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ARMENIA HIGHLIGHTS

Weekly Digest of the Government of Armenia

May 3-May 16, 2011

THEMA

PRESIDENT SARGSYAN INVITED A MEETING WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE MANAGEMENT OF ARMENIA'S LARGEST AGRO PROCESSING COMPANIES



President Serzh Sargsyan invited today a meeting with the participation of the management of Armenia's largest agro processing companies. At the meeting with the leaders of a dozen of the processing companies from the capital and marzes, which was held at the Yerevan Beer Ltd, present were the RA Ministers of Agriculture, Finance, and Chairman of the State Revenue Committee, who presented problems existing in the area of agro purchases and processing, reforms carried out in the areas of tax and customs administration, which will touch different spheres, including creation of favorable conditions for the development projects for the private enterprises engaged in the area of agro processing. At the outset, the President noted that his meetings with the major enterprises and taxpayers are intended to discuss directly with the businessmen their problems, talk about the present and the future of the enterprises working in different areas, and speak about their cooperation with the

government. According to Serzh Sargsyan, at these meetings he has been stressing the importance of working with the State Revenue Committee and, in general, importance of the entire process pertinent to tax collection. "When I say "process", I don't mean just the entries into the state budget, but rather simplification of the process, relieving the businesses of unduly burden with the expectation that the entrepreneurs will consciously do their best to fulfill their tax obligations, since we don't have other sources of revenue to pay pensions, wages and defense expenses. That's why, in this process we take every precaution not to create risks related to budget spending. After the meeting with the leaders of the mining industry and the bankers, I felt it would be right to hold the next meeting with the leaders and owners of the processing enterprises because we meet every year, talk about purchases of agricultural produce and interaction with the farmers.

May 5, 2011 full story www.president.am

"QUOTE OF THE WEEK"

"ARMENIA NEEDS A NEW POLICY AGENDA WHICH WOULD RULE OUT ANY IMPEDIMENT TO THE SHAPING OF A MIDDLE CLASS IN THE COUNTRY."

TIGRAN SARGSYAN
PRIME MINISTER OF RA

Upcoming Events

MAY 18: President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek arrives Armenia

MAY 18-19: PM Tigran Sargsyan will leave for the Republic of Belarus on a two-day official visit

MAY 28: Armenia marks Republic day

JUNE 4: St. Petersburg's Petrovsky stadium will host EURO 2012 Russia vs. Armenia

USEFUL LINKS

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

BORDER-CROSSING PROCEDURES TO BE SIMPLIFIED

A cabinet sitting was held today under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan. Before proceeding to the agenda, the Prime Minister dwelt on Republic of Armenia Control Chamber's findings and issued a series of assignments to that effect. Backing the 2011 census program, the Government proposed the State Statistics Board to draft a census questionnaire



within a month's time. The National Statistics Service was earmarked AMD 100mn in preparation for the census due on October 12-21, 2011. The census will help collect data on Armenia's social and demographic situation, the population's geographical distribution, employment (economic activity), educational background and housing conditions. The Government prescribed a State border crossing regime including the rules for implementing cross-border motor, air and other communications, the border checkpoints, the demarcation posts' description and installation modes, the State borderline maintenance rules, as well as a procedure to follow in letting in and out passengers, means of conveyance, animals, freight and other items across the State border. The Prime Minister suggested adopting a protocol decision: "Citizens keep sending complaints and grievances stating that especially after the passage of the law on mandatory insurance, they spend too much time at the border getting through the prescribed formalities. We asked the Central Bank to take up the matter and suggest a solution. Following a consultation held with the CBA, the insurance companies said to be prepared to provide services on the spot. In view of the above, we should commission the 3 marz governors concerned, as well as the Ministry of Territorial Administration and the State Revenue Committee by the Government to earmark the needed sites as shortly as possible cooperating with the Central Bank and insurance companies." The Government amended a previous decree to simplify the land category changing procedure for landed entities. In this connection, Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan reiterated the need for providing citizens with high-quality services and called on public officials to take the trouble working day and night on the problem as they are supposed to facilitate the task of our citizens. The Executive next endorsed the bill on repatriation which stipulates the key principles, as well as the rules and regulations of repatriation-related State policy. The meeting approved a number of other draft laws which will be submitted to the National Assembly in the manner established by law. In conclusion, the Government accepted the proposal on signing a free trade zone treaty with the CIS States. The arrangement seeks to ease the traffic of goods and passengers across the CIS borders.

