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ARMENIA HIGHLIGHTS

Weekly Digest of the Government of Armenia

January 18-24 2011

THEMA

On January 21, the President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili arrived to Armenia on a working visit. The Presidential delegation comprises the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia Grigol Vashadze, the Minister of Energy Alexander Khetaguri, and other officials. Presidents Serzh Sargsyan and Mikheil Saakashvili visited the scientific and production center of Synopsys Armenia company where they participated at the award ceremony of the first Armenian-Georgian Thematic Olympiad for Schoolchildren. The idea to hold the Olympiad belongs to the Presidents of Armenia and Georgia and is aimed at strengthening and deepening the cooperation between the two states not only in political, economic and cultural areas but also in the areas of science and education. The first Armenian-Georgian Thematic Olympiad attracted 30 students from each country, who competed in the areas of mathematics, physics and informatics. It's been agreed that the Olympiads will be conducted regularly and each country in rotation will be hosting the Olympiad, expanding at the same time the list of subjects. Presidents Sargsyan and Saakashvili

awarded each winner with a computer. Those students, who in each category displayed the most ingenious solution to the task, were also awarded the "Most creative solution" prizes. On January 22 President Serzh Sargsyan held a private meeting with the President of Georgia Mikhail Sahakashvili who is in Armenia on a working visit. The meeting of the two Presidents was followed by the negotiations with the participation of the delegations. The parties discussed a wide range of issues pertaining to the Armenian-Georgian cooperation in different areas. It was noted that preliminary estimates show that in 2010 the turnover between the two countries increased by 11 percent. Serzh Sargsyan and Mikhail Sahakashvili spoke with satisfaction about the cooperation in the humanitarian area; one of the examples of such cooperation is the Olympiad of the Armenian and Georgian schoolchildren which was initiated by the two Presidents. The two sides spoke also about simplifying the border crossing procedures between Armenia and Georgia, making them easier, more transparent and open for the transportation means, so that motor vehicle are able to move almost non-stop from one country to the other as it's done in many European countries.

January 21-22, 2011 www.president.am

"QUOTE OF THE WEEK"

"GREAT OPPORTUNITIES
HAVE BEEN FORMED
IN THE FIELD OF FISH
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ERABLE GROWTH WAS
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FISH PRODUCTION IN
2010. IN 2011 WE NEED TO
MAINTAIN THESE PACES,
AS WELL AS STIMULATE
EXPORT"

TIGRAN SARGSYAN
PRIME-MINISTER OF RA

Upcoming Events

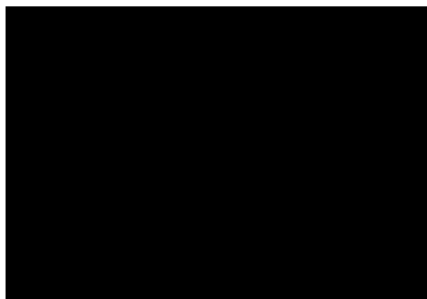
**JANUARY 28: Armenia celebrates
the National Day of Army**

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PRIME MINISTER'S CUP AWARDED TO BRAIN RING INTELLECTUAL GAME WINNER

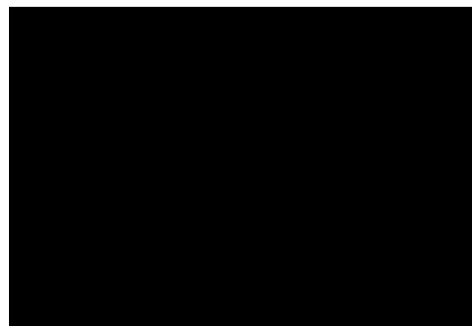
Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan attended yesterday the last game of the second edition of the Prime Minister's Cup awarded for Brain Ring intellectual contest involving the teams of different government agencies of the Republic of Armenia. The first four places were held by the teams of State Com-



