

Armenia celebrates Constitution Day



Armenia celebrates Constitution Day on July 5, which is also marked as the Day of State Symbols – the flag, the coat of arms and the anthem.

The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia was adopted by a national referendum on July 5, 1995 when the citizens of the republic voted for the adoption of the Constitution of independent Armenia, thus expressing the wish to live in a free and democratic state.

Constitution Day is a public holiday for Armenia and its citizens, which marks the creation of a new governmental framework and the beginning of another era for the country, which for over seven decades had been a Soviet satellite.

The Armenian Constitution was

amended with a referendum held in December 2015, in which the overwhelming majority of citizens cast their ballot in favor of shifting to a parliamentary form of government.

Armenia can become a strong state only when the rule of law becomes a non-negotiable value, said Speaker of the National Assembly Alen Simonyan in a statement on the occasion of Constitution Day.

“Dear compatriots,

Today we celebrate the Constitution Day of the Republic of Armenia.

A day that symbolizes the level of our independent statehood, legal thinking, and civic maturity.

The Constitution is not merely a legal document. It is the expression of our identity, dignity and freedom. The Constitution is our collective oath to live by the law and be guided by justice.

As a President of the National Assembly, my clear conviction is that Armenia can become a strong state only when the law becomes a non-negotiable value. No one should be above the law, regardless of his/her status and position in society.

Dear compatriots, congratulating you on this important day, I reaffirm that we will continue to do everything possible to ensure that everyone in the Republic of Armenia is equal before the law,” said Simonyan.

Armenia interested in deepening strategic partnership with US: Pashinyan congratulates Trump on Independence Day

p. 2

U.S. Embassy Celebrates American Independence Day

p. 4

Mirzoyan, Araghchi discuss bilateral relations, regional developments

p.3

Armenian Foreign Ministry issues press release on conclusion of negotiations for Armenia-EU new Partnership Agend

p. 5

Armenia interested in deepening strategic partnership with US: Pashinyan congratulates Trump on Independence Day

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has extended congratulations to U.S. President Donald Trump on the occasion of the United States' Independence Day, highlighting the enduring friendship and shared values between the two nations.

In his message, Prime Minister Pashinyan conveyed warm wishes on behalf of the

Armenian government and people, emphasizing the importance of the historical ties that unite Armenia and the United States. He underscored the two nations' mutual commitment to democratic principles, Christian values, and the ideals of freedom, dignity, and justice.

The Prime Minister expressed Armenia's strong interest in deepening its



global peace initiatives and expressed hope that the United States, under his leadership, would play a key role in promoting stability and prosperity in the South Caucasus region. Reaffirming Armenia's commitment to peace, he highlighted the importance of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and internationally recognized

strategic partnership with the United States and expanding cooperation across a broad range of sectors, including trade, high technologies, energy, mining, transport, and infrastructure. He voiced confidence that continued joint efforts would further elevate bilateral relations to benefit both countries.

Pashinyan also commended Trump's

borders. He also pointed to the "Crossroads of Peace" project as a framework for reopening regional infrastructure.

Concluding his message, the Armenian leader wished Trump personal success and extended his best wishes for peace, prosperity, and continued progress to the American people.

Armenian Deputy PM discusses regional developments with EU's special envoy

Deputy Prime Minister of Armenia Mher Grigoryan received Magdalena Grono, EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia. The meeting was also attended by the Head of the EU Delegation to Armenia, Ambassador Vassilis Maragos.

At the beginning of the meeting,



Deputy Prime Minister Grigoryan presented the key areas on the Armenia-EU cooperation agenda, highlighting the intensification of bilateral relations.

The sides also exchanged views on regional developments and current dynamics in the South Caucasus.

Armenian, French Presidents discuss bilateral cooperation, regional situation

Within the framework of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development organized by the United Nations, President of Armenia Vahagn Khachaturyan held a meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron.

During their conversation, the two leaders discussed the current regional situation and ongoing developments.

They also exchanged views on key issues concerning the bilateral agenda between Armenia and France.

The meeting emphasized the importance of continued cooperation between the two countries, highlighting shared values and mutual commitment to peace, stability, and development in the region.



Armenian Foreign Ministry hands note to Russian Ambassador over interference in internal affairs

Armenian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Ani Badalyan, responding to a written inquiry from Radar Armenia, confirmed that the Ministry has handed a note to the Russian Ambassador concerning statements made by Russian state media and certain officials targeting the Armenian authorities.

The note conveys Armenia's strong dissatisfaction with "openly unfriendly and very often hostile propaganda aired on Russian state television channels against the Armenian government."

According to Badalyan, the content of the note was made public because the issue is of significant concern to Armenian citizens. "There is no reason to withhold the content of the note from the public," she said.

The note expresses a strong protest

against the "openly unfriendly, often hostile propaganda against the Government of the Republic of Armenia in Russian mass media," which, it claims, is actively fueled by statements from certain officials, members of the Russian State Duma, media outlets, and representatives of the expert community.

"The use of offensive language during live broadcasts on Russian state television, as well as the targeting of the Armenian government's activities, is absolutely unacceptable and undermines the positive outcomes of recent high-level visits between Armenia and Russia," the note states.

It further emphasizes that statements made by individual members of the Russian State Duma regarding the legal actions of Armenian investigators to prevent a coup attempt are not only surprising

but also deeply concerning. Some of these statements reportedly characterized the arrest of coup plotters as "another unfriendly step by Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan."

"Such remarks are not only absurd, since it is unclear how preventing a coup d'état could be considered an unfriendly act, but also represent gross interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Armenia," the note adds. "Moreover, it gives the impression that this media policy is being deliberately pursued to undermine democracy, the rule of law, and the constitutional order in Armenia."

The Armenian Foreign Ministry urged its Russian counterparts to take "immediate and effective measures" to put an end to these unfriendly actions toward Armenia.

Mirzoyan, Araghchi discuss bilateral relations, regional developments

A phone conversation took place between the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, Ararat Mirzoyan and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran, Abbas Araghchi.

According to Iran's Tasnim news agency, Araghchi thanked Mirzoyan for Yerevan's position and support during the Israeli attack on Iran.

