



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, February 25, 2011

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

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POLITICS

1. Kiro Manoyan: "The Armenian party must stiffen its stance in the Karabakhi process" [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The recent activity in the process of talks over the NK issue was an attempt to prevent the resumption of war, according to Kiro Manoyan, head of the ARF Armenian Cause and Political Affairs Office.

He said today at a meeting with journalists that the resumption of the war is less possible; however it must not be excluded, taking into consideration the warlike rhetoric and violations of the ceasefire regime by Azerbaijan.

'It is quite clear that it is not yet time for the settlement of the issue. The Armenian party must stiffen its stance and show clearly that the talks will not go on without the direct participation of the Nagorno Karabakh,' Kiro Manoyan said.

He noted that except for diplomacy, other steps must be undertaken for the resolution of the NK conflict. In this context, the speaker underscored the importance of the actions in direction of ensuring



international recognition of the Artsakh Republic. He said the recognition will not hinder the process; "moreover it can become an impetus". The speaker says in that case Azerbaijan will stop "kidding".

"When Azerbaijan is dissatisfied with a certain issue, it applies to military actions and tends to rivet the world's attention," Kiro Manoyan said.

2. Ankara to use Turkish youth of US for denial of Armenian Genocide [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The Federation of Turkish American Associations (TADF) and the Assembly of Turkish American Associations planned to organize March 17-19 in Washington a so-called national leadership conference, aimed at providing efficient help to the Turkish youth in the US for being more active in lobby.

Citing the Turkish "ANKA" news agency, Armenpress reports that the two big Turkish organizations of US decided to join their efforts and sources of influence to act against the Armenians' steps for the Armenian Genocide recognition.

Suat Kinikloglu, chairman of the Turkey-US parliamentary friendship group, Virginia Fox, co-chairperson of the US Congress's US-Turkey friendship group, a number of congressmen and public figures will partake in the conference, which will be held in assistance with Ambassador of Turkey to the US Namik Tan.

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmed Davutoghlu and Egemen Bağış, chief negotiator of Turkey in accession talks with the European Union have been invited to partake in the conference.-0-/39/

3. Vahan Hovhannissyan: Azerbaijan does not correspond to European standards [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

At the Parliamentary Assembly of the EU Eastern Partnership – Euronest – Armenia came forth in favor of participation of Belarus, head of the Armenian delegation to Euronest and ARF faction Vahan Hovhannissyan said today, explaining that double standards are being applied toward Belarus and that is the reason why the Armenian delegation came forth in favor of Minsk.

"From the point of view of democracy Azerbaijan even does not correspond to the European standards. With Lukashenko's example Ilham Aliyev is planning to forward his candidacy at presidential elections. Why does Europe want to work with Baku but does not want to work with Minsk? Maybe because Belarus does not have oil," Hovhannissyan said.

4. ARP has not discussed format of participation at parliamentary elections [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

Armenian Republican Party has not discussed the issue on participating with joint list with "Prosperous Armenia" and "Orinats Yerkir" parties in the coming parliamentary elections.

Press secretary of the Republican party Eduard Sharmazanov told Armenpress that the issues connected with elections the party is discussing on the eve of elections.

"Yet at the event dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the Republican party the president noted that his political team must implement structural changes, reforms," Sharmazanov said, noting that the country faces a number of inner and foreign challenges. "For confronting these challenges stability of political team is necessary and with that aim the coalition partners responded to our call," he said.

According to Sharmazanov, the political team of President Serzh Sargsyan put aside small interests of party and was guided by greater – state interest making decision to assist S. Sargsyan at 2013 presidential elections.

5. Vardan Khachatryan: Unification of opposition forces in the current round is not right [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

Armenia's political opposition must activate its activity, member of the RA National Assembly Vardan Khachatryan said today at a meeting with journalists. According to him, the unification of the opposition in the current round will not be right. The parliamentarian finds that only after activation of their activity the parties can display unity on the threshold of parliamentary elections.

"The approaches according to which the representatives of the opposition forces note that they will exclude the cooperation with this or that party are not right. In the given situation the process will bear an issue of more optimal and efficient unification," Mr. Khachatryan said. According to him, time will show which opposition forces will be unified.



