



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, July 18, 2008

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

POLITICS

1. ACCORDING TO ARAM SAFARIAN, FOR RECEIVING OBJECTIVE CONCLUSION OPPOSITION SHOULD BE REPRESENTED IN NA COMMISSION [NOYAN TAPAN, 07/16/08]

If the opposition continues boycotting the work of the ad hoc parliamentary commission on study of the March 1-2 events, the commission will draw subjective conclusions only on the basis of the data provided by law enforcement bodies. Aram Safarian, a commission member, the Secretary of the NA Bargavach Hayastan (Prosperous Armenia) faction, stated at the July 16 press conference. He affirmed that the commission will be able to publicize an objective and reliable document on the March 1 events only in case of having all-round information. A. Safarian said that the second invitation will be sent to first President Levon Ter-Petrosian and Zharangutiun (Heritage) party leader Raffi Hovannisian to take part in commission's work to get that information.

According to Aram Safarian, commission's work proceeds according to an eventful schedule. "We have already met with imprisoned deputies, have talked with them, have made up hundreds of protocols," he said. The BH figure added that the commission receives many materials and video materials from various people, besides, application-complaints are received from relatives of people imprisoned on the March 1 case. According to A. Safarian, the commission members will no go on leave and will continue convening sittings twice a week.

2. ARMENIAN-TURKISH RELATIONS WILL IMPROVE WHEN TURKEY SEES ARMENIA AS FULLY-FLEDGED DEMOCRATIC STATE, ARAM SAFARIAN CONSIDERS [NOYAN TAPAN, 07/16/08]

According to Aram Safarian, the Secretary of the RA National Assembly Bargavach Hayastan (Prosperous Armenia) faction, Armenian-Turkish relations have worsened in the early 1990-s, when after proclamation of Armenia's independence, in 1992, Turkey closed the land, motorway and railway border. As he mentioned at the July 16 press conference, Armenian-Turkish relations had tendencies of becoming warmer in 1993-1995. However, the first RA President's efforts in that direction, according to the BH representative, gave no result, as the Turkish government of that time considered its relations with Azerbaijan as more important.

A. Safarian said that today President Serzh Sargsyan undertakes steps aimed at improving Armenian-Turkish relations. One of these steps, according to the deputy, is sending an invitation to Turkish President Abdullah Gul to watch football in Yerevan. "Football is an occasion for the two Presidents to communicate with each other: normalization of relations should start from some thing," A. Safarian said. He affirmed that relations between Armenia and Turkey will essentially improve when Turks sees that Armenia is a strong, fully-fledged, democratic state.

3. LEBANESE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY PLAYS IMPORTANT ROLE IN THAT COUNTRY'S LIFE, GABRIEL GEARA SAYS [NOYAN TAPAN, 07/16/08]

During the July 15 meeting of RA Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian and Gabriel Geara, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Lebanon to Armenia, both sides mentioned with satisfaction the economic cooperation becoming active parallel with high-level political relations. In this respect they considered characteristic partnership developing in the financial and banking sphere, which is reflected in establishment of Lebanese banks in Armenia. G. Geara conditioned it by active efforts and interest shown by the current Prime Minister as far back as on the post of CBA Chairman.

According to the report provided to Noyan Tapan by the RA government Information and Public Relations Department, the RA Prime Minister and Lebanese Ambassador attached importance to resumption of work of the Armenian-Lebanese Intergovernmental Commission after some interval and discussion of issues of mutual interest within the framework of it.

G. Geara also presented his country's home political situation to the RA Prime Minister, spoke about the new government formed lately, happily mentioning that two important posts in the cabinet of Ministers, of Minister of Energy and Water Resources and of State Minister, have been entrusted to Armenians.



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The Lebanese Ambassador taking the chance praised the Lebanese Armenian community emphasizing that Armenians have always had an important role in his country's political, economic, and cultural life.

4. E. NALBANDIAN DISCUSSES A NUMBER OF ISSUES IN WASHINGTON [ARMENPRESS, 07/17/08]

Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian who is in Washington on a working visit met on July 16 with the U.S. Assistant State Secretary Daniel Fried.

Armenian Foreign Ministry press service told Armenpress that during the meeting the sides discussed issues of the agenda of Armenian-U.S. relations. They also referred to the issues on ensuring stability and security in the region and ways of their solution.

Minister Nalbandian and Assistant Secretary D. Fried exchanged thoughts over the reasons and consequences of post-electoral developments in Armenia and the steps the Armenian authorities are carrying out for overcoming the situation.