During the call, the Iranian Foreign Minister expressed gratitude to the Armenian government for its stance and appreciated its efforts in providing consular services to Iranian citizens during



the 12-day war against Iran.

According to Tasnim, the ministers discussed and exchanged views on bilateral relations and recent regional developments.

Araghchi strongly condemned the

aggressive actions of Israel and the United States against Iran. He noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran is seriously pursuing its right to receive compensation for the aggression in international organizations.

For his part, Foreign Minister Mirzoyan welcomed the cessation of military operations, which he said would contribute to regional stability and the reduction of tensions.

He once again condemned the aggressive actions against Iran.

Armenia, France outline key directions of defense cooperation

Armenian Defense Minister Suren Papikyan met with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of France to Armenia, Olivier Decottignies.

During the meeting, the sides discussed ongoing Armenia-France cooperation in the defense sector. Both parties



commended the progress achieved within the framework of bilateral collaboration and outlined key directions for its continued development.

They also exchanged views on regional and international developments

U.S. Embassy Celebrates American Independence Day

Yerevan, Armenia - On July 2, 2025, the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan welcomed Armenian friends and partners to celebrate the 249th anniversary of the United States' independence. The festive occasion was inspired by the iconic American highway Route 66 -- stretching from Chicago, Illinois, to Santa Monica, California and symbolizing freedom, opportunity, and the pursuit of the American dream.

The Embassy's event featured Route 66-themed décor and elements of American culture, including the modern roadside icon, space cowboy Buck Atom, delicious food and displays of classic vintage cars.

During the event, U.S. Ambassador to Armenia Kristina Kvien and guest of honor, Armenian Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan, highlighted the strong and enduring partnership between Armenia and the United States. "The U.S.-Armenia partnership is stronger now than



it has ever been," said U.S. Ambassador Kristina Kvien. "I can't wait to see what our countries can accomplish together as we work to build a future in which our peoples thrive and prosper. With our enduring friendship, our shared strategic goals, and our expanding economic ties, there is no limit to what the United States and Armenia can achieve."

Guests enjoyed a unique blend of Armenian and American cuisine and live music performed by the NESS Band from Hard Rock Café Yerevan. Renowned Armenian singer Srbuk (Srbuhi Sargsyan) performed

the U.S. and Armenian national anthems.

The U.S. Embassy extends its sincere gratitude to the generous sponsors who made this year's Independence Day celebration possible, including Hovnanian International, Bostonegene, Visa, Viasphere Technopark, Zeppelin Armenia, Unicom, First Mortgage, FINCA, Ameria Bank, UMAKS/DHL, INTELLCORES LLC, Global Anderson, National Instruments, Eldorado, Cafesjian Museum, Lydian, Krisp, Grid Dinemics, Soft Construct, Siemens, AMD, Coca-Cola, Synopsis, Van Ardi, Tufenkian Hotel, Contour Global, DoubleTree by Hilton, Converse Bank, Holiday Inn Republic Square, CARD, AlexAndera Winery, ArmAs Winery, ManyChat/Octohub, EPAM, McCann Armenia, Wine Works, CultWines, FedEx, and The Gurus.

Independence Day commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776 — a foundational moment in America's extraordinary history.



Armenian Speaker of Parliament Alen Simonyan said on July 1 that authorities ought to seriously consider banning the broadcast of Russian television channels in Armenia.

Banning Russian TV broadcast must be seriously considered, says Armenian Speaker of Parliament

"We must very seriously discuss the suspension of Russian television channel broadcast in the territory of Armenia," he told reporters, referring to recent assessments voiced by Russian state broadcasters which were denounced by the Armenian government.

Simonyan said some Russian TV programs are actually harming the Armenian-Russian relations.

Simonyan said that "some people" could be trying to interfere in Armenian domestic affairs with funding from tycoon [Samvel Karapetyan](#).

"If there are channels that allow themselves to interfere in Armenia's domestic affairs, perhaps we ought to respond likewise, by at least banning their entry into the homes of our society," the Speaker said.

Tashir Group under investigation for alleged money laundering, tax evasion

Law enforcement agencies raided the Tashir Group main office in Yerevan on Wednesday as part of a criminal investigation of a case pertaining to alleged money laundering and tax evasion, authorities told Armenpress.

"Urgent investigative actions are carried out at the main office of Tashir Group as part of an investigation of criminal

proceedings launched by the General Department of Economic Crime and Smuggling Investigations at the Investigative Committee into aggravated money laundering, tax evasion and failure to pay duties or other payments," Investigative Committee spokesperson Kima Avdalyan told Armenpress.



Armenian Foreign Ministry issues press release on conclusion of negotiations for Armenia-EU new Partnership Agenda



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia has issued a press release on the conclusion of negotiations on the Armenia-EU new Partnership Agenda. It reads:

On June 30, 2025, H.E. Ararat Mirzoyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, and H.E. Kaja Kallas, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, met in Yerevan. The visit and the discussions marked a pivotal moment in Armenia-EU relations.

The Minister and the High Representative emphasized that Armenia and the EU have never been closer.

Minister Mirzoyan and High Representative Kallas announced the conclusion of negotiations on a new, ambitious Partnership Agenda between Armenia and the EU. This comprehensive framework is a testament to the mutual desire to elevate the relationship to a new level and reflects the European aspirations of the people of Armenia, as also affirmed in the law on the launch of the process of Armenia's accession to the European Union.

A Vision for a Deeper Partnership

The new Partnership Agenda

articulates a vision for a deeper, stronger, and more diversified partnership. It aims to unlock the full potential of the CEPA, guiding efforts to bolster Armenia's resilience, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and sustainable development. Armenia will continue working together with the European Union to foster a more secure, prosperous, and democratic future and to promote peace and stability in the South Caucasus.

Key Priority Areas of Cooperation

The Partnership Agenda establishes concrete actions for cooperation across a wide spectrum of areas, reflecting the breadth of shared interests. Key priorities include:

Strengthening Democracy, Human Rights, and Good Governance: reinforcing the rule of law, advancing justice sector reform, combating corruption, and ensuring the protection of fundamental freedoms.

