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The **Noah's Ark**

Noyan Tapan

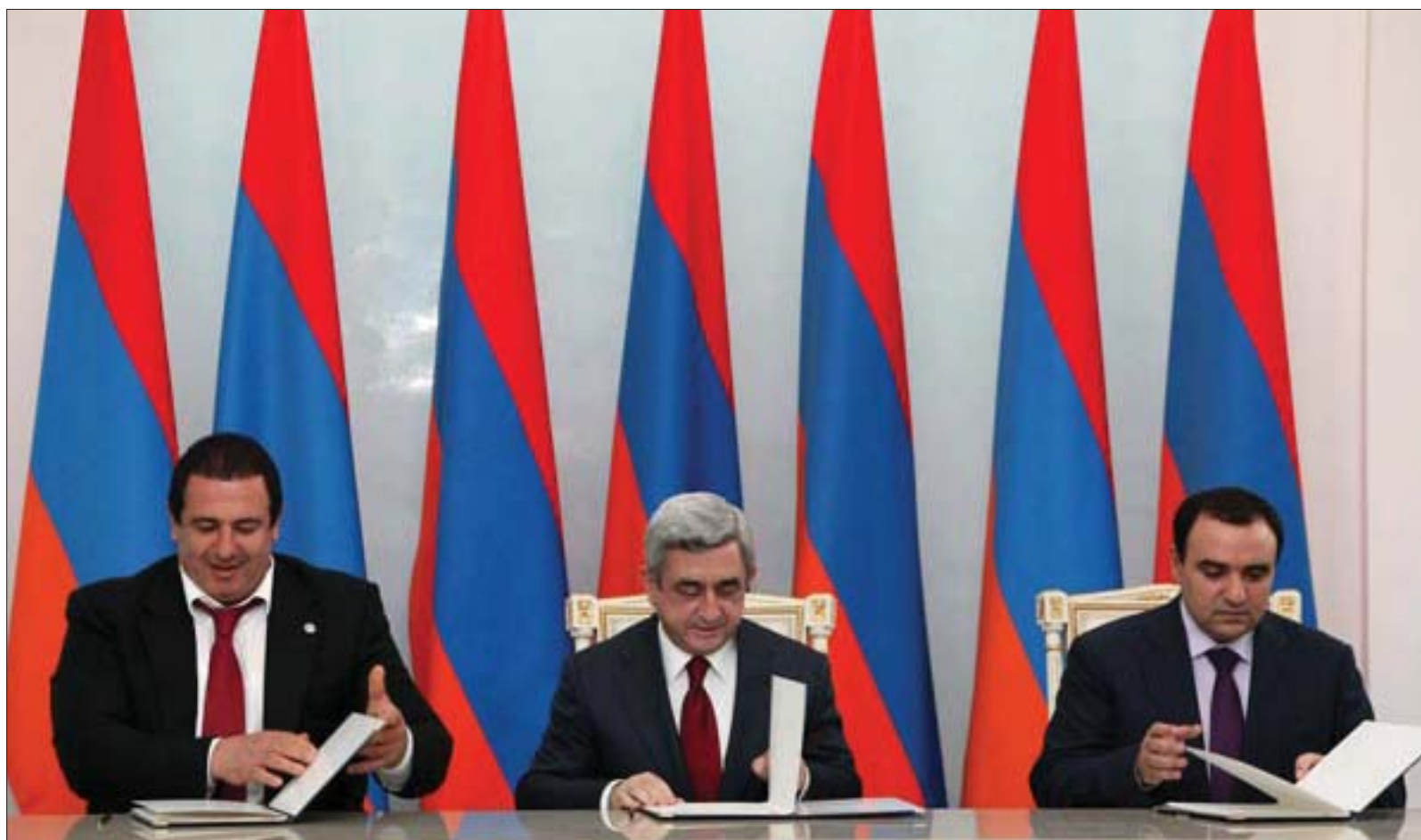
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Leaders of political coalition meet



The parties of ruling coalition pledge to hold clean elections

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HIGHLIGHT

Armenian FM participates in Ministerial Conference of Paris Pact in Vienna

Armenian FM Edward Nalbandian participated in the third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact on Combating the Afghan Illicit Opiate Trade in Vienna on Thursday, February 16.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, high-ranking delegations from over 50 states participated in the Conference; Armenian MFA press service informs Noyan Tapan

Armenian FM delivered a speech in a session headed by Russian, French and Austrian FM's Sergey Lavrov, Alain Juppé and Michael Spindelegger. Nalbandian presented Armenia's contribution in the international society's combat of illegal drug turnover and the state's decisiveness to continue reducing and eliminating trafficking, illegal drug production and turnover.

Farewell to the memorandum!

by David Petrosyan

On February 13 the three parties of Armenia's ruling coalition issued a joint statement. According to the text of the statement, the Republican Party of Armenia (RPA), Bargavach Hayastan (Prosperous Armenia) Party (PAP), and Orinats Yerkir (Rule of Law) Party took a decision to run in the upcoming regular parliamentary elections separately and to carry out the pre-election struggle by treating each other in a respectful and civil manner, within legal boundaries. At first glance, this statement appears to be insignificant and uninteresting. Yet, it appears so only at first glance. The point is that only a year ago the three parties signed a coalitional memorandum, which clearly stated two important circumstances:

- when running in the regular parliamentary elections (in May 2012), the parliamentary candi-

dates of all the three coalitional parties would be included in a single proportional list of candidates, - during the regular presidential election (in February 2013), all the three coalitional parties would endorse the candidacy of the incumbent president of the country (the name of Serzh Sargsyan was not indicated in the text).

In essence, the result of that memorandum was that the PAP and the Orinats Yerkir Party acknowledged their status of "junior partner" in the governing coalition.

At the end of the last year the pro-government mass media and experts claimed that a new memorandum would be signed by the three parties making up the ruling coalition and that the memorandum would confirm the main points of the previous one and establish the coordinated position

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Serzh Sargsyan received the newly appointed Head of OSCE Office in Yerevan, Ambassador Andrei Sorokin

On February 16 President Serzh Sargsyan received the newly appointed Head of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office in Yerevan, Ambassador Andrei Sorokin.

The President of Armenia congratulated Andrei Sorokin on his appointment and wished him productive work. He also expressed hope that through his activities A. Sorokin will promote cooperation and enhance relations between Armenia and OSCE.

The newly appointed Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan assured that he and the staff of the Office will continue cooperation with the non-governmental and political organizations, as well as different state structures of Armenia, supporting reforms conducted in the country and its democratic development.



Serzh Sargsyan received NATO Secretary General's Special Representative James Appathurai



President Serzh Sargsyan received on Monday, February 13 NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the South Caucasus and Central Asia James Appathurai.

The parties hailed our country's relations with NATO in all areas and deepening cooperation.

Serzh Sargsyan noted that from the viewpoint of cooperation development, 2011 was a rather efficient year and underscored that active political contacts have been maintained, Armenia has expanded its participation in the International Security Forces in Afghanistan, and Armenia-NATO Individual

Partnership Action Plan for 2011-2013 has been adopted.

The NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the South Caucasus and Central Asia James Appathurai expressed gratitude to Serzh Sargsyan and in his person to the Armed Forces of Armenia and the people of Armenia for the excellent service of the Armenian troops in Afghanistan and said that the Armenian nation can be proud of them.

At the meeting, the parties also spoke about regional challenges and recent developments in the NK peace process.

Armenian Deputy FM is in Tehran



Within the framework of its working visit to Iran, Armenia's delegation, led by Deputy FM Shavarsh Kocharyan, met with Seyed Abbas Araghchi, Iran's Deputy FM on Asia, Oceania and CIS Affairs.

The Armenian and Iranian deputy FMs underscored the need to hold consultations between the foreign ministries of both countries, and to expand the legal framework, MFA informed Noyan Tapan.

Expressing a satisfaction over the developing cooperation between the two countries, the parties stressed the importance of the reciprocal visits by the Armenian and Iranian presidents and FMs in 2011. They also dis-

cussed the course of the joint economic programs. It was noted that the fulfillment of the arrangements reached and the implementation of the programs envisioned by the signed documents should give a new impetus to the cooperation between both countries.

On the same day, Armenia's Deputy FM Shavarsh Kocharyan was also received by Iranian FM Ali Akbar Salehi. Kocharyan conveyed to Salehi Armenian FM Edward Nalbandian's greetings and well wishes. And Iran's FM noted that his country gives great importance to developing relations with neighbor and friend Armenia.



Proportional elections will promote dictatorship of party elite - Armenian ruling party MP

The guilty are the political forces, as they do not nominate strong figures and then they complain about the majority election system, Armenia's Justice Minister Hrayr Tovmasyan said during the National Assembly hearings devoted to passing to a 100-percent proportional election system in the country.

Tovmasyan noted that the proportional election system secures a greater representation, and added that those forces that cannot win are the ones who complain about the majority election system. "Perhaps the guilty are

the political forces, as they must have strong local figures to win," the Minister stated.

"There is no best model. Each model is applicable in the given country," stated the ruling coalition's Republican Party of Armenia MP Davit Harutyunyan, another opponent of a completely proportional election system in the country.

In his view, in the case of a 100-percent proportional election system, the voter does not have an MP whom he can apply in person. As per Harutyunyan, the proportional election system will pro-



mote the dictatorship of the party elite, and Armenia can pass to a completely proportional election system only in the case when there is inner-party democracy in the country.

Majority election system has become hotbed for criminal offenses - Armenian opposition member

The cause for the present-day situation in Armenia is the criminal-oligarchic system established in the country, the opposition Armenian National Congress Central Office Coordinator Levon Zurabyan said during the National Assembly hearings dedicated to changing to a 100-percent proportional election system in the country.

According to Zurabyan, "as a result of the defective electoral system, the people's future is put in danger, [and] the authorities are perceived as a group of occupants."

"The majority [election system] has become a hotbed for criminal



offenses. Elimination of the majority system will crush the most serious ring of corruption," Levon Zurabyan noted, and, addressing the authorities, he said: "Today we

have a unique chance to take the road of agreement. Don't lead the country toward confrontation! Make the right decision, since you still have that chance."

Armenia's majority election system is antidemocratic - opposition MP

The majority election system functioning in Armenia is antidemocratic, opposition ARF Dashnaksutyun Party MP Armen Rustamyan stated during the National Assembly (NA) hearings devoted to changing to a 100-percent proportional election system in the country.

He added that in all of independent's Armenia's parliaments the majority election system had obstructed the expression of the will of the people, as the opposition forces, for whom the people voted, had a very small representation in NA.

As per Rustamyan, the majority election system has always served

for the reproduction of the authorities, and the ousting of the opposition. ARF MP proposed to at least be honest and to auction off the majority election seats.

The other keynote speaker, opposition Heritage Party's Deputy Chairman Ruben Hakobyan, noted it is not a secret that the main voting fraud is committed in the majority election system. "There is a simple business deal between the authorities and the candidates who enter NA through the majority [election]. The authorities turn a blind eye to the falsifications and violations, and the MP elected by the majority [election] brings votes for the authorities," Hakobyan



maintained, and added that more than half of the 41 MPs who were elected by the majoritarian electoral system have not come to NA in months.

Plurality system reminds Armenian parliamentary opposition of Ali Baba's story

Shifting to 100%-proportional system has always been on the agenda since 1995, parliamentary opposition Heritage party group MP Larisa Alaverdyan told the journalists on Thursday, February 16.

According to her, shifting to

100% proportional system will reduce the number of unpleasant incidents we witness during elections.

The other participant of the conference the ruling Republican Party of Armenia (RPA) MP

Hovhannes Sahakyan said if Heritage had 41 candidates to present, then they would also choose the plurality system. Alaverdyan responded it saying plurality system reminds her of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves' story.

Speaker of the Armenian Parliament offers creation of independent monitoring body



The election systems do not influence on the process of conduction of fair elections, Speaker of the National Assembly of Armenia Samvel Nikoyan told at the parliament hearing on February 15.

"In the first Supreme Council of Armenia we had 260 majority system MPs and I think no one doubts that these elections were fair," Nikoyan stressed.

The NA speaker said discussions over proportional-majority election systems had always taken place. They have mainly referred to two issues ensuring fair elections through the change of the system and development of party system.

"We should discuss these issues in the context of parliamentary structure as well," Samvel Nikoyan said, urging to think that whether a country like Armenia may allow itself have two-chamber parliament.

The NA speaker said experience of more than 110 countries has been studied where the majority and proportional systems are acting in parallel.

Samvel Nikoyan offers creation of a body which will implement unbiased monitoring where the authorities and opposition be they parliamentary or extra parliamentary have equal representation.

Armenian CEC: There are no requests and complaints about yesterday's elections



Elections of the local self-government bodies held on February 12 were conducted in compliance with the Armenian Electoral Code.

Head of the Armenian Central Electoral Commission Tigran Mukuchyan said this today summing up the preliminary results of the elections.

The elections were held in 37

communities. In 2 of the communities there were pre-term elections.

The current heads of communities won in 35 communities: 28 of them represent the Republican Party of Armenia, 2 - the Prosperous Armenia and 5 are unaffiliated.

