

Tigran Mansuryan - 80



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan joined his daughters to attend a concert at A. Spendiaryan National Academic Opera and Ballet Theater, devoted to renowned Armenian composer, RA Honored Art Figure, RA People's Artist Tigran Mansuryan. The concert is being held within the framework of Maestro Mansourian-80, dedicated to the 80th anniversary of Tigran Mansuryan.

The symphonic orchestra performed works by the master of classical music of Armenian classical music. In his speech, Prime Minister Pashinyan emphasized that Tigran Mansuryan is one of the greatest figures of our contemporary art and music.

“But we usually record the fact because it is more visible and perceptible and sometimes, we don't notice the path that is actually more important. On January 27 as I had the opportunity to visit the maestro to congratulate him on his birthday and spend some time in his family environment, I discovered a new Tigran Mansuryan for me because I understood the perception that people usually have and certainly have in the case of Tigran Mansuryan , needs some revision, because I am sure a lot of musicians, artists, just seeing and looking at Tigran Mansuryan, they say, here's a lucky man, here's a successful man, here's a story of a successful life, here's a person born under a lucky star is listening.

In fact, however, this is not a gift of fortune to man, but a victory of destiny, because a man born in Lebanon as a refugee and hoping for a good life in Soviet Armenia, found himself in an extremely difficult social situation, in extremely difficult conditions, and here is the point. has been able to rise to the floor of creative glory.

This story is more important to me because when the maestro was telling his story that day, so it is in 90 percent of Armenian families, his relatives say, well, those difficult stories, difficulties,

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PM Pashinyan receives UEFA President

Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan received UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin on September 5. President of the Football Federation of Armenia Artur Vanetsyan was also present at the meeting.

As Noyan Tapan was informed from the Office of the Prime Minister of Armenia, the PM welcomed Aleksander Ceferin's visit to Armenia and highlighted the close and productive cooperation between UEFA and the Football Federation of Armenia for the benefit of the development of football in Armenia. Nikol Pashinyan particularly emphasized the support by the UEFA to the development of football infrastructures in Armenia, noting that as a result of that a range of projects aimed at popularization of football in the country are carried out.

Nikol Pashinyan expressed confidence that the visit of the UEFA President will foster the partnership between the UEFA



and the Football Federation of Armenia, including in the direction of the construction of the national stadium in Armenia.

Aleksander Ceferin thanked the Armenian PM for the warm reception and for being focused on the development of football. The UEFA President expressed satisfaction over the cooperation with the partners of the Football Federation of Armenia, noting that the UEFA will continue fostering the development of football in Armenia, including the infrastructures.

It was particularly mentioned that with the support of UEFA 76 stadiums with artificial turf will be constructed in the regions of Armenia during this year, as well as necessary stuff will be provided to the Football Federation of Armenia for the implementation of projects aimed at the development of futsal and women's football.

The UEFA President noted that in the modern world football has become a separate branch of economy, where huge amounts of money are circulated. The interlocutors shared the opinion that football plays an important role in the social life for uniting and consolidating different peoples.

During the meeting the interlocutors also referred to the upcoming projects of cooperation between the UEFA and the Football Federation of Armenia.

Aleksander Ceferin presented Nikol Pashinyan with a football ball.

PM again meets Jermuk residents to discuss Amulsar project



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has held a meeting on September 6 at the Government Headquarters with a group of residents of Jermuk, Vayots Dzor.

The meeting focused on the situation regarding the Amulsar gold mine project, the

PM's Office said in a news release.

Earlier in August PM Pashinyan personally visited the town of Jermuk and met the local population to discuss the matter.

"In particular, the Environmental Impact Assessment procedures, the monitoring

issue, the legal, economic and environmental aspects and public concerns were addressed," reads the news release.

The PM attached importance to the government-society dialogue over issues of public concern and noted that the solution to the Amulsar issue must be based on Armenia's balanced interest, and that future steps must be taken by taking into account the importance of viewing all components of the project in a complex whole, the PM's Office said.

The Amulsar gold mine project, a program operated by Lydian Armenia – the subsidiary of gold developer Lydian Armenia – is currently stopped pending the government's approval for resumption of operations. The Ministry of Environment has requested the National Academy of Sciences to assess the Environmental Impact Assessment of the project.

Pashinyan in fresh meetings on key mining project

(RFE/RL- Yerevan)- Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan met with his political allies, environmental activists and the chief executive of a Western mining company on Friday to discuss the future of its controversial project to develop Armenia's Amulsar gold deposit.

Pashinyan briefed parliament deputies from his My Step alliance on the status of the stalled project and answered questions from them. He declined to talk to journalists after the three-hour meeting behind the closed doors.

