



"Armenian governments programs for 2010 will be aimed at creation of new jobs. Page 2



David Ignatius "The events of 1915 call for us to mourn, but also to live." Page 4

# ARMENIA HIGHLIGHTS

weekly publication of the Government of Armenia

19 - 25 April, 2010

## THEMA



## Armenians mark 95th anniversary of Genocide

On April 24, 2010 marks the 95-th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The Armenian Genocide was masterminded by the Central Committee of the Young Turk Party led by Mehmed Talat Pasha, Ismail Enver Pasha, and Ahmed Djemal Pasha. 95 years ago today, Armenian intellectuals of Constantinople were arrested, the figure reaching 800 during a week. Majority of them were killed in prisons, the others died when being exiled. In all, from 1.5 to 2 million

people were slaughtered in the Ottoman Empire during the World War I. The entire population of six vilayets of Western Armenia was annihilated. Those who survived found shelter in different countries of the world, forming the Armenian Diaspora. Present-day Turkey denies the fact of the Armenian Genocide, justifying the atrocities as "deportation to secure Armenians". Only a few Turkish intellectuals, including Nobel Prize winner Orhan Pamuk and scholar Taner Akcam,

speak openly about the necessity to recognize the Genocide. The Armenian Genocide was recognized by Uruguay, Russia, France, Lithuania, the Italian Chamber of Deputies, majority of U.S. states, parliaments of Greece, Cyprus, Argentina, Belgium and Wales, National Council of Switzerland, Chamber of Commons of Canada, Polish Sejm, Vatican, European Parliament and the World Council of Churches.

[www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

### Milestone Events

**April 26:** His Holiness Karekin II will be in Baku to attend the World Summit of Religious Leaders.

**May 6 - 7:** PM Tigran Sargsyan will attend EPP Group Bureau in Karlovy Vary

**May 9:** The Day of Victory of the Great Patriotic War

**June 26 - July 6:** International Open Chess Tournament in Jer-muk

### "Quote"

"Science is a tool for translating money into research in modern world, with innovation being the key to turning newborn knowledge into cash money."

Tigran Sargsyan

## 5.5% GDP growth registered in Armenia



According to updated statistical data, Armenia's GDP was 5.5% higher in January-March 2010 as compared with the same period of 2009.

The RA National Statistical Service reported that GDP amounted to AMD568.1 billion. At the same time, the country's GDP increased by 43.1% in March as compared with February.

Besides, consumer prices were 8.4% higher in the first quarter of 2010 as compared with the same period of last year. Inflation rate reached 8.4% in March 2010. The 2010 Armenian na-

tional budget envisages 1.2% economic growth and 4.5% inflation.

Creation of new jobs in post-crisis period is the first priority with Armenian Government, according to RA Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan.

"Despite 5.5% economic growth observed in the first quarter of 2010, creation of new jobs remains a burning issue," he stated.

"Armenian governments programs for 2010 will be aimed at creation of new jobs," the Prime Minister concluded.

[www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## Armenian President present at TPP opening



Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan was present on April 21 at the opening of a new thermal power plant in Yerevan with combined steam-gas cycle. The president toured in the territory of the plant, got acquainted with the technical phases of the operation of the unit.

The construction of the power plant was launched in July 2008. It was constructed with the 284 million USD credit provided by the Japanese

Bank of International Cooperation.

The construction of the power unit was has been implemented by the Japanese and Korean specialized companies. The operation of the new unit will give an opportunity to increase the power and reliability of the Armenian energy system, to decrease the electricity losses in the networks. The station will have considerably low emissions.

[www.pamarmenian.net](http://www.pamarmenian.net)

## Armenia win silver in Division III Ice Hockey World Championship



Division III Ice Hockey World Championship finished on April 18 in Karen Demirchyan Sport and Concert Complex, Yerevan.

Inflicting a 5:2 victory on Armenia in the final match, North Korea won the champions title.

Armenian players received silver medals. South African Republic team

defeating Mongolia won bronze.

David Berger (South African Republic) was recognized the best goalkeeper, Armenia's David Tagvoryan and Hakob Avetisyan the best fullback and forward respectively, and Kim Kwang Ho (North Korea) was the best scorer.

[panarmenian.net](http://panarmenian.net)

## Armenia among leaders of Eurovision 2010 pre-charts



Armenia is among leaders of Eurovision 2010 pre-charts, according to a monitoring conducted by Ararat-online.ru. Pre-charts are not decisive but they reflect Europeans' attitude about the songs. Armenia will be represented by Eva Rivas with Apricot Stone song.

