for the post of head of Yerevan's Nork-Marash community to be elected on May 18 - has withdrawn his candidature within the envisaged period, NT correspondent was informed by the chairwoman of the district electoral commission No 10 Silva Markosian. Thus the acting head of the community, member of the Republican Party of Armenia (RPA) Varazdat Mkrtchian and non-party men Garnik Martirosian and Ashot Margarian will run for this post.

Elections will be held on the same day in another three communities of Yerevan. One candidate will run in elections in each of these communities: in Avan - the acting head of the community, RPA member Taron Margarian, in Davitashen - the deputy head of the community, RPA member Arthur Gevorgian, and in Malatia-Sebastia - the head of the district municipality's unit of trade and services, non-party man Davit Ohanian.

17. SERGE SARGSIAN: MAY 9 HAS BECOME DOUBLE SYMBOL FOR US [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/09/08]

The Armenian president Serge Sargsian sent a congratulatory message to the war veterans on the occasion of Victory and Peace Day. The message, which was submitted to NT by the RA president's press service, reads:

"Dear veterans,
Dear compatriots,
I congratulate you on Victory and Peace Day.

The victorious end of the Great Patriotic war was an event of exceptional importance in the life of our people as well. The Armenians played a considerable role in this victory by their involvement in the armies of the allies, in the resistance movements and especially in the Soviet army. The peace was achieved at the cost of enormous sacrifices and opened new prospects for our people not only to heal the wounds but also to develop our country. Today's Armenia is the continuation of the republic which was rescued and prospered thanks to the feats of those who achieved this victory.

Since 1992, May 9 has become a double symbol for us. By liberating Shoushi, the new generation proved that it is a worthy successor of the heroic past of its ancestors. Shoushi has become a symbol of Armenians' love of freedom, inflexible will-power and their ability to overcome ordeals with honor.

On this holiday we remember with pride all those who died for Fatherland. The memory of our heroes will live on.

Congratulating you on the occasion of this double holiday, I wish all of us a peaceful sky and deeds worthy of our historical victories".



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18. FESTIVE EVENT ORGANIZED IN VICTORY PARK ON OCCASION OF 63rd ANNIVERSARY OF VICTORY IN GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR AND 16th ANNIVERSARY OF LIBERATION OF SHOUSHI [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/09/08]

A festive event was organized in Victory Park of Yerevan on May 9 on the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic war and the 16th anniversary of the liberation of Shoushi. The event was attended by the prime minister Tigran Sargsian, the speaker of the RA National Assembly Tigran Torosian, NA deputies, government members, veterans of World War II and azatamartiks (freedom fighters) who took part in the liberation of Shoushi.

The event participants laid wreaths at Monument to the Unknown Soldier. Then there was a military parade followed by a festive concert.

During a talk with NT correspondent, veteran of the Great Patriotic war, Professor Suren Zohrabian said that the biographies of more than 600 thousand Armenians who fought against fascism are covered with glory. 300 thousand of them died on the battlefield in the name of peace. In our recent history, the Artsakh heroic war, especially the liberation of Shoushi, are unprecedented, which, according to S. Zohrabian, can be considered as the continuation of the victory gained in the Great Patriotic war.

Responding to questions of the reporters, T. Torosian said: "Regardless of the fact, in which war our compatriots had participated - in World War II or the liberation of Shoushi, we all must appreciate their heroic deeds, realizing that they risked their lives in the name of peace".

19. ARMENIAN NA SPEAKER CONGRATULATES ARMENIANS ON THE DAY OF VICTORY AND PEACE [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Armenian National Assembly Speaker Tigran Torosian congratulated Armenians on the Day of Victory and Peace. Armenian National Assembly press services told Armenpress that in his message the speaker particularly says,

"Dear compatriots,

I warmly congratulate you on the occasion of the most loved and most valuable holiday the Day of Victory and Peace.

May 9 is the embodiment of the heroic struggle for freedom and peace of three generations of our people, the top of which became liberation of Shushu and Artsakh by this returning our people dignity and opportunity of living and creating in peace.

Bowing our heads in the memory of soldiers and commanders who were killed for this day, we do not have right to forget that it was erected thanks to the unity, devotion and love towards homeland.

Again I congratulate you, dear compatriots, wishing new success and victories for peace, strength of our country and prosperity and happiness of our people."

20. MEMBER OF ARF FACTION SAYS GOVERNMENT ADOPTED A PROGRAM WHICH IS ABLE TO UNITE THE PUBLIC [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Armenian government's program has a number of positive sides, it underscores human factor. Member of the ARF parliamentary faction Ara Nranian told today at a press conference that government's program is not only of propagating nature but makes public a participant of its implementation.

The ARF representative underscored the involvement of the experienced specialists, noting that the government's team includes people who are modest, clever and experienced. "It is a good beginning and if it will continue in this way in near future we will have positive results. The government has approved prospective programs which may unite the public and the latter will soon feel the results," Nranian said.

Nevertheless, he said ARF has concerns, among them is that the government's team, supporting liberated economy, may become pseudo-liberated and harm the real sector of the economy.

"In our country victories are registered for the consolidation of which it is necessary to have state with developed economy. The ARF has never separated economic issues from politics, has never speculated with them for political reasons and has always been of the opinion that the existing issues in the country can not be solved without having strong economic potential," the ARF representative said.

Economist Andranik Tevanian agrees that the program of the government has good sides, is full of kind wishes but suggests viewing the issue from other point of view. He underscores the form and time of the implementation of the programs. One of the main flaws he said is that not in all cases the time of the implementation of the program is mentioned.



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"In Armenia the political life has a quite serious economic pre-context and the economic life is quite politicized," A. Tevanian said.

A. Nranian also noted that it is necessary to present the issue in a right way. If it will be presented from the right side, the existing flaws will be voiced, the further steps will be - to have serious approach and reach their solution.

The newly appointed prime minister, according to the ARF representative, is ready to display serious approach towards the existing issues and carry out necessary activities.

A. Tevanian also said that he sees certain obstacles in the implementation of the governments program, particularly lack of public trust and absence of joint thinking. According to him, it is necessary to ensure public's trust towards the authorities and make them believe that soon changes will be registered.

21. CONDOLEEZZA RICE CONGRATULATES EDWARD NALBANDIAN ON HIS APPOINTMENT [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian continues receiving congratulatory messages on his appointment in the office of the foreign affairs minister of Armenia.

Foreign Ministry press service told Armenpress that U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has congratulated Nalbandian on his appointment.

In her message she particularly said, "I congratulate You on being appointed in the office of the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Armenia. I am looking forward to the meeting with You and I hope that with the joint work we will be able to consolidate the friendship between our countries.

We have enough work to carry out for final definition of the principles for the Karabakh conflict regulation as well as supporting Armenia in regulation of diplomatic and economic relations with neighboring countries. We also hope that Armenian will undertake resolute steps to give new impetus to the democratic reforms and restoration of civil freedoms which are general values put in the basis of the relations of our countries."