Speaking about the elections of Mayor of Hrazdan, Tigran Mukuchyan said that 58.04% constituency was registered in this community. Current Mayor Aram Danielyan got 13079 votes while the representative of the oppositional Armenian National Congress Sasun Mikayelyan - 11507.

"As of now, no requests and complains about the elections were submitted to the local electoral commissions", concluded Tigran Mukuchyan.

Vartan Oskanian's Statement



Vartan Oskanian submitted an application for membership to the Prosperous Armenia Party

Armenian former FM Vartan Oskanian stated on February 14 that he submitted an application for membership to the Prosperous Armenia Party.

"I make this decision convinced that the Prosperous Armenia Party, together with other political parties, is able to, through political competition, secure free and fair elections, and thus, a new National Assembly with a new configuration of political forces.

As Chairman of the Board of the Civilitas Foundation, I had, on various occasions, expressed my views on events and developments in Armenia. Today, I believe it is time to become more actively involved in our political processes.

Given the possibility of my membership in the Prosperous Armenia Party, in the coming days, the Civilitas Foundation Board will make a decision about my future status", Vartan Oskanian stated.

Authorities again "robbed votes", ANC states

Oppositional Armenian National Congress (ANC) stated that during the elections of leaders of 39 communities on February 12 "the 4th provision of the 66th chapter of the Armenian Electoral Code was violated".

According to the provision, "the member of the commission who seals the ballots and is responsible for the ballot box should allow dropping the ballot to the box only after making sure there is no stamp on participation in the elections in the voter's passport and after sealing it".

Violating this imperative of law, on the February 12 elections, territorial electoral commissions didn't send the seals to the local electoral commissions and as a result, the latter broke the law and



opened a way to numerous violations", the ANC statement reads.

"The authorities again robbed the votes at the elections distorting the expression of the people's free will and breaking their promise to hold free, fair and legitimate elections. The authorities again showed that they were not ready to respect even the provisions of the Electoral

Code which they adopted when there was a real threat to the reproduction of their power.

The ANC condemns this robbery of votes at the elections, demands recognizing the elections invalid in all the 39 communities and punishing all the falsifiers of the CEC and local electoral commissions", the statement notes.

U.S. Ambassador about Hrazdan elections: Both sides confirmed transparency of electoral processes

According to U.S. Ambassador to Armenia John Heffern, "some positive signs" were noticed in the local self-government elections held in Armenia on February 12. There was a "strong election campaign and competition" in Hrazdan, with two strong mayoral candidates," Mr Heffern told the Mediamax news agency.

"We also expect to see a real political competition in the parliamentary elections to be held in Armenia in May," said the Ambassador.

He told Mediamax that he personally watched Hrazdan elections, talked to both sides, the CEC representatives and observers.

"I was happy to see that there were normal conditions in the



polling stations. Both sides confirmed the transparency of electoral processes," said the diplomat.

"The international community is interested in strengthening of

democracy in Armenia. We cooperate with the CEC, parties, civil society and media to ensure free and fair elections in May," said John Heffern.

Armenia-based Rule of Law party stands high chances - leader

Artur Baghdasaryan, Chairman of the Rule of Law party believes that his party has "very good chances" in the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

Moreover, given the party's "significant role" in Armenia's political arena, it will gain more seats in Armenia's next parliament.

Mr Baghdasaryan considers ungrounded the claims that the party is doomed to defeat if it runs for parliament on a straight ticket.

With respect to the public opinion polls, Mr Baghdasaryan pointed out different results: some polls show high chances for the party.

"I can tell you what was said in 1999, 2003 and 2007. At that time they forecast only 1% for us, but we got 20%. We are sure of our victory in the forthcoming elections as well," Baghdasaryan said.

Responding to a remark that the Rule of Law party was an opposi-



tion force in 2007, which accounts for its heavy vote, Baghdasaryan said that in 2003 the party was a ruling force and in 2007 an opposition one. "In both cases we enjoyed confidence, which means we have a stable electorate that trusts us."

With respect to mass media analyses saying that the coalition forces will not support the Rule of Law party, Baghdasaryan said that his party trust its partners.

"We trust our partners, but each party must wage its own struggle," Baghdasaryan said. The coalition's latest meeting was supposed to do the impossible: ensuring transparent, free and fair elections, with healthy competition between political forces.

Baghdasaryan also stressed that no intraparty strife is going on. According to him, the party has 120,000 members and 350 offices.

Slovak Official says Karabakh is a democratic state



Ashot Grigoryan with František Mikloško in Yerevan, Tuesday

Nagorno-Karabakh is one of the most democratic states in the world and must continue to its progress," said František Mikloško, First Speaker of the Slovakian National Council upon visiting Stepanakert.

Mikloško is heading a delegation of Slovakian businessmen who visited Syunik, Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic on February 13 to discuss the implementation joint programs and scope out investment opportunities.

"Nagorno Karabakh has been unrecognized for 20 years, while one visit is enough to get convinced that the people of Arsakh cannot but live independently.

Artsakh must continue to behave as an independent state just as it does today until the world accepts its independence," said Mikloško, who was an election observer during Karabakh's most recent parliamentary elections.

Mikloško also has added that the Nagorno Karabakh Republic is committed to marinating the Christian culture, while Europe has distanced itself from Christian roots. "Nagorno Karabakh is challenging Europe in this regard," he said adding that the European Union must begin accession talks with Armenia, Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan.

In discussing the Armenian Genocide, Mikloško said that

"Western Europe has not yet come to understand that the Armenian Genocide served as a basis for the genocides of Nazis and Communists."

The Slovakian National Council has already adopted a bill criminalizing the denial of the Armenian Genocide.

On the investment front, the delegation stated that Slovakian businesses have invested in a recently opened hydroelectric power plant with the capacity of 6 Mega Watts in Karabakh. A more powerful (15 Kilo Watt) plant will be constructed in the near future that will provide electricity to Syunik and Artsakh.

Agreements on cooperation in the field of education have also been signed. These accords will enable students from the universities in Goris, Armenia and Stepanakert to study at the University of Skalitsa.

The agreement reached between the educational institutions of Slovakia and Nagorno-Karabakh is seen as a first step for Slovakia's recognition of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.

Mikloško and his delegation were accompanied by Ashot Grigoryan, President of the Forum of Armenian Associations in Europe.

Australian MLC says it is time for Ankara to recognize the Armenian Genocide

Member of the Legislative Council of Australia Walt Secord condemned the Turkish government for its continued denial of the Armenian Genocide in a powerful address on the floor of the Legislative Council during the first sitting of the New South Wales parliament in 2012.

In a clear and unequivocal statement on public record, Secord declared that the Turkish government's denial of the Armenian Genocide was unacceptable.

"It is repugnant for Turkey to deny the deaths of the 1.5 million Armenians," said the co-deputy chair of the NSW Parliament's Armenia Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group.

"It is time for Ankara to accept the past and unequivocally recognize the Armenian genocide."

In his address entitled 'Genocide Study Tour', Secord also discussed his recent visits to the Armenian Genocide Museum Institute in Yerevan, the Concentration Camp in Auschwitz and Halabja in Iraq.

He spoke of the lack of a just resolution to the Armenian Genocide as a factor that paved the way for the destruction of

European Jewry during the Holocaust.

"Sadly too few of us know of the Armenian Genocide. It was that very denial of history that allowed communities to silently watch the transports to and the smoke of Auschwitz," said Secord.

The Legislative Council Member thanked the Armenian National Committee of Australia for supporting his recent visit to Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh and pledged to continue encouraging the advocacy efforts of the organization.

ANC Australia Executive Director Varant Meguerditchian immediately contacted Secord to thank him for bringing to light the denial of genocide and sharing his learnings from his "Genocide Study Tour" with his parliamentary colleagues.

"Denial is considered by scholars as the final stage of one genocide and the first stage of the next genocide," said Meguerditchian.

"We thank Mr Secord for bringing awareness to this issue of humanity by highlighting the relationship between the denial of the Armenian Genocide and the persecution of Jews during the Holocaust."

Farewell to the memorandum!

from page 1

of the coalitional parties on majoritarian districts. Instead of the new memorandum, however, the political beau monde got a new statement.

So a year later, in the light of the results of the abovementioned statement, the situation is this:

- the parties of the ruling coalition are going to run in the elections separately;

- The RPA actually accepted the position of the PAP on the presidential election. In accordance with that position, the PAP will make a decision on endorsing a candidate at the upcoming presidential election later, taking into account, among other things, the results of the upcoming parliamentary elections;

- The PAP has de facto and de jure renounced its status of "junior partner" and in the future it will act on the political scene not in compliance with the agreements with the RPA, but based on the number of mandates to be received at the upcoming elections.

So, we can say that in the run-up to the parliamentary elections, the memorandum of the parties of the ruling coalition, which was signed a year ago, has de facto and de jure ceased to be in force. The intrigue that began in late November of 2011, following the famous "Political Analysis" that the ex-president Levon Ter-Petrosian presented at a rally in Liberty Square of Yerevan, is con-

tinuing. The main thing is that the PAP will run in the upcoming parliamentary elections separately and for the time being the "party in power" is not consolidated enough, at least in comparison with the 2008 presidential election.

Based on the results of the abovementioned political statement, we can say that:

- President Serzh Sargsyan is not as strong as he was a year ago in order to make the PAP leader Gagik Tsarukian endorse him as a candidate;

- the positions of G. Tsarukian and the PAP led by him have become stronger;

- unlike the RPA, the PAP acquired situational partners in the run-up to the elections such as the Armenian National Congress (ANC), ARF-Dashnaktsutyun, Zharangutyun (Heritage) Party, and several other parties.

Thus, on the eve of the start of the official election campaign, the political spectrum in the country has become even more ambiguous.

Strangely enough, this ambiguity was not removed by the elections to local self-government bodies. Held on February 12, these elections were marked by the triumph of the ruling party and its candidates in the absolute majority of 39 settlements. But even in the only settlement where the opposition fielded a candidate and where the RPA also gained a victory, the election results cannot be interpreted definitely in favor of RPA.

The matter concerns the elec-

tions held in the city of Hrazdan, the center of Kotayk Marz (Province). According to official data, this sixth largest city of Armenia has a population of about 53,000, 43,874 of whom are voters. During the February 12 elections 25,480 voters (over 58% of the total number) took part in the ballot, which is a very high index for Armenia, especially as on the polling day the temperature in Hrazdan fell to 22 degrees of frost. The incumbent mayor, the RPA member Aram Danielian received 13,079 votes (51.3%), his opponent, the ANC candidate Sasun Mikaelian gained 11,506 votes (45.1%), and 893 ballot papers (3.5%) were recognized null and void. A margin of 1,573 votes seems to be a wide one. Yet, these elections should also be viewed from the following aspect:

- numerous press reports say that bribes of 20,000 drams per a four-member family were distributed in residential quarters of Hrazdan (the current exchange rate is 385 drams per dollar). In some cases voters received bribes of 10,000 drams;

- departmental buses were used to take voters to their polling stations;

- the opposition supporters recorded massive violations of Article 66 Paragraph 4 of the Electoral Code.

It is quite obvious that the outcome of the Hrazdan elections for the ANC is the result of a full mobilization of the ANC efforts,

and the RPA functionaries and adepts speak a lot about it. This is the truth, but not the whole truth as the circumstance that the RPA too had to mobilize all its resources in order to win the election in Hrazdan is being suppressed. This is especially topical in the light of the fact that President Serzh Sargsyan has a strong dislike of Sasun Mikaelian.

Two circumstances are of importance to the opposition in this case:

- the votes received by the opposition were "clean", i.e. they were collected as a result of the conscious choice of voters, rather than by means of bribery, vote rigging, or violations of the law. Even if we assume that at the upcoming parliamentary elections in May, 10-15% of the 45.1% of voters who gave their votes to S. Mikaelian will vote for other parties (Heritage and Free Democrats Parties officially endorsed S. Mikaelian as a candidate, while the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun endorsed him informally), nevertheless it turns out that the ANC has a steady electorate;

- not all of the votes given to Aram Danielian were the votes of the RPA supporters. Some of them were votes given by supporters of the PAP, which also actively used bribes as a pre-election tool during the previous election campaigns. It is another matter that it is not clear how many of those who voted for A. Danielian are the RPA supporters and how

many of them support the PAP. In reality this proportion will only be revealed based on the results of the parliamentary elections.

The author is not inclined to share the optimism of the new chairman of Armenia's Central Election Commission (CEC) Tigran Mukuchian who, copying the OSCE observation missions, called the February 12 elections "a new step forward". By saying "a new step forward", T. Mukuchian apparently meant the circumstance that there were no scuffles, clashes, wounded and killed persons in the aftermath of the February 12 elections, as well as the circumstance that the actual opposition did not dispute the outcome of the Hrazdan elections. In our opinion, the opposition did not dispute the election outcome for the reason that it is rather difficult to prove the fact of giving and taking a bribe, especially when one tries to prove it in Armenian courts.

