

President appoints 12 Ministers



Several ministers of the Armenian Cabinet have been named as President Armen Sarkisyan formally signed orders on appointments and re-appointments at the recommendation of the Prime Minister. 11 ministers re-appointed in Armenian Cabinet.
 Re-appointments include Zohrab Mnatsakanyan as FM, Davit Tonoyan as Minister of Defense, Ara-

yik Harutyunyan as Minister of Education and Science,
 Suren Papikyan as Minister of Territorial Administration and Development,
 Erik Grigoryan as Minister of Environmental Protection, Felix Tsovakyan as Minister of Emergency Situations,
 Hakob Arshakyan as Minister of Transportation, Communication and Information Tech-

nologies,
 Tigran Khachatryan as Minister of Economic Development and Investments,
 Atom Janjughazyan as Finance Minister, Arsen Torosyan as Healthcare Minister and Artak Zeynalyan as Minister of Justice.
 The new appointment in the Cabinet is Zaruhi Botoyan as Minister of Labor and Social Affairs.

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UN looks forward to working closely with the Armenian Government

The United Nations looks forward to working closely with the Armenian Government, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said in a congratulatory message to Nikol Pashinyan on his appointment as Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia.

“Please accept my congratulations on your appointment as Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia. The recent parliamentary elections, for which the United Nations provided technical support, marked an important milestone for the democratic development of Armenia, which I hope will see further progress



in the spirit of inclusivity and transparency,” Mr. Guterres said.

“I am confident that under your

leadership, Armenia will continue to uphold the principles and goals of the United Nations. As you proceed with the ambitious

reform agenda, the United Nations looks forward to working closely with you and with your Government to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, and to strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights and the rule of law,” he added.

The UN chief reaffirmed that the United Nations stands ready to support the significant efforts of the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in order to help the sides achieve peace in the long-standing Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Serzh Sargsyan said to stay in politics



Former President Serzh Sargsyan has no plans to retire from active politics or resign as chairman of the Republican Party of Armenia (HHK), an HHK spokesman indicated on January 18.

Eduard Sharmazanov insisted that Sargsyan did not leave the political arena when he stepped down as Armenia’s prime minister in April amid mass protests against his continued rule.

“There is no such issue on our agenda,” Sharmazanov told reporters when asked about possible changes in the leadership of the former ruling party.

“[Sargsyan] is the chairman of our party. We had elected him; our congress had elected him. The president still has something to say and to do,” he said after a

meeting of the HHK’s governing board chaired by Sargsyan.

Sharmazanov made clear in that regard that the HHK is planning to hold its next congress in 2020, rather than this spring, as was suggested by some senior party figures earlier.

Sargsyan, who governed Armenia for ten years, has made very few public statements and appearances since his dramatic resignation which came two weeks before the protest leader, Nikol Pashinyan, was elected the country’s prime minister. The protest movement was sparked by Sarkisian’s attempt to extend his decade-long rule after Armenia’s transformation into a parliamentary republic engineered by him.

Sargsyan did not run in snap parliamen-

tary elections held on December 9. The HHK’s list of election candidates was headed by former Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan. Some observers suggested that the latter could soon replace the ex-president as HHK leader.

According to official election results, the HHK won only 4.7 percent of the vote, narrowly failing to clear the 5 percent threshold to enter the new parliament. Pashinyan’s My Step bloc got as much as 70 percent.

Also, the new authorities brought embarrassing corruption charges against Sarkisian’s former chief bodyguard and one of his two brothers. The other brother had his \$30 million Armenian bank account frozen by the National Security Service last summer. Pashinyan demanded afterwards that Aleksandr Sargsyan “return the money to the state budget.”

“While Pashinyan fought against us, we don’t fight against him,” said Sharmazanov. “We fight against policies which we believe do not serve the security of Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh).”

Sharmazanov claimed that Pashinyan’s government has made “many mistakes” since taking office in May. In particular, he denounced its plans to downsize the state bureaucracy by reducing the number of government ministries.

Armenian, Azeri FMs Meet Again

The OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs plan to meet the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan in the near future, the mediators said in a statement following a meeting with the Foreign Ministers of the two countries.

Co-Chairs Igor Popov of the Russian Federation, Stéphane Visconti of France and Andrew Schofer of the United States of America hosted consultations between Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov and Acting Foreign Minister of Armenia Zohrab Mnatzakanyan on 16 January in Paris. The Co-Chairs met separately and then jointly with the Ministers. Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk also participated in these meetings. This was the fourth meeting of the

two Ministers.

State Secretary for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France Jean-Baptiste Lemoine reviewed the outcomes of the talks with the participants. The Co-Chairs were received at the Elysée Palace, where they briefed top diplomatic advisers of President Emmanuel Macron.

The participants expressed to the Ministers their appreciation for the ongoing efforts of the sides to maintain an environment conducive to intensive results-oriented negotiations.

The Ministers discussed a wide range of issues related to the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and agreed upon the necessity of taking concrete measures to prepare the populations for peace.