Enhancing Freedom, Mobility, and Security: advancing structured dialogue on visa liberalisation, strengthening border management, and deepening law

enforcement cooperation to combat organised crime and other shared security challenges.

Deepening Foreign and Security Policy Cooperation: inaugurating a new chapter of cooperation in security and defence to enhance Armenia's resilience and stability, and countering hybrid threats and foreign information manipulation.

Boosting Economic Resilience and Connectivity: fostering sustainable economic growth through enhancing connectivity in transport, energy, and digital domains, in line with the EU's Global Gateway strategy and Armenia's "Crossroads of Peace" initiative.

Expanding Trade and Economic Integration: working to further diversify bilateral trade and improve market access, including gradual approximation with EU standards and technical regulations.

Fostering People-to-People Contacts: Promoting deeper ties between societies through expanded cooperation in research and innovation, education and youth mobility, and culture.

Next Steps

Following the conclusion of negotiations, the agreed text of the Partnership Agenda will proceed through the respective internal procedures of the Republic of Armenia and the European Union. Upon adoption, the Agenda will serve as the guiding framework for cooperation.

We look forward to embarking on this ambitious new phase of partnership with the European Union for the tangible benefit of our citizens and the promotion of a peaceful and prosperous region.

Government's policy is to show zero tolerance toward corruption and corrupt practices – Prime Minister

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan attended the opening of a high-level two-day international conference titled “The Independence and Impartiality of Prosecutors in the Context of Public Criminal Prosecution Against Officials Who Have Committed Crimes: Corruption and Money Laundering,” dedicated to Prosecutor’s Day in Armenia.

The event brought together a distinguished audience, including Armenia’s Prosecutor General Anna Vardapetyan, senior officials from the executive and judicial branches of Armenia, representatives from the prosecutor’s offices of seven European countries, two international prosecutorial organizations, the Council of Europe, prosecutors, and heads of diplomatic missions accredited in Armenia.

In his address, Prime Minister Pashinyan congratulated all prosecution service employees on their professional day and expressed gratitude for their crucial work. He emphasized the key role of law enforcement in ensuring citizens’ access to the

fundamental components of happiness – peace and/or security (both internal and external), justice, freedom, and prosperity.

Touching on the central theme of the conference, the Prime Minister highlighted corruption as one of the main challenges facing any society, noting its capacity to create issues in multiple directions. “The government’s policy is to show zero tolerance toward corruption and any manifestation of it, and we remain consistent on that path,” Pashinyan said, adding that beyond uncovering and eliminating the consequences of corruption, it is equally important to identify and address its root causes.

He stressed that corruption is primarily a temptation for those who hold power and leverage, and underlined the importance of ensuring dignified working conditions for public officials. In that regard, Pashinyan pointed to significant salary increases introduced in the judiciary, emphasizing that these reforms are intended first and foremost for the benefit

of citizens. “From the beginning, our belief has been that increasing the salaries of prosecutors, investigators, and judges is not just for them—it’s for the people, to ensure better access to justice,” he noted. “I want to believe that justice is becoming more accessible in the Republic of Armenia, although we must also acknowledge that this is not a simple process.”

The Prime Minister described this as an ongoing process that requires political will to confront challenges and formulate both legal and political responses.

Concluding his remarks, Prime Minister Pashinyan reiterated his congratulations and thanks to all employees of the Prosecutor’s Office. “I am confident and hopeful that they strive every day to provide better-quality service to the public. That service is justice and the rule of law. I am also convinced that the Prosecutor General of Armenia leads the institution with that vision and commitment,” he stated.

Trafigura explores investment opportunities in Armenia’s mining sector



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received Jeremy Weir, Chairman of the Trafigura Group.

The interlocutors discussed issues related to cooperation in the mining sector and the possibilities of implementing investment projects by the company in Armenia.

Jeremy Weir presented details about Trafigura’s activities in various countries around the world and emphasized the company’s interest in carrying out projects in Armenia as well.

Prime Minister Pashinyan highlighted the importance of maintaining ongoing dialogue and discussions to outline further steps for cooperation.

Armenia to allow import of certain Iranian products duty-free with proper licensing

The Government of Armenia has approved a decision that allows the duty-free import of specific Iranian-origin goods into the country in 2025, provided that importers obtain the necessary licenses.

Under the new regulation, a tariff quota system will be applied to certain categories of Iranian goods imported into Armenia during 2025. The decision outlines the procedures for granting import licenses, including both one-time

and general licenses, and sets forth the required documentation and forms.

Specifically, the decision stipulates that selected Iranian-origin products may be imported into Armenia at a 0% customs duty rate, as long as the import is carried out within the framework of the defined quota and in compliance with the licensing conditions.

The government also established rules

for how import volumes will be allocated among economic operators within the framework of this tariff quota, particularly for certain types of agricultural products.

The measure aims to strengthen trade ties between Armenia and the Islamic Republic of Iran while supporting Armenian businesses by providing access to lower-cost imports under regulated and transparent conditions.

Armenia to continue targeted relief program for forcibly displaced persons of Nagorno-Karabakh

Socially vulnerable Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians will continue to receive monthly financial aid from the Armenian government until the end of 2025, authorities announced Thursday.

Deputy PM Tigran Khachatryan, speaking at the Cabinet meeting, presented the changes in the support program for forcibly displaced persons of Nagorno-Karabakh. He said that the relief program will continue only for minors, pensioners and

persons with disabilities.

"We were supposed to shift to this targeted support mechanism from April, but we postponed it for two months. The 40,000 dram monthly rental support program went on for April and May, while the new regulation has taken effect starting June," he said.

The government will pay monthly 30,000 drams per person to minors, pensioners and persons with

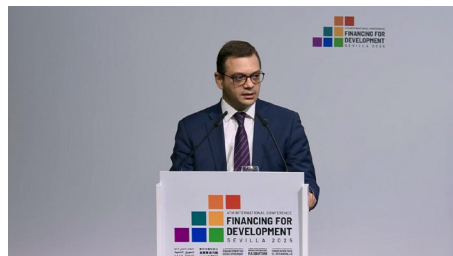


disabilities who were forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh.

