



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Friday, April 29, 2011

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

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AGBU NEWS

1. Armenia to participate in Los Angeles Times festival of books [Armenpress, 04/29/11]

For the first time Armenia will be represented at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books. The 16th annual event will take place on April 30 and May 1 at the campus of the University of Southern California.



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The two day event will bring together tens of thousands of avid readers who will have a rare opportunity to meet and interact with their favorite authors and get acquainted with newly published books – both traditional and virtual. One of the largest book shows in the world, the LA Times festival is expected to draw as many 140,000 visitors and hundreds of state and private exhibitors.

Program highlights include a debut appearance of the Republic of Armenia, featuring different book genres, such as arts, music, genocide and historic literature in Armenian, English, French and Russian languages. The Armenian booth, which is one of the largest among the participating countries, will have celebrity appearances, book signings, cultural organizations that sell and promote books, live music and much more. Visitors will be able to meet with Armenian writers, journalists, academics and also have discussions with them. A special presentation will be held to introduce the first Armenian virtual book and virtual college, sponsored by the Armenian General Benevolent Union, AGBU.

Armenia's debut at the LA Times Festival of Book is dedicated to the 500th anniversary of the first printed Armenian Book (1512-2012), which will be celebrated in 2012. During the festival Yerevan – the capital of Armenia – will be proudly announced for being named the 2012 World Book Capital by the United Nations Cultural and Educational Organization, UNESCO.

Armenia's participation at this important book forum was made possible through the close cooperation and sponsorship of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia, the Consulate General of the Republic of Armenia in Los Angeles, the West Coast Chapter of AGBU, and the Armenian Publishers' Association.

POLITICS

2. Ara Gochunyan says normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations depends on Turkey [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

"The Turkey's attempt to tie the process of normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations with certain processes is a step to win time", chief editor of the "Zhamanak" Armenian newspaper issued in Istanbul Ara Gochunyan said speaking to Armenpress.

Many analysts expect changes in the process of normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations after the parliamentary elections in Turkey. Referring to this opinion, Gochunyan said he does not think that the inner-political developments will move the process from the deadlock. "I think these processes are not connected. Currently elections are in process in Turkey, afterwards they will take place in Armenia. If viewing from this point of view the process will be protracted. The issue of normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations must not be tied with the inner political developments", the chief editor said.

According to him, the normalization of bilateral relations depends on Turkey.

3. "Status quo" to be preserved for long time [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

The current "status quo" of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict will be preserved for a long time, head of political sciences and philosophy chair of the St. Petersburg State University Valery Achkasov said. According to him, the current situation in the Karabakh conflict settlement process is in phase when it is difficult to find settlement to the issue.

"Increasing its financial flows, Azerbaijan will try from time to time make the situation on the border tensed, but I do not consider the war will resume", he said, adding that the current "frozen" situation of the process will remain for a long time.

4. Expert: No changes expected in the process of normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

No changes are expected in the process of normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations, head of the Eastern Cultural Sciences and Philosophy Chair of the St. Petersburg Tigran Tumanyan said, adding that speaking in the language of pre-conditions the Turkish authorities will hardly manage to make a step forward.

Tumanyan noted that changes though are noticeable in certain part of the Turkish public but the political leadership continues the policy of denial.

Head of the political sciences and philosophy chair of the St. Petersburg State University Valery Achkasov said after the parliamentary elections in Turkey no changes will take place as the polls show that the winner will be the ruling party and the position of the latter has not changed. He too noted the change of position of certain people in Turkey.



Head of the another chair of the same university Vladimir Guturov said Russia is interested in the region and wants the conflicts be settled in peaceful way.

5. Serzh Sargsyan: “Political processes in our country are normal” [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

The political processes in our country are normal, RA President Serzh Sargsyan said today at the meeting with journalists after the consultation with the directors and owners of the main companies, operating in the sphere of mining-metallurgy. He added that the coalition parties made their activity both in the legislative and executive bodies more dynamical.

According to the president, the parliamentary activity is quite active. He says an important tradition is being formed in the parliament: the discussion is often rough, charges are made, yet they process within the bounds of correctness.

“I think due to the efforts of both the coalition and parliamentary opposition we can reach civil culture. I emphasize the tendencies in the extra-parliamentary opposition’s activity. Meetings are conducted and such speeches are made, which are not aimed at split in the society, which are not aimed at the development of the ideas of “breaking, crumbling”, which are aimed at transposing the political struggle to some platforms as well,” the RA president said. He says the fact that the meeting organizers and the police manage to cooperate is positive.

“Thank God, in the recent long period during those events no any tough violations of the civil order were registered. This can give an opportunity to again make the Square of Freedom a place for expressing alternatives for the development of Armenia,” Serzh Sargsyan said.