During the meetings, the Co-Chairs reviewed with the Ministers key principles and parameters for the current phase of the negotiation process.

The Ministers and the Co-Chairs considered next steps toward a possible summit between the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia in order to give a

strong impulse to the dynamic of negotiations.

The Co-Chairs underlined the importance of possible mutually beneficial initiatives designed to fulfill the economic potential of the region.

The Co-Chairs plan to meet the leaders of the two countries in the near future.

Group of businessmen from Sharjah to visit Armenia to discuss concrete programs

President of Armenia Armen Sarkissian on January 17 met with Ruler of Sharjah, Dr. Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, the Presidential Office informed.

The President highly valued the warm attitude of the Ruler of Sharjah towards the Armenian people, the vivid evidence of which are the programs implemented by his support and donation.

The two officials discussed the means of expanding the bilateral relations and attached specific importance to the cooperation in science, research and education sectors.

“We are ready to further develop and deepen the relations between our friendly states and peoples”, the Armenian President said.

Based on the discussion an agreement was reached that a group of selected businessmen will visit Armenia to get acquainted with the cooperation opportunities and discuss concrete programs.

The officials also discussed the possibility of signing an agreement on declaring Sharjah and any Armenian city as sister cities.

President Armen Sarkissian invited the Ruler of Sharjah to visit Armenia which the latter agreed with a great pleasure.



Ex-deputy FM to lead Armenia PACE delegation



Armenia's delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) will be led by ruling faction (My Step) lawmaker, chairman of the parliamentary committee on foreign relations, Ruben Rubinyan.

Rubinyan is a former deputy foreign minister who served from mid-2018 until being elected to parliament.

The press service of the National Assembly said the delegation will include – MP Hovhannes Igityan (My Step), MP Naira Zohrabyan (Prosperous Armenia) and MP Edmon Marukyan (Lusavor Hayastan).

Alternate delegates include Vladimir Vardanyan (My Step), Sos Avetisyan (My Step), Tatev Hayrapetyan (My Step) and Mikayel Melkumyan (Prosperous Armenia).

Former minister wanted for corruption

The Special Investigation Service (SIS) of Armenia has pressed charges against former minister of nature protection of Armenia Aram Harutyunyan based on the sufficient evidence obtained during the preliminary investigation of the criminal case of receiving bribe of particularly large amount.

As the press service of the SIS informs, Aram Harutyunyan, being a high ranking official, received bribe of particularly large amount through other people.

According to the indictment, in 2007 Aram Harutyunyan provided mining licenses and



allowed to carry out mine exploitation to a businessman and received particularly large amount of bribe for that, 4.2 billion AMD or 14 million USD at that time.

In order to hide the criminal source of the money, Harutyunyan transferred the money to a Swiss bank account of an international organization and then started to transfer the money to a bank account of a person in close relations with him engaged in some business activities in Armenia.

Manhunt is declared for Aram Harutyunyan.

Kocharyan's pre-trial detention extended for another two months

The Yerevan court on January 18 approved the motion to extend the pre-trial detention of 2nd President of Armenia Robert Kocharyan for two months, an official of the Prosecutor General's Office Vahagn Muradyan told reporters, reports Armenpress.

"Robert Kocharyan's pre-trial detention will be extended for two months, and the motion of the defending side on using bail has



been rejected", Muradyan said.

Kocharyan's attorneys submitted motion to release the 2nd President from custody on bail on December 26, 2018.

Robert Kocharyan has been charged on July 26, 2018, over the 2008 March 1 case, under the Article 300.1 part 1 of the Criminal Code for breaching the constitutional order of the Republic of Armenia.

Prosperous Armenia faction plans to come up with numerous legislative initiatives

The Prosperous Armenia faction plans to present numerous legislative initiatives in the new Parliament. The faction's principle is to act as dictated by the people, faction MP Gevorg Petrosyan told reporters during today's briefing, reports Armenpress.

"The Prosperous Armenia party plans to come up with numerous legislative initiatives. We will start fulfilling our main duties with the principle of effective cooperation with our partners. We



are full of hope that the My Step faction, being an absolute major-

ity, will carefully listen to all key issues voiced by the opposition faction", the lawmaker said, adding that he also doesn't think that all initiatives of the opposition faction will succeed.

The MP said the opposition factions also have no plans to automatically vote in favor of all initiatives presented by the My Step faction. "The problems in the Parliament will be solved based on the conditions of mutual respect, as its number one beneficiary are the people", he added.

Armenia launches dialogue with EU member states on visa liberalization



Armenia launched a dialogue with the EU member states on visa liberalization within the framework of the Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed in No-

vember 2017 and ratified by Armenia in April 2018, the Police of Armenia told Noyan Tapan.

The Armenian delegation led by Deputy Police Chief, Police Colonel Hovhannes

Kocharyan, has departed for Germany on January 15-17. The delegation also included advisor to the foreign minister Davit Sargsyan, head of the Department of Europe at the MFA Tigran Samvelyan and Head of the Migration Service Armen Ghazaryan.

During the visit the delegation members had a number of meetings with the German officials.