Thus, the outcome of the last elections to local self-government bodies, held on the eve of the parliamentary elections in May 2012, cannot be called definitely positive for the RPA and definitely negative for the opposition. Taking into consideration the abovementioned refusal of the ruling coalition's parties to run in the upcoming elections in unity, we should note that the intrigue on the eve of the parliamentary elections in Armenia remains at quite a high level.



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3 ROOMS

- ♦ **2474. Koryun Street**, 5/3, 100 sq.m., 3 turned into 4, euro repair , euro windows, permanent gas, balcony, 2 AC, opportunity. Price 160.000 USD
- ♦ **2454. Moskovyan str.**, 5/2, 180sqm, normal state, 3 bedrooms, lavatory, permanent water, gas. Price 370.000USD
- ♦ **2453. Koryun str.**, 6/4, 100sqm, 4 rooms, euro repaired, 2 lavatories. Price negotiable
- ♦ **2429.** Ekmalyan street, 10/9, 178sqm, 3bed-rooms, 3lavatories, capitally repaired, AC, parking. Price-360.000USD
- ♦ **2393. Moskovyan street**, 5/3. 110 sq.m., euro repair, logha balcony 17 sq.m., permanent hot and cold water, cube 700 l, electric heating system, natural gas, Ariston, 2AC, satellite. Price: 400 000 USD
- ♦ **Tumanyan str.** 5/3, 170 sqm, 4 rooms, 2 garages for 3 cars, capitally repaired, furnished, equipped, permanent water, gas, heating system, 3 balconies. Price: 1100 USD
- ♦ **2335. Mashtots Avenue**, 4/4, 95 sq.m., 3 rooms, 2 bedrooms, stone building, euro repaire, euro doors and windows, open balcony, permanent hot and cold water, concrete cover, beech parquetry, h 3 m, closed attic. Price 125000 USD
- ♦ **2348. Abovyan Street**, 4/2, 177.8 sq/m, euro repaired, concreted, laminate furniture in the bedroom, cupboards in the kitchen, tiled, Baxi system, Price: 250000 USD preliminary
- ♦ **2395.** North Avenue. 130 sq.m., newly built, h-3 m, a view to Abovyan street. Price: 1 sq.m.-1600 USD

PREMISES

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- ♦ **1727. Baghramyan str.**, 2 storied, 230sqm, capitally repaired, entrance from street, garage. Price 350.000USD
- ♦ **1725. Hanrapetutyun str.**, 1storied, 171sqm, 2 entrances, capitally repaired, permanent hot and cold water. Price 500.000USD
- ♦ **1703. Northern Avenue**, 9/7, 66sqm, capitally repaired, heating, lavatory, 30000AMD service rent, view to Teryan street. Price 220,000USD
- ♦ **1553. Kasryan street**, 170sq.m., working fashion saloon, large windows, facade-15m, 1room+foye, h=2.80 m, cellar 30 sq.m. Price 500 000 USD preliminary
- ♦ **1598. Nairy Zaryan street**, 180 sq.m., 1st floor, a working restaurant, hall-100 sq.m. 1st line, repaired, tonir. Price: negotiable
- ♦ **1383. Nalbandian St**, cellar + 1 story, 30 sq. m. cellar, 90 sq. m. story, Euro repair, hall, kitchen, lavatory, 24-hour hot and cols water, gas supply, suitable for a bar or restaurant. Price: 512.000USD
- ♦ **Tumanyan str.**, 3/1, 100 sqm, office space, not repaired, entrance from the street, windows looking at the yard. Price: 115.000 USD
- ♦ **1603. North avenue**, 159 sq.m., 1st floor.

Entrance on ground floor also, construction is in process, suitable for a shop. Price: 1 sq.m. 10 000 USD

- ♦ **1588. Tigran Mec street**, 256 sq.m, 5/1.2 , trade area, stone building, euro repair, 1st floor trade area - 210 sq.m., 2nd floor 46 sq.m. residential Area. Price: 600 000 USD

LANDS

- ♦ **2122. Davitashen**, 1800sqm, water, gas, electricity, possible to sell separately 600sqm, 1200sqm. Price-150USD per sqm.
- ♦ **1869. Kaskade**, 720 sq.m. 1st line, permission for construction, suitable for a new building or a business. Price: negotiable
- ♦ **2121. Centre**, land-1338sqm, 1100sqm has permission for building. Price-2million USD
- ♦ **2107 Monument**, 2400sqm, permission for building, 2 projects to build 3 storied building, possibility of water, gas, electricity, beautiful view of city and Ararat. Price-500USD per sqm.
- ♦ **2033. Tsakhkadzor**, New Quarter, 600 sq.m., 1st line, asphalted road, premises, designed for construction of residential house, with all communal conveniences. Price: 120 USD for 1 sq.m.
- ♦ **1939. Kotayk region**, Aghavnadzor district. Land 5000 sq.m., suitable for building a resort place. Price negotiable
- ♦ **2011. Proshyan street**. Land 400 sq.m. for building a house, privatized, 2nd line/ near the garden/. Price 1 sq.m. beginning from 700 USD
- ♦ **2013. Cascade**. Land 1000 sq.m. For public construction needs, First line, gas, water and electricity possibilities. Price 2800USD
- ♦ **2028. District of Erebuni**, Arin-Berd street. Land 2 acr. With a 2 storied partially built building, water, electricity plastered.h=4.20m. Price 1 sq.m, 50 USD
- ♦ **Avan, Ayntapi str.**, near Star Supermarket, 1st line, 528 sqm, land attached to a house, water, canalization, front-25m. Price: 60.000 USD
- ♦ **1402. Hr. Kochar St**, 1,100 sq. m, personal plot, front -25 m, privatized, empty, possibility for building communications. Price negotiable.
- ♦ **1351. Monument**, 2,000 sq. m, privatized, front - 17 m, APZ permission, for social purposes: suitable for a restaurant, hotel. Price negotiable.

PRIVATE HOUSES

- ♦ **2725. Nork-Marash**, building - 733.25sqm, land-620sqm, semi-basement +2floors, euro repaired, semi-basement is sport room, sauna, summer room, pool, fireplace, 1st floor- sitting room, 1 bedroom, cabinet, kitchen, lavatory, 2nd floor - 4 bedrooms, permanent hot and cold water, gas, Spanish tiles, 2 AC. Price - 500.000USD
- ♦ **3063. Komitas A.** Avetisyan street, 3storied+cellar, total-500sqm, 3 bedrooms, 3 lavatories, capitally repaired, cabinet, possible to sell with furniture. Price-negotiable
- ♦ **3059. Vahagni community**, total-1500sqm, building-280sqm, 2.5 storied, newly built, not lived in, 1st floor-living room-44sqm, kitchen, family room-24sqm, 2nd floor-3bedrooms, 3 lavatories, garage for 2 cars, cellar, security system, possible to sell with furniture. Price-negotiable.
- ♦ **3210 Aygestan community**, 2 stories, land: 480 sq.m, building: 310 sq.m, 1st floor is not repaired, garage, 2nd floor: repaired, kitchen, lavatory-tiled, permanent hot and cold water, Baxi system, a place for barbeque, garden, trees Price: 270.000 USD
- ♦ **3103. Ajapnyak community**, Miraqyan street. 1 storey, land -264.8 sq.m., building 110 sq.m., euro repair, euro windows, 5 rooms, 1 lavatory , Baxi system, kitchen, book , ramparted. Price: 90 000 USD
- ♦ **3105. Kaskad, Antarain**. 4 stories, land 1800 sq.m., building 1000 sq.m., newly built, need of cosmetic repair, windows, permanent hot and cold water, heating system, 4 bedrooms, ramparted, solar lamps, security system, cameras, external lighting. Price: 1. 300.000 USD
- ♦ **3054. Blur, Kharkovyan street**, 3 storied building, land 400 sq.m., building 450 sq.m., new, euro repair, ramparted, 4 bedrooms, 5 lavatories inside, 2 lavatories outside, Baxi system. Price 800 000 USD
- ♦ **2916. Ashtarak highway**, village Nazrvan. 3 storied building. Land 3500 sq.m., building 760 sq.m., euro repair, 3 tiled lavatories, a sauna, billiard, permanent hot and cold water, gas, heating system, garden, pool, garage.The building is ramparted. Price 50000 USD

NEWLY BUILT

- ♦ **87. Sayat-Nova street**, newly built building Given to the operation in December 2012. Climate control, gas, the fasad sector has 3 bedrooms-188 sq.m, 199 sq.m, 1 sq.m- 1900 USD, 2 bedrooms have a beautiful sight- 117 sq.m, 120 sq.m, 124 sq.m, 1 sq.m-1700 USD Price: 1 sq.m-1900-1700 USD
- ♦ **90. Main avenue**. Newly built, 2 buildings, 14 stories. Ready for habitation/ at the end of 2013, at the beginning of 2014. Commercial areas on the 1st and on the 2nd floors, flats on the higher floors. Price: 1 sq.m.- 1150 USD 1 sq.m.- 1300 USD
- ♦ **91. Main Avenue**, Park, near Malibu cafe, 16storied newly building, Capitally repaired, heating and security system, 2 lavatories. Price: 1 sq.m.- 2.000 USD

- ♦ **93. Kievyan street**, newly built building Given to the operation in October 2011, gajats, windows, exterior doors, h -3, 15 m, gas supply, the second floor has a parking lot, parking is possible for sale. Price 12 000 USD



possible with mortgage, for 13 years term

- ♦ **94. Masiv**. Newly built, , coupling, 8 flats, in each cottage 4 flats, totall-2000 sq.m, each flat has 2 stories, 3 bedrooms, 210 sq.m., parking: 80 sq.m. Price: 160 000 USD

FOR RENT

1 ROOMS

- ♦ **1031. Byuzand street**, 1 room, 34 sq.m, capitally repair, newly built, furniture, techniques, heating, AC, cabin. Price 600 USD
- ♦ **1009. Teryan str.**, 4/3, 1room changed into 2, 50sqm, euro repaired, furnished, permanent hot and cold water, gas, AC, spanish tiles, technique, ariston heating system. Price 800USD per month, 60USD per day
- ♦ **1057. Argishti str.**, 14/9, 1 room, furnished, heating system, permanent hot and cold water, AC
- ♦ **1005. Lalayanc str.**, 11/5, 1room changed into 2, euro repaired, furniture, permanent hot and cold water, gas, AC, spanish tiles, technique. Price 600USD per month, 40USD per day
- ♦ **1024. Amiryan street**, 12/3, 1turned into 2, 50 sq.m, euro repair, techniques. Price: 1 day 60 USD
- ♦ **853. Amiryan street**, 10/7, 1 turned into 2, 50 sq.m., euro repair, Italian furniture, bed, utensil, techniques, permanent water, gas, antenna, Baxy system. Price 700 USD, 50 USD per day

2 ROOMS

- ♦ **1024. Amiryan street**, 12/3. 2 rooms, 50 sq.m, euro repaire, furniture, techniques. Price: 1 day -50 USD, a month: 700 USD
- ♦ **2064. Aygedzor**, 7/1. 2 rooms, 60 sq .m, capital repair, euro windows, Baxi system, AC, heating floor, camera, cabin. Price 800 USD
- ♦ **2037. Baghramyan str.**, 5/2, 60sqm, 1 bedroom, euro repaired, modern furniture, spanish tiles, permanent hot and cold water, gas, baxi, AC, technique. Price 100USD per day
- ♦ **2022. Amiryan street**, 4/3. 74 sq.m., 2 turned into 3, newly repaired, Spanish tiles, jakoozi, permanent hot and cold water, furniture, techniques. Price 1500 USD, 1 day 100 USD
- ♦ **2057. Sayat-Nova**, 11/4, 2 turned into 3, 78 sq.m., capitally repaired, Baxi system, furniture, techniques, AC, satellite. Price: 1 day- 80 USD, a month- 900 USD
- ♦ **1961. Tumanian street**, 4/2, 86sq.m., 1 bedroom, Euro repair, Euro windows, Furnished, permanent hot and cold water. Price: 1200 USD, 1day: 70USD
- ♦ **115. Buzand str. Building 7, /near Republic Square/, 9/4, 75 sq.m, 2 rooms, newly built, capitally and euro repaired, furnished, equipped, permanent water, gas, heating system, AC, open balcony. Price: 1100 USD long-term, 1500 USD short-term.**
- ♦ **2119. Argishti/Glendale Hills I**, 7th floor , 2 rooms, 46 sq.m, capitally repaired, new furniture, tiled bathroom, equipped, water, gas, Baxi heating system, refrigerator, TV, balcony for storage. Price: 450 USD , 50 USD per day
- ♦ **2108. Amiryan str. /City center/, 2 rooms, AC, washing machine, TV, refrigerator, satellite, bed sheets, utensil, all the conveniences. Price: 600 USD , 60 USD per day**
- ♦ **2099. Sayat-Nova Ave.**, 12/6, 2 rooms, all the conveniences, repaired, furnished, water, gas, Baxi heating system, AC, washing machine. Price: 550 USD

