



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, March 26, 2010

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

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AGBU NEWS

1. Spring term of Armenian Virtual College to kick off on April 5 [Armenpress, 03/26/10]

The Armenian Virtual College set up by the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) will start its spring academic term from April 5. Public Relations Manager of the college Tamar Minasyan told Armenpress that in this academic term the college offers introduction classes of Eastern and Western Armenian, early and medieval Armenian history and Armenian architecture, all in 2 parts. The classes, as always, are conducted in 6 languages – Eastern and Western Armenian, English, Russian, French and Spanish.

According to T. Minasyan, the university continues to receive applications for entrance from different countries all over the world – USA, France, Italy, Germany, Holland, Greece, Uruguay, Turkey and Brazil through its internet site (www.avc-agbu.org). The number of the countries and applicants is



growing year by year. The age limit of the ones wishing to get Armenian education widely differs. By the initial information on the registered people, the youngest applicant is 19 years old, and the oldest is 81.

Three faculties – faculties of language, history and culture, operate in the college. The participants of the class are either regular students, who gather 2 credits from each lesson, or free listeners – students without credits. The teachers are skilled specialists of Armenia who are ready to communicate with their students all-day-round.

The goal of the Armenian Virtual College is to help students gain basic knowledge on Armenian culture, history and Armenian language through online education.

POLITICS

2. Ara Saghatelian: Armenian journalists should understand that Azerbaijani mass media reports about renewal of war are manipulation [Noyan Tapan, 03/23/10]

Some media outlets of Armenia recently published reports concerning the renewal of the Karabakh war. As Ara Saghatelian, Director of the Public Relations and Information Center of the RA Presidential Staff, said during the March 23 press conference, the Armenian mass media mainly reprint materials from Azerbaijani websites. However, according to him, Armenian journalists should understand that reprinting such materials has its effect on the Armenian public and that the Azerbaijanis spread them for "manipulation" purposes.

Speaking about the recent amendments and additions to the RA Civil Code, the RA Criminal Code, and the RA Criminal Procedure Code, A. Saghatelian declared that they are aimed at balancing freedom of speech and the protection of a person's dignity.

As for the concern expressed by reporters that these amendments may become a truncheon in the hands of the authorities against the print media, he said that there is no problem of closing newspapers in Armenia. He underlined that the adopted package of amendments does not envisage any administrative procedures, simply the mass media must become "socially responsible". In the words of A. Saghatelian, if the current quality of the press is not improved, Armenian society will suffer.

3. McMahon bankrolled by Turkish coalition of America to deny Armenian Genocide [Noyan Tapan, 03/23/10]

Michael McMahon representing New York's 13th Congressional District has become bankrolled by the Turkish Coalition of America. According to www.mirrorspectator.com, in 2009, McMahon became a member of the Subcommittee on Europe in the House Foreign Affairs Committee. On May 10, 2009, McMahon joined the Turkish Caucus.

McMahon pledged to oppose the Armenian Genocide Resolution in the March 4, vote in the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

The Turkish Lobby is using McMahon, after Robert Wexler's resignation from Congress on January 10, to be the next strong Turkey supporter in the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe.

Democrat Michael McMahon is the only strong Turkey supporter in the Subcommittee on Europe.

4. Forum of Armenian Unions of Europe assesses negatively Armenian-Turkish developments [Noyan Tapan, 03/23/10]

The Chairman of the Forum of Armenian Unions of Europe (FAUE) Ashot Grigorian welcomes the proposal on signing a non-aggression pact with Azerbaijan that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan made in an interview with Euronews television. It is said in the March 23 statement of the FAUE Chairmanship that in case of rejection of such a constructive proposal, Azerbaijani leadership will bear full responsibility for any complications related to the Artsakh problem.

The FAUE applied to the heads of the countries - the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs with the request to watch closely the events to follow that proposal. At the same time, FAUE assesses negatively the Armenian-Turkish developments and considers the Turkish side responsible for them, expressing a negative opinion of Prime Minister Erdogan's statement about (a hundred thousand) illegal Armenian emigrants in Turkey. The FAUE calls on all Armenian emigrants residing in Turkey to leave this country within a short period - in response to the authorities' steps reminiscent of the Ottoman times.



