



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, October 24, 2008

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

POLITICS

1. RESULTS OF OCTOBER 19 ELECTIONS TO LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT BODIES DISPUTED IN SEVERAL COMMUNITIES OF LORI AND TAVUSH MARZES [Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, 10/22/08]

The results of the October 19 elections to local self-government bodies were disputed in several communities of Lori and Tavush marzes. The district electoral commissions that include these communities received applications with the request to recount the votes.

NT correspondent was informed by spokesperson for the RA Central Electoral Commission Tatev Ohanian that there were applications from candidates for the council of aldermen in the city of Spitak to recount the results in all the 9 election centers, from candidates for the council of aldermen in the city of Vanadzor to recount the results in 7 election centers, and an application to recount the votes in one election center was received from a person empowered to act for a candidate for the head of Mets Ayrum community. The results of the voting in all the 10 election center in Dilijan, 4 in Berd and 7 in Ijevan will also be recounted based on similar applications.

As a result of the recounting made on October 20 based on the application of a person empowered to act for a candidate for the head of Odzun rural community in Lori marz, the election was invalidated and a revoting with the participation of the same candidates will be held on November 9.

2. YBC PRESENTS RUSSIAN PRESIDENT WITH NAME CASK OF BRANDY [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev accompanied by Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan visited the Yerevan Brandy Company (YBC) late October 20. According to a press release of the RA presidential press service, the presidents of Armenia and Russia toured the company, went to the ageing department where they familiarized themselves with the history of the world-famous Armenian brandy and its production process.

D. Medvedev, the head of Russia which is a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, stopped beside the Peace Cask, in which spirit symbolizing 1994 - the year of signing the ceasefire - is being aged. The cask is called "Peace" as it will be opened on the day of the final resolution of the Karabakh conflict.

According to a tradition, the YBC presented the Russian president with a name cask of brandy.

3. BILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION IS MAIN SUBJECT OF ARMENIAN-RUSSIAN ENLARGED DISCUSSIONS [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

During his official visit to Yerevan, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev visited the Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex early October 21. He laid a wreath at Monument to the Victims of the 1915 Genocide, went to the Armenian Genocide Museum, and planted a tree in the Memorial Park.

Then presidents Serzh Sargsyan and Dmitry Medvedev took part in the opening ceremony of Square of Russia and made speeches.

The presidents went from the square to the RA president's residence where a tete-a-tete talk took place between S. Sargsyan and D. Medvedev. They discussed a whole range of Armenian-Russian relations, the Karabakh problem's settlement process, the recent developments in the region and some urgent international problems.

According to a press release of the RA presidential press service, the tete-a-tete talk was followed by enlarged discussions that focused on Armenian-Russian economic cooperation which is consistently developing.

The co-chairs of the Armenian-Russian intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation - Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian and Russian Minister of Transport Igor Levitin presented the problems discussed at the 10th jubilee sitting of the commission, as well as the results achieved.

After the negotiations, the ceremony of signing joint documents took place. The following documents were signed: the 2009-2010 program of interdepartmental consultations between the foreign ministries of Armenia and Russia, the agreement on trade, economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation between Armenian government and the government of Russia's Sverdlovsk region, and the



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agreement on trade, economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation between the regional administration of Armavir marz (Armenia) and the government of Yaroslavl region (Russia).

Then the ceremony of giving awards to Arthur Chilingarov, famous Russian polar explorer, scientist and public-political figure of Armenian origin, and Igor Levitin, Russian minister of transport, co-chair of Armenian-Russian intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation, was held. By the Armenian president's September 17 decree, A. Chilingarov was awarded a Saint Mesrop Mashtots Order, and by the Armenian president's October 17 decree, I. Levitin was awarded an Order of Honor for his significant contribution to the development of friendly relations between the peoples of Armenia and Russia and the promotion of economic links between two countries.

4. VICTOR DALLAKIAN PROPOSES HIS FORMULA OF FORMING FACT-FINDING GROUP ON MARCH 1 EVENTS [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

During the hour of statements on October 21, independent deputy of the RA National Assembly Victor Dallakian made a proposal: by a decision of the parliament, to set up a 12-member fact-finding group for providing expert advisory assistance to the NA Ad Hoc Committee on Inquiry into the March 1-2 Events in Yerevan and their Reasons. The deputy proposed that 6 members of the fact-finding group should be appointed by the "RPA", "Prosperous Armenia", "ARF" and "Orinats Yerkir" factions that form the coalition, 3 members should be appointed by "Heritage" opposition faction, and another 3 members of the group - by the first Armenian president Levon Ter-Petrosian. The coalition may appoint 2 of its 6 members, while the parliamentary and extraparliamentary opposition - 1 of its 3 members (each) by the recommendation of international organizations.

According to V. Dallakian, it should be stipulated in the decision that efficient work of the group shall be ensured by the ad hoc commission on March 1 events, while remuneration of the group members is done by order established by the speaker of the National Assembly.

5. AT THIS MOMENT UNITY IS NEEDED MORE THAN EVER, "RPA" FACTION'S DEPUTY SAYS [Aravot, 10/22/08]

"Internal political disagreement is sometimes inevitable, whereas in foreign policy one should be above petty speculation and ambitions," Eduard Sharmazanov, member of NA "Republican Party of Armenia" (RPA) faction, RPA's spokesman, stated during the October 21 sitting of the National Assembly. In his words, the all-nation unity around the national goal is the key touchstone of solving the Karabakh problem. Noting that at this moment unity is needed more than ever, he made an appeal to give up "the shameful and dangerous struggle of vanity and to unite in the name of Armenia's development and strengthening".

6. DMITRY MEDVEDEV: WE PAY FOR GROSS FINANCIAL MISTAKES MADE BY A NUMBER OF STATES, FIRST OF ALL, THE U.S. [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

The international financial crisis, which is currently at its active stage, gladdens no one as it results in a decline of economic growth rates and the loss of investments, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who was on an official visit to Armenia, said at the October 21 press conference. According to him, the goal of any government is to try to get out of this unpleasant situation with minimal losses. D. Medvedev noted that perhaps 15 years ago such a crisis would not affect Russia so much but today the reality is different. "We have an open economy and we have to respond to all the challenges facing us, just as other countries do. This is the advantage of an open economy and also its difficulty, it develops according to its laws, cyclic laws: in the long run, we must take it into account as well. It is clear that we pay for the gross financial mistakes made by a number of states, first of all, the U.S, taking into consideration the fact the share of the U.S. financial market and its impact on global economy are quite considerable," the Russian president said.

In his words, the solutions used to overcome the crisis are satisfactory but it does not mean that the list of solutions has been exhausted. "Life makes its corrections, often more complex corrections, and we will respond to them, if necessary, by new organizational, financial and structural solutions. Our purpose is to reduce the consequences of the global financial and economic crisis to a minimum," D. Medvedev stated.



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7. RA PRESIDENT RECEIVES PARTICIPANTS OF 25th SITTING OF COUNCIL OF HEADS OF CIS SECURITY AND SPECIAL SERVICES BODIES [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

RA President Serzh Sargsyan considering the sittings of Council of Heads of CIS Security and Special Services Bodies very useful, attached importance to them from point of view of information, exchange of experience, working out and implementation of joint actions against dangerous phenomena. He stated this at the October 22 meeting with the participants of the sitting of Council of Heads of CIS Security and Special Services Bodies held in Yerevan. According to S. Sargsyan, security bodies' regular contacts contribute to elaboration and implementation of events consonant with the current threats.

