



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Tuesday, December 20, 2011

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

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POLITICS

1. Vladimir Petrosyan appointed acting vice-mayor of Moscow [Armenpress, 12/17/11]

Head of the Department of the Social Defense of the Moscow Population Vladimir Petrosyan has been appointed acting vice-mayor of Moscow on social policy affairs, Armenpress reports, citing press office of the capital and government of the RF.

Vladimir Petrosyan is temporarily replacing Lyudmila Shvetsova who has received a parliamentary mandate and passed to work at the State Duma.

2. Turkey does not have any serious source to prevent adoption of the bill penalizing the denial of the Armenian Genocide [Armenpress, 12/17/11]

Speaker of the Turkish parliament Cemil Cicek sent a letter to his French counterpart calling upon him not to adopt the bill penalizing the denial of the Armenian Genocide. In the letter Cicek stressed the "destructive impact" the adoption of the bill may have on the Turkish-French relations.

Citing Turkish mass media, Armenpress reports that the Turkish speaker asked his counterpart not to interfere into the issue which is the "affair of historians".

The bill envisages one year imprisonment and 45 thousand euros of fine in case of denial of the Armenian Genocide in the territory of France. It will be put for voting December 22.

Both international and Turkish experts note in their analyses that the French National Assembly will adopt the bill penalizing the denial of the Armenian Genocide as Turkey does not have any serious source to prevent it.



3. Serzh Sargsyan attends opening of exhibition dedicated to the 500th anniversary of the Armenia typography in Venice [Armenpress, 12/16/11]

President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan participated December 14 in the opening of the "Armenia: Signs of Civilization" exhibition in the "Correr" Museum of Venice dedicated to the 500th anniversary of the Armenia typography. President's press office told Armenpress that President Sargsyan expressed gratitude to all who participated in the organization of the exhibition, including the authorities of Italy, local authorities of Venice, all the state and diplomatic officials.

After the exhibition the President visited San Marco Cathedral of Venice.

4. President Serzh Sargsyan visits the Mkhitarian Congregation at the St. Lazarus Island in Venice [Armenpress, 12/16/11]

President Serzh Sargsyan visited the Mkhitarian Congregation at the St. Lazarus Island in Venice, met with the members of the Congregation and representatives of spiritual and cultural Armenian organizations of Italy, President's Press Office reported.

At the Church of the Congregation, the President of Armenia lit a candle for the Republic of Armenia, Armenian Spyurk and Nagorno Karabakh. According to President Sargsyan, it is a source of pride and a great honor to announce to the members of Mkhitarian Congregation in Venice the commencing of the events dedicated to the 500th anniversary of Armenian book-printing.

In his remarks, President Serzh Sargsyan hailed activities of the devotees of the Congregation who carry on their patriotic mission at the St. Lazarus Island, underscored that thanks to their work for many years "light has been radiating" from the Island, and that light should be disseminated and employed. "We cannot be isolated from the global processes, cannot live isolated from other nations, we have to preserve in this swiftly changing world our identity, using opportunities provided by the rapidly changing world and glorifying our ancestors we should keep strong the Armenian roots of our youngsters. This is our primary task and, I believe, now, when the entire Armenian nation has historical motherland, has statehood, these issues can be solved much easier," the President of Armenia said. Speaking about the events dedicated to the 500th anniversary of Armenian book-printing, President Sargsyan noted that celebrations are not only tribute to our ancestors but also present a great and nice opportunity to show others our values and our commitment to these values. "We, as a state, as representatives of our nation stand ready to help the Mkhitarian Congregation, all Armenian structures and those who bring their contribution to Armenia and the Armenian-Italian friendship," President Sargsyan stressed. In his words, many would ask what is "Armenian phenomenon?", is it the world-spread Armenian Spyurk? The President noted that he is convinced that the Armenian phenomenon is our ability through the centuries to recognize and employ everything that is progressive. That very ability stipulated that the Armenians were the first nation in the world to adopt Christianity as state religion, invented alphabet, writing and literature long-long before any other nation and short after the invention of book-printing had been printing books in the Armenian. Serzh Sargsyan stressed the importance of the drive and guts which are coming from the ancestors, to be transferred to our young and to be carried on from generation to generation.

