

Nikol Pashinyan comments on David Sanasaryan's case



Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan has got acquainted with the discussions over the head of the State Oversight Service David Sanasaryan whose powers have been temporally suspended. Pashinyan made a post on his Facebook page, saying,

“Today is Saturday and I had the opportunity to get a little acquainted with the discussions over head of the State Oversight Service David Sanasaryan.

My conclusion is this – the mentality of “brotherhood” has much deeper roots in Armenia than oligarchy or criminal.

Even for civil activists and politicians “brotherhood” remain the main formula of worldview, while justice and truth, revolution and its values become secondary. David is my friend, but know well, there are no inviolable people in Armenia, be it an opposition figure or representatives of the authorities, revolutionary or counter-revolutionary”, Pashinyan said.

The PM emphasized that the law will be double stricter for those who once stood in front of

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Armenia calls for joint efforts to restore Notre Dame Cathedral



Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has offered condolences to French President Emmanuel Macron, expressing solidarity with the French people.

“We are shocked by the tragedy in Paris. The Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris is one of the most prominent and favorite symbols of European civilization and the whole

Christian world,” the Prime Minister said.

He said it is a unique embodiment of the French culture and spiritual heritage.

“Armenia offers solidarity to the people of France and shares its emotions,” Pashinyan added.

“We are hopeful that we’ll combine efforts to take necessary steps to restore the former look of the cathedral,” he said.

Hundreds of millions of euros have already been pledged to help rebuild Notre-Dame after a devastating fire partially destroyed the French cathedral.

The fire, declared fully extinguished some 15 hours after it began, ravaged the 850-year-old building’s roof and caused its spire to collapse.

Artsakh stands for peaceful relations with Azerbaijan - President deepening bilateral agenda

Artsakh stands for peaceful relations with Azerbaijan, President Bako Sahakyan said in an annual address to the National Assembly on April 17.

He stressed, however, that in case of any aggression, Artsakh will do everything to defend the Motherland’s independence, security and dignity.

President Sahakyan noted that large-scale work was carried out in all the areas of the republic’s life in 2018, steady growth was registered with the current programs being elaborated and translated into life.

The President detailed the projects to be implemented in a range of spheres and assured that they will be successfully put into life through close cooperation, coordinated and professional work of all the branches of power and different structures.

Bako Sahakyan underlined that among the crucial priorities has been ensuring the security of the country and people, the



maintenance of high-level operational effectiveness of the Defense Army.

President Sahakyan stressed that the Defense Army carried out effectively the set tasks, guaranteeing the inviolability of the borders and full-fledged security of the state.

The President pointed out that the legisla-

tive body of the republic had its active role in the successful implementation of the envisioned programs, expressing gratitude for their constructive cooperation and principled stance. A number of other urgent issues of international agenda were also discussed during the meeting.

Joint statement by the Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Russia, and the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group



On 15 April, the Foreign Ministers of Russia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia – Sergey Lavrov, Elmar Mammadyarov, and Zohrab Mnatsakanyan – held a working meeting in Moscow at the initiative of the Russian side. The Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (Igor Popov of the Russian Federation, Andrew Schofer of the United States of America, and Stéphane Visconti of France), as well as Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office

Andrzej Kasprzyk, joined the meeting.

As a follow-up to the agreements reached by President Aliyev and Prime Minister Pashinyan at their summit in Vienna on 29 March of this year, the participants in the meeting discussed the situation at the border and the line of contact, as well as the prospects for establishing humanitarian co-operation. They also exchanged detailed views on key aspects of the settlement process.

The Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia reaffirmed the intention of the parties to continue their efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict through political and diplomatic means. The Ministers emphasized their interest in the further stabilization of the situation in the conflict zone, in particular during agricultural activities.

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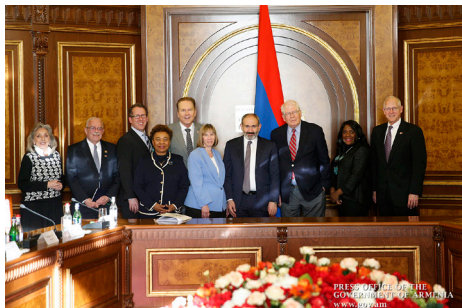
the people and spoke about legality and justice, inadmissibility of permissiveness.

“And if they have crossed the line, they have drawn themselves, their accusation will not be limited by the criminal code, but their accusation will be in the logic of betrayal of the people”, Pashinyan said.

They also agreed to take measures, on a mutual basis, to allow families to have access to their relatives held in custody in the respective detention centers of the parties. The Ministers expressed their willingness to start concrete work on establishing contacts between people, including through mutual visits of media representatives.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group reiterated their commitment to the mediation mission aimed at achieving a sustainable peace in the region. The participants of the meeting agreed to continue their contacts in the near future.

U.S. Lawmakers visit Armenia



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received a U.S. Congressional delegation, including Congressman David Price (D-North Carolina), Congressman Vern Buchanan (R-Florida), Congresswoman Dina Titus (D-Nevada), Congressman Michael Conaway (R-Texas), Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-Virginia), Congressman Adrian Smith (R-Nebraska), Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-California), and Congresswoman Terri Sewell (D-Alabama). The House Representatives are all members of the House Democracy Partnership (HDP); Congressman Price serves as the HDP Chairman, and Congressman Buchanan is the Co-Chair.

