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Ministers Downplay Possible Surge in Russian Gas Price For Armenia

By Shoghik Galstian

YEREVAN (Azatutyun.am) — Armenia's economy would not be hit very hard by a sharp rise in the price of Russian natural gas threatened by Moscow, two senior government officials in Yerevan insisted on Monday, November 2.

"I do not think we should speak about a possible increase in gas prices with an apocalyptic mindset. Furthermore, I do not believe it would have catastrophic consequences," Finance Minister Vahe Hovhannisyan told an opposition lawmaker concerned about the socioeconomic impact of such a scenario.

"I just want to remind you that last year there was also similar talk of a possible increase in the price of gas, and now there is similar talk again," he said at a meeting in the Armenian parliament.

Economy Minister Gevorg Papoyan acknowledged, meanwhile, that a gas price hike is a real possibility. He said the Armenian government is making contingency plans for it.

Armenia imports from Russia the bulk of natural gas used by its power plants, households and some sectors of the domestic economy, paying the Gazprom monopoly $177.5 million per thousand cubic meters of the fuel. By comparison, the market-based gas price in the European Union currently exceeds $1,100 per thousand cubic meters.

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Armenian PM Praises Loyalists After Parliament Brawl

YEREVAN (Azatutyun.am) — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan praised lawmakers from his Civil Contract party and mocked their opposition colleagues after they brawled on the Armenian parliament floor on Thursday, October 29.

The several dozen men spent about 30 minutes punching and kicking each other during a session of the National Assembly. Some of them were visibly injured as a result. Vahagn Aleksanyan, a parliament vice-speaker, threw a chair at deputies representing the main opposition Strong Armenia party.

Ruben Rubinyan, the parliament speaker also affiliated with Civil Contract, was in no rush to interrupt the session despite the ugly scenes.

"I will deliberately not interrupt the session so that everyone can see all of this," he said. "The session will continue. You decide if there is going to be a brawl or not? Either disperse or take your seats."

The brawl only intensified, leading Rubinyan to eventually call a break and order security guards into the auditorium. It then continued in the parliament lobby.



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan speaks during a news briefing in Yerevan, October 29, 2026



Opposition and pro-government deputies brawl in the Armenian parliament, Yerevan, October 29, 2026

"I thought they [opposition deputies] were at least physically strong. Turns out they aren't," Pashinyan scoffed in a social media post shortly afterwards.

He explicitly defended his loyalists at a news briefing held later in the day.

"Whether with a chair or something else, [their behavior] was proportionate and right," said Pashinyan.

The violence broke out during a speech by Civil Contract's Taron Chakhoyan, who previously served as a deputy chief of the prime ministers staff and headed a government agency regarded by the Armenian opposition as one of Pashinyan's key propaganda mouthpieces. Chakhoyan launched a scathing attack on Narek Karapetyan, a nephew of billionaire Samvel Karapetyan leading Strong Armenia's parliamentary group, in response to opposition allegations about government corruption.

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Sometimes Sour Is Good Too



Master chef Betty Arouyan with cooking series director Rita Balyozian answer audience questions (photo Aram Arkun)

Preparing Pickled Vegetables at Boston Tekeyan's Cooking Workshop

By Aram Arkun
Mirror-Spectator Staff

WATERTOWN — Guests learned how to make Armenian pickled vegetables (*ttoo* or *tourshoo/tourshi*) at the Tekeyan Cultural Association Boston Chapter's cooking class on Wednesday, October 28 at the Baikar Building. Master chef Betty Arouyan demonstrated the method while audience members had their own ingredients ready to follow. They also enjoyed some nice light foods and desserts prepared by Tekeyan chapter members in a relaxed atmosphere before leaving with a full bottle of their own personally made pickled vegetables.

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Armenian Soldier Found Dead as Spate of Non-Combat Deaths Continues

By Ani Ghulinyan

An Armenian soldier has been found dead from a gunshot wound at an undisclosed military unit, in the latest non-combat death recorded in the Armenian military. Despite the government forming a commission to investigate non-combat deaths, the number of such deaths continues to rise, with more than 30 occurring in 2026 alone.

