



**RA GOVERNMENT TRIES TO DECREASE CORRUPTION RISKS IN LICENSING**  
PAGE 3



**IMF MODIFIES ECONOMIC FORECAST FOR ARMENIA**  
PAGE 4

# ARMENIA HIGHLIGHTS

Weekly Digest of the Government of Armenia

October 1-6 2010

## THEMA

### ARMENIAN SIDE RAISES PROBLEMS OF ARMENIANS OF GEORGIA DURING MEETING BETWEEN NALBANDIAN AND VASHADZE



Yerevan hosted a meeting of Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian and his Georgian counterpart Grigol Vashadze. The Ministers discussed the Armenian-Georgian relations, implementation of agreements reached between the Armenian and Georgian Presidents, cooperation in the fields of transport and energy, tourism, organization of business forums and collaboration within international organizations. The two men exchanged opinion on expanding the legal-contractual field, the RA MFA press service reported. During the meeting, the Armenian side referred to problems of Armenians of Georgia, specifically, in the educational field and Armenian cultural heritage. Grigol Vashadze delivered a lecture at the diplomatic school of the RA MFA. Georgian-Azerbaijani relations are more than strategic partnership, Georgia's top diplomat said. "Mikheil Saakashvili's statement on creation of a confederation was not based on emotion. He just described the essence of bilateral relations," Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze stated in Yerevan.

"The President's statement prompts the format of future cooperation. Constitutions will not be amended," he said. Saakashvili voiced the idea of a confederation between Georgia and Azerbaijan in July 2010. OSCE Field Assessment Mission in Karabakh-surrounding territories has no relevance to stipulations in draft resolution submitted by Azerbaijan to UN General Assembly, despite Azeri assertions to the opposite, Armenian Foreign Minister stated. As Edward Nalbandian said during a joint news conference with his Georgian counterpart Grigol Vashadze, the mission belongs to OSCE, with only a few UN experts on Refugee Issues participating. "No other UN structure is involved in the mission," Nalbandian stressed. "The mission aims to study general situation in Karabakh conflict region. Two of the co-chairs – Robert Bradtke (USA) and Igor Popov (Russia) have been appointed a short while ago, so they use the occasion to familiarize themselves with the situation onsite," the Foreign Minister stated, adding that the co-chairs will arrive in Yerevan on the evening of October 6.

October 4-6, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

### "QUOTE OF THE WEEK"

"WE HAVE MANAGED TO ACHIEVE RADICAL CHANGES IN THE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT, REDUCING THE NUMBER OF LICENSES FROM 169 TO 96 OR BY 40%,"

TIGRAN DAVTYAN  
RA FINANCE MINISTER

### Upcoming Events

**October 11:** *President of Slovenia Danilo Türk Visits Armenia*

**October 16:** *Armenia Celebrates the Day of Alphabet and Translation*

**October 16:** *Official opening ceremony of Tatev Ropeway*

### USEFUL LINKS

- [www.president.am](http://www.president.am)
- [www.gov.am](http://www.gov.am)
- [www.parliament.am](http://www.parliament.am)
- [www.mfa.am](http://www.mfa.am)
- [www.armenpress.am](http://www.armenpress.am)
- [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)
- [www.matenadaran.am](http://www.matenadaran.am)

## EU CONCERNED OVER INCREASED INSTANCES OF CEASEFIRE VIOLATION



Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan discussed a number of issues on Armenia-EU relations with EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, Peter Semneby. The parties also focused on regional issues, including Karabakh conflict settlement. Semneby expressed his concern over increased instances of ceasefire violation on the line of contact between NKR and Azeri armed forces, presidential press service reported.

[September 24 2010, www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## TECHNICAL LAUNCH OF LONGEST ROPEWAY SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 16



According to clarified data, the technical launch of the longest ropeway leading to Tatev monastery will take place on October 16, 2010. A range of events with participation of Armenia's officials and guests is scheduled for this day, the National Competitiveness Foundation of Armenia told a PanARMENIAN.Net reporter. Several days after the official launch, all visitors will be welcome to take a ropeway ride.

[September 29, 2010 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## VIC DARCHINYAN: I'M HAPPY I'M FIGHTING IN MEXICO

Showtime Sports hosted a press conference Thursday at The Conga Room, L.A. Live, to formally introduce and discuss Bantamweight Tournament: Winner Takes All that begins Saturday, Dec. 11. In attendance was Ken Hershman, Showtime Sports Executive Vice President and General Manager, the four world class boxers who will participate in the two-round, single-elimination tournament to determine the best fighter at 118 pounds – International Boxing Federation (IBF) champion Yonhy Perez (20-0-1, 14 KOs), former world champions Joseph Agbeko (27-2, 22 KOs) and Vic Darchinyan (35-2-1, 27 KOs) and world-ranked rising star Abner Mares (29-0-1) – and their promoters. The semifinal matchups: Perez defends his title against Agbeko and Darchinyan and Mares vie for the World Boxing Council (WBC) Silver Belt. The bouts are scheduled for 12 rounds. The winners of each semifinal will clash in the final in 2011 with the losing fighters competing in a consolation fight.