Deputy FM attends ministerial meeting on financing development for landlocked countries

Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia Robert Abisoghomyan participated and delivered remarks at the ministerial meeting titled "Financing a New Decade of Development for Landlocked Developing Countries", held within the framework of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) in Sevilla, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has said in a statement.

In his speech, the Deputy Foreign Minister addressed the systemic vulnerabilities faced by landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), emphasizing the need for targeted actions by UN bodies to properly



meet their development needs.

He underscored the importance of coordinated efforts by the international community to develop infrastructure and promote inclusive economic growth in LLDCs.

Highlighting the Avaza Action Plan,

Abisoghomyan noted that it provides a clear framework of measures and commitments to tackle the socio-economic challenges of LLDCs. He touched upon the issue of insufficient funding allocated to transport infrastructure in the practical implementation of the plan.

Reflecting on the principles of inclusive interconnectedness, open borders, and mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation, the Deputy Minister presented the Armenian Government's "Crossroads of Peace" initiative, reaffirming Armenia's commitment to promoting peace and regional cooperation.

Firebird AI co-founder Razmik Hovaghimian granted Armenian citizenship

One of the most influential Armenian figures in Silicon Valley, Razmik Hovaghimian, has been granted citizenship of the Republic of Armenia. The passport was officially handed over by Armenia's Minister of High-Tech Industry, Mkhitar Hayrapetyan.

Razmik Hovaghimian is the co-founder of Firebird AI and a serial entrepreneur behind several successful tech ventures. He has held senior leadership positions at the Japanese tech giant Rakuten, contributing to the management of its global initiatives.



Beyond his accomplishments in the tech sector, Hovaghimian is also actively engaged in social and educational projects. He collaborates with the Leo Messi Foundation, established by football star Lionel

Messi, and is the co-founder and CEO of Play Time Sports-Tech Holding. The company focuses on innovation and digital solutions at the intersection of sports and technology.

As part of his latest endeavor, Hovaghimian and Firebird AI are planning to invest approximately \$500 million in Armenia to establish a large-scale artificial intelligence data center. The project is expected to significantly boost Armenia's technological capacity and elevate the country's standing in the global tech ecosystem.

Armenia responds to Carnegie report, reaffirms commitment to regional connectivity

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia has responded to a recent publication by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which claimed that the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump had put forward proposals to Armenia and Azerbaijan regarding the unblocking of infrastructure in the South Caucasus.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Ani Badalyan has emphasized that the unblocking of transport infrastructure in the South Caucasus remains a key priority for Armenia.

"Unblocking transport infrastructure in the South Caucasus has been and remains an important priority for Armenia. As is well known, Armenia has put forward its vision for regional connectivity — the 'Crossroads of Peace' initiative — which has already received positive feedback

from a number of international partners," Badalyan said.

She added that Armenia has also proposed several solutions aligned with this initiative that could be acceptable to all involved parties.

"At the same time, various international partners periodically present their own ideas regarding the normalization of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations, including on the unblocking of transport infrastructure between the two countries. Discussions on these matters are ongoing with all interested partners with the goal of achieving mutually beneficial outcomes that realize the region's potential as a vital crossroads," the spokesperson noted.

The Trump administration reportedly floated a proposal to establish a U.S.-operated transport corridor through Armenia's southern Syunik province, aiming to



address the ongoing blockade between Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey over regional connectivity, according to an analysis by Olesya Vartanyan of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Citing unnamed diplomatic sources familiar with the discussions, Vartanyan reported that the plan would place a U.S.-based commercial logistics firm in charge of managing and monitoring cargo transit between Azerbaijan and its Nakhichevan exclave via Armenian territory.

Former President Serzh Sargsyan faces new criminal charges



Former President Serzh Sargsyan has been charged with bribery and illegal entrepreneurship, the Anti-Corruption Committee announced on Wednesday.

Investigators said Sargsyan abused his powers to help his confidant's businesses secure a business deal in establishing a bitumen plant, which was launched through foreign investments.

The law enforcement agency stated in a report that Sargsyan had been involved in illegal entrepreneurship since 2006, when his confidant launched a new company with two Russian firms registered in Cyprus, and allegedly transferred 22.5% of the shares to a company founded by Sargsyan's nephew and former President Kocharyan's son. In 2013, investigators

said, the company failed, and foreign investors planned to sell their shares. However, Sargsyan allegedly instructed his confidant to take a \$14,000,000 loan from an Armenian bank owned by his associate to return the investments made by the two Russian companies. Sargsyan then allegedly organized the sale of his confidant's company assets to benefit a business affiliated with his son-in-law.

In 2015, the said company acquired the assets for \$40,000,000, effectively gaining a monopoly on petroleum imports (the assets included 23 gas stations, a petroleum base, and a bitumen factory). Furthermore, Sargsyan allegedly instructed his business partner to pay \$6,000,000 to "the son of the Second President of Armenia" in exchange for the 22.5% of the company shares that had been previously given as a bribe. The money was allegedly transferred to his company through a fake transaction contract. The indictment has been sent to the Anti-Corruption Court.

Sargsyan served as President from 2008 to 2018. He was the Minister of Defense before that.

Armenia open to linking ‘Crossroads of Peace’ with China’s ‘Belt and Road’ – FM



During his official visit to Beijing, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan gave an interview to the [South China Morning Post](#).

Below are excerpts from the published article highlighting key points of the discussion.

On Armenia-China strategic partnership

When asked about the prospects for deepening strategic ties between Armenia and China, Minister Mirzoyan emphasized that there are no obstacles to strengthening bilateral relations.

“Not only is there no impediment to advancing our relations, but there is also openness and readiness to deepen them without any limitations,” he said.

He noted that this mutual understanding has already been conveyed to China during discussions with Chinese counterparts.

“We have acknowledged the strategic nature of our relationship, and we see shared interest in officially elevating these ties.”

Minister Mirzoyan described the political dialogue between Yerevan and Beijing as “intense and active,” noting Armenia’s intention to expand cooperation beyond trade and infrastructure, into areas such as culture and people-to-people exchange.

On peace in the South Caucasus

Addressing questions about prospects for peace in the South Caucasus, Minister Mirzoyan recalled that China was among the countries that welcomed the progress made in Armenia-Azerbaijan peace negotiations.