At the meetings the German side praised the productive cooperation based on the international legal documents on readmission, highlighting the high level of mutual trust and the willingness to meet Armenia's legitimate expectations.

The sides attached importance to the necessity to clarify the timeframes for implementing the provisions of the future action plan on visa liberalization, the framework of mutual commitments, as well as discussed other issues of mutual interest.

Armenia's FM meets with IOF Secretary General in Paris

Foreign minister of Armenia Zohrab Mnatsakanyan on January 17 met with Secretary General of the International Organization of La Francophonie Louise Mushikiwabo in Paris, the Armenian foreign ministry told Noyan Tapan.

FM Mnatsakanyan congratulated Louise Mushikiwabo on assuming office and reaffirmed Armenia's full support to the implementation of her mission and concrete priorities set by her aimed at further developing the Organization as a key platform based on the common values.

The sides highly valued the holding of the La Francophonie summit in Yerevan recently both in content, organizational and representational terms. They agreed that the decisions and agreements reached during the summit have created good preconditions for further deepening the cooperation in different sectors in the La Francophonie region.

During the meeting the acting FM introduced the Secretary General on Armenia's chairmanship priorities and future programs in the La Francophonie, expect-



ing a close cooperation with the IOF Secretariat for their implementation. Zohrab Mnatsakanyan said Armenia will continue taking active steps to solve the problems facing the Organization, raise its position and reputation in the international arena,

also through development of close cooperation with international and regional organizations such as the UN, UNESCO and the Council of Europe. In this context both sides highlighted the promotion of dialogue with the African Union as a key direction.

Armenian government reports major rise in tax revenue

Armenia's State Revenue Committee (SRC) has reported a more than 14 percent increase in the amount of taxes and customs duties collected by it in 2018.

The SRC chief, Davit Ananyan, said on January 16 the total tax revenues worth 1.3 trillion drams (\$2.7 billion) also exceeded the Armenian government's 2018 target by 3.5 percent. He attributed the major increase to SRC efforts to improve tax collection and administration.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's government pledged to crack down on widespread tax evasion when it took office in May. Ananyan promised at the



time that its tax revenues "will be substantially higher than planned" this year.

According to Pashinyan, over the next two months alone the SRC recovered more than 20 billion drams (\$42 million) of

unpaid taxes from 73 companies.

The 2019 state budget commits the government to increasing its budgetary revenues by another 15 percent this year. This would enable the government to further cut the budget deficit while boost-

ing public spending by around 12 percent.

Armenian tax revenue rose by more than 7 percent in 2017. The improvement was particularly visible in the national customs service long regarded as one of the country's most corrupt government agencies.

Ananyan, who served as a deputy finance minister before taking over the SRC, acknowledged in May that his predecessor, Vartan Harutiunyan, tackled the informal sector of the Armenian economy "quite effectively." But he said the fight against tax fraud will be tougher and "even more effective" during his tenure.

Georgia to preserve role of transit country for Russian gas supply to Armenia - Mamuka Bakhtadze

Georgia is not planning to renounce its role as a transit country for Russian gas supplies to Armenia, ARMENPRESS reports Georgian PM Mamuka Bakhtadze told reporters on January 18 in Tbilisi, answering the question if Georgia plans to revise the agreement with Gazprom on gas supplies to Armenia. The agreement expired on December 31, 2018.

"Georgia significantly benefits from its role of a transit country and we will continue to preserve it. It is in line with the interests of our country. As refers to the agreement, the negoti-

ations with Gazprom will start when a date is scheduled", he said, noting that so far there is no negotiation plan. "And if something new appears in the contract, the public will be informed by the Ministry of Economy of Georgia", Bakhtadze said.

Until January 2017 Georgia received 10% of the transited. In the beginning of 2017 Gazprom and Georgia signed another agreement, according to which the Russian side paid for the transit mainly in cash, while starting from 2018 only in cash.



Italian Renco's CEO assures construction of new power station in Yerevan will launch soon

Minister of energy infrastructures and natural resources of Armenia Garegin Baghramyan on January 18 held a meeting with Giovanni Rubini, Chief Executive Officer at Italy's Renco S.p.A.

At the meeting Giovanni Rubini provided information about the works carried out for the construction of new power station in Yerevan, praising the cooperation with the Armenian government. He said the works are being carried out in accordance with the timetable and without any obstacles. He assured that the financial summary of the program will be completed soon, and the construction works will launch.

Minister Baghramyan attached importance to the proper implementation of the construction works and the maintenance of the timetable.

250 million USD will be invested for the implementation of the program.

The construction will last 26 months and will involve 1000-1200 people.

230 jobs with high salaries will be created during the operation of the plant.

Romania's national flag carrier to conduct direct Bucharest-Yerevan flights

Romania's national flag carrier "Tarom" will conduct direct Bucharest-Yerevan flights starting from April 3. This will be an affordable option for Armenians to visit other European countries by transit.

