



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Wednesday, December 30, 2009

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

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AGBU NEWS

1. AGBU Young Professionals of Los Angeles make donation to AGMI [Noyan Tapan, 12/29/09]

Every year the collection of the Armenian Genocide Museum is enriched with new and unique materials that greatly promote the research on Armenian Genocide and organization of museum exhibition. Those materials are mostly obtained with the support and donations of friends of the AGMI. Donation made by AGBU Young Professionals of Los Angeles to the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in 2009 enriched the museum collection with unique materials. With the financial support of the organization the museum obtained about 150 valuable museum items, including 75 volumes of rare books, which are primary sources for study Armenian genocide, of which 30 of unique importance. Hundreds of rare magazines and newspapers, original photos, postcards, medals, stamps, as well as a unique collection of original photos (38 items) taken by Russian photographer D. I. Yermakov at the end of the 19th century, depicting Armenian cultural monuments.

The Armenian Genocide Museum expresses its deepest gratitude to the AGBU Young Professionals of Los Angeles for their honest and patriotic step, hoping that henceforward the collaboration for preservation of our common memory will be continued.

POLITICS

2. Candidate for deputy Hmayak Hovhannisian withdraws his candidature [Noyan Tapan, 12/28/09]

Candidate for RA NA deputy, Chairman of the Union of Political Scientists Hmayak Hovhannisian, on December 28, officially withdrew his candidature and handed his candidate's certificate. Noyan Tapan was informed about it by chairwoman of electoral district commission N 10 Silva Markosian.

It should be mentioned that H. Hovhannisian had repeatedly declared his intention of withdrawing his candidature in the established term, until December 31, for Haykakan Zhamanak newspaper's editor-in-chief Nikol Pashinian accused of organization of the 2008 March events and currently being imprisoned. He had also applied to electoral district's voters calling them for voting for N. Pashinian.

Thus, N. Pashinian, Marxist Party of Armenia Chairman David Hakobian, and National Unity party member Ara Simonian will take part in the by-elections by the majority system to be held on January 10 2010 at electoral district N 10.



It should be mentioned that the deputy powers of Khachatur Sukiasian elected in the 2007 parliamentary elections from electoral district N 10 were stopped ahead of the schedule on the basis of his application on resignation.

3. Young activists of Nikol Pashinian's pre-election headquarters subjected to beating [Noyan Tapan, 12/29/09]

About 10 young activists from the pre-election headquarters of Nikol Pashinian, the editor-in-chief of Haykakan Zhamanak daily who has been nominated to run in the by-election of NA deputy in Yerevan's electoral district No 10, were subjected to beating on December 28 for conducting an election campaign. According to these young men, they were beaten by about 50 members ("armed with iron rods and iron items") of the pre-election headquarters of Ara Simonian, a member of National Unity party (NUP), a candidate to run in the by-election in the same electoral district.

A1+.am reports that five of the young men who were attacked: Vahagn Gevorgian, Sergey Gasparian, Sargis Gevorgian, Sahak Muradian and Tevos Matevosian suffered injuries and were taken to the University Hospital No 1 to receive first medical aid. Two of them - Vahagn Gevorgian and Sergey Gasparian who had suffered most serious injuries to the head were moved from hospital No 1 to the resuscitation unit of the Nor Nork hospital.

"Failing to counteract in any way the victorious election campaign of Nikol Pashinian and realizing that in this way the election's outcome might be predetermined, the regime is already resorting to violence 15 days before the election, using criminal types and its machinery of illegalities. In reality, it is not a political force that acts against us in the person of the authorities, but a band which was united on a criminal basis and is capable of setting new and new records of impertinence and barbarism," is said in the December 28 statement of the Armenian National Congress (ANC).

According to the ANC's information, the attack was instructed by RPA faction deputy Ruben Sadoyan and committed by the head of the RPA sub-headquarters for polling stations 10/19 and 10/20 Vahan Nadarian, while the "general responsibility for ensuring the victory of NUP's candidate lies with Gagik Beglarian".

