



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Monday, February 16, 2009

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

POLITICS

1. GAGIK TSARUKIAN: BARGAVACH HAYASTAN IS LOYAL TO POLITICAL COALITION PRINCIPLES [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

The Bargavach Hayastan (Prosperous Armenia) party is loyal to the principles declared by the political coalition, party Chairman Gagik Tsarukian stated at the party's fourth congress held on February 12. He reaffirmed party's assistance to the profound reforms (as he classed them) being implemented in the country, to President Serzh Sargsyan's resolution and the policy carried on by him. "We are sure that the reforms carried on in the country with our assistance will win, and we realizing our share of responsibility, henceforth also continue making a contribution to RA's development and prosperity," G. Tsarukian said.

According to the party leader, there are also omissions and shortcomings hindering country's economic progress. In spite of the economic growth, he mentioned, population's certain part does not feel that growth, we should realize that the situation becomes more serious in consequence of the economic crisis. G. Tsarukian considered inadmissible the attempt to increase the tax burden for economic entities, while just the opposite should have been done.

The BH Chairman also considers that in order to mitigate the crisis negative consequences an all-round state assistance should be also in time provided to economic entities, on the activity of which the crisis can have a destructive impact. G. Tsarukian also considered important protection of small and medium-sized business in the country. The business crediting conditions should be also reconsidered in Armenian banking system, the interest rates should be decreased, state assistance programs aimed at assistance to native manufacturers should be implemented, he said.

Representatives of the governmental coalition member parties, ARFD and Orinats Yerkir (Country of Law), as well as a representative of the parliamentary opposition, Zharangutiun party greeted the conference participants. Armen Martirosian, the head of the Zharangutiun parliamentary faction, in particular, said: "We had March 1, the stigma that is faced by our country up to the present, we all have our share of responsibility," he said. A. Martirosian also emphasized that everybody in Armenia has the responsibility of building peace and stability together, as well as coming out of the world financial-economic crisis with honor. "We can come out of the crisis with honor if our political system is really based on justice, free political competition, which will also bring free competition in the economic sphere. Free competition is the key that will give us a possibility to solve the tasks set before us in this situation. It is the government system accepted by society that will make it possible to be together and to solve the foreign challenges we face," Armen Martirosian said.

The delegation heads of the RF Yedinaya Rossiya, Ukrainian Regions party, Chinese Communist Party, as well as of Croatia made greeting speeches.

2. ARMAN MUSINIAN CONSIDERS NOT SERIOUS AND POLITICALLY IMMATURE PRIME MINISTER'S PROPOSAL TO COOPERATE WITH AUTHORITIES [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

"RA Prime Minister's appeal to the opposition to take part in the anti-corruption complex events program monitoring is not serious and is evidence of political immaturity," Arman Musinian, the Spokesperson of first RA President Levon Ter-Petrosian, stated in his interview to the Kentron TV company. According to him, making such a proposal under existence of 60 political prisoners, the March 1 slaughter, political terror, everyday mass persecutions is evidence of political immaturity. Mentioning that the opposition has never refused to conduct a dialogue with the authorities, A. Musinian reminded opposition's precondition, "our political hostage friends should be immediately released, there will be no dialogue with the authorities without it."

Arman Musinian also stated that the March 1 rally will be a rally of a new, concluding stage. "The authorities are terrified, and today they already visit Movement activists' places everywhere, try to intimidate, even to bribe them," he said adding that in the Ararat region the activists were even brought to the police department, were shown March 1 video recordings, which L. Ter-Petrosian's Spokesperson estimated as a psychological pressure.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Monday, February 16, 2009

3. RA PRESIDENT RECEIVES RF PROSECUTOR GENERAL [Hayastani Hanrapetutiun, 02/14/09]

On February 13, RA President Serzh Sargsyan received RF Prosecutor General Yuri Chayka. According to the report of the RA President's Press Office, during the meeting S. Sargsyan and Y. Chayka highly assessed the current cooperation level between the two countries' law enforcement bodies and emphasized the necessity of the memorandum signed by the RA and RF Prosecutor Generals the same day. They agreed that memorandum's fulfillment will contribute to improvement of Prosecutor system structures' activity.

4. STABLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED ON FEBRUARY 14 [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

Stable Development Program Social Partnership Agreement is planned to be signed at a conference to be held on February 14 in Yerevan with the participation of the public government bodies and civil society. As Noyan Tapan was informed by the RA Ministry of Economy Information and Public Relations Department, Minister of Economy Nerses Yeritsian will sign the agreement on behalf of Armenia's government.

5. THIS TIME TRIAL ON "CASE OF SEVEN" POSTPONED BECAUSE OF DEFENDANTS' NOT SITTING DOWN [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

The trial on the "case of the seven" was again postponed on February 12, but this time not because of the defendants' not standing up, but not sitting down before the court: they refused to sit down after the judge entered the court hall. Judge Mnatsakan Martirosian presiding over at the sitting sent away all defendants from the hall for two weeks, until February 26, with the motivation of treating the court with disregard, not including the trial prolongation term in their punishment term. It should be mentioned that the sitting on the case is postponed for the 8th time.

A. Martirosian explained to all defendants by turns that they are obliged to fulfill the orders of the judge presiding over at the sitting, in this case, to sit down. He said that not fulfilling judge's orders, as well as making statements without getting a permission is also a manifestation of treating the court with disregard.

According to lawyer Melania Arustamian, the court just does not know its task, as in case of the expected amendment to Articles 225 and 300, RA Criminal Code, the trial can proceed in absolutely another course. The lawyer said that he could use other measures instead of sending away the defendants, but he preferred postponing the sitting again. According to M. Arustamian, this time all seven defendants were disposed to contribute to sitting's taking place by all means, but the judge would postpone it in any case until he receives proper order "from above."

Nor Zhamanakner party Chairman Aram Karapetian was also present at the court sitting. In his opinion, the judge just was not ready for the change of defendants' conduct. Touching upon the issue of amending the articles, by which the defendants are accused, he mentioned that the necessity of such amendments is evident, but they should not be imitation, as it is done at present.

6. ACCORDING TO GEGHAM BAGHDASARIAN, FORMER KARABAKH AUTHORITIES WANTED TO GET FREE OF RESPONSIBILITY OF PARTICIPATING IN NEGOTIATIONS PROCESS [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

The Nagorno Karabakh Republic lacks home political activity and pluralism since the 1994 truce up to the present. Gegham Baghdasarian, NKR National Assembly independent deputy, stated at the February 13 press conference. According to him, under the conditions of universal calmness and Artsakh media imperfection the Demo independent newspaper, the editor of which was he, was perceived as opposition. "We closed Demo so that the semi-stagnation condition could be seen, and society could draw conclusions from that," G. Baghdasarian said. He mentioned that henceforth he is going to edit a new magazine, Analitikon, each issue of which will be dedicated to an individual subject.

Touching upon the subject of NKR home political sphere, the deputy said that it stagnated for even more in the last presidential elections, when all political forces, including Dashnaksutiun considered opposition, supported Bako Sahakian. As G. Baghdasarian clarified it, the above mentioned forces explained their decision by the necessity to be united, while, in deputy's affirmation, it was an absolutely wrong decision. "Dashnaksutiun, for instance, thought that it had no chance to win the presidential



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Monday, February 16, 2009

elections and supported B. Sahakian. That psychology is not understandable for me," G. Baghdasarian said adding that thus the sound political fight and competition was lost.

The only intrigue in Karabakh's home political sphere, as the speaker mentioned, was the talks that allegedly former President Arkady Ghukasian will become Prime Minister soon in NKR and former President Robert Kocharian in Armenia. G. Baghdasarian found it difficult to say whether the talks correspond to reality.

Touching upon the reasons of Karabakh's being left out of the negotiations process ten years ago, G. Baghdasarian said that he does not share the opinion that it took place because of R. Kocharian. According to the deputy, the Artsakh authorities themselves wanted to get free of the responsibility of taking part in the negotiations.

7. ARMENIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS TO RESUME ACTIVE FIGHT FROM MARCH [Aravot, 02/14/09]

Yerevan Mayor's Office has not properly notified the Armenian National Congress (ANC) on not endorsing the holding of the March 1 rally in the territory near Matenadaran or in Northern Avenue, therefore ANC is not going to make any change connected with the holding of the event. Arman Musinian, the Spokesperson of ANC leader Levon Ter-Petrosian, stated at the February 13 press conference.

A. Musinian stated that the three-month interval announced in the rally fight gave its results in the respect of both not hindering the Nagorno Karabakh settlement and doing organization work in ANC. The radical opposition is going to resume the fight from March 1, but by what scenario it will proceed - time will show. According to A. Musinian, several variants were discussed, including holding of rallies.

Touching upon RA President Serzh Sargsyan's speech at the 45 Munich Security Conference, A. Musinian said that his speeches cannot be a guarantee that tomorrow the country head will not sign a document on Nagorno Karabakh settlement not favorable for Armenia.

According to A. Musinian, the Armenian authorities do not undertake adequate measures to resist the economic crisis, and revolts of social nature are not excluded in Armenia. In his words, this factor to some extent will assist Congress activity, which is ready to assist in any way citizens fighting for their social rights.

In A. Musinian's affirmation, R. Kocharian has always had rather a great influence in the political sphere. After the presidential elections and March 1 events the contradictions within the power become deeper and deeper. As its proof A. Musinian pointed to the murder of the Deputy Head of Police considered to be President's intimate.

8. ARMENIAN PRESIDENT STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF FURTHER ENHANCEMENT OF ARMENIAN-ISRAELI COOPERATION IN DIFFERENT SPHERES [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

Newly appointed Israeli ambassador to Armenia Shemi Tsur handed today his credentials to the Armenian President Serzh Sargsian.

Presidential press service told Armenpress that the President of the republic expressed gratification on the present level of the political dialogue between the two countries and congratulated the ambassador on the parliamentary elections which took place lately in Israel expressing confidence that the Armenian-Israeli friendly relations which have a rich tradition will continue to develop in the same way.

Serzh Sargsian stressed the importance of further enhancement of relations in different levels and spheres, including the in different international organizations, and stressed the existence of all the prerequisites important for that.

The official ceremony of handing credentials was followed by the face to face talk during which the diplomat noted that it is a great honor for him to be the ambassador of Israel to Armenia and that he will exert all possible efforts to enhance the further cooperation between the two states and develop the further relations with the two peoples.

During the meeting the Armenian president and Israeli ambassador exchanged thoughts on the regulation of Middle East situation, the negotiation process over Karabakh conflict and the Armenian-Turkish dialogue.

Ambassador Shemi Tsur greeted the current Armenian-Turkish dialogue and expressed hope on the regulation of relations.

Considering the military regulation of the conflicts inadmissible the interlocutors emphasized that the regulation of the existing issues through peaceful negotiations has no alternative and that the peace and stability are the values that can present many advantages to all the nations.



9. A MEMORANDUM ON 2009-2011 COOPERATION SIGNED BETWEEN ARMENIAN AND RUSSIAN CHIEF PROSECUTOR'S OFFICES [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

Today a memorandum has been signed between Armenian and Russian Chief Prosecutor's offices on the main directions of 2009-2011 cooperation. The document was signed by the Armenian and Russian chief prosecutors Aghvan Hovsepian and Yuri Chayka who is in Armenia on an official visit.

According to the memorandum during 2009-2011 the protection of rights and freedoms of human and the citizen, prevention of corruption, fight against terrorism, trans-national organized crimes, trafficking, illegal circulation of weapon, drugs, psychotropic agents, etc will be the primary cooperation spheres for the two offices.

This is the third document signed between the sides. A. Hovsepian said that everything must be done to make the cooperation more efficient and reduce the number of crimes.