ARMENPRESS reports the flights will start from April 3, for now twice a week. "We hope to increase the number of flights by June, making it 3-4 times a week. Of course, there is the demand. This is a cheaper option compared with other airlines flying to Europe. It takes 1-1.5 hours less to reach Europe through Bucharest than through Kiev or Moscow", the representative of the airline in Armenia Ararat Muradyan said.

He noted that at the beginning there will not be so many visitors to Romania, instead, transit flights will be more. "Waiting 1-4 hours in Bucharest people will be able to fly to 15-16 cities", Muradyan said.

Deputy Minister of Transport, Communication and IT of Armenia Armen Arzu-



manyan said that the policy of open skies gives various airlines an opportunity to

enter the Armenian market and conduct flights.

Armenia ranked "free" in Freedom on the Net 2018

According to the Freedom on the Net 2018 released by the Freedom House, Armenia has made a move in the ranking from "partly free" to "free".

Political rights and civic freedoms have been taken into account during the calculation of points.

The report says internet freedom in Armenia improved after citizens effectively used social media platforms, communication apps, and live streaming to engender political change in April 2018. Online content and social media apps were not restricted during the reporting period. Digital activism and live streaming were essential to the Velvet Revolution's effectiveness.

According to the report, internet access in Armenia continues to grow. Internet is ubiquitous in the capital, Yerevan, with most shopping malls, cafés, universities, and many schools providing free Wi-Fi access. There is also Wi-Fi connectivity in central areas of Yerevan, buses on certain public routes, the metro, some railway stations, and several taxis.

Freedom House presented the countries which made the biggest moves in the internet freedom in 2018.

Pashinyan meets businessmen in Zurich, discusses opportunities to implement various investment programs in Armenia

Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan, who is in Switzerland on a working visit, had meetings with a group of businessmen in Zurich during which he discussed the opportunities and prospects of implementing different investment programs in Armenia.

In particular, Pashinyan and Chair of the Switzerland-Armenia chamber of commerce Mike Baronian discussed issues relating to expanding the ongoing investment program in pharmaceuticals in Armenia. Mike Baronian said currently the Yerevan company is engaged in the reprocessing of the raw material, and their goal is also to organize medicine production in Armenia and carry out an export. It is expected to invest more than a dozen million USD in the next five years by creating new jobs with high salaries. The official introduced the PM on investment programs relating to energy production and copper reprocessing via the latest technologies.

Swiss businessman Hans Schweikart introduced the Armenian PM on a major investment program in solar energy production. Nikol Pashinyan welcomed the Swiss businessman's initiative and presented the government's future strategy in the energy field, as well as the development prospects of that field. He proposed the

businessman to discuss the issue linked with the implementation of the program with the ministry of energy infrastructures and natural resources aimed at effectively implementing it.

Pashinyan also met with the delegation led by CEO of the Franck Muller Group, famous Swiss-Armenian businessman and philanthropist Vartan Sirmakes, which included a group of businessmen. During the meeting a number of issues relating to the implementation of investment programs in the field of agriculture, food industry, construction, banking system, jewelry and professional education were discussed. The PM attached importance to the implementation of the presented programs in Armenia and expressed the government's readiness to assist their implementation. Pashinyan said the government will continue the steps aimed at improving the business environment and is interested in the implementation of new investments and creation of jobs in Armenia.

Pashinyan also discussed the implementation of Old Yerevan program with Vartan Sirmakes. The PM highlighted the importance of preservation of historical-cultural monuments and the need to ensure maximal care for these buildings.

Pashinyan to take part in World Economic Forum in Davos

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan will be among world leaders attending the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, which kicks off on January 20.

The prime minister's press office reported that Pashinyan will meet with leaders of countries, international organizations, as well as businesses attending the summit. He will also attend the Informal Gathering of World Economic Leaders (IGWEL) and World Civil Society Forum in Davos.

Pashinyan is also scheduled to meet with the members of Switzerland-Armenia Commerce Chamber and Swiss businessmen in Zurich.

Ahead of the summit, the organizers featured an op-ed penned by Pashinyan, who discusses Armenia's future and the impact of the popular movement that brought him to power. Below is the op-ed.

Shaping the Future Of Democracy in Armenia

By Nikol Pashinyan

The changes that took place in Armenia last year are indeed historic in nature and magnitude. The Velvet Revolution led to the triumph of democracy in our country. The popular movement was based on a wide consensus embraced not only by all layers of our society but also by the six-million-strong Armenian Diaspora. It was an absolutely non-violent transformation without a single victim. Love, fraternity, and tolerance were the slogans of the Armenian popular movement.

The snap parliamentary elections held last December confirmed and reinforced the democratic aspirations of our society. They demonstrated that the political forces representing the new Armenia do indeed enjoy wide public support.

These democratic changes did not trigger any tectonic shifts in our foreign policy. Armenia remains committed to its international obligations and foreign policy partners. Moreover, I believe that the democratic Armenia can be a more valuable contributor to the political-military and economic unions which it is participating in.

Where did this demand for change in Armenia come from?