Welcoming the U.S. Congressional delegation to Armenia, the Prime Minister noted that our country prioritizes the fur-

therance of relations with the United States. Nikol Pashinyan pointed out that Armenia is undergoing radical reforms and is steadfastly pushing ahead with democratic transformations. The Premier referred to the Velvet Revolution and the snap parliamentary election of December 9, 2018, noting that it was the first free, democratic and transparent election held in Armenia since independence as evidenced by international observer missions. Nikol Pashinyan emphasized that his government is taking consistent steps to strengthen the institutional and economic power of democracy and expects our international partners' support, including the United States.

David Price thanked the Prime Minister for the warm welcome and hospitality shown to the Congressional delegation. Hailing the reforms underway in Armenia, he noted that the HDP stands ready to promote a culture of parliamentary activities in Armenia through exchange of experience and consultation, as well as to strengthen the U.S.-Armenia relations and inter-parliamentary cooperation.

Asked so by the Congress members, Prime Minister dwelt on the ongoing eco-

nomics reforms and regional developments. The Premier praised the youth's contribution to the Velvet Revolution and to the reform process. He highlighted women's role in our country's political and administrative life, the functioning of the parliamentary system, and so on. Speaking about democracy in our country, Nikol Pashinyan underscored that democracy is inner belief, and not a geopolitical or external political orientation for Armenia and the Armenian people.

As to the post-revolution economic development trends in our country, the Premier gave details of the growth rates recorded so far, noting that consistent steps are being implemented to combat monopolies, curb the black economy and create new jobs. Pashinyan said his government seeks to ensure inclusive economic growth and, in this respect, he would appreciate cooperating in the fields of infrastructure, innovations and technologies.

The Congress members assured of their willingness to assist Armenia in promoting democracy, implementing economic reforms and strengthening the Armenian-American friendship.

Armenia ranked 61st in 2019 World Press Freedom Index



Armenia is ranked 61st in the 2019 World Press Freedom Index released by Reporters Without Borders on April 18.

Georgia is placed just ahead of Armenia at 60th, Russia is 149th, Turkey and Azerbaijan are ranked 157th and 166th respectively. Armenia's southern neighbor Iran is 170th in the list.

Norway, Finland, Sweden, Netherlands and Denmark are ranked as the countries with the highest degree of freedom for journalists.

According to the report, "the new media served as an echo chamber for the "velvet revolution" in the spring of 2018 that brought a

former journalist [Nikol Pashinyan] to power."

The study notes, however, that "the media landscape is diverse but polarized and the editorial policies of the main TV channels coincide with the interests of their owners."

"Journalistic independence and transparent media ownership continue to be major challenges. The new government must try to recover the opportunities that were lost in the transition to digital TV, which has paradoxically restricted the number of regional channels," Reporters Without Borders said.

At the same time, the organization urges the government to refrain from any excesses in its attempts to combat "fake news".

"Its use of the security services for this purpose, followed by a social network user's arrest, prompted concern. Investigative journalism, which is flourishing online, is well placed to play a major role in a national offensive against corruption."

The 2019 World Press Freedom Index shows how hatred of journalists has degenerated into violence, contributing to an increase in fear. The number of countries regarded as safe, where journalists can work in complete security, continues to decline, while authoritarian regimes continue to tighten their grip on the media.

Grounds for keeping Kocharyan under arrest still exist, says Prosecutor General

The General Prosecution has seen the grounds for keeping ex-President Robert Kocharyan under arrest, Prosecutor General Arthur Davtyan told reporters on April 17.

"And based on these grounds the investigative body had filed a motion on extending the period of pre-trial arrest, recently the appeal was discussed at the Court of Appeals, and we believe the grounds of arrest still exist", Davtyan said.

Second President of Armenia Robert Kocharyan, who ruled the country from 1998 to 2008, spent two weeks in jail in summer of 2018, but was eventually freed. But on December 7, a higher court overruled the release and ordered him to be remanded into custody pending trial again.

At the time the court announced the verdict, Kocharyan turned himself in to authorities.



Kocharyan is charged with 'overthrowing constitutional order' during the 2008 post-election unrest, when clashes between security forces and protesters left 10 people dead, including two security officers, during his final days as president. Kocharyan is also charged with bribery.

He vehemently denies wrongdoing.

Currently no talks are being held based on any program' – Armenian MFA comments on Azerbaijani FM's statement

Anna Naghdalyan, spokeswoman of Armenia's foreign ministry, commented on the statements made by Azerbaijani foreign minister Elmar Mammadyarov after the recent meeting with the Armenian foreign minister in Moscow.

Below we presents the comment of the MFA spokesperson.

Question: Talking about the meeting held in Moscow on April 15, the Azerbaijani FM stated that a discussion was held based on the program presented by Russia in 2016. What program the talk is about?

Answer: First of all, I would to state that a joint statement of the parties participating to the meeting has been released based on the meeting results which mentions the topics discussed. Joint statements are made for this purpose so that the agreed upon formulations between all participants of the meeting are summed up there. Beyond the agreed upon formulations, the statements contradicting them do not contribute to strengthening the mutual trust, especially if they are fictitious and have nothing to do with the reality.