“Armenia is committed to institutionalizing peace with Azerbaijan through the signing of a Peace Treaty,” he stated.

“We see that China expressed readiness to support the Armenia-Azerbaijan normalization,” he said.

On normalizing relations with neighbors, including Türkiye

Regarding Armenia’s efforts to normalize relations with its neighbors, including Türkiye, Minister Mirzoyan underlined the significance of such steps for Armenia’s broader connectivity agenda.

“Normalization is a key component of Armenia’s ‘Crossroads of Peace’ initiative, launched in 2023, which aims to enhance connectivity between Armenia, its neighbors, and wider regions, including Europe, Central Asia, and China,” Minister Mirzoyan said.

He further noted the potential for synergy between Armenia’s “Crossroads of Peace” and global infrastructure initiatives such as China’s *Belt and Road Initiative* and the EU’s *Global Gateway*, a €300 billion investment strategy.

“Imagine, Armenian “Crossroads of Peace” wouldn’t have that huge impact without the “Belt and Road” project of China; and vice versa, probably the “Belt and Road” wouldn’t run that smoothly if it were to bypass Armenia,” the Foreign Minister said.

Russia summons Azerbaijani Ambassador over detention of journalists and raid on Sputnik Azerbaijan

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has summoned Azerbaijani Ambassador Rakhman Mustafayev in protest over what it described as “unfriendly actions” by Baku, including the unlawful detention of Russian journalists and a police operation targeting the Sputnik Azerbaijan news agency.

“In light of the unfriendly actions of Baku and the unlawful detention of Russian journalists, against whom the Azerbaijani authorities had no claims over the years, the Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan has been summoned to the Foreign Ministry,” the Ministry told TASS.



Tensions escalated following a raid by Azerbaijani law enforcement on the offices of Sputnik Azerbaijan, a local branch of the Russian state-affiliated media group. The Azerbaijani Ministry of Internal Affairs confirmed that an operation was

conducted but did not provide details on the legal basis or outcomes.

According to RT Editor-in-Chief Margarita Simonyan, employees of the Sputnik Azerbaijan office ceased all communication following the operation, raising concerns in Moscow over their safety and the transparency of the Azerbaijani authorities’ actions.

Moscow has demanded explanations and the immediate release of any detained journalists, stressing that the media should not become a target in political disagreements.

Baku summons Russian envoy as Moscow warns citizens over travel to Azerbaijan

On July 2, 2025, the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Azerbaijan, Mikhail Yevdokimov, was summoned to Azerbaijan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During the meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov, Azerbaijani authorities lodged a formal protest over what they described as Russia's "unfriendly actions" that have undermined the bilateral relationship.

The protest centered on the June 27 police raids in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg, during which Russian law enforcement allegedly used excessive force in operations targeting Azerbaijani nationals. The Azerbaijani side claimed that two citizens were killed and several others seriously injured as a result of unlawful conduct by Russian officers. Officials emphasized that Moscow's explanation of the incident contradicted forensic findings and the evident signs of severe violence on the victims' bodies.

Azerbaijan further condemned the portrayal of Azerbaijanis in parts of the Russian media as an "ethnic criminal

group," calling such language discriminatory and reflective of ethnic intolerance. It demanded a thorough and objective investigation into the Yekaterinburg incident and insisted that those responsible be held accountable. Azerbaijani authorities rejected suggestions that their concern over the matter constitutes interference in Russia's internal affairs.

Baku also pushed back against Russia's objections to actions taken against the Sputnik Azerbaijan office, insisting that all legal measures were conducted in accordance with domestic legislation and are subject to ongoing investigation.

In a broader context, Azerbaijani officials pointed to rising tension in bilateral ties since the downing of an Azerbaijan Airlines aircraft in Russian airspace late last year – a tragedy for which they claim Russia has failed to provide transparency, justice, or compensation.

The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry concluded that a series of hostile remarks by Russian political figures and media outlets over the past several months have harmed

the country's sovereignty, insulted the Azerbaijani people, and further strained relations.

In parallel, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued its own warning to Russian nationals regarding travel to Azerbaijan. Speaking at a press briefing, MFA Spokesperson Maria Zakharova advised Russian citizens currently in Azerbaijan – or those planning to visit – to carefully consider the current situation.

She added that Russia's embassy in Baku is actively working with families of detained Russian citizens, some of whom were seen with visible bruises in recently released footage.

According to Zakharova, the embassy has received 11 appeals from relatives who identified their family members in the videos aired by Azerbaijani media. She emphasized that the Russian diplomatic mission remains in contact with these families and is committed to defending the legitimate rights of Russian citizens through diplomatic channels.

Israel-Iran war could negatively affect Baku's willingness to reach peace with Yerevan, warns Swedish MP

According to Swedish Member of Parliament Erik Hellsborn, the recent 12-day war between Israel and Iran might negatively affect Azerbaijan's readiness to sign a peace agreement with Armenia.

Hellsborn expressed this opinion in an interview with Armenpress, addressing the prospects for finalizing negotiations on a peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan and its potential early signing.

The MP also commented on the unprecedented development of relations between Armenia and the European Union and the prospects for their further expansion.

Speaking about the agreement reached between Yerevan and Baku back in March, Hellsborn said the recent military escalation between Israel and Iran could reduce

Azerbaijan's willingness to finalize the deal in the near future.

He also warned that the weakening of Iran's military capabilities as a result of the conflict with Israel could present an opportunity for Baku to occupy new territories from Armenia.

"I wish Armenia's democratically elected government the best in their struggle to accomplish a stable, long lasting peace. But I fear that recent war between Israel and Iran might have a negative impact on Azerbaijan's willingness to reach an agreement. But there is a risk that a weakened Iran will be less of a deterrent for Baku, and might embolden them to seek control over more Armenian territory," Hellsborn said.

The Swedish MP also positively

assessed the recent strengthening of Armenia-EU relations and the June 29–30 visit to Armenia by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Kaja Kallas. He emphasized the importance of continued efforts to build strong economic and cultural ties between Yerevan and Brussels, which would benefit both sides.