First, historically, the core values of our society have been deeply rooted in the ideas of freedom and justice. In 1988, Armenia was one of the first countries to shake the very foundations of the communist regime through



a nationwide popular movement. Democratic aspirations have remained strong in Armenia since that time.

Second, Armenia is a landlocked country with limited natural resources facing heavy security challenges, which emanate from the uneasy geopolitical situation in the region. As a result, Armenian people could not afford the luxury of having extractive institutions causing economic inefficiency and impeding the development of country. Like many other nations, Armenia needs to develop its economic and political institutions in order to create conditions conducive to economic, political, and social progress. Yet the former regime drove our country to a standstill. The modernization of national institutions, therefore, became an imperative, while democracy was the only viable solution which could help us reach this fundamental goal. We didn't see any alternative to democracy.

Achieving coherent democracy is a difficult process – it requires substantial time, unconditional commitment, and even a change in mentality. We have only taken the first steps in this everlasting path.

With the unprecedented level of public confidence and legitimacy, the Government of Armenia adopted an ambitious reform agenda. The robust fight against corruption, eradication of monopolies, the establishment of a level playing field for all economic and political actors, the elimination of poverty, and an independent judiciary system are among the priorities of our Cabinet.

Therefore, having finalized the political transformation, currently our government is concentrated on the economic transition. We have opened an entirely new page: now there is a true competitive environment for doing business in Armenia. We are improving the

regulatory framework, eliminating barriers to trade, modernizing infrastructure, increasing the competitiveness of the Armenian products, and attracting foreign direct investment. Along with such traditional fields as mining, agriculture, diamond processing, textiles, mineral water, wine and liquors, we are boosting industry-based economy, focusing on sectors with the greatest growth potential, including communication technologies, education, water resources, health, tourism, and renewable energy.

Armenia, as a member of the Eurasian Economic Union (E.E.U.), plays a good bridging role between the E.E.U. and the European Union, creating multiple opportunities for western companies to do business within the E.E.U., utilizing the knowledge and skill of Armenians, thoroughly familiar with this market and its rules. As a member of WTO, Armenia benefits from Most Favored Nation status with all other WTO member countries. We signed the "Comprehensive and Enlarged Partnership Agreement" with the European Union, which is connecting Armenia to the E.U. both economically and politically. Thus, there all the opportunities for foreign investors to start their business in Armenia.

We are on the path to building a truly technological and industrial economy that would meet 21st-century standards with ever wider opportunities and prospects to position Armenia as a country producing high-value and knowledge-intensive goods and services with creative human capital at its core.

We are determined to move forward on this path in order to reach our final goal – a stable, democratic, and economically developing Armenia based on the rule of law and accountable governance. We have no right to fail. We ought to justify the trust of our people and protect democracy.

Human Rights Watch praises new Armenian leadership



GERMANY – Kenneth Roth, executive director of the Human Rights Watch, speaks at a press conference during which he presented its annual report for 2019, in Berlin, January 17, 2019

Human Rights Watch (HRW) on January 17 commended Armenia’s new authorities for holding general elections widely recognized as democratic and “reviving” a criminal investigation into the 2008 post-election violence in Yerevan.

“International observers found that the December parliamentary vote was conducted with ‘broad public trust,’ and was free from abuses that marred past elections, including vote buying and pressure on voters,” the New York-based watchdog said in a statement attached to its annual report on human rights practices in more than 100 countries.

“Ensuring a free and fair vote is an important first step for Armenia’s new leadership,” the statement quoted Giorgi Gogia, HRW’s associate Europe and Central Asia director, as saying.

“But it’s only a beginning. The authorities need to use this mandate to push through reforms to address the human rights problems that brought people to the streets,” Gogia added in reference to last spring’s “velvet revolution” that brought Nikol Pashinyan to power.

HRW’s World Report 2019 says that Pashinyan “inherited a country plagued with corruption and myriad human rights problems,” including police brutality, domestic violence and discrimination against LGBT people.

“In a commendable move, the new authorities made progress in existing investigations into abuses that had been stalled for years,” it says, referring, among other things, to the renewed investigation into the deadly breakup of 2008 post-election protests in Yerevan.

The HRW report cites criminal charges brought in July against former President

Robert Kocharyan and two retired generals accused of illegally using Armenian army units against opposition supporters protesting against alleged fraud in the February 2008 presidential election. “The previous investigation was one-sided, with 52 protesters sent to prison,” it says.

Kocharyan, who was again arrested in December, strongly denies the accusations, saying that they are part of a political “vendetta” launched by Prime Minister Pashinyan. The latter was one of the main speakers at the 2008 protests and spent about two years in prison because of that.

“As the authorities deal with past grievances, they should fully respect due process rights for all detainees and ensure independence of the judiciary,” said HRW.

The watchdog also urged the authorities in Yerevan to tackle domestic violence and discrimination against LGBT people and ensure “quality education” for children with disabilities.

“The [former] authorities approved an action plan in February to carry out the 2017 domestic violence law, but the [current] government needs to increase the number of shelter spaces for domestic violence survivors, establish state-run shelters, and conduct public awareness campaigns about the issue,” said the HRW statement.