Austrian European and International Affairs Federal Minister Ursula Plasnik, Slovak Foreign Minister Yan Kubec, Swiss Foreign Minister Michele Calmy-Ray, Chili Foreign Minister Alexandro Folksey, Hungarian Foreign Minister Kinga Gyonts, Korean Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hvan, Secretary General of BSEC permanent international secretariat Leonidas Krizantopoulos congratulated the Armenian minister.

Secretary General of League of Arab Countries Amr Musan also congratulated Edward Nalbandian. In his message he particularly wrote, "I am sure that Your political experience and personal qualities will let You implement the duties which You are bearing i.e. the duties of the head of the Armenian diplomacy. Using the opportunity I want to reconfirm the importance which we are giving to the relations between the Arab world and Armenia."

22. ARMENIAN AND KARABAKH PRESIDENTS DISCUSS ISSUES ON BILATERAL RELATIONS [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Armenian President Serzh Sargsian is in Stepanakert to participate in the celebrations dedicated to the Day of Victory, Karabakh's Defense Army, 16th anniversary of Shushi liberation.

Today the Armenian president had face-to-face meeting with his Karabakh counterpart Bako Sahakian.

Press service of the Karabakh president's staff told Armenpress that during the meeting the interlocutors discussed a wide-range of issues on bilateral relations.

23. TIGRAN SARGSIAN CONGRATULATES ARMENIANS ON THE VICTORY DAY [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian congratulated Armenians on the Day of Victory and Peace. Governmental press service told Armenpress that in his message he particularly says,

"Dear compatriots,

I warmly congratulate you on the Day of Victory and Peace. Today we, together with many nations, are celebrating anniversary of the historic victory against fascism which thanks to the patriotism, devotion, sacrifice and courage of the sons of our people has become ours too.

The victory is doubled by another great event – liberation of Shushi. Sixteen years ago in a demanded war our people registered its right for peaceful and independent right.



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Today I direct my warmest congratulations to the war veterans, our freedom fighters and whole people and pay tribute to the memory of those who lost their lives in this fight.

Dear compatriots, I wish you all good mood, peace and welfare."

24. ARMENIAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSES HOPE THAT TURKEY NOT TO RETURN TO ITS PREVIOUS STYLE [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

"In general, previously there was an impression that the impulses received from the Turkish side before April 24 included positive elements connected with the regulation of the Armenian-Turkish relations then those received after April 24," Armenian deputy foreign minister Arman Kirakosian said, commenting with the request of Armenpress, on the statement of the Turkish ambassador to Azerbaijan in which the latter said that Turkey connects the regulation of relations with Armenia with the Nagorno Karabakh conflict regulation and Armenia's refusal of efforts of international recognition of the Armenian genocide.

"If the information about the statement of the Turkish ambassador to Azerbaijan corresponds to reality, we may only express hope that it is not the continuation of previously noted tendency and is not return to the previous style," A. Kirakosian said.

25. ARMENIAN PRIME MINISTER RECEIVES FRENCH AMBASSADOR [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian received today French ambassador to Armenia Serzh Smesov. Governmental press service told Armenpress that during the meeting the two sides pointed out the importance of boosting Armenian-French economic relations and making them relevant to the high level of existing political relations.

It was also noted that the cooperation must also be developed in the educational sphere and there are great opportunities and prospects for their further expansion.

In this pre-context ambassador Smesov spoke about the intention of establishing French school in Armenia which may become a tying circle between the already existing French kindergarten and French university.

He asked the support of the prime minister in providing a territory with that purpose.

Tigran Sargsian said that he will task the Yerevan mayor to suggest solutions in short period of time.

During the meeting the ambassador also spoke about the tendencies of appearance of big French specialized companies in the Armenian market, considering it as one of the positive achievements of the economic partnership.

Armenian prime minister highly underscored the support of France in the involvement of Armenia and South Caucasus in the European New Neighborhood program. The prime minister said Armenia is expecting close cooperation with France within the framework of the program and EU-Armenia Action plan.

The French ambassador also informed that next week the head of the France-International Cooperation Department is expected to visit Armenia to discuss further bilateral cooperation issues as well as issues on cooperation within the framework of EU-Armenia action plan program.

26. DMITRI MEDVEDEV CONGRATULATES ARMENIAN PRESIDENT ON VICTORY DAY [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

President of Russia Dmitri Medvedev sent congratulatory messages to the presidents of the CIS countries on the Day of Victory and Peace.

Kremlin press service reported that in the message to the Armenian President Serzh Sargsian, Medvedev particularly wrote, "I am sure that the Armenian-Russian friendship which has undergone trial of the time will hence also be basis for boosting strategic partnership and multilateral cooperation between our countries."



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27. VLADIMIR PUTIN CONGRATULATES HEADS OF GOVERNMENTS OF CIS [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

The chairman of the Russian government Vladimir Putin sent congratulatory messages to the heads of governments of the CIS countries, press service of the Russian Ministers' Cabinet reported.

In the message directed to the Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian, V. Putin says, "On these days we again remember about the heroic efforts in the battle field which helped to make fascism collapse and remember those who were erecting the Great Victory.

We are obliged to keep the memory of general trials which fall on our people in the fight against fascism, take necessary lessons so that the valuable experience of unity and reconciliation pass to our generations."

28. ARMENIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF FRENCH SENATE [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Chairman of the French Senate Christian Poncelet received today in Luxemburg Palace Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian who is in Paris on an official visit.

The chairman of the Senate congratulated E. Nalbandian on his new appointment and highly underscored his activity as an ambassador in boosting Armenian-French relations.

Armenian Foreign Ministry press service told Armenpress that minister Nalbandian said that it was a great honor for him to represent Armenia in France, which stands by Armenia as a devoted friend and with which closest cooperation is established both bilateral and on the European and international levels.

In this respect the Armenian foreign minister thanked the chairman of the Senate for those initiatives and readiness directed towards developing cooperation with Armenia.

During the meeting Nalbandian presented to the chairman of the Senate the prior directions of the activity of the government's program as well as viewpoints of Armenia's leadership towards a number of regional and international issues.

29. REPRESENTATIVE OF "HERITAGE" FACTION UNDERSCORES DIALOGUE BETWEEN AUTHORITIES AND OPPOSITION [ARMENPRESS, 05/10/08]

For a dialogue between the authorities and opposition a personal invitation is necessary. Member of the "Heritage" faction Anahit Bakhshian told today at a press conference that dialogue, in such case, is an important process for the state and the authorities must undertake steps in that direction. She noted that no matter how different are the views of the representatives of the two sides it is possible to reach a positive result.

According to her, each task group, set up to clarify the situation connected with the recent presidential elections, must have the trust of the people. For that reason, such people must be included in them the word of which is acceptable for the majority of the people and the 50 percent of which must consist of the opposition. For getting out of the inner-political tensed situation she suggested that the arrested people be pardoned.

"During his pre-electoral campaign President Serzh Sargsian pointed out about the idea of changing the moral-psychological atmosphere in the country and I believed that he wanted to do it," A. Bakhshian said.

Referring to the activity of the National Assembly, she noted that today it does not include all the directions existing in the inner-political field.

