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Karabakh Armenian Army ‘Preparing For War’

STEPANAKERT -- Nagorno-Karabakh's armed forces have spent the past year strengthening their front-line positions and preparing for a possible new war with Azerbaijan, their chief commander said on Tuesday.

“I’m not waiting for [Azerbaijani] provocations, I’m waiting for war,” Lieutenant General Movses Hakobian told a news conference in Stepanakert. “Nagorno-Karabakh’s Defense Ministry and Defense Army were set up to wage war, and we are getting ready for that every day, every hour.”

“If there is a war, we will fight. If not, peace will be guaranteed,” he said.

According to Hakobian, Karabakh Armenian forces have dug up new trenches and carried out other “large-scale engineering work” along their main Armenian-Azerbaijani “line of contact” east and north of the territory. He also pointed out that they held their biggest ever military exercises last month.

Armenia’s Defense Minister Seyran Ohanian likewise stated in January that Armenian defense fortifications around Karabakh have been beefed up significantly in recent years. “We are maintaining the balance of forces vis-à-vis the Azerbaijani armed forces,” Ohanian insisted last month.

Azerbaijan’s leaders regularly threaten to forcibly win back Karabakh and Armenian-controlled territories surrounding it. They have also vowed to continue an ongoing military build-up



Karabakh army chief commander Movses Hakobian

fuelled by Baku’s massive oil and gas revenues.

Hakobian said that instances of ceasefire violations by Azerbaijani troops increased by more than half in 2010, resulting in seven casualties among Karabakh Armenian soldiers. He claimed that there were 30 attempted Azerbaijani incursions across the frontline and that his troops thwarted all but one of them.

The Armenian side also killed 41 and wounded 23 enemy soldiers in the course of the year, added Hakobian.

The Armenian death toll reported by the general is lower than the number of soldiers killed in non-combat incidents highlighting hazing and other chronic problems that have plagued the armed forces of both Armenia and

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Head of Armenia’s National Service for Seismic Defense Charged With Embezzlement

YEREVAN -- The head of Armenia’s National Service For Seismic Defense, Alvaro Antonian, has been charged with embezzlement and is risking up to eight years in prison, it emerged on Monday.

The Special Investigative Service (SIS) claimed that Antonian pocketed 3.3 million drams (\$9,100) from a French government grant that was used for building several seismic monitoring stations in the southeastern Vayots Dzor province.

In a written statement, the SIS said the grant worth 70,000 euros (\$92,500) was provided to the Armenian earthquake-monitoring agency in August 2009 through a non-governmental organization headed by Antonian. It said the official has already been formally charged under a Criminal Code clause carrying between four and eight years’ imprisonment.

Antonian, who has avoided pre-trial arrest, strongly denied the accusations. “I didn’t embezzle or waste anything,” he told RFE/RL’s Armenian service.

“I had those stations built properly and on time,” said Antonian. “Less



Alvaro Antonian

than half of the sum provided by the French side was actually spent ... We dreamed about having such state-of-the-art facilities for 20 years.”

Antonian added that the launch of the criminal proceedings was “very unexpected” for him and that he suspects “personal motives” were behind it. He did not elaborate, though, saying only that he did not fall out with any high-ranking government official.

“I’m a member of the [ruling] Republican Party. How could I have problems with the supreme authority?” argued the official.

EU Concerned Over Human Rights Protection in Armenia

Democracy development and human rights protection in Armenia are the issues the EU is much concerned about, Stefan Fule, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy, said in an interview with RFE/RL.

Fule stressed he is happy that Armenian authorities agreed to create a sub-committee on human rights protection within the framework of EU-Armenia relations. Tragic memories of the March 1 events must be left behind, he said. The events should not be forgotten but the country should move ahead releasing those who are still in jail in connection with March 1 events.

According to him, steps Armenia has to take in the direction of democratic reforms and liberalization of economy are important for stable development of the country and convergence with the EU. In this case Armenia can get political, economic and financial assistance of the Union.

He pointed out the Eastern Partnership program which is a reasonable offer and a chance to fulfill country’s objectives by means of reforms and



Stefan Fule

progress. There are no first and second priority countries for the EU, Fule noted, adding that Union’s assistance is determined by reforms that participating states are ready to carry out.

Fule noted that Armenia stands aside of the six states involved in the Eastern Partnership program, as a group of EU experts working at the ministries and giving advice concerning improvement of Armenia’s policy has been sent to the country very early. The EU commissioner believes it is conditioned by authorities’ commitment to implement reforms despite the country is still faced with many challenges.