mittee on Immovable Property Cadastre by the Government, State Property Management Department by the Government, Ministry of Emergency Situations the Ministry of Finance respectively. Manvel Badalyan from the team of State Property Management Department by the Government was awarded the prize of best player. Tigran Sargsyan said it to be quite meaningful that the contest was won the team of State Committee on Immovable Property Cadastre by the Government as the agency had come up with a serious project aimed ensuring increased service quality in the given field. The head of government stated in part: "This already traditional event has to be expanded and furthered nationwide. It is my pleasure that the number of participants has increased considerably this year. The time has come for the government to have rivals from other spheres as well, including the private sector. We would suggest mass media presenting their teams for the contest." According to Tigran Sargsyan, in its capacity of the organizer, the Ministry of Education and Science will present the finalized rules and procedures. Note that the first edition of the Prime Minister's Cup awarded for Brain Ring intellectual contest involving the teams of different government agencies of the Republic of Armenia was held in 2010. Involving some 20 teams from different government agencies, the tournament seeks to boost the culture of intellectual competitions in Armenia.

January 22, 2011 www.gov.am

THE MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF ARMENIA AND GEORGIA TOOK PLACE



On January 22, the Armenian Foreign Affairs Minister Edward Nalbandian met with his Georgian counterpart Grigol Vashadze who was in the delegation led by the President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili, arriving in Armenia.

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Georgia had a thorough talk on a wide range of issues relating to the

Armenian –Georgian meaningful cooperation. They also touched upon the agenda of regular meeting of the inter-governmental commission, expansion of legal-contractual field, trade-economic cooperation and implementation of joint projects.

Edward Nalbandian and Grigol Vashadze exchanged views on regional issues, expressing confidence that all the existing issues should be solved exclusively through negotiations.

In the course of the meeting, issues concerning the cooperation between Armenia and Georgia in the international organizations were discussed.

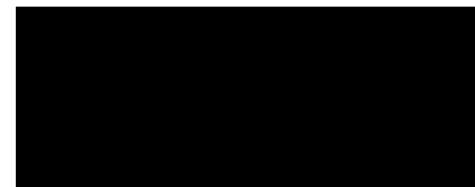
As always, the problems concerning the Armenians in Georgia were also on the agenda of the Armenian and Georgian negotiations.

January 22, 2011 www.mfa.am

HEADLINES OF THE WEEK

- **JANUARY 18:** *Hrant Dink's widow accuses Turkish authorities of premeditated murder*
AH
- **JANUARY 19:** *Armenian "Kohar Carpet" on display at Boston Museum of Fine Arts*
AH
- **JANUARY 20:** *U.S. Supreme Court rejects Massachusetts genocide denial lawsuit*
AH
- **JANUARY 21:** *No successful attacks on Armenian governmental websites reported since September 2009*
AH
- **JANUARY 22:** *Armenian Ministry of Social Affairs, Ardshin-investbank agree on pension payment through credit cards*
AH
- **JANUARY 23:** *Yerevan hosts Charity Burns Supper*
AH
- **JANUARY 24:** *About 8000 tourist visits to NKR reported in 2010*
AH

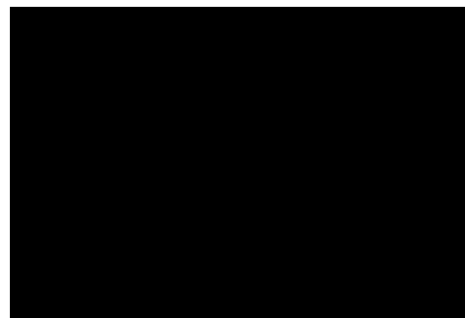
COOPERATION TREATY BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS



On January 24 cooperation treaties were signed between the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia and Yerevan State University, the French University in Armenia and the Russian-Armenian Slavonic University. In his speech ARM Defence Minister Seyran Ohanyan stated that the cooperation treaty with the Higher Educational Institutions will allow students to take their educational internship in the MoD As for the best ones, there may be employment prospects in the Ministry of Defence. The rectors participating in the event thanked the Minister of Defence for broadening the cooperation, stating that this initiative can help the students fill up their academic knowledge with practical skills and at the same time promote the work of the Ministry of Defence.