5. In opinion of Armen Rustamian, situation in Armenia not relevant for holding special elections [Noyan Tapan, 03/23/10]

The situation in Armenia is not relevant for holding special elections, the representative of the ARF Armenia Supreme Body Armen Rustamian expressed an opinion at the March 23 press conference. He said that a necessity to hold special elections arises when a country faces a serious political crisis and there are no other opportunities to rectify the situation. "In other words, when there is an uncontrollable situation in the country, and new elections are the only way out. We do not rule out such a perspective, it is quite possible. In general a political force should be ready to run in elections at any moment. In this sense, we are ready if matters take such a turn," A. Rustamian declared.

Yet, he underlined that the ARF does not attach much importance to special or regular elections. The ARF lays great stress on the content of the program of a political force intending to come to power. In the view of A. Rustamian, Armenia is not ready yet to hold normal elections. "If an electoral system is so vicious as the current one in Armenia, the vote results will arouse suspicions and lead to post-election tension," he noted. In his words, holding special elections under conditions of such an electoral system will only "proofread" the mistakes of the authorities.

6. Dan Malan "The denial of the fact of the Armenian Genocide is strange for me" [Armenpress, 03/24/10]

"An exciting visit I paid to the Armenian Genocide Museum. Watching the cadres from the Armenian Genocide and listening to the history, I was very upset, it left a hard impression on me. It is strange for me that there are people who can deny the fact of Genocide." This is the impression of the producer of the "Bloody Sunday" film Dan Malan who is in Armenia within the framework of the 8th festival of British films. During the meeting with the reporters he noted that his film is telling about the Ireland-Britain confrontation and is very much alike the Armenian-Turkish issue. "We must remember the history, at the same time not becoming its hostage. Like Armenia, we too have a great Diaspora spread throughout the world," D. Malan said.

Before coming to Armenia, D. Malan visited also Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Georgia. In Turkey the "Bloody Sunday" film was shown in Diarbekir where Malan was informed about the sufferings of Armenians in 1915.

"It was very exciting that I was accompanied by young Turks, who were speaking with sensitivity and were presenting me the whole truth which today I saw in the Genocide Museum," the producer said.

In Turkey Malan was also informed about the murder of chief editor of "Agos" newspaper Hrant Dink, and asked to accompany him to his tomb.

"I have taken the book of Turkish author Malik Yakzin. He was taught to write and read by Hrant Dink and this person is taking care of Dink's tomb. I asked to organize a meeting with that man. When I turned over I saw that he was standing by the tomb, I was shocked. He told that every morning he comes to the cemetery, says hello to Dink, and then continues the work," Dan Malan said.

He! realize s that there is a necessity of curing the historic wounds throughout the world and there is a "painful contradiction over the Genocide recognition issue." But Malan managed to notice that there are people in Turkey with who a dialogue may be started. Though he noticed that this people are not representatives of authorities, but "common, simple" people.

In Azerbaijan the closed showing of the film took place, intended only for reporters, thus no political discussions took place. But Malan noted that in Armenia he was presented the Armenian history, culture and in Baku he was forced to organize his tour on his own and is disappointed with his visit to Baku. "Yerevan is the most secure town I have ever been in my life. I cannot say anything like that about Baku," he added.

7. Hamlet Harutyunyan: Without participation of the NKR the NK issues not to be solved [Armenpress, 03/24/10]

Without participation of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic the NK issues cannot be solved, member of the Armenian Republican party's NA faction, chairman of the "Artsakh" patriotic union Hamlet Harutyunyan said today at a press conference.

"I refer to the number of those people who from the very beginning were strictly against of leaving the NK out of the negotiate process. And now everything must be done to bring Artsakh back to the table of negotiations," he said.



At the same time he thinks that conflicts never settle without mutual concessions. According to him, Armenia and the NKR will never agree to one-sided concessions under anyone's pressure. "We exclude it. This is what the president and foreign minister have stated," the parliamentarian said.

Commenting on the statement of the head of the Turkish Liberal Democratic party Cem Tokar who said that Turkey may become a party in the NK issue after the normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations, H. Harutyunyan said that he has a negative attitude toward that opinion and excludes that Turkey will ever participate in the NK conflict negotiation process.

He says currently Turkey is delaying the ratification of the protocols trying to move forward its preconditions. "Armenia is against the solution of the issue through forwarding pre-conditions and the whole world supports us in this issue. I think that the international community will exert pressure on Turkey which will surrender and ratify the protocols," H. Harutyunyan said.