"We have reached that assistants of the chief prosecutors, heads of departments and separate prosecutors already work with each other. It can be imagined in such a circumstance how urgently all those issues are solved which rise between the law enforcement bodies.

We think to reach that prosecutors of provinces of the two countries also be able to establish a direct relations with each other. I think only in this way we will be able to fight against criminal which increases from day to day as the criminal world also "does not stop", - Armenian chief prosecutor noted.

Y. Chayka stressed that life dictates the directions of cooperation between the two offices. Compared to previous programs of cooperation today a number of other issues are put in front of the prosecutor's offices.

"For the first time we will cooperate in the sphere of protection of rights and freedoms of human and the citizen, which is very important. Today the events develop in such a way that the Chief Prosecutor's Offices must also deal with the issues of protection of rights. Fight against corruption is the second direction of our cooperation. The issue is urgent not only in Russia but also in Armenia, this is the reason why we will conduct an exchange of experience", - he said. Y. Chayka also stressed the importance of the fight against terrorism. Russian Chief Prosecutor's Office trusts and respects the Armenian partners. "We signify the cooperation as we have much to teach each other", - said Y. Chayka.

10. GEORGIAN FM TO PAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze will pay a two-day official visit to Armenia, consultant from the Georgian embassy in Armenia Nino Aptsiauri told Armenpress.

This is the first visit of G. Vashadze to Armenia in the office of the Georgian foreign minister. During the visit he is expected to meet with the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, NA Speaker Hovik Abrahamyan, Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan, Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandyan.

During the meetings a number of issues on mutual interest will be discussed.

BUSINESS

11. ARMENIAN GOVERNMENT PROPOSES RAISING CUSTOMS DUTIES OF IMPORTED CONSUMER GOODS [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

By the amendments proposed to the RA Customs Code, it is envisaged raising the customs duties of imported goods not considered as raw material, as well as imported goods for final consumption up to 15%. The RA minister of economy Nerses Yeritsian said at the February 12 sitting of the government that this is allowed by an agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

According to the minister, until now the customs duties of goods imported into Armenia made either 0% or 10%. "By this proposal, we will be able to make the import of final consumption goods more expensive in order to protect domestic producers," N. Yeritsian said. He announced that this rise will be temporary, while the list of respective goods will be ready in a few days.

The prime minister Tigran Sargsyan said that customs duties will be raised for those imported goods, with respect to which "there is a competitive field" in Armenia. In his words, the aim of the government is to protect domestic producers. He noted that this draft should be sent to the National Assembly as soon as possible in order to pass the amendments to the Customs Code by an accelerated procedure this month.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Monday, February 16, 2009

12. SOME COMPANIES NOT TO PAY VAT FOR IMPORTED TECHNOLOGIES AND EQUIPMENT AT BORDER IN 2009-2010 [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

All the companies to make investments of over 300 million drams (about 1 mln USD) in Armenia will not pay value added tax (VAT) on imported technologies and equipment necessary for their production at the border in 2009-2010. This decision was approved at the February 12 sitting of the Armenian government. In the words of the RA minister of economy Nerses Yeritsian, "this change will solve a number of urgent problems in Armenia: social, economic problems, job creation, entrance into international markets, etc".

The decision will first of all apply to Armenian-German VKS-Armenia LLC. This company was founded in 2007. It is the representation of famous Textile Solutions company (Germany) and produces expensive textile clothes. The minister announced that the company's investment program was approved by the operative staff set up at the government with the aim of discussing programs on assistance to the private sector.

The company currently has 700 employees in Yerevan and Vanadzor, and the investment program envisages increasing their number to 10 thousand by opening branches in various marzes of Armenia. It was mentioned that in 2008 the company exported 324 thousand ready-made garments to Germany.

In the opinion of the prime minister Tigran Sargsyan, it is a radical change and the price of this decision makes nearly 5 billion drams. "We take this step consciously because we give priority to new investment programs that will create jobs in Armenia," he underlined. According to him, meetings with representatives of the private sector show that this decision may become a serious stimulus for establishment of new enterprises in Armenia.