He said the events on the 20th anniversary of the republic will be completed this year. The events will last till the end of the year. “I want to remind that we all enter into May, which is a month of success and victory of our nation,” the president said.

“We all must be able to gain a victory over evil: only the strong can win the evil. Today we have authorities, we have opposition, which does not allow the authorities to relax their vigilance. Through cooperation we can ensure serious achievements for our country. Here we are ready to be the first, to undertake steps for relaxing, and I have already assigned the minister of justice to make proposals,” Serzh Sargsyan said.

6. Analyst: Opposition trying to involve non-extremist electorate [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

The opposition is trying to involve non-extremist electorate as well, director of the Caucasian Institute Alexander Iskandaryan said today at the meeting with reporters. According to him, the elements of dialogue noticeable between the opposition and authorities may be considered as the launch of pre-electoral campaign. According to him, the summer time will be period of “silence” and during the autumn time – before the parliamentary elections, the political forces will present their positions.

“The parties are trying to present themselves at their best before the elections. It particularly was expressed in the memorandum signed by the coalition”, Iskandaryan said.

Referring to the statement of Levon Ter-Petrosyan that the April 28 rally may become the day of either separation or dialogue, the political analyst noted that there is no separation as the demands forwarded by the opposition are being implemented by the authorities stemming from their will, irrespective of the wish of the opposition.

“As to the Freedom Square, it is just a symbol, nothing more. As to the issue on setting free the people arrested in connection with March 1-2 unrest, it has been included in the agenda of the opposition long ago”, Iskandaryan said.

7. Analyst: the USA to try to resume Armenian-Turkish relations [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

The United States may have a resolute impact in this round of settlement of the Armenian-Turkish relations, director of the Caucasian Institute, political analyst Alexander Iskandaryan said, adding that the impact of Europe currently is not big as it continues supporting the “soft” power.

“In this process it is necessary not to underestimate the role of Russia as no big initiative can take place in our region without participation of Russia”, he said. Alexander Iskandaryan noted after the recent events in the Arab world, the place and role of Turkey in the region has changed. “The parliamentary and presidential elections in Turkey may have essential impact on it”, the political analyst said, predicting that the ruling “Justice and Development” party will get the majority of seats in the parliament. In his opinion, after the elections the USA will try to exert pressure on Turkey for resuming the Armenian-Turkish relations. The analyst said he thinks so stemming from the analysis of the April 24 speech of Obama.



8. Ruben Hakobyan: “ANC realized that the policy it adopted was leading to a deadlock” [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

The reason the ANC changed its stance thoroughly is that ANC realized that the policy it had adopted was leading to a deadlock, says Ruben Hakobyan, vice chairman of “Heritage” party department.

Speaking on the Armenian National Congress’s posture of launching a dialogue with the authorities Ruben Hakobyan said today at a meeting with journalists that this step is welcome. He says the mediation of European establishments is noteworthy in this matter.

“Neither in 1991, nor now Levon Ter-Petrosyan has a radical program,” according to Paruyr Hayrikyan, leader of the National Self-Determination Union party. He stated that he has not noticed anything new in any program by the ANC.

9. RA NA Speaker to leave for Brussels [Armenpress, 04/29/11]

At the invitation by Jerzy Buzek, president of the European Parliament, Hovik Abrahamyan, speaker of the RA National Assembly, will partake May 3 in Brussels in the first constituent meeting of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly.

The speakers of the Eastern Partnership member-states’ parliaments will partake in the meeting, during which the Constituent Act and the Rules of Procedure of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly are intended to be adopted.

NA Speaker Hovik Abrahamyan will address a speech. An official from the NA public relations and media department told Armenpress that the private talk of the NA chairman with the president of the European Parliament is intended as well.

BUSINESS

10. Michael Vardanyan: “Grand Holding” has no intention of leaving Armenia [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

The news that “Grand Holding” company is leaving Armenia does not correspond to reality, co-founder of the “Grand Holding” company, member of parliament Michael Vardanyan said today, adding that if the company intended to depart it would not have built “Grand Sport” complex that opened here.

“We are striving to turn into a company having international rating which will export its products to all the countries of the world, it will have different branches in different countries”, Vardanyan said.

11. President consults with heads of banks [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan conducted today a consultation in the Central Bank of Armenia with the participation of heads of banks of the republic. President of the “Araratbank” Ashot Osipyan told the reporters that during the consultation they discussed the issues existing in the banking system, the micro-economic indexes, further steps connected with the development of the sphere. He said the participants drew their attention to the legislative changes which he said will promote the increase of the level of providing loans.

At the consultation a decision was made that the steps presented by the banks will be under the direct control of the President. Osipyan also said a decision was made to conduct such meetings regularly.

