



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

POLITICS

1. ASSAULT MADE ON ACTING HEAD OF RADIO LIBERTY YEREVAN OFFICE [168 Zham, 08/20/08]

The acting head of Radio Liberty Yerevan Office was attacked and beaten in downtown Yerevan late August 18. "I connect this incident to our radio station, its programs. The man who attacked me was swearing at Radio Liberty and our programs," he said.

The president of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Jeff Gedman on August 19 made a statement in connection with the fact. He said: Obviously, this is not an accidental incident. It is for the first time that the Armenian office has been subjected to a physical attack for our programs and we expect the authorities to investigate the case in detail and respond to this assault in a rapid and serious way proceeding from the situation.

The head office of the Armenian National Congress set up on the initiative of first Armenian president Levon Ter-Petrosian issued a statement in connection with what happened. "It is natural that being an islet of independent information in our present situation of totally controlled electronic mass media, Radio Liberty is horrifying the ruling regime by its unbiased information. Especially under conditions of the post-March 1 information blockade, Radio Liberty has become if not the only source, then one of rare sources of true information for wide sections of the population," the statement reads.

2. GAGIK KHACHATRIAN APPOINTED CHAIRMAN OF NEWLY-CREATED COMMITTEE OF STATE REVENUES [Azg, 08/20/08]

By an August 20 decree of Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, the RA government-adjunct State Customs Committee and State Tax Service were reorganized, through merger, into a Committee of State Revenues adjunct to the RA government.

NT was informed by the RA president's press service that by another presidential decree of the same day, Gagik Khachatrian was relieved of his post as chairman of the State Customs Committee and appointed chairman of the Committee of State Revenues. On the same day the president signed a decree on relieving Vahram Barseghian of his post as head of the State Tax Service.

3. EDWARD NALBANDIAN AND NIKOLAY BORDYUZHA DISCUSS MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED DURING ARMENIA'S CHAIRMANSHIP OF CSTO [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

During the August 20 meeting of Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian and Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Nikolay Bordyuzha, the sides discussed measures on Armenia's upcoming chairmanship of CSTO and during that chairmanship, as well as issues related to the sittings of the Council of Foreign Ministers of CSTO Member States and the Collective Security Council to be held in Kislovodsk.

According to the RA MFA Press and Information Department, the interlocutors also exchanged ideas on the problems on the agenda of CSTO and ways of their solution.

4. ARMENIAN FOREIGN MINISTER CONSIDERS TURKISH PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT AS PRAISEWORTHY [Azg, 08/20/08]

"Armenia has always been in favor of a dialog and negotiations, especially on issues related to cooperation and security in our region," Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian stated, when answering Zaman daily's question: "What is your response to the Turkish prime minister's statement to start negotiations with Armenia?"

According to a press release submitted to NT by the RA MFA Press and Information Department, E. Nalbandian considered as praiseworthy Turkish prime minister's statement about an intention to start negotiations with Armenia on these problems.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

5. ARMENIAN PRESIDENT CONDOLES DEATH OF TEN FRENCH SOLDIERS IN AFGHANISTAN [ARMENPRESS, 08/21/08]

Armenian president Serzh Sargsyan sent a letter of condolences to his French counterpart Nicolas Sarkozy to express his grief over the death of ten French soldiers in Afghanistan.

The presidential press service told Armenpress that Sargsyan's message runs as follows.

"Mr. President, it was with great sadness that I learned about the death of ten French soldiers killed in Afghanistan. At this moment of grief for the French people I express my sincere condolences to you, the families of the killed soldiers and to the friendly people of France on behalf of the people of Armenia and myself.

Please accept, Mr. President, assurances of my deep respect."

6. PRESIDENT SARGSYAN INSTRUCTS LAW-ENFORCEMENT BODIES TO CONDUCT RAPID INVESTIGATION INTO RFE/RL JOURNALIST ATTACK [Aravot, 08/21/08]

On Wednesday Armenian president Serzh Sargsyan ordered law-enforcement bodies to investigate an attack on the acting chief of RFE/RL's Yerevan bureau Hrach Melkumian.

Samvel Farmanian, a spokesman for Serzh Sargsyan, told RFE/RL that the president instructed law-enforcement bodies to conduct a criminal investigation "as rapidly as possible" and to "uncover all circumstances of the incident."

Hrach Melkumian was attacked and beaten up by an unknown man in downtown Yerevan late on Monday. According to Melkumian, the assailant hit him repeatedly along with cursing.

7. ARMENIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY CONDEMNS THE TERRORIST ACT AGAINST FRENCH PEACEKEEPING SOLDIERS IN AFGHANISTAN [ARMENPRESS, 08/21/08]

Armenian foreign ministry condemned in a statement Wednesday the terrorist act against French peacekeeping soldiers in Surobi region of Afghanistan as a result of which ten soldiers were killed and 21 were wounded.

The foreign ministry's press division told Armenpress that the ministry expressed sincere condolences in message to the friendly people of France and the killed soldiers' relatives.

8. SERZH SARGSYAN TO ADDRESS 63-rd SESSION OF UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY [ARMENPRESS, 08/21/08]

Armenian president Serzh Sargsyan will travel to New York, USA, late in September to take part in the 63-rd session of the UN General Assembly.