Belgian Parliamentarian: International Recognition of the Armenian Genocide Seriously Progressed

Honorary member of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Belgium François Rola Du Vivie believes that over the past 15 years, the international recognition of Armenian Genocide has seriously progressed.

“Of course, recognition is not worldwide, but you have to look at what was achieved in the past 10-15 years. Significant progress” he said in an interview with Radio Liberty. “Of course, the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by Western European countries is important and, hopefully, one day the United States will follow.

But more important is, the recognition by Armenia’s neighbor Turkey. This is the essential question of the future, but in this context, I cherish some hope. Because, for example, in Belgium, we already have a third generation of Turks who were born here, this is the third generation that goes to university and is instilled by critical thinking in universities, they teach that history, which they did not hear from Armenians. I think that this is a great hope for the future.”

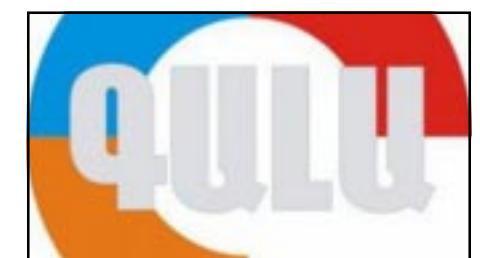
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Another Independent TV Denied New License

GYUMRI -- An independent television station based in Armenia’s second city of Gyumri lost on Thursday a government-administered tender for a new broadcasting license and will therefore be almost certainly taken off the air by 2015.

The development is the latest result of the country’s ongoing controversial transition to mandatory digital broadcasting overseen by the National Commission on Television and Radio (HRAH).

The process envisages, among other things, a significant reduction in TV and radio frequencies available for bidders. In particular, only one TV station will be allowed to operate in



each of Armenia’s ten provinces outside Yerevan starting from 2015.

The GALA TV channel, which has been at loggerheads with the Armenian authorities for the past three years, vied for one such digital frequency with another Gyumri-based broadcaster, Tsayg. The latter is loyal

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Government Employees Protest Against Layoffs



YEREVAN -- More than a hundred angry civil servants, many of them members of the ruling Republican Party of Armenia (HHK), rallied in Yerevan on Monday to protest against the government's decision to liquidate a division of the State Social Security Service employing them.

The government made the decision last month as part of a plan to streamline the agency subordinated to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Under that plan, elderly Armenians will have pensions transferred to their bank accounts or receive them directly from post office workers starting from next month.

Pensions have until now been delivered and paid to them by 300 or so employees of the State Social Security Service division to be disbanded by the end of this month.

The service employees denounced the decision as unjustified as they walked to the presidential palace and then the main government building in Yerevan. They handed officials letters demanding that the government at least delay the dissolution.

"I am now my family's only breadwinner," one woman told RFE/RL's Armenian service. "One of my family members is disabled, and we

live in a rented apartment."

"We want to keep our jobs and continue to meet the minimum needs of our families," said another protester.

The demonstrators said both they and the other laid-off workers were forced to join the HHK ahead of the disputed February 2008 presidential election that was won by the party's leader, Serzh Sarkisian, amid opposition allegations of massive fraud.

"They made sure that all 300 employees became Republican Party members on a single day," one woman told RFE/RL's . "Today they don't need these 300 persons in the Republican Party and so they are kicking them out."

"They were forcing us to bring votes for the party," claimed one of her colleagues. "Or else, we would not have kept our jobs. Now they have kicked us out in one fell swoop."

Some protesters angrily brandished HHK membership cards. "We don't need that party," said one of them. "We are going to hand these back to them, as a New Year gift."

The government decided to restructure the pension agency one month before dismissing its head, Vazgen Khachikian. The latter is a senior member of the ruling party.

Opposition Youths Get Suspended Jail Terms

YEREVAN -- Two young activists of Armenia's leading opposition group received two-year suspended prison sentences on Tuesday on charges of violent conduct which they rejected as politically motivated.

Davit Kiramijian, 19, and Sargis Gevorgian, 18, were among at least 15 people detained on May 31 in Yerevan in clashes between riot police and several dozen supporters of the opposition Armenian National Congress (HAK). The police used force to keep them from entering the city's newly renovated Liberty Square, Armenia's main venue for political gatherings since the late 1980s.