"This is all a very positive development. We should continue to build economic and cultural ties between us. A future where both Europe and Armenia views Armenia as part of a greater western civilization is something that will be beneficial for both parties," Hellsborn said.

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Spike in anti-Christian incidents in Israel: Armenian Quarter most targeted, report says



The Religious Freedom Data Center (RFDC) has released its latest quarterly report, documenting 50 hate incidents against Christians in Israel between April and June 2025. The report reveals a troubling rise in targeted attacks, particularly in Jerusalem's Old City, where 50% of incidents occurred in the Armenian Quarter.

According to the data, 64% of the recorded incidents took place within the Old City walls, with half of those centered around the Armenian Patriarchate. This makes it the single most frequently targeted Christian site. Other major hotspots included Jaffa Gate and David Street (25%), Via Dolorosa (13%), and Chabad and HaAshurim Streets (6% each).

Outside the Old City, 22% of incidents occurred on Mount Zion, 10% in West Jerusalem, and smaller percentages in Gethsemane and areas beyond Jerusalem.

The vast majority of attacks (78%) involved spitting, a form of harassment widely reported by clergy and Christian

residents. Other incidents included verbal abuse (8%), vandalism (4%), trespassing, and desecration of holy sites.

Among the victims were Armenian, Franciscan, Orthodox, and Catholic clergy, as well as Christian civilians. Many incidents were documented during processions, services, or while walking in religious attire. One case included threats of arson toward Armenian clergy, and several featured coordinated verbal assaults and gestures of contempt.

The RFDC also noted that only 22 of the cases have been filed with police since January 2025. Of those, just two have led to prosecution. Six cases were closed, while 14 remain without updates – raising serious concerns about impunity and the lack of law enforcement follow-through. During a Knesset hearing in May, police representatives admitted that the average annual number of indictments stands at only one to three.

The report was presented at two Knesset committee sessions in May, chaired by MK Gilad Kariv, and attended by Christian clergy, diplomats, and civil society actors. A follow-up session is scheduled to take place in the Old City to hear directly from victims.

Yaron Weiss, an Israeli expert on Armenian affairs and a human rights advocate, has voiced concern that the recent surge

in attacks against Armenians in Jerusalem may be linked to ongoing attempts to seize control of the "Cow Garden" in the Armenian Quarter.

In comments to *Public Radio of Armenia*, he stressed the urgent need for law enforcement to protect the small Armenian community and to take decisive action against the perpetrators. Weiss also criticized the current handling of such cases, noting that even in the rare instances when attackers are detained, they are promptly released without consequences.

The organization's recommendations include greater police presence during sensitive religious periods, installation of surveillance cameras in key areas, educational outreach in schools, and stronger municipal recognition of Christian presence in Jerusalem's public spaces.

The RFDC is an independent initiative founded in June 2023 by Yisca Harani, an Israeli activist, scholar and expert in Christian history and interfaith relations. The center was established in response to a noticeable increase in anti-Christian incidents in Jerusalem, particularly in the Old City. Its primary mission is to document, report, and assist in addressing acts of harassment and violence against Christian individuals, clergy, and institutions in Israel.

Armenia attaches special importance to development of relations with Canada: Pashinyan congratulates Carney on Canada Day

Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan has sent a congratulatory message to Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on the occasion of Canada Day, extending warm wishes on behalf of the Government of Armenia and personally.

In his message, Prime Minister Pashinyan emphasized the importance Armenia places on developing bilateral relations with Canada, noting the country's valuable

support for Armenia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and democratic reforms.

"Armenia attaches special importance to the further development of bilateral relations with Canada and the further expansion and deepening of cooperation in all areas of mutual interest," the Armenian Prime Minister noted.

Pashinyan expressed particular appreciation for Canada's continued support

of Armenia's democratic reform agenda and pledged readiness to work closely with Prime Minister Carney to fully realize the potential of cooperation between the two nations.

Concluding his message, Pashinyan wished Prime Minister Carney good health and energy, and extended wishes of prosperity, peace, and happiness to the friendly people of Canada.

International high-level conference held in Armenia on 107th anniversary of Prosecutor's Office

An international high-level conference dedicated to the 107th anniversary of the establishment of the Prosecutor's Office of Armenia and the Day of the Prosecutor's Office Worker kicked off on July 1 in Dilijan.

The event is organized by the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Armenia within the framework of joint programs of the European Union and the Council of Europe.

The conference titled "Prosecutorial Independence and Impartiality in the Context of Launching Public Criminal Proceedings Against Officials Suspected of Crimes: Corruption and Money Laundering," has brought together senior officials, legal experts, and representatives from international institutions.

Among the attendees were Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Prosecutor General Anna Vardapetyan, senior officials from Armenia's executive and judicial branches, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Yerevan Maxime Longangue, Deputy Director of the Legal Reforms and Human Rights Cooperation Programmes Division of the Council of Europe Lilit Daneghyan, and Tomislav Sertić, Head of the Economic Crime and Cooperation Division at the Council of Europe.

Also in attendance were the Prosecutors General of Lithuania and Malta, Nida Grunskiene and Victoria Buttigieg respectively, former President of the Advisory Council of European Prosecutors Jana Zezulová, and prosecutorial delegations from Austria, Greece, Poland, the Czech Republic, Eurojust, and the International Association of Prosecutors. Heads of diplomatic missions accredited to Armenia also participated.

Prime Minister Pashinyan congratulated prosecutors on their professional holiday and thanked them for their service. He emphasized the critical role of the law enforcement system in upholding peace, justice, and citizens' well-being. "Corruption is one of the principal challenges of any society," the Prime Minister stated, adding that his government maintains a policy of zero tolerance towards corruption. "It is essential not only to eliminate the consequences of corruption but also to uncover and address its root causes."

Prosecutor General Anna Vardapetyan extended congratulations to all prosecutors and staff of the Prosecutor's Office, highlighting the responsibility they bear. "We are responsible not only for ourselves, but also for the people around us and those who trust us. I wish you to fulfill

your mission with a sense of duty, great responsibility, a straight back and a clear face," she said.

Clare Ovey, Director for Human Rights at the Council of Europe, praised the organization of the conference and emphasized the vital role of prosecutors. "The stronger this cooperation, the weaker the impact of international organized crime on our continent," she noted.