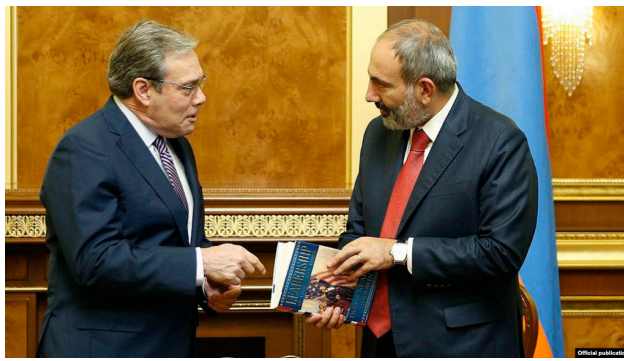
Alen Simonyan, a senior My Step figure and deputy speaker of the Armenian parliament, gave no details of what Pashinyan told his loyalists. He said that the participants of the meeting did not arrive at any "conclusion."

"The prime minister's position is known," Simonyan told the press. "As for his remarks, they were about the existing situation."

Pashinyan went on to hold separate meetings with activists opposed to the project and Edward Sellers, the interim chief executive of the British-American company Lydian International that had received in 2016 a government license to mine gold at Amulsar.

Lydian has had no access to the planned mining site ever since several dozen environmental protesters started blocking all roads leading to it in June 2018. The latter want the Armenian authorities to ban the project, saying that it would wreak havoc on the environment. Lydian maintains that it would use modern technology that would prevent such damage.

According to a government statement, Pashinyan told the activists from Jermuk, a resort town over 10 kilometers north of Amul-



Armenia -- Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan (R) meets with Edward Sellers, interim chief executive of Lydian International, Yerevan, September 6, 2019.

sar, that he believes a solution to the dispute should be based on "Armenia's balanced interests." The statement did not say whether he told them the government is planning to enable Lydian to resume its operations or on the contrary pull the plug on the multimillion-dollar project.

Pashinyan's press office also reported few details of his talks with Sellers. It said they discussed the results of an independent environmental audit of Lydian's project commissioned by the government and conducted by a Lebanese consulting firm, ELARD.

ELARD sent a written report to Armenia's Investigative Committee about a month ago. According to the law-enforcement body, the report concluded that gold mining at Amulsar will pose only "manageable" risks to the environment if Lydian takes "mitigating measures" recommended by ELARD.

Pashinyan echoed that assessment on August 19 when he signaled his intention to restore Lydian's access to Amulsar. But he then decided to ask ELARD experts to personally explain their findings at a video conference held ten days later.

The experts said they cannot definitively evaluate environmental dangers of the project Lydian because had submitted flawed and incomplete information to Armenian regulatory authorities. Lydian responded by accusing them of misleading Pashinyan's government.

Pashinyan said at the end of the Skype call that the government might require Lydian to go through a fresh licensing process which would probably take months. The government has announced no decisions to that effect yet.

Armenian, Azerbaijani FMs to meet "soon"



Soon Armenia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Zohrab Mnatsakan-

yan and Azerbaijan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Elmar Mammadyarov will hold another meeting.

FM Mnatsakanyan confirmed it to a news conference today but didn't disclose specific timeframes.

"Our government has very clearly expressed the seriousness of our intentions to actively work in the direction of the peaceful settlement process of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, and the number of the meetings this year between the foreign ministers and leaders of the two countries is already showing this seriousness. Our meeting is outlined, it will take place soon, we have an agreement to announce the meeting simultaneously and naturally I wouldn't want to breach it [agreement]," Mnatsakanyan said.

Mnatsakanyan and Mammadyarov last met on June 20 in the United States.

Armenia is no place for mobsters, says Deputy Speaker on situation in prisons

The situation in Armenian prisons is under control and there are no problems associated with it, Deputy Speaker of Parliament Alen Simonyan from the ruling My Step bloc told reporters referring to the disobediences that took place in correctional facilities September 5.

"I am aware that the situation is currently under control and there are no problems whatsoever. I can once again insist that the Republic of Armenia isn't for criminal au-

thorities," Simonyan said referring to the so-called organized crime hierarchy subculture in prisons which is being tackled by the government.

Inmates in several prisons of Armenia displayed disobedience in the evening of September 5, but the actions were stopped by the Department of Corrections.

Minister of Justice Rustam Badasyan had earlier confirmed that the situation is under control.



Badasyan said he will take actions based on the situation in case of possible developments.

Kocharyan's lawyers plan to file motion following Constitutional Court's decision



The lawyers of 2nd President of Armenia Robert Kocharyan plan to file a motion to the court following the decision of the Constitutional Court of Armenia, demanding to suspend the detention of their client, AR-

MENPRESS was informed from the lawyers team of Robert Kocharyan.

The Constitutional Court of Armenia has issued its verdict over ex-President Robert Kocharyan's appeal regarding his arrest.

Robert Kocharyan, currently in pre-trial detention on charges of "overthrowing constitu-

tional order" during the 2008 Yerevan unrest, requested the Constitutional Court to determine whether or not his arrest is con-

stitutional, i.e. whether paragraph 2 of Article 135 and Article 35 of the Criminal Procedures Code are in conformity with the Constitution.

On September 4, the Constitutional Court delivered a verdict, partly approving Kocharyan's motion.

The Constitutional Court ruled that Article 35 of the Criminal Procedures Code contradicts respective articles of the Constitution and is invalid in terms of not envisaging official immunity among the circumstances which exclude criminal prosecution.