[www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)



## Medvedev and Sargsyan hold talks in the wake of Turkey decision



Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has held talks with his Armenian counterpart near Moscow.

But this was no walk in the park for either leader - both are embroiled in a complex political situation. Armenia wants to normalise relations with its neighbour, Turkey, which experts say could upset the balance of political and economic power in the east Caucasus. "Lately several important steps have been taken. My latest contact, today's meeting with Serge Sargsyan and a recent meeting with the President of Az-

erbaijan, confirm that both countries are ready to act constructively to solve this very complicated problem. "Medvedev told reporters. Turkey shut its frontier with Armenia sixteen years ago in solidarity with Muslim Azerbaijan over its dispute with ethnic Armenian separatists in Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan is potentially a key supplier of oil and gas to the West via Turkey. Diplomats fear Baku may choose to offer its supplies to Russia for re-export if relations with Turkey take a turn for the worse.

[www.euronews.net](http://www.euronews.net)

## 10,000 Armenians march to remember mass killings



About 10,000 people have taken part in a torch-light procession to commemorate the 95th anniversary of the mass killings of Armenians by Ottoman Turks.

Friday's march across the Armenian capital was staged by the nationalist Dashnak-Tsutyun party's youth wing. Historians estimate that up to 1.5 million Armenians were killed by Ottoman Turks around the time of World War I. Turkey denies that the deaths constituted genocide, saying

the toll has been inflated and those killed were victims of civil war and unrest.

The demonstrators burned a banner with images of Turkish leaders. They carried placards with slogans such as "We demand compensation from Turkey!" and "The recognition time is now!"

The Armenians will mark the 95th anniversary of the slayings on Saturday.

[www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

## Armenian freezes Turkey pact ratification



Armenia is freezing its ratification of an agreement to normalize ties with Turkey and reopen their shared border, the Armenian president said Thursday "dealing a setback to efforts to end the countries' long-standing enmity.

Turkey closed its border with Armenia in 1993 to protest the Armenia-backed war by separatists in the Nagorno-Karabakh region; the region is an enclave within Azerbaijan but under the control of Armenian and ethnic Armenian forces. The border closure exacerbated tensions

already high over the issue of whether the killing of up to 1.5 million Armenians during the final days of the Ottoman Empire amounted to genocide.

Neither Turkey nor Armenia have ratified the October agreement to restore diplomatic ties. Armenia's governing coalition accuses Turkey of dragging its feet by demanding the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute be settled first.

President Serge Sarkisian said Thursday he was not abandoning the normalization process, but instead would "suspend the procedure of ratifying the protocols."

"We shall consider moving forward when we are convinced that there is a proper environment in Turkey and there is leadership in Ankara ready to re-engage in the normalization process," he said in a televised address.

In Turkey, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Armenia was free to de-

cide how it wanted to proceed. "I have expressed our loyalty to the protocols on numerous occasions," he said. "We will press ahead with the process on the principle that treaties are binding."

Mediation efforts by Russia, France, the United States and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute have made little visible progress.

The United States urged both sides to continue to work toward reconciliation.

"President Sarkisian's announcement makes clear that Armenia has not ended the process but has suspended it until the Turkish side is ready to move forward. We applaud President Sarkisian's decision to continue to work towards a vision of peace, stability, and reconciliation," said Assistant Secretary Phil Gordon at the U.S. State Department.

[www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

## Knowledge-based economy needs knowledge based society



Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan attended today the annual gathering of the National Academy of Sciences.

A minute of silence was held in memory of those academicians who passed away recently. RA NAS President Radik Martirosyan reported on the main outcome of research activities for the year 2009. His report was followed by numerous statements and comments made by those present. The speakers thanked the head of government for attendance and thoughtfulness to scientific problems.

Tigran Sargsyan delivered a speech stating in part: "Any government has a primary goal of modeling a highly competitive economy that is a knowledge-based economy, speaking in contemporary terms. Moreover, knowledge-based economy is impossible to form without a knowledge based society. This is our vision of Armenia's prospective development strategy. There is no alternative to developing fundamental research in the country, and we only have to define the ways leading to that objective."

Tigran Sargsyan pointed out those primary bases needed to enhance the status of sciences and scientists in Armenia: "You must advise us on the challenges faced in Armenia, primary policy agenda and possible remedies. It is up to you and not the government to formulate

the tasks: you should be brave enough to define the tasks and introduce them to the society. Thereby you will tackle the moral issue, and scholars will be assessed at their true value by society. Science is a tool for translating money into research in modern world, with innovation being the key to turning new-born knowledge into cash money. There is a serious problem in the Republic of Armenia in this respect as the foregoing two ingredients are not tied up in our country."