30. OFFICIAL INTERNET PAGE OF ARMENIAN MINISTRY OF CULTURE PRESENTED [ARMENPRESS, 05/10/08]

Hence the public will have an opportunity to get acquainted with the activity of the Armenian Ministry of Culture and the country's cultural policy from the official Internet page of the ministry (www.mincult.am).

The page presents the history of the ministry from its formation and activity during the first republic until nowadays. It also presents the legislation, structure, and ministry's collaborator non-governmental, international and Diaspora organizations.

The web site also has "Discussions" section through which the visitors of the site may direct their questions and suggestions connected with the projects.



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During the presentation of the Internet page, Minister Hasmik Poghosian noted that it may serve as an active way of communication between the public and the government.

"You may find in the web page all those issues which have recently been raised in respect of availability of the information, all those works which refer to the cultural policy in the republic and outside of its borders. Besides, it will also establish mutual ties between the public and the ministry," she said.

"We will be very happy to receive proposals or remarks connected with different projects. We are ready to take into consideration and discuss all the ideas and initiatives," H. Poghosian said.

The British Council helped the ministry in designing of the site and its English section.

31. LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENTAL ELECTIONS IN SYUNIK [ARMENPRESS, 05/12/08]

Elections of the head of Khndzoresk village of the Armenian province of Syunik were held on May 11.

An official from the electoral constituency N37 comprising Goris and Sisian, told Armenpress that the only nominated candidate - the acting head of the village, member of the Republican party Seryozha Hayrapetian, has been re-elected. Around 1,036 voters participated in the elections 1,016 of which voted for the candidate.

On the same day elections of the Board of Elders were held in Kuris village. All the four nominated non-party candidates have been elected.

The secretary of the N38 electoral constituency (involving Kapan and Megri regions) Ramela Hakobian said that on May 25 urgent elections of the head of the community will be held in Artsvanik village of Kapan region. She said one candidate has been nominated – non-party Anushavan Harutyunian.

On June 1 in the same electoral constituency – in the village of Vardavank – elections of the head of the village will be held. The acting head of the village, non-party Garegin Kostandian is the only nominated candidate.

32. AZERI FM SAYS ARMENIAN AND AZERBAIJANI PRESIDENTS MAY MEET IN JUNE [ARMENPRESS, 05/12/08]

Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mamedyarov stated today in Baku that the meeting of the Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents may take place in June of the running year.

"We decided that the negotiations must continue. More probably in June meeting will be conducted on the level of presidents," the minister said.

On May 6 Armenian and Azerbaijani foreign ministers met in Strasbourg.

"New Armenian President has been elected. At the meeting with the new leadership of Armenia it will be clear whether it agrees to peace," Mamedyarov added, noting that during the meeting with Edward Nalbandian "he once again stated Azerbaijan's position that the Karabakh conflict must be regulated within the framework of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.

BUSINESS

33. "CONSTRUCTION AND INTERIOR" EXHIBITION OPENS IN YEREVAN [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The exhibition "Construction and Interior" with the participation of 40 Armenian and foreign companies opened at the Hall of Sittings of the Armenian government on May 8. The event was organized by Prom Expo company. More than 200 products, as well as the sector's services are presented at 10 sections of the exhibition.

At the opening ceremony the RA deputy minister of urban development Karlen Gevorgian expressed a hope that companies participating in the exhibition will find serious partners during the event, which is being held on May 8-10. According to him, construction is currently one of the most rapidly developing branches of the Armenian economy. He underlined that such exhibitions help to organize efficiently work in the sector and present new projects, materials and technologies.

Commercial director of Prom Expo Vahagn Mirijanian said that a wide range of items of construction and adjacent sectors are displayed at the exhibition. The availability of new materials and structures necessary for designing the interior was pointed out. In the words of V. Mirijanian, the exhibition will be successful as a lot of companies showed great interest in it.



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The minister of economy Nerses Yeritsian, the minister of energy and natural resources Armen Movsisian, and the deputy chairman of the Central Bank of Armenia Arthur Javadian familiarized themselves with products and services on display.

The exhibition was organized with the assistance of the RA ministry of economy, the RA ministry of urban development, Yerevan mayor's office and the RA Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

34. CBA PUTS INTO CIRCULATION NEW 10 000-DRAM BANKNOTE [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The Central Bank of Armenia (CBA) put into circulation a new banknote of the nominal value of 10 000 drams (2008 issue). NT was informed by the CBA press service that new 10 000-dram banknotes are legal means of payment in the territory of the Republic of Armenia and shall be accepted without reserve at their nominal value against all monetary liabilities, without a time limit. Banknotes of the same nominal value which were issued in 2003 and 2006 remain in circulation without any restriction and change in the conditions of their use.

DIASPORA

35. VARDAN GREGORIAN TO RECEIVE AWARD OF COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education has named this year's recipients of its prestigious Distinguished Service Awards. Dr. Vartan Gregorian, President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, was named one of the five recipients, who will be honored during a July 14 luncheon in New York City. Gregorian is the recipient of the James L. Fisher Award for Distinguished Service to Education.

36. KARIN SONG AND DANCE ENSEMBLE PERFORMS IN AKHALTSKHA [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The concert of the Karin Song and Dance Ensemble, which has arrived from Armenia with artistic director Gagik Ginosian at the head, took place in the Hovhannes Tumanian Secondary School 3 of Akhalkskha.

As A-Info agency reports, the Armenian society of Akhalkskha looked forward to the performances of the ensemble as Gagik Ginosian was born and grew up in Akhalkskha and has developed the dances of the ensemble on the basis of the old-style performances of the Samtskhe-Javakhe region.

37. THIRD INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHER ARMIK OPENS IN UNESCO'S HALL [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The third individual exhibition of photographer Armik entitled "Biological variety in the Lebanon forest" opened in the UNESCO's hall in Lebanon on May 5. Exhibited were different photos, which depict the different sorts of the creatures living in the forest, which are not often paid attention to, however, it is impossible to see them with the naked eye. According to the Daily Azdak, Armik has performed professional work and has managed to penetrate into the depth of the forest with a great patience and consistency introducing to the observer the imperceptible creatures existing in nature.

The exhibition was sponsored by Khaled Kabani, the Minister of Culture.

38. NAIRI IRITSIAN ELECTED CHAIRPERSON OF AKHALKALAK REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

Nairi Iritsian was unanimously elected Chairperson of the Akhalkalak regional administration in the May 2 sitting of the Municipality Bureau of Akhalkalak. This information has been provided by A-Info. Haroutiun Hovhannisian, the former Chairperson of the Akhalkalak regional administration resigned after two months on that post on account of being nominated as a candidate of MP by the majoritarian system in the region of Akhalkalak by the United National Movement ruling party in Georgia.



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39. TALENTED MOSCOW-BASED MUSICIAN SONA ARSHAKIAN GIVES FIRST SOLO CONCERT IN YEREVAN [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The 21-year-old Sona Arshakian from Moscow gave her first important and responsible concert at Yerevan's Chamber Music House. The program of the first solo concert of the Moscow State Conservatory student was a complex and rich one. On that evening the young pianist performed works of almost all European composers: Scarlatti, Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann and Rakhmaninov.