Vassilis Maragos, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Armenia, called the conference "an important platform to reflect on priorities, achievements, and lessons learned." He reaffirmed the EU's commitment to supporting Armenian state institutions in combating corruption and strengthening the rule of law, including through capacity-building for judiciary professionals.

The conference is organized within the framework of the projects "Support to the Implementation of Judicial and Legal Reforms in Armenia" and "Strengthening National Capacities for Effective Prevention and Combating Economic Crimes in Armenia," co-financed by the European Union and the Council of Europe's Partnership for Good Governance program and implemented by the Council of Europe.

Armenian Innovation Foundation holds first meeting of Board of Trustees

The Armenian Innovation Foundation (AIF) held the inaugural meeting of its Board of Trustees, marking a significant step in the Foundation's official launch and the start of its organizational activities.

The Foundation was established through a public-private partnership in line with a decision by the Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of Armenia on Science and Technology Development, with participation from key representatives of the private sector as well as associations.

The mission of AIF is to drive the advancement of scientific, technological, and innovation capacity as a cornerstone of Armenia's economic growth, industrial transformation, and global competitiveness.

The Foundation serves as a strategic

bridge between government, academia, industry, and international partners, aiming to:

- Support the development of research, technology, and innovation strategic state programs,
- Develop public-private investment partnership programs,
- Attract global expertise, ideas, and resources to strengthen Armenia's innovation ecosystem.

During the first meeting, the Board of Trustees elected Hakob Arshakyan—Vice President of the National Assembly—as Chairman of the Board.

"This Foundation can become a powerful instrument for the development of Armenia's innovation ecosystem—enabling

us to unify our efforts in designing long-term development programs by leveraging the scientific and technological potential of both Armenia and the Diaspora. It is a great honor for me to assume the role of Chair of the Board, and I am grateful for the trust placed in me," stated Hakob Arshakyan following his election.

The Board also approved the procedure for filling the vacant position of Chief Executive Officer, as well as the composition and timeline of the working group responsible for organizing the process.

In the coming months, the Foundation will begin implementing its first-year strategic priorities, starting with the CEO recruitment process, the formation of organizational structures, and the preparation of strategic development programs.

ASUE, Florida State University launch partnership to advance STEM and Social Entrepreneurship

The Armenian State University of Economics (ASUE) and Florida State University have launched a partnership to advance STEM and Social Entrepreneurship for Global Innovation and Progress.

The project is funded by the US Department of State.

ASUE Rector Armen Grigoryan, US Ambassador to Armenia Kristina Kvien, Florida State University Jim Moran College of Entrepreneurship Professor and Associate Dean Dr. Eric Liguori attended the launch ceremony at ASUE.

ASUE Rector Armen Grigoryan said the project reflects “our shared commitment to advance joint initiatives by combining the valuable American experience and Armenian potential.”

He added that the partnership is unprecedented in terms of marking the first major cooperation between an Armenian



state university and a US public university.

The goal of the program is to provide students and young people aspiring to make changes with the necessary environment, knowledge, tools and mentorship to realize their ideas.

Ambassador Kvien lauded the successful cooperation between the US embassy and ASUE.

“This new partnership will help

strengthen innovation and entrepreneurship, and most importantly make a strategic investment in the mutual prosperity of our countries,” she added.

“This partnership brings together the finest American skills and Armenian talent to solve real issues, develop local businesses and open new doors for cooperation and trade between the United States and Armenia,” the ambassador said, highlighting the valuable international experience and new research opportunities for US universities benefiting from the partnership. “This is also a victory for US companies who seek global partnerships and talents ready for the future.”

By investing in Armenia’s scientific and entrepreneurial ecosystem, the ambassador said, the US helps shape a future that advances the American principles of free entrepreneurship, merit and accountability.

National Youth Forum to bring together 800 young people from Armenia and Diaspora



The Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs of the Republic of Armenia will host the 2025 Armenian National Youth Forum from August 5 to 7 in Yerevan. The forum is being held for the second time. The first forum took place in 2023. This biennial event serves as a platform for youth from Armenia and the Diaspora to exchange ideas, address common challenges.

According to Aram Voskanyan, Advisor to the High Commissioner and co-organizer of the forum, this year’s event will bring

together 800 young participants, including 600 from Diaspora communities and 200 from Armenia.

“The participants are young people aged 18 to 35 representing diverse fields and sectors,” said Voskanyan. “We have received over 1,200 applications. Selection is based on criteria such as community engagement, social activism, and involvement in projects related to Armenia.”

He noted that nearly 60 percent of the applicants will be visiting Armenia for the first time. “This is not just a forum, it’s also a chance for Diaspora Armenian youth to get acquainted with their homeland,” he added.

The forum will be held in interactive formats, including master classes, roundtable discussions, open lectures, and panel sessions.

Each day of the forum will focus on a specific theme. Topics will range from national identity and Armenia-Diaspora

relations to the peculiarities of Western and Eastern Armenian. The organization of the forum is aimed at sparking interest in the Armenian language and culture among Diaspora youth,” Voskanyan emphasized.

Discussions will also address opportunities for Diaspora Armenian youth to contribute to Armenia’s development, whether in the public, private, or civil society sectors.

Reflecting on the success of the 2023 forum, Voskanyan said, “The positive response from the first forum laid the foundation for its continuation. This year, we aim to make the platform even more inclusive,” he concluded.

The Armenian National Youth Forum is organized by the Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs of the Republic of Armenia.

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Syunik – musical hub of Armenia: Kapan Fest to welcome world-renowned artists for the third time

The Kapan International Music Festival, which brings a fresh cultural pulse to the city of Kapan and the Syunik Province, is set to return for its third edition, once again uniting acclaimed Armenian and international musicians from around the world.

Scheduled to take place from July 4 to 15, the festival will feature a wide array of distinctive concert programs, masterclasses, artist talks, and engaging public discussions. Since its inception, Kapan Fest has welcomed pianist Anna Sarkisova from the United States, who returns year after year, drawn by the festival's warm atmosphere and the audience's genuine appreciation for high art.