As Noyan Tapan was informed by the RA President's Press Office, General Alexander Bortnikov, the Chairman of the Council of Heads of CIS Security and Special Services Bodies, the head of the RF Security Federal Service, briefly presented the issues discussed during the Council's 25th jubilee sitting. It was mentioned that they are mainly of anti-terrorist nature and their aim is to provide a high level of coordinated actions and cooperation. Formation of proper normative-legal field was considered important for efficient work.

8. RA NA PROLONGS ACTIVITY PERIOD OF NA AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON EVENTS OCCURRED ON 1-2 MARCH BY 4 MONTHS [Azg, 10/22/08]

On October 22, the RA National Assembly with 84 votes "for," 5 "against" and 1 "abstained" adopted a draft decision On Making an Amendment to the decision On Creation of a NA Ad-hoc Committee on the Events Occurred on 1-2 March 2008 in Yerevan and Their Reasons. According to it, Committee's activity period was prolonged by 4 months, up to February 25, 2009.

The four members of the Committee authoring the draft turned down the proposal of independent deputy Viktor Dallakian on stipulating the order of creation of a fact-finding group by the decision.

V. Dallakian, three members of the Zharangutian (Heritage) faction present at the sitting and independent deputy Rustam Gasparian voted against the draft. Independent deputy Hakob Hakobian elected from the Tavush region was abstained.

9. OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS CONSIDER DELAYING RALLIES A WISE STEP, LEVON ZURABIAN SAYS [Haykakan Zhamanak, 10/22/08]

By stopping holding rallies for a month of two the Armenian National Congress (ANC) will use other methods of political struggle, as well as will solve organization issues. ANC Coordinator Levon Zurabian stated at the October 22 press conference. He reaffirmed first President Levon Ter-Petrosian's October 17 statement, according to which the main reason of temporarily giving up rallies is not to hinder President Serzh Sargsyan in the issue of Nagorno Karabakh settlement for the sake of Armenia's state interests. L. Zurabian emphasized that opposition supporters have understood that argumentation and consider delaying rallies for nearly two months a wise step. And the rally to be organized after the interval, as L. Zurabian foretold, will be stronger and more crowded.

Touching upon Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Armenia, the oppositionist said that it should be considered in the context of West-Russia struggle carried out for Armenia.

10. ACCORDING TO LEVON ZURABIAN, IF OPPOSITION TOOK PART IN WORK OF NA AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON EVENTS OCCURRED ON 1-2 MARCH, NO FACT-FINDING GROUP WOULD BE CREATED [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

"The NA Ad-hoc Committee on the Events Occurred on 1-2 March 2008 in Yerevan and Their Reasons is a failure: it has made no disclosure except the version about the piglet," Levon Zurabian, the Coordinator of the Armenian National Congress (ANC) stated at the October 22 press conference. He reminded the conviction voiced by People's Movement leaders when the Committee was just being created that the Committee's main "mission" will be to slur over the March 1 crime of the authorities. L. Zurabian said that not participating in Committee's work was a right decision, as otherwise creation of a fact-finding group could not be spoken about.

ANC will take part in the work of the fact-finding group without fail, as the number of power and opposition representatives in it will be equal. However oppositionists have another three conditions for working in the fact-finding group. According to L. Zurabian, the first condition is that the group should have the right to interrogate any person irrespective of the position he takes. According to the second condition, the group should be able to receive all necessary documents from state bodies. And the third



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condition is that all March 1 video materials and recordings made by the National Security Service and Police should be accessible for the fact-finding group.

11. ACCORDING TO ARMEN MARTIROSIAN, DECISION TO POSTPONE REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON INQUIRY INTO MARCH 1 EVENTS IS UNJUSTIFIED [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

The decision to postpone the report of the National Assembly AD Hoc Committee on Inquiry into the March 1 Events is not justified, the leader of "Heritage" parliamentary faction Armen Martirosian stated at the October 22 press conference.

According to him, during 7 months of its work, the committee did not present any interim report. Besides, all the questions that worry the society have remained unanswered. In his opinion, the only noteworthy statement of the parliamentary ad hoc committee is the statement that the operation in Liberty Square began before 7 am of March 1st.

A. Martirosian said that the decision on formation of the indicated committee envisages the possibility of inviting only state officials. However, within the framework of its inquiry, the committee has no powers to invite the first president of Armenia who witnessed the operation on the morning of March 1st, as well as the second Armenian president. Whereas, as A. Martirosian said, it is quite obvious that it was the second president - Robert Kocharian who could give an order to fire at the peaceful demonstration. Otherwise, in the words of A. Martirosian, one can assume that any Armenian policemen has the right to fire.

As regards the current stage of the Karabakh conflict settlement, the leader of "Heritage" noted that the Turkish president's statement, according to which he had discussed the issue of the territories around Nagorno Karabakh with Serzh Sargsian, causes distrust. The NA deputy underlined the necessity of holding open public discussions on this issue. In his words, the Armenian authorities must finally inform the society about the current state of this issue.

12. ARMENIAN PRESIDENT RECEIVE AIDE TO UN SECRETARY GENERAL [ARMENPRESS, 10/22/08]

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan received today aide to the UN Secretary General Sheik Sidi Diarra who has arrived in Yerevan to participate in education and development global innovation conference.

Presidential press service told Armenpress that the president highly underscored the support provided by UN establishments to Armenia.

Noting that starting from the membership to UN, Armenia is actively participating in the works of the Organization, Serzh Sargsyan said that without the direct support of relevant UN establishments it would have been difficult to develop effective programs in a number of spheres.

"Our goal is to form actively developing society," the leader of the country pointed out and noted that the government has declared information technology development as a priority. In is way of the creation of information society, the state encourages the activation and involvement of the youth in this sphere.

Greeting the determination of development of the information technology and telecommunication in Armenia, UN high ranked official said that it will help to apply the knowledge in development potential of the country which is particularly important for the countries which do not have entrance to sea like Armenia.

The sides agreed that economy based on knowledge gives an opportunity to be more competitive.

13. ARMENIAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE ASSISTANT OF UN SECRETARY GENERAL DISCUSS ISSUES OF ENSURING STABLE COMMUNICATION TO THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE NO EXIT TO SEA [ARMENPRESS, 10/22/08]

Armenian deputy foreign minister Gegham Gharibjanian received today the assistant of UN Secretary General, highest representative of issues of developing, having no exit to sea and small island states Shake Sidi Diarra.

Press service of Armenian Foreign Ministry told Armenpress that deputy minister Gegham Gharibjanian highly assessed the education and development global innovation conference which is being carried out with the support of "Information Technologies and Development" global alliance of UN department of economic and social issues and American "Athgo international" organization.



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G. Gharibjanian noted that this is an evidence of effective cooperation between Armenia and UN. He also pointed out that Armenian authorities are interested in the implementation of programs worked out in collaboration with UN and development of new ways of cooperation.

During the meeting the sides discussed the issues of ensuring stable communication with external world to the countries which have no exit to sea. The officials noted that such countries must have opportunity of free transition to sea and in this respect regional cooperation, ensuring the involvement of all countries and the participation of transiting countries in solution of problems of countries which have no exit to sea are highly underscored.

In this context Armenian deputy foreign minister pointed out that Armenia very often faces a situation when stemming from political motivations, economically vital and profitable and politically prospective programs are substituted with programs which promote separation lines in the region impeding the regional development programs worked out within the frameworks of UN as well.