The presidential press office told Armenpress that in New York president Sargsyan is expected to address the General Assembly's session.

9. ARMENIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAD SHORT CONVERSATION WITH TURKISH DIPLOMAT IN YEREVAN [ARMENPRESS, 08/21/08]

A Turkish delegation that arrived in Armenia on August 20 to watch its under-21 team's game against Armenia, returned home right after the game that ended late in the evening August 20.

Both teams are in the race for the UEFA European Under-21 Championship play-offs.

The acting press secretary of the Armenian foreign ministry Tigran Balayan told Armenpress that the Turkish delegation included also Namik Guney Erpul, a deputy head of a Turkish foreign ministry department for cultural ties. He said no officials meetings were held with Turkish diplomats in Yerevan.

After the game Armenian foreign minister had a short conversation with the Turkish diplomat.

10. PRESIDENT SERZH SARGSYAN INTRODUCES HEAD OF NEW STATE REVENUES COMMITTEE [ARMENPRESS, 08/21/08]

President Serzh Sargsyan introduced today Gagik Khachatryan, the head of the new State Revenues Committee, to high-ranking tax and customs officials.

The presidential press service told Armenpress that while referring to his August 20 decree to dismiss Vahram Barseghian as head of the State Taxation Service, Serzh Sargsyan reminded of his



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

warnings, which he had made during his August 1 meeting with senior taxmen that if the agency failed to ensure a tangible breakthrough within this month, relevant conclusions should be made by both sides.

According to Serzh Sargsyan, no progress was seen in the past 20 days, as well as no indication that the agency's leadership had any desire to enforce radical changes, let alone realizing their importance.

"I did not see that the leadership of the State Taxation Service realizes in what sector they work and why. I did not see that they come to work to serve the government and the business, I did not see a desire, a zeal to work on their part. Furthermore, the agency continued to work in its usual manner, even worse," Serzh Sargsyan said adding that "This is the case that surgical intervention is inevitable."

Addressing the present, the president also said, "I would not like the opinion to spread among the society that my August 20 decrees stem from the desire to merge the taxation and customs agencies into one. Not at all. The State Taxation Service works very bad, both professionally and in terms of human and moral approaches and this situation could not be tolerated any longer."

In a reference to the new State Revenues Committee the president said, "I am sure that we are capable of adapting this new government body's work to our current economic demands, and to modern requirements in general."

In the end by reiterating the need for sweeping changes in this sector the president said, "Those who feel that they are not able to fulfill their duties, to meet the new requirements, must go."

He proposed that all rally around the head of the new body to get down to hard work and face the sector's challenges.

11. NO CONCRETE PROPOSAL OVER NAGORNO-KARABAKH SETTLEMENT: FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN [ARMENPRESS, 08/21/08]

A spokesman for Armenian foreign ministry said today there was no concrete proposal at this time in terms of continuity of the talks over the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

He said the August 1 meeting of Armenian and Azerbaijani foreign ministers in Moscow, Russia, was followed by statements on intention to continue talks and on a possibility of reaching an agreement on a new meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's session in New York in September.

The spokesman, Tigran Balayan, told Armenpress that there was no certainty over the New York meeting. He said the OSCE Minsk Group cochairmen did not contact with the Armenian side with a concrete proposal.

Officials in the U.S. embassy in Armenia could not say when the Minsk Group chairmen could pay another visit to the region. Although it was said earlier they could do so in September.

12. PRIME MINISTER TIGRAN SARGSYAN CONGRATULATES HIS HOLINESS, CATHOLICOS KAREKIN II, ON HIS BIRTHDAY [Hayastani Hanrapetutian, 08/21/08]

Prime minister Tigran Sargsyan sent a message of congratulations today to His Holiness, Catholicos Karekin II, head of the Armenian Apostolic church, on the occasion of His Holiness birthday.

The government department for public relations and information told Armenpress that the message reads as follows.

"Your Holiness, on behalf of the government and myself I congratulate you on the occasion of your 57-th birthday anniversary. I wish you good health, long life, inexhaustible power and energy for implementation of your patriarchal mission, new deeds, which are pleasant for God for the sake of further strengthening of relations between our state and our Church and to the glory of our people's Christian reawakening."

13. AUTHORITIES OF TWO COUNTRIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SOUTH OSSETIA, ARTHUR SAKUNTS SAYS [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/21/08]

The authorities of both Russia and Georgia are responsible for the military operations in South Ossetia, as a result of which the civilian population suffered, the head of the Helsinki Citizens Assembly Vanadzor Branch Arthur Sakunts expressed an opinion at the August 21 press conference. In his words, the reason is that the authorities of the two countries are not legitimate and do not bear responsibility for protection of the rights of their voters. "The main reason for the conflict's resumption is the state of illegitimacy of the authorities in both countries because before taking such actions, the authorities should have thought about civilian population," A. Sakunts said. In this respect, according to him, it is not essential which of them started military operations.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

As a result of the events in Georgia, A. Sakunts identified a number of worrying issues related to Armenia. He considered as quite worrying the statement of the Armenian ministry of defence that the territory of Armenia will not be used as a base field for military operations against Georgia. A. Sakunts said that the Armenian legislation does not regulate in any way the legal status of Russian bases in the territory of Armenia. "What guarantees do I as an Armenian citizen have that tomorrow Russian tanks will not appear in Liberty Square? The words of the Armenian minister of defence cannot be a guarantee here," he stated.