The interlocutors also discussed prospects of regulation of Armenia-Turkish relations.

On the same day the foreign minister met with the OSCE Minsk Group U.S. co-chairman Matthew Bryza and the sides discussed details of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict regulation process, results of the recent visit of the co-chairs to the region as well as new opportunities of the meeting of Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents.

Speaking about the continuation of negotiations the foreign minister noted that the military rhetoric of Azerbaijan and threats of re-starting war do not get relevant assessment by the international community and makes the process of formation of atmosphere of trust at the negotiations more difficult.

On the second half of the day Nalbandian conducted separate meetings with the heads of Armenian-American organizations.

5. FELIX PIRUMIAN APPOINTED AIDE TO PRESIDENT OF ARMENIA [Hayastani Hanrapetutian, 07/17/08]

On July 16 President Serzh Sargsyan signed a decree to appoint Felix Pirumian an aide to the president of Armenia.

This was reported to Armenpress by the presidential press service.

6. SECOND PRESIDENT ROBERT KOCHARIAN MEETS WITH BAZE GATHERING PARTICIPANTS [Hayastani Hanrapetutian, 07/17/08]

Armenia's second president Robert Kocharian was July 16 in the resort town of Jermuk to meet with participants of annual youth gathering known as Baze (Hawk) jamboree. The ex-president thanked young Armenians who are from Armenia and other countries for their support to this "beautiful initiative" and wished them good moods.

"Being the master of this country means to have strong will and be persistent. This is what our young people have now," he said, adding also that he is always next to the state and youth, loves and respects both.

Defense Minister Seyran Ohanian, head of the Diaspora Committee Hranush Hakobian traveled also yesterday to Jermuk to meet with gathering's participants. The latter had an opportunity to ask a lot of questions.

The defense minister, particularly, was asked about the fate of 4 Armenian civilians captured by Azeri troops in April. He said he had met with their parents and promised to spare no effort to bring all back home.

Head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Catholicos Karekin II, is expected also to meet with young Armenians in Jermuk. A special pilgrimage will be organized for them to Saint Gayane Church and those who would like, will be baptized by the Catholicos in a special ceremony.



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7. ISSUES ON DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPT OF DIASPORA MINISTRY DISCUSSED [Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, 07/17/08]

Chairwoman of Armenian Foreign Ministry-affiliated State Diaspora Ties Committee Hranush Hakobian met today with the UN permanent coordinator in Armenia, UNDP representative Consuelo Vidal Bruce.

Armenian Foreign Ministry press service told Armenpress that during the meeting the sides discussed issues on the development of concept of the Diaspora Ministry as well as issues on the possible support of the UN office in preparation and training of the staff.

The interlocutors also referred to the issues on organizing joint summer rest of the Armenian and Diaspora Armenian children and creation of international camps in Armenian villages. The sides also agreed to work out a draft agreement for the implementation of joint works which will enter into effect after the establishment of Diaspora Ministry in October.

8. ARMENIAN PM RECEIVES CHAIRMAN OF EURASIA PARTNERSHIP FOUNDATION [ARMENPRESS, 07/17/08]

Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian received today the chairman of the "Eurasia Partnership Foundation" George Zarubin.

Governmental press service told Armenpress that at the meeting the chairman presented to the prime minister the work carried out by the foundation and introduced to the coming programs expecting to hear suggestions and opinion of the prime minister.

The prime minister underscored the cooperation with the foundation noting that its activity is aimed at applying democratic traditions in Armenia and their consolidation, which is quite greeting.

Tigran Sargsian assured that he is ready to discuss the new initiatives of the foundation and assured on behalf of the Armenian government that he will support the implementation of the initiatives.

The sides underscored the cooperation in developing program for fighting against corruption.

BUSINESS

9. PROCREDIT INTERNATIONAL BANK'S NEW BRANCH OPENS IN YEREVAN [NOYAN TAPAN, 07/16/08]

ProCredit Bank, which opened a branch in the town of Vanadzor, Lori region, the day before, opened one more branch on July 16 in Yerevan, in Mashtots, 16. As it was mentioned at the opening ceremony of Yerevan branch, ProCredit Bank is the first among international banks functioning in Armenia, which has also opened a branch in a region.

Andrea Wiktorin, the Ambassador of Germany to Armenia, took part in the opening ceremony. According to her, this German bank has completely implemented its programs in Armenia.