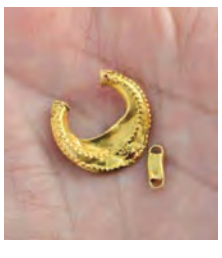
Non-combat deaths are a recurring issue in the Armenian army. The Helsinki Citizens Assembly Vanadzor reported in 2025 that although the number of deaths has decreased, the percentage of suicides and attempted suicides are still high in the overall death toll. The report also highlights that the causes of murder and suicide in the armed forces are often connected to a culture of military

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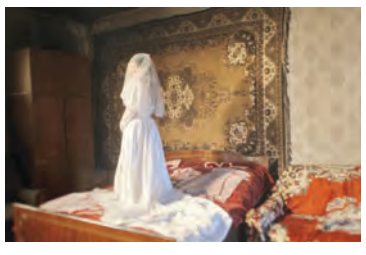
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ARMENIA

NEWS *from* ARMENIA

Pashinyan Administration Projects 2027 State Budget Revenues at $10 Billion

YEREVAN (ArmenPress) — Armenia's state budget revenues for 2027 are projected at 3 trillion 604 billion drams, or approximately $10 billion, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said during discussions on the draft 2027 state budget at a joint session of parliamentary committees on November 2.

"We should note that the increase in the revenue component of the 2027 state budget compared to 2017 stands at 191%, meaning that revenues have nearly tripled compared to 2017. The increase compared to 2021 is 114%, or approximately 2.1 times," Pashinyan said.

Capital expenditures are projected to increase 3.2-fold compared to 2017 and 3.5-fold compared to 2021.

"In the education sector, the increase compared to 2017 is projected at 181%, or 2.8 times, and 2.3 times compared to 2021. In the science sector, the increase is 2.7-fold compared to 2017 and 2.5-fold compared to 2021," the Prime Minister said.

Pashinyan emphasized that as the budget grows, expenditures and expectations also increase. "The higher the level of well-being in the country, the higher the level of well-being people expect. The funds in Armenia's state budget are generated through the activities of the citizens and residents of the Republic of Armenia," Pashinyan said.

Armenia to Expand Universal Health Insurance Coverage

YEREVAN (primeminister.am) — At a regular Cabinet meeting on October 29, chaired by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, the government approved bills on making amendments and additions to the law "On Universal Health Insurance" and on making an amendment to the law "On Medicines." As Minister of Health Anahit Avanesyan noted, starting January 1, 2027, citizens earning a salary of up to 200,000 drams will also be included in the Universal Health Insurance system. According to the Minister, the burden of the insurance premium — totaling 10,800 drams per month — will be distributed as follows: 4,400 drams will be subsidized by the state, 4,400 drams will be covered by the employer, and 2,000 drams will be paid by the employee.

Avanesyan also announced that, in response to requests from numerous citizens, starting January 1, 2027, employed individuals will be given the opportunity to voluntarily insure their dependents. The bills also establish mechanisms for including drivers who provide taxi services via electronic platforms into the insurance system.

Judge Disciplined for Refusing to Try Armenian Archbishop

By Naira Bulghadarian

YEREVAN (Azatutyun.am) — Armenia's Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) agreed on Tuesday, November 3, to a government demand to discipline a judge who recused himself from the trial of an archbishop arrested late last year amid Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's attempts to depose Catholicos Garegin II.

Archbishop Arshak Khachatryan, who heads the Armenian Apostolic Church's Chancellery in Echmiadzin, is prosecuted on a drug-related charge rejected by him as politically motivated. The Investigative Committee claims that he had one of his aides plant a marijuana joint in the backpack of a protester who demanded Garegin's resignation in 2018.

Armenia's Court of Appeals released Khachatryan from custody shortly before the start of his trial in March. A district court judge in the Armavir province, Gevorg Manukyan, agreed to recuse himself from the case during the opening session of the trial. Khachatryan's lawyers argued that he used to work for the Investigative Committee's Armavir division and may therefore not be impartial.

The Justice Ministry complained to the SJC about Manukyan's decision, demanding disciplinary action against the judge. The judicial watchdog responded by formally reprimanding him. It did not immediately elaborate on its decision.



Judge Gevorg Manukyan, October 3, 2026

The ministry also initiated last month disciplinary proceedings against another Armavir court judge, Hakob Manukyan (no relation to Gevorg), who similarly refused to preside over a separate trial of Garegin and six other senior clergymen that began in August. Manukyan cited a conflict of interest, arguing that he had received a lawyer's license from Ara Zohrabyan, Garegin's chief lawyer who used to head the national bar association. The SJC is scheduled to meet and discuss disciplinary action against him on November 16.