3 ROOMS AND MORE

- ♦ **1137. Moskovyan str.**, 6/1, 2 bedrooms, lavatory, pool, normal state, furnished, technique, DVD, AC, permanent hot and cold water. Price 1100USD, possible daily rent.
- ♦ **1950 Crossroad of Khanjyan**, Mashtoc/8 2 bedrooms, New stored , 163 sq.m , absolutely repaired, 2 bathrooms, furniture, heating condition, Climate control, looks to the garden, including exploiting costs. Price 2500\$
- ♦ **1856 Abovyan str.** 5/4 floor 3 rooms, 95 sqm, euro repaired, 2 bathrooms,heating system, AC, furnished, equipped, satellite. Price: 750USD, 70-75 USD per day.
- ♦ **1951 Crossroad of Khanjyan**, Mashtoc /13 2 bedrooms, New stored 122 sq.m absolutely

repaired, 2 bathrooms, furniture, heating, Climate control, including exploiting costs . Price 2000\$

- ♦ **1874 Amiryan str.** 14/5 floor 120 sqm, capitally repaired, 2 bathrooms, 2 AC, heating system, parking, looking at the boulevard Price: 2000USD
- ♦ **1406. Sayat-Nova str.**, 7/3, 110sqm, 2 bedrooms, euro repaired, gas, furnished, technique, permanent hot and cold water , baxi. Pric negotiable
- ♦ **1790. Byuzand street**, close to Abovyan st., 7/5, newly built, 2bedrooms, euro repaired, 2 balconies, furnished, baxi, technique, 2 lavatories, garage. Price 1600USD per month.
- ♦ **1810. North Avenue**, /5, 2bedrooms, newly built, euro repaired, beautiful view, refrigerator, washing machine, permanent hot and cold water, heating system, garage, TV, lavatory, Price negotiable.
- ♦ **1787. Koghbaci street**, 13/6, 2bedrooms, newly built, euro repaired, furnished, 2 lavatories, central heating. Price 1700USD per month, 100USD per day.
- ♦ **1793. Teryan street**. 260 sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 3 lavatories, capital repair, climat control, parking, unfurnished (possible to furnish), newly built Price: 3500 USD
- ♦ **1564. Tumanyan street**, 7/4. 110 sq.m., euro repaire, 2 lavatories, Spanish tyles, permanent hot and cold water, gas, Baxi system, satellite, modern furniture, techniques, garage. Price 1200 USD.
- ♦ **1720. Amirian Street.**, 3 bedrooms, 190 sq/m, newly built, euro windows, permanent hot and cold water, gas, central heating, 2 open balcony, nice view to the city, possible with or without furniture, parking for 3 cars. Price 3000USD per month negotiable, for long term-6 months and more.

PRIVATE HOUSES

- ♦ **1094. Noy block**, 2 storied building - 400sqm, garden, permanent hot and cold water, furniture, technique, 1 lavatory, gas. Price 2000USD
- ♦ **1095. Aygestan**, 1 storied building - 105sqm, 3bedrooms newly built repaired, furniture, technique 1 lavatory, garden. Price 1000USD per month, 100USD per day.
- ♦ **1808. Amiryan**, 4/3 3 rooms, 64 sq.m, capi-



tally repaired, Venetian style, furnished, equipped, Spanish tiles, permanent hot and cold water, gas, baxi, no balcony. Price: 800-900 USD, 50 USD per day

- ♦ **971. Norq-Marash community** The gardens of Norq Ground 620sq.m, basement +2f. con 733.15 sq.m, basement: the sport hall, sauna, room for summer, swimming pool, fireplace, 1st floor: leaving room, bedroom, kitchen, office, corridor, bathroom, 2nd floor 4 bedrooms, 2 bathroom(Spanish), always running cold and hot water, natural gas, 2 conditioner, baxi. Price 1500\$
- ♦ **1096. Blur**, 4 storied building, each floor-160sqm, total-400sqm, euro repaired, 1st floor-garage, sport room, swimming pool, 4 bedrooms, summer kitchen, 3 lavatories, capitally repaired, furnished, gas, permanent hot and cold water. Price 4000USD
- ♦ **455. Norq**, 3 storied building-150sqm, total - 600sqm, 3bedrooms, lavatory, capitally repaired, furnished, technique, gas, permanent hot and cold water. Price 2000USD
- ♦ **1135. Monument V.** Papazyan street, 2floors, total-375sqm, stone building-210sqm, cellar, euro repaired, baxi, AC, garage-14sqm. Price 2000 USD per month.
- ♦ **1164. Arabkir, Monument**. 1 storied, land-300 sq.m, building-150 sq.m., capitally repaired, 3 bedrooms, 2 lavatories, pool. Price: 1200 USD
- ♦ **211.** Ajgedzor. 2 storied, 3 bedrooms, permanent water, capitally repaired, beutifull view. Price: 1300-1500 USD
- ♦ **721. Blur Qery street**, land 150 sq.m., 2 stories+ a cellar, 200 sq.m., newly built, telephone, refrigerator, washing machine, 3 bedrooms, garage, 2 lavatories, a pool, camin, permanent hot and cold water, a cellar is used as a sport hall. Price : 3000 USD
- ♦ **1117. Aygestan**, land-420 sq.m., building 646 sq.m., 3 storied, 4 bedrooms, open kitchen, euro repair, new tiles, furnished, techniques. Price* 5000 USD
- ♦ **1121. Vahagni community**, 2 stories, building 402 sq.m.(including garage and cellar) euro repair, 3 bedrooms, hall, permanent hot and cold water, gas, heating system, heating floor, kitchen and dining room are furnished. Price: 3000 USD
- ♦ **1142. Djrvej**, Bagrevand community. 3 storied, land-1000 sq.m., building-700 sq.m., 1st floor-cellar, pantry, playing room, kitchen, lavatory, 2nd floor- a big hall, kitchen, dining room, 4 bedrooms, 3rd floor- resting room, 1 bedroom repaired, each bedroom has its lavatory, no furniture/ can be furnished, if necessary/garage for 2 cars, parquet,

Spanish tiles. Price: 4 000 USD.

- ♦ **1114. Gulakyan street**, 3 storied building 500 sq.m., euro repair, 1st floor: sauna, a pool, kitchen, 2nd floor: kitchen, dining room, 3rd floor 3 bedrooms, lavatories in each floor. Price: 3300 USD
- ♦ **1109. Blur**, 3 storied building, land 400 sq.m., building 450 sq.m., new, euro repair, ramparted, 4 bedrooms, 5 lavatories inside, 2 lavatories outside, Baxi system. Price 3800 USD
- ♦ **662. Norq gardens**, Amaranocayin street. 2 storied stone building.Land 1000 sq.m., building 300 sq.m., ramparted, 3 lavatories, 3 bedrooms, hall, camin, gas, heating system, stained glasses. Price 3000USD negotiable
- ♦ **1071. Noy block**, 2.5 storied, land 400 sq.m., building 500 sq.m., garden 250sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 5 lavatories, 2 kitchen, a hall. Price 3000 USD priliminary
- ♦ **1085. Aygestan district**. 2 storied stone building, land 500 sq.m., each floor 12 X 14, 3 bedrooms, a cabinet, 3 lavatories, a cellar, a sauna, kitchen with cupboards, Baxi system, AC. Price 3000 USD
- ♦ **1139. Komitas, Sundukyan street**, 2 stories, stone building, land : 700 sq.m, each floor 185 sq.m, 4 bedrooms, cellar 185 sq.m, , capital repair, Baxi system, swimming pool, a place for barbeque, 2 lavatories, garden, 1 cabinet. Price: 3000 USD
- ♦ **333. Nork**, 3 storied, 250sq.m, euro repair, 4 bedrooms,7 lavatory, permanent hot and cold water, central heating, natural gas, garden, pool. Price negotiable.
- ♦ **1014. Norq Marsh district**. 2 storied, a cellar, capitally repaired, land 567sq.m., building 551 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 1 cabinet, furnished, a heating system. Price 2500 USD primary.
- ♦ **1076. Nork**, 2 storied, 220 sq.m., euro repair, in the 1st floor 2 rooms, kitchen, lavatory, in the second floor, separate entrance, open kitchen, 3 bedrooms, lavatory, furnished, view to city, garage, garden. Price: 2000USD
- ♦ **990. In Monument, Papazian street**, 2 storied stone building + half-cellar, has mansard,5bedrooms, 2 kitchens, 2bathrooms, laundry, permanent hot and cold water, gas, plot of land 250sq.m, the size of whole construction is 370 sq.m. Price 2500USD
- ♦ **1019. Nork**, 2 storied, separate structure, 700 sq.m. land, 350 sq.m. construction, capital euro repaired, finished, garage with remote control, pool, 3 bedrooms, one with bathroom, and 2 separate bathrooms. In the first floor sitting-room, gas, permanent hot and cold water, Baxi System, fire-place, view to town, walled. Price: Negotiable

PREMISES

- ♦ **1869. Kaskade**, 720 sq.m., 1st line, building permission, suitable for new building or a business center. Price: negotiable
- ♦ **1461. Sayat - Nova str.**, 1st floor 95sqm, capitally repaired, 2 halls - 32sqm and 46sqm, kitchen, lavatory, 1 line, 2 entrances. Price 3000USD
- ♦ **1821. Argishti** 14/7 3rooms,-87sq.m repaired.- modern stile ,non populated ,2bathroom.heating ,furniture ,technique satellite, when renting for the long time also internet, b. looks to the country. Price 800\$, 1day 20.000AM dram
- ♦ **1438. Komitas**, Hr. Qochar str., 6storied building + cellar + cockloft, total-960sqm, each floor-120sqm, needs to be repaired, plastered, permanent hot and cold water, gas, parking for 15 cars. Price negotiable.
- ♦ **1525. Hanrapetutyun street**, 1st floor, 3steps up, h-3.20m, repaired, 1 large hall+3 rooms, 2 entrances, kithen, lavatory. Price 1400USD per month, negotiable.
- ♦ **1526. Byuzand street**, 5/semi-basement, 170sqm, 4-5 step down. cellar-50sqm, has 6 rooms, the largest is 30sqm, 2 entrances, 2 lavatories, 6 windows from street side. Price 2000USD per month, negotiable.
- ♦ **1528. North Avenue**, 9/1, 2 floors, total area 159sqm, 1st floor-66sqm, 2nd floor 93sqm, newly built, euro repaired, has the entrance from the street, security system, heating system. Price 7500USD per month.
- ♦ **1482. North Avenue**, 210 sq.m., 1st floor, with 2 floors, h=8m. Price 10.000 USD
- ♦ **1113. Abovyan Koryun district**, 2 storied, 400 sq.m., 2 separate entrances, capital euro repair, convenient for restaurant or shop, has a possibility for open air café. Price: Negotiable
- ♦ **1408.Zarobyhan street**, parallel to Baghramyan, 2 storied, 300sq.m.construction, 600 sq.m. land, in a first floor hall and kitchen, in a second floor 5 rooms, bathroom, open balcony, capital euro repair, gas, baxi system, permanent hot and cold water, telephone, garage, fruit garden. Price: Negotiable.
- ♦ **1438. Komitas**, 6 floors, cellar, mansard. Each floor is 120 sq.m., hasa need for cosmetic repair, walls are plastered, floor is leveled, hanging ceilings, permanent hot and cold water, gas, parking for 15 cars. Price: Negotiable
- ♦ **1429. Nalbandian St**, 2 stories - 78 sq. m, each story - 38 sq. m, hall, lavatory, 2 show windows, door, two-way entrance, 24-hour water, gas, suitable for any activity. Price: 23000USD
- ♦ **1461. Amiryan** (down-town), 1st circle, 5 stored building, 300sq.m is renovated, the rest is under renovation, central heating, climate-control, parking. (tax included) . The price is available for 5 and more years, 2500sq. Price: 1sqm - 400USD
- ♦ **1462. Teryan street**, 3 stored, capital repaired, AC, capital repaired, parking, 800sq. Price: 10.000USD

The RA President Visits Defense Ministry... ...and the US Army/NATO Top Officials Also Were There



By **Gourgen James Khazhakian**,
Chief Correspondent

On last Tuesday Feb.14 the RA President, Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the RA Armed Forces **Serzh Sargsyan** visited the Armed Forces Operative Control Center where he got familiarized with technical means of the control system, after what President Sargsyan presided a meeting with the Armed Forces leadership.

The RA Defense Minister **Seyran Ohanyan** reported to the RA President on the course of the ongoing reforms in the Armed Forces.

And then the RA Armed Forces Supreme Commander-in-Chief received a report from the Armed Forces General Staff Head Col. - General **Yu. Khachaturov** on the fighting readiness of the RA Defense Ministry Staff.

During joint exercises of the Gen. Staff being held within the frames of tactics-line

trainings for fighting efficiency Supreme Commander-in-Chief **Serzh Sargsyan** received reports from the commanders.

On the same day the RA Defense Minister **Seyran Ohanyan** hosted Rear Admiral **Marc C. Montgomery**, Deputy Director, Plans,

Policy and Strategy, United States European Command who was on a working visit to Armenia.