“The authorities also need to address widespread harassment, discrimination, and violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people,” it added. “Political parties and some politicians tried to exploit widespread homophobia and made hateful and derogatory comments during the pre-election period.”

Armenia, Kazakhstan deepen cooperation on prevention of emergency situations

The Armenian government approved the draft on ratifying the agreement on Cooperation between the governments of Armenia and Kazakhstan in the field of civil protection, prevention and elimination of emergency situations. The agreement has been signed in Almaty on September 12, 2018.

During today’s cabinet session acting minister of emergency situations Felix Tsolakyan said in recent decades the Armenian-Kazakh relations have steadily developed.

“The friendly ties between the two countries have also intensified. The activities in the emergency situations field have a special place in these relations. This is conditioned by the geographical position of the two countries, as well as the membership to the same military-political bloc (CSTO) and participation in the same economic cooperation organizations – the CIS, the EAEU”, the acting minister said. “The specialists of both sides quite successfully cooperate within the CSTO and CIS, develop joint documents and etc”.



Yerevan Home Care is the first and the only one company launched in 2011 in Yerevan. The company is providing a 24/7 qualified care service to older adults, disabled people, people suffering from chronic diseases or those who need postoperative care, as well as to people with dementia.

Creating the company we concenter to support many families that live abroad and have their elderly family members staying in Armenia. We succeed in supporting these families to have not only a solution of the raised problem but to have a deep feeling of satisfaction that their relatives are in good hands.

The organization's greatest wealth is educated, professional, skilled, experienced staff and people with high values and psychological knowledge.

We treat each patient with a strong sense of responsibility and show an individual approach to the families, at the same time maintaining the accepted norms and using contemporary approaches.

Taking your relative's care on our shoulders, we bring harmony between the different generations.

Apart from the professional knowledge the company pays a great attention to the humanitarian qualities of the serving staff, to their kindness, patience,



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care aides, home care aides, and home health aides. Home health aides might also provide limited assistance with things such as taking blood pressure or offering medication reminders.

Nursing care is more related for patients after surgery, traumas, different chronic diseases

Rehabilitation service is for people who need professional rehabilitation in their recovery periods after some types of diseases and surgery. Dementia / Alzheimer /special care is for people with dementia in all stages when you worried about their safety or a health problem.

Yerevan Home Care provides all type of medical equipment that will increase the quality of like of your loved ones. (rent of the equipment is acceptable)

Transportation is a key issue for older adults and for people with temporary or permanent disabilities especially in Armenia where the streets and buildings are not adjusted for disabled people. Yerevan Home Care is providing a transportation service for people that are in wheelchairs.



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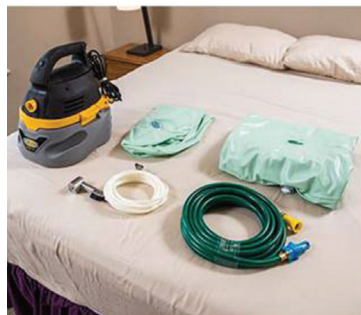
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We assure that we will be your irreplaceable assistant in helping and surrounding your relative with care and support.

We provide service to all type of patients who needs care assistance.

Personal care is for elderly people who are alone and need support in daily living, such as dressing, bathing, feeding, or meal preparation. This type of care includes personal



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Hrant Dink remembered 12 years after assassination

Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink was commemorated in a ceremony on the 12th anniversary of his assassination, Daily Sabah reports.

In Istanbul's Şişli district, a large crowd gathered outside the bilingual Agos newspaper, where Dink worked as editor-in-chief before his murder in 2007.

Dink's wife Rakel and children Arat, Delal and Sera were present in the ceremony which was also attended by various significant names from Turkey's politics, media and arts circles.

A minute of silence was observed at 3:05 p.m., when Dink was assassinated, which was followed by a commemorative speech given this by



Filiz Ali, daughter of famous Turkish poet and writer Sabahattin Ali, who is widely believed to be killed in a political murder in April 2, 1948.

Ali reminded that the masterminds behind neither his father's nor Dink's murders were revealed so far, with murders of journalists, writers, artists and scientists causing unhealable scars in the society.

Ogün Samast, the assailant who killed Dink at the age of 17, was captured by security forces soon after the murder. However, the trial on who instigated Samast to the murder and which institutions turned a blind eye to the threats against Dink's life remains a mystery.

Turkish playwright writes exciting letter on Hrant Dink's death anniversary



Turkish novelist and playwright Adalet Ağaoğlu sent an exciting letter to Hrant Dink's family and "Agos" newspaper on the occasion of the 12th anniversary of Dink's murder. ARMENPRESS presents the letter published in Agos.

"Family of my much beloved Hrant

Dink, 'Agos' periodical...

Hrant Dink, my brother, I do not forget you even for a second. I remember you alive during the conferences on peace, standing together with us. It was important that an open-minded person, who is opposed to violence and stands for peace like you talked

about such topics. I do not forget for a minute. You talked so beautifully that, believe me, every time I wanted to hug you with enthusiasm. It's a pity, great pity. Violence took you away from us. I have always been against violence, but when we lost you as a result of violence, my convictions reinforced.