T. Sargsyan said that if the program submitted by VKS Armenia is successful, the number of employees of the light industry will double as compared with the number of those in the mining industry.

13. FIRST REPORT OF ARMENIA'S FINANCIAL OMBUDSMAN PUBLISHED [Azg, 02/14/09]

The Office of the Financial Ombudsman of the RA has published its first report, according to which the Office received 7 complaints, including one written complaint, in January 2009. Under the law, three of these complaints were not subject to examination by the financial ombudsman, while the four other complaints were within the scope of the ombudsman's authority, but the complainants had not presented beforehand their complaints to the financial body in envisaged order.

Out of 4 complaints, 2 were related to incorrect calculation of monthly repayment sums/interest of a credit by the bank and the credit organization. One complaint was about a levy exceeding the customer's credit line, and the last complaint was made against an insurance company declining to pay compensation for repairs of the car damaged in an accident.

The staff of the Office gave explanations to the persons who had filed complaints subject to examination by the financial ombudsman, advising them to apply first to the financial organization, against which the complaint is made. The further process of complaints filed by these customers is being controlled by the Office of the Financial Ombudsman.

It is noteworthy that under Article 31 Point 2 of the RA Law on Ombudsman of the Financial System, the ombudsman shall summarize the precedent of his (her) examination and publish it each month - until the 15th day of next month. The financial ombudsman started operating on January 24, 2009. You can contact the ombudsman at 58-23-22 or visit her at 26/1 Vazgen Sargsyan Street in Yerevan, the Erebuni Plaza business center, 4th floor, room 411.

14. ARMENIAN PRIME MINISTER RECEIVES HEAD OF WORLD BANK OFFICE IN ARMENIA [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

The Armenian prime minister Tigran Sargsyan on February 13 received the head of the World Bank Office in Armenia Aristomene Varudakis and the World Bank economic team's mission led by Samya Mitra.

According to the press service of the Armenian government, the sides discussed issues related to cooperation with Armenia in the next 4 years within the framework of the WB Country Partnership Strategy, the Armenian government's anti-crisis measures under conditions of the global financial and economic crisis, as well as further cooperation with the World Bank with the aim of overcoming the consequences of the crisis.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Monday, February 16, 2009

DIASPORA

15. AMERICAN ARMENIAN STUDENTS TO TAKE PART IN ESSAY CONTEST "WHY I LIKE TO VISIT ARMENIA" [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

"Visit Armenia, It Is Beautiful" program has organized an essay contest "Why I like to visit Armenia," which is open to high school level students (9th to 12th grades). The participants should write an essay in Armenian or English. The deadline to register is February 15, 2009. The deadline to submit the essays is March 31, 2009. Winners will be announced on April 30, 2009.

16. CONFERENCE ON ARMENIAN SUBJECT HELD IN UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

A conference under the title "Armenian Constantinople/Istanbul: Church, Society, and Culture" took place on February 11 in University of Minnesota Business Center. The conference was conducted by Dr. Ronald Marchese, University of Minnesota lecturer. The conference was initiated by the Armenian Studies Program, California State University, Fresno.

17. ANTONINA MAHARI'S BOOK'S ENGLISH TRANSLATION TO BE PRESENTED IN HOLLYWOOD [NOYAN TAPAN, 02/13/09]

"My Odyssey" book's English translation's presentation will take place at Hollywood St. Mary Armenian Church. Antonina Mahari's memoirs are presented in the book. Translation from Russian original was done by Jaklin Ekmekjian and Gohar Arsenian. The English editing was done by Ruth Bedevian.

ARTS

18. ARMENIA PARTICIPATES IN "BERLIN GREEN WEEK" ANNUAL EXHIBITION [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

Armenian delegation participated recently in the "Berlin Green Week" annual international exhibition together with 80 states of the world.

Head of the foreign ties and marketing department of the Armenian Agriculture Ministry, member of the delegation Seyran Iritsyan told Armenpress that Armenia presented alcoholic drinks, natural juices, honey, dried chocolate covered fruits which attracted the attention of the visitors. During the event in the Armenian pavilion Armenian lavash (flat bread) was baked and distributed to the visitors.

