

Well prepared and ready for close cooperation PM Pashinyan meeting at Synopsys Armenia the youth that contributed to his revolutionary success



Expectations from the honestly won state leader are big'n'great

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Armenia willing to assume greater engagement with the EU, Foreign Minister says

Armenia is willing and ready to assume greater ownership and engagement with the EU, its member states and partner countries towards transforming our common area into a secure, stable and prosperous neighborhood, Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan said, addressing the 10th Informal Dialogue of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Eastern Partnership Countries.

Minister Mnatsakanyan reiterated the unwavering and strong commitment of the new government led by the Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to resolutely deliver on the clear mandate of the people of Armenia and to consolidate the rule of law democratic principles, fight against corruption, the protection and the promotion of the rights of the Armenian people to secure fairness and equal opportunities for all in economic social and other activities.

He also reiterated that the developments in Armenia over the months of April and May were of strictly domestic nature, they concern Armenia, they are about Armenia and are about the aspirations of the Armenian people.

"In our foreign policy priorities, as formulated in the Government programme, Armenia pursues continuity, predictability and reinforced engagement with all its friends and partners on the basis of sovereign equality and in consolidation of our efforts to promote the interests of Armenia and advance mutually beneficial

cooperation and partnership," the Foreign Minister stated.

I have arrived in Minsk from Brussels, I have arrived in the very small hours of the morning following the delay, so I'm still looking forward to enjoy Minsk if I had that opportunity.

Armenia's top diplomat briefed the attendees on the results of his meetings in Brussels and noted that Armenia will continue to decisively pursue the mobility partnership and visa liberalization agenda with the European Union.

"Amongst other things, the political significance of this agenda is in promoting people to people contacts, as human interactions represent a fundamental source of advancing mutual respect and understanding in interstate relations," he added.

"Eastern Partnership continues to be an important platform for advancing the spirit of co-operation on the basis of shared principles and set of values. We will continue to insist on advancing such spirit in our relations and to work towards building trust and mutual respect amongst partner countries. This message of Europe born out of the deprivations of the Second World War remains as relevant as ever. And Commissioner Hahn has been referring to it, the message of stability in your statement as well. The turbulence of the present international and European agenda should compel us to reinforce such message and action," Zohrab Mnatsakanyan stated.



He noted that sustainable peace remains a challenge to the region. "Armenia is committed to the exclusively peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the internationally agreed format of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship. The status and security of Nagorno-Karabakh are the overarching priorities of Armenia. The environment conducive to peace is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of the negotiation process and should be given a prominence. Escalation along the Line of Contact between Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan and along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, war mongering and the hate rhetoric, denial of genuine people to people contacts should be firmly rejected. Both EU member states and Eastern partner countries should resolutely withhold all activities contributing to the arms race in the region and tolerating actions, which undermine the peace process or challenge the agreed format of negotiations. The

concept and message of Eastern Partnership is pertinent and reinforcing in reiterating Armenia's commitment to peace," Mr. Mnatsakanyan said.

"The government agencies and the civil society of Armenia have been significantly benefiting from participation in multiple activities within the Eastern partnership. We continue to receive additional support for the reforms and institutional capacity building in Armenia and underline the importance of the incentive-based approach as defined in the Brussels Declaration. I would also want to underline the importance of sustained engagement of our civil society organizations in promoting the Eastern partnership agenda," the Foreign Minister added.

In conclusion, he said, Armenia is willing and ready to assume greater ownership and engagement with the EU, its member states and partner countries towards transforming our common area into a secure, stable and prosperous neighborhood.

Congratulations Mr President !

On June 23

President of the Republic of Armenia

His Excellency Professor

Armen V. Sargsyan celebrated his jubilee.

The Highlights team joins to sincere congratulations Mr Sargsyan has been receiving from over the world and wishes him further success in the name of our Motherland Armenia's prosperity, strongest health and family happiness.



“Now I am Convinced there are Many Things in your Thoughts that Today Seem Impossible for Ordinary People, but within 5-10 Years, of Course, with our Support, You will Make it a Reality and Expand the Limits of what is Possible in our Country”

Well prepared and ready for close cooperation PM Pashinyan meeting at Synopsys Armenia the youth that contributed to his revolutionary success



**By
Gourgen
James
Khazhakian
Chief
Correspondent**

...A few months ago **Hagob**, a taxi driver told this writer: *“If somebody can change something in this country, it’s our (“computerized”) youth...”*

And, interestingly, I had a dream that night: walking at the Yerevan streets, I’m meeting smiling faces including our-The Armenian-always-sad’n’gloomy girls, a policeman is UNPRECEDENTEDLY gentle, and, importantly, the universally-hated “potbellies” (in both direct and figurative senses) are tryind to hide themselves behind the trees, monuments etc, so the country, after all, became MERRY (here I recollect title of an article about Nikol Pashinyan published in Opendemocracy.net: **Saint Nick of Armenia: how protest leader Nikol Pashinyan “rescued” Armenia and made it merry**)

...A couple of years ago a friend of mine, alike Hagob the Cabman, told me: *“If somebody could overthrow THEM, that is Nikol...”*

Well, my (our) dream came true, thanks to Nikol Pashinyan (whom I’ve been knowing for a quarter years already).

...Last week I stopped Hagob’s cab, and when getting out the taxi at my home, I gave double payment to him saying *“Thank you Hagob The Nostradamus...”*

And yours truly was among them who was greeting at the late noon of 19 June The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia His Excellency **Nikol V. Pashinyan** at the door of the Educational Dept of Synopsys Armenia, the largest IT company of the RA.

Indeed, and that is well known that the ICT sphere is a very important branch of our economy having 20-25 per cent annual growth, but here there is a great symbolism (that PM mentioned in his unplanned’n’improvised speech The Highlights readers could find below): many of “copmputer-

ized” youngsters (here we shouldn’t forget Hagob, a cabman) that greeted His Excellency Prime Minister that memorable day just a couple months ago were in his team protesting, closing streets and very actively working in virtual sphere. So it was not accidental at all that the most active of them found themselves in the Pashinyan’ Govt (for instance, **Maneh Tandilyan**, incumbent Minister for Social Affairs).