4. RA authorities paid tribute to the memory of the freedom fighters resting in Yerablur [Armenpress, 12/30/09]

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, NA Speaker Hovik Abrahamyan, Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan and other members of RA legislative and executive bodies visited on the eve of the New Year Yerablur pantheon and put flowers on the tombs of Sparapet Vazgen Sargsyan, Armenian Military Leader Andranik Ozanyan, as well as on the memorial of the freedom fighters killed during the Artsakh war. Armenian Defense Minister Seyran Ohanyan noted in the conversation with journalists that visiting Yerablur they pay tribute to the memory of all their fighting friends. "We managed to erect victories through their self-oblivion and poured blood", he said. S. Ohanyan, congratulating the relatives and families of the freedom fighters, resting in Yerablur assured that the Armenian government will always keep them in the center of attention. "We will do our best to reach to end the work of our fighting friends left in half a way," the minister said. According to him, the Armenian Armed Forces ensure the peace of the Armenian nation with honor. S. Ohanyan's greatest wish for 2010 is the peace and blue sky above all of us.

BUSINESS

5. 4, 5-5 thousand tourists expected in New Year in Tsakhkadzor [Armenpress, 12/29/09]

Tsakhkadzor is expected to host during New Year celebrations about 4, 5-5 thousand tourists. Head of the Tourism Department of Tsakhkadzor Municipality Gerasim Mkrtychyan told Armenpress that nearly 3 thousand tourists are expected to stay in hotels, and 1, 5-2 thousand – in private houses. The living expenses of each tourist make averagely 50-100 USD per day. Currently near the 20 hotels of Tsakhkadzor and health resorts wait for the visitors, who intend to have a rest from December 31 to January 5. A funicular railway functions in Tsakhkadzor, the ticket cost of which has risen against last year by reaching from 1000 to 1500 AMD. There are also discounts in case of making a multiple use of the funicular railway. Director of the funicular railway Asatur Poghosyan said that the funicular railway caters to 34 thousand people annually, from which in the winter period to 6 thousand, mainly to skaters.



All the five skating-routes function. In the upland the snow is favorable for winter sport-lovers to conduct trainings, and the weather in low-lying lands, according to G. Mkrtchyan, is fine.

6. A growth of 10-12% forecasted in the sphere of construction [Armenpress, 12/29/09]

The construction sphere in Armenia has endured in 2009 a decline of nearly 40 %, Armenian Urban Development Minister Vardan Vardanyan said at today's press conference adding that the financial and economic crisis has mainly affected the construction sphere, which has undergone great losses. The 40 % of GDP fell to the lot of the construction, and the construction works funded by only state budget have reduced this year by 50-55 %. Nevertheless, financial means for the upcoming years have been intended, and the construction works which are of continuous nature will not be stopped. In response to the question of Armenpress how the construction sphere will manage to restore its major role in economic growth, the minister noted that the expectations from 2011 are great, the economy is expected to develop, and the budget exits will be increased. A growth of 10-12 % is forecasted in the sphere next year. According to V. Vardanyan, a new concept on legalizing and pulling down some illegal buildings has already been worked out and will enter into force in February of 2010. V. Vardanyan is against savings, as in the construction sphere it takes place at the price of the volume or quality. He also noted that in implementing a construction, it is necessary to give preference to the local raw and constructors, who are sophisticated and qualified. Five billion 100 million AMD is intended next year for school construction and repair. V. Vardanyan said that 5 schools are intended to reconstruct, which are in an emergency condition. The 3 of them will be fortified on the assignment of the Armenian Prime Minister, the 2 will be pulled down and new ones will be built in place of them. The minister noted that the ministry has annulled this year a contract with one constructing company because of the implementation of low-quality work in a school. V. Vardanyan keeps the name of that company in secret noting that it will be made in public only after accomplishing the process.