All detainees except Kiramijian, Gevorgian and his sister Ani, a journalist with the pro-opposition "Haykakan Zhamanak" daily, were released later that day. The Gevorgians were set free pending investigation three days later, while Kiramijian was remanded in two-month pre-trial detention. A Yerevan court unexpectedly ordered the university student's release in July.

The same court convicted Gevorgian of "shoving" a police of-

ficer and tearing off one of his epaulettes in an attempt to impede Kiramijian's arrest. The latter was found guilty of "group hooliganism."

The police and prosecutors claim that Kiramijian verbally abused and beat up a passerby together with several other HAK activists. It remains unclear why none of them was also prosecuted.

Both young men strongly denied the accusations throughout the five-month trial. "That the ruling will be illegal and unfounded was evident right from the start of the trial," Gevorgian told RFE/RL's Armenian service after it announcement. "It wasn't a surprise," said Kiramijian.

Liberty Square has been off limits to the HAK ever since the Armenian authorities quashed in March 2008 non-stop protests organized by its leader, former President Levon Ter-Petrosian, following a disputed presidential election. The Yerevan municipality has rejected dozens of rally applications lodged by the opposition alliance in recent months.

Armenian Highway Project Falls Behind Schedule

YEREVAN--A multimillion-dollar project designed to upgrade most of Armenia's main highways and enhance its transport communication with neighboring Iran and Georgia has still not been launched almost one year after being approved by the Armenian government.

Transport and Communications Minister Manuk Vartanian on Friday blamed the delay on the government's failure so far to find foreign contractors offering reasonable prices.

The project, estimated to cost around \$1 billion, envisages the expansion and repair of roads stretching from the Armenian-Iranian border to one of the two main Armenian-Georgian border crossings.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) agreed in September 2009 to finance it with a \$500 million loan to be disbursed to the Armenian government. It said the rest of the sum will be raised by Yerevan and "other development partners."

Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisian's cabinet gave the final green light to the scheme in January 2010. The then Economy Minister Nerves Yeritsian said up to \$120 million worth of construction work will be carried out in the course of this year.

The government subsequently called an international tender for the right to upgrade the first highway section.

"A tender took place [in November] but we declared no winners because the submitted bids were quite



expensive," Vartanian told journalists. He said the government will call another tender this spring.

Vartanian also revealed that he has personally written to two dozen "authoritative foreign construction firms" urging them to bid for the project contracts. "Local builders can not construct such a highway," he said. "It's going to be a new highway meeting higher standards."

The ADB also approved in 2009 \$500 million in funding for road construction in southern Georgia and the Black Sea region of Ajara in particular. The Armenian and Georgian governments had earlier agreed to jointly seek external assistance for rebuilding highways in those areas to substantially shorten travel between Armenia and the Georgian Black Sea coast.

Armenian officials have said that another aim of the infrastructure upgrades in the two South Caucasus states is to make it much easier for neighboring Iran to use Armenian territory for freight shipments to and from Georgia and other countries.

Armenian Survey Urges Greater Investment in Education



YEREVAN -- Armenia needs to invest more in public education if it is to enjoy sustainable economic development, a Yerevan-based economic think-tank said in a report presented on Friday.

The Economy and Values Center called for a "new model of economic development" that would put the emphasis on a high quality of university education.

"We believe that we need a fundamental change in the philosophy behind the setting of economic priorities," said Manuk Hergnian the private center's director. "That is, human capital must become the prime target of investments."

Hergnian did not specify just how the Armenian government should improve the quality of higher education that has declined considerably since the 1990s.

Sevak Hovannisian, another senior researcher at the center, said the educa-

tion sector has grown disconnected from the economy and its needs. "All over the world, education follows the economy, but in Armenia the education and economy are following different paths," he told RFE/RL's Armenian service.

Education Minister Armen Ashotian admitted the problem. "Unfortunately, the gap between higher education and the economy continues to exist," he said.

Ashotian blamed the problem on a lack of government funding for schools and universities. But Economy Minister Tigran Davtian, who also attended the presentation, disagreed.

"I certainly agree with Mr. Ashotian in that in any sphere, finances are very important," said Davtian. "But not only the volume of financial resources but also the efficiency of their use is very important."

Commentary on HR 252: The Unfortunate Fallout

By John Hughes
ArmeniaNow Chief Editor

A resolution calling for the United States to officially recognize the Armenian Genocide is effectively dead, as the Democrat-led 111th Congress concluded yesterday (Dec. 22) without Armenia's perceived champion, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, putting the resolution on the Full House agenda.