January 24 2011, www.mil.am

TIGRAN SARGSYAN SEES GREAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASING FISH PRODUCTS EXPORT



During the January 20 sitting, the Armenian government set a procedure of technical requirements of foodstuff safety. Armenian Minister of Agriculture Sergo Karapetyan noted that special requirements are set for fish products, what will bring them closer to international norms, allowing their access to global markets. "Great opportunities have been

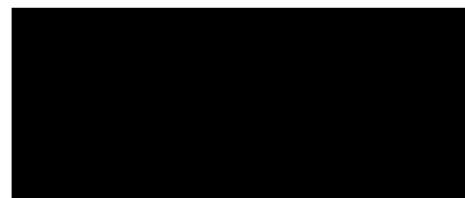
formed in the field of fish production. Considerable growth was recorded in fresh fish production in 2010. In 2011 we need to maintain these paces, as well as stimulate export," said Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan. Total output rate for fishing and agriculture production fell by 14.4% in January-November 2010 against 2009 results to comprise AMD 536.5bln. 41.6% slump in agricultural and fish production was observed in November 2010 in Armenia compared with October - drop in agriculture amounted to 42.2%, while fish production grew by 28.9%. In January-November 2010, fish production amounted to AMD 8954.7mln that is 5.9% less compared to the same period in 2009. [January 20, 2011 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR YOUNG FAMILIES PROGRAM FUND TO REACH AMD 4BLN IN 2011

During the January 20 government sitting, Armenian Minister of Finance Vache Gabrielyan said that 223 loans at the total amount of AMD 1.7bln were allocated in Armenia in 2010 under Affordable Housing for Young Families program, with the state subsidies amounting to AMD 35mln. According to Gabrielyan, in 2011 the amount of state subsidies will make AMD 88mln, of which AMD

22mln will be allocated in the first quarter of 2011, with taking into consideration the revised terms for residents of the country's regions. Gabrielyan added that, according to the ministry's calculations, 300 loans will be allocated in 2011, while the program fund will be increased by AMD 1bln to reach AMD 4-4.5bln. [January 20, 2011 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

CHARLES AZNAVOUR CALLS ON ISRAEL TO RECOGNIZE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE



Renowned French singer, Armenia's ambassador to Switzerland Charles Aznavour has called on Israel to recognize the Armenian Genocide. Addressing a Jerusalem University award ceremony in Paris on January 23, Aznavour stated that "Turkey's unmitigated anti-Semitism became more vivid during the past years," The Voice of Israel reported. [January 24, 2011, www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

ABKHAZIAN PRESIDENT PLEDGES SUPPORT TO ARMENIAN COMMUNITY

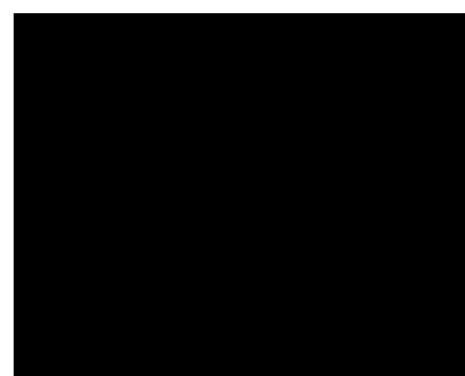
Abkhazian President Sergey Bagapsh met with the leaders of the Armenian community.

"Abkhazia has always been a country where people of various nationalities and confessions lived. Armenians of Abkhazia make their contribution to development of our statehood," Bagapsh said.

He also pledged support to all undertakings of the Armenian community, [apsnypress.info](http://www.panarmenian.net) reported.