7. Arminco taken off list of companies with dominant position [Noyan Tapan, 12/29/09]

The results of the studies conducted in the markets of gasoline, diesel-fuel oil, and data transmission were discussed at the December 28 sitting of the RA State Commission for the Protection of Economic Competition.

The studies showed that 5 economic entities were engaged in the import and sale of gasoline in the first nine months of 2009, with sales of gasoline amounting to 131.5 tons. Flash company with its share of 42.24% and 51.4% in gasoline sales and diesel-fuel oil sales, respectively, was again put on the list of economic entities with dominant position in the market.

The Commission's spokeswoman Armine Udumian said that by another decision of the Commission, Arminco company was taken off the list of companies with dominant position because it has lost its dominant position in the data transmission market.

DIASPORA

8. H. Hakobyan, "2009 for the Armenian Diaspora Ministry was efficient and rich in notable works" [Armenpress, 12/29/09]

The year of 2009 was quite efficient and rich in notable works for the Armenian Diaspora Ministry, Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan said at today's meeting with journalists. According to her, the establishment of the Diaspora Ministry brought to the spread of a pan-Armenian way of thinking, numerous forums and discussions were conducted, meetings with the participation of many Diaspora Armenians were organized. "Diaspora is comprised of 7 million people, over 30 000 organizations and over 20 all-Armenian organizations. Diaspora includes powerful ties, knowledge and might, which must be used in favor of the development of the homeland", H. Hakobyan said. The Diaspora Ministry decided to move forward with the formula of "To recognize, trust and cooperate". H. Hakobyan noted that the ministry has not governed Diaspora during its activity, has not intervened in its works, but has assisted to have a dialogue with it. To arrange its works more efficiently, the Armenian Diaspora Ministry has cooperated with numerous institutions and signed cooperation agreements. The Ministry has signed memorandums with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Armenian Trade-Industrial Chamber and "Noravanq" scientific-educational foundation. According to the agreement with the Armenian National Academy of Sciences, a scientific conference entitled "The repatriation of the 1946-1948s and its lessons" has been conducted, the goal of which was to study the mistakes of the previous



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repatriation, to learn lessons from them and to work out a program which would promote the cooperation between the homeland and Diaspora. A Chair of Diaspora-Armenians has opened in the Yerevan State University on the initiative of the ministry. Programs are being implemented in RA higher educational establishments for preparing pedagogical and professional cadres for Diaspora. Eleven holders of master's degree are being prepared on the order of the ministry, which actively participate in the events implemented by the latter. Diaspora departments have opened in Armenian Literature and Art Institutes with the support of the ministry, which realize the publication of "Essays on the History of the Diaspora Painting" series of publications, devoted to the works of the Diaspora artists. Three professional all-Armenian forums of architects, lawyers and cardiologists have been conducted over the year for revealing the Armenian potential. As a result, relevant all-Armenian associations have been founded. The ministry provides a collaborative labor environment for them. Attaching importance to the efficient activity of the Diaspora youth, H. Hakobyan noted that numerous programs are to be implemented to strengthen the tie between them and the homeland. Thanks to "Come Home" program many families and young people from Armenia and Diaspora have come close to each other", H. Hakobyan said. About 300 Diaspora young people have paid a visit to Armenia within the frameworks of the program. They have lived in Armenian families. The ministry receives hundreds of letters of gratitude from them up today. The program will be continued in 2010 as well. A forum entitled "Cultural Genocide" and dedicated to the 95th year of the Genocide will be conducted next year in Armenia. H. Hakobyan noted that the programs of the passing year will be continued and extended. "The Diaspora Ministry is the home of Diaspora, and all the possible measures are to be undertaken to support them and strengthen the tie with the homeland", H. Hakobyan said.