Currently no talks are being held based on any program. Moreover, the content part of the discussions continues within the do-



main of getting acquainted with and clarifying each other's positions.

Question: The Azerbaijani FM announced the proposal of the American side to hold meeting in Washington D.C. in the future. Do you confirm this information?

Answer: As you know, after the approval of each meeting on the NK conflict, a respective statement is being made in an agreed upon manner. Indeed, the possibility of holding the future meeting in one of the co-chair countries is being considered, taking into account the geography of such previous meetings.

As this issue is still at the discussion stage, we must refrain from one-sided announcements and the manner of public ne-

gotiations. Moreover, making an announcement in advance on the future meeting in one of the co-chair countries is disrespectful to the participants of the process, but first of all to that co-chair.

Striving to become the announcer of the agreements, which have not been made

yet, doesn't contribute to forming a normal working atmosphere based on mutual trust.

On 15 April, the Foreign Ministers of Russia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia – Sergey Lavrov, Elmar Mammadyarov, and Zohrab Mnatsakanyan – held a working meeting in Moscow at the initiative of the Russian side. The Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (Igor Popov of the Russian Federation, Andrew Schofer of the United States of America, and Stéphane Visconti of France), as well as Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk, joined the meeting. A joint statement was adopted following the meeting.

Moscow believes agreements on Karabakh settlement will be implemented



Moscow considers that the recent agreements on the Nagorno Karabakh settlement reached between Baku and Yerevan will not remain on the paper, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told a press conference following his meeting with Serbian counterpart Ivica Dacic, TASS reports.

the parties to make additional efforts to allow families to have access to their relatives held in custody in the respective detention centers of the parties," Lavrov noted.

Besides, he said, the agreements approve contacts between people, including through

"The humanitarian measures are clearly enlisted in the joint statement [of the Foreign Ministers of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia and the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs] and envisage the commitment of

mutual visits of media representatives.

"I think this is a useful agreement," the Russian Foreign Minister stated.

"I have seen comments saying that such agreements, especially in the humanitarian field, have not always been executed. This is true. Judging from the atmosphere in which the work is now taking place, I have reason to believe that both Baku and Yerevan are interested in these agreements not to be left on paper this time," Lavrov said.

He pledged Russia's willingness to contribute to their realization.

Asked about the proposals on conflict settlement, the Minister noted that "agreements should be sought between parties themselves on the basis of the principles of territorial integrity, the right of peoples to self-determination and non-use of force," he said, adding that "details remain confidential."

Single transportation network under development in Armenia

Minister of Transportation, Communication and Information Technologies Hakob Arshakyan has briefed on the ongoing activities on introducing a nationwide single transportation system.

He said the ministry is focused on this matter because the transportation network has failed to develop sufficiently for many years.

He said they've created a database that shows the current state of the transportation network in Armenia, the active routes, the operators, as well as planned new routes.

Arshakyan said there are nu-



merous new settlements that will be covered by the new network.

"Now an adjustment of passenger flow calculations is tak-

ing place in order to have a more adjusted picture of the new network, in terms of what type and in what quantity passenger transportation vehicles are required and in what fre-

quency they should operate," Arshakyan said, adding that it will be followed by a tender to choose an operator.

"At this moment the entire information is in the stage of collection and processing".

The minister said they will have the complete picture of passenger flow in May, and then will start modeling.

He said the single network envisages a single ticket system. "When we say single, we mean an entirely integrated ticketing and logistical system. The distribution of operators depends on the degree of profitability of concrete routes".

Chinese manufacturer to open elevator factory in Armenia



A Chinese elevator manufacturer will

soon open a plant in the Kotayk Province of Armenia, with an estimated annual production of 2000-3000 elevators, Governor of Kotayk Romanos Petrosyan said.

He said the production will be both for domestic use and exports.

The governor said he had signed a memorandum with the Chinese XinJiang Tian-Shan Elevator Manufacturing company five months ago.

He said they are awaiting the Chinese business delegation's visit for the selection of a plant territory.

"We've approximately estimated the existing potential of the province's elevator demand, as well as possibilities in regional cities and the capital," Petrosyan said.

He said the goal is to present the elevators made in Armenia in the EEU market.

Armenia, Iran sign MoU on customs cooperation



Armenia and Iran signed a Memorandum of Understanding on

April 15 on the exchange of information about the customs value of goods and vehicles transported via the customs borders of the two countries within the framework of the visit of Chairman of the State Revenue Committee of Armenia Davit Ananyan to Iran.

The Armenian SRC and Iran's Customs Service have established cooperation and mutual assistance on the exchange of data relating to the customs value of goods, as well as created an opportunity to effectively organize the customs control of goods passing through the border. The MoU also created more favorable conditions for boosting the bilateral trade turnover aimed at fighting tax evasion.

During the visit a meeting was also held with the Iranian minister of economic affairs and finance during which issues of mutual interest were discussed

Yerevan City Hall to buy 15 new garbage trucks to help out embattled waste management operator



Mayor of Yerevan Hayk Marutyan on April 18 spoke about the situation around waste management in the capital city.