Each of the participants in the bantamweight tournament has previously fought at least one of the other fighters in competitive bouts. "This is a great tournament. It has the interest of the fans. It has the interest of the fighters and once and for all you'll know who the best really is. There are four great fighters. I have a lot of respect for all of them. Agbeko fought a great fight and Darchinyan had concrete between his ears, didn't listen to his corner and I believe cost himself the fight, but Yonhy finished the unfinished work of Vic by finishing Agbeko off," Darchinyan's promoter Gary Shaw said. "I'm happy I'm fighting in Mexico. My style is a Mexican style, guys are coming to fight, coming for a show, so that's what I'm going to do. Mexicans love my style. I am not against them, I am not against anyone. I'm just against my opponent. It just happens Mexicans have been my opponents, which is good. Mexicans are good fighters," fightnews.com cited Darchinyan as saying.

[October 1, 2010 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## HEADLINES OF THE WEEK

- **OCTOBER 1:** Armenian delegation to participate in International Telecommunications Union conference AH
- **OCTOBER 1:** Bambir Armenian rock band's song tops EuroVoice Music Contest popularity list AH
- **OCTOBER 2:** U.S. Ambassador to RA to meet Armenian community in San Francisco AH
- **OCTOBER 3:** Armen Jigarkhanyan awarded Order of Honor AH
- **OCTOBER 4:** Georgian Foreign Ministry's statement on Russia's attempt to damage Armenia-Georgia incorrect, Armenian expert believes AH
- **OCTOBER 4:** International Science and Technology Center Executive Director awarded with RANAS gold medal AH
- **OCTOBER 5:** Center for French-language material digitization to be created in Armenia AH
- **OCTOBER 6:** Catholicos of All Armenians meets with French Ambassador Serge Smessov

## SEYRAN OHANYAN DISCUSSES DEFENSE ISSUES WITH MEMBERS OF AMERICAN-BRITISH GROUP

Armenian Minister of Defense Seyran Ohanyan met with the members of joint American-British group for revision of Armenian defence strategy. The parties pointed out significant progress in reforms conducted in defense sector, agreeing to continue consultations, Armenian Defense Ministry press service reported.

[October 2, 2010 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## SPECIAL EQUIPMENT TO BE IMPORTED FROM FINLAND TO CLEANSE SEVAN BASIN FROM TREES

Sevan National Park non-commercial organization's council hosted a sitting in Yerevan, headed by Armenian Territorial Administration Minister Armen Gevorgyan. Creation of special workgroup to examine legal status of unregistered Sevan-adjacent constructions was agreed on. Water Master special equipment for cleansing Sevan basin from water-covered trees was imported from Finland. Companies in charge of territory cleansing will be given a possibility to sell the trees, thus lowering the self cost of cleansing works.

[October 2, 2010 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)



## TIGRAN SARGSYAN: 'AT THE END OF THE YEAR THE ECONOMIC GROWTH RATE WILL BE HIGHER THAN 1.2%, DEFINED BY 2010 STATE BUDGET BILL'



According to forecasts, at the end of the year the economic growth rate will be higher than 1.2%, defined by 2010 state budget bill, RA Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan said at a meeting with journalists during today's visit to 'Masis' station. He added that if not the unprecedented decline in the agricultural sphere, the economic growth rate would be higher. The

Prime Minister said the Government overfulfills the most important index – tax incomes – which strengthens the state's financial stability and raises the level of withstandability. 'Economic forecasts change once every quarter. An economic crisis is registered when symmetric phenomena of past years are not registered and it becomes difficult to make forecasts. It is evident that the world economy reflects on Armenia through investments, transfers, world market prices. Taking this fact into account, reassessment of macroeconomic indices is being made every quarter. The matter is that our macroeconomic indices should be balanced for that we could form enough reserves to ensure stability,' Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan said.