...Within more than a decade yours truly has been covering such an events “starring” various top-celebrities, but Pashinyan’s visit, DEFINITELY, stands out of that row: as it was mentioned above, PM’s speech was not in the agenda, and so it was an impro-

was REALLY ready to discuss that question. And below our readers could find promised speech of The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia His Excellency **Nikol V. Pashinyan**: (Source: Press Service of the Govt of Armenia)

“Today, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan visited Synopsys Armenia’s headquarters in Yerevan. The Premier toured the educational and production departments of one of Armenia’s leading IT companies to get acquainted with the ongoing and prospective programs and new IT development initiatives.

The Company’s top executives gave details of their production-university cooperation-based academic program being implemented jointly with the National Polytechnic University of Armenia, which allows them to provide the labor market with highly skilled graduates. The Company cooperates with the YSU, the Armenian-Russian (Slavonic) University and the European Regional Academy. Most of Synopsys Armenia’s graduates, as well as a significant part of the students at the educational department are employed in the company. In addition to scientific and research work, they are working on start-up projects.

During the tour of the production department, Nikol Pashinyan was briefed on Synopsys Armenia’s ongoing activities, their current achievements and the plans for the future. It was noted that the company introduced more than 70 new educational programs, each of which is estimated at USD1.5 million. The Prime Minister talked to the Company’s students and faculty in order to get a first-hand view of their achievements and welcomed the application of new ideas and approaches.

Then, the Prime Minister was presented with the opportunities for implementing new projects in the IT sphere, training highly qualified specialists for the development of this field, the opportunities and trends in the organization of the educational process, and the peculiarities of Armenia’s home market.

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vised one. Look thru it’s essential extracts, and you will see how prepared came to the ICT community the PEOPLE- SUPPORTED’N’ ELECTED PM Pashinyan and how ready he was to accept proposals and resolve problems.

Armen Baldryan, a leading member of the ICT community, Chairman of the ICT Employers Union stressed that such a preparedness and readiness of Mr Pashinyan to cooperate closely was a nice surprise for them.

For instance, today ICT sphere has been included in the Armenian Ministry of Transport, Communication and ICT that is not the best solution, not at all, the Community leaders says. According to them, the national economy branch that has been championing in terms of annual growth, needs to have own separate Ministry, and the PM

Sargsyan`s Brother, Top Bodyguard Detained

A controversial brother and the chief bodyguard of Armenia`s former President Serzh Sargsyan were detained on June 25.

It was not immediately clear whether law-enforcement authorities will press criminal charges against them.

A spokesman for the Armenian police, Ashot Aharonyan, told that Aleksandr Sargsyan was detained on suspicion of illegal arms possession. A short amateur video posted on Facebook showed masked policemen hauling him and his bodyguards out of their cars in downtown Yerevan.

Aleksandr Sargsyan was set free several hours later. Aharonyan said the police are now checking the legality of weapons possessed by him and his men.

Sargsyan, who is better known to the public as "Sashik," has repeatedly caused controversy in the past with his flamboyant behavior and insults addressed to critics of Armenia`s former governments.

The 62-year-old is thought to have made a big fortune in the past two decades. Unconfirmed reports in the Armenian press have said that he spent millions of dollars buying real estate in Europe and the United States.

Tax inspectors raided on Saturday the offices of a real estate company in Yerevan at least partly controlled by Serzh Sargsyan`s second, youngest brother Levon and his family. The State Revenue Committee (SRC) accused the company of failing to pay 300 million drams (\$625,000) in taxes. Nobody has been arrested yet as part of that criminal case.

Earlier on Monday, the National Security Service (NSS), detained Serzh Sargsyan`s longtime chief bodyguard, Vachagan Ghazaryan. An NSS spokesman declined to say whether that is connected with more than \$1.1 million and 230,000 euros (\$267,000) in cash confiscated from Ghazaryan`s Yerevan apartment late last week.



The money was found during a joint operation conducted by the police and another law-enforcement body, the Investigative Committee. The committee said Ghazaryan and his wife failed to disclose it in their income and asset declarations submitted to an anti-corruption state commission.

Such declarations are mandatory for Armenia`s high-ranking state officials and their close relatives. Ghazaryan was such an official until Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan dismissed him last month as first deputy head of a security agency providing bodyguards to the country`s leaders.

Two Armenians to be represented in Turkish Parliament



According to preliminary results of the Turkish Parliamentary elections, two Armenians will be represented in the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

Garo Paylan has been elected from the pro-Kurdish Peoples` Democratic Party (HDP), Margar Yesayan will represent the ruling Justice and Democracy Party (AKP).

Early results show the AKP has collected 42% of the votes for parliament, while its partner, the MHP, has 11%. The main opposition CHP has received 23%.

The pro-Kurdish HDP has exceeded the 10% threshold needed to enter parliament. With 67 seats, it will form the chamber`s second-largest opposition faction.

Armenia continues to back Russia at UN



Armenia has again sided with Russia at the United Nations General Assembly, underscoring its new government's intention not to change the country's traditional foreign policy orientation.

Armenia was among 15 nations – including Russia, Belarus, Iran and North Korea – that voted against a General Assembly resolution calling for the withdrawal of Russian troops from the breakaway Transnistria region of Moldova.

The nonbinding resolution was adopted late

on June 22 by a vote of 64 to 15, with 83 abstentions in the 193-nation assembly. It was co-sponsored by Britain, Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine and seven other mostly eastern European countries.

Transnistria is considered one of the many “frozen conflicts” in the former Soviet Union. The mainly Russian-speaking region declared independence from Moldova in 1990 over fears that Chisinau would seek reunification with neighboring Romania. Moldovan forces and Moscow-backed Transnistria fighters

fought a short but bloody war in 1992.

The conflict ended with a cease-fire agreement after Russian troops in the region intervened on the side of the separatists. Some 1,400 Russian troops remain in Transnistria guarding Soviet-era arms depots, and Moscow has resisted numerous calls over the years to withdraw its troops.

Armenia's decision to vote against the resolution on Transnistria was consistent with its voting record at the UN and other international organizations. Yerevan has usually opposed measures critical of Russia, the South Caucasus state's leading ally. Those include a 2014 General Assembly resolution that that condemned Moscow's annexation of Crimea and upheld Ukraine's sovereignty over the Black Sea peninsula.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has repeatedly pledged to keep his country allied to Russia since he swept to power in a democratic revolution last month. “Nobody ... will cast doubt on the strategic importance of Russian-Armenian relations,” he told Russian President Vladimir Putin at their first meeting held in Sochi on May 14.