According to Ashot Abrahamian, bank's Deputy Executive Director, the bank provides various and affordable banking services to organizations, enterprises, house farms, and physical persons. It was mentioned that the bank attaches importance to responsible banking activity by developing culture of economy and establishing long-term cooperation with its customers.

One of the main directions of ProCredit Bank is small and medium-sized business crediting, as small and medium-sized enterprises provide new jobs and have a positive impact on the development of the respective spheres. "That is why the bank leadership attaches importance to opening of branches in the regions. With the network of regional branches we have a goal to ensure confidence and to contribute to development of small and medium-sized business," A. Abrahamian said. It was mentioned that the process of branches' opening will be permanent.

10. UN FAO TO PROVIDE ARMENIA WITH \$500,000 ASSISTANCE [ARMENPRESS, 07/17/08]

The UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) shows support to Armenia's most vulnerable rural population.

The press division of the Armenian Agricultural Ministry told Armenpress that FAO approved recently a set of assistance programs with a total budget of \$21 million for some countries, including Armenian farmers and vulnerable rural households in order to ease the aftereffects of the rising food and fuel prices.



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Within the frameworks of this program some 2000 most vulnerable Armenian households which suffered from 2007-2008 very cold winter, will be provided with wheat seeds and fertilizers.

Besides, trainings will be held for farmers engaged in cultivation of potato, wheat and vegetables. The program will last for 12 months. Its total budget is \$500,000. It will be carried out in partnership with Armenian Agricultural Ministry.

11. GOVERNMENT SPENDS 4.9 BILLION DRAMS ON CAPITAL REPAIR OF HIGHWAYS IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS [ARMENPRESS, 07/17/08]

In the first half of this year the government spent 4.9 billion Drams on capital repair of highways of state significance.

Susanna Tonoyan, a press officer for the Transport and Communication Ministry, told Armenpress that the capital repair of 31.2 km long sections of 11 roads have already been finished. The territory of the Erebuni airport in Yerevan was covered with a fresh asphalt layer.

Overall the government has earmarked a total of 11.4 billion Drams for repair of state significance highways. The mentioned funds will be particularly directed towards the repair of 246 km long road sections and installation of metal fences along roads.

Susanna Tonoyan said 100 km will be repaired this year and the rest in 2009.

Also a 25 km long road section repaired on the Millennium Challenges Corporation's funds, will be commissioned later this year. The repair of another 109 km long sections will kick off this year on the Asian Development Bank's credit and accomplish next year.

12. RUSSIAN-BASED ARMENIAN BUSINESSMEN SAMVEL KARAPETIAN RESPONSES TO THE CALL OF THE ARMENIAN PRESIDENT SERZH SARGSIAN VOICED AT THE "BAZE" YOUTH GATHERING [Azg, 07/17/08]

Armenian President Serzh Sargsian addressed to the participants of "Baze" All-Armenian youth gathering – both Armenian citizens and young people from all parts of the world – calling on them to be more active and initiating in the efforts directed towards building, improving and flourishing the homeland. In response to the president's address Russian-based Armenian businessman Samvel Karapetian sent a letter to President Serzh Sargsian which particularly says,

"Dear Mr. President,

With great attention and excitement I heard Your address to our compatriots at the "Baze" youth gathering. Armenia is our homeland and despite the geographic distance a part of our soul and heart is always in the homeland and lives with the pain and concerns of our country, our brothers and sisters, lives with our soil and water.

Let me too address You as an Armenian man to an Armenian man. I consider myself the supporter of Your initiative because irrespective of anyone's financial capabilities our only wealth is our homeland and our only pride – our roots, and we all will be rich when we see our country flourishing.

Responding to Your call, I am ready in near future to invest 200 million USD in business and social projects and another 50 million USD I am planning to provide for the implementation of any symbolizing project in Armenia which, I hope will support our statehood and serve for the coming generations."

13. RUSSIAN-BASED ARMENIAN BUSINESSMEN CONTINUE RESPONDING TO PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS [Azg, 07/17/08]

Armenian President Serzh Sargsian addressed to the participants of "Baze" All-Armenian youth gathering – both Armenian citizens and young people from all parts of the world – calling on them to be more active and initiating and contribute to the flourishing of the homeland.

Russian-based Armenian businessmen are quickly responding to the address of the president. The founder and chairman of the board of directors of "Mon Ar" company Sergey Hambardzumian also responded to the call of Serzh Sargsian. In the letter addressed to the president he wrote,

"Dear President,

With great enthusiasm I listened to Your address in "Baze" All-Armenian youth gathering directed to Armenian citizens and the whole nation. We really have a lot to do and as a first step, for the development of Matenadaran complex and construction of new additional building for it I am ready to provide 10 million USD."