October 1, 2010 [www.armenpress.am](http://www.armenpress.am)

## EURONEWS GIVES FIRST REACTION TO DEMAND ON RETURN OF ARARAT TO ARMENIAN

The Presidency of the Forum of Armenian Association of Europe (FAAE) sent a letter of appreciation to the management of Euronews TV channel, hailing its true information with respect to praying namaz by Turkish nationalists on the ruins of Ani. Head of the FAAE Ashot Grigoryan said that the TV channel noted that Turkey organizes new provocations instead of lifting its blockade of Armenia. Besides, the TV channel made a clear hint, showing the territories around Ararat, including Surmalu province, in Armenia's colors. According to Grigoryan, it is the first reaction of Euronews to the speech of Slovakian politician Frantisek Miklosko at the European economic forum, in which he demanded to return Ararat mountain to Armenians. FAAE noted that the more Ankara develops its nationalistic policy, the severer EU's reaction will be. Thus,



Grigoryan advised the Turkish authorities to study the EU policy towards nationalistic parties of those countries, which became members of the European family during the past 10 years. "As a response to Turkish nationalists, we state that the Armenian lobby of Europe is going to intensify its struggle for the return of Armenian lands, which were transferred by Bolsheviks to Turkey without any grounds and explanations," reads the FAAE statement.

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

## ARMENIA TO INCREASE ELECTRIC POWER EXPORT VOLUMES TO IRAN

Armenian Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Armen Movsisyan said that the volumes of electric power export from Armenia to Iran will be increased. "The volumes of electric power export have consider-

ably increased this year compared to 2009, and they will continue growing also next year," Movsisyan told journalists on October 5. As for Georgia, the Minister noted that currently Armenia does not supply electric power to it, while its export in future depends on many factors, including climate and precipitation in 2011.

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

## RA GOVERNMENT TRIES TO DECREASE CORRUPTION RISKS IN LICENSING



The Armenian government is consistently introducing e-governance system to decrease corruption risks, what will allow creating pre-requisites for improvement of a competitive business environment, decreasing a direct communication between public employees and citizens. On October 4, Armenian Minister of Finance Tigran Davtyan said that the Armenian government has approved a bill on introduction of amendments to the RA Law on Licensing, Tax Code and 14 laws, under which the types of licenses and procedure for their obtainment is reduced. "We have managed to achieve radical changes in the public management, reducing the number of licenses from 169 to 96 or by 40%," said Davtyan. Besides, many complex licenses have been simplified, while enterprises will be able to apply for licenses electronically at [www.e-gov.am/licenses](http://www.e-gov.am/licenses). At the first stage, the amendments will refer to simple licenses issued by the RA Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Transport and Communication, as licenses for organization of gambling and taxi services are basically provided here. In six months, the new approaches will be applied in other fields as well.

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

## 80% OF WEBSITES REGISTERED IN CIRCLE.AM USE FOREIGN HOSTING

51% of websites, registered in Circle.am Armenian ranking system, are located within .am domain zone. .com zone has a 29% share; .ru - 8%; .net - 3%, .info-3%, other domain zones -6%. According to a report developed by Circle.am and Business 24 project, 80% of Armenian websites use foreign hosting, with only 20% of servers situated in Armenia. A 2% decrease in Armenia-hosted websites was observed in summer 2010 compared to spring results, proving the country is not up to facing foreign competition.

September 23, 2010 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## TURKISH NATIONALISTS RALLY IN ARMENIAN HOLY SITE AT ANI



The cathedral was conquered by Turkish ruler Alp Arslan in the 11th Century. Turkish nationalists have said Muslim prayers inside the ruins of a historic Christian cathedral in a move likely to cause friction with Armenians. Hundreds of nationalists travelled to the ruins of the 11th Century cathedral at Ani in eastern Turkey to commemorate a Muslim victory there. The action is being seen as a response to the reopening of another historic Armenian church last month in Turkey. Armenians from across the world came to hear Mass at the church in Lake Van. Continue reading the main story. Ani, an uninhabited archaeological site, was once the capital of a medieval Armenian kingdom in the province of Kars. Devlet Bahçeli, head of the Nationalist Action Party (MHP), led the crowd saying prayers at the site. The party said it was following the example of Turkish ruler Alp Arslan, who removed the cathedral's cross and prayed there following his capture of Ani in 1064. Turkish nationalists say Muslim prayers inside the cathedral. The nationalists said they were imitating one of their historic heroes. On 19 September, Armenian worshippers held a service at the island church in Lake Van for the first time in nearly 100 years. The church, on an island in the lake, was damaged during the mass killing of Armenians during World War I. It was restored by the Turkish government in 2007 and turned into a museum. Turkey allowed the Mass to take place in the hope it would be seen as a gesture of reconciliation but some denounced the move as a publicity stunt. Some Christians did not attend the service, complaining that the Turkish authorities had refused to place a cross on the roof of the building.