8. Gagik Minasyan describes talks about the resignation of the Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan as "reflection of old Armenian habit" [Armenpress, 03/24/10]

"Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan works very good. He was nominated by the Armenian Republican Party the head of which is the president of the country. With this all is said," chairman of the NA's Finance-Credit and Budget Affairs Standing Committee Gagik Minasyan said, describing the talks about the resignation of the Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan as "reflection of old Armenian habit".

9. Michael Bennet: "The pogroms of the Armenians organized in the Ottoman Empire may be defined only and only as Genocide" [Armenpress, 03/24/10]

"The pogroms of the Armenians organized in the Ottoman Empire may be defined only and only as Genocide. 1915-1923 1,5 million Armenians were brutally displaced walking toward their death and were murdered in camps. This is the policy clearly carried out by the Ottoman authorities," US Senator for Colorado Michael Bennet said in response to the letter addressed to him by the Forum of Armenian Association of Europe connected with the Armenian Genocide.

The chairman of the Forum Ashot Grigoryan said in the letter directed to him, the Senator said that he expresses his position over the issue for the Colorado State and American Armenians.

"From day to day more Americans recognize what happened as Genocide. At the same time I understand Your anger when someone is trying to hide what happened presenting it as common war losses. Our devotion to paying tribute to the memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide and the wish to prevent such crimes in future demands the recognition of tragedies occurred in past. In spite of this huge hard history I hope that the mutual respect will develop among Turks and Armenians. I am sure that the USA may have an important role in this process," the Senator said.

10. Senator R. Menendez demands adoption of Armenian Genocide resolution by Congress [Armenpress, 03/25/10]

"Turkey cannot dictate us how to work in the legislative body of our state. We can never let Turkey or any state of the world tell us what we can do in our Congress. I mention this irrespective of the thing that Turkey has a certain role in our strategic programs, and I demand that Congress adopts the bill on the Armenian Genocide," well-known supporter of the Armenian Cause Senator Robert Menendez said at a meeting with the Armenian community held in New Jersey on the initiative of the U.S. Armenian Cause office.

According to him, true partners must be honest with each other, in the opposite case, the friendship is false. He is sure that Turkish-American relations will be more sincere and solid if the United States recognizes the Armenian Genocide.

Referring to the fact of opposing the bill on Armenian Genocide by the administration, R. Menendez stressed that the Congress is independent, and the executive body is eligible to express only an opinion about developments.

11. H. Demoyan says the war will restart only in case I. Aliyev feels that he loses the political trust in his own country [Armenpress, 03/25/10]

"Before restarting the war Aliyev must understand that his army has been educated by the armed forces of Turkey, which can implement a change of authority in the own country at any moment. Hence, in that short-term war, both in case of victory and defeat Aliyev can be dismissed from the office by the



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defeated generals or the generals who have taken a victory. This prospect must excite Aliyev," Hayk Demoyan, director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences said at today's press conference. According to him, the war will restart only in case Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev feels that he loses the political trust in his own country.

According to H. Demoyan, at any moment Azerbaijan can restart a war, but it cannot be long-term, as the international community will intervene, like in case of the five-day war of Georgia and Russia.

BUSINESS

12. ARF considers anti-crisis program of Armenian government as failed one [Noyan Tapan, 03/23/10]

In the opinion of the ARFD, the anticrisis program of the Armenian government is a failed one. Armen Rustamian, a representative of the ARF Armenia Supreme Body, declared this during the March 23 press conference. In his words, Armenia is currently facing the crisis of economic management, whose main symptom is the constant accumulation of unsolved problems. He said that a direct manifestation of the crisis is unbridled inflation in Armenia under conditions of the low purchasing capacity of consumers. "Inflation has reached an illogically high level, especially as the gas, power and water tariffs have not officially risen yet," A. Rustamian noted.

He stated that the ARF will not limit itself to expressing opinions. In connection with the rise in tariffs and its consequences, a specialized working group was set up and it already summarized the work done. "First of all, we are going to ask questions and we expect the government to give exhaustive answers to our questions," he underlined.

He said that the government does not follow the guidelines of 22 priorities stipulated in the coalition memorandum. "It is strange that the political forces making part of the coalition did not publicly reject those priorities, but at the same time they have not presented any report on work done in this direction," A. Rustamian said.