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14. HOUSE FOREIGN OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVES \$52 MILLION ASSISTANCE TO ARMENIA AND \$8 MILLION FOR NAGORNO KARABAKH [Azg, 07/17/08]

The House Foreign Operations Subcommittee approved \$52 million in assistance to Armenia and \$8 million for Nagorno Karabakh, as well as \$3 million in Foreign Military Financing for Armenia and Azerbaijan, reported the Armenian Assembly of America (AAA).

The Bush Administration initially proposed to cut funding to Armenia by nearly 60 percent from \$58.5 million in FY 2008, to a proposed level of \$24 million in FY 2009. In addition, the Administration had requested that \$5 million of the funds to Armenia allocated in FY 2007, be directed out of Armenia, which triggered a response by Congressmen Adam Schiff (D-CA) and

Joe Knollenberg (R-MI). In a letter sent to House Foreign Appropriations Subcommittee Chairwoman Nita Lowey (D-NY) and Ranking Member Frank Wolf (R-VA), they urged that funding be re-programmed to support democracy efforts in Armenia.

The AAA told Armenpress that it commends the efforts of Congressman Knollenberg (R-MI) for sending a strong message regarding Azerbaijan's continued war rhetoric during today's consideration of the House Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill. The Knollenberg amendment sought to zero out military funding for Azerbaijan. The amendment was not approved by a vote of 7 in favor and 8 against.

15. ARMENIA TO ANNOUNCE TENDER FOR THIRD MOBILE PHONE OPERATOR ON JULY 17-18 [Aravot, 07/17/08]

Armenia's Public Services Regulatory Commission (PSRC) approved July 16 a package of a tender documents developed for choosing a third mobile phone operator, granting it with a license and the right to use radio frequencies.

Mariam Stepanian, the PSRC press secretary, told Armenpress that the package comprises tender organization rules, samples of using radio frequencies, the license and other issues.

The minimum payment for bidding for the license is 10 million euros. It will be returned to the companies that will fail to qualify in the first stage.

The tender will be officially announced on July 17 or 18. It will be placed also in the Wall Street Journal and The Financial Times. The winner will be clear 90 days later.

DIASPORA

16. THIS YEAR DOCUMENTARIES PREVAIL IN GOLDEN APRICOT'S ARMENIAN PANORAMA CONTEST PROGRAM [NOYAN TAPAN, 07/17/08]

Four young Armenian-based and Diasporan directors taking part in Golden Apricot's Armenian Panorama contest program spoke about their films and festival at the July 17 meeting with journalists. Introducing one Armenian-based and three Diasporan cinematographic figures, Mikayel Stamboltsian, programs director of the Golden Apricot (Voske Tsiran) 5th International Film Festival, said that this year fiction films are few in the Armenian Panorama contest program and instead the number of documentaries is unprecedentedly large.

French Armenian Varant and Khazhak Soudjian brothers take part in the documentary film genre contest in Golden Apricot, presenting the films *The Second Wind* and *July in Ltchap*. They take part in this Yerevan festival for the first time and hope that it will not be the last one. Soudjian brothers' films tell about life and human relationship revealing the fates and individuals, who are usually unnoticeable.

The Second Wind is Varant's third film in this genre. It is about a young pickpocket, whose last adventure becomes fatal and turning. Khazhak Soudjian has shot his 18-minute film *July in Ltchap* for both Armenian-based and Diasporan Armenians. "I tried to present real Armenia for everybody," the author said. The village of Ltchap near Sevan has appeared in a grave situation after the collapse of Soviet system: the young director made an attempt to bring to light village's real picture.

Problems of loneliness and lack of communication in Western Armenian society are raised in the fiction film *The Blue Hour* of American-based Erik Nazarian. Erik Nazarian was born in Armenia, but moved to the U.S. at the age of 4. He graduated from the Cinema and Television School of South Californian University. Before that the young director had shot 4 films. *The Blue Hour* film is his first fiction work. It is about people living on the bank of Los Angeles river, who do not communicate with each other in any language and the only thing connecting them is the river. The film is about four different families, who appeared in loneliness and lack of communication. "One of them communicates with its memory, the



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other with a picture, the next with silence. People have become alien to each other and become detached. It is a universal pain. In the era of high technologies human relationship takes place in different ways except the human one," the author said.