Marutyan told government officials at a Cabinet meeting that initially the waste management operator, Sanitek, was carrying out normal work in the initial period, however the company's "incorrect work" led to the existing situation.

Marutyan said Sanitek has been fined nearly 13,000,000 drams.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan weighed in, noting that there are numerous complaints over waste management in Yerevan.

"Is the situation critical?" he asked.

"It's not critical, 2012 in Naples was critical, I have made photos there, I will send you the photos after the session, you'll see what's critical, we hope we won't reach critical," Marutyan responded, referring to the 2012 Naples waste management crisis.

Pashinyan said the Government must in

all ways support the Yerevan City Hall in order for Sanitek to work duly.

"You said you've fined Sanitek with 13 million drams, but this won't improve the situation, on the contrary it will make it worse because next time they will say – you fined us 13 million, and we don't have money to renovate our vehicles", the PM said.

According to the PM the problem emerged when factually there was only one operator. "Because if we had a second operator there would be a different competitive situation," he said.

Mayor Marutyan said they studied international practice and today all European companies are returning to the model when the community and government are assuming management of transportation and waste management on themselves.

"Take all necessary measures in order for the problem not to get worse," Pashinyan told Marutyan.

Pashinyan also called on private companies who are willing to support to contact the City Hall.

Since a procurement process would take a lot of time, the government approved the Yerevan City Hall's proposal to buy 15 new garbage trucks without tender.

Armenia to participate in Belt and Road Forum in China

BEIJING, APRIL 19. The 2nd Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation will be held in China from April 25-27, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi said at a press conference on April 19.

The Forum will be attended by representatives of 150 countries, including 37 heads of state. Representatives of 90 international organizations will also take part in the summit. 4000 media representatives will cover the Forum.

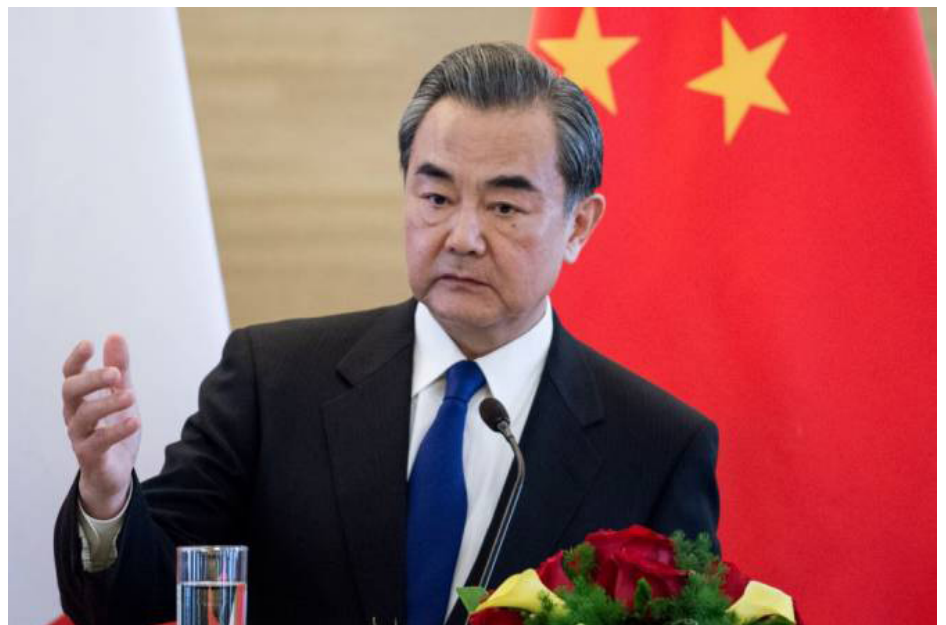
The Armenian Embassy in China informed that Armenian minister of nature protection Erik Grigoryan will arrive in China to attend the Forum.

"The Forum is the most important international diplomatic event for China. The Forum will focus on the construction of single belt and road and the discovery of beautiful future", the Chinese FM said.

The opening ceremony of the Forum will be held on the first day, which will be followed by a round-table discussion with the

participation of leaders of countries, as well as thematic discussions and forums with

the participation of businessmen.



Armenia has brotherly ties with France: FM's interview to Le Figaro newspaper



Foreign minister of Armenia Zohrab Mnatsakanyan gave an interview to the Le Figaro French daily morning newspaper during his working visit in Paris.

We presents the full interview:

-What is the main purpose of your visit to Paris?

-We have unique, as it is called to say, brotherly relations with France. The agenda of our relations covers a wide range of issues relating to political, economic, cultural and educational fields. This is my third meeting with Jean-Yves Le Drian. Of course, French President Emmanuel Macron attended the 17th La Francophonie summit in Yerevan in October 2018. Moreover, France is one of the most important member states of the European Union with which Armenia has signed the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in 2017. This visit is an additional investment in the firm architecture of our bilateral relations.

-Can you state that there is any progress on the Nagorno Karabakh conflict settlement process?

-On Monday I met with my Azerbaijani counterpart in Moscow. The meeting was also attended by Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov and the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs (France, Russia and US). This meeting was held after the March 29 summit of the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan. From our point of view, the subject of the matter is the security of 150.000 people living in Artsakh. These people are under constant threat, taking into account the existing hatred atmosphere that has been sown against Armenians.