President Serzh Sargsyan responded also to the questions raised by the attendees. He noted that he was well aware of the problems faced by the Congregation, including the issue of digitalization. Serzh Sargsyan assured that the Government of Armenia will allot necessary funding to the Congregation to solve that issue. He said that the best way to preserve that valuable library is to digitalize it, as it is done in the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts – Matenadaran.

Today, at the Correr museum in Venice President Serzh Sargsyan participated at the opening of the "Armenia: Impressions of a Civilization" exhibition dedicated to the 500th anniversary of book-printing in Armenia. The President of Armenia thanked all those who have brought their participation to the organization of the exhibition, including the authorities of the Italian Republic, local administration of Venice, all state officials and diplomatic staff, those who have sacredly preserved the relics and, certainly, to the Correr Museum – one of the best museums in the world – for the implementation of this great and important project.

Later, President Sargsyan visited San Marco Cathedral of Venice and listened to the Armenian spiritual music concert.

Afterwards, at the Napoleon Hall of the Correr Museum, President Serzh Sargsyan will host an official dinner which will be attended by the specialists of the Armenian studies, who have arrived to Venice from different countries of the world to participate at the "Armenia: Impressions of a Civilization" exhibition.



5. Turkey sends parliamentary delegation to France for preventing adoption of Armenian Bill [Armenpress, 12/17/11]

Turkish Parliament has decided to send December 18 a missionary delegation to Paris for preventing the adoption of the Bill on Criminalizing the Denial of the Armenian Genocide, which will be brought to a vote December 22 at the French parliament. The parliamentary delegation of Turkey will be headed by Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee Volkan Bozkir, Armenpress reports, citing Turkish mass media.

"We will hand the letter of our parliament to the chairman of the French Parliament. Maybe we will manage to prevent the adoption of the Armenian Bill as a result of the meetings. We will try to present to French community the dangerous consequences of the adoption of the bill for Turkish-French relations," Bozkir told Turkish mass media.

The bill envisages 45000 euros fine and one-year imprisonment for the denial of the Armenian Genocide.

It is noteworthy that even Turkish analysts find that the possibility of adoption of the Armenian Bill at the French Parliament is very big, because Turkey has no serious levy of preventing it.

6. Sharmazanov considers continuation of dialogue possible [Armenpress, 12/19/11]

The passing year is a year of tolerance, and we will preserve the spirit for the coming year: we hope the 2012 will give wider opportunities for mutual understanding, vice speaker of parliament, spokesman for the RPA Eduard Sharmazanov told news conference today summing up the main achievements and flaws of the passing year.

"During this year we have not only managed to effectively cooperate with the parliamentary opposition parties but with extra parliamentary as well. Of course because of well-known reasons it was suspended, but we are convinced that all the opportunities exist to repeat the attempt of the dialogue for the sake of the Republic of Armenia," Sharmazanov said, stressing that during the year flaws have also been registered.

7. Hayk Demoyan convinced war to result in coup in Azerbaijan [Armenpress, 12/19/11]

Becoming non-permanent member of the UN Security Council Azerbaijan turns on a dangerous counter for itself, director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute Hayk Demoyan said a news conference December 19. "In two years Azerbaijan will have to explain its people why being even non-permanent member of the UN SC, it did not manage to settle the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Even in this case Azerbaijan will not go to war as it is not sure that it will win," Demoyan said.

According to him, it is necessary to have full conviction that in short period of time it will be possible to reach success, but Azerbaijan does not have it. "The war may bring to coup. It will be Aliyev's loss," the speaker noted. According to Demoyan, in any case the military may ascribe to it the protection of the country and in that case the authorities will appear in margins.