Armenian pavilion aroused great interest among the German Minister of Protection of Agricultural Consumers Ilge Aygner, Minister of Agriculture, Nature Protection and Food Quality of Netherlands Gerda Ferburg, and others.

During the days of exhibition European coordinator of UN Food and Agriculture Organization M. Kadlechikova and representatives of "GTZ" program visited the Armenian pavilion. The latter expressed readiness to support Armenia's agro-processing companies to participate in the same exhibition in 2010.

According to S. Iritsyan, in the exhibition industrial, tourism and achievements of other spheres are presented.

19. INGA AND ANUSH ARSHAKIANS TO REPRESENT ARMENIA IN "EUROVISION 2009" INTERNATIONAL SONG CONTEST [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

Inga and Anush Arshakians will with "New dance" song represent Armenia in the "Eurovision 2009" international song contest. Their participation has been decided during the February 14 concert through the SMS voting of the audiences and the jury.

21 singers presented their songs during the concert from which Mher took the second place and "Dorians" and "Bambir" rock groups – correspondingly the third and fourth places, then come Shprot, Tigran Petrosian and Hripsime Hakobian.

Iren, Hasmik Margarian, "The Beautified Project" group, Martha Bulbulian, the Oxigen, Artem Avunts, Hayk Kasparov, Arman Harutyunian, Guzh, Lilu, Davit Minasian, Davo and Sergey Grigorian also took part.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Monday, February 16, 2009

“Eurovision 2009” will take place in Moscow. The semi finals will take place on May 12, in which the representative of Armenia will sing and the final round will take place May 16.

SOCIAL

20. OPENING CEREMONY OF ARMENIAN-GERMAN UNIVERSITY TO TAKE PLACE FEBRUARY 17 [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

The opening ceremony of the Armenian-German University will take place February 17, in the Aygedzor 47 in Yerevan after which the first lectures of this educational establishment will be held.

Head of the Germany’s “Union of Armenian Academics 1860” scientific cultural organization, a post graduate of the Chair of history of East European countries of Ruhr University in Bochum town, historian Azat Ordukhanian told Armenpress that the first lecture will be on “Armenians in Germany. History and the Present”. The lecture of Armenian ambassador to Germany is planned for February 18 and the lectures of rector of the University, Doctor Professor Paul Imhof – for February 19. He is a theology by profession and will deliver speech on the corresponding theme.

A. Ordukhanian informed that a foreign language extended library is also intended to be established affiliated to the University which besides the scientific literature will also have departments of fiction, music literature, text books, methodology as well as press. First samples of the library will be the publications of the Germany’s “Union of Armenian Academics” and its members.

“This very modest but symbolic donation of books must be registered as a first step of establishment of the foreign language library of the university. Its establishment will be conducted in parallel to the development of the university”, - A. Ordukhanian said.

He informed that the series of books of the university is already being prepared to publication which will be published in March. Works of a number of German Armenians who have played a role in the establishment of the university have also found place in it.

21. “WITHOUT TIES” MEETING OF HEADS OF IT ORGANIZATIONS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS TO BE HELD IN DILIJAN [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

“Without ties” meeting of heads of IT organizations and representatives of state institutions will be held February 20-22 in Dilijan.

Executive director of “The Union of IT Enterprises” Karen Vardanian told Armenpress that during the meeting the participants will discuss works carried out in the IT sphere and the existing problems.

The issue of competitiveness of Armenian informational technologies in the conditions of world financial crisis will also be discussed.

“We must understand what will happen to the sphere of Armenian informational technologies. In case of any problems forces of state and non state institutions must be combined”, - K. Vardanian said. The latest researches of the sphere will also be presented during the meeting.

According to K. Vardanian today there are issues in having statistic information in the IT sphere and the problems connected with these issues will be presented to the participants. He said in the conditions of world financial crisis it is necessary to spur the sale and find new markets for the Armenian product. A plan of actions on promoting the sale of IT products and services and exporting them to new markets will be presented.