Such behavior must not be supported by international organizations especially by UN. He expressed hope that the UN and particularly Mr. Diarra, who is the representative of issues of countries which have no exit to sea, will have their contribution to the development and verification of Armenian external communication lines.

14. RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR HANDS TO HOVIK ABRAHAMIAN INVITATION OF CHAIRMAN OF RUSSIAN STATE DUMA TO PAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO RUSSIA [ARMENPRESS, 10/22/08]

Armenian National Assembly Speaker Hovik Abrahamian received today Russian ambassador to Armenia Nikolay Pavlov.

NA public relations department told Armenpress that during the meeting the ambassador congratulated the NA speaker and wishing him success in his responsible office, handed the invitation of the chairman of the Russian State Duma Boris Grizlov to pay an official visit to Russian Federation.

According to the ambassador, the visit will promote the deepening of the Armenian-Russian friendly relations and deepening of inter-governmental cooperation.

During the meeting the sides also discussed other issues of mutual interest.

15. DMITRI MEDVEDEV DISCUSSES WITH ILHAM ALIYEV PREPARATION OF HIGH LEVEL MEETING FOR DISCUSSION OF KARABAKH CONFLICT [ARMENPRESS, 10/22/08]

President of Russia Dmitri Medvedev discussed with the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev the preparation of the high level meeting for the discussion of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict regulation, press service of Kremlin reported. The phone conversation between the two presidents took place today.

"The leaders of the countries discussed the practical issues on preparation of high level meeting for the discussion of Nagorno Karabakh conflict which is planned to be held in near future with the participation of Russian president," the press service said.

16. ARMENIAN-IRANIAN RELATIONS DISCUSSED [ARMENPRESS, 10/23/08]

Armenian National Assembly Speaker Hovik Abrahamian received today Iranian ambassador to Armenia Seyid Ali Saghayan.

Public relations department of the NA told Armenpress that during the meeting Hovik Abrahamian highly underscored the cooperation between the two friendly countries and the economic ties which are expanding from year to year.

The NA speaker asked to convey his greetings and good-wishes to the chairman of the Iranian Mili Mejlis (parliament) and the invited the group of members of Armenian friendship group of the Iranian parliament to visit Armenia, expressing assurance that mutual visits and warm relations between the parliamentarians will also promote the development of relations between the two countries.

The Iranian ambassador conveyed his and the greetings of the Iranian parliament speaker Ali Larijani and the invitation to pay official visit to Iran. According to him, the relations between the two parliaments greatly promote the consolidation of ties between the two countries.

Hovik Abrahamian highly underscored the neutral and balanced position of Iran over Nagorno Karabakh and underscoring the development of cooperation with Iran in all the economic spheres referred to the importance of bringing to life the programs in the energy system.

Expressing gratitude for the invitation, H. Abrahamian said that he will plan to pay a visit to Tehran in 2009.

During the meeting the sides also discussed other issues as well.



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17. ARMENIAN PRESIDENT SIGNS ORDER ON APPROVING CREATION OF FACT FINDING GROUP [Hayastani Hanrapetutian, 10/24/08]

President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan signed an order on October 23 on approving the creation of fact finding group and rule of organization of the latter's activity.

Presidential press service told Armenpress that the order enters into force from the next day of the official publication.

18. THOMAS HAMMARBERG GREETES THE DECISION OF CREATING FACT FINDING GROUP [ARMENPRESS, 10/23/08]

"An expert advisory opinion was produced outlining the methodology of a truly independent and impartial investigation and the Government accepted its key principles," Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights Thomas Hammarberg said at the 1039th meeting of the Committee of Ministers.

The Commissioner welcomed the pro-active approach taken by the Armenian Government on the question of the inquiry into March events. The office of the Commissioner and an international expert who participated in the July visit engaged in an outgoing dialogue with the Government concerning the Commissioner's proposal to establish a group of experts tasked with establishing the facts of the March events. The Commissioner expressed hope that the relevant actors will continue to respond constructively in order to achieve the goal of carrying out a comprehensive, independent, impartial and transparent inquiry which would be perceived as credible by the whole population.-0-/45/

19. ACCORDING TO A. AGHANBEKIAN WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE WORLD MAKES A CONTROVERSIAL IMPACT ON ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 10/23/08]

World financial crises influenced the development of Russian economy more than that of Armenian. During today's roundtable on the theme "Armenian and Russian Economy Today and Tomorrow", which was organized in Armenian National Academy of Science, well known economist, Member of Russian Academy of Science Abel Aghanbekian said that Russian economy has already suffered during crisis days – construction, car sale, production of technology have decreased and the number of unemployed and criminals increased, which surely has its negative impact on the development of Russian economy.

According to him, what is going on in the world has controversial impact on Armenia, particularly the reduction of prices of oil, which will bring to its double reduction in case of right policy: no such reduction of prices has ever been registered in Russian Federation.

Armenia will feel the results of world crisis – first of all investments of big international organizations will reduce as the world market bears great difficulties. Charity has notably reduced, which is mainly done within the frameworks of economical rise. In other countries including Russia the number of rented workers reduces. Financial crisis also affects the development of tourism.

According to A. Aghanbekian these financial conditions create new opportunities for powerful companies ensuring field of competition for them, and powerful countries cannot have financial stability as the financial crisis first of all reflects on them.

Representatives of Armenian Ministries of Economy, Finance, Central Bank and big enterprises took part in the discussion.

Today's roundtable was held within the frameworks of activity of higher school of corporative management after Abel Aghanbekian.

Within the frameworks of the same initiative A. Aghanbekian and the head of the school Radik Vanunc launch a range of roundtables dedicated to modern economic issues on the themes "How the culture of corporative management develops in Armenia", "The impact of international financial crisis on the Armenian economy", "Modern condition of applying financial instruments in Armenia".

20. AMENDMENTS TO NA REGULATIONS AIMED AT RAISING ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION ARE ONLY "SLIGHT RETOUCH," ZHARANGUTIUN IS CONVINCED [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

On October 23, the RA National Assembly in the second reading and completely adopted a bill authored by representatives of the coalition parties' parliamentary factions, according to which amendments and addenda were made to the NA Regulations.



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According to David Haroutiunian, bill's co-author, the Chairman of the NA Standing Committee on State and Legal Issues, the amendments and addenda are aimed at expanding the powers of the parliamentary opposition, raising its role. It was also mentioned that international experience on opposition's legal status and the approaches of principle of PACE Resolution N 1601 of 2008 were taken into account when working out the bill.

According to the amendments made, it is stipulated that, in particular, "a faction is considered opposition if the faction head or secretary makes a statement on being opposition at a NA sitting and none of its members or persons proposed by it make part of the government." Guarantees of opposition faction's activity are also fixed, in particular, on the day of convocation of the first NA session the right of nominating candidates for posts of chairmen and vice-chairmen of standing committees is distributed among the factions. It should be mentioned that provisions regarding election of chairmen and vice-chairmen of standing committees, as well as election to these posts will come in force from the day of opening of the first NA session of the next convocation.

An opposition faction by the order established by the law receives a possibility to submit for discussion draft laws or decisions it considers special, by the order of priority to address questions to the government and to make statements.

In the opinion of the only opposition Zharangutiun (Heritage) faction, the above mentioned amendments are not even "cosmetic," but only a "slight retouch," therefore the faction, according to its decision publicized in advance, voted "against."