THE ARMENIAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER EDWARD NALBANDIAN MET WITH THE YSU'S STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS



On May 13, the Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian visited the Yerevan State University, where he had a meeting with the professors, teaching staff and students of various faculties of the University. The meeting was initiated by the YSU Student Council in the frames of the 20th Anniversary of the Republic of Armenia. In his speech, Edward Nalbandian said, "Dear youth, you are probably often told that you are the future of the country. It is a simple truth and the bright example of it is that the

first graduates and audience of the MFA's new established Diplomatic School who have already taken diplomatic office at the RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs are the graduates of this University. Those young people, who sat on your student chairs yesterday, today work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and they will form the foreign policy of our country tomorrow. You have approximately the same age as our newly independent state, 20th year of which expires this year. You were born along with our newly independent state and as much you grow up, you will have the age of our country. Its concerns and successes, difficulties and victories were a part of your life. I wish you success- your successes will be the successes of our country.

May 13 2011 www.mfa.am

HEADLINES OF THE WEEK

- **MAY 3:** *Despite NKR's warnings, Baku spoils for the fight* AH
- **MAY 5:** *Gomidas Institute in London publishes Talaat Pasha's Report on Armenian Genocide* AH
- **MAY 7:** *SOAD kicks off global reunion tour over South America in Edmonton* AH
- **MAY 8:** *May 9: Victory Day, Wedding in the Mountains and liberated Shushi* AH
- **MAY 11:** *Affordable Cars for Young Families program to launch in Armenia* AH
- **MAY 13:** *Three Armenian sambo wrestlers win bronze at European Championships* AH
- **MAY 16:** *Migration issues have priority position on Armenia-EU cooperation agenda* AH

SEYRAN OHANYAN: THE ARMY HAS PROPERLY FULFILLED ITS TASKS

In his interview with "Haylur" news program of the Public Television, Armenian Minister of Defense Seyran Ohanyan talked about the cases of ceasefire violations by Azerbaijan, about the activeness of snipers, as well as about the organization of the spring recruitment. In response to the question whether that the ceasefire regime has allowed Azerbaijan avoid serious casualties, win time and prepare for future military adventures, while, the Armenian side could have had greater achievements if not the ceasefire, Seyran Ohanyan said: "To be able to correctly evaluate from professional point of view, we should first of all understand the task that the Artsakh Armed Forces had, and how that task was solved. The liberation movement of Artsakh was not meant for taking over the whole Azerbaijan – it was meant to liberate Artsakh, ensure security for the people of Artsakh, and force the rival to peace. I think the army fully realized its task. As a lawful example of democratic society, today the people of Artsakh are ensuring their progress. As for Azerbaijan's winning time, I believe one should be naive to think that time has played in the hands of Azerbaijan only."

May 16, 2011 full story www.armradio.am

SERZH SARGSYAN: ARMENIA, SWITZERLAND HAVE POTENTIAL FOR BOOSTING COOPERATION

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan said that Armenia and Switzerland have great potential for boosting cooperation and expressed interest in full usage of the existing opportunities in economic cooperation. Sargsyan told a joint press conference with his Swiss counterpart Micheline Calmy-Rey that the countries can cooperate in jewelry and watchmaking industry, as well as agriculture, tourism, culture, science and art. Sargsyan also expressed gratitude for



granting Armenia a status of honorary guest at the Geneva International Book and Press Fair, the RA presidential press service reported.

May 3, 2011 www.panarmenian.net

WHOCARES GILLAN AND IOMMI'S BAND ALBUM PRESENTED IN YEREVAN

On May 6, Yerevan's Armenia Marriott hotel hosted a presentation of WhoCares music band album, created by Deep Purple lead singer Ian Gillan and Black Sabbath guitarist Tony Iommi. Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan attended the presentation. The album includes Out Of My Mind and Holy Water songs, as well as a new video for Out Of My Mind track. "WhoCares is a band born out of Gillan and Iommi's love for Armenia," the Prime Minister said at the presentation.