K. Vardanian said that in case of choice of the markets it must be clarified in what way the product must be exported, what kind of infrastructures must be created and how the actions of the state and the company exporting its product must be coordinated.

40-50 companies, representatives of Armenian Economy Ministry and other departments will take part in the meeting.

22. “MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES IN AGRO ECO SYSTEMS” REGIONAL PROGRAM TO BE HELD IN ARMENIA [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

Armenian State Agrarian University in joint collaboration with Georgian and Azerbaijani agricultural academies funded by NATO will implement “Management of Water Resources in Agro Eco Systems” program. The goal of the program is to solve the issues existing in the sphere of stable management of water resources in the region.

The Armenian, Georgian and Azerbaijani scientists and relevant specialists included in the program will study the irrigation and drainage technology, agricultural, geographical, and information



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Monday, February 16, 2009

systems, physiological and hydrological features of land. The studies will also include the issue of Sevan Lake.

The co-chairman of the Armenian side, head of the Armenian State Agrarian University's "Agrogitaspyur" department Gurgen Yeghiazarian told Armenpress that within the frameworks of the program in Artsvaberd village drop irrigation network system has been applied with which this year 1,000 sq. m. of vegetable fields will be irrigated. In the same community weather forecasting electronic station has been placed. Thanks to the applied new devices the specialists will learn methods of effective management of water resources and will also have an opportunity to acquire practical skills in applying and using new hydro-technology.

G. Yeghiazarian said the program will end in 2010.

23. AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE DEDICATED TO THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN TO BE HELD IN YEREVAN [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

The center of adoption and orientation of children of Fund for Armenian Relief intends to organize an international conference in April dedicated to the protection of children.

Head of the programs of the center Ramona Ktakian told Armenpress that during the conference the participants will discuss the situation existing in the country in the sphere of protection of children and changes in it.

Representatives of Armenian state institutions as well as NGOs and international organizations will take part in it. The program is now being clarified. During the year the center also intends to organize events in Yerevan dedicated to the day of protection of children and a charity banquet at the end of the year.

During 2008 "The center of adoption and orientation of children" provided shelter to 170 children who have been left into oblivion, abandoned by the parents as well as subjected to violence in the families.

According to the charter of the center 3-18 year old children must be received for 30-day period, but there are exclusions as well. Through the functioning "hot line" neighbors, relatives, policemen and simply people who are concerned with the fate of homeless children make urgent calls.

During 2008 the center provided shelter to more children than in 2007. According to R. Ktakian it is not connected with the increase of the number of children who appeared in difficult situation.

"Formerly there were also many cases when children were not paid any attention, were subjected to violence, appeared in the streets, just very few people spoke about it and the issue was not highlighted. Today the attitude of people has changed, they do not pass indifferently by such children and let us know about them", - R. Ktakian said.

State institutions also support the center in this issue.

24. THE OVERALL 2008 INCOME OF GEGHARKUNIK PROVINCE FROM TOURISM INCREASED BY 1 BILLION COMPARED WITH 2007 [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

As compared with 2007, during 2008 the income of Gegharkunik province got from tourism increased by 1 billion drams.

Head of the Gegharkunik provincial agency of Armenian National Statistic Service Hakob Badalian told Armenpress that during 2008 an average 648,000 people made use of resort houses, pavilions, houses, food objects, private houses and other services, as a result of which an income of 10 billion 742 million 480 000 drams has been received.

According to H. Badalian the rural tourism has also notably progressed: nearly 100,000 tourists visited Shorzha, Tsovazard, Hayravank, Tsapatagh, Norashen, Chkalovka, Ardanish, Daranak, Jil and other off-shore communities. The incomes of these sphere reached nearly 800 million drams.

25. A NUMBER OF HEALTH CARE, CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO BE RECONSTRUCTED DURING 2009 IN TAVUSH PROVINCE [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

With the Armenian 2009 state budget a number of health care, cultural and educational institutions are intended to be reconstructed in the Tavush province.