A. Sakunts does not see any guarantees either regarding the issue of nonresumption of hostilities for solution of the Karabakh problem. "The illegitimate authorities of Armenia and Azerbaijan cannot guarantee that we will not have such problems at the Karabakh front," he said.

14. ACCORDING TO AGHVAN VARDANIAN, COALITION HAS ALL NECESSARY OPPORTUNITIES TO SOLVE PROBLEMS IN ARMENIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/21/08]

If the president of Turkey Abdullah Gul arrives in Armenia in connection with the football match between the national teams of Armenia and Turkey to be held in Yerevan on September 6, actions of protest will be organized against Turkey, member of the ARF Bureau Aghvan Vardanian declared at the August 21 press conference.

As for the internal political situation in Armenia, he said that it is not always that the factor of a third force is a balance. According to him, being part of the ruling coalition, the ARF believes that the coalition has all necessary opportunities to solve the problems in the country. In the words of A. Vardanian, it is necessary that the main influential political forces be unanimous regarding national, state and strategic problems of importance to Armenia.

15. SERZH SARGSYAN SENDS TELEGRAM OF CONDOLENCE TO KING OF SPAIN [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/21/08]

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan sent a telegram of condolence to King of Spain Juan Carlos I in connection with the plane crash at Madrid Airport on August 20. The text of the telegram was submitted to NT by the RA president's press service. It reads:

"It caused me a deep pain to hear of the plane crash at Madrid Airport which resulted in many deaths.

At this moment of mourning in Spain, on behalf of the Armenian people and myself, I express condolences to you, the families of those who died in the crash and to the friendly Spanish people."

16. VERSIONS OF CONFLICTS' MILITARY SOLUTION ARE DOOMED TO FAIL, ARF BUREAU MEMBER SAYS [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/21/08]

Any versions of military solution of conflicts are doomed to fail, which the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict demonstrated as well. Stating this at the August 21 press conference, member of the ARF Bureau Aghvan Vardanian said: "He who takes up a sword will fall from it. This is the lesson to be drawn from the Georgian events."

Speaking about the possible impact of these events on Nagorno Karabakh, he noted that Karabakh is a much more successful state unit than Ossetia, and while being unrecognized, it can serve as an example for some recognized states in many issues. In the opinion of A. Vardanian, what happened is an occasion for the main political forces of Armenia to show their unity in the Karabakh problem and other problems of national and state importance.

In the current situation A. Vardanian considered it important that the Georgian authorities in cooperation with Armenia ensure the rights of the Armenians of Javakhk as an ethnic minority. At the same time he underlined that everything possible should be done to prevent Javakhk from being used as a tool for increasing the tension by a third force.

In his words, one should also be careful about the activity displayed by Turkey so that any initiatives to proceed from this activity will not take place at the expense of Armenia.



17. "HERITAGE" FACTION ADVOCATES CANCELLATION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY'S DECISION ON DEPRIVING 4 DEPUTIES OF IMMUNITY [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/21/08]

"Heritage" parliamentary faction has put a draft decision into circulation, according to which the RA National Assembly's (NA) decision on depriving 4 opposition deputies of their immunity as NA deputy shall be recognized as invalid. The faction member Armen Martirosian announced this at the August 21 press conference.

According to him, the reason for making such a decision by their faction is that it is the 5th month that the indicated deputies have been deprived of their immunity, three of them have been held under arrest, however, until now no serious investigation has been conducted, which gives an occasion to assume that they were groundlessly arrested.

Speaking about the recent initiatives of the National Assembly, A. Martirosian criticized the amendments which were made in the tax legislation and are related to the introduction of cash registers in fairs. In his words, today 70-80% of the Armenian economy is in the hands of several families, but as previously, the main tax burden lies on the small and medium businessmen.

A. Martirosian also criticized the bill on making amendments to the RA Law on Approval of the Annual and Complex Programs of Measures on Restoration, Preservation, Reproduction and Use of the Ecosystem of Lake Sevan. In his opinion, the discharge of water from the lake will result in grave ecological changes.

18. SERZH SARGSYAN: TAX SERVICE WORKS EXTREMELY BADLY [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/21/08]

On August 21 Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan introduced Gagik Khachatryan, the chairman of the newly-created Committee of State Revenues adjunct to the government, to the top executives of the tax and customs sector, NT was informed by the RA president's press service.

Speaking about the decree that he signed yesterday to relieve Vahram Barseghian of his post as head of the State Tax Service, S. Sargsyan said that as long ago as during his August 1 meeting with executives of the tax service, he warned them that if there was no progress in the work of the tax service this month, respective conclusions would be made. However, in the words of S. Sargsyan, in the past 20 days no essential changes have been registered, moreover, it has not been evident that the heads of the tax service have an intention to make changes and are aware of their importance.

"I wouldn't like any of you to spread an opinion in society that the August 20 decrees are based on the intention to unite the tax and customs bodies. Not at all. The tax service works extremely badly. It works badly from the professional point of view and from the viewpoint of human and moral norms, and this situation is no longer admissible," S. Sargsyan said.