May 6, 2011 www.panarmenian.net



ABRAHAM: I AM THRILLED TO MAKE MY FIRST OPEN-AIR FIGHT



Arthur Abraham is getting ready for a big fight, the Super Six World Boxing Classic semifinals match. After the final press conference, the former IBF middleweight beltholder checked out The Home

Depot Center's outdoor tennis arena, where Showtime will air the fight on Saturday, May 14. "It's a great venue and I am thrilled to make my first open-air fight," he said, quoted by Ring TV. "There is a lot at stake. I know that Andre Ward is a tough and very skilled opponent. But my goal is to become a superstar in America, and in order to do so, I need to defeat Ward. I am prepared for a real battle and a huge victory for my legions of fans all over the world."

May 14, 2011 www.panarmenian.net

AFFORDABLE CARS FOR YOUNG FAMILIES PROGRAM TO LAUNCH IN ARMENIA

Armenian Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs is working on implementation of Affordable Cars for Young Families program. The program allows for young families to purchase a car within 5-7 years, with a 20% prepayment at annual interest rate of 12%. The total cost of the car is

Euro 15 thousand. As the Deputy Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs Arsen Karamyan told a news conference in Armenia, negotiations with foreign colleagues are held; the name of the company to be involved in the program won't be announced yet.

May 11, 2011 www.panarmenian.net

RA GOVERNMENT APPROVES OFFER ON SIGNING FTA WITHIN CIS



During the May 12 sitting, the Armenian government approved the offer on signing a Free Trade Agreement within the CIS. Armenian Minister of Economy Tigran Davtyan told journalists after the sitting that currently bilateral agreements on free trade are in force within the CIS. "This is a serious action for expanding multilateral ties within the CIS to promote trade and boost economic cooperation," Davtyan said, adding this is the path taken by the EU for integration. According to him, as a result of negotiations the parties managed to reach a common agreement, in which the free trade regime is agreed, while the multilateral agreement will include the content of all bilateral agreements. "We expect the agreement to be approved by all the CIS member states," noted Davtyan.

May 12 2011 www.panarmenian.net

ENERGY MINISTRY: SECURITY LEVEL AT ARMENIAN NPP EXCEEDS THAT OF FUKUSHIMA

The security level at Armenian NPP exceeds that of Fukushima, Armenian Minister of Energy and Natural Resources said. As Armen Movsesyan stated in the parliament, Armenian NPP is the only nuclear station in the world complete with natural circulation regime allowing for reactor cooling within 72 hours even without a forced circulation. As he pointed, out, based on information about NPP-related emergency situations worldwide, Armenian NPP develops a plan of actions to provide the power station safety.

May 11, 2011 www.panarmenian.net

TURKEY-ARMENIA FRIENDSHIP SYMBOL BEING DEMOLISHED



Now that the Los Angeles Lakers have been bumped from the National Basketball Association playoffs, Kobe Bryant, the team's star, faces an off-the-court challenge. This winter, Bryant alienated a large segment of the Lakers' fan base, members of California's large Diaspora Armenian community, with a decision to endorse Turkish

Airlines. Now, some hope Bryant will use the off-season to make amends. When the season started, many experts believed Bryant and his teammates would be playing the Miami Heat in June for the NBA championship. Now, he can only expect

to get more heat from diaspora Armenians. Bryant's summer vacation began far earlier than expected when his team suffered the ignominy of a 4-0 second-round series sweep at the hands of the Dallas Mavericks. The shocking way the Lakers, defending NBA champs, exited the playoffs could end up sharpening the residual resentment that many Armenian fans feel for Bryant. When the two-year Turkish Airlines en-

dorsement deal was announced last winter, Armenian diaspora groups reacted with outrage. The Armenian Youth Federation (AYF), the youth wing of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, as well as the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), issued statements calling on the Lakers' star to cancel the deal. Given the Turkish government's 49-percent stake in Turkish Airlines, diaspora groups suggested that Bryant was accepting "blood money" because of Ankara's refusal to acknowledge the 1915 Ottoman Turk slaughter of ethnic Armenians as genocide. The hard feelings intensified this spring as billboards featuring Bryant, who has never been to Turkey, began popping up in southern California to publicize the launch of direct Turkish Airlines flights from Los

The hard feelings intensified this spring as billboards featuring Bryant, who has never been to Turkey, began popping up in southern California to publicize the launch of direct Turkish Airlines flights from Los Angeles to Istanbul.