The Constitutional Court, however, ruled that paragraph 2 of Article 135 is constitutional.

Iranian President, Singapore's PM expected to attend upcoming EAEU Summit in Yerevan

Armenia is preparing for the upcoming Summit of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan said during press conference on September 6

President of Iran Hassan Rouhani and Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Hsien Loong are expected to attend the Summit.

"We are preparing for this Summit. We



expect that it will be held with the participation of heads of EAEU member

states and guests who cooperate with the EAEU, including Iran and Singapore", the FM said.

The EAEU Summit will take place in Yerevan on October 1.

Earlier Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan invited the Iranian President and Singapore's PM to participate in the Summit.

Armenia ready to establish relations with Turkey without preconditions – FM



Armenia is ready to establish relations with Turkey without preconditions, Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan told a press conference on September 6.

He added, however, that “there is no good news today,” as the process involves two parties.

Unfortunately, he said, “we have realities that can in no way be welcome.”

“It’s the fact of the rejection of the Zurich

process by Turkey, it’s the fact of the continuing blockade and the biased stance on the Karbaakh issue. It’s the fact of the denial and justification of the Armenian Genocide,” Zohrab Mnatsakanyan noted.

September 6, 2008 marked the start of “football diplomacy.” Then Turkish President Abdullah Gul visited Yerevan to watch a football match between the national teams of Armenia and Turkey. President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan visited Bursa on a return visit to watch a football match between the national teams of Armenia and Turkey on October 14, 2009.

The “football diplomacy” led to the signing of two protocols between Armenia and Turkey. On 10 October 2009, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard

Nalbandyan signed in Zurich the two protocols in a ceremony attended also by then U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, French Minister of Foreign Affairs Bernard Kouchner and Foreign Minister of Russia Sergey Lavrov.

The Protocols required ratification from parliaments of both countries. In February 2015, the Armenian part, represented by President Sargsyan recalled the protocols from parliament, citing the “absence of political will” on the Turkish side.

Then, in December 2017 citing lack of any “positive progress towards their implementation” by Turkey, the Armenian side vowed to declare them void and null, which Armenia formally did on 1 March 2018.

LHK faction expects MP Arman Babajanyan to return mandate



The Lusavor Hayastan (Bright Armenia, LHK) faction of the Armenian Parliament expects MP Arman Babajanyan to return his mandate of lawmaker, LHK spokesperson Aren Petunts said on Facebook shortly after the MP announced he is quitting the faction.

“Lusavor Hayastan faction respects Mr. Arman Babajanyan’s principled stance and

expects him to return with the same principled manner the mandate he has received by the Lusavor Hayastan Party proportional list. We thank

Mr. Babajanyan for his work at the Lusavor Hayastan faction and we wish him good luck in his future activities,” Petunts said.

Member of Parliament Arman Babajanyan from the opposition Lusavor Hayastan (Bright Armenia) Party has announced his intentions to quit his membership to the faction, but he said he is still undecided

whether or not he will remain an independent lawmaker or he will quit at all.

“We haven’t seen creativity, pro-active-ness and innovation from the opposition. The opposition has failed in being better than the government, its mission of the future’s hope, just like it has failed in its highly important role of being an alternative to the government. The abovementioned reasons and factors are making me no longer compatible with the Lusavor Hayastan faction of the National Assembly, which unfortunately has made me to make the difficult decision of leaving it. I will announce it at the beginning of the upcoming sitting of parliament. I will soon announce whether I am also refusing from the mandate of lawmaker or if I will continue my active political activities as an independent lawmaker,” Babajanyan said in a Facebook statement.

He also mentioned several other reasons for withdrawing from the faction.

Armenia a big market for major French company: THALES Group sums up results of Yerevan visit

THALES Group, one of the world's leading French companies, continues to observe Armenia outlining the directions through which it will be possible to form a new Armenian-French cooperation in the future.

For this purpose, the company's delegation arrived in Armenia at the invitation of President Armen Sarkissian.

During their visit the delegation representatives already met with the Cabinet members, including Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Arayik Harutyunyan, Minister of Economy Tigran Khachatryan, Deputy minister of High technological industry Gegham Vardanyan. They visited leading technological companies, in particular Synopsis Armenia, BetConstruct and TUMO



Center for Creative Technologies. THALES Group officials examined the Armenian experience in high technologies.

THALES Vice President, regional director Paul Remi, who visits Armenia for already the third time, told reporters that this visit was very important. "The purpose of our visit is to collect as much information as possible within the framework of the working group formed

between Armenia and THALES to clarify the potential areas through which we can be represented in your country", he said.

Asked whether there are already agreements reached, Paul Remi said it's a little bit early to talk about that. "There are very good cooperation prospects. We are a major company and do not want to just give promises. Our goal is to achieve tangible re-

sults. Yes, we have plans to cooperate with the Armenian ecosystem in the field of high technologies. But we need to work hard to clarify the real and tangible directions", he said. He specifically highlighted artificial intelligence as a field with a great cooperation potential.