8. Works over international recognition of Armenian Genocide to intensify [Armenpress, 12/19/11]

Turkey has lost in the Armenian Genocide issue in media, academic and scientific areas, director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute Hayk Demoyan told a news conference. He said after the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide the works over its international recognition will intensify even more. "A state commission has been set up chaired by the President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan," Demoyan said, adding that mobile expositions will be conducted. About 30 mobile museums will open in different countries of the world within the coming three years. New quality work related to the international recognition of the Armenian Genocide will be carried out.

9. Turkish organizations are refused to be provided a hall in Paris for conducting conference against Armenian bill [Armenpress, 12/20/11]

The Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey days ago had leased Paris Le Grand Hotel's hall, to hold a 200-person conference to lobby against the bill that criminalizes the denial of the Armenian Genocide. Armenpress



reports citing «ntvmsnbc» channel that the Hotel administration canceled the room reservations and the hall's lease, at the last moment, noting they are occupied.

Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan and parliament speaker Cemil Cicek asked the leadership of France to prevent the adoption of the bill threatening with negative impact the adoption of the bill will have on the Turkish-French relations. In case of the adoption of the bill Turkey has also threatened to recall its ambassador to Paris.

It is remarkable that both Turkish and international experts forecast the adoption of the bill by French National Assembly. The bill envisages 1 year imprisonment and 45 thousand euros' fine in case of denial of the Armenian Genocide.

BUSINESS

10. Turkish businessmen fear to tell their government that they cooperate with Armenians [Armenpress, 12/16/11]

Businessmen do not like limits. The Armenian and Turkish businessmen, who participated in Gyumri-Kars economic forum December 14-16, registered this.

Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Yerevan Press Club, International Center for Human Development and Armenian Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen undertook the business-forum, which was preceded in Gyumri by "Shirak-Expo" exposition. Together with Armenian businessmen, Turkish businessmen participated in it.

On the same day conference of businesswomen of the two countries was held in Gyumri. Presenting the goals of the meetings to Armenpress' correspondent, Coordinator of "Support to Improvement of Armenia-Turkey Relations" project of the Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen Arthur Ghazaryan noted that local and spherical cooperation is very important for improvement of Armenian-Turkish relations.

Arthur Ghazaryan said that they can make joint deals, which will promote further development of business relations between Armenia and Turkey and opening of the border. "I do not reject, Turkish businessmen are more manageable by their government and fear to say that they cooperate with Armenian businessmen, which we cannot say about Armenian businessmen," Arthur Ghazaryan said.

11. Deputy finance minister thinks system of obligatory accumulative pension to result in economic growth [Armenpress, 12/17/11]

The system of obligatory accumulative pension will not become an additional burden for the state budget, deputy finance minister Vardan Aramyan said speaking to reporters at the annual pension conference today.

"Armenia's financial system is ready for accumulative system and it will not be an additional burden for the budget. We have micro-economic forecasts and we find that the launch of pension reforms will bring to economic results as well. The whole public will have savings which will be clearly connected with the country's economic growth," the deputy minister said.

He noted that on one hand new expenditures will be created for the budget connected with the doubling of the five percent by the state, on the other hand the government will have additional tax incomes on the account of additional economic growth.

The obligatory accumulating pension system will be applied in Armenia from January 1, 2014. After reforms, the pension insurance system will have three components: basic pension ensured by the state, obligatory accumulating component (5% from the salary of the citizens to be doubled by the state) and voluntary accumulating at their own discretion. The system will be obligatory for the citizens born after 1974 January 1. The voluntary accumulating system operates from January 1 2011.

DIASPORA

12. French-Armenians expect NA of France to adopt Bill Criminalizing Armenian Genocide Denial [Armenpress, 12/17/11]

French-Armenians have great expectations that December 22 the National Assembly of France will adopt the Bill Criminalizing Armenian Genocide Denial, Director of ARF Armenian Cause Office in Paris Hrach Varzhapetyan told Armenpress.