Angeles to Istanbul. He also appeared in a television commercial touting the direct flights. Turkish Airlines, which turned a \$191-million profit in 2010, is no stranger to using athletic stars to promote its brand. The company also has endorsement deals with two of the highest profile soccer clubs in Europe, Manchester United and FC Barcelona. Now that Bryant doesn't have to concentrate on basketball again until the fall, diaspora community leaders hope the supremely talented guard will have time to reflect on his endorsement choice.

May 9, 2011 www.eurasianet.org

CIS STATES TO AGREE EXEMPTIONS FOR FREE TRADE ZONE TREATY

CIS government heads will try to agree exemptions for a free trade zone treaty on May 19 in Minsk, Belarusian Foreign Ministry's official representative Andrei Savinykh said Thursday. "The sides will discuss a draft free trade zone treaty," Savinykh said. The Economic Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) approved a draft agreement on a free trade zone in mid-April that would move the grouping of most of the former Soviet republics further toward liberalized trade. Savinykh said the sides will agree exemptions from the free trade regime and undertake an obligation not to expand them more, and discuss the phas-

ing out of export duties in the CIS. Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov said in April export duties remained a stumbling block in the negotiations. Sergei Glazyev, secretary at large of the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, has said that a free trade zone might be launched as soon as by the end of 2011. The CIS is a loose association of former Soviet republics. It consists of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Ukraine has not ratified the CIS Charter but participates in its activities.

May 12, 2011 www.rian.ru

NAGORNY KARABAKH CONFLICT SETTLEMENT A PRIORITY SAYS OSCE

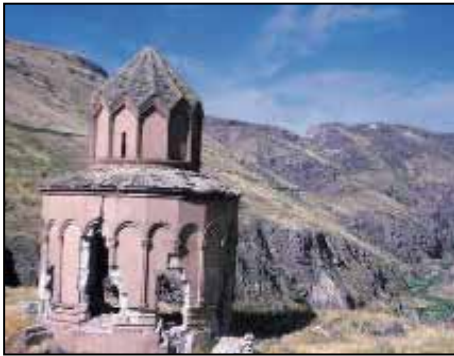
Resolving the Nagorny Karabakh conflict is one of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's top priorities, says the president of Lithuania, currently holding the organization's rotating chair. President Dalia Grybauskaite discussed the prospects for resolving the conflict during a meeting on Monday with Azerbaijani President Ilkham Aliyev. Nagorny Karabakh, a breakaway region on Azerbaijani territory with a predominantly ethnic Armenian population, has been at the center of a bitter conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. "Lithuania as the OSCE chair unambiguously speaks for a peaceful resolution," Grybauskaite said. "I told President Ilkham Aliyev that both [conflicting] sides should take steps to promote trust, such as the removal of snipers and the establishment of direct contacts ... An open



and benevolent dialogue is necessary." Aliyev informed Grybauskaite about the current state of the conflict as well as about the ongoing negotiations. "We [Azerbaijan] hope that by displaying a constructive approach to proposals of the OSCE Minsk Group, Armenia will take a step forward and begin its withdrawal from the occupied Azerbaijani territories. Peace will be established in the region after this," Aliyev's press service quoted him as saying after the talks with the Lithuanian president. Nagorny Karabakh, a breakaway region on Azerbaijani territory with a predominantly ethnic Armenian population, has remained in Armenian control since the late 1980s, when the region claimed independence from Azerbaijan to join Armenia. The conflict is estimated to have left more than 30,000 people dead on both sides between 1988 and 1994. The OSCE Minsk Group, comprising Russia, France and the United States, mediates the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorny Karabakh.