HR252 first breathed new hope into the long-standing struggle for recognition in March, when it dramatically passed a Foreign Affairs Committee by one vote, taking it to the next legislative level, which would have been a vote on the Floor of the Full House.

The resolution was seen to have a chance of being debated (though likely would never have been signed by President Barrack Obama even if it passed) right up till the last, added, day of the lame duck Congress, which will be replaced next month by a Republican majority.

There was no dissent, publicly, against hearing the resolution even from Obama, whose administration has typically and predictably favored Turkey's friendship over Armenia's feelings and has disfavored the overwhelming weight of historic justification against the same evil that drew bi-partisan US condemnation of the Holocaust, Darfur, Rwanda, Cambodia, Bosnia

Even if brought to a vote, passed, approved by Senate, chances that the resolution would actually lead to a change in US policy have never been realistic since April, 2009, when new-president Obama shrunk from his campaign promises and shriveled in stature to those of us whose votes were cast in belief that this president was different from a string of previous disappointing politicians.

Since, on his first April 24 "atrocities" speech, when Obama wilted under the understandable but regrettable reality of Turkey's strategic value to America, vs. Armenia's burden on US foreign aid budgets, the Armenian Assembly of America and the Armenian National Committee of America would have done better service fighting the current systemic injustice in today's Armenia, rather than their well-meaning but ultimately rebuked and costly

lobbying against a system not set up to reward moral integrity or correct historic wrong.

Following yesterday's latest disappointment, not only has another opportunity to raise world awareness passed, but its fallout has revealed, again, the unfortunate and universally Armenian character of a community splitting against itself, leaving blame as the bitter payoff for what should be commiseration.

For reasons that may be as rooted in history as the Genocide itself, the ANCA through its media arm, Asbarez, has in its day-after coverage of the non-vote, attacked the Assembly, accusing the lobbying body of cowardice and with vitriol that, whether unwarranted, surely seems untimely, wrote:

"As always, the Assembly spent the majority of the last two years kowtowing to the State Department and its interests and, in the last minute, is jockeying to become the representative of the Armenian community. It is time for the community to see the Assembly for the duplicitous organization that it is and call them out on their hypocrisy."

The Assembly invited criticism upon itself (and "kowtowing" may not be too harsh a judgment) when, in the wake of Pelosi's failure to find a backbone it, remarkably, praised the Speaker.

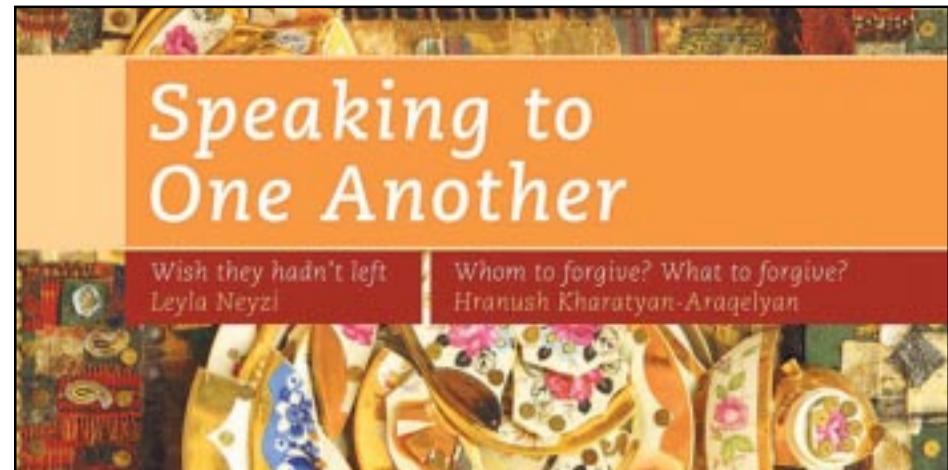
"...We also particularly commend the steadfast leadership of Speaker Nancy Pelosi . . ." said an Assembly statement, hours after the Speaker's "steadfast leadership" led nowhere.

Surely, such lame rhetoric begs the question whether the Assembly favors the approval of the Washington Beltway community or the respect of the Armenian-American community. But for ANCA to use the occasion to kick the fallen hardly serves to elevate the status of the accuser.