According to Paul Remi, Armenia is rich of resources. "As a high technological company we view Armenia as a big market. Armenia is a small country, but has very strong educational and technological foundations, and this is a great advantage for a company like THALES", he said, adding that the visits to Armenia will continue.

THALES Group is one of the world's leading French companies providing services for the aerospace, defense, transportation and security markets.

Export grows in Armenia by 3% January-July 2019



In January-July 2019, compared to January-July 2018, Armenia's external trade turnover grew by 2.3%. The export increased by 3% and the import by 1.9%, according to the report released by the Statistical Committee.

In July, compared to June, the export from Armenia grew by 6.8%, and the import by 6.5%.

The export growth rates have also accelerated. In particular, if in June 2019, compared to June 2018, the export grew by 1.2%, in July 2019, compared to July 2018, the export increased by 19.5%.

The biggest share in Armenia's external trade turnover as of Jan-

uary-July 2019 belonged to the CIS states – 30.9%, of which 27.5% belongs to Russia. The trade turnover with the EU states comprises 21.8% of the entire external trade turnover. China and Switzerland have a big share – 11.9% and 6.4% respectively.

The volumes of goods exported to the CIS states in January-July 2019 increased by 10%, and that to the EU states decreased by 22.7%. The volumes of goods exported to other countries increased by 17.9%. The volume of goods exported to Russia grew by 9.4%.

As for the EU states, in January-July the volumes of goods exported to Italy and the Netherlands increased by 23.2% and 40.3% respectively, however, the export to Belgium, Bulgaria and Germany has declined.

The export to China, as well as to Switzerland and Iraq has drastically increased – 72.6%, 25.3% and 25.5% respectively. The export volumes have declined to the USA, UAE and Iran.

In the aforementioned period the export volumes of precious and semi-precious stones, metals have increased by 38.8%. 10.3% increase has been registered in the export volumes of ready-made food products.

Government funds pay rise for teachers



The Armenian government allocated on September 5 1.7 billion drams (\$3.5 million) for financing this year a 10 percent increase in the salaries of schoolteachers effective from September 1.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan promised the pay rise in March when he touted additional tax revenues collected by the State Revenue Committee (SRC).

The measure will affect the nearly 38,000 teachers of Armenia's public schools. Their monthly salary has averaged approximately

80,000 drams until now.

The average monthly wage in Armenia currently stands at over 187,000 drams (\$392), according official statistics.

"We certainly don't regard this pay rise as revolutionary," Pashinyan said at the latest cabinet meeting in Yerevan. "On the other hand, this is the beginning of a process which will continue if we manage to put in place the right mechanisms."

Education Minister Arayik Harutiunyan said in this regard that his ministry hopes to raise the teachers' minimum wage to 108,000 drams already next year through the introduction of a "new formula for financing schools." He denied "false" reports about ongoing massive staff cuts in the chronically underfunded schools.

"The staff cuts have been ordinary, just like they were in the past," said Harutiunyan. "They are mainly to do with [teachers'] retirement age."

High-tech Ministers from 20 countries confirm participation in WCIT 2019 Yerevan

High-tech Ministers from 20 countries have confirmed their participation in the Ministerial roundtable to be held within the framework of the World Congress on Information Technologies (WCIT) 2019 in Yerevan, Armenia's Minister of High-Tech Industry Hakob Arshakyan said in a Facebook post.

The World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT 2019), one of the largest and



most prestigious ICT events in the world,

will be held in Yerevan this year from October 6-9.

The three-day congress will bring together over 2,500 participants from around 70 countries: information and communication technology leaders, CEOs and investors, policy makers and government officials, academics, and technologists. This year's theme is *The Power of Decentralization: Promise and Peril*.

Lebanese Armenians building 600-house district in Kotayk

Lebanese Armenian investors are planning to build a 600-house district on the territory of the city of Yeghvard, Governor of Kotayk Province informs in a Facebook post.

The district will house 2,800 people. Seven houses have already been built in the neighborhood called "Mari." The construction of the rest is under way.

The district will have a kindergarten, an educational complex, a church, shopping

centers and entertainment places.

Investors say they thus want to contribute to the reinforcement of Armenia-Diaspora ties.

The Governor said to be ready to support any initiative that meets the interests of the community.



French Government, Council of Europe invite Armenian Ombudsman to deliver remarks



At the special invitation of the French Government and the Council of Europe, Armenia's Ombudsman Arman Tatoyan has delivered remarks at the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers session.

The session was dedicated to "respective contributions of national human rights institutions and ombudspersons to human rights and the rule of law".

Tatoyan presented the Armenian Human Rights Defender's activities and experience, as well as principles and methods of work.

He presented how he is working with

the civil society and state bodies, ensuring high level of independence and significant growth of productivity, the Ombudsman's Office said in a news release. Tatoyan attached importance to the cooperation having strong institutional foundations that is established with parliament.

For example, he noted that during the spring session the parliament adopted a legislative package relating to the correctional system, which was developed by the Ombudsman's Office and which was later signed into law by the President, and then joint work was done with the Justice Min-

istry and the parliamentary committee on state-legal affairs. Tatoyan noted that this proves the important trilateral cooperation format.