The settlement can be only political, and the Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship is the only format for achieving this. But at the same time, an atmosphere contributing to peace and contacts between the people are needed here. We cannot hold negotiations on

the one hand and have hatred demonstrations on the other hand. The security of the people, the status of Artsakh are priority issues. 150.000 people living there should participate in this process. They are the guarantors of the Armenian identity, an identity which still faces the denialism of the genocide.

-More specifically, there is almost no progress in this memory issue...

-France has recognized the Armenian Genocide in 2001, and recently President Macron announced that April 24 will be marked in France as Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day.

This decision has deeply touched the Armenian people. There was a desire to completely eliminate us. But we survived, strengthened and developed: this is victory. But, unfortunately, we still face the consequences of the Turkish denialist policy. This denialism not only relates to Armenians, but also the whole humanity. The Turkish President just "threw out of the window" the Zurich protocols on establishment of diplomatic relations and opening of the borders between Armenia and Turkey which were signed in 2009. We were committed to these protocols and were ready to normalize the relations with Turkey without preconditions.

-What are your priorities a year later from the velvet revolution of Armenia held in spring 2018?

-Among them are the cooperation with Europe, the rule of law, justice, anti-corruption fight, all the reforms for which the people gave a mandate to us. I would also mention the tax reforms and the economy. Armenia has a huge potential. The causes of our velvet revolution were domestic, not geopolitical: we are pro-Armenian, not a pro-European, pro-American or pro-Russian, even if we have close cooperation with Russia.

Senior Armenian Official Indicted in Corruption Probe

(Yerevan – RFE/RL) - Armenia's National Security Service (NSS) on April 18 brought corruption charges against a senior government official and political ally of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan who actively participated in last year's "velvet revolution."

The NSS said that Davit Sanasaryan, the head of the State Oversight Service (SOS), will therefore be suspended pending investigation. But it decided not to arrest him for now.

Two senior officials from Sanasaryan's agency, which is tasked with combatting financial irregularities in the public sector, were arrested in late February. The NSS said they colluded with a private firm linked to them in order to personally benefit from government-funded supplies of medical equipment to three hospitals.

A senior executive of the firm, Zorashen, was also taken into custody. All three suspects denied the charges.

Sanasaryan strongly denied any wrongdoing when he spoke to reporters several hours before the NSS's announcement. "Nobody, no structure can link me with any corrupt practice because I reject any corrupt practice," he said after attending a weekly cabinet meeting in Yerevan.

Sanasaryan declined to comment on a news report that one of the arrested SOS officials, Samvel Adyan, gave incriminating testimony against him. "I'm not authorized to speak about that," he said. "But I can say one thing for certain: I could not have been involved in any corrupt deals. There can be no such evidence."

Sanasaryan also reiterated his concerns about the NSS investigation, saying that he has conveyed them to Pashinyan. He



Sanasaryan ran in Armenia's December 2018 parliamentary elections as a candidate of Pashinyan's My Step alliance.

The NSS claimed earlier that the arrested SOS officials arbitrarily forced medical institutions to rig rules for the choice of companies supplying expensive equipment for hemodialysis, a treatment of kidney failure. It said they wanted to make sure that "the business entity sponsored by them" wins tenders for such supplies.

Health Minister Arsen Torosian told RFE/RL's Armenian service on February 26 that he asked the NSS to investigate "external interference" in dialysis-related procurements because the new tender rules threatened to disrupt the vital medical services provided to around a thousand patients across the country.

The dialysis equipment tenders were until then won by a handful of private firms. Earlier in February, one of their owners accused Sanasaryan of deliberately driving his Frezen company out of business. Sanasaryan dismissed the allegations, saying that the SOS has simply broken up Frezen's "monopoly" on supplies to one of the hospitals.



Sanasaryan defended his arrested subordinates and protested their innocence at the time. He was subsequently questioned by NSS investigators.

In a statement, the NSS said that it has collected sufficient evidence to charge Sanasaryan with an abuse of power aimed at benefiting the "company effectively managed by his subordinates." The SOS chief will face up to four years in prison if convicted.

stressed that he does not believe that the prime minister ordered the NSS to prosecute him for political reasons.

Sanasaryan, 34, is a former opposition and civic activist who had for years challenged Armenia's former government, accusing it of corruption and incompetence. He played a major role in the mass protests which brought Pashinyan to power in May 2018. The latter named him to manage the SOS shortly after becoming prime minister.



Pashinyan in the International Arena



By Harut Sassounian

Last week, Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan made his first appearance at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France.

Pashinyan gave an impressive speech to the representatives of 47 European countries. Even more impressive were the Prime Minister's answers to their dozens of questions. While his speech was prepared in advance, the questions were impromptu and the answers had to be delivered on the spot.

Pashinyan began his speech by thanking the Council of Europe for repeatedly saving him from being imprisoned by the previous Armenian regime, or reducing his sentence. He was being prosecuted for articles he had published as editor of the *Orakir* newspaper.

The Armenian Prime Minister then proceeded to recount the impressive democratic advances his country has made since last year's peaceful "Velvet Revolution."