Welcoming the guest, Armenian Defense Minister emphasized the high level of the cooperation between the RA Defense Ministry and the United States Europe-

an Command. Rear Admiral **Marc C. Montgomery** thanked the Armenian side for the support for Kosovo and Afghanistan missions. During the meeting they discussed issues such as Armenian-American joint exercises, military education and other issues of mutual interest.

During the visit, Rear Admiral **Montgomery** met the Deputy Chief of General Staff of the RA Armed Forces Lieutenant-General **S. Galstyan**. They discussed issues regarding participation of the Armenian peacekeepers in the international operations. Rear Admiral

Montgomery also visited the Peacekeeping brigade of the Armenian Armed Forces.

Just a day before, on Feb.13 the RA Defense Minister **Seyran Ohanyan** received NATO's Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia **James Appathurai**.

The parties expressed satisfaction about the successful development of Armenia-NATO cooperation. It includes spheres such as peacekeeping, military education, military trainings, and defense reforms.

Upon the request of the guest, Armenian Defense Minister presented the situation on the contact line in Nagorno-Karabakh.



VivaCell-MTS Supports Development of Robotics in Armenia... ...and Encourages Taxpayers

On February 15, at a press conference General Manager of VivaCell-MTS **Ralph Yirikian** and Executive Director of the Union of Information Technology Enterprises of Armenia (UITE) **Karen Vardanyan** announced that Armenia's leading telecom operator and UITE provided robots to five educational institutions to organize group trainings. The beneficiary educational institutions include *Kvant College*, *Basic College of the State Engineering University of Armenia (SEUA)*, the *Mkhitar Sebastatsi EduComplex*, *school N131* and the *Ayb High School*.

"VivaCell-MTS extends hands to the UITE for encouraging the development of robotics in the country. Having a young generation interested in robotics is a necessary precondition for that," said VivaCell-MTS General Manager **Ralph Yirikian**. "A corporate citizen, VivaCell-MTS joins hands to develop the sphere of technology, including robotics, which can positively affect the development of related spheres of industry in Armenia and create a supply chain, help developing the country's competitiveness in international markets as well as provide Armenia's high reputation in the world. We are present wherever there is room to development, wherever we can encourage our people's intellectual excellence," added Mr Yirikian.

"We witnessed an interesting thing during the open championship of Armenian robots last year, which, we believe, will get a positive feedback in the public. Schoolchildren have been actively

and fruitfully engaged in robotics. Today Armrobotics hosts school groups, successfully participating in the contest. This change is a result of opening robotics groups

engineering thinking. They are made of various details, engines, wheels and software module. After mastering it students will be able to develop their program", he said.

ceipts issued in December 2011. This first group of winners who came from Yerevan and neighboring regions received 40 "MTS Connect Diamond" 3G modems

internet postpaid tariff plan with AMD 0 monthly fee during 6 months.

VivaCell-MTS is the leading telecommunications operator as well as the third largest taxpayer of Armenia. As the pioneer of corporate responsibility in Armenia, VivaCell-MTS has committed to a fair, socially-responsible and transparent corporate behavior, respect to the laws of the country of, and fulfillment of tax obligations in an efficient and timely manner. Beginning April 2012, VivaCell-MTS logo will be placed on the reverse side of cash register receipts.

Within the last three years, the Committee of State Revenues of the Republic of Armenia has managed to undertake significant measures to increase the efficiency of retail trade tax control by encouraging public to demand cash register receipts.

The total amount of awards for 800 thousands of cash register receipts given during draws organized since 2009 makes AMD 720 million; about AMD 5.8 billion worth bonus has been given for 314 thousands of cash register receipts, which have not won in the draws.

Our citizens have been already provided with 180 cars in 2011. To further promote the public control over the use of cash registers the citizens will receive also mobile phones, modems and access to broadband internet through MTS Connect Unlimited postpaid tariff plan with AMD 0 monthly fee during 6 months, provided by VivaCell-MTS, as a reward.



in schools," said UITE Executive Director **Karen Vardanyan**.

The UITE came up with the idea to open robotics groups in schools as early as in 2009, after number of parents inquired for places, where their school-aged children could learn making robots.

The robotics groups in schools are organized by the UITE, upon VivaCell-MTS general sponsorship.

According to a UITE rep **Hrachya Khachatryan**, the robots presented are made in the U.S., but they plan to prepare more detailed sets of

domestic production more affordable to schools. "Robot constructors are being produced for schoolchildren. Through electronics, mechanics and programming they contribute to developing en-

The Principal of Mkhitar Sebastatsi EduComplex **Ashot Bleyan** called this initiative very important one in terms of developing furthermore schoolchildren's cre-



ative abilities and imagination.

And on February 13, 2012 the Arabkir branch of the RA hosted 80 out of the 315 winners of the drawing organized on January 14, 2012, on 1700 cash register re-

with "MTS Connect Unlimited" postpaid internet tariff plan with AMD 0 monthly fee for a period of 6 months, as well as 100 MTS Touch 551 mobile phones. The gifts to the winners were provided by VivaCell-MTS. The other 220 winners of the drawing will receive their prizes from VivaCell-MTS service centers in their respective regions starting February 15.

Based on the results of the draw held on January 14, 2012 with around 1700 cash register receipts issued in December 2011 participating in the event, the owners of 315 tickets with the

maximum number of coinciding digits and maximum cost of deals have won 15 cars, 100 MTS Touch 551 mobile phones, and 200 "MTS Connect Diamond" 3G modems with "MTS Connect Unlimited"

Authoritative Armenian organizations join their efforts to protect children from Internet risks



by Lusine Zhamharyan

World Vision Armenia, the National Center of Educational Technologies of the RA Ministry of Education and Science, Microsoft Company, and the Child Protection Center of the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) signed a memorandum of understanding on February 7. The document will allow the parties to successfully cooperate, raise public awareness of safe use of the internet and cell phones, and also to prevent the risks involved when one uses these means of communication.

During a meeting with journalists, the representative of Microsoft RA organization Grigor Barseghian said that the Internet had rapidly become part of everyday life, with young people, pupils, and children being the most active Internet users. Thanks to the Internet, we can receive any

information instantly; these are also the advantages of the Internet.

The organizations to have signed the memorandum underlined the importance of preventive measures in the fight against those risks. Head of World Vision Armenia Graham Strong spoke about the risks and positive aspects of the Internet.

"At a birthday party last Saturday, I saw several children dancing a mixture of rap and Armenian dances. They told me that they learned that dance from YouTube social site. This also poses a risk".

According to Artak Poghosian, representative of the National Center of Educational Technologies of the Ministry of Education and Science, their Center provides Internet connection to all schools. Thanks to cooperation, a website (www.safeinternet.am) was

launched under a project aimed at protecting children's online security. The site also enables to organize distant learning.

Artak Poghosian told Noyan Tapan correspondent that in addition to these services, the National Educational Technology Centers offers online courses.

The press conference was followed by an open discussion entitled "The Safe Internet Use Means". Among the participants were children, teachers, and many guests. Welcoming the project, the children thanked the organizers for providing them with such an opportunity. Each of them expressed his/her opinion about the project. A group of children aged 10-12 had filmed a video on the problem of protecting children from Internet risks. It is envisaged broadcasting the video on television. The signatory organizations stated that they were ready to cooperate with private and business organizations, state bodies, and charitable institutions. In their words, joint efforts of such organizations will make cooperation more efficient.

Videos "The Internet and Me" and "The Internet Use Rules for Me" made by children were demonstrated at the event.

"We made a short film about the safe Internet. In the film, we showed the need to use antivirus software to protect your comput-



er. The film has some funny episodes, its duration is 5-7 minutes," said the schoolchildren from Aparan.

The organizers demonstrated a

commercial made by sixth graders. The commercial was recently updated by specialists and would be regularly aired on television this year.

IN MEMORIAM: Whitney Houston 1963-2012



Whitney Houston strikes a pose during her performance at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles on April 10, 2000, during the taping of the "25 Years of #1 Hits: Arista Records' Anniversary Celebration." Houston took the stage to a standing ovation in a heavily scrutinized six-song performance.



Whitney Houston and Dionne Warwick perform at the World Women's Award ceremony in Hamburg's Congress Center in Germany on June 9, 2004.



Bobbi Kristina Brown and her mom Whitney Houston perform at the last concert of "Good Morning America's" Summer Concert Series at Rumsey Playfield in September 2009.



Whitney Houston, right, and her husband, Bobby Brown, perform during the "VH1 Divas" duets show in Las Vegas on May 22, 2003.



Bobby Brown, Whitney Houston and their daughter Bobbi Kristina watch the premiere of the new show "Being Bobby Brown" on June 27, 2005 in Atlanta.




Whitney Houston performs in Freiburg, Germany, on Oct. 3, 2009.



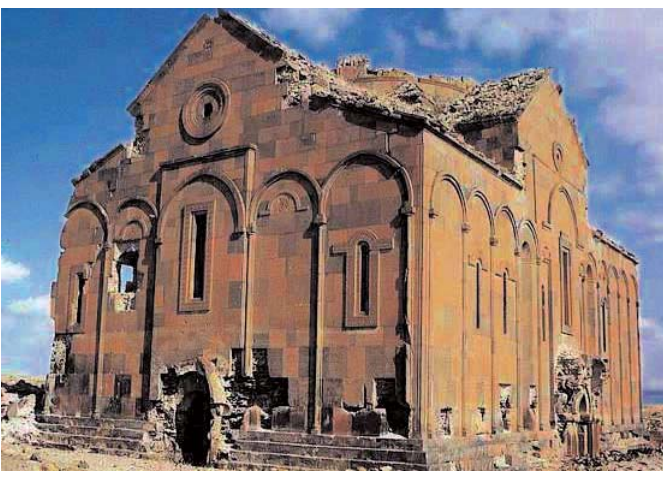
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President Obama calls for 19% cut in economic aid to Armenia



President Obama has called for a sharp 19% reduction in economic aid to Armenia in the last budget request of his term, reported the Armenian National Committee of America.

The President has proposed \$27,219,000 in Economic Support Fund (ESF) aid for Armenia in his Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) budget, which is nearly \$12,781,000, or 32%, less than the \$40,000,000 approved by the Congress for FY12. The President's ESF figures for FY13, however, do not include \$2,824,000 in International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement assistance and 2,500,000 in Global Health Programs (USAID), both categories that were formerly included under the ESF heading. Adding these two line items to the \$27,219,000 ESF proposal, brings the economic aid total to Armenia to \$32,543,000, which is a sharp 19% cut, measured from FY12 to FY13.

"We are saddened, but not surprised to see that President Obama has once again sought to cut economic aid to Armenia. His Administration has proposed reductions in assistance to Armenia

- including this year's sharp 19% cut - despite the devastating economic impact of dual Turkish and Azerbaijani blockades, and Yerevan's broad support for the U.S.-led missions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo, and her cooperation on a broad-range of Washington-inspired regional initiatives - including the reckless Turkey-Armenia Protocols," said ANCA Executive Director Aram Hamparian. "Sadly, President Obama has chosen to neither keep his commitment to maintain assistance to Armenia, nor taken any meaningful steps to honor his pledge to foster Armenia's growth and development through expanded trade."

Regarding military assistance, the Administration's proposed budget does maintain parity in Foreign Military Finance (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) to Armenia and Azerbaijan, requesting \$2.7 million in FMF and \$600,000 for IMET for each country.

The Administration's budget does not include any figures for aid to Nagorno Karabakh, although, over the past several years USAID has allocated \$2,000,000 annually for this purpose.

This level of Nagorno Karabakh funding is considerably less than the intent expressed by the Congress over the course of many years, reflecting a pattern of under-spending that has left many developmental and confidence-building needs unmet.

During his campaign for the Presidency, Senator Barack Obama promised several times in writing to maintain aid and expand trade with Armenia.

Iran-Armenia rail link 'realistic' for Russia



Vladimir Yakunin (second from right), chairman of Russia's state-run rail network, speaks to journalists in Yerevan, 15 Feb 2012.

Russia remains interested in an ambitious project to build a railway connecting Armenia to neighboring Iran despite "problems" created by Tehran's deepening standoff with the West, according to the head of the state-run Russian rail network, RZD.

"We think that this project has realistic chances of implementation but that could be done only within the inter-state framework and does not depend only on us," Vladimir Yakunin said at the end of a visit to Armenia late on Wednesday.

Yakunin arrived in Yerevan to introduce Viktor Rebets, the new executive director of Armenia's national railway company managed by RZD. He also met with President Serzh Sargsyan.

The Armenian and Iranian governments officially approved the railway project in 2009. But they have yet to identify concrete sources of funding for the 470-kilometer rail link that would mainly pass through Armenian territory. Unofficial estimates of its total cost have varied from \$1 billion to \$4 billion.

The Armenian side hopes that Russian firms will participate in the railway construction and partly finance it. The Russian government

and RZD have not ruled out such possibility.

The Armenian and Russian transport ministries set up joint working groups looking into the project after Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's August 2010 visit to Yerevan. Medvedev and Sarkisian also discussed the issue when they met in Moscow in October 2011.