According to Sona, the program was complex but she was well-prepared, and she expressed a hope that the audience will like her performance. "My professor is very strict and demanding. We have prepared well for the concert but the program was difficult," she said.

"I started playing the piano quite unexpectedly. In our family, I am the first to practice music, for which I am obliged to a childhood friend. Following her suit, I started to attend a music school and soon I realized that I was to play and become a famous pianist," Sona recalls. Shortly afterwards the gifted girl continued her education at Yerevan music school after P. Tchaikovsky, and three years later she left for Moscow to study in Moscow, a city famous for its music traditions.

The talented and hard-working girl not only studied music in a foreign city but also improved her music skills and graduated from the Tchaikovsky music schools with an honors diploma. With the same success Sona Arshakian entered the Moscow State Conservatory, studying in the class of famous Professor Yuri Hayrapetian of Armenian descent. "At his classes, I began to perceive music differently. It is a different feeling that I can express only on the keyboard of a piano. This perception is peculiar to my world, in which nothing but nature and music exists: they are as much in harmony as the air and breath," Sona said.

In response to the question about why there are no works of Armenian composers in her concert program, Sona replied that it is a matter of time, and the next time she will certainly perform works of Armenian authors.

In addition to playing the piano, Sona likes to sing, paint and dance. "I like Armenian folk songs above all and I sing them with pleasure. I often sing in church," she noted.

Sona's greatest wish to become a great and well-known pianist, for which she studies hard. After this solo concert, the young pianist will give a performance in Moscow. She plans to participate in an international competition of pianists in Geneva in October.

In 2006 Sona took part in the Citta di Sulmona competition in Italy and won the second prize, while at another international contest of pianists in Italy in 2007 she was awarded the 3rd prize and the Special Prize.

ARTS

40. EXHIBITION DEDICATED TO 60th ANNIVERSARY OF RA HONORED PAINTER VALMAR OPENS AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ARMENIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

An exhibition dedicated to the 60th anniversary of RA honored painter Valmar (Vladimir Margarian) opened on May 2 at the National Gallery of Armenia, where more than 80 works by the painter were presented.

RA Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian, Minister of Culture Hasmik Poghosian, other high-ranking officials, as well as fans of Valmar's art were present at the official opening of the exhibition.

Congratulating the painter on the occasion of his jubilee, RA Minister of Culture awarded Valmar Ministry's gold medal.

T. Sargsian said that the RA government will undertake steps for Armenia to become a cultural center in the region. "I think Valmar will be the soldier of culture, who will prove with his biography that we have realistic ambitions. I am sure that we will be able to become a cultural center with Valmar and many talented artists like him," the Prime Minister said. At the same time he said that to make Armenia a cultural center we should first of all change society's attitude to art, as well as create all possible conditions for artists.

As art critic Saro Sarukhanian evaluated, Valmar is one of the unique artists, thanks to whose creations the Armenian people became known in different countries of the world. And, according to him, it is not accidental that Valmar is considered a painter of Great Armenian World. According to S. Sarukhanian, with his obstinacy and devotion Valmar was able to overcome many difficulties and today he is considered one of the most renowned painters in the world.



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"The art loving society in my canvases is able to find and appreciate everything, which is close to it and seems unique. I try to speak with people through my paintings, which proceed just from my heart and essence," Valmar said.

41. PERFORMANCE OF ARMENIAN ACTORS IN TRABZON THEATRICAL FESTIVAL ACCEPTED WARMLY [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

In the 9th Black Sea theatrical festival held in Trabzon the "Servants" performance of the Armenian group has been warmly accepted by the audience, which stood up and applauded to the Armenian actors.

Noting that the audience liked the performance of the Armenian actors very much, member of the Turkish oppositional People's Republican party, mayor of Trabzon Volkan Janalioghli told Turkish "Hurriyet" that "the Armenians gave color to the festival. Trabzon audience showed its assessment with its applauses," he said.

The newspaper noted that Armenia which has previously twice participated in the festival, last year refused to take part in it because of the murder of the chief editor of "Agos" newspaper Hrant Dink in Istanbul.

42. BOOKS OF PERSIAN FAIRY-TALES AND STORIES PRESENTED IN KHANKO-APER LIBRARY [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Books of Persian fairy-tales and stories with the Armenian translation have been presented today in Khanko-Aper library. The books were translated and published within the framework of cooperation of the library and Iranian embassy's cultural center.

The director of the library Ruzan Tonoyan said that during the recent years the Armenian-Iranian ties are becoming deeper and this event as well is aimed at giving impetus to merging Armenian-Iranian cultures. She said it is a good opportunity for the Armenian children to get acquainted with the Iranian literature in the Armenian language.

Reza Atoufi, consultant of the cultural center of the Iranian embassy said that relations between Armenia and Iran are so multilateral that all the conditions for more expansion and deepening of relations in all the spheres exist.

Karo Vardanian, the head of the cultural policy department of the Armenian Culture Ministry said that the experience of the years showed that cooperation is passing successfully with those countries with which ancient-long friendly relations existed and Armenian-Iranian relations are a good example of it.

43. FAMOUS ARMENIAN ACTOR HONORED IN RUSSIAN SAINT PETERSBURG [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

On April 28 the 70-th birth anniversary of famous Armenian actor, Vladimir Msryan, was marked in Russia's Saint Petersburg's Cinema House. The event also celebrated the 25-th anniversary of a film about famous Italian violinist, Nicolo Paganini, in which the Armenian actors played the leading role.

Speaking to a news conference today in Yerevan Vladimir Msryan said he was awarded a Saint Petersburg's medal, which is awarded to people for their contribution to the cultural progress of the second largest Russian city.

"I was very touched and happy to have received the medal and I am thankful to my Russian friends for organization of both celebrations," he said, adding that virtually all people who made the film were present.

The film was shot in 1982. For his excellent play Vladimir Msryan was called by Italians 'the best Paganini of all nations and times.'

44. TWO DIRECTORS TO PRODUCE FILM ABOUT FAMOUS ARMENIAN ACTOR [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Two Armenian film directors, Gurgen Gadachik and Armen Vatian will make a documentary about famous Armenian theater and cinema actor Vladimir Msryan.

Speaking at a news conference today Gurgen Gadachik said the film will feature the actor's life and his works.

He said the film will present excerpts from theater plays and films in which the actors plays and also celebration of Msryan's 70-th birth anniversary in Russian Saint Petersburg last April 28.



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Vladimir Msryan said this documentary will give audience an opportunity to see what he has done, and to evaluate his activity.

He said his last role was in a 30 minute short film made by Gadachik and a young director. The film is called Anna Karenina. He said the film was shown at Venice film festival and won the praise of the audience.

“Nevertheless, my main occupation is theater. I live by it and by characters I play,” he said.

He said his 70-th anniversary will be marked in Yerevan in September and a book about him will be released.