Pashinyan took advantage of the opportunity to criticize the PACE members for not supporting the democratic developments in Artsakh. "Nagorno-Karabakh is still not recognized internationally as a sovereign state, but is there international debate on whether the people living there are human beings?" Pashinyan asked.

In response to a question from French Parliamentarian Ms. Dalloz about corruption, Pashinyan stated: "The greatest thing I can do against corruption is for me, personally, to remain outside corruption... The very first thing is that I, my family and my relatives must be scrutinized even more closely than others, and it is very important to me that transparency should be a key aim in

Armenia. I will not say that it is 100% successful, but it is leaping forward with giant steps. About 10 days ago a criminal case was initiated against one of my close relatives. I do not want to jeopardize their right to the presumption of innocence, but the fact is that the case is going to be investigated entirely lawfully and impartially...."

Ms. Aghayeva of Azerbaijan asked when Armenia would comply with resolutions and documents of international organizations on Artsakh.

In response, Pashinyan urged "the participation of the representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh in the peace process. It is hard to imagine how we can resolve the conflict without the main party to the conflict being involved in the peace talks and without talking to them. As I said in my statement, we will continue to try to reinstate the dialogue within the OSCE Minsk Group between Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh. Many of you might not know this, but there was a direct meeting between a leader of Nagorno-Karabakh and a leader of Azerbaijan in the past, so there is precedent. Elected representatives from Nagorno-Karabakh were almost always involved in the negotiations. It is said that, that was the case up to 1998, but I can tell you that up until 2018 Karabakh's representatives were present in the peace talks. Let us not forget that Robert Kocharyan, before he became President of Armenia, was elected president of the republic of Nagorno-Karabakh. Thereafter Serzh Sargsyan represented Armenia but he was also one of the leaders of Karabakh. So Nagorno-Karabakh was represented at the negotiating table throughout the negotiations, and it is our objective today to create the conditions for this dialogue between Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan not to be interrupted...."

Responding to a question by Ms. Tomic from Slovenia about the rights of the LGBT community in Armenia, Pashinyan stated: "Armenia is committed to the rule of law and all citizens have the same rights and obligations in the Republic of Armenia."

Mr. Aydin of Turkey expressed his concern about Pashinyan's recent statements on changing the negotiating format on Artsakh under "pressure from the Diaspora and the oligarchs within the country."

Pashinyan repeated the answer he had given to the Parliamentarian from Azerbai-

jan, adding that: "I have already explained that we are absolutely not expecting or demanding to change the format. ...How do we see the Nagorno-Karabakh issue being resolved without the involvement of Nagorno-Karabakh? The word 'occupation' is used quite frequently, but the people who live in Nagorno-Karabakh were born there. They live there, as did their parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and great-great-grandparents – I could go on! How can someone occupy the land where they, their children and their ancestors were born, and where their ancestors are buried? ... I recently did something that might seem strange. In a press conference, I publicly asked a rhetorical question: do Azerbaijan's President and leadership have nothing to say to the people of Nagorno-Karabakh and the people of Armenia? I would like the opportunity to speak to the people of Azerbaijan. I can do that today, but I do not want it to be one-sided and I want to ensure that it is not perceived as an act of provocation. I want to initiate such discourse with government, people and young people. Our agenda is one of peace, and we do not propose to change the format."

Regarding a question asked by Mr. Arieiev of Ukraine on "who does Crimea belong to?" Pashinyan answered: "... We often find that our friends are on different sides of a conflict, and it is hard for us to choose between two friends. We are sometimes forced to make a choice, but globally our choice is pro-peace, pro-dialogue, pro-stability and pro-development."

In response to the final question from Mr. Masiulis of Lithuania regarding whether Armenia would be more pro-European and less pro-Russian, Pashinyan responded: "When I was a member of the opposition, I declared that I did not accept that Armenia or any other country ought to be pro-Russia, pro-Europe, pro-America or whatever. I consider myself to be a pro-Armenia politician. I think that French politicians are pro-France, Ukrainian politicians are pro-Ukraine and Russian politicians are pro-Russia...."

Armenia's Prime Minister skillfully responded to all the questions and sometimes, cleverly avoided answering them. This was the first test of his political competence in the international arena which he passed with flying colors!

‘We will rebuild’: Macron vows to restore Notre-Dame within five years



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President Emmanuel Macron has vowed to rebuild Notre-Dame “even more beautifully” within five years, as all of France’s cathedrals prepared to ring their bells on Wednesday to mark 48 hours since the colossal fire began, France 24 reports.

In a televised address on Tuesday evening, President Macron suggested he wants it rebuilt by the time Paris hosts the Summer Olympics in 2024.

“We’ll rebuild Notre-Dame even more beautifully and I want it to be completed in five years, we can do it,” said Mr Macron, who had already pledged to launch an international fundraising scheme for the reconstruction.

“It’s up to us to convert this disaster into an opportunity to come together... It’s up to us to find the thread of our national project.”

massive fire on April 15 ravaged the 850-year-old Gothic building, destroying much of its roof and causing its steeple to collapse.

The cathedral was minutes away from total destruction, officials say.

A combined €800m has already been pledged by a number of companies and business tycoons to help rebuild the UNESCO World Heritage site.