October 1, 2010 [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

## WHY I OPPOSE MATTHEW BRYZA'S NOMINATION AS AMBASSADOR TO AZERBAIJAN

The Sept. 24 editorial "A toxic hold," "A toxic hold," in criticizing Sen. Barbara Boxer's and my opposition to the nomination of Matthew Bryza as ambassador to Azerbaijan, cited an unsubstantiated comment from a junior member of my staff as my position. This was despite the fact that a Post editorial writer had a full conversation with my foreign policy adviser and an official written statement regarding my position, which was entirely consistent with my statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The suggestion that my office "backpedaled" is incorrect. The Post is entitled to its own opinion, but not to its own facts. For the record, I stand by my position that Mr. Bryza is the wrong person for the job and have made public my hold in the U.S. Senate on his nomination. That position has absolutely nothing to do with the ethnic origin of his wife. It is based on information that I believe raises concerns about Mr. Bryza's ability to remain impartial toward



Azerbaijan and Turkey, including his opposition to the recognition of the Armenian genocide by Turkey and his close ties to individuals in both governments. Perhaps it is not so unusual for a U.S. ambassador to have acquaintances in regional governments, but when those relationships affect the ability of the individual to represent the interests of the United States, it is my prerogative to withhold support of the nomination. Finally, at the core of my opposition to Mr. Bryza's nomination is respect for the Armenian people. The Armenian genocide was one of the great atrocities of modern history. We should not be sending a top diplomat to the region who does not support recognition of what is considered among historians to be the first modern genocide. Nor should The Post label the Armenian National Committee of America as "noxious" simply for demanding recognition of this historical fact.

*Barbara Levy Boxer is a Senator from California and a member of the Democratic Party.*

October 3, 2010 [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

## IMF MODIFIES ECONOMIC FORECAST FOR ARMENIA

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Wednesday modified downward Armenia's 2010 growth rate, from 4.8 percent to 4 percent. The modification was announced by IMF country representative in Armenia Guillermo Tolosa in Yerevan, according to the ArmInfo news service. The IMF predicted a 4.5-percent growth for Armenia for 2011. The IMF country representative also modified the prediction for the country's 2010 inflation rate, from 6.2 percent up to 7 percent. The good news, however, pronounced by the IMF official was that Armenia's budgetary deficit would drop, from accounting for 5 percent of the country's GDP this year to 4 percent in 2011 and further down to 3 percent in 2012. According to the Armenian government's mid-term expenditure program for 2011-2013, the country's budgetary deficit would be reduced from 7.7 percent of GDP in 2009 to 4.9 percent in 2011, 4.3 percent in 2012 and 4 percent in 2013. Guillermo Tolosa said that Armenia's economy is recovering from the crisis. By August, Armenia's inflation rate dropped to 1.3 percent, down from the January-July average of 5 percent, according to the Armenian National Statistical Service.

September 30, 2010 [www.chinadaily.com.cn](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn)

## ARMENIAN PM TO VISIT TEHRAN LATE IN OCTOBER

Sargsian will be in Tehran on October 25-26 to discuss bilateral ties and cooperation in meetings with senior Iranian officials, including President Ahmadinejad and First Vice-President Mohammad Reza Rahimi.

Earlier, Yerevan's Ambassador to Tehran Grigor Arakelian had told FNA that the visit will take place at the invitation of Rahimi.

The envoy added that the Iranian and Armenian officials are slated to explore avenues for the further expansion of and deepening of relations between the two states.

Meantime, Iranian ambassador to Armenia Seyed Ali Saqayan announced in September that a free trade agreement between Iran and Armenia could be signed during the visit to Iran by the Armenian premier. He pointed out that a relevant document was drafted last year when Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan visited Tehran, and said the two sides started working on the draft shortly after Sargsyan's visit.

October 3, 2010 [www.english.farsnews.com](http://www.english.farsnews.com)



## IN SEARCH OF MY ARMENIAN POET



For most Armenians before my generation, Charents is a name of legend. Known as a genius poet, Charents was also a public activist and soldier during the First World War. Unfortunately very few members of my generation only know him by his masterpiece “Yes Im Massis Sarn Em Siroom” (I love my Massis mountain). Even I had the barest introduction to this great literary treasure until a few days ago. On September 25, 2010 the ARPA film festival screened the documentary, “Charents: In Search of My Armenian Poet” at the Egyptian Theater. The film’s director is Shareen Anderson, an award winning filmmaker based in South Africa. On the day of the screening I was very excited at the opportunity to learn more about this prolific man. We soon shuffled into the unfortunately small theater where Professor of Armenian language and literature at UCLA, Anahid 16 Keshishian, gave a wonderful introduction about her experiences with Charents. She described her emotional journey with this man as if they had been close relations; even though Charents had been killed by the NKVD (the predecessor to the KGB) in a Soviet prison sixty-seven years ago. I felt envious... Why hadn’t I had those same