6. New coalition memorandum to be a response to the inner and outer challenges of the country [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The new coalition memorandum will be a response to the inner and outer challenges of the country, member of the Armenian Republican faction Mkrtych Minasyan said speaking to Armenpress. He said discussions over the signing of memorandum were taking place previously. The parliamentarian also assured that previously there were no discussions in the ARP political council about participation in the coming parliamentary with joint lists with "Prosperous Armenia" and "Orinats Yerkir" parties. "At the coming parliamentary elections each party will speak with people with its own voice," Minasyan said.

Speaking about the challenges the coalition faces, the parliamentarian said that the prior issue is the fair solution of the Artsakh issue.

"We are doing everything to make the Karabakh people get use of their right," Minasyan said. From inner challenges the parliamentarian singled out the necessity of overcoming the consequences of the financial-economic crisis.

7. Oleg Yesayan: "In 1988, Karabakh declared to the world its desire to live freely on its own land" [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

A solemn event, dedicated to the 23rd anniversary of the historical decision, adopted of February 20, 1988 at an extraordinary session of the Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO) regional council of deputies, was held February 21 at Armenia's embassy to Russia.

An official from the RA embassy to RF told Armenpress that RA Ambassador Oleg Yesayan addressed a speech at the event. He mentioned that the decision had a historical significance, as on that day "Karabakh declared to the world its desire to live freely in its own land and to reunite itself with the homeland, and it actually was the declaration of the official start of the national liberation movement".

"Today we must pay the homage the historical decision, adopted February 20, 1988, deserved, especially under conditions of the misinformation propaganda by Azerbaijan. The decision was born due to strong efforts by the people of the region and the Armenian nation, when their claim for the realization of the right to self determination in accordance with the Constitution – transfer of Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Oblast to the jurisdiction of Armenian Soviet Republic – was registered.

However Azerbaijan responded to this peaceful initiative with the massacres of Sumgait, trying to avoid a proper assessment to the crime up to now," the ambassador said.

8. RA President Receives US Deputy Secretary of State [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

RA President Serzh Sargsyan received today the delegation, headed by Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg. Philip Gordon, assistant secretary of state for Europe and Eurasian affairs, and other officials were in the delegation.

The presidential press service told Armenpress that President Serzh Sargsyan greeted the guests and said he is happy for the next meeting in Yerevan with the deputy secretary of state. The president emphasized the importance of regular meetings in the discussion of issues of mutual interest and the strengthening of the bilateral relations.

James Steinberg said it is his third visit to Armenia after joining Obama's administration and mentioned that he is happy for the strengthening of the US-Armenian relations.

"Dear Mr. President, as you mentioned, the regular meetings, your February meeting with the Secretary of State in Munich, and your last year's meeting with President Obama in Washington, and, of course, my visit to Armenia, show the strength of the relations between our states," James Steinberg said.

During the meeting the speakers touched upon a number of issues on regional security and the process of regulation of the Nagorno Karabakh issue.

9. Armen Martirosyan: Opposition must form a joint agenda [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

Armenia's political opposition must form a joint agenda, member of the "Heritage" faction Armen Martirosyan said today at a news conference, noting that forming joint agenda does not mean uniting of the political forces.

"It is not necessary for the opposition forces to unite and create one complete structure. It is just necessary to create one joint field for operating," Martirosyan said. According to him, recently the



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viewpoints of the opposition forces have become closer. According to the parliamentarian, the political forces of the opposition field can find edges for cooperation.

“Previously, the “Heritage” came forth with such suggestion but unfortunately no attention was paid to it. I think our party can cooperate with the Armenian National Congress and ARF as well as with other forces, it has such experience,” Martirosyan said. According to him, no opposition force can reach any result in case of acting alone.

Speaking about the image of “Heritage” the parliamentarian noted that the public continues sympathizing them, but it is necessary to speak about it after serious social polls. The party needs to present its work to the public, the speaker said.

10. ANC ready to cooperate with all forces [Armenpress, 02/24/11]

The Armenian National Congress is ready to cooperate with all the political forces for the establishment of democracy in Armenia, head of the All-Armenian National Movement’s administration Aram Manukyan said at a news conference, adding that democracy is such valuable system that both authorities and different opposition forces may become allies in its establishment.