Worse, broadcasting evidence of the disproportionate divide in the relatively-small Armenian community that pitifully hinders what should be Diaspora's single unifying cause, no doubt sweetens the Turkish Delight that the enemy camp must be enjoying following its de facto repeat triumph over right.

"Speaking to One Another: Personal Memories of the Past in Armenia and Turkey"

Book Aims to Start Dialogue Between Turks, Armenians



Turkish and Armenian civil society have slowly but surely been building a constructive future despite "official" concerns about whether resolutions concerning Armenians being passed by countries' parliaments or the "genocide" being recognized by countries around the world.

One recent example of such an effort came to the fore with the new book, "Speaking to One Another: Personal Memories of the Past in Armenia and Turkey." The first part, "Wish they hadn't left," was written by Professor Leyla Neyzi from Sabanci University in Istanbul, while the second part, "Whom to forgive? What to forgive?" was written by Professor Hranush Kharatyan-Araqelyan from the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences in Yerevan.

The first story, titled "Wish they hadn't left: The burden of Armenian memory in Turkey," begins with: "One of our Turkish interviewees, in speaking about Armenians, made the statement quoted above: 'Wish they hadn't left.' This phrase is significant as it signals a nostalgic view of the past, whereby a lost society of harmonious relations between Muslims and Christians is (re)imagined. This discourse, which romanticizes the past, also conveniently elides the tricky question of agency by implying that the sizeable population of Christians of this land 'left' of their own accord."

The interviewee was Kamil, who was a student at the Gazi Mustafa Kemal Elementary School in the central Anatolian town of Aksehir in the early 1960s.

"Besides those who, like Kamil, are sorry about the 'separation,' there are also those who want to forget and hide the 'unity.' Kamil still encounters them, as he did in his childhood, and he still protests. When it is decided that an abandoned church is to be used as a theatre, the dust of the years must be removed: 'When the church is being washed, the man wants to turn the hose on one of the walls. As the sprayed water hits the wall, the paintings, this and that, appear. They whitewashed those walls because it's not to be

Armenian owned or operated.

About 100 cabbies showed up in court Tuesday. Arminak said they were all worried they would be jobless come the new year.

known that the Armenians lived here. Imagine what sort of destruction this is.' Kamil is happy about the restoration of the hamam, which he knew as gavurs' hamam in his childhood, as much as he is unhappy about the whitewashed walls."

In the second half of the book, a story from a relative of a survivor of 1915 haunts readers:

"My grandma did not rejoice in anything in her life. She died in pain and repeatedly said that it is payback for her sin: She left her small daughter on the road... I don't know, it is a very sad story, in the middle of the road they couldn't find food to feed. They had four children, this one was a baby girl, she cried all the time. A Turkish soldier was coming and hitting her all the time, saying 'be quick, don't lag behind.' She told that her grandfather said: 'Let us leave this child here on the road and go. At least we will be able to rescue the three boys... (The storyteller gets upset, silent, tries to collect his thoughts...) It took a long time for my grandma to die. She would open her eyes and say, 'I suffer for that child that I left behind'."

The book has been published in English, Turkish and Armenian.

Alin Ozinian, an Istanbul-based Turcologist who translated the book from Armenian to Turkish, said oral history work is an impressive way of preserving history.

"Oral history is maybe the most romantic way of preserving history. Those stories are very impressive," she said, adding that the book will help people tell more of their stories, which are usually hidden.

The book underlines that there is now an opportunity for Armenians to visit Turkey. "People go and find the villages of their ancestors, sometimes also the house they lived in, important places their grandfathers told them about: the cemetery, church, sacred places, trees, forests."

There is also an exhibition that opened on Dec. 17 in the Cezayir Exhibition Hall in Beyoglu that displays the memories of ordinary people in Armenia and Turkey about the intertwined past using their own words.

"They are relieved they can continue supporting their families as a result of the court ruling," Arminak said.

Armenian American Cabbies Win Court Round in Santa Monica Taxi Franchising Dispute

LOS ANGELES TIMES -- A judge Wednesday issued a temporary restraining order barring Santa Monica from instituting a new taxi franchising system that a group of Armenian American cabdrivers charged discriminated against them.

Judge Robert H. O'Brien gave attorneys until Jan. 7 to show why the preliminary injunction shouldn't be granted in the case filed by the Taxi Drivers Assn. of Santa Monica, which sued the city Tuesday in civil court in downtown Los Angeles.