The 24-minute film 36 Immortals by Yerevan-based doctor Hrachya Vardanian is also interesting. The author is convinced that the Armenian alphabet created at a fatal moment is more endangered today, as worship of foreign things has become an idol for everyone and everywhere.

ARTS

17. JOURNALISTS MEET WITH CHINESE AND IRANIAN DIRECTORS WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF GOLDEN APRICOT [NOYAN TAPAN, 07/16/08]

Within the framework of the Golden Apricot (Voske Tsiran) 5th International Film Festival, on July 15, Armenian journalists met with Chinese director S. Cai, the author of The Red Awn film, and Iranian director Abolfazl Saffary taking part in the contest of fiction films.

According to Mikayel Stamboltsian, the director of festival's programs, a cinema critic, 25 years ago Iranian and Chinese cinematography developed rapidly. He said that Armenian film spectators already thanks to the previous festivals had a possibility to deal with Iranian cinematography classics but had not dealt with the Chinese ones yet. In his opinion, it will be especially interesting to see films by new generation's representatives, thanks to which "we will receive the new word of those countries' cinematography."

"Iranian cinematography classics spoke about simple truths and the young people have started doubting these truths. Saffary's film, for instance, shows that simple truths are not so simple," M. Stamboltsian said.

The Iranian director has happily brought his film End of the Earth to Armenia, as its showing had been prohibited in Iran for two years and only this year it has received a right of showing. This is the director's first fiction film. Before that he shot documentary, feature, and short films. According to him, however, "in this case also documentary's influence is seen."

According to Chinese director S. Cai, The Red Awn film is about people who have lost their place and are between a city and a village. "1 million people move to Chinese cities every year. The reason is that they have lost their lands or strive for a happy life, but they do not become city dwellers, either, and lose their identity," the artist said. The Red Awn's hero, nevertheless, chooses the city. The director conditions this by the fact that the youth has no other way. "Maybe it is cruel, but it is reality," he said.

According to S. Cai, he is very happy to visit Armenia: "I am here for the first time, but I have the impression that I have known Armenia for already a long time."

18. FOREIGN DOCUMENTARY FILM MAKERS ABOUT ARMENIA [Aravot, 07/17/08]

"Armenia is a country with very rich history, there is no doubt that it is possible to find many themes here for shooting a documentary film," Serbian film director Lucian Monte said today. He has arrived in Armenia to participate in the "Golden Apricot" 5th international film festival. His documentary film "The Trip of Red Refrigerator" is presented in the festival.

L. Monte said he had very little time to get acquainted with Armenia but is sure that in case of having longer time he would succeed in shooting film here it is just necessary to study everything thoroughly.

Young Spanish film director Oskar Moreno is presenting in "Golden Apricot" his "Today is a Different Day" film. He also had a little time to study Armenia but before arriving here got acquainted with its history.

"I like to take photos of people's faces and managed to see that the faces of Armenians reflect their history," he said.

Representative of Canadian documentary film Karl Valiken considers Armenians individuals saying that there is a lot of "national" in Armenia.

Iranian Rochsare Ghaemmaghami, representative of Iranian documentary film-makers, said that when she was little she was very much interested in the films of Sergey Parajanov. She said she likes to watch the films of Armenian film directors.

Indian film director Nishtha Jai said she is participating in the "Golden Apricot" for the second time.



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19. CATHERINE BREILLAT: ONE SHOULD BE SINCERE, OPEN, BOLD, AND INTERESTING IN CINEMATOGRAPHY [NOYAN TAPAN, 07/17/08]

To be engaged in cinematographic work it is not compulsory to go to a cinematographic school, but it is compulsory to go to montage work, as it is when confronting pictures that one is able to feel and see correctness and beauty of feelings and pictures. Catherine Breillat, famous French screenwriter, actress and film maker, Golden Apricot's honorary guest, advised Armenian artists and students engaged in cinematographic work.

When shooting a film C. Breillat is not guided by cinematographic rules: "I shoot as a like, choose my colors and forms. I like it when perpendicular, horizontal, and crooked lines intersect, and light and dark, feeling and outburst join them," she said.

Catherine Breillat does not agree with those naming her a film maker, a film maker shoots a film according to a screen written in advance, while she does what subconsciously results on the shooting ground. According to her, having a screen has only one positive side: you are able to get money.