“Currently the Armenian National Congress has drawn its attention on the opposition electorate who express complaint but do not have occasion or do not provide time to enter the fighting arena,” Aram Manukyan said.

11. Medal of Honor to Frank Pallone [Armenpress, 02/24/11]

An event was held February 22 in the reception hall of the Armenian Embassy in Washington, dedicated to member of the U.S. House of Representatives, co-chairman of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues Frank Pallone, on the occasion of which he was handed a Medal of Honor by Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan.

Press service of the Armenian Foreign Affairs Ministry told Armenpress Ambassador Tatul Margaryan noted in his welcoming speech that the high honor by the President is the manifestation of the assessment of the 15 year-old devoted work of Congressman Frank Pallone for his outstanding contribution to strengthening of the Armenian-American friendship, consistent activity for the good of Armenians and for presenting the issues of Armenian people to international community in unbiased way. This high medal also expresses the attitude of the American-Armenians toward the congressman and his 15 year-old activity.

Afterward the NK representative in the US, the executive directors of the US Armenian Cause and Armenian Assembly of America welcomed and addressed congratulatory words to congressman Pallone.

The congressman expressed gratitude to the Armenian President for appraising his activity. He also addressed his congratulatory speech to the Armenian Ambassador to the US, and to the heads of American-Armenian organizations for kind words and for close cooperation of many years. He stated that he will continue his efficient activity to register success in issues exciting the Republic of Armenia, Nagorno Karabakh and Armenian people.

BUSINESS

12. Tigran Davtyan says exportation priority of Armenia’s economy [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The priority of Armenia’s economy is exportation, especially in the sphere of industry, RA Economy Minister Tigran Davtyan said today at the joint session of the RA economy ministry board and the administration of the Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen (Employers).

Tigran Davtyan says the industrial development, focused on exportation, is a priority in the programs of the government.

“Over 50 investment projects of industrial development of thousand billion AMD are under way in Armenia. We hope that within a year and a half they will be brought to the logical finish,” the minister said. He underscored the importance of the state-private sector cooperation in the process of implementation. He noted that the government secured extraordinary conditions for the implementation of several projects – postponing of VAT payments, interim regime of importation, etc.

According to Arsen Ghazaryan, president of the Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen (Employers), every effort must be exerted for the promotion of economic strategy development. He says



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red tape issues must be eliminated for ensuring real increase in the spheres, which have exportation prospects.

13. International pharmaceutical conference in Armenia [Armenpress, 02/25/11]

The 4th international pharmaceutical conference will be conducted in November in Armenia, in which leading specialists and companies of the pharmaceutical sphere will participate. The members of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations will be invited.

Executive Director of the Armenian Union of Medicine Manufacturers and Importers Samvel Zakaryan told Armenpress that the up-to-date approaches of pharmacy, the directions of international development in the sphere, the issues and their solutions will be presented. This year the representatives of Diaspora will be also invited at the conference.

"We intend to bring the product of well known medicine manufacturers by using the Diaspora ties. The union wants to create a field with its activity, which will contribute to development of the sphere," Mr. Zakaryan said.

Within the framework of the conference "Pharma Expo" exhibition is intended to conduct, at which the leading companies will present the own product and innovations.

The executive director of the union noted that the conference will contribute to establishment and development of new ties of cooperation.

DIASPORA

14. Armenian ambassador to Lebanon conducts meetings [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

Armenian ambassador to Lebanon Ashot Kocharyan visited February 21 the offices of the ARF, Ramkavar Azatakan Party and met with the heads of the parties and members of the administration as well as with the chief editors of "Azdak", "Ararat" and "Zartonk" newspapers.

Foreign Ministry's press and information department told Armenpress that the ambassador presented certain details about the events planned by the embassy for 2011 and expressed hope that the Lebanese-Armenian community and all the Armenian establishments continue close cooperation with the embassy, particularly for conducting the events dedicated to the 20th anniversary of Armenia's independence.

During the meetings they referred to the Armenia-Lebanon bilateral relations, enhancement of the Armenia-Diaspora partnership, role of Lebanese Armenian leading mass media in covering of issues of all-Armenian importance.

