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ARMENIA HIGHLIGHTS

Weekly Digest of the Government of Armenia

August 3 -9 2010

THEMA



TIGRAN SARGSYAN: ARMENIA'S CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IS OVERCOMING CRISIS SITUATION

Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan partook on August 6 at the event dedicated to the Day of Constructor. Governmental press service told Armenpress that the prime minister congratulated the constructors on their holiday and noted that the year of 2009 was full of trials first of all for the construction sphere. "We had a sharp decline in capital investments and first of all in the construction sphere and its result was reflected on the whole economic system. The tendencies of the first half of 2010 showed that the sphere is stage by stage leaving the crisis behind and is also being promoted by the large-scale programs funded from the state budget. These works will continue and it is very much important that the new initiatives of the urban

development ministry make the functions of the constructors more various," the PM said. The prime minister underscored the programs carried out by the ministry during the 2010. "Today we want to say something new in the construction sphere and the young generation will be proud of it. I am sure that there is enough potential in Armenia, enough skills to build wonderful republic. Your role is very significant in building our future," Tigran Sargsyan said. On the occasion of the Day of Constructor a number of workers of the sphere were awarded Prime Minister's, Urban Development Minister's diplomas of gratitude for their contribution to the development of the sphere.

August 6, 2010 www.armenpress.am

Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan left on a short term vacation August 9-13. Governmental press service told Armenpress that a part of the vacation he will spend abroad to pass a medical examination. During the vacation vice premier Armen Gevorgyan will replace the prime minister.

"QUOTE OF THE WEEK"

"IRAN AND ARMENIA SHOULD USE ALL THE EXISTING POTENTIALS TO EXPAND TRADE ACTIVITIES AND MUTUAL INVESTMENT BY THE (TWO COUNTRIES') PRIVATE SECTOR"

AMIR MANSOUR BORQE'I
IRAN'S DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER

Upcoming Events

August 12: Serj Tankian gives solo concert in Yerevan

August 19: President of RF arrives Yerevan

USEFUL LINKS

- www.president.am
- www.gov.am
- www.parliament.am
- www.mfa.am
- www.armenpress.am
- www.panarmenian.net
- www.matenadaran.am

RA PRESIDENT SERZH SARGSYAN'S TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH RUSSIAN PRESIDENT DMITRY MEDVEDEV



RA President Serzh Sargsyan today had a telephone conversation with Russian President Dmitry

Medvedev. The Presidential press service told Armenpress that once again President Serzh Sargsyan expressed his condolences for the massive fire, broken out in Russia, which caused human and material loss. President Serzh Sargsyan mentioned that the Armenian nation knows about the importance of the support of friend-countries in such situations. Mr. Serzh Sargsyan offered the help of the Armenian fire extinguishing-rescue service for extinguishing of the fires and eliminating the consequences. The Presidents reached an arrangement on involving the Armenian fire extinguishing-rescue group in works, undertaken against the disaster.

[August 4 2010 www.armenpress.am](http://www.armenpress.am)

ARMENIA BECOMES BOARD MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION

Director of the RA National Institute of Standards Enok Azaryan said that in July Armenia has been elected a board member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Over 50 countries voted for Armenia's membership in the ISO board, Azaryan told a press conference in Yerevan. "The common methodology of standardization will allow Armenian entrepreneurs to avoid problems with export of their products. All issues related to commerce and trade turnover in 162 countries included in the ISO will be solved through common standardization," he said. Azaryan noted that standardization is carried out on a voluntary basis – at the option of producer. But a company will not be able to enter the European market without standardization. In case of violation of standardization and compliance rules, fines are envisaged at the amount of AMD 100,000-

300,000. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Service for Protection of Consumers' Rights carry out inspections on compliance of foodstuffs and non-foods with standards respectively. According to Azaryan, around 20,000 people apply for standardization per year. Meanwhile, the cost of certificate varies from AMD 1.5-3.5mln, depending on type and scope of activity. Certificates are issued for three years. In addition, Azaryan said that the RA National Institute of Standards was awarded an ISO special prize in Tbilisi on July 27. The ISO was established in 1946 by five national organizations for standardization. Currently, the ISO comprises of 162 member states, out of which 105 states are full members of the organization. Armenia has become an ISO member in 1997.