For his part, Putin expressed hope that Yerevan and Moscow will continue to cooperate in the international arena. He singled out the UN, noting that “Armenia and Russia have always supported each other” there.

Armenian Electoral Code discussed at the Venice Commission



Armenian Justice Minister Artak Zeynalyan, Vice-President of the National Assembly Arpine Hovhannisyan and Secretary of the commission set up to work out electoral reforms Daniel Ionisyan pre-

sented the electoral reforms to the Venice Commission.

“The planned amendment of the Electoral Code was discussed during the plenary sitting,” Daniel Ionisyan told Public Radio

of Armenia. He said Armenia's representatives made short speeches.

According to Ionisyan, the text has not yet been presented to experts, the changes have not been discussed in detail.

President of the Venice Commission Jani Bukikkio stressed the importance of organizing the elections in line with the principles of the Venice Commission in an inclusive and transparent way, discussing all proposals of the stakeholders to reach a consensus.

The government said in its program that was adopted earlier this month that it's planning snap elections within a year and noted that elections should be preceded by legislative amendments.

A working group comprising three representatives from each faction represented at the National Assembly has been set up to cooperate with a three-member working group of the government's plenipotentiary representatives to start discussions on the amendment of the Electoral Code.

Armenia looking forward to start Visa Liberalization Dialogue with EU – FM

The EU-Armenia Partnership Council discussed on June 21 the peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict.

“We see this is a conflict that needs an early political settlement. We continue to fully support the mediation efforts and proposals of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs and we will continue to accompany the process with all our determination,” EU High Commissioner for EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini said at a joint press conference with Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanian following the first meeting of the Partnership Council in Brussels.

Minister Mnatsakanian reiterated Armenia’s strong commitment to the peaceful settlement of the conflict within the internationally agreed format of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship. He emphasized the promotion of an environment conducive to peace and underlined that Armenia expects European partners to take steps towards establishing such environment and refrain from steps that would work in the opposite direction.

He appreciated the consistent and strong support of the EU to the peace process within the OSCE Minsk Group.

Federica Mogherini stressed the importance of normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations. “We continue to encourage both sides to continue to engage in this process without preconditions,” she said.



At a meeting in Brussels the parties also discussed the implementation of the nuclear deal on Iran and addressed the situation in Syria. Mogherini hailed the hospitality that Armenia gives to Syrian refugees.

The High Representative said she hopes the EU-Armenia relations will make even greater progress in a spirit of partnership.

The Armenian Foreign Minister, in turn, urged European colleagues to accelerate the process of ratification of the Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement in their parliaments.

“We exchanged views on the visa liberalization dialogue. We are taking steps on our side towards the successful implementation of the Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreement. We are looking forward to move on with this agenda,” Armenia’s top diplomat

stated.

He stressed that visa liberalization is important in many ways, mostly in the sense that it will promote the people-to-people contacts. He added that it’s a good way for fundamentally strengthening the relations with the European Union.

High Representative Mogherini refrained from indicating any concrete time frames for the launching of the Visa Liberalization Dialogue that would lead to the establishment of a visa-free regime as a final goal.

“That is a decision in the hands of the Council. It’s a question to be put more to member states than me,” Mogherini stated.

She noted, however, that the successful implementation of the Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreement could lead to the Visa Liberalization Dialogue.

Armenia assumes BSEC PA chairmanship

At the 51st plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) in Tirana, Armenia assumed the chairmanship of the Assembly.

Addressing the session, Vice-President of the Armenian National Assembly Edward Sharmazanov said “BSEC PA is expanding year by year, becoming an important tool of establishment of economic stability in the region.”

He noted that for the effective implementation of the goals of BSEC PA it is necessary to maintain the economic nature



of the organization, avoiding politicization.

“Inter-parliamentary diplomacy and economic development are integration tools that

should never be used as tools for propaganda and blackmail,” Sharmazanov said.

“We strongly deny any attempt to pose political precon-

ditions as a primary condition for development of economic cooperation. We condemn the economic blockade of Armenia by Turkey and Azerbaijan, which contradicts the fundamental principles of BSEC,” the Vice-Speaker added.

He stated that Armenia’s illegal blockade should be in the focus of international organizations, including BSEC. “The blockade prevents Armenia from demonstrating its competitive privileges in equal conditions,” he said.

“Refusal from economic cooperation cannot serve as a tool for solving political problems,” Sharmazanov said.

Yerevan to host Eurasian Week Forum in October 2018



Yerevan will host the Eurasian Week International Forum October 24-26, 2018. The event is expected to bring together more than 2,000 participants from the EAEU

member states, including representatives of the authorities, business institutions and financial regulators, experts from EAEU and third countries.

The Eurasian Week is a major annual business event aimed at the development of EAEU's economy, investment and export potential. The Forum is held by the Eurasian Economic Union Member States and the Eurasian Economic Commission. The initiative to establish the Eurasian Week was approved by the decision of five Prime Ministers of EAEU Member States back in 2015.

The Forum is designed as an effective dialog platform for developing B2B contacts, discussing tools and conditions for business development in the EAEU, as well as for jointly elaborating the strategy of EAEU economic development in the context of global

challenges.

The main areas of the exhibition include energy, IT and telecoms, agriculture, food industry, transport and logistics, engineering and automotive industry, chemicals, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, metallurgy, mining, light industry, and wood processing.

This year the forum will be accompanied by a large-scale exhibition of export and cooperation potential that will feature over 120 companies.

Last year the forum brought together more than 2,000 participants from 46 countries including Vietnam, EU member states, Egypt, India, Iran, China, US and Turkey.

Azeri, Turkish diplomats attend regional meeting in Armenia

Making rare visits to Armenia, senior diplomats from Turkey and Azerbaijan attended a regular meeting of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) organization held in Yerevan on June 27.

Azerbaijan's Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmut Mammadgulyev and the head of an economic cooperation department at the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Omer Kucuk, declined to speak to journalists on the sidelines of the meeting chaired by Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan.

Armenian and Azerbaijani officials rarely visit each other's capitals due to the unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Mutual visits by Armenian and Turkish officials are also rare.