45. “PRIVILEGES OF THE CONTEMPORARY FILM CRITICISM AND ISSUES” SEMINAR KICKS OFF IN TSAKHKADZOR [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

“Privileges of the Contemporary film criticism and Issues” seminar kicked off today in Tsakhkadzor. The seminar is included in the “Film Journalism without Borders” program of the Yerevan branch of the “Golden Apricot” international film festival and Association of Armenian film critics and film journalists. It is organized for the journalists covering cultural sphere.

Director of the “Golden Apricot” film festival Harutyun Khachatryan noted that the film festivals are held by film lovers and journalists who write about film. “We are convinced that the journalists writing about films are very important for us, it depends on them how this branch of art will develop. Mass media do not have much time to send their reporters to participate in different international festivals, write about them and that is why we thought that it is our work. If we are trying to announce competitions for best journalists, the articles are not very praising. Those who will have serious, real analytic articles will leave for international and other festivals,” H. Khachatryan said.

This year during the days of Golden Apricot festival a daily newspaper will be issued. H. Khachatryan also said that in the end of May a regional seminar will be organized with the participation of young film journalists. The participants of the seminar together with Armenian journalists will prepare the first issue of the newspaper.

The art director of the “Golden Apricot” festival Susanna Harutyunian said the seminar will help the reporters to prepare for more skillful coverage of the festival.

46. SHOWING DEDICATED TO AL. SPENDIARIAN KICKED OFF IN HIS HOUSE MUSEUM [ARMENPRESS, 05/10/08]

“Spendiarian in the Memory of Contemporaries” showing opened today in the house-museum of Al. Spendiarian, dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the death of the distinguished composer.

The organizer of the showing, head of a department of the museum Astghik Harutyunian said that they are displaying particularly those materials which have not yet been displayed and were kept in the archives of the museums.

The showing presents the life and creative activity of Al. Spendiarian. “The showing is interesting as it has many portraits, they are made by Martiros Petrosian,” A. Harutyunian said.

The showing will last for a month.

47. CONCERT DEDICATED TO ARMENIAN MUSIC CONFERENCE TO BE HELD WITHIN THE FRAMEWORKS “NATIONAL GALLERY” MUSIC FESTIVAL [ARMENPRESS, 05/10/08]

Within the framework of the “National Gallery” 4th international music festival a concert will be held in a hall of the gallery dedicated to the Armenian Music Conference.

An official from the “Arts Gallery” Foundation told Armenpress, that the program includes performances of the works of contemporary Armenian composers – “Linos” string quartet, Narekatsi Chamber Music Orchestra.

Armenian Music Conference has been established in 1995. The founders are composers Levon Chaushian, Yervand Yerkanian, Ruben Sargsian, Vahram Babayan, Martin Vardazarian and music critic Margarit Rukhkian.

The main goal of the establishment is to spread contemporary Armenian music.

“National Gallery” 4th international music festival kicked off on April 17 and will last until June 15.



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48. ARMENIAN EMBASSY IN EGYPT PARTICIPATES IN TRADITIONAL ANNUAL FAIR [ARMENPRESS, 05/12/08]

On May 9 the Armenian embassy in Egypt in cooperation with Armenian community of Egypt participated in a fair organized by the International Women Peace Movement headed by Egypt's First Lady, Mrs. Suzan Mubarak.

Armenia had a separate pavilion for displaying Armenian food, needlework, souvenirs as well as Armenian dishes.

Armenian foreign ministry's press division told Armenpress that local Armenian children danced during the event.

Mrs. Suzan Mubarak visited the fair on the same day. Overall 12 embassies were invited to participate in the event, which was held on Baghdad Street of Cairo's Heliopolis quarter and over 100,000 people visited the fair.

49. 'MUSEUM NIGHT-2008' TO BE LAUNCHED ON MAY 17 [ARMENPRESS, 05/12/08]

A traditional cultural event called 'The Museum Night-2008' will be launched this year on May 17, the press division of the Armenian Ministry of Culture told Armenpress.

It said all museums involved in the event will be open until 1 am to host all lovers of art free of charge. The participating museums will organize special celebrations and expositions.

The first 'Museum Night' event was held in 2005 by some 1,200 museums in Europe in an effort to give art lovers a chance to rediscover their exclusive collections.

Armenia joined other 40 European countries in 2005 to celebrate the event.

50. EDUCATIONAL-CULTURAL CENTER OPENS FOR METS SEPASAR [ARMENPRESS, 05/12/08]

Armenian Caritas charity organization helped establish an educational-cultural center for the village of Mets Sepasar which is in the northwestern province of Shirak.

Hasmik Sarkisian, the coordinator of the construction program, told Armenpress the center is furnished for offering singing, dancing needlework and other classes for 120 children.

The center will also offer computer literacy classes and Sunday religious classes.

The village has 1000 population and is the highest altitude rural community in Ashotsk region of the province. Main occupations are cattle breeding and farming.

SOCIAL

51. HEAD OF PASSPORT AND VISA DEPARTMENT DENIES RUMORS ABOUT GROWTH IN NUMBER OF PERSONS LEAVING ARMENIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The number of persons returning to Armenia exceeds 1,5 times the number of those leaving the country," head of the RA Police Passport and Visa Department, Colonel Alvina Zakarian declared at the May 7 press conference, denying the rumors about an increase in the number of persons leaving Armenia. According to her, 54 families rejected so-called green cards (status of a permanent resident of a country) in 2007, while 25 families rejected green cards in the first 4 months of this year. 799 citizens have applied to their department with the request to be granted Armenian citizenship in 2008, most of them are citizens of Georgia, Russia, Lebanon, Turkmenistan and the U.S. 188 citizens received dual citizenship under decrees of the Armenian president, while after adoption of the RA Law on Dual Citizenship, the department sustained 1,417 persons' applications for dual citizenship.

In her words, as was announced earlier, in 2010 Armenia intends to introduce a new passport system but the current passports will be in force until their date of expiry.

A. Zakarian provided explanations about some provisions of the RA Law on Foreigners concerning the terms of residence permit and entry visas. She underlined that without an invitation sent beforehand, residents of not all countries may receive a visa to cross the Armenian border. Among these countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, China, Egypt, India, Iraq, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Vietnam and Syria.



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52. ZHIRAYR SEFILIAN DEPRIVED OF OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY TO APPROPRIATE BODIES TO RECEIVE CITIZENSHIP [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

In order to be granted citizenship of the Republic of Armenia, one should apply to the RA Passport and Visa Department in person and fill in an application-questionnaire and a test on knowledge of the Constitution, whereas Zhirayr Sefilian has no such opportunity as he is in prison. The head of the RA Police Passport and Visa Department, Colonel Alvina Zakarian said this in response to a reporter's question. The commander of the Shoushi special battalion Z. Sefilian recently applied through his plenipotentiary to the department with the request to be granted citizenship, but his application has been rejected.

In the words of A. Zakarian, Z. Sefilian's earlier application with the same request was also rejected because "his activities here disturb public order".