21. MUSHEGH SAGHATELIAN SENTENCED TO 5 YEARS' IMPRISONMENT [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

Yerevan Criminal Court presided over by judge Mnatsakan Mnatsakanian by the October 23 judgement sentenced Mushegh Saghatelian, the former head of the Criminal Punishments Execution Department of the RA Ministry of Internal Affairs, to five years' imprisonment and fine of 900 thousand drams. As Noyan Tapan correspondent was informed by Alina Yengoyan, the Spokesperson of the RA Cassation Court, therefore the court considered proved the accusation brought to M. Saghatelian by part 1 and part 2, Article 316, RA Criminal Code, using violence to power representatives dangerous and not dangerous for life on March 1 morning in Yerevan and part 4, Article 235, RA Criminal Code, illegal bearing of gas, cold or throwing arms. It should be mentioned that prosecutor Hovsep Sargsian in his indictment had mediated to sentence him to seven years' imprisonment.

22. IN ARMENIAN OMBUDSMAN'S OPINION, REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA WILL LOSE MANY OF MARCH 1 CASES IN EUROPEAN COURT [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

We should think of making social relations sound to exclude cases like March 1 in the future, RA Ombudsman Armen Haroutiunian said in his interview to the Shant TV company. The Ombudsman with the consent of the RA President is to be involved in the fact-finding group to be created for the purpose of studying those events. According to the Ombudsman, rather a deep analysis should be made and it should be cleared up what deformations have been made in social relations and what need to be corrected. According to him, having a common goal to make Armenia a democratic and legal state, people can have divergences over some issues, but it does not mean that the divergences should lead to hostility and March 1. The Ombudsman considers that the culture of a civilized political struggle should be introduced in the country.

The Ombudsman welcomed "RA President's political will" to form a fact-finding group from equal number of opposition and power representatives and considers positive that experts and not political figures will be involved in the group. A. Haroutiunian refrained from giving estimations to the activity of the NA Ad-hoc Committee on Events Occurred on 1-2 March, however he said that in difference to the fact-finding group, the Committee has been formed by another principle, that of coalition majority. At the same time the Ombudsman said that it will not be right to oppose the activities of the two structures to each other, it is important that the two structures be able to present an all-embracing picture of the events thanks to complementing each other.

The Ombudsman is for changing arrest chosen as a restraint to NA deputies Myasnik Malkhasian, Hakob Hakobian, and Khachatur Sukiasian (the latter is being searched for), as he does not think that being in freedom they can hinder the preliminary investigation.

As regards the cases on the March 1-2 events, A. Haroutiunian said that as a lawyer his attitude is equivocal. "I have an apprehension that RA will lose many of these cases in the European Court of Human Rights." He rendered it more clear by saying that if PACE clearly mentioned in the well-known



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resolution adopted by it that "only testimony of the Police is not enough for an objective investigation of the case, it is not difficult to guess how these cases will be treated in the European Court."

23. ACCORDING TO RAFIK PETROSIAN, FACT-FINDING GROUP WILL BE ABLE TO GIVE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON MARCH 1-2 EVENTS [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

If the Special Investigation Service is not able to give answers to questions on the March 1 events, the NA Ad-hoc Committee on Events Occurred on 1-2 March all the more is not able to answer them as it does not have either intellectual ability or proper powers. Rafik Petrosian, a member of the NA RPA faction, stated at the October 23 press conference.

According to him, a fact-finding group need to be created as quickly as possible for that purpose, which will function by the principle of parity, equal presence of opposition and power representatives and one representative of the RA Ombudsman. According to R. Petrosian, only that parity principle will help the group to have an unbiased approach in the work. He expressed the hope that the fact-finding group can work more efficiently than the Committee.

At the same time R. Petrosian said that members representing coalition forces in the Ad-hoc Committee act by the dictate of their parties, and the right of decisive vote belongs just to them, as the opposition has refused to take part in Committee's work.

By the way, the journalists reminded R. Petrosian that it is the parliament that decided to give the right of decisive vote to the coalition, and the opposition refused to take part in Committee's work just due to being deprived of the vote.

24. RAFIK PETROSIAN WELCOMES OPPOSITION'S DECISION TO TEMPORARILY STOP RALLIES [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

As member of the RA NA RPA faction Rafik Petrosian classed it, today two super-mighty states, Russia and the United States try to protect their interests in the South Caucasus, in particular, in Armenia. However, as the deputy stated at the October 23 press conference, Armenia will not be able to carry on such policy so as it can "float between them" and its own interests not be violated in the country.

In that respect R. Petrosian welcomes the decision of the opposition, in particular, of first RA President Levon Ter-Petrosian to temporarily stop holding rallies. Nevertheless he does not think that the opposition has taken that "time-out" due to being concerned with Armenia's interests. According to him, the opposition has made such a decision seeing that struggle through rallies gives no result.

Touching upon the publications in press that allegedly RA President Serzh Sargsyan "sells Karabakh," R. Petrosian said: "Nothing of the kind goes on in my opinion. No one is going to cede Nagorno Karabakh. However I find it difficult to answer what solution will be found, as only a few persons are aware of the own business of the authorities."

Considering as a very strong chess move S. Sargsyan's policy in normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations, in particular, inviting Turkish President Abdullah Gul to Armenia, R. Petrosian meanwhile said that the Armenian authorities do not hope that Turkey can meet Armenia half-way, as it has always been Armenia's potential rival and will protect Azerbaijan's interests. "Nevertheless, if even the Armenian-Turkish border is not opened, the world will once more see that Turkey is not ready for normalizing its relations with Armenia," the RPA deputy emphasized.

25. KONSTANTIN ZATULIN: RUSSIA CANNOT RECOGNIZE NKR UNTIL ARMENIA DOES IT [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

"Quite lately the United States seeked to take the initiative of solving the Nagorno Karabakh conflict into its hand, while Russia is not different to that subject, either." Vladimir Zakharov, the Deputy Director of Moscow State Institute of International Relations, stated at the October 22 Yerevan-Moscow TV bridge organized at the Novosti-Armenia information center. According to his observation, the main goal of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Armenia was discussion of the Nagorno Karabakh settlement and preparation for tripartite meeting of Presidents of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia.

Konstantin Zatulin, the Director of the Institute of CIS Countries, said that Armenia holds the opinion that the Nagorno Karabakh conflict in its nature differs from other similar conflicts and the problem may be solved with the mediation of the West, with the influence of the Armenian diaspora. K. Zatulin also stressed that it will be a serious damage for Russia unless Armenia and Azerbaijan come to agreement in a peaceful way. In that case, according to K. Zatulin, the August events of Georgia will recur.



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Alexander Iskandarian, the Director of the Caucasian Media Institute, in his turn, reminded that 3/4 Armenia's commodity circulation is done through the territory of Georgia, and Yerevan has no other outlet to the outer world except Georgia and Iran. In response to it K. Zatulin said that everything should be done "to liquidate Armenia's dependence on Georgia." "Otherwise it comes that even in case when it is in Armenia's interests to recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia Armenia does not do it only due to Georgian dependence," K. Zatulin said. He also stated that Russia cannot recognize NKR until Armenia does it.

RA National Assembly deputy Armen Ashotian added that Armenia will recognize NKR in case a danger of military operations emerges.