Dear Hrant, when once I heard that you were taken to the court I immediately came in front of 'Agos'. I was shouting 'I will not give you to anyone'. We together were trying to prevent your imprisonment. What a pity you fell victim to violence. I miss you very much, Hrant Dink.

My Hrant Dink. I and my husband bowed in front of your memory and greatness. I lost my husband who respected you very much in July. So I became even smaller, but I still resist. The best thing I can do for the memory of both of you is that I do not abandon my own ideas and moving forward along my own path".

Armenia's Leading Telecom Operator Founding General Manager Ralph C. Yirikian: "The greatest achievement is to restore belief in one's own abilities"

The First New Year in a New Home

The biggest miracle of the New Year for Avdalyan family was the newly built house; the best gift for everyone. The construction that had lasted eight years was finally completed thanks to the support of partner organizations. The young family living in Ner-

problem we shall not neglect. One of the aims of our program is to give people an opportunity to rise up with our support. Those, who overcome the despair once, change their attitude to solving problems forever. I think we have been able to wake up this confidence in people. The greatest achievement is to restore belief in one's own abilities," Vi-

vidual approach.

"The New Year is a family holiday, and we are glad that as a result of our cooperation, the family celebrates it in their own home. This family now has their "castle" and is full of hope for the future," said Fuller Center for Housing Armenia President **Ashot Yeghiazaryan**.

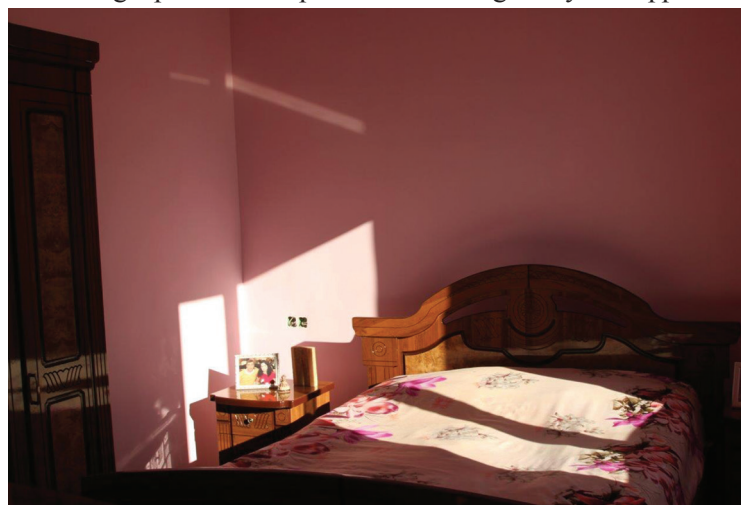
Summing up the accomplish-

convert the embedded on-net airtime to MBs:

1 minute = 1 MB

To exchange the minutes with MBs, one needs to enter "My VivaCell-MTS" application from the smartphone.

The application is available on both Google Play and App Store.



kin Bazmaberd village of Aragatsotn region was the last beneficiary family of VivaCell-MTS and Fuller Center for Housing Armenia 2018 housing project.

Before celebrating housewarming, Sarmen and his family lived with Sarmen's parents in a small house for years. The start of the New Year was special for the family. The young mother of two children, Arevik, was delighted to finally have a chance to furnish a corner of her own she had dreamt of for years.

"I have dreamed of having our own kitchen, our own corner for so long. There is nothing better in the world than welcoming the New Year in your own home. May this New Year bring joy to all families," said **Arevik**.

The heads of partner organizations shared the joy of the New Year and the housewarming with the young family.

"Social problems oftentimes make families experience extreme hardships. That is a big



vaCell-MTS Founding General Manager **Mr Ralph C. Yirikian** said.

The cooperation which started 10 years ago, has been fruitful for 162 families living in the regions of Armenia. Focusing on families in the borderland villages, and equally the families being homeless for various reasons, the partners have been trying to solve housing problems through indi-



ments of the previous year, the partners also discussed issues related to the projects to be implemented in 2019.

VivaCell-MTS gives an opportunity to convert on-net minutes to MBs

Till January 31, 2019, (inclusively) "Viva" prepaid and postpaid tariff plan subscribers can

Notes

- The remaining airtime after the conversion should be at least 500 minutes.

- The prepaid subscribers can use the converted MBs till the expiration of the packages provided by "Viva" tariff plans. The postpaid subscribers can use the converted MBs till the last day of the calendar month.

- In case one of the packages is consumed before the expiration of the validity period, one can reactivate the packages of the current tariff plan by dialing *161*4#: in case of reactivation the remaining packages, as well as the converted MBs are zeroed and new packages are activated with a validity period of 30 days.

- Converted MBs are not available in roaming.

City Spa, one of the founders of Aesthetic medicine in Armenia, that was established 14 years ago, is still following the main principles that were implemented since the launch: to use only clinically and scientifically approved, highly effective and safe with FDA approval products and equipments imported mainly from UK and Europe.