53. 5600 VETERANS OF GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR LIVE IN ARMENIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

At present, 5600 veterans of the Great Patriotic War, including 1500 participants and 4100 invalids, live in Armenia. This information was provided to a Noyan Tapan correspondent by the Department on Invalids and Elderly Issues of the RA Ministry of Labour and Social Issues. It was mentioned that according to the RA Law on "Veterans of the Patriotic War", veterans receive monthly payments of honour: 10 thousand drams (approximately 33 U.S. dollars), in addition to pension.

Veterans pay 50 percent of rent, garbage removal, radio and telephone subscription payments. They also make use of the privileges for medical assistance, medicine, in case of necessity for receiving a pass for health resorts, as well as running in the territory of the CIS countries once a year.

54. DEMONSTRATION OF SHUSHI CHRONICLE-DOCUMENTARY HELD IN NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ARMENIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/08/08]

The demonstration of the Shushi chronicle-documentary film directed by Ashot Gevorgian, which is dedicated to the 16th anniversary of the liberation of Shushi, was held in the National Library of Armenia on May 8. The foundation history, the military actions for the liberation of Shushi and the stories of the freedom fighters, who have taken part in it, are presented in the 45-minute film.

In the words of Ghukas Sirunian, the editor-in-chief of the Information Department of the RA Ministry of Defence, enormous work is being conducted in the direction of summarizing all the films shot during the liberation war of Artsakh on the initiative of the Ministry, so as the real picture of the war actions is introduced to generations in future. "The Artsakh war brought us a victory and we are obliged to tell the current and further generations about that victory," Ghukas Sirunian mentioned.

David Sargsian, the Head of the National Library of Armenia, stated that demonstrations of films about the Karabakh war will be organized in the library until the end of May. "The films are being demonstrated for the collaborators of the library, students, and representatives of different departments. This way we are trying to introduce to the young generation the triumphant pages of our history," David Sargsian stressed.

55. EXPLOSIVE ASSEMBLY FOUND ON PAVEMENT NEAR HOUSE NO 24 IN MASHTOTS AVENUE [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/09/08]

Policemen found and rendered harmless a self-made explosive assembly in a Samsung mobile phone box on the pavement in front of house # 24 in Mashtots Avenue. An investigation is underway. NT was informed by the RA Police PR and Information Department that the Central police station received the alarm call about a suspicious device at 9:40 am on May 9.

56. 6 ARMENIAN NGOs TO RECEIVE GRANTS [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/09/08]

Six Armenian non-profit NGOs will receive grants of the World Bank and the Open Society Institute Assistance Fund for implementation of programs aimed at promoting civil involvement, NT correspondent was informed by the WB Yerevan Office.

"We Plus" NGO will receive a grant for increasing the awareness of voters at the elections to local government bodies to be held in Gyumri in late 2008.

The Armenian-French Development Fund will use its grant to help with social integration of the leavers of special schools for children with hearing defects, while Sustainable Water Environment NGO



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will promote the participation of young people in solution of environmental problems, in particular, it will assist students of Vanadzor and Dilijan higher educational institutions to get knowledge about environmental protection.

The Field of Education NGO will examine the problems of secondary schools in Shirak marz, while "SKARP" Health Center NGO will help with social integration of young people with problems of the locomotor system.

Lawyers for Human Rights organization has received a grant in order to increase rural residents' information about the activities of local government bodies.

Over the past 10 years, 53 local NGOs have received grants of a total of 491 thousand dollars.

57. CONTESTS OF BEST SCIENTIFIC WORK, MUSIC COMPOSITION AND WORK OF ART TO BE HELD THIS YEAR ON INITIATIVE OF WAC AND UAR [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/09/08]

On the initiative and with the financial assistance of the World Armenian Congress (WAC) and the Union of Armenians in Russia (UAR), contests of the best scientific and creative works will be held this year as well. The start of these contests was announced at the May 8 press conference. Unlike in 2007, this year WAC and UAR initiated contests for employees of the RA National Academy of Sciences (NAS) and the members of the Union of Artists and the Union of Composers. The prize fund makes 80 thousand dollars.

The theme of the literary contest is "The Armenian at the Beginning of the 21st Century", with the prize fund making 15 thousand USD. The prize fund of the journalistic contest "Armenia is the Homeland of All Armenians" is 10 thousand USD, while the prize fund of the contest of paintings, sculptures, works of graphic and decorative arts on the subject "Armenia and Its Residents Through the Eyes of A Painter" makes 10 thousand USD.

The NAS and the Union of Composers have allocated 30 thousand and 15 thousand dollars respectively for rewarding the winners of the contests of best scientific works and best music compositions. The deadline for submission of contest participation bids is January 31, 2009.

According to Vladimir Aghayan - head of the WAC Armenian branch and the vice president of the UAR, WAC and UAR pay great attention to promoting the activities of scientific and creative intellectuals in Armenia and assist with solution of their problems. He said that the creative contest, which was first organized last year, will provide a new incentive for writers and reporters. In his words, the responses that came after these contests confirmed the necessity to continue providing support to creative unions. He said that the president of the WAC and UAR Ara Abrahamian was the first person to invest in the Union of Writers' Fund for Development of Literature founded in 2005. Since then A. Abrahamian has provided assistance to the fund. Based on this example, the RA NAS created a Fund for Development of Science, whose co-chairmen are A. Abrahamian and the NAS president Radik Martirosian.

V. Aghayan expressed a hope that other businessmen will follow the example of A. Abrahamian and will help make work of creative and scientific intelligentsia more efficient. "If a writer takes his pen and starts creating in these difficult conditions, this is already an achievement. It is an important stimulus to encourage the work of creative intellectuals and scientists," he underlined.

The chairman of the Union of Writers Levon Ananian stated in his speech that such initiatives of WAC and UAR are especially praiseworthy today when the nation is separated. In his words, these organizations view culture and science as an important link which should play a unifying role for the nation. L. Ananian also informed those present about another step taken within the framework of the initiative of WAC and UAR: the three novels to win awards this year will be published with their support. "A. Abrahamian is a benefactor devoted to the nation, whose support contributes to the development of our literature," L. Ananian said.

58. WAC AND UAR-ORGANIZED INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION AIMS TO PROMOTE PARTICIPANTS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PAST OF ARMENIAN PEOPLE [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/09/08]

It is the 4th year that the World Armenian Congress (WAC) and the Union of Armenians in Russia (UAR) are holding "We Were, We Are, We Will Be" writing competition for pupils of the senior school and students. The theme of this year's competition is "We are Strong When We are Together". Pupils and students from Armenia, Artsakh and the Diaspora can participate in it. The deadline for bids is late May, while the results will be summarized in June. The award-giving ceremony will take place in October, during Days of the WAC and the UAR in Armenia. 6 award winners will receive computers.

The head of the WAC Armenian branch, vice president of the UAR Vladimir Aghayan said at the May 8 press conference that the main purpose of this annual competition of the best literary work is



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promote knowledge of pupils and students of Armenia, Artsakh and Diaspora about the historical past of the Armenian people and to instill faith in the future into them. Besides, the competition contributes to the further development of Armenia-Diaspora relations and the formation of national unity, promotes the preservation of the national identity and the dissemination of the Armenian culture, language and literature.