Mammadgulyev has participated in international gatherings in Yerevan on at least three occasions in the past. No other representative of the Azerbaijani government is known to have paid more visits to Armenia.

The BSEC is a loose and largely ineffectual grouping of eleven countries, including Russia, and Turkey. The latter refuses to establish diplomatic relations and open its border with Armenia despite the BSEC's main declared mission: to promote economic cooperation among the member states.

Speaking after the meeting, Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Karen



Nazaryan criticized what he called attempts to "politicize the work of the organization."

officially passed on to Azerbaijan.

"The BSEC is a regional economic structure," he said.

Nazaryan referred to Baku's efforts to get BSEC structures to adopt pro-Azerbaijani statements on the Karabakh conflict.

The BSEC's Parliamentary Assembly adopted one such statement in Ukraine's capital Kiev last year in the absence of its members representing Armenia as well as Russia.

The meeting in Yerevan marked the end of Armenia's latest rotating presidency at the BSEC. It was of-

Taner Akcam: Armenian Genocide denial can only be defeated politically

Turkish historian Taner Akcam, who has been studying the Armenian Genocide for decades, says he came across the topic by coincidence.

“When I was studying at Hamburg Institute of Social Research, my first topic was history of torture in the Ottoman Empire. This is how I started reading about the Abdul Hamid period massacre and other events related to the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, Mr. Akcam said in an interview with Public Radio of Armenia.

“When I was reading I was not even aware there were Armenians living in Turkey. During that period, when I was researching on the history of torture, our institute launched a big project on Nuremberg Tribunals, on whether Nuremberg could be taken as a standard for all macro-crimes. My project was almost coming to an end, and I was looking for another topic to research, and I thought I might maybe do something on the trials in Istanbul, because I knew there was a relation between Istanbul military tribunals and Holocaust. I made the proposal without knowing how complicated the topic is. The institute accepted my proposal. And so I started working on Armenian genocide and it never ended,” he said.

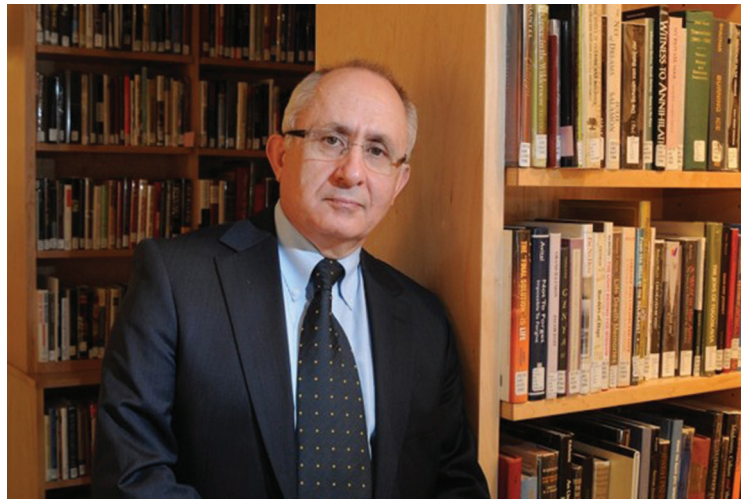
When in Turkey, as any common Turk and as a progressive leftist young university student, Taner Akcam knew there happened something in the past – Turks killed Armenians, Armenians killed Turks, but thought it was way back and there are more important problems to solve.

“Another important perception I had was that Turkey was actually established in a fight against great power, imperialist power, and mainly Armenians and the Greeks were with these colonialists to partition our country. So this was my mindset. Over the years during my research I changed this perception, although this was difficult. This is what I have been writing since then, that

Turkey actually should face own history and acknowledge these wrongdoing,” Taner Akcam said.

Mr. Akcam does not see a perspective for Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide any time soon.

“Turkey is now in its winter again. Turkey is back up to its traditional policies, this is the original setup of the Turkish Republic, to deny the Armenian Genocide. There was an opening between 2002 and 2012, but after that Turkey went back to its traditional policies, because the



ruling Justice and Democracy Party (AKP) and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan started to ally themselves with the traditional force in Turkey – the bureaucracy and the military, who established the Turkish republic and who are the core of the denialist policy,” the historian said.

He does not expect anything to change in Turkey regarding the Armenian genocide after the elections expected on June 24. According to him, only a small Kurdish party with about 10 percent support recognizes this as a fact, while the remaining political parties vehemently deny the Armenian Genocide. “Even if the opposition comes to power, they won’t change this traditional denialist policy.”

As for international recognition of the Armenian Genocide, Mr. Akcam says only recognition by the United States could make a change.

“All other countries might have some moral impact or affect the international politics, but could hardly have any impact with regard to recognition. Why United States is different? Because if the US characterizes the events of 1915 as crimes against humanity or genocide, then legally all Armenians or all other parties can file lawsuits against Turkey in the United States, which can end with a big loss of Turkish assets in the US and even a kind of an embargo against Turkey. Legally, the American government would

particularly in the field of Armenian Genocide research.

A unique feature of the Armenian Genocide has been the long-standing efforts of successive Turkish governments to deny its historicity and to hide the documentary evidence surrounding it.

This book provides a major clarification of the often blurred lines between facts and truth in regard to these events. The authenticity of the killing orders signed by Ottoman Interior Minister Talat Pasha and the memoirs of the Ottoman bureaucrat Naim Efendi have been two of the most contested topics in this regard.

The denialist school has long argued that these documents and memoirs were all forgeries, produced by Armenians to further their claims. Taner Akcam provides the evidence to refute the basis of these claims and demonstrates clearly why the documents can be trusted as authentic, revealing the genocidal intent of the Ottoman-Turkish government towards its Armenian population.

The book includes the “smoking gun of the Armenian Genocide” – an original telegram sent from Ezrum by Behaeddin Shakir to Kharberd Governor Sabit Bey.

“Are the Armenians who were deported from there being liquidated? Are the troublesome individuals whom you have reported as having been exiled and expelled being exterminated or merely being sent off and deported? Please report back honestly,” the telegram reads.

Taner Akcam said in an earlier interview with Public Radio of Armenia that the uncovered telegram will force the Turkish government seek new ways of denying the Armenian Genocide.

The historian is now working on Jerusalem Patriarchate archives and has been working on a book project related to Armenian orphans in Aleppo in 1920-1921, as well as on Cemal Pasha. He is not confident which study will be completed and published first.