As regards the newly-created Committee of State Revenues, the president expressed confidence that the tax and customs systems may operate efficiently under the united management. Underlining once again the necessity to immediately start work and rectify the situation in the sector, S. Sargsyan added: "Those unable to perform their duties and meet the requirements must leave their jobs."

19. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PERMITS TO LET 360 MILLION INSTEAD OF 240 MILLION CUBIC METERS OF WATER OUT OF LAKE SEVAN [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/21/08]

On August 21 the RA National Assembly continued the discussion of the government-submitted bill on making amendments to the RA Law on Approval of the Annual and Complex Programs of Measures on Restoration, Preservation, Reproduction and Use of the Ecosystem of Lake Sevan. The bill proposes permitting to let 360 mln cubic meters instead of 240 mln cubic meters of water out of Lake Sevan in 2008.

In his final speech, the main speaker, chairman of the State Water Industry Committee of the RA Ministry of Territorial Administration Andranik Andreasian assured those present that in September a commission on the problems of Lake Sevan will be set up in by a presidential decree, new environmental protection measures will be introduced, and a concept of construction of reservoirs will be presented. As regards the written proposals submitted, he said that two proposals were received: the NA Economic Committee's proposal to set up a commission on problems of Lake Sevan has been accepted, while "Heritage" faction's proposal not to increase the amount of water discharge has been rejected.

According to a press release submitted to NT by the RA National Assembly PR Department, after being discussed in two readings, the bill was passed in the presented text.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

The parliament discussed and passed (first - in second reading, then in third reading) the bill on making amendments and additions to the RA Law on Trade and Services and the bill on making amendments and an addition to the RA Law on the Use of Cash Registers.

The NA discussed and passed in second reading the bill on making amendments and additions to the RA Customs Code.

Having concluded the agenda, the special session of the RA National Assembly finished its work.

BUSINESS

20. CONSTRUCTION GROWS BY 14% IN ARMENIA IN FIRST HALF OF 2008 ON SAME PERIOD OF 2007 [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

Construction work of 231 bln 639.4 mln drams (over 753.1 mln USD), including building and assembly work of 200 bln 615.9 mln drams, was done in Armenia in January-June 2008. Construction grew by 14%, building and assembly work - by 16.8% as compared with January-June 2007.

According to the data of the RA National Statistical Service, 8% of construction was done at the expense of the state budget, 0.2% - with funds of communities, 1% - of the World Bank, 2.9% - humanitarian aid, 26% - private organizations, and 61.9% - with money of the population.

21. NUMBER OF TOURISTS TO ARMENIA INCREASES BY 13.3% IN FIRST HALF OF 2008 ON SAME PERIOD OF 2007 [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

207,479 tourists visited Armenia in January-June 2008 - against 183,110 tourists in the same period of 2007, with the growth in their number making 13.3%.

According to the RA National Statistical Service, 211,182 people left Armenia to travel abroad in the indicated period, their number increased by 12.8% as compared with January-June 2007.

22. ARMENIAN GDP GROWS BY 10.6% IN JANUARY-JULY 2008 ON SAME PERIOD OF 2007 [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

Armenian GDP grew by 10.6% in January-July 2008 on the same period of last year and made 1 trillion 736 billion 187.7 million drams. The GDP index-deflator made 108%.

According to the RA National Statistical Service, industrial production grew by 1.8% in Armenia in January-July 2008 on the same months of 2007 and made 428 bln 184.9 mln drams.

The gross agricultural output increased by 6.9% to 220 bln 610.4 mln drams, construction - by 14% to 356 bln 107.2 mln drams, retail trade - by 6.1% to 500 bln drams, while services grew by 15% to 389 bln 82.9 mln drams.

The foreign trade of Armenia grew by 29.5% in January-July 2008 on the same period of 2007 and amounted to 2 bln 920.2 mln USD. Exports declined by 0.2% and made 628.1 mln USD, imports grew by 40.9% to 2 bln 292.1 mln USD.

Consumer prices rose by 9.2%, industrial production prices - by 5.8% in January-July 2008 on January-July 2007.

The number of officially registered unemployed declined by 8.3% in late July 2008 as compared with late July 2007 and made 76,200.

The average monthly salary made 87,908 drams in the first seven months of 2008 (20.4% growth on the same period of 2007), including the salary of employees of the budgetary institutions - 62,253 drams (16.7% growth) and the salary of employees of non-budgetary institutions - 108.679 drams (19.6% growth). The average exchange rate of a US dollar made 306.84 drams in January-July 2008 (this index made 342.08 drams in 2007).

23. GOVERNMENT TO RELEASE 25.7 MILLION DRAMS FOR REPAIR OF DILIJAN TUNNEL AND ROAD IN LORI [ARMENPRESS, 08/21/08]

The government of Armenia decided today to release 25.750 million Drams from its reserve fund for repair of the northern portal of Dilijan tunnel damaged by heavy rains in June and for repair of a section of a road from Margara to Vanadzor and Tashir and then to Georgia.

The government department for public relations and information said that 15 million Drams will be spent on the repair of the tunnel's portal and 10 million for the repair of the road, while 750,000 drams on design and study documentation.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

The government also ordered Police and National Security Service to establish tight security regime from September 1 to September 11 in Yerevan in connection with September 6 Armenia versus Turkey 2010 World Cup qualifier.