President of “Anelikbank” Samvel Tchzmachyan described the consultation as effective, saying that the heads of banks presented the existing issues, reached certain arrangements.

President of the “ACBA Credit Agricool” bank Stepan Gishyan said the issue of provision of agricultural loans was one of the core issues of the consultation. He said the program of provision of privileged agricultural loans is in process.

Chairman of the Central Bank Arthur Javadyan noted that issues on social-economic development, financial stability were also discussed at the consultation. The banking system makes the 91% of the whole financial system. In this respect many factors are connected with the stable development of the banking system.

“Meetings with the President will be permanent. They give positive impetus to the representatives of the sphere. Besides, these meetings give opportunity to voice our concerns”, the CB chairman said.



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DIASPORA

12. Events held in Canada dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

On April 25 the commemoration event dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide took place in the Armenian Embassy of Canada. The leaders of two eparchies of Armenian Apostolic church and those of Armenian Catholic and Armenian Evangelical churches, heads of Armenian parties of Canada, organizations and unions, pupils of Armenian schools, representatives of media, hundreds of people from Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto were present there.

During the event flowers were laid near the "Immortal Armenia" monument.

Temporary attorney of affairs of RA in Canada Arman Hakobyan made a speech.

The commemoration event continued in front of the parliament of Canada, and then it was followed by the rally in Ottawa streets as well as by protest in front of Turkish Embassy. The Prime Minister of Canada Steven Harper made a speech dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

13. Events held in Switzerland dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

The burial service dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide was delivered in St. Jacob church in Geneva. The chore of "Our Lady of Armenian centre" of Gyumri performed requiem. The wreath was laid near the memorial monument of Genocide victims. The representatives of Armenian community in Switzerland, public and political figures were present there.

On the same day more than 1000 young people from Bulgaria, Great Britain, Spain, Italy, Germany, France, Holland, Armenia, Israel, Lebanon, as well as representatives of Armenian community from different regions of Switzerland marched to the Nations Square. Here the commemoration event dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide took place.

14. Harut Sassounian: Mr. President, Armenian-Americans reject your offensive word games on Genocide [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11] By Harut Sassounian, Publisher, The California Courier

Despite Armenian-Americans' persistent admonishment of Pres. Obama to refrain from substituting "Meds Yeghern" (Great Calamity) for the Armenian Genocide in his annual April 24 statement, he has continued to do so for three years in a row.

Apparently, henchmen of the denialist Turkish regime and their American cohorts have been able to compel the President of the United States to avoid any reference to the "genocide" or "tseghasbanoutoun" -- its Armenian equivalent. Otherwise, why would the President of the United States address the American public in a foreign language known only to a few? Armenian substitute words such as "Meds Yeghern" are simply meant to fool some gullible Armenian-Americans. This is a cheap trick that is beneath the dignity of the Presidency!

Over the past three years, rather than mending his ways and discontinuing the use of "Meds Yeghern," Pres. Obama has done the exact opposite. Incredibly, he is using that term in this year's April 24 statement not once, not twice, but three times! The President shamefully continues the silly and offensive word games of his predecessors -- whom he had severely criticized -- reducing genocide to "horrific events," "atrocities," "massacres," and "devastating events."

Earlier this month, Pres. Obama declared his candidacy for reelection and asked Americans to reelect him for another four more years. In my view, anyone who so blatantly breaks his promises on both Armenian and non-Armenian issues, including acknowledgment of the genocide, does not deserve to be reelected. It is hard to imagine that any self-respecting Armenian would vote for him again.

To show how offended they are by Pres. Obama's broken promises, over a thousand Armenian-Americans held a spirited protest at Sony Studios in Culver City, at the site of his major fundraiser on the eve of April 24. Their anguished message was carried far and wide by the assembled local, national and international media. Just about every news outlet highlighted the protesters' mistrust of Pres. Obama, casting a shadow on the celebratory atmosphere of the his reelection campaign.

Helping to amplify the protesters' message was vocalist Serj Tankian of the System of a Down whose presence and fiery remarks electrified the crowd, attracting considerable media attention.

Another major boost for the demonstration came from TV celebrity Kim Kardashian who sent a twitter message to her 7.2 million fans around the world, along with a link to her blog: "Today, thousands



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of Armenians will come together in Los Angeles to protest against the denial of the genocide and urge the United States government to recognize the Armenian Genocide. I hope that I can bring some attention to this today.”

During my recent appearances on ABC-TV and FOX-TV, I explained that the purpose of the protest was not to beg Pres. Obama to use the word genocide. It was rather to let him and other politicians know that Armenian-Americans would no longer remain silent when an elected official makes lavish campaign promises to get their votes and money, only to ignore them after the election. These officials should be made to pay a political price for their hypocrisy. To make democracy work, citizens should ensure that dishonest politicians are not reelected. It is bad enough to be fooled once; but allowing ourselves to be fooled twice is truly unforgivable!