13. Prospects of cooperation between Armenia and Lebanon in the sphere of tourism discussed [Armenpress, 03/24/10]

Armenian ambassador to Lebanon Ashot Kocharyan met March 23 with the Lebanese Minister of Tourism Fadi Abud. RA Foreign Ministry press service told Armenpress that the interlocutors discussed prospects of cooperation between the two countries in the sphere of tourism.

They expressed assurance that the friendly relations between Armenia and Lebanon and the existence of direct air communication between Beirut and Yerevan, create good opportunity for mutual visits, preparation of tourism packages, organization and conduction of business forums, cultural days.

Minister F. Abud expressed readiness to invite his Armenian partners and heads of tourism organizations to discuss possible mechanisms of cooperation. He highly praised the active involvement of the Armenian community and its role in the political and social life of Lebanon.

DIASPORA

14. Armenian President meets with the Aleppo-Armenian community [Armenpress, 03/24/10]

On the second day of his official visit to Syria, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan met with the governor of Aleppo, discussed Armenian-Syrian cooperation and opportunities of cooperation on inter-provincial level.

Presidential press office told Armenpress that the Aleppo-Armenian community hosted the president. In the warm and non-formal conversation Serzh Sargsyan said he is pleased with the results of the visit to Syria and noted that it will give new stimulus to the traditional friendly Armenian-Syrian relations.

President Sargsyan also delivered a speech in which he referred to the major issues of the country.

15. Event entitled "Our Shushi: Remembering the Past and Yearning for the Future" in Washington [Armenpress, 03/24/10]



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An event entitled "Our Shushi: Remembering the Past and Yearning for the Future" was organized on March 18 in Washington under the patronage of the Armenian Embassy and All-Armenian Fund's US East Coast affiliate office.

Media and Information Department of the Armenian Foreign Affairs Ministry told Armenpress that representatives of American-Armenian organizations, clergymen, numerous Armenian-Americans partook in the event, Deputy Chairman of "Lincy" foundation, Director of the United Armenian Fund Harout Sassounyan was present, too.

In his welcoming speech Ambassador Tatul Margaryan, attaching great importance to the activity of the All-Armenian Fund in the last 17 years, noted that it has not only a material, but also a moral value. In the first hard, dark and cold years of consolidation of the Armenian state system, the fund's activity raised hope in Armenian people reminding that Armenia is not lonely, that all the Armenians are unified.

Afterward Executive Director of the fund Irina Lazaryan made the guests acquainted with the fund's activity and programs, which included the educational, healthcare and agriculture spheres, as well as presented the restoration programs of Shushi.

A short-length videotape dedicated to the living conditions and needs of Shushi residents was shown.

16. MP Vartkes Mahdessian to sponsor annual visits of Nareg graduates to Armenia [Noyan Tapan, 03/24/10]

A unique opportunity for all graduates of Nareg schools is a reality as of this year, by the kind support of Armenian MP Vartkes Mahdessian, in cooperation with the government of the Republic of Armenia. Starting from the summer of 2010, graduates of Nareg Schools will visit Armenia for two weeks every summer. According to www.gibrahayer.com pupils will visit Armenia with Vartkes Mahdessian covering all the costs of their air tickets and visas, and the government of the Republic of Armenia (will) covers the costs of food, accommodation, as well as visits to historical sites.

17. Did Turkey's Ambassador Really Lobby For Passage of Genocide Resolution? [Noyan Tapan, 03/24/10] By Harut Sassounian, Publisher, The California Courier

Thousands of articles are posted on the internet every day. But, very few make us fall off our chairs!

Last week I came across a shocking news item posted by the Turkish Forum -- the largest website for Turkish news. It was titled: "Forgotten Ambassador in Sierra Leone Uses Armenian Genocide Resolution to solve his Problem." Here is the summary in translation of that incredible article:

"In recent years, parliaments of several countries have adopted resolutions on the Armenian Genocide. In retaliation, Turkey has recalled its ambassadors from these countries. It has been revealed that some opportunistic ambassadors exploited this situation, by abusing their position.

"According to a Foreign Ministry announcement this morning, Orhan Emin Turkone, Turkey's Ambassador in Sierra Leone for the past 12 years, has been fired for having lobbied for the passage of the Armenian Genocide bill in that country's Parliament.

"During a press conference this morning, the Foreign Ministry's Undersecretary Ersin Ozbukey explained: "Recently, it came to our attention that the so-called Armenian Genocide bill was placed on the agenda of the Parliaments of Chad, Eritrea, and Djibouti. But, when we saw that this bill was unanimously adopted by the Parliament of Sierra Leone, we started suspecting that something had gone terribly wrong." Ozbukey added: "We formed an investigative committee that uncovered some interesting, but disturbing information."