The government also approved the results of a tender announced for repair of 110 km long motor roads in Ararat, Gegharkunik and Armavir provinces on the funds of the Asian Development Bank.

DIASPORA

24. ASSUMPTION CELEBRATED IN ARMENIAN DIOCESE OF TEHRAN [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

Liturgies were celebrated in all Armenian churches of Tehran on August 17 on the occasion of the Assumption of Virgin Mary.

According to "Aliq" daily, a liturgy presided over by the head of Tehran's Armenian diocese Archbishop Sepuh Sargsian was celebrated in Surb Astvatsatsin Church of Tehran. The church choir led by E. Injirghulian was singing during the liturgy. The members of Tehran's Armenian Diocesan Council were present.

A ritual Blessing of the Grapes ceremony was held at the conclusion of the liturgy, prior to which the head of the diocese explained the meaning of this ceremony.

25. REPRESENTATIVES OF ARMENIAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS OF IRAN TAKE PART IN "ONE NATION, ONE CULTURE" FESTIVAL [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

38 members of the Union of Arts of Tehran's "Ararat" Armenian cultural organization are taking part in "One Nation, One Culture" festival being held in Armenia on August 18-23.

"Ararat" chorus of the organization, as well as its "Qavaran" vocal music band and performer Rebeka Ashughian arrived in Yerevan.

"Karavan" dance group of "Sipan" union is also participating in the festival. It will perform the following dances: "Rebirth", "Musa Ler", "Ethnographic Dance", "Karabakh" and "Ameno".

26. CATHOLICOS ARAM I RECEIVES REPRESENTATIVES OF SHEIKH KABALAN [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

Catholicos of Cilicia Aram I on August 18 received three representatives of Lebanon's top Shiite Muslim cleric Sheikh Kabalan: his son, the Chairman of the Imam Musa Sadr Organization and the Mufti of Baalbek's Shiite community at Bikfaya's Surb Astvatsatsin Monastery. The head of Lebanon's Armenian diocese Bishop Gegham Khacherian, Bishop Norayr Ashghian and member of the Islamic-Christian National Dialog Committee Jean Salmanian were also present at the meeting.

An event in memory of Imam Musa Sadr will be held in Lebanon soon. In this connection two representatives of Shiekh Kabalan handed a personal invitation to His Holiness to take part in and make a speech at this memorial event.

A discussion on Christian-Islamic dialog took place between the sides, with the meeting turning into a dialog on mutual respect and trust between the two religions.

Catholicos Aram I and the representatives of Sheikh Kabalan underlined the importance of this dialog and the work done so far in the name of co-existence and co-operation of the Lebanese communities.

27. IN OPINION OF ARMENIAN URUGUAYAN COACH, UNLESS NECESSARY STEPS ARE TAKEN IN SECURITY ISSUE, ARMENIA-TURKEY FOOTBALL MATCH MAY HAVE TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

Armenian Uruguayan Sergio Margarian, a famous football coach, does not consider the presence of Turkish fans desirable at the Armenia-Turkey football match to be held in September. He said that during an interview with Radio Liberty:

"When I was the coach of Panathinaikos (Greece), we went to Turkey to play with Turkey's Fenerbahce for UEFA Cup. I can't forget the violence we were subjected to both on the pitch and outside it, due to which the return match in Athens was held in the absence of Turkish fans - based on a decision of the UEFA," Margarian said, adding: "We should be cautious and not confuse the dark pages of the history of the Armenian people with sports. The most important thing is that we should show to the world that Armenia is a civilized country and we can win by playing a good football match," he noted. According



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

to Sergio Margarian, unless all necessary steps are taken in security issue, the match may have tragic consequences.

28. ARMENIAN IRANIAN MOUNTAINEERS CLIMB ATOP OF MOUNT ARARAT [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

Suren Keshishian, Rubik Ter-Avanesian and Alen Khosrovian, mountaineers of "Nairi" Armenian cultural union (Iran) climbed atop of Mount Ararat early August 13. "Aliq" daily reported that they returned to Tehran on August 15.

29. ARMENIAN ENERGY MINISTER MEETS WITH SECRETARY OF IRAN'S SUPREME NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

During his official visit to Iran, the RA energy minister and the Armenian co-chairman of the Iranian-Armenian joint commission on cooperation Armen Movsisian on August 18 had a meeting with the secretary of Iran' Supreme National Security Council Saeed Jalili.

Speaking about the recent developments in the region and hinting at the strategic relations of Iran with regional countries, especially Armenia, S. Jalili underlined: "Iran will spare no effort to reduce the difficulties of the people in the region".

Citing "Irna" agency, "Aliq" daily (Tehran) reported that speaking about Iran's role in the issue of regional security, the Armenian minister of energy expressed a high opinion about Iran's patronage of countries in the Caucasian region, especially in hard conditions.

On the same day Armen Movsisian met with the director of the Iranian foreign ministry's unit for CIS and Middle East issues Alireza Sheikhatar.

The deputy foreign minister of Armenia Gegham Gharibjanian was also present at the meeting, during which the sides addressed the bilateral relations and the developments in the Caucasian region.