Using the Culver City rally as a precedent, Armenian-Americans throughout the United States should hold protests at every campaign appearance of Pres. Obama in the next 18 months!

Furthermore, Armenians do not really need Pres. Obama to repeat what Pres. Reagan stated 30 years ago by referring to the Armenian Genocide in his Presidential Proclamation of April 22, 1981. By breaking his campaign pledge, Pres. Obama compromises his moral and political standing as the leader of the free world!

Let us not forget two other major culprits in this deplorable affair! Where is Vice President Joe Biden hiding these days? Does he recall that he delivered dozens of strongly-worded speeches on the Armenian Genocide during his long years in the Senate and as presidential candidate? What about Hillary Clinton? How quickly did she transform herself from a champion of genocide recognition as Senator and presidential candidate, into a Secretary of State who hides from the media while placing a “personal” wreath at the Genocide Monument in Yerevan, and lobbies Congressmen to vote against a genocide resolution?

The 2012 elections present an ideal opportunity to settle scores with all those who have betrayed the trust of the Armenian-American community.

15. Events held in Kuwait dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

The commemoration event and the march of candle lighting dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide took place on April 24, in St. Vardanants church and then the representatives went to the hall of the church to take part in the commemoration ceremony.

The speeches made during the commemoration event, which was organized by the joint efforts of all organizations of the community, marked the possible ways of international recognition of the Armenian Genocide in the new political situation.

The Armenian ambassador to Kuwait Fadey Charchoghlyan also made a speech, noting that till now Turkish negative policy first of all should be a serious impetus for the international society in order to prevent further genocides.

16. Commemoration event held in Belarus dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

The commemoration ceremony dedicated to the memory of victims of the Armenian Genocide took place on April 24, near the cross stone in the military cemetery of Minsk. More than 200 representatives as well as the staff of the Armenian Embassy participated in the ceremony.

In the memory of victims of the Genocide the representatives of the Armenian community and the Armenian Embassy laid wreaths and the Armenian ambassador to Belarus Armen Khachatryan made a speech.

17. Armenian Genocide remembrance in India [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

On April 24 2011, in Calcutta, India, about 3000 people prayed and paid their respect to the victims of the Armenian Genocide, which was very comforting for the small Armenian community living here.

Every year, on Easter Day, Christians in Calcutta gather in the premises of the historic St. Paul's Cathedral to celebrate the Glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The religious and cultural program concluded with the religious message by the Catholic Archbishop of Calcutta. This year, out of respect to Armenian Genocide victims, Father Khoren Hovhannisyanyan, Pastor of Armenians in India and Manager of



Armenian College and Philanthropic Academy was invited to pray and deliver his message on this occasion.

The master of ceremonies, Reverend Father Andrew Simick, before inviting the Pastor of Armenians in India to stage, announced that this year Easter coincided with the 96th anniversary of Armenian Genocide and asked the congregation to pray for one and a half million victims of the Genocide.

Father Khoren Hovhannisyan prayed for Genocide victims in Armenian and addressed the congregation, saying,

“Every year, on April 24, Armenians all over the world commemorate the attempt to exterminate their nation by the Ottoman Turks, the murder of 1.5 million innocent and defenceless children, women, elderly people and men.

The wound left behind from the Armenian Genocide is yet to heal ... the wound is still bleeding because of Turkish denial ... The whole nation was nailed on the cross because they were Christians, because they were Armenians.”

During the program, the choir of Armenian College and Philanthropic Academy presented verses from the Divine Liturgy.

18. 500 people at the commemoration of Armenian Genocide [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

According to the Dutch News Agency ANP, on Sunday about five hundred people attended the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide in Assen. A spokesperson of the Federation of Armenian Organisations in The Netherlands (FAON) reported.

The annual commemoration, which coincided this year for the first time with the Easter Sunday, took place at the Armenian Genocide Memorial at the cemetery De Boskamp in Assen. That included among others a religious service, speeches, music and laying of wreaths.

Armenians commemorate each year the Genocide of 1915. Last Tuesday there were a Rally and Demonstration in Het Plein in The Hague and a Remembrance Concert.

19. The Ministry of Diaspora organized the teleconference with the representatives of the Armenian community of Aleppo [Armenpress, 04/29/11]

On April 28, the Ministry of Diaspora organized the teleconference where the representatives of the Armenian community of Aleppo took part. The Minister of Diaspora Hranush Hakobyan and the heads of all departments participated in the teleconference.

In Aleppo from the chief consulate the general consul of RA Ashot Manukyan, the adviser of the Minister of Diaspora in Syria Lena Halajyan, directors, teachers of Armenian schools and the representatives of the Armenian community in Aleppo took part in the teleconference.