Depilation: Last year City Spa launched a very safe, painless and fast acting new machine for permanent hair removal. It is the “Primelase” produced by Cocoon Medical. The machine has an innovative



international leading brands such as ZO Skin health (Beverly Hills US), GLO therapeutics (ColoradoUS). Skin Ceuticals (US) etc.

And that's not the all: pedicure, manicure and massage will make your day.

You are welcome to City Spa. The aesthetic doctor's consultations and skin diagnostics with Skin Scanner is fee. The atmosphere in City spa is full of love and peace. The pricing strategy is very flexible and discounts for good long term clients are available during whole year as well as different Gift Cards.

method (dynamic mode) which allows to treat very large areas of the body within few minutes.

Localized fat removal: In Armenia the first cryolipolysis method was implemented by City Spa in 2016. Cooltech is an innovative machine that acts as a none surgical lyposaction, with a new method of cryolipolysis for permanent localized fat removal and body reconturing. It is safe, painless and very effective. City Spa is equipped also with the Wellshape machine for anti-cellulite treatment.



Anti aging Facial treatments and Care: City Spa offers the latest scientifically approved anti aging treatments and products for care. The doctors are regularly improving their qualifications in London and Paris, bringing the new inventions to Armenia. The products used in City Spa are only



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Zodiac Weekly Forecast



Aries (March 20–April 19) The full moon side of this eclipse season may bring fresh news to light about someone in the family. For example, a pregnancy is announced. The new moon calls upon you to take steps toward beginning something new in your career, even if it feels like a risk. Start your research.



Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

The accent of this eclipse cycle will be on travel, education, care of vehicles and relationships to siblings, roommates, neighbors, or others who daily traverse your life. Habit patterns of thought will be brought to consciousness so negative thinking can be corrected. You will be introduced to new practical life skills.



Gemini (May 20–June 20)

During this new eighteen-month series of eclipses you will be learning to value yourself in new ways. Alongside of that comes education in the management of money and other resources, such as time and energy. There will be less assistance from others in these arenas, but you are creating these resources for yourself.



Cancer (June 21–July 21)

The full moon eclipse may have brought you to the point of becoming firm about who you are and who you are not. An issue of identity and declaration of self is at hand. The new moon eclipse represents your inherent need to attend to relationships. Your partner may be starting something that affects both your lives.



Leo (July 22–August 21)

On this eclipsed full moon you may discover or reveal one or more secrets. Dreams and intuition are very strong. Issues of mental health are emphasized. The strength of the interplay between physical and emotional health is apparent. You likely will vow to change health habits that are destructive.



Virgo (August 22–September 22)

The results of contributions you have made to your community become apparent. “Your community” may include organizations to which you belong, your friends, and various connections you have made along the way. A new beginning occurs in the arena of romance or life with children, the territory of play.



Libra (Sep. 23–Oct. 22)

Matters concerning your family and property will be accented for the next 18 months. Old problems in relationships, even with the deceased, will surface for cleansing and healing. A new family member may enter the scene, or you may begin to spend more time with family in general.



Scorpio (October 23–November 21)

You will be mulling over where you stand with regard to moral, ethical and philosophical issues. Information has come to your attention that pressures you to recognize a fallacy in your belief system. This is disturbing, but it is the only way to mature the system. What has been a black/white issue has a lot more gray than you previously thought.



Sagittarius (November 22–December 20)

This eclipse pattern will emphasize issues of sexuality, intimacy, and material accumulation. Reorganization of debt, investments and your estate may be in progress. You may now be more conscious than usual about existential matters related to life, death, and what is on “the other side” of normal, waking consciousness.



Capricorn (December 21–January 19)

The eclipses of this new eighteen month series will draw your attention to your partnerships. Patterns from your childhood history needed to be uncovered, repaired or removed in order to allow your growth into a more mature relationship. Psychotherapy may be truly helpful. There may be a crisis of consciousness at this time.



Aquarius (January 20–February 17)

This eclipse pressures you to concentrate on improvement of work related relationships and health maintenance. Diet, exercise and improvement of physical regimen will become imperative. Honing your management systems in personal and work arenas is necessary to create order in your daily work routine.



Pisces (February 18–March 19)

This eclipse pattern emphasizes your progeny or other personally creative births. Romantic ventures will be intensely emotional and self-revealing. You will be learning a few lessons in discernment concerning friendships and associations that no longer serve you well.

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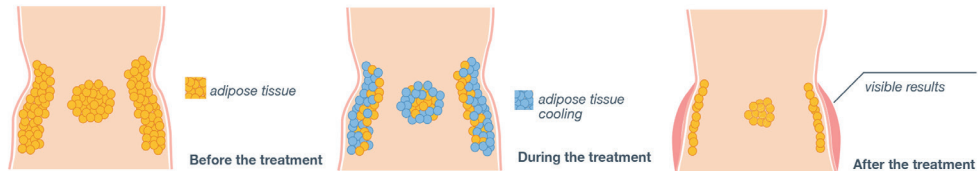
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