With reference to the methodology of assessing the potential of scientists, the head of government noted that it should not be limited to mere publications.

It is crucial to have a medium which may ensure proper liaising between research and industry, and in this respect, successful projects are badly needed in Armenia. Concerning the queries raised by those in attendance on the draft law on NAS, Tigran Sargsyan stressed in part: "The National Assembly is going to engage quite an exciting debate over this bill. You are expected to come up with proposals and recommendations which the government will keep in focus of attention. Only through close collaboration we will be able to change the social status of sciences and scientists in the Republic of Armenia."

## RA Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan's Message on Armenian Genocide Victims Remembrance Day

Dear Compatriots,  
Today Armenians all over the world bend their heads before the memory of those innocent martyrs who fell a prey to the act of genocide perpetrated in the Ottoman Turkey 95 years ago. The State-organized massacres targeted full extermination of the Armenian people. Each episode of this crime knows no prescription.

I am addressing you not only as the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, but also as a man whose ancestors went through the ordeal of the Genocide, and I join you to remember our grandparents, their parents, sisters and brothers. Millions of Armenians have their own family record but they all suffered heavy losses in the Genocide. Today as well, they call themselves Mshetsi, Sasuntsi, Vanetsi and Zeituntsi. We have still genocide survivors who went through the Calvary of 1915, and we join them to call for a legal, political and moral assessment of the Armenian massacres.

On this day of remembrance, I am extending a vote of thanks to all those who are fighting for the reinstatement of the historical truth by recognizing and condemning the Genocide of Armenians.

Dear Compatriots,

In paying homage to the martyrs of Metz Yeghern, we understand that we must take steps forward, come together for the sake of our national dreams and goals. We must build a powerful and democratic State by doing everything possible for the future day of our country and people.

[www.gov.am](http://www.gov.am)



## Armenia and Turkey, overcome by history

*David Ignatius*

Armenia and Turkey, overcome by history.

This week, the horrors of the past once more extinguished hopes for the future, as Armenia and Turkey demonstrated that they have yet to find a way to resolve the burden of the history they share.

Just ahead of April 24, the day on which Armenians commemorate the genocide of 1915, Armenia announced that it was suspending all efforts to normalize relations with Turkey. "We consider the current phase of normalization exhausted," Armenian president Serzh Sargsyan said.

The opportunity to move forward had seemed tantalizingly close. Last week, when the leaders of the two countries were in Washington for the nuclear summit, President Obama tried to do some useful mediation and pressed them to implement an accord they signed in October. "If you pull out, you let the other side off the hook," I'm told he advised Sargsyan, who indicated to the White House that he would stick with it.

Obama made a similar pitch to Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Recep Erdogan, suggesting that normalization made sense as part of Turkey's policy of regional security. When I later asked Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu about the prospects for normalization, I was encouraged. "We don't want the politicization of history," he said. "We want reconciliation of memories" of 1915, so that Turkish suffering during World War I is recognized along with that of Armenians. Turkey wants "zero problems" with its neighbors, he continued. "We want to have a prosperous Armenia next to us." Davutoglu's comments sounded pretty sensible to me, and my reaction was to think: Okay, now it's time for Armenians and Turks to get on with it and make normalization a reality.

### What happened?

Basically, Sargsyan finally decided that he had waited long enough. He had taken a political risk in even broaching the subject of normalization. When he conceded to Turkish calls for an international commission



to examine the anguishing events of 1915, he angered many in the Armenian Diaspora, who argued that the present government had no right to barter over historical events for the sake of normal trade and diplomatic relations. And when Sargsyan's concession got him nowhere with Turkey, the pressure on him increased.

You might think Turkey would

until resolution of the feud between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the status of Nagorno Karabagh, a disputed region in the South Caucasus. Sargsyan, feeling pressure from all sides, finally pulled the plug.

In this tug of war between the past and the future, my instinct is to look ahead. I say that as a proud Armenian-American who

**I think America and the world must call these events by their true name, which is genocide.**

have taken "yes" for an answer on its longstanding proposal for the commission. But the Turks became irate over a U.S. congressional resolution calling for recognition of the genocide. They briefly pulled their ambassador from Washington and let normalization with Armenia stall. Tempers have since cooled, but Turkey has refused to move forward on normalization

lost members of his own family in the genocide of 1915. I think America and the world must call these events by their true name, which is genocide. But history is not a weight that the living must drag along behind them in perpetuity. The events of 1915 call for us to mourn, but also to live.

[voices.washingtonpost.com](http://voices.washingtonpost.com)