He noted that active and productive cooperation has also been developed with the parliamentary committee on human rights and social affairs, as well as the Office of the Representative at the ECHR under the PM's Office.

"We are also actively cooperation with international human rights organizations. Due to impartial principles of work, the Armenian Human Rights Defender's reports are recognized as an important source at the European Court of Human Rights, which are referred to while making judgments relating to Armenia. The Human Rights Defender has been included as a third party in a case examined at the ECHR, which is an exclusive practice. We are successfully continuing to present to the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers the Ombudsman's special stances regarding ECHR judgments," he said.

Tatoyan said that together with the civil society they will soon develop stances regarding the implementation of Armenia-related ECHR judgments.

Government provides 720 mln drams for assisting persons affected during 2008 March 1-2 events

The Armenian government provided 720 million drams from the reserve fund to the justice ministry aimed at providing assistance to persons affected and families of those killed during the 2008 March 1-2 protests in Yerevan.

During today's Cabinet meeting justice minister Rustam Badasyan said the families of persons killed during these events will be provided with 30 million drams, those affected seriously – 15 million drams, and the persons affected slightly will receive 5 million drams.

Based on the calculation results, assistance will be provided to the families of 10 killed persons, 10 persons who suffered serious injuries and 54 people with minor injuries.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said this is not compensation, but an assistance. "My position is that given the well-known circumstances we should make decisions on the compensation issue based on the decisions made by the European Court of Human Rights. Why I say this, I state this for a special reason because it's a known



fact, I am also connected with March 1-2 events, and it's very important to make maximally objective decisions on this matter", the PM said.

Armenia and Germany to sign implementation protocol of readmission agreement



The Armenian Government has approved the recommendation to sign the Armenia-Germany Implementation Protocol of the agreement on readmission of people

residing without permits between Armenia and the EU.

The document was discussed at the Cabinet meeting on September 5.

According to the government, in the beginning of the visa liberalization dialogue with Armenia the EU is attaching importance to Armenia's readiness in supporting in the issue of the return of its citizens residing under irregular statuses in EU countries. The Government of Armenia spares no efforts in the direction of successfully implementing the implementation process of the agreements on return, including readmission.

From 2012 to 2017 Armenia received 1446 readmission applications for 2812 people, but the number grew and in 2018 alone reached 1030 applications for 2045 people. Most applications come from Germany.

Armenian government approves proposal to sign EAEU-Serbia free trade agreement

The Armenian government approved the draft decision on approving the proposal to sign a free trade zone agreement between the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), its member states and Serbia.

During today's Cabinet meeting Minister of Economy of Armenia Tigran Khachatryan said the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) held three negotiation phases with Serbia regarding the signing of the free trade agreement.

The minister said that three member states of the EAEU-Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, have already signed bilateral free trade agreements with Serbia, and the signing of this agreement aims at creating new trade opportunities for Armenia and Kyrgyzstan.



The agreement contains set of tools for contemporary regulating duties aimed at ensuring the stability, predictability and transparency of commercial processes.

Revisiting an ARF Member's Murder 18 Years Later

A witness at the time of the murder, whose testimony was thrown out, says he is willing to submit his testimony again
BY ARA KHACHATOURIAN



The murder case was officially closed in 2002. However, the brutal beating death of Javakhk resident and Armenian Revolutionary Federation member Poghos Poghosian at a popular Yerevan café on September 25, 2001 and the subsequent trial of one of then-president Robert Kocharian's bodyguards, Aghamal Harutunyan, who received a suspended sentence for involuntary manslaughter, has not faded from memory.

Late on the evening of September 24, 2001, Poghosian and his friend Stepan Nalbandyan were at the popular Aragast Café, known as the Paplavok jazz club in Yerevan when Kocharian and his entourage of heavily-armed bodyguards entered the café accompanied by Charles Aznavour. Upon their departure, Poghosian reportedly approached the Kocharian entourage and said "What's up Rob (Privet Rob)," (short for Robert). Minutes after this encounter, seven Kocharian bodyguards, among them Harutunyan, who is known as "Kuku," stormed the café's subterranean lavatory where they allegedly beat Nalbandyan and Poghosian, who was later pronounced dead.

At the time of the trial, the ARF in Armenia called the official investigation "flawed" and said that the evidence in the case was not properly being examined.

British citizen Stephen Newton, who at the time was working on European Tacis project, was also at Paplavok that evening and witnessed the brutal beating of Poghosian and Nalbandyan.

Newton offered his testimony in a lengthy statement, which later was thrown out by Mnatsakan Martirosyan, the presiding judge of "Kuku"'s 2002 trial, because he said it was in English. He forwarded his

testimony to several international watchdog organization, one of which, Human Rights Watch, closely monitored the case.