Referring to the latest pressures on France over this issue, the representative of the ARF Armenian Cause said that France has a distinct foreign policy and will not become a victim to pressures. "Besides that, presidential elections are soon to take place in France, and the authorities need the votes of the French-Armenians. In this regard, the role of the French-Armenians is quite large in the country's political life," Hrach Varzhapetyan noted.

On December 7, the Judiciary Committee of the French National Assembly passed the Bill on Criminalization of the Armenian Genocide Denial introduced by MP Valerie Boyer (UMP).

The bill envisages a 45,000 euros fine and a one-year imprisonment for the denial of the Armenian Genocide, which was recognized by France back in 2001.

It is expected that after adoption of the bill by the National Assembly of France, it will be submitted to the Senate for confirmation. Discussions will be conducted here in spring, 2012.

13. Armenian community of France coming forth as a citizen of France demands adoption of bill criminalizing denial of Armenian Genocide [Armenpress, 12/20/11]

Armenian community of France coming forth as a citizen of France will demand from the authorities of the country to adopt the bill criminalizing the denial of the Armenian Genocide December 22. Speaking to Armenpress, director of the ARF Armenian Cause office in Paris Hrach Varzhapetyan said leaders of the Armenian community of France have changed their strategy and are not going to organize a rally in front of the Senate on the day of discussion of the bill. "As full citizens of France and not representatives of ethnic minorities we will meet with the heads of political forces, MPs, demanding protection of our rights, presentation of our viewpoints and condemnation of Turkey's recent anti-French policy," Varzhapetyan said.

Turkish community of France has already stated that it is going to conduct protest rallies December 22 from 7 am early in the morning in front of the National Assembly. "Representatives of Turkish authorities starting from Prime Minister Erdogan appear in funny situations with their actions as they address unnecessary threats toward France. We hope that French MPs will not yield to the calls and demands of Turkey and will continue moving forward with the policy they have adopted and will approve the bill criminalizing the denial of the Armenian Genocide," Hrach Varzhapetyan said.

Turkish and Armenian mass media disseminated information today as if the lower house of the French parliament adopted December 19 the bill criminalizing the denial of the Armenian Genocide. Varzhapetyan said neither yesterday nor today discussions over the bill have taken place in the French parliament.

ARTS

14. Armenia's participation in "Eurovision 2012" to be clear at the end of the year [Armenpress, 12/17/11]

Public Television of Armenia has not yet adopted a decision on participation in "Eurovision 2012". The decision is suggested to be clear at the end of the year, head of the Armenian delegation of "Eurovision" Gohar Gasparyan told "Armenpress".

Gohar Gasparyan said earlier that Armenia anticipates guarantees of serious and perfect safety for participation in "Eurovision 2012" to be held in Azerbaijan.

"As an organizing country of "Eurovision", Azerbaijan has to ensure the safety of every delegation, but we must not forget that we have an individual issue, and need subjective approach to be able to participate confidently," the head of the Armenian delegation said.

The semifinals of "Eurovision 2012" will be held May 22 and 24, and the final – May 26

15. Gathering of Armenian film figures of Hollywood in LA [Armenpress, 12/17/11]

On the initiative of the RA Consulate General in Los Angeles a gathering of Armenian film figures of Hollywood took place with the participation of well-known artists Marco Khan, Ken Davidian, producers Carla Karapetyan, and others, Foreign Ministry press and information department told Armenpress.

During the gathering RA consul general handed to founder of "Arpa" international festival Silvia Minasyan Order of the RA Ministry of Culture for establishing an international festival named by the Armenian river and for opening way for the Armenian beginners of the film sphere.

RELIGION



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16. His Holiness Aram I Welcomes the United States of America's House of Representatives Bill 306 on Church property [Noyan Tapan, 12/17/11]

On Wednesday 14 December 2011, in an interview with Yerkir Media Television in Armenia, His Holiness Aram I said, The House Resolution 306 -urging the Republic of Turkey to safeguard its Christian heritage and to return confiscated church properties, challenges not only Turkey's failure to respect the Armenian, Greek, Assyrian and Syriac Church properties, but also the freedom of religious prayer and education. This is a major step towards the just solution of the Armenian Genocide.