15. Three Questions Turkey's Ambassador Would not Answer... [Noyan Tapan, 02/23/11] By Harut Sassounian, Publisher, The California Courier

Turkey's Ambassador to the United States, Namik Tan, spoke at the University of Southern California's Center on Public Diplomacy on February 16. His topic was: "Public Diplomacy: The Turkish Experience."

The Turkish Ambassador assumed his post in Washington last February, but shortly after his arrival was recalled to Ankara when the House Foreign Affairs Committee adopted a resolution acknowledging the Armenian Genocide.

Amb. Tan is no stranger to Washington, where he served as the Embassy's Counselor from 1991 to 1995 and First Counselor from 1997 to 2001. During his long diplomatic career, he also was Ambassador to Israel, Second Secretary at the Turkish Embassy in Russia, and Deputy Undersecretary at the Foreign Ministry in Ankara.

During his first visit to Los Angeles this month, the smooth-talking Ambassador managed to meet with Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, spoke to the World Affairs Council, and held meetings with the American Jewish Committee, Turkish community leaders, and the Editorial Board of the Los Angeles Times.

Prior to his arrival, the Association of Turkish-Americans of Southern California had posted a note on its website, urging local Turks to attend the Ambassador's public appearances and "show visible support... especially in the face of usual anticipated detractors."

Running the risk of being labeled "a detractor," I decided to attend the Ambassador's talk which ironically was held at USC's Ronald Tutor Campus Center -- named after its Armenian benefactor, the son of Al Tutor (Varjabedian), a genocide survivor. I made my way through scores of U.S. Secret Service agents, campus security, and Turkish bodyguards who almost outnumbered the guests at the event.



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Even more surprising was the fact that there were only a handful of Armenians and Turks among the attendees, consisting mostly of USC students and professors.

Amb. Tan, who spoke in fluent English for half an hour, presented his country in the best possible light. Since he had not addressed Armenian issues, I decided to pose the following interrelated questions:

The Turkish government recently renovated a couple of Armenian churches. There were thousands of Armenian churches and monasteries throughout Turkey before the genocide, most of which were converted into mosques, warehouses and stables, and many were destroyed. Isn't it time for the Turkish government to turn over these Armenian churches to the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul? Also, after Armenians were deported and killed, they left behind their houses, lands and belongings. Isn't time for the Turkish government to return these properties to the heirs of their original Armenian owners? Finally, regarding the Armenian Genocide issue, Pres. Obama declared in his statement of last April 24: "95 years ago, 1.5 million Armenians were massacred or marched to death in the final days of the Ottoman Empire." If you say that is not true, wouldn't you be calling the President of the United States a liar?

Here is Amb. Tan's response:

"This hate should end. We should put it behind as early as possible. That's why we are trying to reach out to our Armenian friends and we have signed the [Armenia-Turkey] Protocols. In these Protocols, one of the suggestions that we put is that we want an independent historical inquiry commission which will include representatives from every country -- from US, France, and whichever country you like. They will study those claims and we will see the decision all together. But history cannot be legislated. This is not the way that history could be judged. So, I think this has created a lot of ill feelings in our societies. Armenians have given a lot of contribution to our social life historically. Therefore we need to continue such kind of engagements, but this hate should be stopped."

I politely reminded Amb. Tan that he had not answered my questions. He responded by saying: "That is my answer." He probably was not prepared to face such politically sensitive questions. By sidestepping my queries, he left a negative impression on his audience, despite his highly-skilled diplomatic credentials.

At the program's conclusion, Amb. Tan walked over, shook my hand, and thanked me for my questions. I told him that his assessment was inaccurate, as the Armenian issue had nothing to do with "hatred." I explained that a great crime was committed by Turkey against the Armenian nation, and that Armenians are not blinded by "hatred," but simply demanding "justice." The Ambassador turned around and walked away with a mysterious smile on his face!

Even though Amb. Tan avoided answering my questions, our public exchange had the beneficial effect of exposing the university audience, the Ambassador and his entourage to the just demands of the Armenian people for the crimes committed by Turkey. Indeed, it is also imperative to challenge Turkish officials at every opportunity, so that neither they nor their audience would be able to ignore the Armenian grievances.