Australian Parliament holds debate on Armenian Genocide

Australia's House of Representatives has debated, for the first time, a Motion recognizing the Armenian Genocide through the prism of Australia's first major international humanitarian relief effort, and has called for a vote to change the government's foreign policy, the Armenian National Committee of Australia reports.

The debated Motion recognizes, among other things, "the extraordinary humanitarian efforts of the then newly formed Commonwealth of Australia for the orphans and other survivors of the Armenian Genocide, as well as the other Christian minorities of the Ottoman Empire including Greeks and Assyrians".

It was moved on Monday 25th June 2018 in the Australian Parliament's Federation Chamber by Trent Zimmerman (Liberal MP for North Sydney) and seconded by Joel Fitzgibbon (Labor MP for Hunter) and John Alexander (Liberal MP for Bennelong). Chris Bowen (Labor MP for MacMahon), Stuart Robert (Liberal MP for Fadden) and Anne Aly (Labor MP for Cowan) also spoke favorably on Australia's helping hand for the victims of Ottoman Turkey's crime against humanity.

This comprehensive, bipartisan support indicates that the House of Representatives has taken a major step towards Australia recognizing its first major international humanitarian relief effort was to aid survivors of the Genocide that decimated the Christian Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians of the Ottoman Empire.

Significantly, the Motion accurately reflects and accepts as a historical fact the Armenian Genocide as a "genocide", moving Australia closer to international norms of recognizing the systematic murder of over 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Empire starting in 1915.

ANC-AU Executive Director Haig Kayserian said: "This Motion recognizes that Australia's first major international humanitarian relief effort was to help the

survivors, especially the orphan survivors of the Armenian Genocide, and today's bipartisan debate paves the way for an eventual vote to formalise this recognition by the nation's Parliament."

Kayserian said that Armenian-Australians faced "some obstacles and a considerable road ahead" to achieve full recognition of the Armenian Genocide by Australia, however "that journey is that little bit shorter after this debate broke many taboos".



"All speeches recognized Australia's relief efforts during the Armenian Genocide, as that was the focus of this motion, however we must seek more to honor the memory of the survivors of the Genocide of Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians," Kayserian said. "We need more of our political leaders, to follow the lead of some of the honorable members during today's debate, and Australia to properly recognize the Armenian Genocide."

"When debates such as today's and when these calls for recognition evolve into a binding vote on a Motion, such as the one debated today, by one of the Houses of Parliament, we would have ensured an important shift in Australian foreign policy from one that appeases a foreign dictatorship to one that sides with truth and justice on the issue."

Zimmerman, who is the Co-Chair of the Armenia-Australia Inter-Parliamentary Union (Friendship Group/Caucus), was unequivocal in his call for the importance of Armenian Genocide recognition during his speech.

"In remembering the victims of the Armenian Genocide and those Australians who came to their aid, we send a message that the events which started in 1915 are not just some footnote in history," Zimmerman said. "For if we hide from the truth, if we fail to recognize the evil that was perpetrated against the Armenians, we simply provide succour to those today and in the future who think that they can deny the most important of human rights, of life itself."

Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fitzgibbon, who is also a Co-Chair of the Armenia-Australia Inter-Parliamentary Union (Friendship Group/Caucus), echoed these calls.

"Up to 30 countries around the world, and our own New South Wales Parliament, have now declared the actions of the Ottomans an act of Genocide," he said. "I do not believe the ongoing failure of Australia to do the same helps rebuild trust and relationships – we invest so much time in our international relationships and I believe one further act could further strengthen our place in the world."

Alexander, who is Member of the largest Armenian-Australian electorate in Bennelong and a long-time supporter of Armenian Genocide recognition, used this debate to repeat his calls.

"I have long called for this Parliament to recognize the Armenian Genocide," said Alexander. "I am happy that today by debating this motion we are taking a significant step towards achieving that goal by recognizing Australia's first major international humanitarian

relief effort, and what a relief effort it was."

Alexander added: "I impatiently wait for the day that Australia recognizes not only our efforts to aid refugees and orphans of the Armenian Genocide, but also joins with the other 30 countries in calling for Turkey to recognize the events of 1915 as Genocide."

"Today is a victory against foreign influence," Kayserian explained. "Despite pressures to gag this debate by a desperate Turkish dictatorship, five out of six speakers from the largest chamber in Australia's Federal Parliament chose to side with a Motion recognizing the Armenian Genocide, while paying tribute to an important and proud chapter in Australia's history which has been sought to be suppressed by foreign influence."

MPs Bowen, who is the Shadow Treasurer of Australia, Robert and Aly (VIDEOS TO COME) provided detail of the events of the Armenian Genocide and Australia's relief effort in their support for the Motion.

Bowen said: "The Australian soldiers had a chance during WWI to interact with the Armenian people in particular. Many Australians who were taken prisoner were billeted in the former homes of Armenians who had been expelled from their homes. Their homes had been ransacked and pillaged and in many senses destroyed."

He added: "It is... particularly important to recognize the humanitarian efforts of Australians, and perhaps the beginning of those links of friendship and comradeship between the Australian people and Armenian people and Assyrian people."

Robert said: "Whilst Australia formed its sense of modern identity on the battlefields starting with Gallipoli, Armenia formed its sense of great and secondary tragedy from the events that followed. These things should not be hidden, they should be discussed, they should be open.

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Well prepared and ready for close cooperation PM Pashinyan meeting at Synopsys Armenia the youth that contributed to his revolutionary success

from page 3

Noting the importance of developing Armenia's IT sector, the Prime Minister stressed that it is one of his government's priorities. Nikol Pashinyan suggested presenting to the Government a comprehensive program of activities on the above issues - a road map, which should clearly define the State's and the private sector's functions and commitments.

In his speech, the Prime Minister stated in part, *"I am happy to be here. I know that this is the first time we have come together in the same office; we used to be together on the same street or square, and I think that this is a symbolic change in our relations. I have such a symbol-*

of our possibilities both in terms of intellect and in terms of reality. That is, what would be considered impossible 10, 20 or 30 years ago, became a reality.

Now I am convinced and I hope that there are many things

of thinking to another; from the next level to a higher one, finally from one reality to another," Nikol Pashinyan pointed out.