[August 3, 2010 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

YOUTH FORUM ON ARMENIA-DIASPORA ISSUES KICKS OFF IN YEREVAN

Two-day youth forum on Armenia-Diaspora issues kicked off in Yerevan. Participants of the forum, basically represented by interns of the Armenian Center for Strategic and International Studies, will deliver reports on cooperation, as well as will present opportunities for expanding and boosting ties in various fields between the Fatherland and Diaspora.

[August 5, 2010 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

HNCHAK PARTY ORGANIZES SUMMER CAMP FOR ITS YOUTH WING FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES

Armenia's representative of Hnchak party's youth wing Gagik Melikyan said that the youth summer camp organized by Hnchak social-democratic party in Aghveran is aimed at interactive communication of the party's youth representatives from various countries of the world. The camp kicked off on August 3 and will be completed on August 8, Melikyan told a joint press conference.

[August 5, 2010,](http://www.panarmenian.net)

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

HEADLINES OF THE WEEK

- **AUGUST 3** Possibilities for further strengthening of Armenia-Russia relations discussed in Sochi **AH**
- **AUGUST 3:** Alexander Iskandaryan says Kosovo and NK issues legally the same **AH**
- **AUGUST 4:** Replacement of OSCE MG format in Karabakh conflict settlement - politically unreasonable **AH**
- **AUGUST 4:** Armenia's Ambassador to Bulgaria awarded with Golden Age Medal of Honor **AH**
- **AUGUST 4:** Grape harvest to exceed last year's index by 7,000t in Armenia in 2010 **AH**
- **AUGUST 6:** USAID, RA Economy Ministry sign agreements to foster economic development in Armenia **AH**
- **AUGUST 6:** Ahmet Davutoglu, Elmar Mammadyarov discuss Karabakh conflict in Bodrum **AH**
- **AUGUST 6:** Granting of sanctuary status to part of Khosrov reserve is first step for its elimination **AH**
- **AUGUST 6:** John Downes: Armenia is among undisclosed tourist secrets of Europe **AH**

YEREVAN TO HOST ARMENIA EXPO 2010 TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL EXPO-FORUM ON SEPTEMBER 3-5

LOGOS EXPO Center and Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Armenia will organize ARMENIA EXPO 2010 regional trade and industrial expo-forum on September 3-5. It is the largest exhibition in the region, which represents almost all spheres of industry, the press service of LOGOS EXPO Center reported. The idea of uniting separate expositions into a large industrial exhibition provides participants with the opportunity to decrease marketing costs, presenting products and services of their companies. The expo-forum will be organized in Karen Demirchyan Sport & Concert Complex in Yerevan through the official support of the RA government. The event will bring together over 150 local and foreign companies.

[August 4, 2010 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

RA GOVERNMENT HOSTS SITTING OF GOVERNING COUNCIL OF INVESTMENT PROGRAM ON NORTH-SOUTH ROAD CORRIDOR

The RA government hosted a sitting of the Governing Council of investment program on North-South road corridor. The sitting was chaired by Armenian Prime Minister, Chairman of the Board Tigran Sargsyan, the RA government's press service reported. During the sitting, CEO of the Organization on Implementation of Investment Program on North-South Road Corridor Felix Pirumyan briefed the Board members on the document on Assessment of Environmental Impact of Ashtarak-Gyumri road section. The document will be placed on website of the Asian Development Bank and RA Ministry of Transport and Communication. After inclusion of submitted comments and suggestions, it will be offered for a public discussion. Besides, the cost estimate of the Organization on Implementation of Investment Program on North-South Road Corridor was approved for 2010

August 3, 2010 www.panarmenian.net

AROUND 11,500 APPLICANTS ENTERED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF ARMENIA IN 2010

On August 4, the RA Ministry of Education and Science hosted a sitting of the State Admission Commission to discuss appropriation of target seats to the Republic of Artsakh and establishment of the nominal lists of paid and free seats of state higher education institutions of Armenia. RA Minister of Education and Science, Chairman of the State Admission Commission Armen Ashotyan said that, as per decision of the RA government, 70 seats were appropriated to the Republic of Artsakh in 2010 that is 10 seats higher as compared with last year. 16 applicants from the Republic of Artsakh have entered higher education institutions through taking exams in institutions, while 44 applicants – through taking joint entrance exams. Ten additional seats were appropriated to the RA Police Academy.