26. ARMENIAN PRESIDENT RECEIVES LEBANESE DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC FIGURE LEYLA HAMADEY [ARMENPRESS, 10/24/08]

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan received today Lebanese distinguished public figure, deputy chairwoman of "Ualid Ben Talal" Foundation Leyla Sol Hamadey. Her charity and humanitarian activity is known in the whole world.

Presidential press service told Armenpress that the president of the country highly underscored the support of L. Hamadey to the Lebanese Armenian community.

Leyla Sol Hamadey, underscoring the contribution of the Lebanese Armenian community to the progress of the country, noted that they have become inseparable part of Lebanese public.

She said that she will actively continue her humanitarian activity without putting any ethnic and religious differences.

27. SAMVEL FARMANYAN SAYS NOTHING STRANGE IN DISCUSSIONS OF ANY ISSUE OF MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN TWO ALLY STATES [ARMENPRESS, 10/24/08]

"Discussion of any issue on cooperation in the military sphere between two ally states must not give place for doubts and discussions over the increase of efficiency of 102d military base and issues connected with it always take place. We do not understand what means "second Russian military base",” press secretary of the president of Armenia Samvel Farmanyan told RFE/RL, commenting on the publications as if Russia is going to locate new second military base in Armenia, near Ijevan, close to the border with Georgia and Azerbaijan.

"As you know, 102d military base is located in Armenia, the legal grounds of location of Russian military base in the territory of Republic of Armenia are registered in the agreement between Republic of Armenia and Russian Federation on "Russian Military Base in the Territory of Armenia" signed in 1995 March 16 and entered into force in 1997 August 29 as well as in the agreement between Government of Republic of Armenia and Government of the Russian Federation on "Location Points of Russian Military Base in the Territory of Armenia and Rules of Land Provisions for Location and their Usage". Everything is clear and regulated, S. Farmanyan said.

According to the president's press secretary, the legal-agreement supposes that the changes of points of the location occur by making relevant additions and forming declarations to the agreement.

"Such changes and additions have been made by the declarations signed in 2000, 2003, 2005 and 2007 and during these years changes of points of location of the military base always took place and there is nothing strange in it," press secretary of the president said.

28. CONSUELO VIDAL PRESENTS UN ARMENIAN OFFICE'S PROGRAM OF ACTIVITY FOR 2010-2014 TO NA SPEAKER [ARMENPRESS, 10/24/08]

Armenian National Assembly Speaker Hovik Abrahamian received today UN permanent representative in Armenia, coordinator of the UN Armenian office Consuelo Vidal Bruce.

Public relations department of the NA told Armenpress that greeting the guest, H. Abrahamian congratulated her on the International Day of UN and thanked for programs carried out in Armenia since 1993. Hovik Abrahamian underscored the support of the UN in reforms in local self-governmental bodies.

The sides also referred to the Education and Global Innovation Conference held in Yerevan under the sponsorship of UN and underscored the importance of involvement of youth and applying innovative technology in Armenia. The NA speaker expressed readiness to hence continue close cooperation with the UN Armenian office.



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Consuelo Vidal congratulated Hovik Abrahamian on being elected in the high and responsible post and presented to him the program of activity of UN Armenian office for 2010-2014 which is currently being discussed with the Armenian government and asked to present his remarks.

NA speaker Hovik Abrahamian suggested that within the frameworks of the program issue on getting expertise conclusion over important bills presented to the NA be included.

Consuelo Vidal expressed readiness to support in the issue from 2009 and include it in the 2010-2014 program of activity as well.

BUSINESS

29. OVER 100-KM ARMENIAN SECTION OF ARMENIA-IRAN FIBER-OPTIC COMMUNICATION LINE COMPLETED [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

The construction of over 100-km Armenian section of Armenia-Iran fiber-optic communication line has been completed by an international consortium. Victor Koresh, the vice president for regional development of Komstar Obyedinennye TeleSistemy OJSC (Russia), which launched WiMAX network in Armenia, announced this on October 21.

According to him, it is envisaged finishing the construction of 600-km fiber-optic line in 2009. Komstar has reached an agreement to use part of the communication line's carrying capacity.

To recap, Armenia is now connected to the outside world by fiber-optic communication lines (which pass through Georgia) of ArmenTel and Fibernet companies. Armenian-Norwegian company ADC also expressed an intention to build a communication line of this kind.

30. INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CRISIS WILL START AFFECTING ARMENIAN ECONOMY AFTER FIRST QUARTER OF 2009, ECONOMIST ANDRANIK TEVANIYAN FORECASTS [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

The international financial crisis has not yet affected the Armenian economy because the country's economy is not integrated into international market. The director of Politeconom research institute, economist Andranik Tevanian expressed this opinion at the October 22 press conference. By his forecast, the crisis will start affecting Armenian economy after the first quarter of 2009.

The impact of the crisis on Armenia's economy will be an indirect one. In particular, according to A. Tevanian, remittances from abroad will decrease as the Armenian emigrants working in other countries will feel the impact of the crisis. By estimates of A. Tevanian, remittances make a sum comparable to expenditures of the RA state budget: in 2007 the remittances amounted to nearly 2 billion dollars. The economist pointed out the inaccessibility of credit resources as the second problem. For example, it has already become difficult to conclude real estate deals by credits in the mortgage market of Armenia. "The banks do not provide loans. There is quite a serious problem of credit resources, there is no cash," he said.

According to A. Tevanian, economic problems will arise in Armenia not only due to external factors but also because of the Armenian government's activities. He considered the government tax policy as wrong. In his words, money is collected to fill the state budget, whereas the budget is the consequence of the overall economic situation, it is not a goal. Besides, in the economist's opinion, small and medium business will suffer as a result of the introduction of cash registers in trade facilities.

A. Tevanian said that with the aim of preventing the possible economic crisis in Armenia, it is necessary first of all to change the structure of the country's economy, then to ensure competitive economic relations. Besides, there is a necessity to separate the authorities from business and ease the tax burden of small and medium business.

31. SOCIAL MECHANISM OF STATE BUDGET'S CONTROL IS ABSENT IN ARMENIA, ECONOMIST ANDRANIK TEVANIYAN SAYS [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

There is no social mechanism for control of state budgetary expenditures in Armenia, the director of Politeconom research institute, economist Andranik Tevanian said at the October 22 press conference. In his words, "we do not know what expenditures the army makes and how much the police spend on uniforms." In his opinion, the greater the budget, the worse the situation is, because more money is collected from economic entities and then spent without any control - under the cover of increasing pensions by 5 thousand drams.



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The Central Bank of Armenia constantly raises the refinancing rate, which, according to A. Tevanyan, means a policy of expensive money. "On the one hand the state conducts a strict fiscal policy, on the other hand it tightens the monetary policy," he said.

32. DIRECTOR OF AMERIABANK'S DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT: INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CRISIS WILL ALSO HAVE CURATIVE EFFECT ON ARMENIAN ECONOMY [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

Armenia will not be free from the impact of the international financial crisis but the impact will be small as compared with that on developed countries, taking into account Armenia's insignificant integration into international financial markets. Expressing this opinion, the Director of Ameriabank's Development Department Tigran Jrbashian said that the effect of the crisis on Armenia's financial sector is already seen in the form of rising interest rates, a slowing process of crediting and deposit attraction, and a decline in the liquidity of financial assets. The impact of the crisis will be felt in the real sector of the economy as well - as a decline in exports and the inflow of remittances. Nevertheless, in his opinion, Armenia has suffered from the crisis to a much smaller extent than developed countries, for example, Russia.