Catherine Breillat took interest in cinema as early as at the age of 12 and at the age of 17 she wrote her first novel, L'homme Facile. Then she played in Bernardo Bertolucci's film Last Tango in Paris. In 1975 she screened one of her novels as a film maker. And in 1999 the film Romance already brought success to Breillat as a film maker.

Catherine Breillat told that as she was a woman she was not permitted to go to the French National Cinematographic School. She was constantly criticized for bold and open films considered to be pornographic. "Making love is not pornography. Pornography has an aim, while my films raise some problems," the director said. She shoots films of sexual nature as they are prohibited. "I will not stand if someone tells me that it is prohibited. I do not understand why when a director shoots a couple drinking coffee in a cafe he is a director, but when he shoots an open love scene, he stops to be a director..." "My films are rather intended for seeing them alone, as they are very intimate and when seeing them one need to hide his feelings," the director said. According to Breillat, many people after seeing her films either hate or adore her.

Nevertheless, Catherine Breillat again advised those present to be extremely sincere, open, bold and interesting in cinematography.

20. PRESIDENT SERZH SARGSYAN CONGRATULATES PERCH ZEYTUNTSIAN ON HIS 70-TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY [Azg, 07/18/08]

President Serzh Sargsyan sent a message today to famous Armenian author Perch Zeytuntsian to congratulate him on his 70-th birth anniversary. According to the presidential press service, the congratulatory message reads as follows:

"Dear Mr. Zeytuntsian,

I congratulate you heartily on the occasion of your 70-th birth anniversary. Being one of the most prominent representatives of the contemporary Armenian prose and drama art, you have given an innovative breath to modern Armenian literature, you have seen and assessed the reality in your own peculiar way, having refreshed also the language of Armenian prose by focusing in your works on complicated issues of our national life and history, as well as of human values.

You are welcoming this anniversary with weighty earnings, not only as a prose writer, a playwright and a publicist, but also a literary man with a clear-cut political position.

Please accept along with my congratulations also my wishes of good health and new creative achievements for the glory of Armenian literature."

21. DUTCH FILM DIRECTOR CELEBRATES BIRTHDAY IN ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 07/18/08]

A well-known Dutch film director Jos Steling is one of the honorable guests of the fifth international Golden Apricot film festival in Yerevan. He has brought his latest film called Dushka.

The director also celebrated his birthday in Armenia. On that occasion the festival and the Dutch-managed Armenian Post declared July 16 as Dutch Film Day screening Steling's works.

During a meeting with journalists today he said it was his second participation in this festival and that he feels in Armenia like at home.

He said he owns two cinema houses in his native Utrecht and that 70 percent of the audience are women aged 25 and older.

"I think making film is a man's job and watching it a female's. The man goes through, while women stop in the middle and can see everything," he said.



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Comparing films with Internet and TV he said the latter may be compared with light, but films are a window and therefore Internet and TV can not replace films.

SOCIAL

22. MONITORING TO FIND OUT HOUSEHOLDS ELIGIBLE FOR GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES [ARMENPRESS, 07/17/08]

A department of the Agricultural Ministry in charge of subsidies is conducting a monitoring in Martuni and Tchambarak regions of Gegharkunik province together with provincial governor's office experts.

Vanik Hovhanesian, head of the agricultural department at the governor's office, told Armenpress that the monitoring will be over in a week to find out all households eligible to subsidies, which are 35,000 Drams per one hectare of cultivated land.

The money will be given to recipients via post offices. In Tchambarak 1041 households and 4,823 in Martuni have asked for subsidies.

23. MOSCOW CITY COURT SENTENCES FORMER RUSSIAN SENATOR LEVON CHAKHMAKHCHIAN TO 9 YEARS IN PRISON [ARMENPRESS, 07/17/08]

A Moscow city court delivered a verdict on a former Russian senator Levon Chakhmakhchian from Kalmykia, sentencing him to 9 years in prison. He was recognized guilty in extortion of \$1.5 million from a Russian air carrier.

Another ethnic Armenian, Armen Hovhanesian, an inspector of Russian Audit Chamber (Chakhmakhchian's son-in-law) and Igor Arushanov, chief accountant of the Russian-Armenian Business Cooperation Association, were sentenced to 7 and 8 years respectively for their involvement.

The defense lawyers said he would appeal the ruling.

24. EX-PRESIDENT KOCHARIAN TO HAVE HIS OFFICE AT EREBUNI PLAZA HOTEL [Azg, 07/17/08]

The government of Armenia decided today to provide ex-president Robert Kocharian with space at Erebuni Plaza Hotel in downtown Yerevan to set up his office. The overall space located at the sixth floor is 374 square meters.