May 3, 2011 www.en.rian.ru

JOURNEY TO HISTORIC ARMENIA



The Ararat-Eskijian Museum and the Nor Serount (New Generation) Cultural Association will present a unique photo illustration; Journey to Historic Armenia on Sunday, May 15. Photography fans will have the opportunity to see original photos taken by Shiraz-Hovhannes Djeredjian, from 1960's onwards, capturing natural scenes, historical monuments and Armenian landscapes. Djeredjian is known as "the Photographer of the Armenian People." His story-telling photography preserves the richness of the Armenian History. Shiraz has a unique talent in showcasing his photographs. His ability to narrate, coupled with the breathtaking scenes and historical sites, take you back to the places ancestors of the Arme-

nian people, lived, prayed and battled. Shiraz started working with a French archaeological group as a photographer in the 1960-s. After touring throughout Lebanon, he began working on his lifelong desire and travelled to his ancestral home to photograph Armenian fortresses & churches in Western Armenia (Today's Turkey) and Eastern Armenia. His lifelong journey has given him the opportunity to photograph historic Armenian towns and architectural heritage in Cilicia, Aintab, Ourfa, Dikranagerd, Paghesh, the Daron mountains, Sassoun, Kharpert, Van, Akhtamar, Bayazid, Khout, Prnashen, Pssank, Dalvorig, Shadakh, Dzovassar, Pshoud, Mshkegh, Mount Maratoug, Marash, Malatia, Erzroum, Moush, Kars, Ani and the Iranian-Turkish frontier. By his account, he is the first photographer who took aerial photos of Mount Ararat. Within the next two decades, he continues his excursions and takes photos architectural sites and documents historical events. Shiraz also risked his life by photographing remote areas of the Artsakh region immediately following the war of liberation.

May 11, 2011

www.massispost.com

HAMSHEN ARMENIANS TO RESETTLE IN KARABAKH



Around 200 Hamshen-Armenian families living in Kyrgyzstan are opting to resettle in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. The leader of the Hamshen-Armenian community, Ruslan Karabadjakov has traveled to Yerevan, from where he will go to Artsakh to look into logistics for the relocation of 200 families there. "Our place is here, in Armenia," said Karabadjakov. "For 250 years fate has forced us to move from place to place—Adzharia, Cen-

tral Asia. Finally we've decided to seek refuge on our own soil." It is anticipated that the Hamshen Armenians will establish residency in the Mardakert region of Artsakh. The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic authorities will provide land and opportunities for economic developments and will subsidize this effort until the families are self-sufficient. Armenians of Hamshen in Western Armenia were conquered by the Ottomans in the 15th century. The majority of them were forced to convert to Islam. A resurgence of Hamshen Armenians has begun in recent years, with a group in Armenia forming community organizations and publishing a newspaper. The Hamshen Armenians settled in Adjaria, from where they were driven out and a large majority settled in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

May 12, 2011 www.armenianweekly.com

CYPRUS PARLIAMENT HEAD CALLS TURKEY INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST



President of the House of Representatives Marios Garoyian on Tuesday stressed the responsibilities of the international community in regard to Turkey's crime of the Armenian Genocide saying that if Turkey had been punished for that crime, the Turkish invasion against Cyprus may not had taken place. Describing Turkey as an international terrorist, he called upon Ankara to admit its crime and apologize to humanity for it. If Turkey had been punished for its enormous crime of the Armenian Genocide of 1915, the Turkish invasion against Cyprus may not have taken place, he stressed, addressing Tuesday a school event entitled Armenian Genocide from the past to the present. Garoyian stressed the responsibilities of the international community, saying that the Armenian Genocide must be condemned and recognized by all and called upon Turkey to admit its crime and apologize to the Armenian people and all humanity. He went on to add that the international community's failure to punish Turkey increases Ankara's intransigence and described Turkey as an international terrorist, who, through military power, attempts to impose its rule on neighbors and non-neighbors alike. As long as Turkey remains unpunished, the international community has no right to be proud of today's world order, he stressed, adding that the international community should feel as an accomplice as long as the Armenian Genocide and other ethnic cleansing crimes of Turkey remain unpunished.

May 11, 2011 www.asbarez.com

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