August 4, 2010 www.panarmenian.net

RA GOVERNMENT ALLOCATES AMD 65.5MLN FOR ADVERTISEMENT OF ROPEWAY IN TATEV



On August 5, the RA government made a decision on redistribution of 2010 budgetary funds, appropriating AMD 32.3mln to Syunik regional administration for the development of Halidzor and Shinuayr communities. The works are envisaged as part of the ropeway construction and its opening in Tatev, the RA government's press service reported.

Besides, the government decided to allocate AMD 65.5mln to the RA Ministry of Economy for preparation of an advertising videoclip on Euronews channel about the opening ceremony of the ropeway and Tatev monastery complex.

Meanwhile, AMD 27.7mln will be provided to the Armenian office of National Geographic Traveler for organization of a scientific forum -Travel without Frontiers.

August 5, 2010 www.panarmenian.net

ARMENIA-RUSSIA PRODUCT TURNOVER GROWS BY 13,4% IN JANUARY-JUNE 2010

Armenia-Russia product turnover grew by 13,4% in January-July 2010, compared to the same period in 2009 to comprise USD 447 million, with Russia's share grossing 20,6% out of total RA foreign trade turnover.

Armenia to Russia exports comprised USD 57,1 million, increasing by 39,3%, with imports totaling USD 389,9 million (10,4% increase).

Foreign trade turnover volume totaled USD 2166,8 million in January-June 2010, increasing 29,8% compared with 2009 results. Total exports comprised USD 442,8 million (55,9% growth), imports grossed USD 1724 million (24,4% increase), RA National Statistic Service reported.

August 4, 2010 www.panarmenian.net

ARMENIAN GOVERNMENT SETS TOURISM AS PRIORITY DIRECTION

According to the expert, there is a gap between the Armenian experience and methods in the tourism sphere and world experience. "The legislation will eliminate the gap, increasing the level of activity's efficiency and making Armenia an example for other countries," noted John Downes.

AH

He added that the legislative amendments aim not only to increase the level of tourist activity in the country but also to introduce new technologies.

AH

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AH

Head of construction works of the ropeway and infrastructures Artashes Ghazakhetsyan said that the construction works of the ropeway leading to Tatev monastery are at the final stage.

AH

Swiss experts have already installed the equipment. Now they implement wiring works, Ghazakhetsyan told journalists.

AH

The works will be completed until September, after which we will launch the test stage, so that the ropeway is put into commission until October 16. A special commission will be invited from Europe to test the ropeway's safety. It will provide its conclusion on the ropeway's compliance with international standards," said Ghazakhetsyan.

AH

Opening of a ropeway will enable creation of approximately 100 new workplaces, governmental press service reported.

August 7, 2010

Full story www.panarmenian.net

ARMENIA IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOUTH-NORTH TRANSPORT CORRIDOR

Armenia's PM Tigran Sargsyan recently chaired another meeting of the South-North investment programme management board. This time the meeting was dedicated to the ecological problems associated with the construction of this transport corridor. The adopted document would be aired in Armenia for public discussion. In December this year, Armenia and the Asian Development Bank plan to sign a credit agreement for financing the construction of the highway from the Armenian town of Megri at the Iranian border towards the Georgian Black Sea ports of Poti and Batumi. They estimate the total cost of the project will reach USD 1 billion. Companies from Italy, Brazil and Iran have expressed their interest to participate in the project. The motorway will be of particular interest to Iran, which will then have access to the Black Sea and onward to European countries through this connection.