Critics view the ministry's actions as an attempt to pressure or intimidate judges seen as impeding Pashinyan's controversial campaign against the supreme head of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Pashinyan launched the campaign in June 2025 shortly after Garegin accused Azerbaijan of committing ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh and illegally occupying Armenian border areas during an international conference in Switzerland.

Three archbishops, including Khachatryan, and one bishop were arrested in the following months on different charges strongly denied by them. Six other bishops as well as the Catholicos himself were indicted but not arrested early this year. The Armenian Church and its backers view the crackdown as a gross violation of the church's separation from the state guaranteed by Armenia's constitution and other laws.

Tests Find Bacterial Contamination in Dairy Products From 11 Armenian Producers, Consumer Group Says

YEREVAN (panorama.am) — Laboratory testing of dairy products from 11 Armenian manufacturers has revealed bacterial contamination and other quality violations, with particularly widespread problems found in cottage cheese, the head of a consumer rights organization said.

The Informed and Protected Consumer NGO commissioned tests of dairy products as part of a public monitoring initiative, submitting samples to three internationally accredited laboratories, including the National Reference Laboratory operated under Armenia's Food Safety Inspection Body, FDA Laboratory LLC and Standard Dialogue Laboratory LLC.

At a news conference on October 30, NGO chairman Babken Pipoyan said the results produced by the three laboratories showed only minor discrepancies. He also pointed to a significant disparity in testing costs, saying the state laboratory's fees were disproportionately high.

The samples were purchased from supermarkets selected following preliminary monitoring to ensure that dairy products were consistently stored at the required refrigeration temperatures.

The study covered products manufactured by 11 companies: Marianna, Ashtarak Kat, Yeremyan Products, Tamara and Ani, Marila, Milkin, Bonilat, Biokat, Chanakh, Arzni Dairy and Igit. The products tested included milk, sour cream, cottage cheese and chechil cheese.



Babken Pipoyan at news conference

Pipoyan described the findings in the cottage cheese sector as particularly alarming, saying tests had detected not only bacteria belonging to the coliform group but also yeasts and molds.

According to the laboratory results, coliform bacteria were detected in 3.2%-fat milk produced by Ashtarak Kat.

The same bacteria were found in sour cream manufactured by Yeremyan Products (25% fat), Arzni Dairy (20% fat) and Bonilat (17% fat).

Coliform bacteria were also detected in cottage cheese produced by nine companies: Tamara and Ani (7% fat), Marianna (9%), Ashtarak Kat (7%), Yeremyan Products (12%), Milkin (9%), Bonilat (9%), Biokat (12%), Chanakh (7%) and Arzni Dairy (9%).

Additional deviations involving yeast and mold levels were identified in cottage cheese produced by Bonilat (9% fat), Tamara and Ani (7%), Arzni Dairy (9%), Chanakh (7%), Marila (9%) and Biokat (12%).

Tests also found deviations in lactic acid bacteria levels in cottage cheese from Marianna (9% fat), Chanakh (7%), Marila (9%) and Milkin (9%).

In addition, coliform bacteria were detected in Igit's 240-gram package of stick-shaped chechil cheese.

Pipoyan said the organization would submit the full laboratory findings, together with the testing methodology, to the Food Safety Inspectorate for review and further action.

Armenian PM Praises Loyalists After Parliament Brawl

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"Mr. Karapetyan, it's not my fault that your entire extended family is involved in politics, including your uncle, your father and your cousin. The latter even tried to establish a ministry in our country. It's not my fault that he wanted to create a ministry that would satisfy all women," he said, provoking a furious reaction from Karapetian.

Representatives of Strong Armenia and the other parliamentary opposition force, the Hayastan bloc, accused the pro-government majority and Rubinyan in particular of provoking the brawl.

"Ruben Rubinyan bears full responsibility for what happened," said Strong Armenia's Marianna Ghahramanian. "He encouraged the instigator Taron Chakhoyan's provocations and did not intervene in any way."

"They came [to power] promising to fight against corruption, but now they themselves are mired in corruption from head to toe, which is why this is a very sensitive topic for them," charged Anna Grigoryan, Hayastan's parliamentary leader.