He explained that while having quite serious consequences and causing complex problems in financial market, the financial crises also have a curative effect on the real and financial sectors of an economy. "During a crisis, strong economic entities become stronger, while weak ones weaken. Under conditions of falling prices, more efficient bodies start operating in markets, and markets undergo positive structural changes. It will happen in Armenia in the next six months," the expert forecast.

T. Jrbashian noted that the competition field will not form very quickly in the monopoly sectors of the economy, but these sectors will face serious challenges in connection with the fall of prices in international market. In addition, the price growth is also slowing down in the real estate market, in which investments and sales are related to the degree of activity of foreign participants in the market, and investments will flow from the construction sector to the sectors with a higher level of profitability, which will also have a healing effect on the economy.

T. Jrbashian expressed an opinion that the Armenian economy's real sector, which has problems related to the decline in the inflow of official transfers and the fall in prices of raw materials exported from our country to international markets, may benefit from the fall in prices of foodstuffs and power-bearing substances. He said that the competition between domestic and foreign producers will increase in the country's food market.

In the opinion of T. Jrbashian, no additional capital inflow to the Armenian banking system is expected in the next few months as there is a wait-and-see situation in the international financial market. This was explained by the difficulties related to identifying the real state of market participants. "However, by the first quarter of 2009 everybody will understand how each body endured the crisis and the situation will change. It is clear that money cannot wait, it has to bring incomes. So in 2009 redistribution processes will start in the international financial market where Armenia may also play its role because it will get out of the crisis situation with less losses and in a more stable state as compared with other countries," T. Jrbashian said. According to him, more importance will be attached to the availability of stable and reliable financial instruments, and all this will allow to be more attractive for investors.

The expert said that however, the Central Bank of Armenia (CBA) will fail to reach the programmed indices of inflation: by CBA's alternative (pessimistic) scenario of inflation forecast, in the 3rd quarter of 2009, 12-month inflation will make about 5% against the basic scenario of 3.5%, while in the 4th quarter of 2009 it will make 5.9% against the basic scenario of 5.8%. According to T. Jrbashian, in late 2009, the 12-month inflation will make 7-8% but the consequences of this inflation will not be disastrous.

As for fluctuations expected in Armenian currency market, the Director of Ameriabank's Commercial Operations Department Sergei Shevchenko expressed an opinion that these fluctuations will not exceed 10%. For example, the exchange rate of the Armenian dram against the dollar will make 300-320 drams within the next 12 months. S. Shevchenko substantiated his forecast by the fact that the CBA is actively regulating the foreign currency market where the fluctuations were insignificant and rare in the past year.



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33. "INGO ARMENIA" INSURANCE COMPANY GRANTED NONLIFE REINSURANCE LICENCE [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

At the October 21 sitting, the Board of the Central Bank of Armenia (CBA) approved the estimate of CBA's expenditures for 2009, as well as made a decision on granting a nonlife reinsurance licence to Ingo Armenia insurance company.

According to the CBA PR Service, the CBA Board granted permission to participate in Anelik foreign payment and account system to Depi Tun LLC, and permission to participate in Money Gram foreign payment and account system to Armbusinessbank CJSC.

34. ARMENIAN PRIME MINISTER DOES NOT SEE ANY DANGER OF FINANCIAL CRISIS [Azg, 10/23/08]

The main cause of the international financial crisis is the mutual distrust of financial market participants and the expectations of negative developments, Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian said when responding to a question of deputies at the RA National Assembly on October 22. Speaking about the possible impact of the crisis on Armenia, he said that there are no such signs in the country. T. Sargsian expressed his disagreement with the proposal to form gold reserves, saying that the Armenian economy has not yet grown to such an extent that the country could afford to accumulate wealth in the form of gold.

35. U.S. TO COMPENSATE FOR LOSSES INCURRED BY ARMENIA AS RESULT OF RUSSIAN-GEORGIAN WAR [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

The U.S. will provide financial and technical assistance to Armenia whose direct and indirect losses amounted to 670 million dollars as a result of the 5-day Russian-Georgian war, Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian announced at the RA National Assembly on October 22. According to him, during his recent visit to the U.S, this issue was discussed with the U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and heads of the World Bank and the IMF.

T. Sargsian said that the issues of protecting Armenian economy against such dangers in the future were also discussed with Russian leadership, in particular, during the recent visit of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev to Armenia. In the words of T. Sargsian, about 1,000 enterprises founded with Russian capital (fully or partially) operate in Armenia. Part of these enterprises are of vital importance to the Armenian economy and the matter concerned the necessity to ensure their uninterrupted operation.

36. INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CRISIS WILL NOT AFFECT ARMENIAN ECONOMY CONSIDERABLY, VARDAN BOSTANJIAN SAYS [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

The international financial crisis has not yet affected the Armenian economy but there will be some impact, member of the parliamentary "Prosperous Armenia Party" (PAP) faction Vardan Bostanjian said at the October 23 press conference. In his words, the impact of the crisis on the country's economy will not be considerable because insurance, capital and venture fund markets has not formed yet in Armenia.

In his opinion, there will be a decline in the amount of foreign remittances that amount to about 3 billion dollars a year, as a result of which less money will enter the consumer market which in its turn will affect the activity of Armenia's economy.

The deputy said that one of the ways of overcoming the financial crisis is that in conducting its economic policy, the state should become a partner of economic entities, whereas now the state policy impedes domestic producers.

37. REVENUES OF 2009 STATE BUDGET TO EXCEED 2008 INDEX BY SUM EQUIVALENT TO 500 MILLION DOLLARS [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

By the bill on the 2009 state budget, the budgetary revenues will make 905 billion drams (over 2 bln 938 mln dollars), which exceeds the 2008 index by a sum in Armenian drams equivalent to 500 million dollars. The budgetary expenditures are envisaged to make 946 billion drams, member of the parliamentary "Prosperous Armenia Party" (PAP) faction Vardan Bostanjian stated at the October 23 press conference.



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According to him, the budget's deficit is declining year by year. For example, in 2007 it amounted to 76 billion drams, in 2008 - 40 billion drams. V. Bostanjan said 30.5 bln drams of the 2009 deficit will be covered at the expense of domestic sources and only 9.5 bln drams - at the expense of foreign sources. The deficit will make up 1% of GDP.

V. Bostanjan expressed an opinion that the 2009 draft state budget reflects the program goals of the government activities. As regards the ambitions to become regional financial, business and other centers, it is envisaged implementing such programs by 2012 inclusive.

DIASPORA

38. TAVUSH REGION'S VILLAGE OF DITAVAN TO HAVE NATURAL GAS AND RECONSTRUCTED COMMUNAL ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING THANKS TO ARGENTINEAN ARMENIAN BENEFACTORS [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

The Hayastan All Armenian Fund continues its work in Armenia's border communities and villages that today face a whole host of infrastructure and economic challenges. Focusing on six border communities in Armenia's Tavush region, the Fund is working on effectively tackling these challenges and ensuring the people living in these villages a better life. As part of this on going initiative, the Fund signaled the launch of two projects in the community of Ditavan. Thanks to Argentinean Armenian benefactors Armen and Nadya Ekserciyan, the village will soon have access to natural gas and a reconstructed community administration building.