While recognizing the important effort of different organizations within the Armenian community towards this end, he cautioned them on the use of the word compensation as one of the demands of the victims of the Genocide, because he said, "The U.N. Commission on Human Right has recognized the interests of the victims of violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in five forms of reparation: Restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, just satisfaction, and guarantee of non-repetition. We should state clearly our demands within the IHL. The Catholicosate of Cilicia is organizing an experts' meeting to this effect, to be held in February 2012 in Antelias".

In the end of the interview, His Holiness Aram I thanked the Armenian National Committee (Hay Tad) for its close collaboration with the Catholicosate of Cilicia in the past decades, in advocating for the Just Cause of the Armenian people.

SOCIAL

17. Government to allocate funds for paying the tuition fees of about 600 socially insecure and progressive students [Armenpress, 12/16/11]

The Armenian Government will allocate 60 million AMD to the Education and Science Ministry for paying the tuition fees of about 600 socially insecure and progressive students. At the cabinet sitting today Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan noted that it is another important event included in the package of social assistance of the executive power. "The Youth Foundation is organizing a quite transparent process where students control themselves in order that the means reach the addressees. We have received positive signals connected with this program, and I think it will be right to continue it," Tigran Sargsyan said.

18. Ara Abrahamyan and Samvel Karapetyan – laureates of “Man of the Year-2011” awarding [Armenpress, 12/17/11]

Chairman of the Union of Armenians of Russia and World Armenian Congress Ara Abrahamyan and Chairman of “Tashir” company Samvel Karapetyan have been recognized laureates of “Man of the Year-2011” national awarding. The Union of Armenians of Russia told Armenpress that the awarding ceremony was held in “The Savior” church, Moscow.

“Man of the Year-2011” has been established in 1993. The more worthy citizens of Russia and foreign states, who have made outstanding contribution to development of Russia in the spheres of politics, religion, economy, science, education, culture, medicine and innovative production, are awarded with this diploma and silver cross. Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia His Holiness Kirill, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyenin and others are among the laureates of “Man of the Year-2011” national awarding.

SPORTS

19. Money awards to leading Armenian athletes [Armenpress, 12/19/11]

With the decree of the Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan about 106 Armenian athletes and their coaches who reached good results at the world and European championships in 2011 have been granted money awards.

Governmental press office told Armenpress that among the awarded athletes are weightlifter, second prize-winner at the European championship Arayik Mirzoyan, silver-winner of women weightlifting European championship Hripsime Khurshudyan, Greco-Roman style wrestlers Roman Amoyan, world champion, Arsen Julfalakyan, second prize-winner, bronze medal winner of the European championship Yuri Patrikeev, world youth championship winners Narek Khachatryan and Rafik Manukyan.



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Members of the Armenian chess team who won the title of world champions Levon Aronian, Sergey Movsisyan, Vladimir Hakobyan, and others have also received money awards.

20. Arsenal looks at Armenian international midfielder Henrikh Mkhitaryan [Armenpress, 12/19/11]

Arsenal scout Steve Rowley, has informed Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger, to once again look at Armenian international midfielder Henrikh Mkhitaryan, who is currently playing his trade in the Ukraine with Shakhtar Donesk, and Rowley believes he is the missing player that could fill the void left by former captain and playmaker Cesc Fabregas, arsenal-news.com reports.

Mkhitaryan has established himself as one of the best players in the Ukrainian domestic league, since his transfer from Shakhtar's city rivals Metalurg in a 5.4 GBP move, in 2010 and is seen as a hot prospect in European football, and the 22 year old midfielder would certainly bolster a midfield that has lacked creativity so far this season since the departures of Samir Nasri and Cesc Fabregas.

Arsenal are believed to be tracking the midfielder, and were also looking at him after Fabregas left for Barcelona, and are still interested in bringing him to the Emirates, Shakhtar if they are to release him would be looking at a fee of around £8.million.

Produced by AGBU Armenian Representation

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