Rubinyan blamed Karapetyan for the violence, saying that Chakhoyan "did not use a single offensive word in his speech."

Brawls and scuffles on the parliament floor became a regular occurrence in Armenia after the 2018 "velvet revolution." They had rarely happened in the past. Pashinyan's critics have for years accused him of encouraging pro-government lawmakers to physically assault oppositionists. The premier and his political allies deny that.

ARMENIA

AUA Launches Master of Arts in Education Program

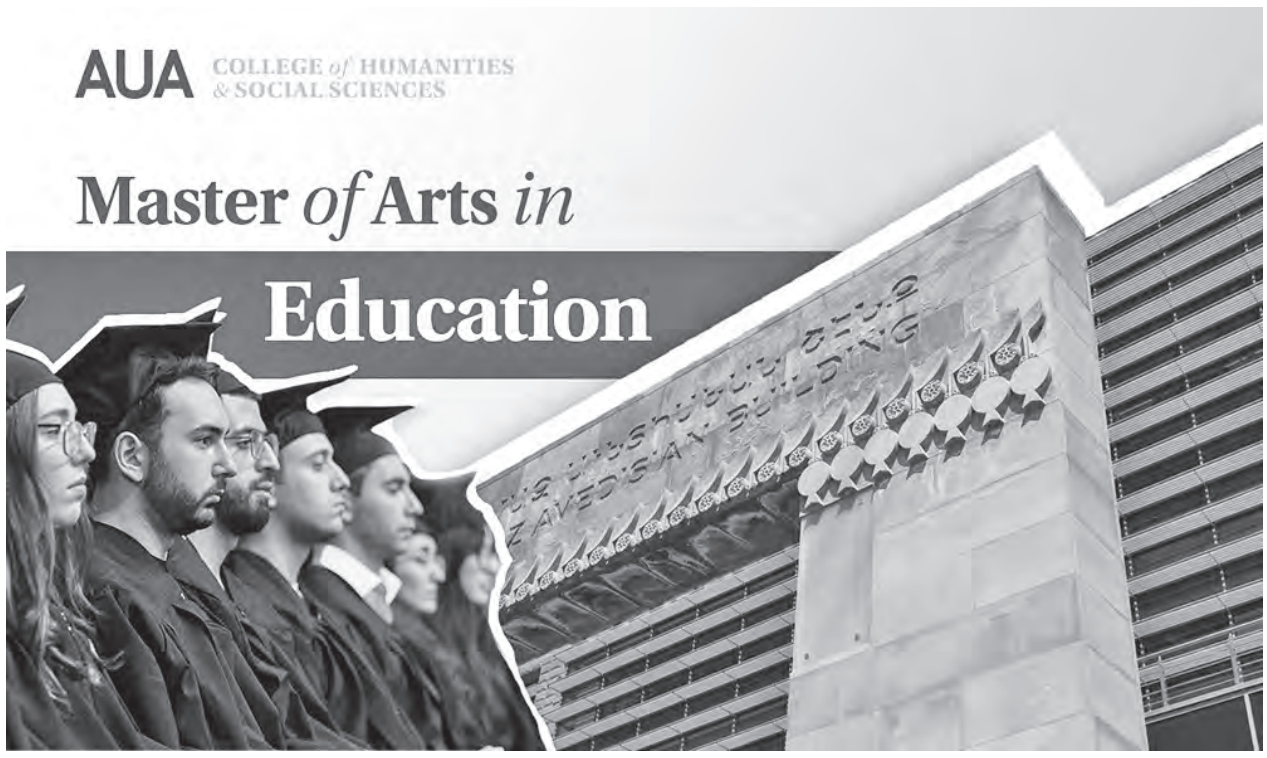
YEREVAN — The American University of Armenia (AUA) is pleased to announce the launch of the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), set to begin in Fall 2027. The program was made possible by the Avedisian 575 Foundation. The Avedisian family has been a longstanding supporter of AUA, contributing to the University's growth and development throughout the years.

"Launching the Master of Arts in Education reflects AUA's commitment to responding to the evolving needs of Armenia," said AUA President Dr. Bruce Boghosian. "We recognized an opportunity to build on our experience in teacher education and create a graduate program that prepares education professionals to address the challenges facing learners, educators, and schools today. I am deeply grateful to the Avedisian family, whose generous support made it possible for AUA to offer this program. We attach great value to the mutual trust and respect that has characterized our close work with the Avedisian 575 Foundation over the course of more than two decades to implement our shared vision for higher education in Armenia."