It will be given to R. Kocharian for a free of charge use for 10 years.

The government will release 1 million Drams from its third quarter budget and then 2 million drams every next year to pay the rent for the hired space.

The furniture and other necessary items will be bought within 20 days after the money is released. A special agreement will be signed to that end with R. Kocharian.

25. NEARLY 90% ARMENIAN LABOR MIGRANTS LEAVES FOR RUSSIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 07/17/08]

A discussion under the title Efficient Labor Migration Management in Armenia: Migration and Development, Migration and Money Transfers took place on July 17 in Yerevan on the initiative of the International Labor Organization and with the financial support of the European Union. According to the statement spread by the organizers, over 760-780 thousand people emigrated from Armenia in 1991-1998, which makes 20% country's population as of 1991. The study conducted by OSCE in 2002-2005 shows that over 90% labor migrants leaves for Russia, in particular, RF capital Moscow.

Boris Kharatian, the Vice-Chairman of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia, said that one of the reasons of labor migration is not finding a job in the homeland, the other is low salary. According to Gagik Makarian, the Executive Director of the Republican Union of Employers, in the past years the Union has been exerting efforts especially to provide young people with jobs to prevent their possible emigration. For that purpose the Union assists establishment of educational institutions-employer permanent contact. G. Makarian said that employers are willing to hire honest and duteous specialists.



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26. GOVERNMENT TO RELEASE EXTRA 21.7 MILLION DRAMS FOR ORGANIZATION OF 3,000 SCHOOL CHILDREN'S SUMMER HOLIDAYS [ARMENPRESS, 07/18/08]

The government decided July 17 to release extra 21.7 million Drams to the Education and Science Ministry for organization of some 3,000 school children's summer holidays.

First deputy territorial minister Vache Terterian said to journalists after the government session that the extra release is for summer camps to pay VAT taxes, which they did not pay until a recent legislation change.

Terterian said the release is made to ensure that children's summer rest proceeds without problems.

27. ARMENIAN TRANSLATION OF THE SONG OF NIEBELUNGS PRESENTED TODAY [ARMENPRESS, 07/18/08]

The Armenian translation of the German national epic poem, Niebelungenlied (the Song of the Niebelungs), was presented today at the Union of Armenian Writers.

The translation was done by translator and literary critic Ara Arakelian. He said the German epic poem is one of the best samples of mediaeval German literature.

In his words, the goal of translating it into Armenia is to bring German culture to Armenian cultural environment.

28. GOVERNMENT TO RELEASE 270 MILLION DRAMS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF SKI-TRACK IN JERMUK [ARMENPRESS, 07/18/08]

The government decided yesterday to release 270 million Drams in the third quarter of this year to the governor's office of Vayots Dzor province. The money will be released from the government's reserve funds.

Some 200 million Drams will be spent on construction of a ski-track in the resort town of Jermuk and 70 million for improvement and development of the adjacent area.

The cable route in Jermuk was opened late in 2007 and since then some 1,500 people used it. Its operation was stopped in spring to allow improvement of the area and starting construction of the ski-track.

29. ARMENIAN AND NAGORNO-KARABAKH HEALTH AUTHORITIES DEVELOP PLAN TO STEP UP COOPERATION [ARMENPRESS, 07/18/08]

Armenian and Nagorno-Karabakh health authorities are developing a plan of joint actions to improve and coordinate their cooperation in future.

The press division of the Armenian Health Ministry told Armenpress that a task force will be set up with Armenian health experts and their colleagues from Nagorno-Karabakh to deal with working out a health development program for Nagorno-Karabakh.

The press division said also the group will develop a new Nagorno-Karabakh bill on health, a program to fight against HIV/AIDS and design other standard acts.

These issues were discussed in detail during a visit to Nagorno-Karabakh by Armenian health minister Harutyun Kushkian.

The press division said the MIDAS information program will be resumed in Nagorno-Karabakh to facilitate and make more transparent all financial reports. A special training program for Nagorno-Karabakh medical staff is being designed as well.

30. BEELINE AND CHILDREN SUPPORT CENTER TO IMPLEMENT JOINT CHILDREN PROGRAM [ARMENPRESS, 07/18/08]

Beeline mobile phone operator and the Children Support Center of the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) will implement a joint program to once again draw the society's attention to children from risky groups and their families.