August 4, 2010 www.messenger.com.ge

IRAN, ARMENIA STRESS EXPANSION OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION

TEHRAN (FNA)- Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister in a meeting in Tehran explored avenues for developing mutual cooperation between the two countries. During the meeting on Tuesday, the two sides also underlined development of regional cooperation and continuation of talks and consultations on issues of mutual interest. Mottaki emphasized the importance of developing infrastructural relations between the two countries in such fields as transportation, energy, power plant, pipeline and railroad construction. During the meeting, Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Arman Kirakosian stressed the importance of developing and strengthening the political consultations between the two countries, and called for an increase in economic cooperation and trade exchanges between the two sides. Describing Iran's role in the region as positive, he said that Tehran enjoys a significant position in the region and in regional developments.

Iran and Armenia have accelerated expansion of their bilateral relations in recent

BASE TO STAY IN ARMENIA



Armenia will allow Russia to extend its lease on a military base in the city of Gyumri because the base contributes to the country's security, Armenian Security Council chief Artur Bagdasaryan said Thursday.

Bagdasaryan said the 25-year lease, which was signed in 1995, might be extended to 49 years or even more, the Novosti-Armenia web site reported.

He did not say when the new agreement might be signed, but an unidentified diplomatic source told Arminfo that it might happen during President Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Armenia later this month.

August 6, 2010 www.moscowtimes.com

years, specially in political, economic, trade and cultural fields.

Iran in early February held an international conference in Tehran on trade and investment opportunities in Armenia, where Armenian and Iranian officials both expressed the hope that the relations between the two countries would further develop.

During the conference, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Amir Mansour Borqei called on Iranian and Armenian officials to use all the existing potentials and capabilities to increase trade ties and exchanges between the two countries.

"Iran and Armenia should use all the existing potentials to expand trade activities and mutual investment by the (two countries') private sector," Borqei said at the conference.

Also, Senior Advisor to Armenian President Ahran Narsisian reiterated during the same conference that Yerevan is seeking to promote relations with Iran.

August 4, 2010 www.english.farsnews.com

ARMENIAN AMERICANS SUE TURKEY, BANKS OVER GENOCIDE LOSSES

Lawyers who have helped secure multi-million dollar settlements over Genocide-era insurance policies have launched an unprecedented lawsuit against the Turkish government and banks, Associated Press reported. In paperwork filed July 29, Los Angeles lawyers Mark Geragos and Brian Kabateck are seeking class-action status for the suit that would compensate descendants of victims of the Armenian Genocide for financial and property losses they suffered. Original plaintiffs include Garbis Davoyan of Glendale, Calif. and Hrayr Turabian of Queens, N.Y., and others are expected to join the suit that charges breach of statutory trust, unjust enrichment, human rights violations and violations of international law as the Turkish government expelled its Armenian citizens and ceased their properties.

DEFENDANTS

Turkey's government along with its Central Bank and Ziraat (Agriculture) Bank, Turkey's biggest bank, are named as defendants. Ziraat Bank was established in 1863 and operated continuously since. It currently has assets of more than \$81 billion and branches in Moscow and throughout Central Asia. Established in 1931, Turkey's Central Bank took over central banking operations from the Ottoman Bank which itself was established in 1856. Since 1930s, the Ottoman Bank operated as a private bank until it was incorporated into Garanti Bank, currently Turkey's second largest bank with \$78 billion in assets.

A LONG PROCESS

The suit designation may take up to three years, Mr. Kabateck told AP. "We are rolling up our sleeves and are going forward," he said. Turkish officials have not yet reacted to the lawsuit. In 2000, California state law allowed heirs to Genocide victims to seek payment on uncollected life insurance policies of dead relatives, opening the way to lawsuits. In 2004 and 2005, New York Life Insurance Co. and French insurer AXA settled for a total of \$37.5 million paid to Armenian community organizations. But in 2009, as it weighed another insurance case against several German insurers, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals invalidated the state law on the grounds that it interfered with U.S. foreign policy. An appeal by Armenian American lawyers is currently pending in that case.

August 4, 2010, www.eurasiareview.com