The program builds on AUA's existing expertise in education to catalyze a national transformation of teacher quality in Armenia while contributing to international educational discourse, mainly through research. More specifically, building on AUA's existing Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language program, MAEd will expand the University's capacity in teacher preparation, laying the foundation for a cohesive Education department.

MAEd's mission is to elevate teacher quality in Armenia by preparing highly skilled, student-centered educators and educational leaders. The program aims to equip professionals to address the pressing demands in the educational landscape of Armenia and beyond through quality research, innovation, and best practices in the field.

"The inspiration for this program came from the desire to build upon Ed's accomplishments: creating schools in Armenia to provide a world-class education from Kindergarten through graduate school," said Pamela Avedisian. "Ed recognized that the key to the success of a school was the teachers. It is our firm belief that Armenia's greatest resource is its people and the Master of Arts in Education program at AUA represents an investment in them, not only in those that will receive the degree, but also in the children and youth that will be educated by them. It is hard to think of a better investment than that."



The program emphasizes equity, inclusion, and social justice, while developing graduates' capacity to implement classroom improvements, lead curriculum and instructional initiatives, conduct applied research, and contribute to education policy. Graduates will be prepared for leadership roles in curriculum, instruction, research and policy, as well as for further graduate study and ongoing professional development.

"The Master of Arts in Education is the newest addition to AUA's commitment to advancing education in Armenia and an important investment in the country's educational future," remarked CHSS Dean Dr. Hagop Yacoubian. "We are ambitious to prepare educators and leaders who can drive meaningful, evidence-based improvements across Armenia's educational landscape, while building the research capacity needed to inform Armenia's education system and its ongoing reform. At the same time, by grounding our research in Armenia's unique educational context and engaging with global scholarship, we hope to bring Armenian perspectives and insights to the broader international education discourse."

MAEd comprises 45 credits and can be completed in 1.5 academic years. Designed to address pressing educational needs in the Armenian context, the program combines applied coursework, field-based projects, and inquiry-driven learning focused on real educational contexts. The curriculum includes core courses, electives, and practicum placements designed to meet the professional demands of diverse participants.

The program also offers four stackable certificate options: Educational Leadership, Management, and Policy; Teaching STEM; Teaching Social Studies; and Teaching Armenian Language Arts. These may be completed independently for professional development or applied toward the MAEd degree.

Graduates will be prepared for high-impact careers in K-12 teaching; instructional, curricular, and administrative leadership; education policy; research; and education-related roles in public, private, nonprofit, and corporate sectors.

For more information about the program, please check the MAEd webpage.

Armenian Soldier Found Dead as Spate of Non-Combat Deaths Continues

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hazing. Although the Armenian government claims that some of the deaths are not connected to military service and therefore cannot be included in army death statistics, OC Media reported four non-combat deaths in August alone.