experiences? Why wasn’t I forced to read Charents in grammar school? Nevertheless, the film soon began and it was very well directed. As the two hours quickly passed I began to revere a man whose work I had never read. Thankfully the film also included excerpts of his poetry. I won’t give any serious spoilers because I believe that this is a must see if you are interested in Armenian culture. Any real criticism that I have of the documentary would be the focus on over compensatory praises by Charentsian fanatics. Rightfully so, Charents deserves every single one. However it was mentioned in one scene that Charents had actually shot a woman who had rebuffed his interests and spent 8 years in jail for it. Why was this man in so much internal conflict? This was always a quickly bypassed topic and like a shadow, loomed over almost each interview. Everybody in the theater knew it existed but it was never directly addressed. Though while that darkness could be very frightening and intriguing the director chose to leave it shrouded in mystery. However, let me reiterate that this documentary is still enchanting. Prior to seeing it, Charents was only a famous Armenian writer. Now he’s been mythologized to the likes of Sayat Nova, Hovannes Tumanyan and Komitas Vartabed. This documentary amplified my interest and doubled my reverence for his work. Through my personal experiences, it seems that the diaspora hasn’t come to know and hold dear this extraordinary figure in Armenian culture. Thankfully “Charents: In Search of My Armenian Poet” definitely changed that for at least one Armenian. I just hope that my fellow viewers in that theater felt the same way.

*October 2, 2010 Lousabats N 854*

## LETTER: DANNY TARKANIAN THANKS ARMENIAN COMMUNITY

The Armenian Weekly received the letter below from Danny Tarkanian, who campaigned to win the Republican Primary for U.S. Senate in Nevada. I want to thank everyone in the Armenian community who followed and supported my campaign for United States Senator from Nevada. Since my college days, I have wanted to get into public service. I believe it is the noblest profession to which a person can aspire. Governor Deukmejian, the first Armenian governor in our country’s history, has been my inspiration. He was a statesman in every sense of the world and

gave hope to Armenians all over America that our dreams were within our grasp. With the many critical issues facing Armenia today, resolution of the genocide, protocols and reduction in financial assistance by the American government, I felt it was time for our Country to have its first Armenian United States Senator. With the help of so many in our community we almost made this a reality. I am forever grateful for all of your help and support. One of the wonderful traits of our Armenian heritage is the determination to persevere. We are not quitters and never will be.

*October 2, 2010 [www.armeniaweekly.com](http://www.armeniaweekly.com)*

## THE MASS AT AKHTAMAR, AND WHAT’S NEXT



“Victory is in the realization of mad men’s dream...” This, written in big Armenian letters along with a photo of Akhtamar Island’s Holy Cross Church, ran on the front page of the local daily newspaper Van Times on Sept. 19, produced in cooperation with the Istanbul-based Agos weekly on the occasion of the Holy Mass ceremony in that church, which took place on the same day. Cheering headlines were common on the front pages of other local newspapers, too. While newspapers like SehariVan, Bolge, Prestij, and Vansesi were presenting the event as “a contribution to the world peace and a bright example of tolerance,” other newspapers like DoguAnadolu were sinking deep into details by criticizing their colleagues for misleading the public by presenting the Mass as a first after 95 years, and not 92 years? matching it with the date of the Armenian uprising of Van in 1918, in an attempt to fuel more historic hatred against “traitor Armenians.” In 1951, Yasar Kemal, a reporter of Kurdish origin, witnessed the beginning of the demolition plan on the island of Akhtamar while visiting the region. He used his contacts to stop the destruction of the site and raised awareness of it through his writings. This is how a masterpiece of world and Armenian medieval architecture was saved for today’s Mass ceremony. The church, however, was left in a dilapidated and abandoned state until 2005, when the Turkish government decided to begin restoration efforts. In an interview to the Armenian Weekly, the governor of Van, Munir Karaloglu, who followed the event from a helicopter flying over the island, said that restoration was carried out by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey, and that it cost nearly \$1.5 million. In 2007, it was finished and opened as a museum. during the ceremony.

*October 1, 2010 full story [www.asbarez.com](http://www.asbarez.com)*

"Armenia Highlights" is compiled in association with  &   
DISCLAIMER: Views expressed in "Armenia Highlights" do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Armenia.