The press division of Beeline told Armenpress that Beeline will provide the Center with free hotline 11611 telephone number which will allow children and adults to make free calls from any point in Armenia and ask for specialists help.



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One of this program's priorities is to create an opportunity to protect begging and unaccompanied children, also from other risky groups, to avoid violence.

The Children Support Center of the FAR was established in 2000 having assisted since then 4000 children. It is being assisted by many benefactors, businessmen and organizations in Armenia and its Diaspora.

31. SPECIAL INFORMATION SHIELDS INSTALLED IN GYUMRI [ARMENPRESS, 07/18/08]

Special shields providing information about historical and architectural monuments in Armenia's second largest town of Gyumri, which is also the capital of the northwestern Shirak province, are being installed across this city, famous for its people of art and craftsmen.

This is part of a program designed to make information about Armenian monuments more accessible. In Gyumri such shields have been already installed in a downtown square and in Kumairi historical quarter.

Richard Nye, coordinator of this program, said to Armenpress that new shields will be installed in the town's southern quarters.

"Gyumri is the first Armenian town involved in this program. The reason is that when I first came to see it back in 1992 I fell actually in love with it, its people and its architecture," he told Armenpress, adding that this program may contribute to tourism development.

32. NEW ANTI-HAIL STATIONS TO BE ASSEMBLED IN SHIRAK [ARMENPRESS, 07/18/08]

Shirak province governor Lidia Nanyan told a news conference today that new anti-hail stations will be installed in the region next year. According to her, six new anti-hail stations were assembled in the northwestern province this year, which are able to protect around 600 hectares of land from natural disasters.

She said also local farmers are encouraged to cultivate wheat and other cereals. This program is supported by the government embracing 57 rural communities in Ani, Ashotsk and Amasia regions of the province. These farmers who cultivate a total of 15,00 hectares of land will receive a total of 494 million drams in government subsidies, 35,000 drams per one hectare.

She said the government approved a sugar-beet cultivating strategy to boost local sugar production. The sugar plant being built in Akhurian will create some 1000 new jobs and push farmers to grow sugar-beet in 3000 hectares.

33. GALA TV, RADIO HAY AND STEPANAKERT PRESS CLUB RECEIVE YEREVAN PRESS CLUB AWARDS [ARMENPRESS, 07/18/08]

GALA TV channel in Gyumri, Radio Hay station in Yerevan and Stepanakert Press Club in Nagorno-Karabakh were chosen by the Yerevan Press Club as recipients of its annual awards.

Deputy chairman of Yerevan Press Club Avet Demurian said the decision to select these media outlets was based not on the assessment of their stories or reports but on their resolution to pursue freedom of speech.

GALA was awarded for its devotion to the principle of media freedom and dignity. It was awarded also a special diploma of the Committee to Protect Freedom of Speech in recognition of its courage and commitment.

Radio Hay was also awarded for persistent defense of its rights. Mathias Jobelius, German Friedrich Ebert Foundation South Caucasus Regional Director, awarded a special prize to Radio Hay director Aram Mkrtchian - a 10-day invitation to visit Germany, for the full coverage of 2008 presidential election campaigns.

Yerevan Press Club hands its annual awards on July 18. Today it became 13 years-old.



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SPORTS

34. YEREVAN BANANTS TO COMPETE WITH LOCAL RED BULL IN SALZBURG [NOYAN TAPAN, 07/16/08]

Yerevan Banants left for Austria on July 16. Under the first tour program of UEFA Cup Tournament, on July 17, Banants football players will compete with local Red Bull. The game will take place in the Wals-Siezenheim sports ground at 23:30 by Yerevan time.

35. YEREVAN ARARAT TO RECEIVE SWISS BELINZONA ON JULY 17 IN ABOVIAN [NOYAN TAPAN, 07/16/08]

Yerevan Ararat will receive Swiss Belinzona in the first game of UEFA Cup Tournament first qualification round on July 17 in Abovian sports ground. French judges group headed by Philippe Kalt will serve the match.

36. VICENTE DEL BOSKE TO COACH SPAIN TEAM FOR ARMENIA GAME [ARMENPRESS, 07/17/08]

Vicente del Boske, the former head coach of Real Madrid FC, was appointed head coach of Spain's national soccer team which is in the same group with Armenia for 2010 World Cup. Spain has won lately European champion's title.

Former national coach Luis Aragon signed a contract with Turkish Fenerbagce. According to Spanish Football Federation press division, the contract with Boske is for 2 years.

Armenia and Spain will take on one another on September 10 in Madrid.

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