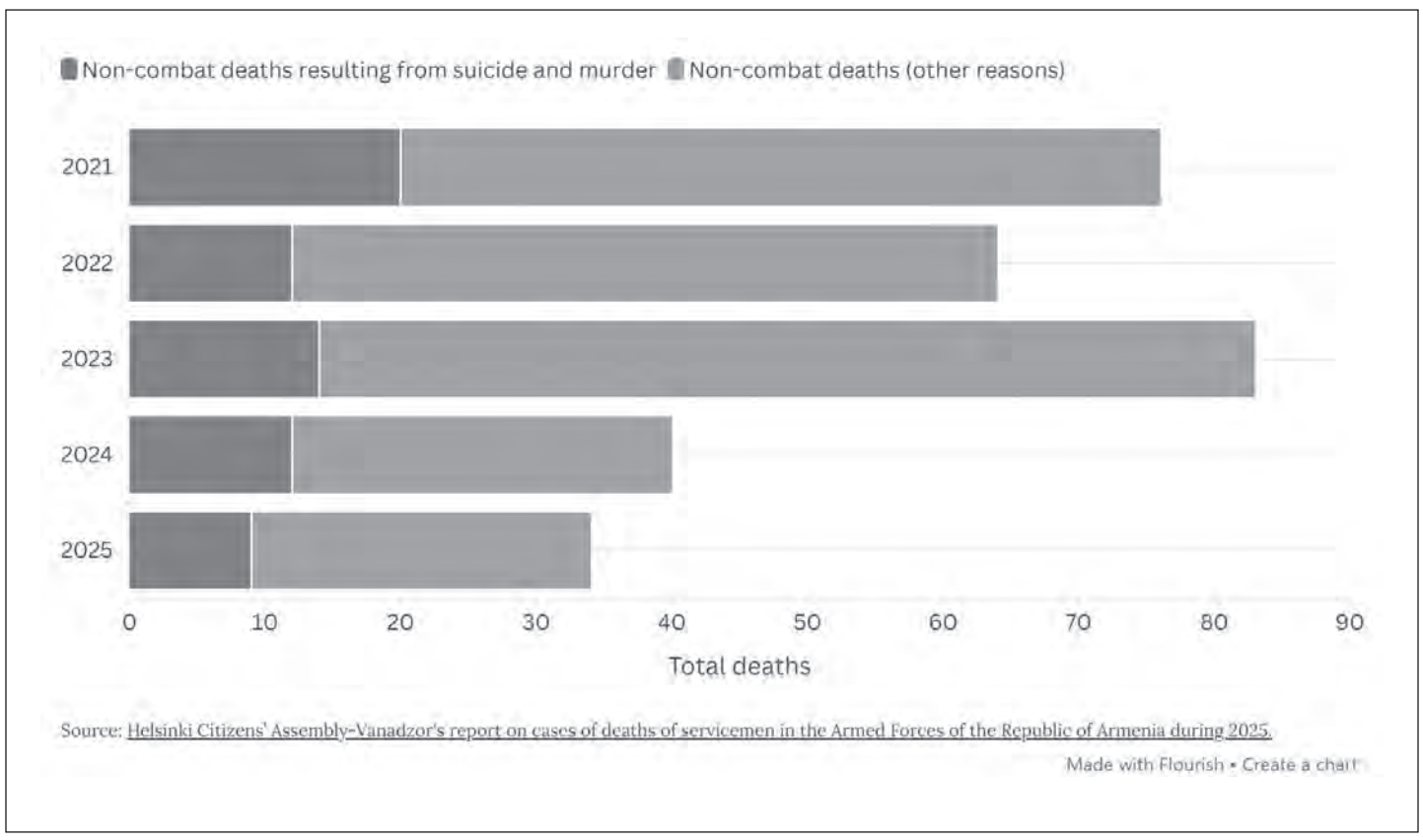
The Defense Ministry did not specify the circumstances surrounding the most recent case involving 19-year-old soldier Tigran Stepanyan, who was found dead on Sunday, November 1. However, some media reports have suggested suicide as a possible scenario.

On September 24, a contracted soldier, identified only as D.K., was killed in an explosion in unclear circumstances.

On October 10, another soldier, Armen Ghazaryan, was found dead with a gunshot wound at a military unit. Although the Ministry did not release a statement about the cause of his death, locals from Ghazaryan's home village of Ranchpar told RFE/RL that the official explanation is suicide, but they expressed scepticism over the report.

The Helsinki Citizens Assembly Vanadzor's report states that six suicides and three murders among service members were recorded in 2025. Of the six cases classified as suicide or driving to suicide, four were considered to be related to military service and two were not.

In August, a 37-year-old soldier died in unspecified conditions. Just a week prior, a soldier was killed, and six others were injured after a lorry hit them on the road in Armenia's Gegharkunik province. Earlier in August, one person was arrested and is suspected to have incited a fellow soldier to commit suicide. The incident triggered major reshuffles in the army following a rise in non-combat deaths this year.



After the deaths in August, Defense Minister Suren Papikyan stated that although statistics are not a correct way to address the army deaths, historical army statistics demonstrate that suicides and similar cases have occurred consistently over the years due to criminal activities within the army. Papikyan claimed that the Defence Ministry did not get blamed for such deaths in the past.

Infocom reports that according to the Prosecutor General's Office, 39 non-combat deaths in the army had been recorded by August 30, 2026. Combined with the four that occurred after this date, this brings the total to 43. The Defense Ministry has not yet published its official statistics.

(The above article was first published online on OC-Media on November 2, 2026.)