Having greeted the participants of the teleconference, Hranush Hakobyan represented the plans of 2011 year of the Ministry of Diaspora, touching upon the Armenian conferences organized by the Ministry of Diaspora.

She also spoke about the "Our elders", "Come home" programs and also introduced the on line library of the Ministry of Diaspora. During the teleconference in the chief consulate of RA in Aleppo, the winners of "Our language is our motherland" competition were given awards.

20. Diaspora Minister receives representatives of Lebanon's "Zvryan" students union [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

The RA Diaspora Ministry hosted today 45 students of Lebanon's "Zvryan" Students Union. The students are on a program visit to Armenia for the commemoration of the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

Minister Hranush Hakobyan presented the ministry's history, mission, issues and objectives, noting the primary directions of the ministry's policy – revealing and uniting the Armenian potential, repatriation and preservation of the Armenian nation.

Video materials on the ministry's activity and "Ari Tun (Come Home)" project were presented. The students received caps and T-shirts with the logo of "Ari Tun (Come Home)" project.

ARTS

21. Films of Golden Apricot to be presented in the Netherlands [Armenpress, 04/28/11]



Filmhuis Den Haag is hosting a selection of films from the 2009 and 2010 editions of the Golden Apricot international film festival. They will be presented under the title "The Best of Golden Apricot".

Films include the award-winning documentary *The Last Tightrope Dancer in Armenia* by Arman Yeritsyan and Inna Sahakyan, *The Border* by Harutyun Khachatryan and *A Room and a half* by the Russian director Andrei Khrzhanovsky. Numerous international guests will be attending the festival including directors, producers and festival representatives, who will introduce their films and answer audience questions afterwards.

A debate devoted to the richness of cinema in Armenian will be held May 8, as part of DAB (Directors Without Borders platform). Also, the photo exhibition *Happy Day...* by Zaven Khachikyan will be on display during the festival, which depicts both the struggles and the joys of a society in upheaval.

22. "Garni" historic-cultural reserve-museum receives Melina Mercouri authoritative prize (UNESCO-GREECE 2011) [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

With the decision of the UNESCO Director General and on the basis of the conclusion of the international prize giving commission UNESCO-GREECE 2011 Melina Mercouri International Prize will be shared by Armenia's "Garni" historic-cultural reserve-museum and Batir vicinity in the territory of Palestine. The ceremonial handing of the prize will take place May 24 at the UNESCO headquarter in Paris.

UNESCO-GREECE 2011 Melina Mercouri prize is being granted once in two years to a person or organizations who have noticeable contribution to the preservation of cultural landscape and their management.

23. Third book telethon to be conducted April 30 [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

"I am Friend of Book" third telethon will be conducted April 30. At the cabinet sitting today Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan called on the ministers and heads of state institutions to actively participate in the telethon. The head of the executive power also rated high the conduction of events connected with the 500th anniversary of printing as well as the fact that Yerevan has been declared World Capital of Book in 2012.

24. Vahan Miraqyan was awarded with "Komitas" medal by the Ministry of Diaspora and Golden medal by the Ministry of Culture of RA [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

On April 27, in Alexander Spendiaryan Opera and Ballet National Academic Theatre by the help of the Ministry of Diaspora and the Ministry of Culture an event dedicated to the Armenian folk artist, the professor of conservatory in Vienna, popular tenor Vahan Miraqyan's 50th anniversary of creative activity and 75th birth anniversary took place. The talented artists from Armenia and different parts of the world took part in the benevolent concert.

The Minister of Diaspora Hranush Hakobyan awarded Vahan Miraqyan with "Komitas" medal. She noted, "I congratulate our great artist. He is gifted with strong voice by the nature. Thank you for representing the Armenian songs, art in many famous stages of the world. Today, in this hall there are people who knew you when you were young, who loved your art, admired your voice, missed you and now are here to listen to you. There are also people who only heard about you and now want to see how 75-year-old young man sings".

Vahan Miraqyan was also awarded with golden medal by the Ministry of Culture and became the professor of Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory.

25. Nadejda Ispiryan's "Street of shattered dreams" film was presented in London [Armenpress, 04/29/11]

The Armenian young film maker Nadejda Ispiryan's "Street of shattered dreams" film was shown in one of central cinemas of London. The Englishmen have highly assessed Ispiryan's art, especially her ability of finding significant tiny elements in a frame.

"Street of shattered dreams" is Nadejda Ispiryan's first feature film. The premiere of the film took place in Yerevan in 2008.

Nadejda Ispiryan is the author of 10 feature films. Most of them were presented in different famous film festivals and won prizes.



26. Session of committee for preparing Edward Mirzoyan's 90th anniversary celebration held [Armenpress, 04/29/11]

The committee for preparing the celebration of Edward Mirzoyan's 90th anniversary conducted today a session at the RA Government. Tigran Sargsyan, RA prime minister, head of the committee, chaired the session.