In his sense, the gasification was the first on the priority list for the community where people depended almost solely on the neighboring woods for a source of heat in the long winter months. This has brought to a serious damage to the environment of the region. The lack of access to natural gas has also become a catalyst of emigration from this tiny border village with people escaping the dread of yet another cold winter.

The community administration building restoration project is designed to incorporate the features of the village mayor's office, the community center as well as the health care point, becoming a social and administrative hub of the village. The renovated building will also be fully refurbished and reequipped.

39. NORA ARMANI WILL COME TO ARMENIA TO STAGE NOVEL BY SAROYAN IN ARMENIAN [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

New York-based actress of Armenian descent Nora Armani took her first theatrical steps at Egypt's Society of Art Lovers where recitation soirees, concerts and stage performances were given. She first performed in Gerald Papasian's 1974 play "The Princess of Window".

Having received a degree in sociology from the American University in Cairo, she went to study at the University of London. However, over those years she appeared in many films and theatrical productions and later also staged plays. In June of this year, she received the most long-awaited and much cherished invitation in her life: she was asked to participate in a theatrical festival dedicated to the centenary of William Saroyan's birth (the event was held within the framework of "Hayfes" international festival in Yerevan).

"That invitation was extremely important to me for two reasons: first, it was related to Saroyan and his works, secondly, the festival was held in Armenia. I set about my job with double responsibility. The result was stunning: the English performance received applause from the audience, while experts considered it to be as warm and dear as Saroyan's work and speech," this is how the actress and stage director Nora Armani commented on the Yerevan premiere of the play "Papa You're Crazy" during a talk with NT correspondent.

In the words of Nora Armani, her intention was to stage Saroyan's autobiographical novel "Papa You're Crazy" rather than any of his famous plays. She said that this work has a universal approach because it is a story of all fathers and children: "We constantly reject our parents but some time later we start resembling them - after spending most of our life on rejection. Whereas, it would be better if we accepted them from the very start," she remarked.

Nora Armani said that the same approach should be displayed regarding the issue of identity assertion: "Many renounce their Armenian nationality, culture and affiliation, but finally they accept all this." According to her, when writing the novel, Saroyan drew parallels between the 10-year-old periods of himself and his son, then compared with "his 45-year-old period because a man and his child are eventually the same person, but one is big and the other is small". She said it was quite difficult to put the 164-page novel in a one-hour play, retaining its integrity.



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"I am very glad to receive this opportunity as it is always pleasant to mix with people who fully perceive the depth of a word and gesture. It is wonderful that people go to the theatre," she noted. Nora Armani plans to stage the play in Armenian and present it in Yerevan. "Staging has been my main activity in recent period: previously I did this job because the result was good but now I love it," she underlined.

Nora Armani first came to Armenia as long ago as 1968. Then was the second visit in 1975, and then yet another in 1987. At that time she became acquainted with Gevorg Emin and other Armenian artists. In 1991 she played a part in Ara Yernjakian's film "Deadline in Seven Days". In 1991-1993, the Diasporan Armenian actress shared the bitterness of cold and dark with Yerevan residents. Then she did not visit Armenia for a long period. However, upon arriving in Armenia in 2007, she found it transformed and bright. "I saw shine and gleams of light in the eyes of people. I am extremely happy that the life has become prosperous here, people smile and ... go to the cinema and theatre," Nora Armani said.

40. TURKEY HIRES FORMER BUSH ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL TO SHORE UP RIFTS WITH JEWISH AMERICAN GROUPS; FIGHT ARMENIAN GENOCIDE RECOGNITION [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/23/08]

According to a report provided by the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), the Turkish Government has hired former Bush Administration official, Noam Neusner, to harness Jewish American support for a pro-Turkey agenda in Congress, with defeat of the Armenian Genocide Resolution as his top priority.

This revelation came as part of a September 30, 2008, mandatory U.S. Department of Justice (U.S. DOJ) Foreign Agent Registration Act filings by Neusner Communications, LLC. The initial registration document submitted by the firm cites "policy goals" including "U.S. Jewish efforts to promote a pro-Turkey agenda in the U.S. Congress." Neusner Communications LLC is tasked to ensure "regular emails and phone calls to Jewish leaders highlighting Turkey's relationship with Israel" and facilitating the "creation of working relationships between U.S.-based Jewish and Turkish community groups."

Neusner is well-known to Jewish American leaders, having served as President Bush's liaison to the U.S. Jewish community from 2002 through 2005. Neusner's DOJ filings indicate that he was hired by the "Embassy of the Republic of Turkey through DiNovo Strategies and Fleishman Hilliard." DiNovo Strategies partner Jay Footlik served as Clinton Administration liaison to Jewish Americans and to European and Mediterranean groups, including the Armenian American community.

ARTS

41. 4th INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CHILDREN'S FILMS BEING HELD IN ARTSAKH [NOYAN TAPAN, 10/22/08]

On October 22, NKR President Bako Sahakian received a group of theatrical figures led by Armen Medvedev, the Chairman of the Rolan Bykov Foundation, who had arrived in Artsakh from Russia, the Ukraine, and Armenia within the framework of the 4th International Festival of Children's Films.

As Noyan Tapan was informed by the General Information Department of NKR President's Administration, a wide range of issues regarding development of cinematography in Artsakh was discussed during the meeting. Both sides mentioned the necessity to expand mutual visits and cooperation, as well as to shoot films about Artsakh.

The guests welcomed NKR President's proposal to hold a film festival in Artsakh, which will greatly contribute to development of that sphere in the republic.

SOCIAL

42. YEREVAN LOVERS' PARK WILL BECOME PRECEDENT OF RESPECT FOR NATURE AND MOST LOVED PLACE OF YEREVAN RESIDENTS, BENEFACTOR IS SURE [Azg, 10/22/08]

Lovers' Park was opened in Baghramian Avenue in Yerevan on October 17: until 1995 the park was known as Pushkin Park among residents of Yerevan. Revitalization work of the 1,6 hectare park has been implemented according to Swiss Landscape Architect (DPLG) Pierre Rambach's design. The sponsor of the rehabilitation of the park done by the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund is the Boghossian Foundation, which within coming 21 years will also implement park's preservation and operation. RA President Serzh Sargsyan also took part in the ceremony of park's opening.



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As Ararat Khlghatian, the Deputy Director of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund, said in his interview to Noyan Tapan correspondent, the revitalization work lasted 14 months, in total 1m 300 thousand dollars was spent, nearly 700 thousand dollars (214m drams) out of which only on construction work. "No construction will be carried out in the park any longer, and young plants will be planted without fail in autumn and spring," Fund Deputy Director assured.

Architect Pierre Rambach's design made an attempt to show the beauty of natural movement of nature, to create the feeling of tenderness and sensuality through outlines of alleys, to express the feeling of freedom through hills getting rid of the former vertical structure of trees, there are ponds, small waterfalls, small bridges, a stage for children, a small cafe in the park. The park is provided with 24-hour artesian water.

According to member of Boghossian family Albert Boghossian, the park is for people who wish to relax from everyday problems and for lovers filled with feelings, the park can also become a source of inspiration for creators: "I hope this park will become more than merely a park, it will become a place full of life all year long where various artists, musicians, sculptors, painters will present their creations at the open-air amphitheater and will show their art through a natural scene," the benefactor said. He expressed the hope that the park will become a precedent of respect for nature and a precedent in the issue of formation of Yerevan green zones.