ARMENIA

Dr. Aram Chobanian Clinical Research Awards Given at 4th International Yerevan Cardiovascular Symposium

YEREVAN — The Fourth International Yerevan Cardiovascular Symposium took place on October 1-3 at Mkhitar Heratsi Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU). It incorporated a joint German-Armenian meeting. During the symposium, the Dr. Aram Chobanian Clinical Research Award Ceremony was conducted.

The central focus of the symposium was "Heart Failure: from Prevention to Transplantation." The program covered modern approaches to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of heart failure, updates to clinical guidelines, and current strategies regarding various stages of disease management. Participants could receive 18 continuing professional development credits.

Principal symposium organizers and partners with YSMU included the Armenian Cardiologists Association, a professional team from Magdeburg University Hospital, Eternal Nation Foundation (https://eternalnation.com/), and Asociación Médica Amigos De Armenia (Friends of Armenia Medical Association, or AMADeA), a Spanish medical association, which both co-organized and co-financed the symposium for the fourth consecutive year. YSMU and Magdeburg University Hospital also have a longstanding partnership involving educational and scientific cooperation.



Jury members for the Dr. Chobanian Award, from left, Drs. Hamayak Sisakian,



Dr. Gevorg Yaghjyan (photo Aram Arkun)

In his welcoming remarks, Prof. Armen Muradyan, YSMU Rector, highlighted as key issues the fight against smoking, problems related to excess weight, and hypertension. Muradyan said that approximately one in five people over the age of 70 suffers from these conditions.

Armenian Minister of Health Anahit Avanesyan declared: "The prevention and treatment of cardiovascular diseases is a priority for the government because, unfortunately, cardiovascular disease ranks first among causes of death in Armenia, claiming thousands of lives annually. We have come a long way in this regard; significant work has been accomplished in recent years concerning infrastructure development, the advancement of the professional community, and the accessibility of services. As a result, we are seeing a reduction in mortality — one of the most important indicators." She pointed to tobacco use, excess weight and unhealthy diets as major risk factors, and called for investment in health literacy and lifestyle changes alongside treatment services.

Professor Hamayak Sisakian, Head of the YSMU Department of Cardiology and Head of the Clinic of General and Invasive Cardiology and Internal Medicine at Heratsi University Hospital, emphasized YSMU's role in training cardiologists, the educational purpose of the Armenian-German meeting, and the need to develop device-based heart failure therapies, circulatory assist devices, artificial hearts, and heart transplantation in Armenia.

Dr. Lilian Grigorian, interventional cardiologist at San Rafael University Hospital in Madrid, Spain, and co-organizer of the event, stressed the importance of international collaboration and connections between Armenian cardiologists and their colleagues abroad, and observed that for the first time, the symposium was being held at YSMU.

Dr. Sarkis Kiramijyan, interventional cardiologist at Adventist Health White Memorial in Los Angeles, and symposium co-organizer, discussed developing cardiovascular care and technologies in Armenia. He reported the introduction and continued use of TAVI/TAVR (transcatheter aortic valve implantation/replacement) procedures at Heratsi University Hospital, under Sisakian's leadership.

Greek cardiologist Gerasimos Filippatos, affiliated with the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and Attikon University Hospital, delivered the opening scientific presentation on heart failure and related controversies.

Dr. Manuel Martínez-Sellés, head of the Acute Cardiac Care Unit of Gregorio Marañón University Hospital in Madrid, presented Spain's experience, innovations and challenges in heart transplantation.

Dr. Knarik Arkun, neuropathologist and cardiopathologist at Tufts Medical Center, Boston, presented pathological aspects of the explanted hearts, and pathology of rejection in transplanted heart. She also gave a talk on cardiac amyloidosis.

Professor Rüdiger Christian Braun-Dullaeus, Director of Cardiology and Angiology, Magdeburg University Hospital, delivered a remote lecture on coronary microvascular dysfunction and heart failure. This lecture was a memorial tribute to groundbreaking American cardiologist Professor Eugene Braunwald, M.D., who passed away on April 22, 2026 at the age of 96. Leading the Department of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, he was the founding editor of *Braunwald's Heart Disease* textbook, which was the standard book of cardiologists for 3-4 generations and has been considered by many as the father of modern cardiology.