"We hope that with joint efforts by both Russia and Armenia as well as some third countries we will, after all, manage to achieve a more modern and perhaps even radically new system of communications for Armenia," Medvedev said during the talks in an apparent reference to the would-be rail link.

Yakunin insisted that the project was feasible even though between 30 and 50 years would be needed to recoup the massive construction expenditures. "And if that project is launched South Caucasus Railway will definitely participate in its implementation," he said, referring to RZD's Armenian subsidiary.

The Russian official noted that the tightening international sanctions against Iran are creating "quite a bit of problems" hampering economic cooperation between

the Islamic Republic and other regional states, including Armenia. "We believe that cooperation is much more effective than any sanction imposed on Iran," he said, echoing Moscow's official stance on the standoff over Tehran's controversial nuclear program.

Richard Giragosyan, a Yerevan-based political analyst, suggested on Thursday that Russia is keen to use the project to "demonstrate its power and influence in this region" and underline its opposition to U.S. or Israeli military action against Iran. "It's too soon to say whether the project will start and finish but I see a new political will from Moscow to take it more seriously," he told RFE/RL's Armenian service.

"This visit [by Yakunin] is about assessing what is needed for the next step to make this more realistic both in terms of Armenia-Iran and just in case the Armenian-Turkish diplomacy restarts," Giragosyan said. "Politically this is more realistic than it has been before. The real challenge will be whether there is a financial commitment from Russia to make this a reality."

The Armenian government regards China as another potential source of funding for the railway construction. Transport Minister Manuk Vartanyan revealed in 2010 that Yerevan is seeking as much as \$1 billion in Chinese loans for that purpose.

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi discussed the issue with Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan during a February 2011 visit to Yerevan. Sargsyan's press office referred to "the Chinese side's interest" in the project but did not elaborate.

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World Bank approves \$11 million credit for Armenia



will finance US\$2.9 million and US\$0.7 million will be provided by beneficiary communities.

The Project focuses on "infrastructure gaps" through renovation and rehabilitation of secondary and special schools, kindergartens, gymnasiums and playgrounds, primary health clinics, potable water pipelines and sanitation systems, community-cultural and social service centers, minor irrigation schemes throughout Armenia, World Bank's website says.

"The proposed project will directly benefit 50 rural communities. While this creates much-needed jobs in the current environment, the success of the program will also depend on how well local communities are able to sustain these new investments," said Asad Alam, World Bank Regional Director for the South Caucasus.

So far, under ASIF III, 233 community infrastructure micro-projects have been completed and another 27 are under implementation.

The World Bank has approved a \$11 million credit, the Third Additional Financing for the Social Investment Fund III Project for Armenia.

The Additional Financing will further assist the Government of Armenia in its efforts to improve the living standards of the poor and vulnerable groups by expanding labor-intensive infrastructure projects in response to critical needs of the local communities.

Total financing of the Additional Financing is US\$ 14.6 million, of which the Government of Armenia

Armenian Central Bank predicts credit growth deceleration

The Central Bank (CB) of Armenia is forecasting a slowdown in the 2012 economic credit growth rate, reports CB's monetary policy program for the first quarter of 2012.

This year a 20.2 percent credit growth is expected, against the previous year's 35.3 percent. According to the Bank, the credit

growth will primarily be directed toward small and medium-size business, and the mortgage market.

It is noted that the predominance of the foreign currency credits for the economy will be maintained within the credit structure.

Some commercial banks, however, express a concern that as a

result of the debt crisis in EU, problems have risen in terms of receiving credits from European institutions.

According to the CB's official report, as of December 2011, the loans which the commercial banks have provided are close to US\$ 3.4 billion, whose 61 percent were in foreign currency.

Armenia's Nairit rubber factory has become property of CIS Interstate Bank

Today Armenia's Nairit Rubber Factory is the property of CIS Interstate Bank, and Energy and Natural Resources Minister Armen Movsisyan confirmed this on Thursday, February 16.

To note, the offshore Rhinoville Property Limited, which is Nairit's primary owner, had taken a US\$ 70-million loan

from the aforementioned Bank in 2006, and it had put up the Factory as collateral. The loan was received for the Factory's upgrading and for investments, but it was not used for its proper purpose.

Armen Movsisyan, however, informed that several leading companies continue to show an interest in Nairit.

The Minister also noted that there would be downsizing at the Factory, once the new administrator is confirmed. This concerns the laying off of 400 employees, which, as per Armen Movsisyan, is not a great number, considering the total of 3,000 employees.

Also, a five-month salary debt has accrued at present.

Russia and Armenia may increase their share in the construction of the new block of the Armenian NPP

Haroutiun Khachatrian

Sergey Kirienko, head of Russia's state-run Rosatom nuclear energy corporation, said on 7 February in Yerevan that Russia and Armenia can increase their stakes in new block of the Armenian (Metsamor) NPP to nearly 50% each. He also made it clear that promising uranium deposits do exist in Armenia but the Russian party would prefer to get also rare metals from Armenia. If this becomes reality Russia will increase its grip on the Armenian power system and Armenia may be forced to pay up to 1.5 billion dollars in cash for having the new nuclear unite.

Armenia has repeatedly said that having a working nuclear power station is among its strategic goals as it would secure its energy safety. Currently it owns the only NPP in the region, the Metsamor station (28 kilometers west from Yerevan) which will be shut in 2016 or 2017. In August 2010, Armenia and Russia signed an agreement on cooperation in the construction of a new nuclear unit in Armenia. The new block was expected to have been built near the old one and to use the existing communications of the

old one. In this way, the Armenian party expected to have paid 20-25% of the block's overall value and hold 20 to 25 % of its shares. Another 20 or 25% was expected to have been paid by Russia who took the obligation to produce and install the so-called "nuclear island" of the block. The remaining 50 to 60% of the value of the block was expected to provide by other investors.

A conference of investors was scheduled to be held as early as in May 2011. However, investors were not found. Obviously, the disaster at the Fukushima NPP played a role in it.

Sergey Kirienko was very careful during his 7 February briefing in Yerevan and said often that he was expressing his personal opinion. However, he obviously expressed the official Russian position in many cases. One could learn, in particular that:

1. The new nuclear block will be complete by 2020, instead of 2016 or 2017 reported earlier.

2. Russia "is considering" the increase of its stake in the new block above the level of 25 percent. The Armenian Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources had reported earlier that Russia was ready to provide 50 percent

of the funds necessary for the construction of the new energy block.

3. The block must belong to the government of Armenia, i.e., the government must own more than 50 percent of its shares. Given that the new block is worth 4.5 to 5 billion U.S. dollars, the Armenian government has to pay 1.1 to 1.5 billion dollars in the period of six years (the average duration of construction). This sum is comparable to 30 - 50 percent of the expenditures of the yearly budget of Armenia in 2012. There is no report on the reaction of the government of Armenia to this statement. According to other reports Armenia is continuing to look for other investors. In particular, the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan was reported to have discussed this problem with his colleagues from France, Nicolas Sarkozy and from Italy, Giorgio Napolitano.

4. The unit will have the installed capacity of 1060 megawatt. Russia is one of few in the world to have technologies for constructing nuclear units of "post-Fukushima" type, it will provide the so-called 3+ reactor. The technologies are used in Russia and in many countries, and are certified by the European Utility

Requirements (EUR). Currently an international consortium led by Worley Parsons (a big Australian company) gives technical-economic assessment for the construction of a new nuclear block.

5. Kirienko recognized that reserves of uranium have been discovered in Armenia but said that Russia would like to get other mines, too. "There are interesting deposits, ... but they require additional study. ... I approve the Armenian government's approach of carefully discussing the projects with people living near the deposits. ... It is important for us that the joint Armenian-Russian mining company should deal not only with uranium exploration but also with related minerals, including rare metals. In this case long-term contracts will be concluded for effective work," he was quoted as saying.

History

The nuclear power plant in Metsamor, is the only one in this region. It contains two blocks, they were built by the Soviet government in 1970-80 and were shut down in early 1989, although they did not suffer of the big earthquake of December 7, 1988

(known as Spitak Earthquake). In 1996, the second block of the NPP was re-opened by the government of Armenia. Its lifespan should be ended in 2004. However, the Armenian governments, in cooperation with European and Russian companies and IAEA managed to improve the safety of the station to at least 2016. Currently, this block provides up to 40 percent of electricity produced in Armenia.

Most of current electricity-producing capacities of Armenia belong to different Russian companies controlled by the government of Russia (among them are the different parts of the Hrazdan thermal plant and the cascade of HPPs on the river of Hrazdan, the so-called Sevan-Hrazdan cascade). Armenia currently has an excess of these capacities but its neighbors, Azerbaijan and Turkey, fail to import electricity due to political reasons.

Uranium reserves in Armenia are being sought as preliminary data were got in the Soviet epoch and they currently belong to Russia. Works are now underway in the southern marz (province) of Syunik and they have raised a serious movement of environmentalists.

Printed press, electronic mass media reliable source of information: polls



The social-political research center has conducted polls in all the administrative regions of the capital Yerevan. The polls were conducted in the period between January 20 and February 9. Seven hundred twenty people participated in the polls. Director of the center Zorik Martikyan presented to the reporters the results of the polls. He said the majority of the inquired - 70% were women. The 42% were employees of private sector. The 68% of the participants of the polls had higher education.

The 21% of the inquired expressed wish to participate in the elections, the 41% said they will not. Twenty-six percent of the participants said they will vote for the Republican Party of Armenia, 21% will back the Prosperous Armenia Party and 14% said they will vote for the Rule of Law Party.

Coordinator of the center Karen Vardanyan said 37% of the participants of the polls said they were for the majoritarian and proportional

election systems, 63% said they were for the proportional system only. The 32% said they were backing the party taking into consideration the work they had implemented, 21% said they liked the leader and 17% voted for a party stemming from the pre-electoral program.

The 29% of the inquired highly praised the activity of the Police, 43% assessed it as good.

The majority of the participants said they were dissatisfied with the efficiency of fighting against corruption. About 57% said TV was the main source of getting political information, 16% said they were learning the news from printed press, 12.5% learned news from electronic media.

Ten percent said the reliable source for them was TV, 11% trust radio, 38% believed the printed press, 36% said they trust electronic mass media. The internet is available and understandable for 73.2%.

U.S. Embassy in Armenia is asked to explain Obama's behavior

Political Developments Research Center addressed an open letter to the U.S. Ambassador to Armenia John Heffern connected with the Obama's proposal to cut the economic aid to Armenia. Public relations office of the center says in the letter they expressed their concern over it.

"We are saddened to hear that President Obama has called for a drastic 19 percent reduction in economic assistance to Armenia in his latest budget request from the Congress. The president has proposed \$27,219,000 in aid for Armenia in his Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) budget, which is nearly \$12,781,000, or 32 percent less than the \$40,000,000 approved by the Congress for the previous fiscal year.

Taking into consideration the fact that Armenia is in an economic blockade by Azerbaijan, and its ally Turkey, which has kept the border with Armenia closed since 1993 as a sign of approval and support in favor of Azerbaijan in the ongoing conflict between the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan, the United States, as a champion of human rights and democratic development, should continue to assist Armenia's progress by keeping the foreign aid level constant with previous



years. This is especially true when the Nagorno Karabakh people have been striving for self-determination which was first presented by American president Woodrow Wilson, and the duel blockade has made the peaceful life much more difficult for people in Armenia and in Nagorno-Karabakh, artificially limiting the economic growth.

As a diplomat of a country that is serving as one of the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group, which aims to bring about a lasting peace and stability in the region, and a country that supported Armenian President's move towards the Turkish-Armenian rapprochement, you are in a good position to understand the tense and fragile situation of the region.

Nonetheless, taking the geopo-

litical difficulties into account, Armenia has still managed to provide peacekeepers in the U.S. missions overseas, specifically in Iraq, and continues to participate in Afghanistan as part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Armenian peacekeepers put their lives on the line to further the democratic and humanitarian mission, along with their Euro-Atlantic partners, which is another reason President Obama's budget proposal to cut foreign aid to Armenia remains perplexing for us.

Therefore, we are kindly asking you to provide an explanation as to why President Obama has decided to lower foreign aid to the Republic of Armenia," the letter runs.

Harut Sassounian: Bryza confesses his love for Turkey, confirming his anti-Armenian bias



By Harut Sassounian
Publisher, The California Courier

It appears that my prediction about Matt Bryza leaving the State Department and working as a lobbyist is coming true. After his brief stint as Ambassador to Azerbaijan came to a premature end, Bryza disclosed to the Turkish Hurriyet newspaper last week that he will be "advising people, government, and private sector on major investment projects."

It remains to be seen whether Bryza's planned activities fall within the legal definition of "lobbying" and "advocacy" on behalf of third parties, such as Turkish and Azeri entities, given the restrictions imposed by U.S. law on former government officials. Depending on the specific type of activity, there is either a one or two-year ban. However, in the

case of "very senior officials" such as Bryza, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, there is a lifetime ban. He would certainly be prohibited from having contact with former State Department colleagues on behalf of other parties, regarding official matters with which he was involved as a government employee.