Public relations department of the Governor's office told Armenpress that the client for a part of the works is the Armenian Urban Ministry and the Tavush governor's office.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Monday, February 16, 2009

From the health care institutions this year the Berd hospital will be reconstructed, from cultural centers – the Tavush provincial and Dilijan town libraries as well as the culture house of Paravakar village.

During 2009 the Achajur and Aygehovit elementary schools, Koti and Ijevan #1, Verin Tsaghkavan, Parvakar, Varagavan secondary, Ijevan #2 and Dilijan # 1 high schools will be reconstructed. Voskevan village and Dilijan #2, 4 schools will be partly reconstructed the inner sanitary of Berdavan school will be constructed.

Within the frameworks of “Construction of educational institutions” program 150 million drams are intended for Berd musical school, 99 million drams – for the construction of Ijevan dance art school, and another 70 million drams – for continuation of construction of Noyemberian stadium.

26. EXTENDED WORKS INTENDED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORKS OF “ELECTRONIC YEREVAN” PROGRAM [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

This year extended works are intended to be conducted within the frameworks of “Electronic Yerevan” program. Head of the “Yerevan center of management technologies” company Khazhak Karayan told today journalists that providing services to Yerevan residents through the electronic variant will give an opportunity to each citizen to get answers to questions he/she is concerned with without visiting the Yerevan municipality and avoid additional problems.

Particularly the center intends to work out and input an electronic digital signature, automatic systems of financial oversight of the agreements and to ensure the relations of the municipality with the database of other offices during the first quarter. During the year the automatic system of management of schools will also be applied.

In the sphere of emergent medical aid a system of automatic response to the calls and automatic addresses is intended to be created as well as to ensure the link between the ambulance doctor with the specialized medical institution. The system of full coordination of ambulance cars will give an opportunity to see where is each car and in what way it can more easily drive to the mentioned address.

Head of the center stated that extended works have also been conducted during the last year directed towards increasing the efficiency of the activity of the municipality and implementation of new principles in municipality-public relations.

During 2008 automatic systems of “Oversight of protocols of consultations and decrees” and registration of receptions of citizens have been worked out and inputted.

New website of the municipality has been worked out which will soon be available for the public in a three languages.

Last year the specialists of the center conducted the works of registration of Yerevan 4500 block of flats and their electronic certification. According to Kh. Karayan it is an essential process as the 2009 will be a year of reforms of communal sphere for the town authorities.

As a result of works conducted during the last year the efficiency of the process of legalization of illegal constructions has been raised. Based on the space photos of different years more than 3000 conclusions have been worked out and presented on the years of construction of illegal constructions.

According to the head of the center, the electronic system, which is being created, besides increasing the efficiency also aims at correct organization of oversight process.

The “Yerevan center of management technologies” company functions since 2005.

27. PREPARATORY WORKS IN “HRAZDAN-5” FINISHED [ARMENPRESS, 02/16/09]

The specialized authorities of “Hrazdan-5” of “Armrusgasprom” company have already finished the preparatory works of the station. The Chinese ““Thermoenergo construction-mounting” third trust” company which has been elected the chief conductor of construction-mounting works on a tender order as well as the Russian “Thermoenergomounting” company which installs the thermo-turbine equipments have already started the works.

Press secretary of “Armrusgasprom” company Shushan Sardarian told Armenpress that construction-mounting, renovation and restoration works of 13 km technical water supply pipeline, a feeding gas pipeline of high pressure of 15 km length and state railway of 6 km length which brings it closer to the construction area have already finished.

During the first quarter of 2009 the suppliers of automatic management systems of heat processes, 220 and 400 kilowatt high voltage equipments, 220 kilowatt power transformers and 400/220 kilowatt link autotransformers, as well as a center of gas preparation and chemical water making equipments will be elected through tenders.



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This year the “Armrusgasprom” company will make 30 billion 588.2 million drams’ investment for the reconstruction and modernization of unfinished fifth energy-block of Hrazdan thermo power plant for purchase of equipments and construction-mounting works.

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