"We confirmed that Amb. Turkone had carried out lobbying activities in favor of the Armenian Genocide bill," Ozbukey stated. "Of course, this can't be excused, but the Ministry also has its fault in this affair. This man was abandoned and forgotten in a far away country. He got that idea, after [Turkish] Ambassadors were recalled following the adoption of the genocide resolution by other countries. Twelve years is a long time," Ozbukey admitted.

"Ozbukey then provided the details of Amb. Turkone unbelievable actions in publicizing the Armenian Genocide in Sierra Leone. Ozbukey said that whenever the Ambassador visited a bar, he would write on facebook: "We massacred the Armenians in such a nasty way." He told bartenders: "My grandfather alone killed 100-150 Armenians whose bones are in the basement of our home." The Ambassador made up such falsehoods and lies. He basically said whatever came to his head. Sierra Leone is a small place. Word spreads quickly. No one had ever heard of either Armenia or Turkey. But,



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within a month, everyone in the whole country was agitated over this issue. People were dancing in the streets when they learned that the genocide was recognized. This shouldn't have happened, but unfortunately, it did!

"Ozbukey explained that after this revelation, the Turkish government started paying more attention to the agenda of various parliaments. In order to avoid such situations in the future, instead of recalling ambassadors, 'we are now considering the possibility of cutting off trade relations, until the resolution is removed from the Parliament's agenda,"

Even though this article sounded too good to be true, the amount of detail and specific names mentioned in it led dozens of Turkish websites to post it, without realizing that it was a hoax! After learning that Turkey did not have an embassy in Sierra Leone, the Turkish Forum deleted the fake news from its website. It was also not true that Armenian Genocide resolutions were being considered by parliaments of Chad, Djibouti and Eritrea in recent months.

It is not known who concocted this elaborate hoax. Given the extensive amount of criticism directed at Prime Minister Erdogan within Turkey in recent weeks, the author could well be a disgruntled Turk with a sense of humor who decided to take a sarcastic swipe at his Don Quixotic leader. The article was accompanied by an authentic looking photo of three African officials along with a non-African individual at a signing ceremony. The photo gave the false impression that the latter was the Turkish Ambassador to Sierra Leone.

It is not at all surprising that several Turkish websites fell for this ruse, as the government of Turkey has made a practice of recalling its ambassadors from France, Canada, the United States, and other countries for having recognized the Armenian Genocide.

Namik Tan, the newly appointed Turkish ambassador to Washington, was recalled on March 4 after the House Foreign Affairs Committee approved the Armenian Genocide resolution. It was reported that he might stay in Ankara until after April 24. This is great news for Armenian-American activists, as they can lobby Congress without facing any opposition from the Turkish Ambassador during the crucial weeks leading to April 24, when he needs to be in Washington trying to block the Genocide Resolution in the House and persuade Pres. Obama not to refer to the Armenian Genocide in his annual statement!

To the best of our knowledge, Amb. Tan did not lobby Congress for passage of the Armenian Genocide resolution, as did the fictional ambassador in Sierra Leone, in order to take an extended vacation with family and friends back home. However, judging from Prime Minister Erdogan's recent self-defeating statements, sometimes truth is indeed stranger than fiction!

18. Commemorative demonstration to mark the 95th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide to be held on 20 April in The Hague [Noyan Tapan, 03/23/10]

Commemorative demonstration to mark the 95th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide will be held in Het Plein in The Hague.

The demonstration is organized by The 24 April Committee of FAON and the Hay Tad Holland cooperating as "Joint Armenian Organisations of the Netherlands".

FAON calls on all other Armenian organizations and all Armenians in the Netherlands for a massive demonstration to enforce claims for recognition of the Armenian Genocide by Turkey and for implementation of the Motion by Rouvoet by the Dutch government. This Motion has been adopted unanimously by the Dutch Parliament in 2004.

According to the report of FAON, the demonstration is intended to enforce the requirement that Turkey recognizes the Armenian Genocide Implementation of the Rouvoet's Parliamentary Motion from 2004, which asks the Dutch government to put constantly and expressly on the agenda the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by Turkey and the need to establish a memorial in The Hague, city of international law, for commemorating the victims of the Armenian Genocide, as an example of how the international community should not handle such disastrous events.