An official from the information and PR department of the RA Government told Armenpress that the committee members discussed and approved the draft program of events for the renowned composer's 90th anniversary.

The list of the anniversary events for 2011 involves a number of initiatives: cultural, scientific evenings, scientific conferences, competition-festivals and anniversary concerts, publication of book-albums and memoirs, shooting and presentation of documentaries, preparation of a CD, establishment of Edward Mirzoyan Scholarship at Yerevan State Conservatory.

RELIGION

27. Catholicos Karekin II receives Jaime Mayor Oreja [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

His Holiness Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II received April 27 Vice President of the European People's Party Group at the European Parliament Jaime Mayor Oreja. Holy See press service reported that during the meeting the Catholicos said he is very glad for the ties and cooperation formed between the EU establishments and the Armenian authorities. The interlocutors also referred to the challenges of the current life and ways to combat them. In this respect the Catholicos said the processes of globalization, different strange phenomena impede the healthy perception of spiritual life by the public and the life that for centuries was erected only on the Christian values. The Catholicos reaffirmed that only with the formation of strong spiritual-moral system of values it will be possible to overcome all kinds of challenges and difficulties.

In his turn, Oreja spoke about the necessity of restoration of traditional values in Europe, saying that the spiritual leaders of the Christian Church have big role in presenting Christian values. In this respect Oreja rated high the dialogue between the Churches.

SOCIAL

28. Historian says Armenians attach great importance to the word of "Genocide" [Armenpress, 04/27/11]

The Armenian nation should not have any expectation from the US presidents' statements, Suren Sargsyan, historian, said today at a meeting with journalists. He mentioned that in the past US Presidents Carter and Reagan used the term of "genocide" in their letters of condolence; however this does not mean that the next presidents will do the same.

"This word does not have any significance in the international recognition of the Armenian Genocide, it is just for self-satisfaction," the historian said. He added that the Armenians do not pay any attention to the main text and idea. "The president says everything which is desirable to be expressed, and more than this, amazingly, we need just one word. However if we are attentive, the US president uses our term of "Mets Yeghern". Jews have such a description, they call the genocide a holocaust and do not compel anyone to utter the word of "genocide"," Suren Sargsyan said.

According to Ruben Babayan, artistic director of the Hovhannes Tumanyan State Puppet Theater, the use of the term of "genocide" can be compulsory only for the Armenian Diaspora. "Will we feel satisfied in case the president says in his speech that "what the Turks committed was genocide: it was committed under acceptable conditions and is acceptable, and, if needed, the Turks can again commit genocide against the Armenian nation"? So, in that case we will say that we are proud and satisfied with the fact that Barack Obama used the word?" Ruben Babayan said.

29. Turkish analyst says shock expected in Turkey in 2015 in connection with Armenian Genocide [Armenpress, 04/27/11]



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Mehmed Ali Birand, famous Turkish journalist and political analyst, called on the Turkish Government to focus on the danger, the Turks are expected to face 2015, when the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide will be marked.

Armenpress reports that Birand wrote in the Turkish “Milliyet” daily that this year the Turks managed to avoid the traditional US-Turkish crisis on April 24: the US president did not use the term of “genocide” in his annual speech.

“Uttering the term’s Armenian synonym – “Mets Yeghern” – Obama managed to prevent the anger by the Turks and, at the same time, not to lose the Armenians’ votes. With the example of the previous years, he tended to please the two sides with the happy medium.

The Turkish analyst says it is necessary that Turkey’s authorities pay much attention to that fact, as Turkey will appear in a difficult situation starting from 2015.

“If a strategy is not developed today, necessary means are not undertaken, we are expected to encounter a shocking scene in the future,” the Turkish journalist wrote.

30. The cooperation agreement will be signed between Yerevan and Ile de France [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

From April 25 to 28 the delegation headed by the mayor of Yerevan Karen Karapetyan by invitation of the mayor of Paris Bertran Delanoe will officially visit the capital of France Paris in order to take part in the commemoration event dedicated to the Armenian Genocide.

During the visit the meetings with the mayor of Paris, the president of International Association of French speaking Mayors Bertran Delanoe, the president of Ile deFrance regional council Jan Pol Hyushon, the mayor of Lion Jerar Kolomb will be held. The problems referring to bilateral cooperation will be discussed during the meetings. The delegation will also discuss with B. Delanoe the questions concerning the cooperation in the frames of French speaking mayors international association and organization of the 31st summit meeting held in Yerevan from October 24 to 27,2011.

The department of information and public relations of Yerevan City hall reported that the cooperation agreement between Yerevan and Ile de France will be signed on April 26. During the visit meetings with the representatives of the Armenian community of France and and business circles are also planned.