[January 24, 2011, www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

ARNO BABAJANIAN - A WORLD OF ARMENIAN MUSIC



January 21, 2011 marks the 90th birth anniversary of prominent composer Arno Babajanian, who created a separate wonderful world of Armenian music. A graduate of Moscow conservatory, Babajanian started a career of composer. The first jazz music for a soviet movie was composed by him. "Song of the First Love" and "A Bride from the North" movies would never be so popular without his music. During the last years of his life, Babajanian was seriously ill. He passed away on November 11, 1983.

[January, 21 2011 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

JANUARY 24 MARKS 87TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF PROMINENT ARMENIAN POET PARUYR SEVAK



January 24 marks the 87th birth anniversary of prominent Armenian poet Paruyr Sevak.

Open day is held in Paruyr Sevak's house-museum.

The poet was born in 1924 in Zangakattun village, Ararat province of Armenia. He made his first steps in poetry when he was 11.

The first pieces of poetry by Sevak were published by Soviet Literature magazine.

The fact that Sevak's parents had to leave Western Armenia, in an attempt to escape the Armenian Genocide, had a great impact on Sevak's works.

Sevak also translated works by Pushkin, Lermontov, Yesenin and Blok into Armenian.

[January 24 2011 www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

TURKS COMMEMORATE SLAIN JOURNALIST

Some 6,000 people gathered on Wednesday in front of the office of Turkish-Armenian newspaper Agos in the central Sisli district of Istanbul, a Press TV correspondent reported. Flowers marked the spot where Hrant Dink worked as editor-in-chief, before he was shot dead by a neo-nationalist youth right in front of his office on January 19, 2007. Four years have passed, but Dink's family lawyers say they are still facing many obstacles in the trial. The European Court of Human Rights has ordered Turkey to pay 100,000 euros in damages to Dink's family for failing to protect him after numerous death threats were reported. The anniversary of Dink's killing has become an annual vigil by his friends and supporters to call for justice.

Lawyers are now calling for the editor's case to be transferred to a juvenile court after changes to the country's anti-terror law, while the government is in the process of reforming the high courts. But many in Turkey believe the main assassination suspect to be just part of a darker plot. A report by Dink's family lawyers reveals a record of interventions by prosecutors and judges in charge of the case and lists deliberate attempts to ignore the involvement of some suspects in the Ergenekon trial, a probe into neo-nationalist factions within the Turkish state. Dink's family this week demanded that police and gendarmerie officials who were left outside the scope of the investigation be questioned in connection with the murder.

January 16, 2011 www.presstv.ir

HIGH COURT DECLINES CASE ON GENOCIDE LESSONS

The US Supreme Court declined yesterday to hear an appeal of a ruling that state public school guidelines can exclude materials disputing that the mass killing of Armenians in the early 20th century constituted genocide. The decision to reject the appeal was seen as a victory for Armenian groups who successfully argued before the First Circuit Court of Appeals that Massachusetts education officials did not violate public school students' free speech rights in 1999 when they excluded sources that questioned the Armenian genocide. "I think the Supreme Court's decision has upheld the integrity of our public schools by rejecting Turkish attempts to force genocide-denial materials into the curriculum," said Laura Boghosian, a member of the Boston-based Coalition to Recognize the Armenian Genocide. "This decision actually gives school officials the right to decide what materials belong in the curriculum. 'The Turkish suit tried to force politicized material into the curriculum. That would have set a very dangerous precedent. Had they won, I think we could see Holocaust deniers demanding their propaganda into our schools' curriculum.'" The appeals court decision, written last summer by retired Supreme Court justice David Souter, found that state guidelines were part of the official curriculum and under the discretion of state authorities. Harvey Silverglate, a Boston lawyer who represented teachers and students from