"It is of utmost importance that we, as the Armenian community in the Netherlands, give a strong signal to show our horror about the Armenian Genocide and about the fact that after 95 years the Genocide is still denied and trivialised in a repulsive way by Turkey and even speaking about it in Turkey is still punishable.

Although there is an extensive recognition of the Armenian Genocide, the international community does not effectively succeed to make clear to Turkey that the pattern of denial and trivialisation is unacceptable and to take the appropriate measures for preventing this practice.

This same attitude of the world made it possible that in 1915 the Armenian Genocide could take place under the eyes of the world.



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It is therefore important that we work together to commemorate this 95th anniversary. We call on everyone to participate in the joint demonstration in The Hague, the city of international law! Together we can make a stand against injustice," FAON statement said.

ARTS

19. Eva Rivas is number 2 to perform in the 'Eurovision 2010' international song contest semi-final [Armenpress, 03/24/10]

Draw for the 'Eurovision 2010' international song contest semi-final was conducted today and according to its result the Armenian representative Eva Rivas will be number 2 to perform in the semi-final. Number one is the representative of Lithuania and the third participant is the representative of Israel. Correspondingly, the representatives of Denmark, Switzerland, Ireland, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Georgia and Turkey will follow.

Eva Rivas will perform during the second semi-final. The first semi-final is to take place May 25, the second one is May 27 and the final of the contest will take place May 29. 39 countries participate in the contest this year.

20. 18 performances staged within the frameworks of "ArmMono" eight international festival [Armenpress, 03/24/10]

"Armmono" eight international festival of mono-performances is ending today in Yerevan, within the frameworks of which 18 performances have been staged this year. Besides the Armenian participants, actors from Russia, France, Switzerland, Poland, Serbia and Lithuania were also invited. Moscow Dramatic Theater after E. Vakhtangov and the State Dramatic Theater conducted by A. Jigarkhanyan came forward within the frameworks of the Russian program. The international program included mono-performances with the participation of Daniel Ludwig (Switzerland), Yanosh Stolarski (Poland), Vera Mvovich (Serbia), Zhirayr Torikyan (France) and Alexandria Rubinovas (Lithuania).

Director of the festival Marianna Mkhitarian said today at a press conference that this year "Armmono" registered successes especially among the performances of the Armenian participants. "The festival has already consolidated in our republic, it has been conducted for the 8th time and has had a lot of audience," she said. M. Mkhitarian also attached importance to the circumstance that Armenian actors have chosen their mono-performances among the works of Armenian contemporary writers.

Distinguished actor Armen Santrosyan said that the organization of the festival in the genre of mono-performances was of great importance for the Armenian theatrical field, as it enables not only to observe the works of local partners, but also gives an opportunity to get acquainted with the performances of foreign actors. "Nevertheless, I can say that within the frameworks of this festival the Armenian mono-performances do not concede to the foreign ones, and are even better," he said.

In response to the question whether commercial performances are possible to stage in Armenia in the mono genre, actor Aram Hovhannisyan said that the mono genre is quite a complicated and a hard work, it suggests a theatrical scenario formed within the frameworks of intellect and idea. In the context of all this, the pursuit of commercial goals is not very justified.

The director of the festival, referring to the performances invited from abroad said that especially the performances of E. Vakhtangov Theater and with the participation of a Polish actor were singled out among them. Referring to the opinions of the honorary guests, it was noted that they were deeply impressed by Armenian mono-performances.

Directors of mono-festivals Vetslav Geras (Poland), Nina Mazur and Hans Rashke (Germany), stage-manager Andrei Kritenko (Ukraine) were in Yerevan on the festival days.

The festival was held with the support of National Assembly Speaker Hovik Abrahamyan and Armenian Culture Ministry. The general sponsor was "Gagik Tsarukyan" charitable fund and "Multi Group" concern.

21. Armenia presents 80 books in international book exhibition in Paris [Armenpress, 03/25/10]

In the 30th international book exhibition opened today in Paris where Armenia participates with 80 units of book. Culture ministry's public relations responsible Gayane Durguryan told Armenpress that within the framework of exhibition which will be conducted until April 1 a presentation of the Armenian pavilion will take place, meetings will be conducted and discussions will be held. Books from 25 countries



are presented at the exhibition. Writers, poets including Umberto Eco, Salman Rushdi, Doris Lessing, Paul Osetr arrived in Paris. More than 600 events will be held within the framework of the exhibition.