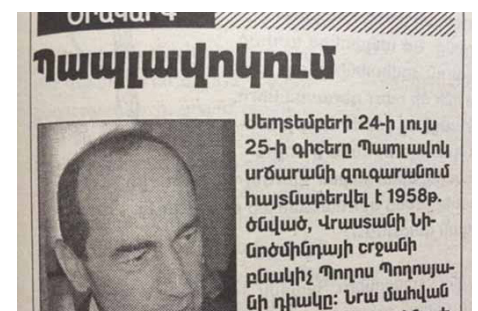
"Although dozens witnessed as the bodyguards began to beat Poghosian on the terrace of the Aragast café, fear of retribution and a resulting conspiracy of silence have starved the investigation of reliable testimony," Human Rights Watch said in a statement in December 2001.

Newton is back in Armenia and in an interview on Wednesday told Azatutyun.am that he would be willing to submit his testimony again, if prosecutors were interested in reexamining the case. He also said that the day after the Paplavok event, the UK Ambassador at the time arranged for him to leave Armenia for Romania, since he feared for his life.

"I stood up and ran to the toilet, entered, and as I went down the stairs I saw a powerfully built, 35-40 year-old man beating Stepan Nalbandian. He thumped Nalbandian in the head. He held Nalbandian's collar with his left hand and was about to thump him again with his right fist. I put my hand up to the assailant's face and shouted 'Stop this'. The assailant looked me straight in the eyes and stopped beating Nalbandian. He brushed past me up the toilet steps and went out and I went two meters forward to see the feet of Poghosian protruding from the toilet cubicle. I approached closer and saw Poghosian lying on the floor, face up, next to the toilet. It was clear to me that Poghosian had been very badly beaten around the head, probably kicked, and a large lump on his left temple, about the size of a thumb, indicated a possible blow from a pistol or similar blunt instrument. The skin all around his eyes was puffed and swelled up like that of a boxer after a fight in which he has taken a lot of hard blows to the face. In fact, because of the swelling you could hardly see Poghosian's eyes, and the swelling of his face generally made it about twenty percent larger than normal. It was a sickening, terrible sight, the memory of which I still find deeply disturbing. Poghosian was still just alive at this point – frothing in his mouth, and making gurgling, rasping noises. Because he was wearing clothes I could not

see any other injuries on him, nor could I see the back of his head. I do not recall seeing much blood. I told the guards, who all appeared shorter than the man who had been attacking Stepan Nalbandian on the stairs, 'You have killed him. Get a doctor to this man now,'" Newton said in his statement.

"The guards were joined by people from the President's office, who entered from outside. About five of these new people appeared. They were young men. I recognized them as belonging to the president's staff both because some were wearing special radio earpieces, and because I knew at least one of them by his face. They shouted phrases to the guards that included the repeated word: 'Britanski! Britanski!' I suppose they were telling the guards that I was British and that they should leave. I shouted that the man (Poghosian) needed medical



attention, as he was unconscious. The President's men spoke to me in English. One of them said to me: 'Don't worry. We will deal with this. You should leave now'. Very keyed up, distrustful of their motives, and not wanting to leave Poghosian alone with his tormentors and their friends, I replied: 'I am not leaving here until you bring an ambulance and ... (because I could not think of anything better at that point) the British ambassador.' During this verbal exchange the guards who had been involved in the attack left the toilet," added Newton in his deposition.

On Thursday, Arevik Khachatryan, a spokesperson for Armenia's Prosecutor General's office said that her office was examining the details of Newton's claims in the press. Last September, Andranik Poghosian, the victim's brother called on officials to reopen the case.

Armin Wegner Asked Franz Werfel Not to Write ‘40 Days of Musa Dagh’

By Harut Sassounian



Part I

Armin Wegner, a German soldier and medic, was sent to the Ottoman Empire during World War I, while the two countries were allies. Wegner was stationed along the Baghdad Railway in Syria and Mesopotamia, where he witnessed the deportations and mass killings of Armenians, subsequently known as the Armenian Genocide. He wrote several books describing his eyewitness accounts.

Contrary to the Ottoman prohibition of taking pictures during the Armenian Genocide, Wegner took hundreds of rare photographs and smuggled them into Germany. At the Ottoman government’s request, he was arrested and some of his photographs were destroyed. He succeeded, however, in hiding many other negatives in his belt. In 1919, Wegner sent a letter to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson at the Peace Conference, advocating for an independent Armenia. In 1921, Wegner testified at the trial of Soghomon Tehlirian, who was accused of assassinating Talaat Pasha in Berlin, the Turkish mastermind of the Armenian Genocide. Tehlirian was found not guilty by the German court and released from jail. Along with his wife, Wegner visited the Soviet Union and Soviet Armenia in 1927 – 28. In 1968, he was invited to Soviet Armenia by the Catholicos of All Armenians and awarded the Order of St. Gregory the Illuminator. Wegner died in Rome in 1978, at the age of 91. Some of his ashes are buried in Armenia.

Wegner’s illustrious counterpart was Franz Werfel, a Jewish-Austrian novelist, playwright, and poet. He was well-known for his novel, “The Forty Days of Musa Dagh,” which described the Armenian resistance to the Ottoman troops during the

Genocide.