In his interview with Hurriyet, Bryza validates in his own words the accusation that he was biased and unprofessional, while acting as the American Co-Chair of OSCE's Minsk Group of mediators on the Karabagh (Artsakh) conflict. At the time, he was repeatedly criticized for being anti-Armenian, pro-Azerbaijani and pro-Turkish. Senators Barbara Boxer and Robert Menendez, who placed a hold on his nomination as Ambassador to Azerbaijan, and the Armenian National Committee of America, which objected to Pres. Obama's ill-advised decision to send Bryza to Baku without Senate confirmation, are now fully vindicated.

In the past, Bryza's apologists used the convenient excuse that as a government official, he had no choice but to support the President's position on the Armenian Genocide and related issues. Yet, now that he is a free man, why does he continue to parrot those same Turkish-inspired, anti-Armenian slogans? Could it be that Bryza, in and out of government, has been trying to ingratiate himself to his future paymasters? Otherwise, why would he give Hurriyet the standard Turkish line that politicians and parliaments should not get involved in acknowledging the Armenian Genocide? To score points with Turkish and Azeri officials, Bryza angrily lashes out at the ANCA: "The organization that blocked me will keep bringing up this issue forever. But it's not up to governments but to people to make their own determination on how to characterize it.... Turkey has the ability to influence that debate in a significant way.... The radicals that blocked me hate that. They don't want to have an open debate; an

open dialogue is their enemy.."

While applauding the more open attitude among some Turks toward a discussion of the Armenian Genocide, Bryza finds as "legitimate" the Turkish official view that "this should not be recognized politically as genocide. It's not the business of any politician in any country to characterize these events as genocide or not as genocide. It has to be up to societies -- not to others -- to have a decision taken based on a political calendar. To me, that's dishonest."

Bryza then takes his pro-Turkish bias a little too far by revealing his denialist views: "Truth is on everyone's side, especially on Turkey's side. The debate about this [Armenian Genocide] issue is really one-sided right now. Anybody who voices a different view is attacked as a genocide-denier, which immediately means you are against human rights. If you believe there was a genocide committed, you can equally argue looking from a narrow definition of the word that genocide was committed to many others, against

Turks or Muslims in eastern Anatolia. Let's have a dialogue of the multiple atrocities [against] many groups. Let's talk about it all. Let's be fair and not forget the suffering of others."

Finally, Bryza seems to have fulfilled his life-long dream of living in Istanbul. During his 2005 visit to Ankara, after a U.S. Embassy official introduced him to local journalists as "an old friend of Turkey," Bryza unabashedly declared: "I am thrilled to be back in Turkey. Turkey in many ways feels for me like a second home.... I can't spend enough time in your beautiful country. I hope to be back soon and often." In a column I wrote at the time, I expressed the hope that "Bryza would soon realize his wish and retire in Turkey permanently." Now, his wish has come true! Hurriyet reported last week that after leaving Baku last month he had settled in Istanbul. "You can't imagine how happy I am to be in Istanbul.... Look at me, I am married to a Turkish woman," Bryza exclaimed!

A New European growth agenda

BRUSSELS - Austerity alone cannot solve Europe's economic and financial crisis. Growth and jobs need to be promoted with equal zeal. European Union leaders now recognize this: kick-starting growth in 2012 was high on the agenda at the European Council's meeting on January 30. But the big question remains: How?

The need for immediate action is clear. The eurozone's economy contracted in the last three months of 2011; even Germany's shrank. The new year is looking grim. France is flat-lining (as is Britain). Italy and Spain have sunk into deep recession. Greece is in its fifth year of a slump. And eurozone unemployment is at record highs, with nearly one in two young people jobless in Spain and Greece.

The economic headwinds are formidable: fiscal austerity, high interest rates outside AAA-rated countries, credit cutting by banks, deleveraging households, weak private-sector investment, and declining exports as the global slowdown undermines demand.

Until growth resumes, any tentative financial stabilization will be extremely fragile. Recession will hit banks' and governments' already-weak balance sheets, increasing pressure for faster deleveraging. But, while gradual adjustment is essential, faster and deeper cuts are largely self-defeating: big reductions in private credit and government spending will cause a sharper slowdown - and thus a vicious downward spiral. A big

new push for growth is therefore vital.

So far, the growth agenda has consisted largely of structural reforms, which are essential for boosting future productivity and flexibility. The crisis does provide a political opportunity for bold moves on this front in many countries; but structural reforms generally will not generate growth and jobs immediately (one exception is permitting shops to open longer).

On the contrary, a shakeout of less productive jobs, for example, would at first raise unemployment, increase government outlays, and reduce private spending. And, because demand is depressed, credit is in short supply, and barriers to enterprise are often high, it will take longer than usual for businesses to create more productive jobs. In short, structural reforms alone cannot be relied upon to stimulate growth in 2012.

Instead, the immediate focus needs to be on boosting investment and exports in economies with a current-account deficit - such as France, Italy, and Spain (and the United Kingdom) - and stimulating consumption in surplus countries such as Germany and the Netherlands.

The European Central Bank has acted decisively to prop up European banks; now it needs to support the real economy, too. While official interest rates are only 1%, solvent sovereigns such as Spain pay more than 5% to borrow for ten years, while creditworthy businesses in Italy can

borrow only at punitive rates, if at all. So the ECB should do more to unblock the transmission mechanism for monetary policy; the European Banking Authority should discourage excessive deleveraging by insisting that banks raise specific capital amounts rather than hit a uniform 9% ratio; and, where necessary, national governments should provide guarantees for bank lending to small and medium-size businesses.

While improving access to finance is vital, governments also need to do more to boost investment. They should prioritize measures to make it easier to start a business, lift barriers to venture capital, and introduce temporary 100% capital allowances to encourage businesses to bring forward investment. At the EU level, the (callable) capital of the European Investment Bank should be greatly increased, as European Commission President José Manuel Barroso suggested in his State of the Union speech last September, so that the EIB can finance a big wave of pan-European investment, notably in infrastructure.

Boosting exports is also essential. Deficit countries need to become more competitive, increasing productivity while cutting costs. A more competitive currency would be welcome: just as the sterling's collapse since 2008 has lifted UK exports, a weaker euro would help Mediterranean economies regain competitiveness for price-sensitive exports. A fiscal devaluation



- slashing payroll taxes and replacing the revenues with a higher VAT - would also help.

Surplus countries, too, must do their part, which is in their own interest. Just as China needs to allow the renminbi to rise, so Germany - whose current-account surplus exceeds China's both as a share of GDP and in absolute terms - needs a higher real exchange rate. That means that Germans need to earn higher wages, commensurate with their increased productivity, so that they can afford more Greek and Spanish holidays. If businesses will not oblige, an income-tax cut would do the trick.

That brings us to fiscal policy. Governments that cannot borrow cheaply (or at all) from markets have no option but to tighten their belts. But they should pursue smart consolidation rather than

unthinking austerity. So they should maintain investment in skills and infrastructure, while cutting subsidies and transfer payments. They should also legislate now for future reforms, notably to encourage people to work longer.

Last but not least, governments that can borrow at unprecedentedly low rates - 0% in real terms over 10 years in the case of Germany - must play their role in supporting demand. Would it be really be so difficult to see VAT coming down ahead of the German election next year?

Philippe Legrain is an independent economic adviser to the president of the European Commission.

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Tigran Sargsyan: Provision of justice is a serious issue

Exclusive interview of Prime Minister of Armenia Tigran Sargsyan to Mediamax



At the end of the last week, Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan discussed the election program of the Republican Party of Armenia (RPA) with party activists and representatives of the society in Lori marz. We asked the Prime Minister to explain the purpose of these meetings.

What is the reason for involving people in the formation of RPA election programs?

- The Republican Party of Armenia has taken the path of changes and we are forming new traditions. In particular, last year we summoned the RPA Conference with the participation of all regional structures. During that conference we presented a detailed report about the government's work in all spheres.

Then, we held an RPA Economic Workshop, during which we introduced a new industrial policy. We invited not only RPA members to the workshop, but also NGOs and our opponents in order to transparently discuss our programs.

Continuing the process of democratization of the party, we

would like the RPA election program to become the product of collective thinking. We intend to meet with party activists in 19 largest communities, invite representatives of NGOs and prominent people so that the party could listen also to their ideas and proposals. This is a chance to introduce the key topics of our election program and collect new ideas. As far as the RPA is a ruling party, one of our basic missions is to unite the society.

Wouldn't it be better to build the program on the basis of aspects of Armenian President's 2008 and RPA's 2007 election programs, which were not implemented or were carried out partially?

- Today's program, the key aspects of which are almost ready, is certainly based on these programs. On the one hand, we are obliged to report about the works that have been done and give assessments to problems that have not been resolved yet. On the other one, life made its corrections, new challenges appeared and we have to refresh our approaches. The

RPA is a conservative party and we are the adherents of evolutionary development. Our programs are based first of all on the system of our values.

I am sure your opponents will say the RPA has a crisis of ideas and this is why it turns to people.

- Every government and power is always subject to criticism, and we should treat it calmly. We have always been attentive towards objective and grounded criticism which allows discovering our weak sides, mistakes and existing problems. During these regional meetings we want to find out whether we have properly chosen our program priorities and fundamental directions.

You will receive a lot of ideas in conditions of limited resources of the state. And if in Yerevan the start-up IT businesses may offer to set up a venture fund, which the government will back by, for example, \$1 million, one of the rural communities will offer to increase the financing of the agriculture in the same amount. How are you going to make a choice?

- We have to focus on the most effective governance and find the model which will enable us to fully reveal the potential of the society. There is one key thesis in this regard: the government's key obligation is to create opportunities for the public.

There are a lot of publications and discussions about a struggle between several wings inside the RPA. You are leading the so-called "intellectual wing". You have recently said that there will be no businessmen in the RPA list and now you are organizing a series of these regional meetings. Can we say that the

positions of the RPA's "intellectual wing" are very strong today?

- It's quite natural that every political party directs its best forces to the government. I think it's also quite natural that in the party the head of the government is responsible for tasks which he deals with as a Prime Minister. So, this process is not conditioned by my personality only.

As for the absence of businessmen in our election list, this is the political stance of our party and the President, who spoke about it still several months ago. If we undertake legislative changes to separate the business from the authorities, it's quite natural that this strive should be reflected also in election approaches and in the list of our party.

I think that during the meetings the people will speak not only about social problems but also about justice. In recent years you and the President have frequently stated that people are suppressed by manifestations of injustice they face around them. And although a lot has changed in last 4 years, there are cases when it seems that the fight for justice gives no results. For example, I am surprised by the fact that a reporter and a "street authority" are arrested and then released, and to change the restraint the Prosecutor's Office uses the same reasons in both cases.

- Provision of justice in the country is a very serious issue and the people's demand towards authorities is quite justified. However, the people's demand is not enough: most of our citizens are not ready to make efforts to ensure justice, and this is one of



the characteristic features of our society. Everybody requires that justice be imposed by the state; people want everything to be good but without their participation. Very often, people consider reporting about any incident as a denunciation. Besides, these people demand the government to impose justice. There is indeed a serious problem here.

But don't you think that people don't report about crimes only because they are scared. They know that the criminal may be released one day and take revenge on them. And the state needs to act in this case by enabling its law enforcement system to ensure the safety of the person who reported the crime.

- The problem of lack of belief does exist today. And it means that we must unite the people around the values that are proclaimed in our program and change the situation together. We need reforms and we must implement them together.

Tigran Sargsyan was interviewed by Ara Tadevosyan

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DID YOU KNOW?



Heading by
Marina Harutiunyan
marina@nt.am
Comments are
welcomed!

Steven Spielberg in negotiations to do Armenian Genocide film

Both renowned producer-director Steven Spielberg and Schindler's List writer Steven Zaillian are in negotiations with the Armenian National Cinema Center to develop a full-length feature film on the Armenian Genocide, Nouvelles d'Armenie reports.

Steven Spielberg and Zaillian collaborated on Schindler's List. Spielberg also produced and directed the movie Munich.

It is hoped that the film will be ready by 2015, in time for the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The date of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide is conventionally

held to be April 24, 1915, the day that Ottoman authorities arrested some 250 Armenian intellectuals and community leaders in Constantinople.

The Armenian Genocide has also been called the Armenian Massacres and, by Armenians, the Great Crime. The number of Armenian deaths is generally held to have been between one and one and a half million.

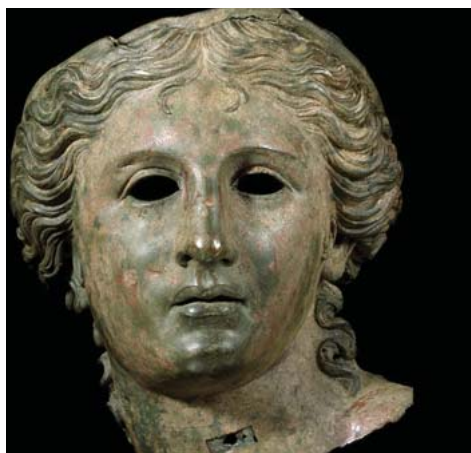
Turkey continues to deny the existence of the Armenian Genocide ever occurred. Instead, Turkey says that during World War I, many Armenians died, the number of Armenian victims has been

greatly inflated.