16. The last program of "Lincy" Foundation to be completed by the end of 2011 [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The last initiative of the "Lincy" Foundation in Armenia – the school building program in the disaster zone is in process. Publisher of The California Courier Harut Sassounian, who was also the Vice-President of the Foundation told Armenpress that reconstruction of six schools in Vanadzor, Spitak and Gyumri continues and is expected to be accomplished by the end of this year. The program costs 12 million USD.

"Irrespective of annulment of the "Lincy" Foundation the program will be brought to an end. The program is controlled by the United Armenian Fund," Harut Sassounian said.

The "Lincy" Foundation created by Kirk Kirkoryan donated all its means – 200 million USD to Los Angeles branch of California University. Thanks to this donation "Dream Fund" will be created which will provide scholarships to students as well as implement a number of research and educational programs.

Harut Sassounian found it difficult to say whether Kirk Kirkoryan will continue his benevolent programs in Armenia or not.

Since its establishment in 1989 "Lincy" Foundation has provided 1.1 billion USD assistance to colleges, research and humanitarian programs. Wide-scale road construction, school building, apartment construction works were carried out in Armenia with the means of the Foundation.

17. Harut Sassounian: The issue of recognition of the Armenian Genocide should be moved to legal platform [Armenpress, 02/23/11]



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From this January UN Congress has started its works with the new staff. Armenpress news agency spoke about the possibility of recognition of the Armenian Genocide and some other issues connected with it with the publisher of The California Courier newspaper Harut Sassounian.

-Mr. Sassounian, how much is the possibility of adoption of the Armenian Genocide Resolution by the Congress? Does it have enough Armenian-inclined congressmen?

-The Republicans comprise today majority in the House of Representatives. The commitments of the speaker of the House of Representatives are fulfilled by John Boehner – representative of the Republican Party. It is well known that the latter has come forth against the resolutions on recognition of the Armenian Genocide, and his position today is not clear yet.

In my opinion Armenian people do not need the adoption of the resolution on the Armenian genocide by the US Congress, for the House of Representatives adopted suchlike resolution in 1975 and 1984, recognizing the 1915 events as genocide.

We also do not need current US President Barack Obama pronounce 'Armenian Genocide' in his speech on April 24, for President Ronald Reagan has already recognized the fact of the Armenian Genocide by the declaration signed 1981 April 21.

Our further steps must be directed toward restoration and defense of the rights of Armenian people encroached in the Ottoman Empire in international courts. Turkey can always deny the fact of the Armenian Genocide, realizing and splendidly knowing the truth. So we must not wait for the criminal to accept its deed and go to implementation of goals only after it.

-In which international instances do you see the solution of the issue?

-We can pursue the Armenian Cause in 3 international courts – European Court of Human Rights, Hague International Court and US Federal Court. If the governments decided to apply to the Hague International Court we must compile all our archives and go to confirmation of our claim. The Armenian Genocide is a fact which nobody can deny. As for the US Federal court, the inheritors of the Genocide have already started presenting claims and registering successes.

-Are suchlike cases in process in federal courts?

-Yes, now some claims of several inheritors of the victims of the genocide are in process.

In such a way we should try to stand up for our claim, without waiting for recognition of the fact of the genocide by Turkey. The whole world knows the truth about the Armenian Genocide. It has been recognized by over 20 states of the world. Some states, like the Great Britain and Israel, do not make that step, taking into consideration their interests.

18. Lecture on Armenian Genocide at UCLA [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

Well known scientist, Professor Siobhan Nash-Marshall has delivered the other day lecture at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) entitled "Lies, Letters and Genocide". Center for Armenian Remembrance and Friends of UCLA Armenian Language and Culture Studies assisted the professor. An official from the Center told Armenpress that over 100 students attended the lecture.

During the lecture Siobhan Nash-Marshall noted that the denial of the Armenian Genocide by the Turkish Republic also presents itself an activity of genocide. Nash-Marshall cited the letter-writing of the representatives of the Turkish supreme authorities in the post-genocide period and noted that such a degree of lie contains elements of criminality. For grounding the argument the scientist cited a number of contemporary and classical psychologists and philosophers. He also promised to publicize the researches of his studies in future, for which the author is currently working with scientist of Armenian origins Rita Mahtesyan.