Werfel visited the Middle East twice in 1925 and 1929. While in Damascus, Syria, he encountered Armenian children, survivors of the Genocide, who were in destitute condition, which inspired him to write “The Forty Days of Musa Dagh.” The world famous novel was published in Germany in 1933. Werfel gave lectures about the Armenian Genocide throughout Germany, as a result of which he was accused of spreading anti-Turkish propaganda. The Nazi newspaper “Das Schwarze” denounced him for carrying out propaganda against “alleged Turkish horrors perpetrated against the Armenians.” The same German newspaper, suggesting a link between Armenians and Jews, condemned “America’s Armenian Jews for promoting in the U.S.A. the sale of Werfel’s book.” His books were burned by the Nazis. He was forced to flee and eventually settled in Los Angeles, where he died in 1945. His body was reburied in Vienna in 1975.

Interestingly, these two distinguished pro-Armenian writers clashed with each other when Armin Wegner wrote a lengthy letter on December 14, 1932, asking Franz Werfel not to write his novel, “The Forty Days of Musa Dagh,” because he was in the midst of writing his own four-volume book on Armenians. Werfel responded to Wegner with a short letter on December 23, 1932, explaining that their planned books did not conflict with one other, as they were about different aspects of the Armenian Genocide. I would like to thank Zaven Khatchaturian, President of Armin T. Wegner Society of USA, who translated both letters from German into English. The German original of both letters are kept at the Shiller-Nationalmuseum und Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach/Neckar, Germany. Below are excerpts from these two historic letters, which Wegner wrote from his home in Berlin to Werfel in Vienna:

“When I returned to Berlin from Meran, a few days ago, after a long and serious illness, the first thing my friends told me, and what I read in the newspaper soon after, was: Franz Werfel is writing a novel about the downfall of the Armenian people. I saw, in the eyes of my friends, that they were afraid to upset me with this news, which they didn’t want to keep from me.

You must know dear comrade and master that I myself have been writing a voluminous novel about the fate of the Armenian people. I am surprised that you have not

heard of it through my numerous publications, if not otherwise, by my letter to the Prussian Academy of the Arts, Department of Poetry. In the fall of 1930, I set out in more detail the project of my Armenian novel. This letter became the reason that the Academy gave me more support for my work on it. Or, perhaps, because of my writings on Armenia, and the well-known fact, in literary circles, that I was involved with the development of the fate of the Armenian people, inspired you to turn to this huge thing on your own way.

You can justifiably reply that history is the field of every man and artist, and that no one can deny them the opportunity to choose the area for his artistic work that appeals to them and entices them. However, you will understand that the message of your plan filled me with a certain anxiety, when you hear the lifelong attachment of fate between me and the demise of the Armenian people as a human and artistic experience.

It may happen, and it has repeatedly occurred, that two poets simultaneously and independently of each other (or even knowingly) grab the same substance. It happened recently—two dramatists almost concurrently, wrote a play about the Panama Canal (likewise two writers wrote the play *The Captain of Köpenick*). Such is the misfortune of the one who comes later, even if he is perhaps the stronger artist, and, as a result, the success of his creation suffers. In such a case, it is one work among other of the artist’s works, which he may or may not give up easily. However, sooner or later he must cope with the flop. In my case it is the work of my life.

In the years 1915 to 1917, I was a member of the Turkish Army in Turkey, and became one of the few individual European eyewitnesses to one of the most terrible tragedies of humanity in the course of the millennia – perhaps, only surpassed by the tragedy of World War I, of which it was a part. As my relationship with Armenia goes back to my boyhood days, and my family’s ties to the Middle East have been around for generations, I did not feel caught up in this shattering experience. The first testimonials I wrote were more human than poetic. In the spring of 1919, before the books of Lepsius could appear in open bookshops, Theodor Wolff published, in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, my then well-known letter to Wilson on the demise of the Armenian people. I am sending you a copy.”

Jerusalem Municipality planning to reconstruct the Armenian Patriarchate Road

The Jerusalem Municipality is planning to reconstruct the Armenian Patriarchate Road, the sole vehicular access road that serves the Western Wall, the Jewish and Armenian Quarters, the Jerusalem Post reports. On Thursday, residents of the Jewish Quarter met Jerusalem Municipality representatives for a public presentation about the project, after an anonymous letter was disseminated among residents that spread rumors about the proposed project, author Heddy Breuer Abramowitz writes.

Director of Old City Development at the Jerusalem Development Authority, Aner Ozeri, told residents that no deal had yet been struck between the city and Jewish and Armenian Quarter residents, but that there were plans under discussion. Ozeri explained that the current infrastructure was built nearly 50 years ago and that it is today inadequate for residents and tourists. People swarm the



Old City throughout the year for festivals, celebrations and state ceremonies. The proposed plan is part of a city development plan, first considered four decades ago, which hopes to unify visually all the gates of the Old City. The design includes stone walkways, new lighting, better sidewalks and more. The plan will be carried out, if approved, in partnership between the municipality and JDA. It will require 24-six construction and 24-seven closure of a 300-meter section of the Armenian Patriarchate Road.