ESMT Berlin students to propose ideas for Gyumri



Armenia hosted a group of students from ESMT Berlin within the project implemented in Gyumri by the Initiatives for Development of Armenia (IDeA) Foundation.

In 2018, IDeA announced the start of a partnership with ESMT within which students of the school’s Master’s in Management (MIM) programme will be involved in the Friendship Park restoration and redevelopment project implemented by IDeA in Gyumri.

The Friendship Park reflects the idea of cohesion, friendship and devotion to all countries and nations that helped Armenia during the earthquake of 1988. The project

aims at redeveloping the former Friendship Park located next to Charles Aznavour Square in Gyumri by transforming it into a unique public recreation area. It is a unique project with a blend of commercial, social and philanthropic components and building on Public-Private Partnerships.

Within the IDeA-ESMT partnership, the students conducted a week of field research in Gyumri, visited the city sights, museums, observed the park area and the central market, met with Gyumri youth, architects, craftsmen, entrepreneurs and promising startups. Following the field research, the students will develop and propose business ideas and solutions to IDeA for the concept of the Friendship Park redevelopment.

“We are looking forward to the promising ideas of the students after their Gyumri visit, which will contribute to the activities and work already implemented by our foundation and will finalise the concept of the park restoration”, IDeA’s Gyumri Development Project Manager Yelena Muradyan notes.

Sayeed Ahmad Nameer, ESMT student from Pakistan, is in Armenia for the first time. He is impressed by the hospitality of the Gyumri people. “I was impressed by people’s sense of humour and hospitality. They are very kind and open to tourists. After our meetings with the locals we found out that they wanted to take part in the transformation of the city. I hope that the study conducted following our visit will be useful for shaping the business model of the park”, says Nameer.

Mujahid Abdullahi, an ESMT student from Nigeria, mentions that he and his friends will try to find solutions to help combine Gyumri art, history, technologies, innovation, social entrepreneurship and small and medium businesses in the concept for Friendship Park.

“The park should become a venue to represent the whole palette and identity of Gyumri. With our ideas we need to show that the city has a vibrant youth who believes in the rebirth and future of the city”, says Mujahid Abdullahi.

Conference on Armenian Genocide held in Chamber of Deputies of Italy

Conference entitled “Mets Yeghern: A Century after the Armenian Genocide” was held in one of the halls of the Chamber of Deputies of Italy on April 16 organized by the members of the Italy-Armenia parliamentary friendship group.

Armenian Ambassador to Italy Victoria Baghdasaryan delivered welcoming remarks at the conference and thanked the Deputies for the adoption of the decision on the recognition of the Armenian Genocide in the Chamber of Deputies on April 10. The Ambassador stated that the process of international condemnation and recognition of the Armenian Genocide continues which must be a serious signal that the denialist behavior on this matter has no place in the value system of the 21st century.

She added that by this step the Italian side

reaffirmed its commitments assumed by the UN Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and determination to the universal values.

A number of Italian political, scientific and cultural representatives delivered speeches at the conference, highlighting the importance of the adoption of the Armenian Genocide rec-



ognition decision which will contribute to raising awareness on the Genocide among the Italian public and political circles and preventing similar crimes in the future.

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian to address Armenian Genocide commemoration in Sydney



The recently re-elected Premier of New South Wales, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian will address the National Armenian Genocide Commemoration Evening on Wednesday 24th April 2019 in Sydney, marking the 104th Anniversary of the Genocide of the Armenians and other Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire during World War I, the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC-AU) reports. Last month, Ms Berejiklian – the grandchild of Armenian Genocide survivors – became the first female to be

popularly elected as the Premier of Australia's largest state, after historically leading her party to election victory. “We are honoured that the National Armenian Genocide Commemoration Evening will be graced by the presence of Premier Gladys Berejiklian,” said Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC-AU) Executive Director, Haig Kayserian. “It should not surprise us that after making history last month, the Premier's commitment to honouring and advancing the Armenian cause remains as steadfast as ever.”

The National Armenian Genocide Commemoration Evening, organised by the Armenian Genocide Commemorative Committee (AGCC) of Australia, will include a keynote address by the Vice President of the International Association of Genocide Scholars, Dr. Melanie O'Brien. Dr. O'Brien is a Senior Lecturer of International Law at the University of Western Australia, teaching International Humanitarian Law, Public International Law, and Research units. Dr. O'Brien's keynote address at the National Armenian Genocide Commemoration Evening is titled “Social Death: The Armenian Genocide and Cultural Destruction”, where she will be speaking to photographs she has personally taken of specific sites of Armenian heritage that were destroyed, proving that targeting religion and culture is as much a tactic of genocide as physical destruction. The National Armenian Genocide Commemoration Evening is an annual event. It will be held at The Concourse in Chatswood on Wednesday, 24th April 2019 (7pm for 7:30pm start), is regularly attended by approximately 1,000 members of the Sydney Armenian community, religious, political, NGO, media, diplomatic and academic leaders from across the country.

City Spa, one of the founders of Aesthetic medicine in Armenia, that was established 14 years ago, is still following the main principles that were implemented since the launch: to use only clinically and scientifically approved, highly effective and safe with FDA approval products and equipments imported mainly from UK and Europe.