schools in Sudbury and Cambridge, as well as the Assembly of Turkish American Associations, had argued that removing the references prevented students from learning more than one view. "I was very disappointed, because this is a major issue in First Amendment law that has gone unresolved for quite a few years," he said. "We were hoping that this was the case that would enable the courts to clarify the role of the First Amendment in protecting public libraries from censorship by public officials and pressure groups." The Turkish-American group says the Muslim Turkish Ottoman Empire did not commit genocide. Although more than 1.5 million Armenians died as the result of actions by Turkish forces, Turkish activists say it was not the result of a policy. In 1998 the Legislature ordered the state Board of Education to prepare an advisory curriculum guide for teaching about genocide and human rights. A draft of the guide initially included a section called "Armenian Genocide." Under pressure from Turkish advocacy groups, the commissioner of education, David P. Driscoll, revised the draft to include references to opposing views, the ruling said. When officials filed the guide with legislators in March 1999, the state's Armenian community protested the inclusion of "contra-genocide" viewpoints, and the education commissioner removed the references.

January 21, 2011 www.boston.acom

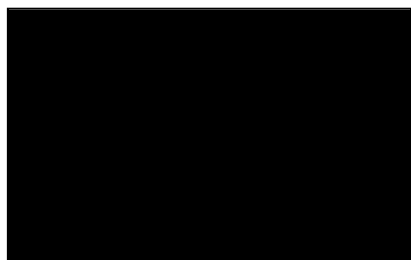
THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS HAD A MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF ARMENIA

"Turkey cannot accede to the European Union unless it reconciles itself with its past and develops constructive relations with its neighbouring countries", the President of Armenia Mr Serzh Sargsyan, who is paying an official visit to Cyprus, stressed yesterday. In statements at the Presidential Palace, where he had a private meeting with the President of the Republic Mr Demetris Christofias and participated in enlarged talks with the two countries' delegations, Mr Sargsyan said that he supports the positions of the Republic of Cyprus on the Cyprus problem, noting that the future of Cyprus - Armenian relations is a bright one. President Christofias thanked his Armenian counterpart for Armenia's continuous support for the struggle of the Cypriot people to free themselves from the Turkish occupation; he also expressed Cyprus' support for the resolution of the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh and referred to the very active and creative Armenian community in Cyprus. President Christofias, referring to the high level of bilateral relations between the two countries, said that these can be further expanded, especially in the sectors of trade, culture and tourism, and that this is also noted in the political declaration that the two Presidents just signed. "The Political Declaration reflects the excellent level of Cyprus-Armenian relations as well as our common commitment to ecumenical values and principles", President Christofias added. "I wish to thank President Sargsyan and the Armenian people for Armenia's continuous principled support for the struggle of the Cypriot people to free themselves from the Turkish occupation and colonization and for the reunification Cyprus, based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation with one and only sovereignty, citizenship and international personality.

January 18, 2011

full story www.mfa.gov.cy

YALCIN AND SERPIL AYASLI AMONG TOP POLITICAL CAMPAIGN DONORS IN THE US ADVANCING TURKISH INTERESTS



Yalcin and Serpil Ayasli Turkish-American couple living in Nashua, New Hampshire, ranks among America's most generous political donors giving more money to politicians and political action groups than anyone else in the country during the 2008 election cycle, according to the nonpartisan Center For Responsive Politics. Their beneficence hasn't slowed much since, apparently funded by a steady sale of stock in the integrated circuits company that Yalcin

Ayasli founded.

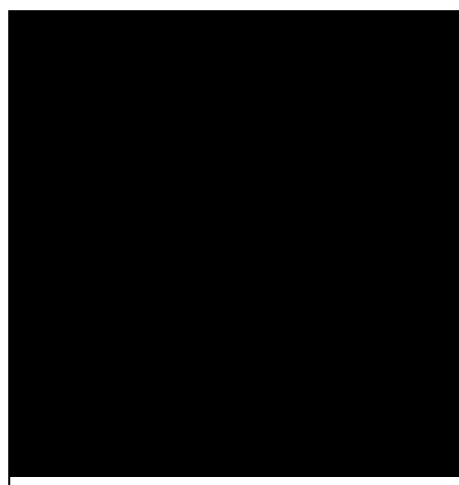
While the Ayaslis' donations have tipped toward Republicans recently, a closer look suggests their giving has nothing to do with partisan politics, but rather is aimed toward advancing Turkish-American relations and the interests and image of Turkey in the United States.