Renovations would extend from the “Kishle” police station near the Tower of David Museum until the Zion Gate, hence likewise requiring partial closure of the road that continues to the Batei Machse Road reaching the Dung Gate.

While the gate may have once been the pinnacle of military defense technology in its day, it is challenging for modern drivers

who navigate in cars and buses as opposed to camels, horses and donkeys.

According to the source, the construction on the road is estimated to take around three-and-a-half months. The would require the relocation of 40 Armenian families who live adjacent to the construction.

Meanwhile, residents seek to hammer out an agreement to get the work done in the shortest possible time, thus reducing the amount of inconvenience to residents and tourists

Armenia reports continuing rise in tourist arrivals

The number of foreign tourists visiting Armenia increased by 12 percent in the first half of this year, a senior government official said on September 5.

Susanna Safaryan, the head of the Economy Ministry’s depart on tourism, told the Armenpress news agency that Russian nationals accounted for the largest share of 770,000 tourist arrivals recorded in that period, followed by citizens of Georgia, the United States and Iran. All four countries have large ethnic Armenian communities.

Safaryan said her department is now striving to attract more European tourists to Armenia.

Armenia already unilaterally abolished



visas for citizens of the European Union member states and the U.S. in 2012 and 2014 respectively. In 2017, it also lifted visa requirements for citizens of Japan, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and several other nations and allowed Russians to visit Armenia with Russian internal passports.

Official Armenian statistics shows that the number of foreigners visiting Armenia

has grown by roughly 9 percent annually since 2012. It reached a new high of almost 1.5 million in 2018. The last several years have also seen a major rise in new hotels and guesthouses across the country.

This growth appears to have been facilitated by the former Armenian government’s decision in 2013 to liberalize the domestic civil aviation sector. The average cost of air travel to and from Armenia has fallen considerably since then.

The government’s Civil Aviation Committee reported recently a 9.4 percent rise in the total number of passengers processed by the country’s two international airports in the first half of 2019.

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problems do not need to be told, etc., I was saying: “No, on the contrary, it must be told to show the victory of man over his own destiny. Because this story is important to me, not to Tigran Mansurian’s characterization, but to others, especially today to show that there is a way to overcome one’s own despair, one’s own helplessness, one’s own sense of deadlock, and one is strong enough to



one’s own destiny, others. to overcome the destiny imposed upon him, to overcome himself, to overcome and win the judgment of defeat.

That is why Tigran Mansurian’s image is important to me because I know that his image should help others and encourage them to overcome their own selfishness and gain confidence in their own strengths.

I used to think that “A Little Bit of Sky” is a masterpiece in the field of film music, and I soon realized that my non-professional opinion was shared by professionals as well. And here’s the fact, I think, to supplement what I say, because yes, that masterpieces also show a human’s victory over his own destiny, the liberation of man from the conditions imposed upon him, the power of man, the will of man, the power of man, and I think that That’s the power of Tigran Mansurian’s music.

Tigran Mansurian’s music imparts strength, optimism, a sense of unity because we may have different feelings during the day, sometimes positive, sometimes negative, but when we are gathered in this hall and Tigran Mansurian’s music sounds, all of us we are with the same feeling, with that creativity, with that genius, with that talent, with a sense of joy.

Maestro, I want to thank you for the years-long sense of unity that you gave to many generations, and I bow to you, your artistic record and your image today: you are an unquestionable authority, unquestionable morality and unquestionable respect,” the Prime Minister said.

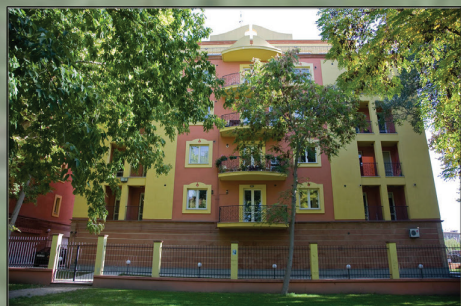
Nikol Pashinyan thanked Mayor of Yerevan Hayk Marutyan and Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Arayik Harutyunyan for organizing Tigran Mansurian’s jubilee at a high, dignified and proper level.

“And a hall like this is a hall of dreams. I want all the halls of all cultural events in the Republic of Armenia to be this way, united and so appreciative of art and culture – such art and culture that we can truly call a national value, a state value that is to be with us for many years ahead. Special thanks to the State Symphony Orchestra of Armenia and, of course, to all those in attendance who were right to state that this hall is the best place to be at this hour, in the company of maestro Tigran Mansurian,” Nikol Pashinyan concluded.



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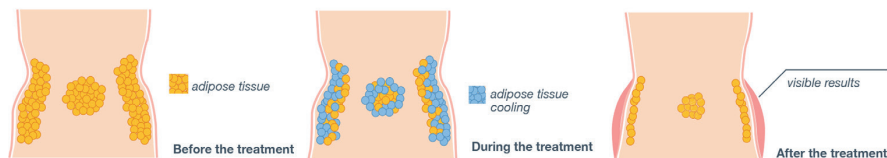
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