The Premier noted the importance of developing the educational sector, since education is

our global position on this issue, but rather reflects a practical goal, namely to get time to discuss the matter with all interested parties in a calm atmosphere, without time pressure. And this is the most important statement, because you know that there are highly respected ministers in the government who insist that in general, this system has a problem in terms of its constitutionality.

Various problems are being raised, and the cornerstone of our approach is the following: we are gaining time to discuss the problem in a calm environment and reach a consensus, a coherent decision.

We had three options. The first option is to postpone the implementation of the law. Why did we



ic picture in my mind: if I see someone's well-being improve noticeably, I think that it may be associated with two phenomena: either he or she is involved in corruption or is engaged in high-tech activities. That is why I am now focused on the problems of corruption and high technology.

In fact, leaving humor aside, I see something very symbolic in this. On the one hand, we face the fact that a person says that it is impossible to change anything; while on the other hand, we have the individuals the IT sphere who state that nothing is impossible. We attach such great importance to high technologies because they expand the scope

in your thoughts that today seem impossible for ordinary people, but within 5-10 years, of course, with our support, you will make it a reality and expand the limits of what is possible in our country."

Nikol Pashinyan noted that the IT sphere is an important part of "emigration," that is "migration from the old reality to a new one," from old life to a new life. According to the Prime Minister, this sphere brings in a new culture of work.

"This model of "emigration" is extremely important: we must stay in our country, live in our country, but not stay in one place, and periodically move from one place to another; from one level

necessarily present in the "road map" to addressing problems. *"There is no such a problem that can be solved without resorting to the educational component. If the solution consists of two steps, then one of these steps is necessarily the educational component,"* the Prime Minister stressed.

The Head of Government next touched on the government's position on the issue of mandatory funded pension system. *"You may know that in fact, we had inherited a specific situation where the relevant law was due to come into force this July 1. That is, we had very little time to change anything there.*

Our decision does not convey

not go that way? For the simple reason that the change we have made is called revolution of love and solidarity.

Here, the principle of solidarity might have been violated, because we had to tell those 207 thousand citizens who for one reason or another had been involved in the system that they should put up with the given situation when we could not help them in any way and, therefore, wanted to continue the reform with the other 80 thousand citizens. Thus, the principle of solidarity would have been violated.

The second option was to repeal the law: why did we not go that way? I noted many reasons in connection with the

investment environment of our economy and so on, but the most important argument is the following: we can make a decision to call of the system in two months, for example, and no one will lose anything, but if we cancel it now, and then think about whether we were right in doing so, we will not be able to reverse the process any longer. That is, if we take a step and then think about whether we did the right thing, we can face a disaster.

It is crucial for us to take what is called a "well-advised de-



ical significance; youth is the most important driving force behind our revolution, but in my opinion, one of the most important political factors that led to the victory was our women's unprecedented activity. I had been attending rallies for 28 years and could never see such rallies where women accounted for 30-40 percent of participants.

In my opinion, this was a decisive factor that led to a change in the situation. I believe that as much decisive was the fact that the whole process was peaceful



cision" in this matter. That is, we can gain time in order to understand all the details at a representative level, and if, for example, it seems to be obvious in three months that the system should be called off, we can do it in three months, and no one will lose anything: people will get back their money, including interest.

The third option is as follows: leave everything as it is, that is, do not change anything. This

would mean that we, as the saying goes, go down the river and say that we are not going to change or discuss anything. Therefore, we came to this option to demonstrate solidarity and a balanced approach.

I know that the given decision is painful for many here, I am really very sorry that we were forced to make such a decision, but this is the most balanced decision, provided that we have the opportunity, and our task in the



coming months will be to discuss the matter in a cool atmosphere in order to make a decision that will be either a consensus or very close to that," Prime Minister Pashinyan emphasized.

The Head of Government thanked Synopsys Armenia for inviting and organizing a meeting with representatives of the IT sphere. The Premier welcomed the fact that women make up 30% of the staff.

"This is information of polit-

and proceeded at a completely different level. I welcome Synopsys Armenia and all those women who have decided to get simultaneously engaged in professional, political, and civic activities. I hope that women's participation in decision-making will grow in the near future. I am convinced that this is the path that will lead us upward toward quite a new level and dimension," Nikol Pashinyan concluded.

Australian Parliament holds debate on Armenian Genocide

from page 9

Reconciliation comes from an honest appraisal of events and an honest appraisal of history."

Aly said: "The humanitarian efforts by Australians towards Armenians should be recognized as an important part of our history. It serves to remind us all, that even in war, there is heroism, there is compassion, and there is shared humanity."

The Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC-AU) led a delegation of community representatives – including leaders of local Armenian, Greek and Assyrian organizations and clergy – to witness the historical

30-minute debate in the Federation Chamber of Parliament House.

ANC-AU Executive Director, Haig Kayserian said: "Our presence here is a gesture of thanks on behalf of our ancestors, all descendants of survivors of the Armenian Genocide, who would be resting that little bit easier after seeing Australia take this significant step towards full recognition of the crimes against humanity that took their lives, their homes and their belongings."

He added: "This is a Motion that brings immense honour to Australia, and for us Australians of Armenian origin – the vast majority

being descendants of survivors of the Armenian Genocide – this is a day of immense pride knowing that our nation helped our ancestors, 14,000 kilometres away, over 100 years ago at a critical time of need for their very survival."

Kayserian concluded: "The gag order on the use of Armenian Genocide by Australia's federal government has received a sizeable blow. But our work must not stop until Australian Parliament follows the Parliaments of New South Wales and South Australia in affirming the historical truth of the Armenian Genocide."

Haghpat Monastery: a Masterpiece of the Armenian Early Medieval Architecture

By *Gourgen James Khazhakian*
Chief Correspondent

Included in UNESCO World Heritage list in 1996 Haghpat Monastery has a very interesting history worth to get acquainted with.

Traveling through the Ages

Excavations held at Haghpat brought forth Bronze Age findings, while River Debed proves that those territories were inhabited still in the Old Stone Age. A church was erected in Haghpat in the fourth century. It is thought the monastery of Haghpat was built during the rule of Abas Bagratuni (929-953), though it should be noted that the construction of the monastery's oldest building was launched in 976 and completed in 991 during the reign of Ashot III the Merciful. It

Kayan, while his cousin Prince Shahنشah whose father was buried in Sanahin destroyed the fortress. The Mongols plundered both the monastery of Haghpat and the monastery of Sanahin.