Depilation: Last year City Spa launched a very safe, painless and fast acting new machine for permanent hair removal. It is the "Primelase" produced by Cocoon Medical. The machine has an innovative



international leading brands such as ZO Skin health (Beverly Hills US), GLO therapeutics (ColoradoUS). Skin Ceuticals (US) etc.

And that's not the all: pedicure, manicure and massage will make your day.

You are welcome to City Spa. The aesthetic doctor's consultations and skin diagnostics with Skin Scanner is fee. The atmosphere in City spa is full of love and peace. The pricing strategy is very flexible and discounts for good long term clients are available during whole year as well as different Gift Cards.

method (dynamic mode) which allows to treat very large areas of the body within few minutes.

Localized fat removal: In Armenia the first cryolipolysis method was implemented by City Spa in 2016. Cooltech is an innovative machine that acts as a none surgical liposaction, with a new method of cryolipolysis for permanent localized fat removal and body reconturing. It is safe, painless and very effective. City Spa is equipped also with the Wellashape machine for anti-cellulite treatment.



Anti aging Facial treatments and Care: City Spa offers the latest scientifically approved anti aging treatments and products for care. The doctors are regularly improving their qualifications in London and Paris, bringing the new inventions to Armenia. The products used in City Spa are only



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Zodiac Weekly Forecast



Aries (March 20–April 19)

Mercury travels rapidly through your sign between April 17 and May 5, 2019. During this period there likely will be greater emphasis on communications, errands, and other short distance travels. Venus enters your sign on April 20 and will be traveling “with you” through May 14. Her presence gives you an air of poise and people will simply like how you look.



Leo (July 22–August 21)

Your general attention is shifting for the next month into the arena of your career and overall life direction. Whatever you have created thus far will be noticed and perhaps applauded. As a talented leader, you may attract an invitation to manage an upcoming project. Change in career or your work in the world is on your doorstep.



Sagittarius (November 22–December 20)

Last week on April 10, your planetary ruler, Jupiter, turned retrograde. Your on-going activity may have pressed the pause button while you rethink your upcoming plans. Retrograde motion suggests a need for more analysis and research before plunging into new territory.



Taurus (April 20 -- May 20)

You have a need to be alone and quiet during this period. That is why social life is not going so well. Give attention to your inner life and notice what your thoughts may be manifesting. Is it really what you want in your future? Think carefully. Pay heed to your dreams as a means of discerning what has been unconscious and wants to surface.



Virgo (August 22–September 22)

Your attention shifts to matters of shared resources for the next three weeks. “Resources” include time, things of material value, energy and sexuality. The territory is wide, ranging from the mundane study of the budget, to investments, and even to important discussions with partners over the need for greater intimacy.



Capricorn (December 21–January 19)

The Goats like to be in charge and will always take control if things seem to be out of order. This week you may need to take the lead, but it is important that you take others into consideration. You are not the only one with a brain. Give others a chance to register their ideas alongside yours.



Gemini (May 20–June 20)

You are finishing a work project and shifting gears into new territory this week. You will be focusing on communications with friends, acquaintances, and building your network. A friend may be in need of your assistance.



Libra (Sep. 23–Oct. 22)

Venus, your ruling planet, has entered the 7th house of relationships and will be there until mid-May. She brings improvements in clientele, social life, and partnerships. This is a good time to ask for a professional consultation if you need it. You are especially able to balance with others during this period in order to create win-win solutions.



Aquarius (January 20–February 17)

You are potentially your own worst enemy this week. It is true that you are becoming worn out with things as they are, but it is probably too soon to speak your truth yet. Bide your time and if necessary, document developments. In a few months you will have your opportunity.



Cancer (June 21–July 21)

You and partner may accidentally slip into old, outdated patterns of behavior or communication. You will recognize it because the experience will feel icky with a touch of slime. Back out of that situation ASAP and call it for what it is. Old habits that are no longer useful.



Scorpio (October 23–November 21)

Now is a good time to give more attention to your physical condition. Take a serious look at your diet and exercise program to learn how you can help your body feel much better. Your vehicle may also need attention.

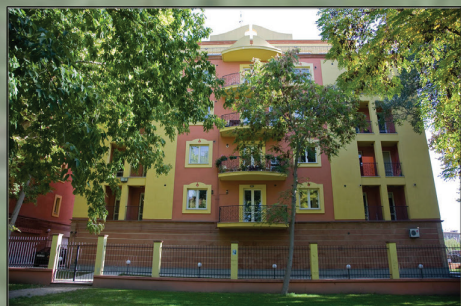


Pisces (February 18–March 19)

Beware of telling yourself what you want to hear this week, especially so if your story is about financial matters. Either you or someone else has fed you a tale that you want to believe. The time has come to see reality in your check-book and everywhere else.

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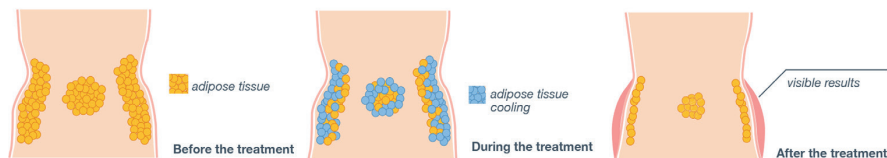
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