ARTS

9. The showing of "The land of Noah" documentary film kicked off in Scandinavian countries [Armenpress, 12/30/09]

The showing of the documentary film "The Land of Noah" telling about Armenia has started in the Scandinavian countries. It is broadcasted by "Scandinavia" TV Channel. Head of the Territorial and Economic Development and Tourism Department of the Armenian Ministry Mekhak Apresyan told Armenpress that The Spanish TVE (Television Espanola) TV Channel will start already next year the broadcasting of the film for its spectator of 450 million. Negotiations are being conducted with Italian "RAI" and famous "Discovery Channel" TV channels in regard to gaining the right of showing the film. M. Apresyan noted that the works on showing that film will not be limited with those TV channels; an effort will be exerted toward showing it in as many countries as possible. The film in Armenia will be shown after completing the translation works. "The Land of Noah" film in English and with duration of 52 minutes presents the whole Armenia, Nagorno Karabakh, as well as Ani and Mountain Ararat. A historical review on the territory of Armenia is implemented in the film, facts and documentary materials are presented. About 225 thousand Euros and 11 million Drams have been spent for the production of the film.

10. RA President awards the creative team of "Spartak" [Armenpress, 12/30/09]

On the December 29 order of the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, the creative team of "Spartak" has been awarded with the diploma of the Armenian President for staging the world famous "Spartak" ballet by Aram Khachaturyan in the National Academic Theater of Opera and Ballet with a new beautiful choreographic interpretation. Armenian presidential press service told Armenpress that President Serzh Sargsyan has signed the same day a decree on awarding some members of "Spartak" creative team with an order and a medal for the outstanding contribution to the development of the sphere of culture, as well as for the new choreographic interpretation of "Spartak" ballet. Stage Manager, Ballet Master Yuri Grigorovitch has been awarded with the order of honor, and Stage Conductor Karen Duglaryan, Solo Dancers Ruben Muradyan, Zhakelina Sarkhoshyan, Narek Martirosyan and Maria Divanyan – with "Movses Khorenatsi" medal.

SOCIAL

11. Employers to Provide Internship Opportunities for Unemployed Young People [Armenpress, 12/29/09]



With the support of the “State Employment Service” agency of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs internship opportunities for unemployed young people will be provided. Sona Harutyunyan, head of the agency, stated at a press-conference today, that young people must be registered in district-centers of the agency and they must not have any work experience. “Our surveys proved that there are a number of young graduates who can’t find proper job because of the lack of work experience. It’s a serious problem in this issue; employers doubt whether to grant them opportunities or not,” Sona Harutyunyan stated. According to her, the number of young people who were provided job opportunities by the agency increases every year, but actually it’s not enough for them, and there are still plenty of projects to be realized for supporting young unemployed people. The project will be realized in assistance with the World Bank. The 6-month internships will be conducted and during that period young people will actually have the opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency and working skills.

12. The Winners of International School Subject Olympiads granted computers [Armenpress, 12/29/09]

By RA Science and Education Minister’s order pupils who won at International Olympiads of School Subjects were granted computers, and their teachers and team instructors were awarded money. This year Armenian pupils won awards in Olympiads at Math, Physics, Information Science and Astrology. They also participated in Olympiads at Chemistry and Biology. Armen Ashotyan, RA Science and Education Minister, stated that 2009 was successful not only for sports, but also for education.

“Despite the problems existing in our schools, the way our society accept present-day schools and scholar projects, we all have a vision about better schools. Armenian scholar system has its traditions that are preserved and passed year by year,” Armen Ashotyan said. The Ministry will reconsider the strategy of organizing Olympiads next year. The minister noted that hence the necessary accessories and the best conditions will be provided for such pupils.