Most recently, Yalcin Ayasli and groups he supports helped lead the counter-charge against bringing the Armenian Genocide Resolution to a vote during the closing days of the 111th Congress. The Ayaslis and their children gave \$277,800 to various candidates and political action committees for the 2010 election cycle....

January 23, 2011

full story www.massispost.com

AKCAM TO SPEAK AT NAASR ABOUT FORCED ASSIMILATION AND GENOCIDE



Recent genocide scholarship has rediscovered the vital work of Raphael Lemkin—not only as a legal scholar but also as an historian and social scientist. His unpublished autobiography and work on the history of genocide have given new inspirations and ideas to a new generation of scholars to rethink and reevaluate existing scholarship. Lemkin wrote, “Genocide has two phases: one, destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor.” Akcam ar-

gues that this “the second phase” can take many different forms, but that assimilation is among the most effective ways to achieve the desired result. According to Akcam, because similarity to the Holocaust has tended to be the yardstick against which occurrences of mass violence are measured, in the Armenian case some of the most significant structural components of the Armenian Genocide—such as the religious conversion or the forced assimilation of Armenian children into Muslim households—have been ignored or deemphasized because they played no role in the annihilation of the Jews in Europe. Following Lemkin and, more importantly, based on newly revealed documents from the Ottoman archives, Akcam argues that assimilation was a structural element in the genocidal process, and calls for analysis and a reassessment of the methods and motivations of this aspect of the Armenian Genocide. Taner Akcam was born in 1953 in the Ardahan province, Turkey. He is the author of 10 scholarly works of history and sociology

January 19, 2011

www.armeniaweekly.com

THOUSANDS IN ISTANBUL MARK ANNIVERSARY OF HRANT DINK'S MURDER

Thousands of people gathered Wednesday to commemorate slain journalist Hrant Dink in front of the Istanbul office building where he was assassinated four years ago, an event that united a diverse and colorful coalition. Crowds have gathered on the same spot each year since January 19, 2007, when the Armenian-Turkish newspaper editor was shot in the back by confessed triggerman Ogun Samast. Thousands of people came together that day as photographers were still taking shots of his body, lying in the street covered with newspapers. Four years later, they united under the same slogan – “We are all Hrant, We are all Armenians” – as at the original gathering, and with the same demands for the justice they say has been denied. “We know the ones who did it, the ones who made them do it and the ones who covered it up are in the state,” journalist Bulent Aydın said to the crowd assembled on a sunny winter day in Istanbul's Osmanbey district. “Let the ones who said ‘kill’ be put to trial.” Though last year's commemoration drew limited participation due to snow, a larger crowd joined this year's event, with one group gathering at Taksim Square and another in the Sisli district. Both marched to Osmanbey and the office of the weekly newspaper Agos, founded by Dink and published in Armenian and Turkish. By 2 p.m. the street was closed to traffic. Flowers and pictures in a heart-shaped wreath were laid at the spot where Dink was shot. At 3 p.m., the time of the assassination, the crowd was called to silence and a recording was played of Dink's voice talking about the Armenians of Anatolia. Many in the crowd could not back hold their tears. During the commemoration ceremony, people handed out banners reading, “There has been no Hrant/prosecutor/state/Parliament for four years.” Relatives of slain intellectuals, journalists, artists and other victims of hate campaigns such as the one Dink had been subjected to before his death came to show their support. “We have gathered here for the fourth time, as a big family. We are relatives now,” Nukhet Ipekci, the daughter of assassinated journalist Abdi Ipekci, told the crowd. “As our sister Rakel [Dink, Hrant's widow] said, they made us relatives in suffering.”

January 19, 2011 www.asbarez.com

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