22. This year “Artavazd” theatrical award-giving ceremony to be conducted on the International Theater Day [Armenpress, 03/26/10]

This year “Artavazd” theatrical award-giving ceremony will be conducted on the International Theater Day, on March 27, in Yerevan State Musical Comedy Theater after Hakob Paronyan. The award-giving ceremony is organized by the Armenian Union of Theatrical Figures, and this year it will be dedicated to the 105th anniversaries of Vardan Atchemyan and Arus Asryan.

Secretary of the Union of Theatrical Figures of Armenia Sona Meloyan told Armenpress that this year awards will be handed in 13 nominations. Till March 1, Armenian theaters have submitted applications to the Union of Theatrical Figures, mentioning in which nomination they want to be presented.

According to her, this year the nomination “for honorable service to the theatrical art” has added, which will be given on the decision of the secretariat of the Union of Theatrical Figures, the rest 12 will be decided by the jury members through secret voting, the results of which will be known the day of handing the awards in the hall.

S. Meloyan also said that figures of theatrical sphere Margarita Yakhotova, Sergey Arakelyan, Lilit Arzumanyan, Narine Sargsyan, Karine Khodikyan, Hovhannes Teckgerzyan, Anush Asilbekyan, Masis Rafaelyan, Levon Mutafyan and Ara Khzmalyan comprise the jury.

In every nomination each of the jury members can vote for up to two participants or works; the one who has gathered 5 or more votes will win. The award-winners, besides the crown ornamented with masks symbolizing the “Artavazd” award-giving ceremony, will also receive money awards.

“Artavazd” theatrical award-giving ceremony has been founded in 1996, adding its nomination! s year by year. At the beginning the award-giving ceremony was conducted in a narrow circle of theatrical figures and has been celebrated grandiosely only from the last year.

RELIGION

23. Gyumri’s Church of St. Nikolai the Miraculous being reconstructed [Armenpress, 03/24/10]

Gyumri’s Church of St. Nikolai the Miraculous is in a reconstruction process. The works are funded by “A Matter of Honor” Russian-Armenian charitable organization, with the support of which Gyumri’s “Hill of Honor” graveyard is also being restored and a memorial complex is being constructed.

Michael Poghosyan, head of the organization implementing the construction works of the church told Armenpress that the church which was built in 1887 will be restored preserving the former look. Despite the uninterrupted work, the church had been never reconstructed, because of which it needed urgent repair.

Besides the inner furnishing and restoration works of the church, the roof will also be fortified, which will have the same look after the reconstruction, too and will remain tin-covered.

The works are intended to accomplish till the start of the events dedicated to the 65th anniversary of the victory taken in Great Patriotic War.

24. Turkish Culture and Tourism Ministry permits one church service a year in Surb Khach Church [Armenpress, 03/25/10]

Van Governor’s office stated that Turkish Culture and Tourism Minister Ertugrul Gunay satisfied the application on Surb Khach (Holy Cross) church, which was filed December 20, 2009 by the chief department of museums and cultural heritage affiliated to the Culture and Tourism Ministry. By this the Minister permitted just one service a year in Surb Khach Church on Akhtamar Island.

Armenpress cited ‘Anadolu’ agency and ‘Sabah’ daily as reporting that the decision particularly states: ‘The Ministry considers it better to permit organizing church services once a year on any day of the second week of September (decision on date, time and duration of the service to be made by the Governor’s office) in the church on Akhtamar Island of Van within the frames of spiritual tourism; the number of participants of the service is limited.’

Turkish mass media reported that Van’s Governor Munir Karaoglu accepted the Minister’s decision with satisfaction and said that ‘no one must doubt that people of Van will show hospitality to the guests from Turkey and abroad, who will arrive in Surb Khach on the second Sunday of September.’



SOCIAL

25. Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute obtained two exceptional original photos of Shushi taken in 1920 [Armenpress, 03/24/10]

The Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute has obtained two exceptional original photos, in which the panorama of an Armenian district of Shushi town turned into ruins in 1920 by Turkish Musavatists is pictured.

An official from the museum-institute told Armenpress that the photos are taken from different positions; All the Savior-Ghazanchetsots Church is pictured in one of them with the houses and buildings of the rich Armenian town with unique architectural structures, and in the other is the image of the burnt and ruined Armenian district with Kanach Zham Church and ruins of three and two-storey buildings typical of Shushi architecture. These photos are the exclusive evidences of the horrible volumes of the genocide.

26. Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute getting prepared for the 100th anniversary of the genocide [Armenpress, 03/25/10]

Getting prepared for the 100th anniversary of the genocide committed in 1915 in Turkey, the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute has prepared a program, which intends an implementation of unrepeatable events over different years.

Director of the Genocide Museum-Institute Hayk Demoyan told today journalists that on the occasion of the 95th anniversary an international scientific conference will be held April 19-20 in Yerevan, during which the Armenian cultural genocide committed in Azerbaijan and Turkey will be referred as well.

On April 22, an exhibition entitled "The Armenian Genocide on the pages of the international press" will open, in which exclusive documents of the 1920s will be presented, as well as 60 samples of the leading mass media of foreign countries, on the first pages of which the Armenian genocide has been referred, will be exhibited.

On April 23, exclusive material evidences of genocide, unfamiliar documents, which have been obtained in the last one year in international auctions, will be exhibited in one of the halls of the Genocide Museum-Institute.

Ten monographs on the Armenian genocide will be published in Armenian, French and English. "In the recent period the museum has been replenished with over 1000 new documents and photos, hence the current territory is not sufficient for exhibiting them all," H. Demoyan said.

He said that the new project of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute is already ready; the project intends to double the territory of the museum in the upcoming 5 years.

This year the museum-institute will define a nominal scholarship after Rafael Lemkin, which will enable the foreign students and aspirants to spend a month in scientific establishments and libraries of Armenia for specializing in the line of the Armenian genocide.

27. Hayastan All-Armenian Fund begins restoration of two thoroughfares in Shushi [Armenpress, 03/25/10]

With its recently initiated reconstruction of the Garegin Nzhdeh and Alec Manoogian streets, Shushi's two main thoroughfares, the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund has begun to restore the town's economic and social infrastructures. The street-revitalization project is being realized through contributions made by the Russian-Armenian community during Telethon 2009.

An official from the Fund told Armenpress that following the construction of sewage, water-delivery, and drainage systems, the streets and sidewalks (about 950 meters) will be paved and refurbished, and light posts will be installed throughout. The project will be completed with the installation of 1.5-meter-wide lawns separating the streets from the sidewalks.

"Prior to the launch of this project, the people of Shushi no longer believed that things would turn to the better in their city," said Grigori Avanesyan, director of the Shushi Administration's Urban Development and Architecture Department.

"These streets in particular had long fallen into disrepair," Avanesyan continued. "There is a great deal of bustle in this part of town. Residents frequently use the telephone station and the bank or visit the cultural center, whereas up till now the streets remained in a terrible state."

The Alex Manoogian Street is also home to the fire station and the much-visited, 1847-built Hovhannes Mkrtych Church, better known as the Green Church because of the color of its dome.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

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“This year our main goal is to implement a number of projects aimed at helping Shushi stand on its feet,” Ara Vardanyan, executive director of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund said. “I hope that our revitalization efforts will go a long way in strengthening Shushi residents “bond with their city, and not be limited to the Fund initiatives only.”

SPORTS

28. L. Aronyan takes victory over A. Grishchuk in “Amber” [Armenpress, 03/25/10]

In the 10th round of “Amber” international tournament of “blind” and rapid chess running in the French town of Nis, Grand Master Levon Aronyan took victory over Russian Alexander Grishchuk by 1, 5:0, 5 score. L. Aronyan took victory over him in the match of “blind” chess, and in the rapid chess the game ended in draw.

After the tenth round of the tournament, L. Aronyan occupies the 9th place in the total calculation with 9, 5 points, Norwegian Magnus Carlsen is in the first place with 13, 5 points, Ukrainian Vasili Ivanchuk occupies the second place with 13 points, and Russian Vladimir Kramnik is in the third place with 12 points.

In the sub-tournament of “blind” chess, L. Aronyan occupies the 9th place with 4 points, and the leader is A. Grishchuk with 7 points. M. Carlsen is in the second place with 6, 5 points and V. Ivanchuk is in the third place with 6 points.

In the sub-tournament of rapid chess L. Aronyan is in the 4th place with 5, 5 points. V. Ivanchuk and M. Carlsen share the 1-2nd places with 7 points, V. Kramnik occupies the third place with 6, 5 points.

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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.