43. DELEGATION OF ARMENIAN COURT OF CASSATION VISITS GERMANY AND FRANCE [ARMENPRESS, 10/22/08]

Delegation of the Armenian Court of Cassation headed by the chairman of the court Arman Mkrtumian visited Germany and France October 13-19 within the frameworks of "Consultation for the Consolidation of Armenia's Legal System" program carried out with the support of the German Technical Support Company.

Press secretary of the Armenian Court of Cassation Alina Yengoyan said that within the frameworks of the program the delegation had a number of meetings with the deputy chairman of the German Federative Supreme Court, judges of the same court. During the meetings the chairman of the Armenian Court of Cassation presented the reforms carried out in the Armenian judicial system.

As part of the program the delegation conducted meetings in Strasbourg with the chairman of European Court of Human Rights Jan Paul Costa, chairman of the third chamber of this court Yozeph Kazadeval, secretary of the same chamber Santyago Kuseda.

During the meetings the chairman of the Armenian Court of Cassation presented Armenia's judicial system as well as reforms carried out in the sphere from 2005.

44. INTERNATIONAL SPECIALIZED "EDUCATION AND CAREER EXPO-2008" NINTH EXHIBITION OPENS IN YEREVAN [ARMENPRESS, 10/22/08]

"Education and Career EXPO- 2008" ninth international specialized exhibition opened today in "Moscow House" business-cultural center, where more than 40 organizations were represented from local and foreign companies.

During the opening ceremony of the exhibition executive director of "LOGOS Expo Center" company Ara Stepanian noted that the educational system is the basis for consolidation of each country and in order to have a stable country it is necessary to start with education in schools.

"From soviet years Armenian educational system has been considered to be the best and I hope this tradition will last long," he said.

Head of "LOGOS Expo Center" company expressed hope that within three days the potential applicants will be able to orientate which university to choose for specialization.

According to the head of the department of secondary specialized education of Armenian Education and Science Ministry Artak Aghbalian, the exhibition presents information to wide circle of population about latest improvements in the sphere of education. In this context the existence of pavilion which gives information about applying high school was singled out.

Main Armenian higher educational establishments including Yerevan State University, Yerevan State Polytechnic University, Armenian State Economic University, Yerevan State Linguistic University after V. Brusov, Armenian State Agrarian University are represented in separate pavilions.

From international institutions European Educational Regional Academy, French University in Armenia, Cavendish University and others take part.

The exhibition is divided thematically – higher education (academies, universities, institutes), secondary specialized education (colleges, technical schools, gymnasiums), training of staff, foreign



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languages, education abroad, exchange programs, job finding, international organizations, information technologies in educational system, literature, stationary, office and school furniture.

The "Education and Career EXPO-2008" exhibition has been organized by "LOGOS EXPO Center" company with the official support of Armenian Education and Science Ministry.

45. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN SYUNIK 12% [ARMENPRESS, 10/23/08]

During the third quarter of this year the unemployment rate in the Armenian province of Syunik reached 12 percent. About 9,262 people looking for job, including 5,746 women are registered in the four regional employment centers of the province, the 7,213 of which have status of unemployed (including 5,109 women).

Compared with the same span of 2007, the number of unemployed in the province reduced by 1,644. With the support of employment centers 409 people looking for a job found it.

Assistant of the head of Kapan provincial employment center Araik Hayrapetian told Armenpress that they are not aware of mass dismissals in "Dino Gold Mining" company during the last month, while according to the law the company must inform the employment center about it so that the center could support those who have been dismissed.

More than 100 people have been dismissed from "Dino Gold Mining" company during the last month and many have been informed that they will be dismissed from December 15.

46. "ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK" STARTS THE FIRST ROUND OF ROAD BUILDING PROGRAMS IN GEGHARKUNIK [Aravot, 10/23/08]

From the second half of October "Asian Development Bank" started its road building program in Gegharkunik.

Head of the transport and road building department of Gegharkunik Governor's office Gevorg Khachatryan told Armenpress that at present land works are being carried out on the roads, and particularly on state highway – Astghadzor 2,5 km, state highway – Vardadzor 2,1 km, state highway – Tsovasar 6 km and Tsovagyugh – Semyonovka 14,3 km.

158,3 million drams will be invested in the direction of Astghadzor, 206,7 million drams - in the direction of Vardadzor, 424,8 million drams – in Tsovasar and 581,4 million drams will be invested in the direction of Tsovagyugh – Semyonovka.

Second round of the program will kick off next year by which 54 km of road is planned to be renovated. Second round of the program will be finished in 2011.

47. AT 3:00 O'CLOCK OCTOBER 26 CLOCK ARROWS MUST BE MOVED BACK FOR AN HOUR IN THE ARMENIAN TERRITORY [ARMENPRESS, 10/23/08]

At 3:00 o'clock October 26 (the last Sunday of October) the clock arrows must be moved back for an hour in the whole territory of Armenia, according to Armenian law on "The Order of Time Calculation on the Territory of Republic of Armenia", the public relations department of Armenian Ministry of Economy told Armenpress.

48. 58 HEALTH INSTITUTIONS FORMED AS A RESULT OF OPTIMALIZATION IN ARMAVIR PROVINCE [ARMENPRESS, 10/23/08]

As a result of optimization works in the health sphere of the Armenian province of Armavir 58 health organizations have been formed of which 8 are functioning in affiliation with the governor's office and 50 are affiliated to communities.

Governor of Armavir Ashot Ghahramian told today at a press conference that with the means of the credit provided by the World Bank 21 village ambulatories have already been repaired, another 22 need to be reconstructed and re-equipped. After the reconstruction and re-equipment of Armavir town's hospital it will turn to provincial medical establishment.

A. Ghahramian said that a relevant program has been worked out, according to which by the provisions of the state budget, new Ambulance cars will be acquired in 2009 and provided to all the provinces of the country.

Last year 2,449 births have been registered in Armavir province and as of October 1, 2008 the number of births reached 2,273.



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The serious issue in the province continues to be school building. The governor of the province said that in 2007-2008 around 31 schools have been reconstructed in the province in 23 of them local heating system has been constructed. With the provision of the next year's budget school reconstruction works will be carried out within the framework of 1 billion 400 million drams. The governor promised that by 2012 all the schools of the province will be reconstructed.

49. "APARTMENT PURCHASING CERTIFICATE" PROGRAM TO CONTINUE IN 2009 IN SHIRAK PROVINCE [ARMENPRESS, 10/24/08]

The "Apartment Purchasing Certificate" program will continue in the Armenian province of Shirak in 2009. It will be carried out in Gyumri as well as in rural communities. State assistance for acquiring apartments will be provided to those communities which have ten homeless families. By the way the choice of place of the apartment belongs to the homeless family which may choose in what community to buy it.

An official from the town building department of Shirak's governor office told Armenpress that currently there are 206 homeless families in the rural communities.

50. RE-QUALIFICATION CLASSES FOR JOB SEEKERS OF KAPAN [ARMENPRESS, 10/24/08]

Around forty job seekers in Kapan will finish the re-qualification classes by the end of the year financed by the Armenian government.

An official from the regional center of Kapan employment agency told Armenpress that classes for waiters, cooks, shop assistants which included 23 people have already been conducted. Fifteen of them have already found jobs. The job issue of the rest will possibly be solved in near future.

Classes for nail polishers, with participation of eight women, are in process. In near future computer, account and table design classes will be held for 9 job seekers registered in the center.

The classes, conducted with the support of the government, help citizens to find jobs and during studying they receive scholarship.

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