Another crucial stage for the monastery started during the invasion of Lenk Timur's legions (14th century), which was then followed by the wars between Ottoman Turkey and Safavid Persia (15th-17th centuries). Upon the treaty signed in 1639 Eastern Armenia was annexed to Persia. The established peace proved beneficial for the monastery, which was restored and re-maintained its role as a significant religious center. One very noteworthy thing to mention is that popular ashug (troubadour) Sayat-Nova (1722-1795) used to spend in the monastery rather long years of his life (he died as one of the defenders of the monastery).



was named Saint Nshan Church.

The monastery, however, went into decline in 1064, after the fall of Bagratuni dynasty. It started flourishing during the Zakaryans who were granted the monastery for the military service provided to the Orbelyan Kings in Georgia. Armenia was released from Seljuk domination at the end of the 12th century by Ivaneh and Zakareh Zakaryans. During their rule, the monastery was expanded occupying a territory three times larger than the previous one.

Already in the middle of the 13th century Haghpat became one of the largest religious and educational centers in Armenia.

Haghpat was Lori's religious center from the 11th century and back then used to compete with its brother monastery of Sanahin. On the eve of Mongol attacks Haghpat's bishop Hovhannes Matsnabertsis built the Fortress of

Haghpat Monastery: Educational Center

Haghpat Monastery was not only a significant religious center but also a prominent educational center and a repository of manuscripts. Haghpat's library was widely known. The monastery's Father Superior was Hovhannes Sarkavag (Imastaser or Philosopher). During his life (1045-1129) Hovhannes Sarkavag came to be known for his reformations of the Armenian calendar as well as his studies in the sphere of theology, mathematics, medicine and natural sciences. He also gathered and edited over 50 spiritual manuscripts. Armenian historian Eritsyan discovered manuscripts, which probably belonged to Hovhannes Sarkavag's library.

Haghpat Gospel

As one of the best miniature samples the Gospel of Haghpat was copied by scribe Hakob in 1211. It was then taken to Ani, where scribe and painter Margareh illustrated it. The gospel depicts secular life, daily scenes and historical figures. The only preserved narrative in the Gospel is Jesus Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, in which Jesus is depicted on the back of a donkey and among them there are Armenians wearing taraz (traditional Armenian dresses/clothes). The script was then again taken to Ani, more precisely to the monastery of Horomos. And after long travels, the Gospel reached Saint Ejmiatsin in 1920 (before that it remained for around 8 centuries in Artsakh).

Presently, the Gospel is kept in Matenadaran.



Haghpat Monastery: Jgrashen Church (Chapel of Saint Astvatsatsin/ Holy Mother)

Jgrashen Church, which actually is a chapel, was built in 1195 and can be found outside of the monastery walls. Jgrashen means “built out of rage.” A legend has it the chapel was built by one of Sanahin monastery students studying architecture there. It is said that he built the monastery out of rage. The chapel has beautiful khatchkars on its western façade.

Haghpat Monastery: Saint Grigor Church

As you enter the monastery the first church that appears on the way or in front is Saint Grigor Church built in 1023-1025. From the inside the monastery appears to have a cross-like form, while from the outside it is a rectangular building. The currently bare walls were once decorated with frescoes. Saint Grigor church was renovated in 1211. The outer walls were decorated with columns and pointed arches.

Haghpat Monastery: Saint Nshan Church

The oldest and main church among Haghpat monastery churches Saint Nshan church was built upon the order of Queen Khosrovanuysh in 976-991 in the honor of her sons Gurgen (Kyurike) and Smbat. The monastery of Sanahin was as well built upon the Queen's initiative. Later on Kyurikyans acted as the primary sponsors of Sanahin and Haghpat monasteries. Saint Nshan Church is a rectangular building from outside and has a cross-form from inside with a wide dome, which was renovated in 1113. The church is believed to be built by prominent Armenian architect Trdat who was later invited to Constantinople to repair the dome of Hagia Sophia Church.

Inside the church there are stone steps that take to a balcony meant for the members of the Kyurikyan family; it's from where they used to hear the Mass. The church's main altar and walls included frescoes out of which only several have been preserved. There is also a bas relief sculpture, which depicts Smbat and Gurgen standing opposite each other holding the church's model. Later on Smbat became King Smbat II Bagratuni (Smbat the Conqueror, 977-989) and Gurgen founded the royal dynasty of Kyurikyans in Lori.

Haghpat Monastery: Saint Nshan Gavut

Built in 1208-1209 by Abbot Hovhannes of Khachen in the place of an earlier building the Gavut of Saint Nshan is one of the exclusive achievements of medieval Armenian architecture. Back in 1185 there used to be the mausoleum of the Kyurikyan family. The mausoleum was built by Princess Mariam, and was therefore known as Mariamashen (built by Mariam). The floor is all covered with the gravestones of princely figures. Compared with other gavits typical of those times, the Gavut of Saint Nshan is larger and stands out with crossing arches. The use of those arches seems to enlarge the gavut's area and stretch up the inner halls.



Haghpat Monastery: Saint Atsvatsatsin Church

Saint Atsvatsatsin Church was built in 1208-1220 upon the order of the daughter of Prince Hassan. The daughter's name was Khatun and in this respect, the church is also known as Khatunashen (built by Khatun). Saint Atsvatsatsin is a small and dome-type church with a rectangular form from the outside and a cross-like appearance from the inside.

Haghpat Monastery: Hamazasp Chapel

To the north of Saint Nshan Church a gavut built in 1257 by Father Superior Hamazasp can be found. The gavut is more known as the building of Hamazasp or Hamazasp's chapel. Being the largest gavut in Armenia (around 330 square meters) it has a low building with the eastern part of roof buried in the soil. The vestibule is amazing and up to this day is in the center of attention of many people studying architecture. It is explained by the fact that the chapel-gavut faced attacks and earthquakes, yet it was only slightly damaged.

Haghpat Monastery: Medieval Fortified Walls

The fortified walls date to the 10th-11th centuries, more precisely they were built after the construction of Saint Nshan Church was completed. During the 13th-16th century invasions the walls were rebuilt for many times. Gigantic stones were used. The walls were last repaired in the 20th century.