31. French Senate vice chairman to support bill criminalizing denial of Armenian Genocide [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

Guy Fischer, vice president of the French Senate, Rhône department senator, will vote for the adoption of the bill criminalizing the denial of the Armenian Genocide during the May 4 vote at the French Senate.

Armenpress reports that the senator stated this in response to a letter by Nouvelle d’Armenie. “During this struggle the Communist deputies have made quite an important investment. Starting from 1965, the fellow-members of the party have regularly raised the issue of recognition of the Armenian Genocide,” the letter mentions.

Senators Guy Fischer and Robert Bret proposed to name the bill “On Criminalization of Public Denial of Crimes against Humanity”. Such a title refers to not only the Armenian Genocide, but also other crimes, committed against the humanity in the 20th century.

“I support my Socialist counterpart Serge Lagos’s proposal: upon his initiative the issue must be involved May 4 in the Senate agenda,” the letter mentions.

32. RA President receives representatives of British “Ark” publishing house [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

RA President Serzh Sargsyan received today Tony Ward, Angela Jeremy – directors of the British “Ark” publishing house – and Razmik Davoyan, writer, publicist, whose works are intended to be translated into English and published by the publishing house.

The presidential press service told Armenpress that the president said he emphasizes the activity of the famous British publishing house and its directors, who are devotees of the arts and poetry and undertake great activity for spreading poetry and making it accessible for people.

“In these difficult times, in this world, which is changing quickly and getting smaller, when in many cases somewhere, maybe, the great art is suppressed by the market, the humanity certainly needs such devotees, it does need,” Serzh Sargsyan said.



Taking into account the fact that the British publishing house is specialized in the presentation of contemporary poetry and publishes works in English by the contemporary poets from the UK and other states, as well as English translations of poetry collections from all over the world, the president said it is gratifying that the Armenian poetry was not overlooked by the publishing house.

The directors of the publishing house mentioned that they were not familiar with creations by Razmik Davoyan; however after reading them and learning about the author during the World Book Expo-Fair of Frankfurt, they made a decision on publishing the writer's works.

Serzh Sargsyan proposed them to meet the RA culture minister and discuss the opportunities of cooperation within the framework of the events to be held in Yerevan, which has been named as World Book Capital 2012 by UNESCO.

Taking into account the fact that the publishing house has a series of books on music, the president offered the directors to publish a book in English on Komitas's life and creation.

33. Winners of essay competition on trafficking awarded in Gyumri [Armenpress, 04/28/11]

The winners of the essay competition announced within the framework of "Child Trafficking Prevention" program were awarded today at N7 School of Gyumri.

It is the second year the "Mobilized and Empowered System of Prevention of Child Trafficking in Armenia through Awareness Raising, Capacity Building and Networking" project has been organized in Armenia in assistance with the European Union, Czech Republic Government, "People in Need", "Hope and Help", Armenian Relief Society. 319 teachers received trainings within the framework of the project. Special trainings on trafficking were held in public schools. The essay competition was announced December.

Tatev Bejanyan, project director, told Armenpress that a survey, carried out before the launch of the project, showed that the level of children's awareness of the phenomenon is low. Taking into account this fact the organizers worried about its efficiency. Tatev Bejanyan informed that 3000 essays were presented for the competition, announced after the awareness trainings.

"It was quite difficult for us to select 150 ones, and then 31 ones – 3 essays from each marz. The results were impressive: the essays were brilliant," Tatev Bejanyan said.

Tatev Kotoyan, pupil of the public school of Amasia, received the first prize.

34. Tokmajyan elected rector of Yerevan State Architecture and Construction University [Armenpress, 04/29/11]

Hovhannes Tokmajyan has been elected rector of Yerevan State Architecture and Construction University. The close voting took place today.

Press service of the Education and Science Ministry told Armenpress that tomorrow the sitting of the Council of State Medical University chaired by Minister Armen Ashotyan will take place. The agenda includes election of rector.

35. Aram Simonyan resigns [Armenpress, 04/29/11]

Yerevan State University rector Aram Simonyan submitted a resignation application and with the decree of Education and Science Minister Armen Ashotyan was dismissed from the office.

Now he is acting rector of the YSU. Ministry's press office reported that Ashotyan ordered to organize contest and corresponding sitting of the council in an appropriate way.

The tenure of Aram Simonyan ends May 29.

36. Armenian Assembly hosts commemorative events in Armenia dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide [Noyan Tapan, 04/26/11]

During the week leading up to the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian Assembly of America's Yerevan Office hosted a series of events dedicated to the memory of Armenian Genocide victims, reported the Armenian Assembly of America (Assembly).