30. ARMENIAN IRANIAN POET VARAND BECOMES MEMBER OF BRITISH GUILD OF INTERNATIONAL SONGWRITERS AND COMPOSERS [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

Well-known Armenian Iranian writer and translator Varand was recently elected and registered as a member of Great Britain's Guild of International Songwriters and Composers. According to "Aliq" daily, the requirements for joining the Guild include creative abilities, experience and validity.

In addition to being awarded an order of the RA ministry of culture during the recent All-Armenian conference of writers, Varand will be given an annual Yeghishe award of the Union of Writers of the NKR based on a decision of the union's board, the chairman of the Union of Writers Vardan Hakobian announced at a literary meeting in the city of Shushi (Artsakh).

31. YOUTH CONFERENCE BEING HELD AT ARMENIAN CATHOLICOSATE OF CILICIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

The Pan-Diaspora Youth Conference that opened under the patronage of the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia on August 14 is continuing its work, discussing issues of interest to the youth.

One of the subjects under discussion was the moral aspect of using the Internet, as well as the diversity of websites on the Armenian Genocide. Dr. Joe Pirri, lecturer at the University of Geneva, provided exhaustive information on this subject. The problem of trustworthiness of sources was also discussed, taking into account the fact that the truth about the fair rights of the Armenian people is often distorted deliberately.

Archimandrite Grigor Chiftchian gave a lecture "The Armenian Church and Armenian Youth". Speaking about Armenian young people's expectations from the church, he also touched upon the expectations of the Church from its youth.

32. EVENT DEDICATED TO 105th ANNIVERSARY OF ARAM KHACHATRIAN'S BIRTH HELD AT ARMENIAN EMBASSY IN NEW DELHI [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

A musical event dedicated to the 105th anniversary of the world-famous composer Aram Khachatrian's birth was organized at the Armenian embassy in New Delhi.

The event was opened by the Armenian ambassador to India Ashot Kocharian who presented the details of Aram Khachatrian's biography and creative life.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

Then some works of the great composer were performed by the musicians invited from the Russian Cultural Center in New Delhi: female pianist Svetlana Rodoshkevich and flutist Mikhail Ushenin. In particular, such works by Khachatrian as his "Nocturne", waltz for "Masked Ball" drama by Lermontov, and excerpts from ballets "Gayane" and "Spartacus" were performed.

According to the RA MFA Press and Information Department, the event was attended by officials of the Indian foreign ministry, heads of the diplomatic missions in New Delhi, representatives of NGOs, art critics and musicians.

33. ARA ABRAHAMIAN: CULTURE IS ONE OF MOST IMPORTANT LINKS CONNECTING DIASPORA WITH MOTHERLAND [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/21/08]

The President of the World Armenian Congress and the Union of Armenians in Russia, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Ara Abrahamian sent a message to the participants of the 3rd All-Armenian Festival "One Nation, One Culture". The message reads:

"Dear compatriots!

On behalf of the World Armenian Congress, the Union of Armenians in Russia and myself, I warmly greet the participants of the 3rd All-Armenian Festival "One Nation, One Culture".

This already traditional festival is an important event that aims to promote the unification of the Armenians scattered around the world, as the fate has willed it.

It is well-known that like faith, culture has always been a common element that has united the Armenians, regardless of their political views and social conditions. Today culture also serves the purpose of preserving and developing national identity, language, literature, traditions and other national values passed on from one generation to another.

Culture is one of the most important links that connects the Diaspora with our motherland - Armenia and contributes to survival of our people living in various countries.

The festival is also significant in that it is held under the high patronage of president of the Republic of Armenia.

I wish the festival participants success and creative achievements in the name of further development of our national arts."

ARTS

34. ARMENIAN NATIONAL FILM CENTER WILL TAKE TWO FEATURE FILMS TO ANAPA FESTIVAL [ARMENPRESS, 08/21/08]

Armenian National Film Center will take two feature films to Anapa, in southern Russia, for Kinoshok annual festival that brings together film makes from the former Soviet republics including from the Baltic states.

The festival is scheduled for September 12-21. Armenian films are 'The Priestess' of Vigen Chaldranian and 'Incensing' by Gagik Harutyunian.

Gevork Gevorkian, head of the National Film Center, told Armenpress that it will present other films at other international festivals. Particularly, it will send 'The Priestess' a cartoon called from "Little Troll's Life" by Naira Martirosian to Listopad film festival in Belarus,

He said Armenia plans also to send Armen Ronov's 'Anna Karenina' to Venice film festival, but it will not be among competing films and also a short film by Arsen Arakelian called 'Chillo'.

35. 100 YOUNG PEOPLE FROM 16 COUNTRIES GATHER IN ARMENIA FOR INTERNATIONAL YOUTH INTER-CULTURAL FESTIVAL [ARMENPRESS, 08/22/08]

About 100 young people from France, Poland, Egypt, China, Lithuania, Greece, Romania, India and other countries, have gathered in the Armenian resort town of Tsakhkadzor for an international youth inter-cultural festival titled "Dialogue of Cultures." The festival opened on August 21.

Young representatives of Yezidi and Assyrian communities of Armenia are also among its participants. The Armenian culture is presented by young people from Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Deputy youth and sport minister Arthur Poghosian said this is the second festival which he said is included in the plan of actions of the CIS Youth Issues Council and is carried out in the context of the Council of Europe and EU 2007-2008 priorities.