13. The number of the community pre-educational establishments of Shirak increased [Armenpress, 12/29/09]

The number of the community pre-educational establishments of Shirak province, as well as the number of the children attending those establishments has increased this year. Head of the Education Department of Shirak governor office Sahak Minasyan told Armenpress that if 3700 children attended pre-educational establishments in 2007, their number has notably increased in the last two years reaching to 4077. “This progress is conditioned by the state policy and the implementation of a joint program with communities”, S. Minasyan said. Community pre-educational establishments already function in the region of Akhuryan too. S. Minasyan noted that the proposals of communities on the buildings, which can serve as pre-educational establishments, will be submitted to the governor. Despite the growth of the number of children in pre-educational establishments, only the 35 % of children of that age attend. The involvement is ensured mainly in urban settlements.

14. RA President participates in the opening of Hrazdan Medical Center [Armenpress, 12/29/09]

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan was present today at the opening of the medical center of Hrazdan town of Kotayk province. Armenian presidential press office told Armenpress that the modernization of the center has been implemented within the World Banks’ “Modernization of the Armenian Healthcare System” loan program. In regard to completing the works, the medical center of Hrazdan ranks the first among the province hospitals included in this program. The hospital of the town, the polyclinics and maternity hospital are included in “Hrazdan Medical center” CJSC. The Hrazdan medical college is intended to be removed here as well. An up-to-date medical center ensured with the main medical equipments has been established in the province medical system of Armenia for the first time. The modernization of the medical center is also conditioned by the strategy on the improvement of the Armenian healthcare system, the goal of which is the quality and efficiency increase of the activity of medical institutions.

15. 320 million AMD extended for the cleaning and repair of RA collector-drainage systems in 2010 [Armenpress, 12/30/09]

Three hundred twenty million AMD has been extended from the state budget for implementation of the program on cleaning and repair of the collector-drainage systems in the republic. Deputy Director of



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“Melioratsa” CJSC of the State Committee Water Economy subordinated to Armenian Territorial Administration Ministry Georgi Chobanyan told Armenpress that the drainage systems of 178 km general length located at the rural meadows of about 9 thousand hectares of the provinces of Lori, Ararat, Armavir and Gegharkunik will be cleaned and repaired within the frameworks of the mentioned program. After regulating the flow of waters and after improving the ameliorative state of sewing lands, the implementation of the program will prevent the salting and spread of epidemic deceases by creating a stable basis for the further growth of cultured plants. The contest intended for works will be held in February of 2010.

16. Gyumri Mayor says dwelling-construction to be the best achievement of Gyumri in 2009 [Armenpress, 12/30/09]

The dwelling-construction is the best achievement of Gyumri in 2009, Mayor Vardan Ghukasyan said at the conclusive meeting held December 28 in Gyumri. The program of “A certificate of Apartment Purchase” which is directed toward the solution of the apartment issue has been replaced in the running year by the Armenian government with the one on dwelling construction, which, according to the mayor, is a more efficient way of giving a solution to the issue of the homeless people. According to V. Ghukasyan, the year has been successful for the sphere of sport, too. The success of Gyumri weightlifter Nazik Avdalyan deserved the appreciation of the mayor; the latter donated her two-storeyed apartment in the center of the town. The honor of handing the key was given to another weightlifter from Gyumri –Yuri Vardanyan. Coach of the Armenian Judo Team Karen Simonyan has been donated with a car. The best 10 athletes from Gyumri have been given the diplomas of the mayor and money awards. The distinguished Gyumri specialists of the spheres of education, culture, construction and healthcare have been awarded with diplomas, and N 5 musical school of the town has been recognized the best educational establishment.

SPORTS

17. “Hatis” replenished with American and Nigerian athletes [Armenpress, 12/29/09]

Yerevan “Hatis” getting prepared for the games of the 1/16th final of the European Women’s Basketball Cup in January of 2010 together with the Russian “Nadezhda” team of Orinburg, has been replenished with American and Nigerian basketball players Amanda Jackson and Sveola Oraneva respectively. The latter comes forward in USA and has received US citizenship. Both of the athletes are defenders. A. Jackson has played in Miami team. An official from “Hatis” told Armenpress that the club “Hatis” continues to look for new athletes for strengthening the team.

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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.