According to V. Aghayan, the implementation of another initiative will continue this year. It is the initiative "pedagogical readings as a methodological help to Diasporan Armenian teachers" which was launched last year. The best works of pedagogical readings were published in a separate collection in late 2007 and distributed to Diasporan educational institutions. V. Aghayan said that the number of Armenian Sunday schools is growing in the Diaspora year by year. Prior to the foundation of the UAR, there were 30 Sunday Armenian schools in Russia, whereas last academic year their number made 350.

59. GOVERNMENT POSTPONES TENDER TO SELECT THIRD MOBILE PHONE OPERATOR [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Armenia's government will discuss a set of issues related to conducting a tender to select the third mobile phone operator during its next session, transport and communication minister Gurgen Sarkisian reported Thursday to Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisian.

The minister said the tender was originally expected to be announced on May 1, but the date was changed due to structural changes in the government.

According to Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisian, the entrance of the third mobile phone operator is very important. He said the tender terms must be elaborated as carefully as possible. The tender will be announced after through examination of its details.

60. ARMENIA'S PERMANENT POPULATION MAKES 3,230,700 [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Armenia's permanent population by April 1, 2008, made 3,230,700 people. The majority, 2,068,500, were urban population and the rest, 1,161,200 lived in rural communities.

According to Armenian National Statistical Service (Armstat), the rise in the first quarter of the year was due to natural population growth, 2.4 percent and negative migration balance index that was 36.2 percent.

According to Armstat, some 9,478 babies were born in the quarter one that was 2.9 percent higher from a year before.

The number of arrivals in Armenia in quarter one rose 12.8 percent (almost 3 000 arrivals) from a year before and the number of those who left it rose almost 5 percent or 4,000 people.

61. PAYING TRIBUTE IN "YERABLUR" PANTHEON [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

On the sixteenth anniversary of the heroic liberation of Shushi and on the Day of Victory in Great Patriotic War Armenian high-ranked officials paid tribute to the memory of those who died in the Artsakh war.

Armenian National Assembly Speaker Tigran Torosian, Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian, representatives of legislative and executive bodies, high-ranked officer staff of the Armenian Armed Forces, clergyman, representatives of the diplomatic corpus, political officials came to "Yerablur" pantheon to put flowers to the tomb of Armenian Chief Commander Vazgen Sargsian, Andranik Ozanian.

"Today is a day when we on one hand pay tribute to the memory of those who were killed and on the other we are proud for our victory and hope that we can unite on resolute moments for reaching victory," Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian said after paying tribute.

He also noted that steps are being carried out for increase of honor payments of the participants of the Second World War. On May 8 the Armenian government decided to double them from July 1.

"The second step which must be carried out is to work out a complex program – large social package which during the 2009 budget discussions will be presented to the public. It will include what the state can do additionally within the limits of its financial abilities, to help unsecured class, war handicapped people, participants of the war, parentless children," T. Sargsian said.

Mothers of killed and missed freedom fighters asked the prime minister to receive them for presenting their social issues. Tigran Sargsian promised to meet with them in near future and hear all the issues.

The leadership of the country and high-ranked officer staff of the Armenian Armed Forces put wreath on the memory of the Unknown Soldier.



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Armenian President Serzh Sargsian will participate today in Nagorno Karabakh celebrations dedicated to the Day of the Nagorno Karabakh Defense Army, 16th anniversary of liberation of Shushi and Day of Victory.

62. ASHTARAK TO HAVE NEW MUSICAL SCHOOL AND GYM [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

The musical school in the town of Ashtarak, which is the administrative center of the central Armenian province of Aragatsotn, will move to a new building. Construction of the new building is funded by the government which has allocated 50 million Drams from the funds it saved last year.

Ashtarak mayor G. Tamazian told Armenpress that this money will be enough to implement only part of the works. He said as much will be released by the municipality. Overall, the project's cost is about 180-190 million.

All major construction works are supposed to be over this year. Interior works are planned for 2009.

The old musical school that was built some 40 years ago, was dismantled and the students have to have their classes at a wing of the local kindergarten. The new building is being built in place of the old one.

The town will also have a new gym. Its construction was started under the Soviets but then with its collapse it remained semi-finished. The government allocated 30 million Drams to buy it. According to preliminary estimates, its construction requires up to 1 billion Drams. The government has promised to allocate the money.

The structure will have a closed swimming pool.

63. SECOND VOLUME OF ARMENIAN MAIN ATLAS TO BE RELEASED IN JUNE [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

The Geodesy and Cartography organization, an affiliation of the state cadastre committee, will release before July the second volume of Armenia's Main Atlas. The work is funded by the government.

The 241-page volume has chapters on Armenian history, culture and its vast Diaspora.

The first volume of this work was published in late 2006. It has chapters on Armenian population, economy, climate, flora and fauna.

Hovsep Petrosian, head of Geodesy and Cartography organization, told Armenpress that the government has released 42 million Drams for publication of atlases. Later it added 25.5 million Drams.

He said the previous Atlas was published in 1961 in Russia.

64. ZVARTNOTS AIRPORT OPERATES MORE LANDINGS AND TAKE-OFFS [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Armenian and foreign aircrafts made 2,566 landings and take-offs at Armenia's biggest Zvartnots airport in April, up from 2,250 from a year before.

The press office of the Chief Civil Aviation Department told Armenpress that 153,946 people arrived in Armenia in April by air, up from 143,405 from a year before.

It said 218,233 people left the country in April that was also up from 186,913 from a year before. In April 779 metric tons of goods were taken out of Armenia by air and 1,930 tons were brought in.

In April the second largest airport in Gyumri implemented 46 landings and take-offs, down from 102 from a year before. Some 2,111 people arrived at the airport and 4,208 left it.

65. MEDICAL REHABILITATION CENTERS TO BE ESTABLISHED IN SEVERAL ARMENIAN PROVINCES [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Medical rehabilitation centers will be established in several provinces of Armenia starting from June.

Head of the "Bridge of Hope" non-governmental organization Susanna Tadevosian told Armenpress that specialists will make research in 10 communities of Tavush and Gegharkunik provinces and a program will be developed for risky groups as well as handicap children.

The center will conduct training classes for medical workers of the communities. Local self-governmental bodies will also be involved in the works.



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It is also expected to set up support centers for children and their families the specialists of which will work with them and help to solve their issues.

"If the problem is revealed early the opportunity of its prevention is greater," Tadevosian said. She said that everything will be done on charity bases.

The works will be carried out within the framework of "Healthy Beginning" program which is being implemented by the "Bridge of Hope", "Mission East" non-governmental organizations funded by Danish International Development Agency.

66. DELEGATION HEADED BY ARMENIAN PRESIDENT PARTICIPATES IN CELEBRATIONS OF 16TH ANNIVERSARY OF LIBERATION OF SHUSHI AND VICTORY DAY IN KARABAKH [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Delegation headed by the Armenian President Serzh Sargsian left on May 8 for Nagorno Karabakh.