Armenian government and U.S. Embassy officials were among the Assembly's special guests at last week's concert of sacred Armenian music performed by the Speghani Choir held at the Assembly's Yerevan Center. In recognition of her contributions to the contemporary art of choir music for the last 15 years, Choir Director and Conductor, Sarina Avtandilyan, was awarded the Vazgen Sargsyan Medal of Honor by Armenia's Ministry of Defense.



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Noting that the dangers of genocide and its denial continue in the 21st century, the Assembly's Country Director Armina Darbinian stated, "We join with Armenians across the globe and all people of good will in remembering the victims of the Armenian Genocide. Together, we will help end the scourge of genocide and build a brighter future for all of humanity," Darbinian continued.

In conjunction with the Assembly's Yerevan Youth Club (AYYC), the Assembly also hosted a two-day art exhibition featuring works by local artists reflecting upon the legacy of 1915. During the exhibit opening, Assembly Chairman Hirair Hovnanian commended the initiative, and along with his wife Anna, shared family memories of the Armenian Genocide.

Speaking on the occasion, Darbinian also emphasized the importance of the role of the youth in the country's future. "Through the Assembly's Yerevan Youth Club, the Assembly is able to support a cadre of talented young individuals by involving them in various events and educational activities," said Darbinian. The AYYC was formed in 2010 as part of the Assembly's new initiatives in its recently dedicated Yerevan Center near Republic Square.

On April 24th, the Assembly's Yerevan Office staff joined thousands of compatriots in paying tribute to the victims of the Armenian Genocide.

37. Hayastan All-Armenian Fund builds community center in Shushi Region's Mets Shen village [Armenpress, 04/29/11]

The Hayastan All-Armenian Fund is building a community center in Mets Shen, a village in Artsakh's Shushi Region. The project is co-financed by the Lebanese-Armenian community and donors in Armenia and Artsakh.

Currently crews are constructing the columns of the second floor. When completed, the two-story, 195-meter-square community center will house the mayor's office, a medical clinic, a library, and an events hall. The structure will also include a room for handicrafts and vocational training.

"The Hayastan All-Armenian Fund has built such multifaceted structures in several other communities," says Ara Vardanyan, executive director of the fund. "Community centers are of vital importance to the ongoing social and economic development of rural areas in Armenia and Artsakh. They help streamline public services, foster a more dynamic civic life, and, ultimately, provide residents with one more compelling reason to continue living and working in their hometowns."

The construction of the Mets Shen community center addresses a number of longstanding issues, for instance relieving key public institutions from having to operate in unsuitable quarters. Currently the mayor's office is housed in Mets Shen's dilapidated telephone station, the clinic in the tumbledown hospital, and the library in a room of the community school. Mets Shen has never had a public events hall.

"Few young people remain in the village while the problems we face as a community persist," says Mikayel Ossipyan, mayor of Mets Shen. "Certainly the community center will revitalize the village and I'm hopeful that our youth will stay put. We're also working hard to address the potable-water issue, all in a concerted effort to prevent our village from being depopulated."

One of the Shushi Region's oldest settlements, Mets Shen has a population of 119, most of whom are seniors. The main occupations are bee-keeping, agriculture, and cattle-breeding. The village is renowned for the 17th-century Saint Panteleon Monastery, named in honor of a local physician for his life-saving work.

There is no specific time for contributing to the vital work of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund. To make a donation, please visit donate.himnadram.org

SPORTS

38. Nazik Avdalyan has a car accident [Armenpress, 04/27/11]

World Champion in weightlifting Nazik Avdalyan was hospitalized in Gyumri on Tuesday after the car accident on Gyumri-Vanadzor highway.

According to preliminary diagnoses, Nazik Avdalyan suffered a spinal fracture and received an injury of bone marrow. She is transferred to Yerevan. Her health state is esteemed as stable, she is conscious.

Earlier, on January 3, 2011 Nazik Avdalyan had a car accident in Artik town. Her Mercedes collided with a barrier. Fortunately, the champion was not injured in the accident.

39. "Grand Sport" sport-health and training complex opens [Armenpress, 04/28/11]



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“Grand Sport” sport-health and training complex opened today in the Shengavit administrative district. Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan participated in the event. The symbolizing red ribbon was cut by the deputy mayor Taron Margaryan and co-founder of the “Grand Holding” company, member of parliament Michael Vardanyan.

The president of the republic toured in the complex, got acquainted with the created conditions and gyms.

Vardanyan said for the reinforcement of the state it is necessary not only to ensure the social welfare of the people and the national self-consciousness but the preservation of health.

Michael Vardanyan said the complex has all the conditions for teaching sport, ensuring healthy lifestyle, rest and entertainment.

The complex has 7000 sq.m of territory of which 3200 is the three-storeyed building, the same is the court with summer volley-ball and big tennis courts, garages, and more than 600 square meters of green territory.

Produced by AGBU Armenian Representation

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