Professor Siobhan Nash-Marshall also noted that on March 18 at Glendale Library he will deliver a lecture on the same theme with Antonia Arslan, Italian writer and academic of Armenian origins and author of 'Skylark Farm'.

19. French Armenians not to vote for Sarkozy in case he interferes in Genocide bill adoption process [Armenpress, 02/25/11]

The French branch of the Political Developments Research Center expressed its deep concern over the possible speculation of the French bill establishing criminal punishment for the denial of the Armenian Genocide taking into consideration the fact revealed recently by WikiLeaks according to which Nicolas Sarkozy promised to "bury" the French bill in the Senate.



An official from the center informed Armenpress that the branch and its associates call on the President of France to be extremely careful in making political decisions over Turkey, stemming from his own political interests.

“It is just necessary to note that in 2012 presidential elections not the 80 000 Turkish electorate may determine the victory of Sarkozy but the over half a million Armenians,” the statement of the center says.

The branch also expressed its readiness to join the possible initiative of the Armenian ambassador to Switzerland Charles Aznavour, according to which, in case of Sarkozy’s interference in adoption of the bill he will call on French-Armenian community not to vote in favor of Sarkozy at 2012 presidential elections.

ARTS

20. Robert Amirkhanyan: “Each Artist Must Have a “License” for Creation” [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

Each person is to be responsible for his own statements, and Vahram Petrosyan is not an exception. His statements prove that he lacks for information and is not aware of the current relations with Azerbaijan properly, according to Robert Amirkhanyan, chairman of the Armenian Composers’ Union, member of the Public Council.

At today’s meeting with journalists he spoke on the recent statements by Vahram Petrosyan, composer. Vahram Petrosyan stated that he appreciates and listens to Azerbaijani music and uses Azerbaijani modulations in the songs he composes.

“Such a phenomenon has been widely spread in our reality, and one can call it “Vahram’s syndrome”. The young man writes songs not for fulfilling the wish of his soul, but for satisfying the market’s demand. Such creations cannot be considered high values of culture. When Armenian artists apply to the richness of others instead of making use of their own richness, it means they lack for “firewood”, so they do not have the right to create,” the composer stated.

He added that standards, which will give an opportunity to differ high quality from low quality, are necessary in culture, as well as in all the important spheres.

Robert Amirkhanyan says he will present proposals on definition of standards in art and on assessment in accordance with those standards at the Public Council’s forthcoming gathering.

“Each artist must have a “license” for creation, and his/her signature must be available underneath in order to realize that when creating, he/she deals directly with the national-cultural security,” Robert Amirkhanyan said.

21. Maxim Vengerov performs in Yerevan [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The Armenian State Youth Orchestra, conducted by Maxim Vengerov – world-famous violin virtuoso, conductor – performed today at the Aram Khachaturyan Concert Hall.

Hasmik Poghosyan, RA culture minister, Gohar Sargsyan, spouse of the RA prime minister, a number of art lovers attended the concert.

The orchestra performed with a concert program, which involved the “Russian Easter Festival Overture”, the “Scheherazade” symphonic suite by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and the Violin Concerto by Jean Sibelius. The Armenian State Philharmonic Orchestra’s brass masters performed at the concert as well.

22. Restoration and transference works of wall paintings of Minas to go on [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The restoration and transference works of distinguished painter Minas Avetisyan will be continued in the running year. Head of the Modern Art Department of the Armenian Ministry of Culture Sona Harutyunyan told Armenpress that currently it is under specification which wall paintings will be moved. According to Mrs. Harutyunyan, the finance issue of the works is still under discussion. It is not excluded that the moving works of Minas’ wall paintings are implemented both by the means of the state and private sectors.

Last year two important paintings were moved from Gyumri to the RA governmental building with the help of Italian specialists. The wall paintings were kept in the building of Gyumri electric-technical factory, which was accident-risky. The paintings are exclusively valuable and were subject to removal. In



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2009 one wall painting was moved to Minas Avetisyan House-Museum in Jajur with the help of Italian specialists. Mr. Harutyunyan said that the works have been implemented at a high level.