The country continues to face calls to accept the events of that period as genocide. Reportedly, to date, twenty countries have officially recognized the events of the period as genocide. Most historians also accept this view.

Gevorg Gevorgyan, Director of the Armenfilm studio and of the National Film Center in Yerevan said, "By the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide we must show the world a film that would be even more impressive than Mayrik or Ararat. Armenian and foreign actors will play in the film."

Armenia launches online campaign to return Anahit statue



Minister of Science and Education Armen Ashotyan took the initiative of returning the fragments of Armenian Pagan Goddess Anahit's bronze statue from the United Kingdom (UK) to Armenia through Facebook. A great number of Facebook users have welcomed the initiative.

"The UK has appointed two ambassadors to Armenia. I suggest all of us unite and appeal to the British Embassy to Armenia sending them a letter with our signatures and demand to return the fragments (head and hands) of Goddess Anahit's well-known statue, kept at the

British Museum, to Armenia. There is an experience of returning cultural values from the UK to their homelands; particularly Egypt has succeeded in this respect several times. What would you say?" Minister Ashotyan addressed to his friends.

The head and hands of the bronze statue referred to Anahit, who was goddess of fertility and war, according to the website of the British Museum, was found in 1872 by a farmer accidentally when he was digging the land in Shatagh, south-eastern Turkey.

"The head made its way via Constantinople (modern Istanbul) and Italy to the dealer Alessandro Castellani, who eventually sold it to the British Museum. The hands were presented to the Museum a few years later. Despite rumors that the whole statue had previously been found, the body has never come to light," the website writes. A copy of the statue is kept at the History Museum of Armenia in Yerevan.

Ashotyan also suggests jointly drafting a common text of the letter addressed to the UK Secretary of Culture, the British ambassadors, and the management of the

British Museum, as well as starting a signature collection at higher educational institutions of Armenia, on Facebook and elsewhere. The minister also reports that a number of students and NGOs have already turned to him, and it will be better for them to start the collection of signatures for returning the fragments of Goddess Anahit's statue to Armenia.

California University student Gevorg Martirosyan organized the online campaign aiming to collect signatures for the petition to return the remains of pagan Goddess Anahit to Armenia.

"I was confronted by those who thought this campaign had failure written all over it because the British Museum would never give out its collections.

In fact, Egypt has recovered some 5000 of ancient artifacts over the years and 400 of which came from the British Museum. If we fail to spare 2 minutes of our time to submit a signature, we cannot expect anything to be returned to Armenia," he said. <http://www.change.org/petitions/british-museum-return-the-fragments-of-armenian-pagan-goddess-anahit-statue-to-armenia>

ARMENIAN POETRY

Sona Van



CALL ME A POET
(not an attractive poetess)

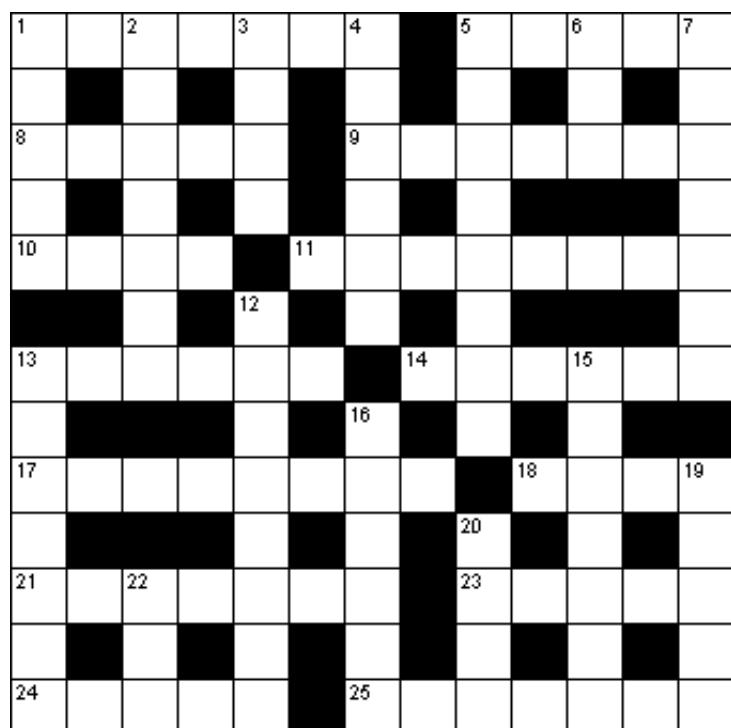
*The wind
like a heartless
prison guard
whistles in irony
taking me to an
exact and concrete
place-
I
want to kill
the compulsory "present"
as a dangerous vile
witness
and
I hunt in my pocket
for a pen*

*the wind
(the same keeper)
takes me away
but where to from here?
And why?
For whom and when
have I been delinquent
in singing a compassionate song?
Or did I not lose a hand
in the ruthless war
of reed pipes?*

*The wind
that heartless
prison guard
carries me away
with a savage whistle
whipping my skirt
high into the sky*

*like that woman pharaoh
tomorrow I too
will wear a beard
so they will call me
a cynical woman poet
and the women will tear my tense
body into pieces
and hanging a stone around my neck
will throw me into the sea-
now go, they'll say, sing to yourself
and I will go ahead and sing . . .
to myself
until the very last day
of this eternal time
or until
rolling from the future
some old wave
someone very dear
will toss my head-
green tangled
in seaweeds
onto the shore*

CROSSWORD



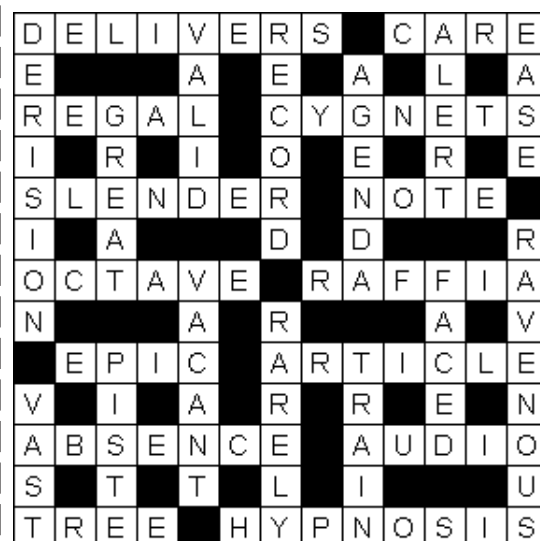
Across

1. State capital of Wisconsin (7)
5. Lombardy city (5)
8. The Friendly Islands (5)
9. Spanish city (7)
10. Muscat is the capital (4)
11. Capital of Malta (8)
13. Capital of Turkey (6)
14. World's largest desert (6)
17. West Indies island group (8)
18. Portuguese folk music (4)
21. State capital of Georgia (7)
23. Capital of Ghana (5)
24. One of the Lesser islands in 17 across (5)
25. Grand Canyon state (7)

Down

1. Paris underground railway (5)
2. Scandinavian country (7)
3. Former name of Thailand (4)
4. Capital of the Bahamas (6)
5. Strait between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans (8)
6. Currency of Bulgaria (3)
7. Falls between Canada and USA (7)
12. Formerly known as Ceylon (3,5)
13. Montgomery is the capital (7)
15. Corsican town and birthplace of Napoleon (7)
16. Carson City is the capital (6)
19. Nebraska city on the Missouri (5)
20. Indonesian island (4)
22. Currency of Romania (3)

Answer of previous crossword



Zodiac Weekly Forecast

Aries (Mar. 20 - Apr. 19):



The pressure of pending change is making itself known in your work arena. The fulcrum is a situation that may no longer be tolerable. It is true that change is absolutely necessary, but perhaps a shift to a totally fresh solution would take the emotional sting from the situation.

Taurus (Apr. 20 - May 19):



You are presented with a deep fear for your personal security. A partner (business or personal) may be pulling the strings. It might be legal. Obsessing is not productive, though anyone would be tempted to do so. Change is on the immediate horizon. It may turn out to be the best thing that happens to you.

Gemini (May 20 - June 20):



Please read the lead paragraph because it is about your planetary ruler. It looks as though you will need to tie a knot at the end of the rope and hold on tightly. The scenery and circumstances in your environment are changing rapidly. Information flows fast and it could be hard to make a decision due to constantly incoming data.

Cancer (June 21 - July 21):



Your romantic side is cooperating well with your nurturing side at this time. This is especially good for female friendships. Make a date for lunch and reconnect with people you like. A different aspect suggests your attention is mildly snagged between the big picture and the little details.

Leo (July 21 - Aug. 22):



This is a week in which you must look at debt, along with taxes, estate matters, or any other type of resource that you share with others. It is possible that you have been operating under an illusion related to one or more of these matters. The truth surfaces now so that you can handle your resources with more accurate information.

Virgo (Aug. 22 - Sep. 22):



Keep your attention fastened on your higher side this week. Otherwise your mind could be drawn down into worry or dark fantasies. Find someone who is in need and give them a helping hand. Enjoy the imagination of others, i.e. in books, movies, or plays.

Libra (Sep. 23 - Oct. 22):



Changes may be occurring in your primary relationship. One or the other of you is probably trying to hang onto what is familiar. Changes and growth must be allowed to happen or the relationship will become stale. Let things flow naturally. Don't jump to conclusions or make problems bigger than they are.

Scorpio (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21):



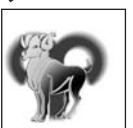
There may be a minor skirmish with a partner or roommate over the sharing of resources. This is not the ultimate deal breaker and the moments of discomfort pass fairly quickly if your relationship is basically sound. Don't turn the issue into a disaster. Let it go and choose a better time in the future to deal openly with the problem.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 - Dec. 20):



You and your partner are particularly enjoying each other at this time. You are sharing your dreams and ideas for a brighter future. You may have fortunate circumstances related to the internet, travel, and publishing. Your ability to see the big picture is especially useful during this period.

Capricorn (Dec. 21 - Jan. 19):



You have a desire to make changes to home and/or other property, but you hit a brick wall that tells you "no." Maybe this is a person who disagrees or possibly it is some type of inalterable rule in your mind. Step back two paces and allow your mind to open a crack to a fresh and doable idea.

Aquarius (Jan. 20 - Feb. 17):



You have a steady mind and hands now. It is a good time to work on a project that requires concentration and careful work. You will find satisfaction this week with the routine activities of life. You may be spending time with older people, whether friends or relatives.

Pisces (Feb. 18 - Mar. 19):



Expect your schedule to be packed this week. Try to build in some quiet space for yourself. You have positive aspects related to communications, writing, travel and influential friends. You have the power to persuade and to heal others with your accurate perceptions.

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WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?
Enjoy your leisure

Alexander Spendaryan
State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre
February 23, 25 at 7 p.m.
Aida. G. Verdi.
Opera in 4 acts

Aram Khachaturian
Concert Hall
February 22, 23 at 7 p.m.
Flora Martirosyan - Never Again... Solo Concert
February 24, at 7 p.m.
Concert Dedicated to Davit Haladjian's 50th Anniversary
Program:
Davit Haladjian:
"Missa de Lumine"
Soloists:
Syuzanna Melkonyan, soprano
Gurgen Baveyan, baritone
Conductor:
Eduard Topchjan

Komitas Chamber Music House
February 21, at 7 p.m.
NCOA & Anna Bakunts
National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia
Artistic Director and Principal Conductor:
Vahan Mardirossian
Soloist: Anna Bakunts
/organ/

Haydn: "Divertimento Es Dur"
Andante Cantabile from Quartet F Dur
Handel: Concerto for Organ & Strings
Dvorak: Serenade

Cafesjian Center for the Arts
February 21 at 8 p.m.
Cafesjian Classical Music Series: Gayane
Geghamyan, soprano,
Anna Mandalyan, piano

Malxas Jazz Club
February 20 at 9 p.m.
Artoisis group and Shushan Petrosyan
February 22 at 9 p.m.
A Series of quintet:
Saxophone, guitar, instrumental program
February 23 at 9 p.m.
"Time report"
February 24 at 9 p.m.
Concert Group
February 25 at 9 p.m.
Latino-American Jazz

Yerevan State Chamber Theater
February 23, at 7 p.m.
Government Concert
February 24, 25 at 7 p.m.
A Man is Required

HUMOR

Trying to be impressive

A young lawyer, starting up his private practice, was very anxious to impress potential clients. When he saw the first visitor to his office come through the door, he immediately picked up his phone and spoke into it, "I'm sorry, but my caseload is so tremendous that I'm not going to be able to look into your problem for at least a month. I'll have to get back to you then." He then turned to the man who had just walked in, and said, "Now, what can I do for you?"

"Nothing," replied the man. "I'm here to hook up your phone."

Will I live any longer?

Patient: Doctor, if I give up wine, women, and song, will I live longer?

Doctor: Not really. It will just seem longer.

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