The goal of this event is to promote maintenance of inter-cultural diversity and help young people to step up their involvement in this process. The festival aims to gather under one shelter representatives



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

of different cultures and different ethnic groups to give them an avenue to show their culture, traditions and customs.

The festival is organized by the Armenian youth and sports issues ministry in cooperation with the Center for Youth Events, International Center for Inter-Cultural Studies, Education and Dialogue and Pan-Armenian Youth Center Foundation.

The government released 18 million Drams to support the festival that will run through August 27.

SOCIAL

36. EARTHQUAKE OCCURS 20 KM NORTH-EAST OF ARMAVIR [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

At 8:34 pm on August 19th, a 2.8 magnitude earthquake measuring 4 on the Richter scale at the epicenter occurred 20 km north-east of Armavir in Armenia. By preliminary data of the RA National Seismic Protection Service, the earthquake was felt in several settlements, in particular, the earthquake measuring 3-4 was felt in Aruch, Amberd and Agarak villages.

37. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FALLS TO 6.4 PERCENT [Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, 08/21/08]

As of August 1, there were 91,700 registered jobless people in Armenia, by 6,600 down from a year before, according to the State Employment Agency of the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry.

According to these figures, the unemployment rate fell 7.2 percent. The Agency said 18,263 jobless people, or 20 percent, were young people.

Some 76,200 people or 83 percent were granted unemployed status, while the share of jobless women continued to remain high as they made almost 75 percent.

The unemployment rate fell 0.3 percent from the start of the year to 6.4 percent. Also jobs were found for 4,733 unemployed people since the beginning of the year.

Young jobless with no work experience as well as people over 50 face the toughest problems as they are usually denied jobs by employers.

Along with this there is a big demand for some specialties, especially doctors, in regions outside Yerevan. Many of the offered jobs, up to 56 percent, are ignored because of low wages.

As of August 1 some 17,357 received unemployment allowances.

38. CONVOY OF TRUCKS HEAD FOR MEGHRI T BRING ARMENIA-BOUND GOODS [ARMENPRESS, 08/21/08]

An operative task force created by the prime minister sent today morning a convoy of trucks to the town of Meghri on the Iranian border to bring commodities that arrived through Iran.

Gagik Martirosian, an aide to prime minister, told Armenpress, that part of goods will be brought to Yerevan by the convoy and the other part by Iranian trucks. He said the bulk of goods are flour and fuel.

He said the trucks are expected in Yerevan late in the evening.

39. SENIOR INSPECTOR AT ZVARTNOTS AIRPORT ARRESTED FOR ABUSE OF POWER [Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, 08/21/08]

On July 21 Armenian National Security Service officers arrested Vahe Musaelian, a senior inspector at the border check point at Yerevan Zvartnots airport for abuse of his power.

The Police said to Armenpress that Vahe Musaelian failed to report on a passenger who had a passport with false data flying for Vienna, Austria. In return he was given 40 British pounds.

It said a criminal case was launched into this case to find out other circumstances. The case was sent to court on August 13.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

40. GOVERNMENT-FUNDED PROGRAM FOR REPAIR OF ELEVATORS TO BE OVER LATE IN OCTOBER [ARMENPRESS, 08/22/08]

A government-funded extensive program for repair of elevators in high-rise residential blocks will be over late in October, as originally planned.

Gagik Khachatryan, head of a Yerevan municipality department in charge of utilities, said out of 2,464 elevators 1,682 were already repaired. Thirty lifts were replaced by new ones. Twelve of them were brought from Belarus.

Gagik Khachatryan said also the entire stock of necessary parts was brought to Armenia, but there is a shortage of skilled repairmen.

41. ARMENIA'S FULL RAIL COMMUNICATION WITH GEORGIA TO RESUME IN SEVERAL DAYS [ARMENPRESS, 08/22/08]

It will take several days before Armenia's rail communication with the outside world, disrupted by explosion of a key railway bridge 40 km west of central Georgian town of Gori, may resume, Van Bayburd, an ethnic Armenian aide to Georgian president, told Armenpress by phone from Tbilisi.

He cited Georgian authorities as saying that it will take several days to fully restore the bridge. According to him, a smaller alternative bridge, that was idle for years and was repaired by Georgian and Armenian crews earlier this week, has not got the capacity to transport all Armenia-bound rail carriages.

"Everything possible was made to transport goods to Armenia via alternative ways, particularly, by trucks," he said, praising Armenian diplomats working in Georgia on the ground.

The Georgian railway is the main transport link between Armenia and the Batumi and Poti ports which process more than 90 percent of freight shipped to and from the country.

42. NEW HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT FUND TO BE LAUNCHED IN ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 08/22/08]

A new human resources development fund, called Pyunik, will be launched officially in Armenia soon. Its honorary chairman is a Diaspora Armenian benefactor Gabriel Jambarji and Levon Sarkisian is the chairman of the board of trustees.

Education and science minister Spartak Seyranian said to reporters today that Jambarji and his friends have been supporting Armenian education since 1998 by providing Armenian schools with 530 full labs for Biology, Chemistry and Physics subjects, furnished with modern equipment and devices and materials necessary for conducting tests.

Levon Sarkisian said the idea to shift to official activity is to enlarge the number of sponsors. Part of labs were given to schools outside Yerevan. Gabriel Jambarji and his friends also provided Armenian schools with 200 computers and 250 printers.