Haghpat Monastery: Repository

Adjacent to the northern wall of Saint Nshan Church a repository was built in the 11th century. It's where the ancient and valuable manuscripts of Haghpat were kept. In the 11th-13th centuries the abbots of Haghpat spared no effort to have all the Armenian books and manuscripts, and in this regard, Haghpat's repository turned into the first Armenian Matenadaran (repository of manuscripts). The abbots were looking for manuscripts in the entire territory of Armenia. They also copied the manuscripts, which they couldn't take with them to the monastery.

Out of safety measures the manuscripts were later moved to the nearby caves, which used to serve as reading halls as well. A legend has it that in the 13th century Mongols used to torture abbots to learn the place of the manuscripts. It is also said that with the hope to find strength to stand the pain three senior and twelve junior clergymen uttered the following phrase from the Gospel, “Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs.”

Of interest are the half-buried jars in which wine and dairy products were being kept.

Haghpat Monastery: Belfry

The belfry of Haghpat Monastery was built in 1245 upon the order of Father Superior Hamazasp. It's a three-story building with seven prayer halls on the first and second floors. The third floor comes as rotunda with seven columns that hold the arches covered with a pointed roof.

Other things to see in Haghpat Monastery are the Sayat-Nova Memorial and the refectory. Outside of the monastery, in Haghpat village the ruins of a fourth century church can be seen. The fourth century church is considered Haghpat's first Christian church, so it's also worth a visit.

Zodiac Weekly Forecast



Aries (March 20–April 19)

You may be backpedaling your way out of one or more relationships right now. What you fear is being smothered or overwhelmed. Your ruling planet, Mars, is retrograde. Be aware that the war is really internal. Perhaps you let yourself become closer than you really wanted.



Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

Relationships are problematic now and probably through the summer. You may be caught into power games with one who does not let go. It is time and energy consuming so you would be wise to find some way to rise above the fray. Make an effort to stay out of quarrels that are about ego.



Gemini (May 20–June 20)

You have been spending with a bit of grandiosity. It has been fun and probably worth it to you. However, it appears that you are confronted with the bill that causes you to reel in and stop in your tracks. That is OK. Just don't continue to pay all the tabs and travel everywhere. You will be fine in the end.



Cancer (June 21–July 21)

Probably you have recently experienced a fine vacation or you may be anticipating one right away. Relationships with children and lovers are flowing easily. You may feel challenged by a partner (marital or business) who is not in the best of moods. You know there is little point in arguing, so get around it the best way you can and steer clear of a quarrel.



Leo (July 22–August 21)

Within relationships of intensity, there is often a strong sexual attraction, whether or not your personalities are compatible. If the sexual component is not recognized, it may be transmuted into a competition. Avoid commitment to any new relationship on your radar. You need to know more about the individual who is making the offer.



Virgo (August 22–September 22)

Overall you have been in a charmed place during this month and next. However, there may be a crisis with your children or a lover this week. There are elements of obsessive thinking and criticism involved. Be intentional about keeping an open mind and don't insist on a black and white answer.



Libra (Sep. 23–Oct. 22)

You and your child or a lover may not be seeing eye to eye at this time. It may be best to find other things to do for distraction than spend much time together. This is not a time for open quarreling. It will only create resentment that follows you around and turns up later at inconvenient moments.



Scorpio (October 23–November 21)

Mars is an Avatar for you. This week it seems as though everywhere you go, there will be troublesome and antagonistic people. Perhaps the real issue is inside of you. The slope is slippery related to career. Keep your nose clean.



Sagittarius

(November 22–December 20)

Warning to those on diet and exercise programs: this week it is just too easy to break training. If you mean what you've promised to yourself, don't go anywhere in which you would be in harm's way. Social life may be over the top, even more than you prefer.



Capricorn (December 21–January 19)

Prepare for a period of scarcity between now and the end of August. This could be due to debt or reduced income. Make every effort to not indebt yourself further. You will need your savings for back up. Otherwise you must work extra hours to manage your resources. Many of you have seen this time coming and have already prepared.



Aquarius (January 20–February 17)

Mars, the god of war, is turning retrograde in your sign. Take to heart the message about non-aggression, lest you be sorry you ever attempted it. Perhaps someone deserves your ire, but this is not the time to tackle. However, if you are on the receiving end of someone's anger, it is safe to defend yourself.



Pisces (February 18–March 19)

Allow your intuition to be your guide. The Muse wants to speak through you during this period of two to three weeks. Focus on art, music, dance, and color—whatever gives you pleasure. Take long breaks if possible. Being near the water will be most soothing, even if it is only the bathtub.

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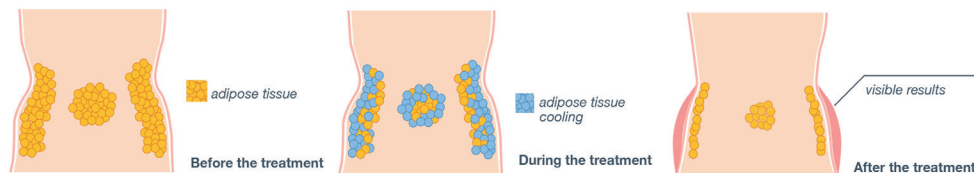
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The publisher: NT Holding LTD
Լրատվական գործունեություն իրականացնող՝
ՆՏ Հոլդինգ ՍՊԸ

Ծավալը՝ 2.25 մամուլ, տպաքանակը՝ 1500
Circulation: 1500 print copies and
15600 copies by e-mail list in PDF format

Weekly Newspaper, Since May 4, 1993

President of the NT Media Holding:
TIGRAN HARUTYUNYAN
Editor-in-Chief of the Media Holding:
GAYANEH ARAKELIAN
Director of the weekly:
MARINA HARUTYUNYAN
Chief Correspondent: **GOURGEN KHAZHAKIAN**
Proofreader: **SUSANNA MKRTCHIAN**
Layout: **DIANA GRIGORYAN**
Համարի թող. պատ.՝ Մ.Հարությունյան

ISSN 1829-0604

Գրանցման վկայականի համարը՝
03U898368, տրված՝ 11.01.2013թ.
Registration certificate and the date:
273.110.00512, 15.12.1995

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