The association represents five Armenian American-owned or operated cab companies — and 300 Arme-

nian American cabbies — who sued Santa Monica after they were all denied franchise licenses with the city.

"If this TRO had not been issued, approximately 300 Armenian American cabdrivers operating within the city of Santa Monica would have their licenses to operate their cabs revoked," said Tamar Arminak of the Geragos & Geragos law firm, which represents the cabbies.

Santa Monica officials could not be reached for comment.

The controversy began in June when the city, after reviewing franchise applications, chose five of 13 cab companies, none of which were

Dilijan Concert Series Presents International Program

By Charles Fierro

One of the benefits of life in a major cosmopolitan center is the opportunity for audiences to hear music from many parts of the world. On their December 19 concert at the Herbert Zipper Hall in downtown Los Angeles, the Dilijan Chamber Music Series presented a festive program of international works. Of special interest to the Armenian community, recent pieces by the eminent composers Edward Mirzoyan and Gagik Hovuntz received eloquent performances by distinguished Southern California musicians.

Mirzoyan, composer of the beloved "Shoushanik" elegy for string orchestra, is as well known for his film scores as for his concert music. He turns 90 this season. On this occasion he was represented by his relatively recent Poem for Cello and Piano (2001), a superbly crafted neo-Romantic essay demanding the entire resources of the cello in a luminous cantilena whose roots in Armenian culture proved simultaneously subtle and powerful. The great arc of the music unified the piece convincingly, even during the impassioned cadenza.

Gagik Hovuntz celebrates his 80th birthday this year. His three-movement Sonata-Duet ((1981) for violin and cello is manifestly a substantial contribution to the chamber music literature. Boldly chromatic, structurally solid, it is vigorous music of intensity and courage. In the second movement, the extreme harmonics are not merely for effect, but are completely necessary and integrated into emotional texture of the whole.

The great English composer, Benjamin Britten (1913-1976), created his song cycle, The Poet's Echo for soprano and piano while in residence

at the Composers' Union retreat in Dilijan, Armenia in 1965. We like to think that the natural beauty of this resort in the Caucasus Mountains inspired the composer to produce one of his signature works. His insight into the Russian text by Alexander Pushkin, combined with his consummate craft of composition and unerring understanding of the human voice resulted in a moving experience for listeners.

The balance of the program was devoted to more familiar fare: Seven Duets for two violins by Bartok, Schubert's virtuosic concert aria, Shepherd on the Rock for soprano, clarinet and piano and the Spanish composer Pablo Sarasate's entertaining Navarra for two violins and piano.

All the performances exemplified the high standards of the Dilijan Concerts. Pianist Armen Guzelimian, violinists Ana Landauer and Movses Pogossian, cellist Armen Ksajikian and clarinetist Gary Bovyer brought exemplary expertise to their roles. Special credit belongs to Elissa Johnston, whose radiant soprano voice and dramatic projection in the Schubert aria and the Britten song cycle contributed much to make this concert a memorable event.

As a special bonus, the program opened with performances by three gifted piano students from the Lark Music School in Glendale. Jenny Mirzoian played a Prelude by Edward Abrahamian; Meghrie Babikian offered the complete "Pathetique" Sonata by Beethoven, and Avetis Allen Dishigrikyan expertly delivered Edward Pashinian's Toccatina and Arno Babajanian's ever popular "Dance of Vagharsapat".

Charles Fierro is a concert pianist and Professor Emeritus of Music at California State University, Northridge.

Karabakh Army 'Preparing For War'

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Karabakh. Eleven of them were shot dead in three separate incidents that occurred at various Karabakh army units in the second half of this year.

"These three incidents have had a quite serious negative influence on

the Defense Army's image," admitted Hakobian. He said the Karabakh army command is determined to "rectify the situation."

Hakobian asserted at the same time that the overall number of various crimes committed by servicemen fell by 14 percent in 2010.

Another Independent TV Denied New License

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to the central and local governments, rarely airing criticism of their policies.

The HRAH has for months been expected to grant the tender to Tsayg, and it lived up to those expectations on Thursday. The regulatory body announced the decision in the conspicuous absence of any GALA representatives.

"We anticipated no other decision," GALA's owner Vahan Khachatrian told RFE/RL's Armenian service "We already said two months ago that there is going to be a political decision."

GALA fell foul of the Armenian authorities after breaking ranks in September 2007 to provide airtime to op-

position leader Levon Ter-Petrosian. It has since been the country's sole TV channel that regularly features opposition politicians and broadcasts reports critical of the government.