There are still 5 wall paintings by Minas in Shirak province.

RELIGION

23. Company implementing construction of Saint Anna Church to be known in the upcoming days [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The company implementing the construction of Saint Anna Church - Yerevan residence of Catholicos of All-Armenians Karekin II, will be known at the end of this month, Naira Melikyan, representative to sponsor of the construction works of the church, philanthropist Hrayr Hovnanyan, told Armenpress.

According to the initial statement of "Hrayr and Anna Hovnanyan Fund", 7 Armenian companies have participated in the tender announced for construction. The winner was to be elected this February 20, but the submitted documents are still under discussion. In their applications companies must note the distinct amount of the intended expenses. But primary importance is attached to constructional experience of the company," Hrayr Hovnanyan's representative said.

SOCIAL

24. Hayastan All-Armenian Fund completes reconstruction of Shushi Library [Noyan Tapan, 02/23/11]

Earlier this year, the Shushi Library began operating in a completely renovated and newly furnished space. The transformation of the venerable landmark, at a cost of approximately \$227,000, was sponsored by the Armenia Fund U.S. Western Region.

The library now is poised to function as not only an extraordinary destination for reading and research, but a hub for a range of educational and cultural events. It will serve Shushi, Stepanakert, and nearby rural communities, helping enrich the lives of students and the population at large.

The renovation project has resulted in a complete makeover of the library, which comprises a two-story main building and a single-level administrative unit, with a total area of 624 square meters. Both structures were reinforced and rebuilt around new floor plans, the roofs were replaced, and the floors were covered variously with ceramic tiles and hardwood. Improvements also include the installation of up-to-date electrical and climate-control systems.

The administrative building consists of an entrance hall and four offices. The main building comprises a large reading hall, a storehouse, and a basement used for various library needs.

The people of Shushi have long cherished the dream of seeing their city restored and teeming with Armenian life, says Mikayel Khachatryan, deputy head of the Shushi Administration. Today that dream is becoming reality, through key improvements including rebuilt roads and the refurbished roofs of over ten apartment complexes as well as ongoing redevelopment projects such as the renovation of the Shushi Cultural Center and the Abovyan School, and installation of an internal potable-water network. Khachatryan has high hopes that the Shushi Library will regain its former stature as a regional intellectual center. In the Soviet era, he says, the library had up to 60 visitors a day. Moreover, it hosted a regular stream of lectures and book presentations featuring renowned authors and scholars. All that came to a grinding halt with the onset of the Artsakh War. In 1992, when the residents of Shushi returned to their native city, what they found was utter devastation. Their beloved library, like all of Shushi's once-vibrant institutions, was far from being able to resume its activities.

Now that the library has received a new lease on life, its management is hard at work to optimize it. The library's book collection, comprising over 16,500 volumes, will shortly be moved back to the renovated premises, after having been temporarily stored at the Muratsan School. The management has already taken steps to considerably expand the collection. Another significant addition will be realized thanks to Moscow-based ethnographer Karen Yuzbashyan, who has donated his private collection of ethnographic studies, totaling 265 pieces, to the library.

Currently the library employs a staff of seven, with plans to expand it in the near future. One critically important position the management is seeking to create is that of a bibliographer. Another top priority is to digitize the entire book collection.

"One after the other, redevelopment projects launched in 2009 are coming to fruition," says Ara Vardanyan, executive director of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund. "And with the completion of every



single initiative, we feel proud for bringing hope and joy to Shushi, as we continue to do our share in helping restore and beautify this magnificent city-fortress of our ancestors.”

25. “Baku.am” web site to operate in Yerevan [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The newly opened “Baku.am” web site will allow the Azerbaijani society for the first time get acquainted with the history of Baku – without distortions and discriminations. Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute Hayk Demoyan said at the presentation of the web-site that it is a wonderful source of alternative information for the Azerbaijani young people.

“We tried to present the real history of the town of Baku based on facts and being utmost objective. The Azerbaijani young people will get informed who built the major part of their buildings, founded theatres, etc.,” Demoyan said, adding that the founders of first library, reading hall, music newspaper, chocolate and mirror factories, oil pipeline in Baku were Armenians.