In an interview with Armenpress, Sarkisova shared her admiration:

"All of us musicians eagerly await the month of July, when we can travel to Kapan. Thanks to the professionalism of the organizers, the festival is held to an exceptionally high standard. Every effort is made to create an inspiring environment for both faculty and participants. Having performed at numerous international festivals, I can confidently say that Kapan Fest is on par with the best of them.

The recent acquisition of a new-generation Steinway D grand piano-transported from Belgium across Europe to Armenia - has significantly enhanced the festival's artistic quality. We are now exploring the possibility of acquiring a second instrument to further enrich future performances."

She emphasized that the organizers are fully committed to making both guests



and audiences feel welcome - an effort that has greatly contributed to the festival's growing appeal and reputation.

Participants often remark that time seems to fly by during the festival. The concerts, held at the Organ Hall of the Kapan State Art College, consistently attract full audiences.

"Once, our performance began at 10:30 p.m., although the concert had officially started at 8:00 p.m. I feared the audience might have grown tired and left - but not a single seat was empty. I have performed on many stages, but the warmth and attentiveness of the Kapan audience is truly exceptional.

They eagerly await the festival and offer it their wholehearted support. Every time I step on stage in Kapan, it is a deeply emotional moment for me, because I am performing in my homeland. I had never been to Kapan before the festival, and my

first performance there remains one of the most moving experiences of my life," said Sarkisova.

This year, Kapan Fest will feature musicians from France, Germany, Belgium, the United States, Slovakia, Russia, Denmark, Portugal, and several other countries.

The most eagerly anticipated guest is world-renowned pianist and GRAMMY Award winner Martha Argerich, who will perform in three concerts in Kapan, accompanied by the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra. This will mark Argerich's first-ever visit to Armenia.

"She is deeply excited and enthusiastic about the trip. As someone who values countries with rich history and culture, she is very

much looking forward to experiencing Armenia and meeting our musicians," Sarkisova noted, adding that music lovers from Yerevan and other regions are expected to travel to Kapan to attend her performances.

Argerich's participation is expected to significantly elevate Kapan Fest's international profile and facilitate future collaborations with other world-class artists.

As part of the festival's educational mission, a series of masterclasses will be offered to young performers, including students from the Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory. According to Sarkisova, Kapan Fest received a large number of applications, and more than 50 participants were carefully selected.

Local faculty members from the Kapan State Art College are also actively involved, bringing their students to attend the masterclasses.

"This is extremely important. Kapan

DevHacks Hackathon hicks off as part of Tech Week Vanadzor 2025



As part of *Tech Week Vanadzor 2025*, Armenia's most intense hackathon – DevHacks – officially kicked off on July 4 at the Vanadzor Technology Center. The 48-hour competition, the longest of its kind in the country, has brought together around 200 participants, making it the largest hackathon in Armenia's history.

Unlike the typical 24-hour format, DevHacks spans two full days, which is why organizers are calling it the “toughest” hackathon of the year. The event aims to unite the most talented teams around innovative and impactful tech projects, encouraging creativity, collaboration, and real-time problem-solving.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Armenia's Deputy Minister of High-Tech Industry Ruben Simonyan expressed excitement about the energy and atmosphere at the Vanadzor Technology Center.

“It's incredibly inspiring to see so many young people here with bright eyes and strong motivation. The fact that you're ready to challenge yourselves for 48 hours is impressive. Make the most of this opportunity to connect, exchange experiences, and learn,” Simonyan said.

He also highlighted the importance of organizing such events outside of the capital, encouraging the expansion of similar initiatives to other regions of Armenia.

Director of the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE), Sargis Karapetyan, reflected on his own experience at his first hackathon and thanked the organizers for their dedication.

Aram Kocharyan, co-founder and CEO of Layerswap, the company organizing DevHacks, said: “I'm thrilled that over 200 people have joined DevHacks. It's not going to be easy – you'll get little sleep, face challenges, and probably have arguments. But whether you win or not, the experience will be invaluable.”

On July 6, teams will present their completed projects to a panel of judges who will evaluate submissions based on technical complexity, completeness, usability, and feasibility. The jury includes

experts from various sectors, including Web3/crypto, fintech, and space-related technologies.

The total prize pool is the AMD equivalent of \$15,000:

1st place: \$10,000

2nd place: \$3,500

3rd place: \$1,500

Tech Week Vanadzor, taking place from July 4 to 6, is one of the most important annual gatherings in Armenia's tech ecosystem. Notably, Tech Week has never been held in Yerevan – and never will be. The core idea is to temporarily relocate the technological capital of Armenia outside of Yerevan for three days.

This year, Vanadzor hosts leading industry experts, startup founders, company executives, students, and tech enthusiasts from across Armenia and abroad. The central venue is the Charles Aznavour Cultural Palace, which will host conferences and panel discussions featuring over 60 speakers—including founders, CEOs, investors, and innovators.

Tech Week Vanadzor is organized by TCF, Zealous, and the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE).



was once a major cultural hub, but much has changed. For educators, it has become increasingly difficult to cultivate children's interest in classical music. The festival is helping to reverse that trend. Last year, applications to the piano and violin departments at Kapan's music college were limited. This year, we have seen a notable

increase. That, for Kapan, is a significant achievement,” Sarkisova emphasized.

The overarching goal of Kapan Fest is to establish Kapan as a vibrant musical center and to spark broader public interest in both the city and the Syunik region.

“The festival takes place in Kapan not only because the city boasts an outstanding concert hall, but also because Syunik - with its breathtaking landscapes and distance from Yerevan - is a hidden gem. Foreign visitors are consistently charmed by it; many liken it to a miniature Switzerland.

We must invest more actively in our regions-not only economically, but culturally. There is no other festival in Yerevan quite like Kapan Fest,” affirmed Sarkisova.

She added that festivals of this caliber not only enrich cultural life in the regions but also contribute meaningfully to the development of tourism.

The founder of the Kapan International Music Festival is the distinguished Belgian-Armenian cellist Sevak Avanesyan. The festival's principal partner is the Kapan Municipality, with support from the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia, the Zangezur Copper-Molybdenum Combine, and numerous other sponsors and supporters.

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