Later in 2007, GALA was raided by tax officials and accused of tax evasion, a charge it strongly denied. A fund-raising telethon in early 2008 allowed the small TV station to pay almost 27 million drams (\$75,000) in fines imposed by tax authorities and avoid closure.

The result of the Gyumri frequency bidding was announced one week after the HRAH again refused to give a frequency to A1+, a Yerevan-based independent TV station that was controversially pulled off the air in 2002.

Tribute to Armenian Genocide Saviors Worldwide

Together with the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, Argentine businessman of Armenian descent Eduardo Eurnekian has decided to organize a tribute to the Armenian Genocide Saviors worldwide.

The board of the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation at its headquarters in New York unanimously approved the initiative to pay tribute to the Armenian Christian heroes who helped Jews and others persecuted by the Nazis during the Second World War.

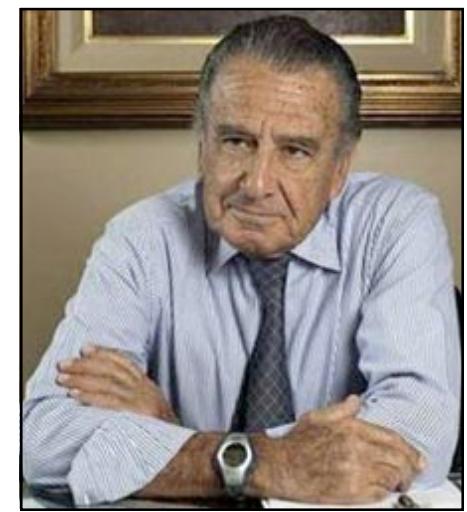
The monument will be the first of its kind in the world and will be located in the city of Buenos Aires, the foundation says in a recent news release.

Fourteen Armenians are reported to have been recognized for their rescuing of people persecuted by the Nazis and their allies. It is noteworthy to mention that in the year 301, Armenia became the first country to adopt Christianity as State religion.

"The study of Armenian history requires educating children so that the Armenian martyrdom never is forgotten. We are committed to the study and investigation of these tragic events and to the promotion of the results," said Baruch Tenenbaum, founder of the Raoul Wallenberg Foundation.

In the capital of Argentina the announcement was made by officials of the NGO after a meeting with Buenos Aires Mayor, Mauricio Macri, and the Armenian Ambassador, Vladimir Karmirshalyan, who enthusiastically gave their approval to a plan that has no precedent.

In addition, on 21 September 2010, on the 19th anniversary of Independence of the Republic of Armenia, the Wallenberg Foundation announced the beginning of a new educational program dedicated to promote the Ar-



menian culture, heritage, as well as the legacy of the Armenian heroes of the Genocide. This initiative includes the production of a special website that will present news, columns and interviews in Armenian and English.

A few days after the announcement, in October 2010, Eduardo Eurnekian was named "Man of the Year" by the Armenian General Benevolent Union. The award recognized his work on behalf of the Armenian community and his trajectory in the business world.

The award was presented during the 86th Anniversary Gala of the organization.

"Eduardo Eurnekian is a formidable role model. His vision goes far beyond the limits of the business scope. We must imitate him. He is a light that guides us." Tenenbaum said.

Eduardo Eurnekian was born on December 4, 1932 in Buenos Aires. He is considered one of the most successful entrepreneurs in Latin America. His enterprises are related to infrastructure, agriculture, energy, retail and banking, in Argentina, Armenia and other countries around the world.

International Recognition of the Armenian Genocide Progressed

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Talking about what, in his opinion, will continue the process of recognition of the Armenian Genocide by Turkey and the international community, du Vivre, in particular, said: "I am from that generation which thought that the Berlin Wall will never collapse, and suddenly it happened. Since this was preceded by an intelligent network for 20-30 years, which eventually yielded results. The same thing I think about the Armenian Genocide - I am sure the day will come when Turkey recognizes it."

"I can tell you about my con-

versation with Abdullah Gul, when he was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. He was displeased with the fact that there was no discussion on the Armenian Genocide among Armenian and Turkish historians, he said that it would be a good idea," recalled Du Vivre, "I told him - Mr. Minister, you're talking about establishment of a commission of historians from the country that you do not even recognize. Do not you think that the first step in this direction should be the opening of borders and the exchange of ambassadors? To what Gul replied: "Yes, what you saying is reasonable."