The web site is in Armenian, Russian and English language. The hundreds of photos and post cards placed there cover the history of Armenian families, Armenian press, printing and presence of Armenian culture. The web-site also presents documents and photos of massacres of Armenians in Baku in 1905, 1918, 1990.

According to Hayk Demoyan, in early 20th century, Baku, being biggest center of the Russian empire, had rich Armenian civilized presence.

“The anti-Armenian policy adopted by current authorities of Azerbaijan, does not tolerate any reminding of presence of Armenians in Baku and the rich cultural heritage they left in the history of the town,” Demoyan said.

26. 4 RA citizens evacuated from Libya [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The four citizens of the Republic of Armenia – Gevorg Astvatsatryan, Artak Mhacakanyan, Karapet Babajanyan and Ani Ghazaryan – have reached Moscow safely, RA Foreign Ministry Spokesman Tigran Balayan told Armenpress.

Protests with a claim of resignation of the government and president kicked off February 15 in Libya. The populated areas of the capital of Libya experienced aircraft strikes. A number of Libyans have become refugees.

27. Coalition’s candidate for RA Ombudsman [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

The daily Azg writes that the information that the three-wing coalition wants to forward the candidacy of young lawyer Karen Andreasyan in the office of the Human Rights Defender was true. It was stated by the spokesman of the Armenian Republican Party Eduard Sharmazanov. The daily says of course the journalists know Andreasyan as in this or that way he related to the journalism institutions but not the people. It is possible that he has professional values, high educational level and working experience and like Sharmazanov says will hardly and objectively work in this office, but his candidacy is not corresponding to one legislative point that candidate for this office must enjoy the trust of the people because he has not manage to become known for public. The only way of his mass communication with the public was while anchoring “In reality” program on “Armenia” TV.

28. No visa regime between Armenia and Argentina [Armenpress, 02/23/11]

Today the Armenian government approved the suggestion on signing agreement between the governments of Armenia and Argentina on elimination of visa regime between the two states.

Deputy foreign minister Arman Kirakosyan said this is an unprecedented agreement as Argentina will be the only state, besides the former USSR republics, with whom the visits with common passports will be conducted without visa regime.

The deputy minister said it will not only promote the further development of friendly relations between Armenia and Argentina but the mutual visits of the citizens.

29. Tigran Sargsyan Partakes in Session of Council of Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan [Armenpress, 02/24/11]

The session of the council of the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan was held today. Tigran Sargsyan – RA prime minister, chairman of the council – chaired the session.



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, February 25, 2011

An official from the information and PR department of the RA government told Armenpress that election of rector of the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan was an agenda item.

In the result of a vote at the session, Ruben Mirzakhanyan, who had been proposed to assume the office of the university's acting rector, was elected rector of the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan.

The university's 2010 budget report and the 2011 budget, involved in the agenda, were approved.

Manuk Mkrtchyan, RA education and science deputy minister, was elected secretary of the council of the Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan.

30. Lower level of unemployment expected in 2011 [Armenpress, 02/25/11]

According to 2011 forecasts on demand of labor force, higher level of salaries and lower level of unemployment is expected compared with the previous forecasts.

Press service of the Central Bank of Armenia told Armenpress that nearly 7.8% growth of average nominal salaries is expected this year, conditioned by moderate increase of salaries in some organizations which have continuous and budgetary funding of productivity in the private sector.

The reeducation of unemployment and the preservation of the environment of rise of prices in the first half of 2011 will have essential influence on nominal salaries in the forecasted period.

SPORTS

31. Elina Danielyan - leader of Women's Grand Prix chess tournament [Armenpress, 02/24/11]

At the Women's Grand Prix chess tournament in Doha Armenian Grand Master Elina Danielyan, taking victory over former world champion Maya Chiburdanidze (Georgia) in the second round, has gathered 2 points out of the possible 2 and shares the 1-2nd places with Georgian Grand Master Nana Dzagnidze.

The other representative of Armenia- Grand Master Lilit Mkrtchyan, conceded to Bulgarian Antoinetta Stephanova in the 2nd round and has only a half point.

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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.