Presidential press service told Armenpress that the delegation consisted of the Secretary of the Armenian National Security Council Arthur Baghdasarian, head of the Republican party's NA faction Karen Karapetian, Defense Minister Seiran Ohanian, Agriculture Minister David Lokian, Finance Minister Tigran Davtian, Health Minister Harutyun Kushkian and Emergency Situation Minister Mher Shahgeldian.

The delegation headed by the president participated in the celebrations dedicated to the Day of the Nagorno Karabakh Army, 16th anniversary of liberation of Shushi and Day of Victory.

On May 8 Armenian president had a face-to-face meeting with Karabakh president during which they discussed a wide-range of issues on Armenian-Karabakh relations.

On May 9 Armenian President Serzh Sargsian visited Stepanakert memorial and put flowers on the tombs of the freedom fighters killed during Artsakh war. Afterwards the delegation headed by the president left for Shushi. President Sargsian put wreath on the memorial on the monument to the Chief Commander Vazgen Sargsian, participated in the service in St. Rescuer Church, visited Gandzasar.

67. CARD TO ESTABLISH 53 MILK COLLECTING COOPERATIVES IN TAVUSH [ARMENPRESS, 05/12/08]

Three villages in the northeastern province of Tavush –Tovuz, Nerkin Karmraghbyur and Varagavan – will have soon milk collection and sale cooperatives.

The cooperatives will be established with the support of the Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development (CARD) that will also provide them with checking and freezing equipment, churns and laboratory devices.

Areg Gedeonian, a CARD rural development programs specialist, told Armenpress that this initiative, designed primarily to ensure high food quality, will help local farmers to collect and sell their milk in due time.

Each milk collection center, built in line with food safety standards, will be used by 7-8 members of the cooperative.

Apart from technical support CARD will also organize for them a training course on how to produce high quality and ecologically pure milk, how to freeze it, how to use lab equipment and so on.

Some 500 tons of milk which these farmers are expected to produce annually will be sold to and processed by local dairies, which have contracts with farmers.

According to Gedeonian, 53 milk collection points have been established in Lori, Syunik, Gegharkunik, Aragatsotn, Vayots Dzor and Tavush provinces, which in 2007 produced a total of 8,500 tons of milk, a 90 percent rise over the previous year.

CARD specialists also teach farmers how to improve their cattle and how to produce new sorts of dairy products.

Due to coordinated work many of these cooperatives have set up insurance funds to keep their members protected from incidents and other potential damages.

This year too CARD specialists will continue to provide various consulting and other services to cattle breeding farms.

68. FIRE DESTROYS CABLES AND TRANSFORMER OIL OF ALEXANDER SPENDIAROV BALLET AND OPERA THEATER POWER SUBSTATION [ARMENPRESS, 05/12/08]

A fire was reported to break out at 00.08 am today morning at a power substation supplying electricity to Alexander Spendiarov Ballet and Opera Theater building in Yerevan.



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According to the press office of the rescue service of the Armenian Emergency Ministry, firemen rushed to the spot immediately after receiving the call.

It said the fire was put out at 00.38. Power cables and transformer oil of the sub-station located on the ground floor were said to burnt out.

69. UNEXPECTED COLD HITS SOME PARTS OF ARMENIAN MOUNTAIN AREAS [ARMENPRESS, 05/12/08]

Experts of the plant growing department of the Armenian agricultural ministry said the unexpected cold that descended on some mountain parts of Lori, Shirak and other provinces of the country with temperatures falling as low as 4-6 degree below zero on Celsius, could to sustain serious damages to the country's fruit orchards and vineyards.

However experts say the cold could have damaged wheat sprouts. An official of the department told Armenpress its experts will travel soon to these areas to assess the volume of damages.

Gagik Surenian, head of weather forecasting department at the Armenian Meteorological Service, told Armenpress that temperatures are very likely to fall again below zero on May 14 in Shirak, Lori and some other parts of the country.

He said currents of warm air will start penetrating Armenia from south from May 15.

SPORTS

70. LEVON ARONIAN DEFEATED BY VESELIN TOPALOV IN INTERNATIONAL CHESS TOURNAMENT IN SOFIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/09/08]

An international chess super tournament with the participation of six grand masters started in Sofia on May 8.

In the first round Levon Aronian lost to Veselin Topalov (Bulgaria), Teymur Rajabov (Azerbaijan) - to Vasily Ivanchuk (Ukraine), while Ivan Cheparinov (Bulgaria) beat Bu Xiangzhi (China). L. Aronian plays against I. Cheparinov in the second round.

71. YEREVAN "ARARAT" TEAM WINS ARMENIAN FOOTBALL CUP FOR THE FIFTH TIME [ARMENPRESS, 05/09/08]

Yerevan's "Ararat" team marked today its victory over Yerevan's "Banants" (2:1) winning the Armenian Football Cup for the 5th time by this ensuring the participation of the team in UEFA Cup championship.

The chairman of the Armenian Football Federation Ruben Hayrapetian handed the Armenian Football Cup to the senior of the "Ararat" team Arthur Minasian. Armenian Sport and Youth Affairs Minister Armen Grigorian was present at the event.

72. ARMENIAN CHESS PLAYER SHARES 1-4 PLACES IN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP IN GREECE [ARMENPRESS, 05/10/08]

Armenian chess player Davit Zakarian shared 1-4 places in the international championship held in the Greek town of Khalkidiki.

The Armenian grand master shared the places with Serb Siykovic, Palestinian grand master Ermentov and Greek Pavlidis.

73. LEVON ARONIAN SHARES 4-5 PLACES IN SOFIA TOURNAMENT [ARMENPRESS, 05/12/08]

Armenia's grand master, Levon Aronian, played a draw against his Azerbaijani rival Teymuraz Radjabov in the third round of Masters category tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria.

With 1 point he is sharing 4-5 places. In this round Vasily Ivanchuk of Ukraine upset China's Bu Sian Zhin, while Ivan Cheparinov of Bulgaria lost to his country fellow Vesselin Topalov.

After three rounds the leader is Ivanchuk with 3 points, second is Topalov with 2 points, third is Cheparinov with 1.5 points and 6-th is the Chinese with 0.5 points.



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74. DAVID NALBANDIAN RANKED 7-TH [ARMENPRESS, 05/12/08]

Argentinean Armenian tennis player, David Nalbandian with 2,115 points is ranked number 7 by the international rating organization.

The list is topped by Roger Federer of Switzerland, second is Rafael Nadal of Spain and third is Novak Jukovic of Serbia.

75. VIK DARCHINIAN - DMITRY KIRILOV FIGHT TO TAKE PLACE ON AUGUST 2 [NOYAN TAPAN, 05/09/08]

The fight between famous Armenian boxer Vik (Vakhtang) Darchinian and Russian boxer Dmitry Kirilov has been postponed and will take place on August 2.

Internet media also report that Vik Darchinian will be one of the boxers of the new computer game, Prize Fighter Don King. The game will be put on sale next month.

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