The minister said Jambarji gave his accord to show support also to universities and high schools as well as to pre-school institutions.

In 2007 in recognition of his services to Armenian education Gabriel Jambarji was awarded the gold medal of the Armenian education and science ministry.

SPORTS

43. WRESTLER SUREN MARKOSIAN DROPS OUT OF STRUGGLE FOR OLYMPIC MEDALS [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

Free-style wrestler Suren Markosian (66 kg) was beaten during his first match on August 20 and dropped out of the struggle for medals at the 29th Summer Olympic Games.

Javelin thrower Melik Janoyan and free-style wrestler Harutyun Yenokian (84 kg) will compete in Beijing on August 21.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

44. NATIONAL YOUTH FOOTBALL TEAM OF ARMENIA BEATEN BY RUSSIAN TEAM AT START OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION IN PALANGA [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

An international youth competition with the participation of 8 teams began in Palanga (Lithuania) on August 19. The rivals of Armenian under-17 footballers included in 1st group are those from Russia, Moldova and Lithuania. In the first round, Armenia's team lost to Russian footballers with a 0-3 score.

45. YOUNG CHESS PLAYERS OF ARMENIA WITH 13.5 POINTS LEAD POINTS TABLE AT WORLD YOUTH UNDER 16 OLYMPIAD [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

The World Youth Under 16 Chess Olympiad began in Mersin (Turkey) on August 17. Out of 26 teams from 18 countries, 7 teams represent Turkey, two - South Africa and two - Switzerland.

The Armenian team is composed of Samvel Ter-Sahakian, Vahe Baghdasarian, Hayk Vardanian and Hayk Tamazian. 4 rounds have been held. The Armenian chess players lead the points table with 13.5 points.

46. ARMENIAN TEAM WITH 5 BRONZE MEDALS IN 66th PLACE AMONG 74 COUNTRIES TO HAVE WON OLYMPIC MEDALS [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/20/08]

As of August 20, the national team of China is in 1st place (76 medals: 43 gold, 14 silver, and 19 bronze medals), the US team is in 2nd place (79 medals: 26+26+27), and the British team is 3rd (33 medals: 16+9+8) on the medal count at the Beijing Olympic Games.

Armenia's team has 5 bronze medals so far and takes 66th place. Boxer Hrachik Javakhian has secured at least a bronze medal for himself and continues his struggle.

As a whole, 74 out of 205 countries participating in the Beijing Games have won medals.

47. ARMENIA'S UNDER 21 NATIONAL FOOTBALL SQUAD BEAT PEERS FROM TURKEY 2-1 [ARMENPRESS, 08/21/08]

Armenia's under 21 national football squad upset peers from Turkey on Wednesday in Yerevan 2-1. The two last goals from Karlen Mkrtchian and Henrik Mkhitaryan denied Turkey a move to the top of qualifying Group 2.

Turkey needed three points to leapfrog the Czech Republic and take pole position in the race for the UEFA European Under-21 Championship play-offs.

The Turks did their best to exploit their best players. The first goal was scored by Turkey at 66 minute. However, to the delight of a 12,000-strong crowd at the Hrazdan Stadium in Yerevan, Mkrtchian finished from a Goharyan free-kick one minute from time, with Mkhitaryan atoning for his earlier miss in added time by scoring the second goal.

Armenia has now 10 points, the Czech have 14 and Turkey 13 points.

Foreign minister Edward Nalbandian and president of the Armenian Football Federation Ruben Hayrapetian met with players after the match to congratulate them on the brilliant victory.

Speaking at a news conference after the game Turkish head coach Mutif Erkasap said they were given 'excellent' welcome in Armenia. He said his players expected the game to be too tough and tense, but their fears did not prove.

48. ARMENIAN OLYMPIANS COMPETE UNSUCCESSFULLY IN BEIJING ON AUGUST 21 [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/21/08]

Free-style wrestler Harutyun Yenokian was beaten during a wrestling match on August 21 and had to drop out of further struggle at the Beijing Games. Javelin thrower Melik Janoyan showed a result of 64.47 m, failing to reach the final among the top 12.

49. YOUNG ARMENIAN CHESS PLAYERS SHARE 4th-6th POSITIONS AT WORLD OLYMPIAD [NOYAN TAPAN, 08/21/08]

Games of 5th and 6th rounds of the World Youth Under 16 Chess Olympiad were held in Mersin (Turkey) on August 20. The Armenian team drew (2-2) with the team of Philippines, then Armenian chess players were defeated by Russians (0-4).



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, August 22, 2008

Russia's team leads the points table with 17.5 points. The teams of Philippines and India share 2nd and 3rd places with 16 points each. The teams of Georgia, Armenia and the UK earned 15.5 points each and share 4th-6th positions.

Produced by AGBU Armenian Representation

Please be advised that the [AGBU Armenia News Bulletin](#) is for general reference only and should not be reprinted in any form without the explicit written permission of AGBU. All rights reserved.

Established in 1906, AGBU (www.agbu.org) is the world's largest non-profit Armenian organization. Headquartered in New York City with an annual budget of \$36 million, AGBU preserves and promotes the Armenian identity and heritage through educational, cultural and humanitarian programs, annually touching the lives of some 400,000 Armenians on six continents.