Armenian Minister of Health Anahit Avanesyan (photo courtesy YSMU)

Scientific topics covered during the talks at the conference included advanced cardiovascular imaging, cardiac resynchronization therapy, TAVI/TAVR, interventional treatment of valvular disease, mechanical circulatory support and left ventricular assist devices, heart transplantation, artificial intelligence in cardiology, invasive assessment of coronary microvascular disease and cardiovascular risk management.

During the symposium, Mkhitar Heratsi commemorative medals and certificates of appreciation were presented to Gerasimos Filippatos and Sarkis Kiramijyan, and certificates of appreciation to Lilian Grigoryan, Knarik Arkun, Manuel Martínez-Sellés, Konstantinos Toutouzas, Zviad Kipiani and Hadi Skouri.

Dr. Aram Chobanian Clinical Research Award

Dr. Gevorg Yaghjyan formerly served as YSMU vice dean for postgraduate and continuing medical education. Yaghjyan developed a relationship with Dr. Aram Chobanian during his Fulbright experience at Boston University. Chobanian became his mentor in medical education and a close personal friend. Chobanian was an internationally recognized cardiologist and hypertension researcher. He was a former president of Boston University and former dean of Boston University School of Medicine. He contributed to medical education and healthcare development in Armenia.



Dr. Ani Rapyan receives the Dr. Aram Chobanian Clinical Research Award from Dr. Hambardzum Simonyan (photo Aram Arkun)



Dr. Ruzanna Alaverdyan receives the Dr. Aram Chobanian Clinical Research Award from Dr. Hambardzum Simonyan (photo Aram Arkun)

Following the passing of Dr. Aram Chobanian in 2023, Yaghjyan wanted to honor his mentor through practical support for young physicians in Armenia. He approached Garnik Nanagoulian, then executive director of the Fund for Armenian Relief, and proposed establishing a clinical research award in Dr. Chobanian's memory.

The Armenian National Science and Education Fund (ANSEF) already had established a grant program supporting basic and biomedical science. However, Yaghjyan believed it was equally important to create a complementary award focused specifically on clinical research – bringing science closer to patients and encouraging Armenian physicians to investigate questions arising directly from clinical practice.

Nanagoulian immediately embraced the idea. With his encouragement and the invaluable assistance of Dr. Hambartsum Simonyan, the original proposal was further developed and ultimately transformed into a new and distinct recognition – the Dr. Aram Chobanian Clinical Research Award**.**

This combination of basic science and clinical research reflects Dr. Chobanian's own remarkable career as a physician, scientist, educator, and academic leader. His work demonstrated that scientific discovery and clinical medicine are not separate paths-they must come together to improve patients' lives.

Out of ten initial applicants for the award, seven made presentations. From these, two cardiologists were selected through a competitive process based on the quality, scientific merit, and clinical relevance of their submitted research abstracts. The jurors were Drs. Sisakian, Kiramijyan, Grigorian, and Arkun.

Dr. Simonyan, Healthcare Programs Director and Deputy Country Director at the Fund for Armenian Relief, presented certificates to the awardees and mentioned their importance for career-building. The first-place recipient was Dr. Ani Rapyan, a lecturer at the YSMU Department of Propaedeutics of Internal Medicine. The second-place recipient was Dr. Ruzanna Alaverdyan, a physician at the Admissions and Emergency Care Department of Heratsi University Hospital.

-- Aram Arkun

INTERNATIONAL

Armenian Parliament Approves Trump Route Agreement

By Arshaluys Barseghyan

Armenia's Parliament has ratified a framework agreement with the US on strategic cooperation concerning the Trump Route (TRIPP), which is meant to connect mainland Azerbaijan to its exclave Nakhchivan. The agreement was passed on Wednesday, October 28, with only the ruling Civil Contract party's support. The opposition voted against it.

Plans for the route were reached during the Washington summit in August 2025, which resulted in the initialling, but not the signing, of a peace treaty.

A bilateral document with the US and Armenia described the route as being "expected to generate reciprocal benefits for international and intra-state connectivity for the Republic of Armenia."

Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan presented the agreement during a parliament debate on Tuesday, highlighting its political and security benefits alongside its economic potential.

"By connecting Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as third countries, this project will significantly strengthen the peace, stability, and security surrounding the Republic of Armenia and between Armenia and Azerbaijan — an objective that was established from the outset during the project's negotiation phase," Mirzoyan said.

Under the framework, the US is set to hold a 74% stake in the TRIPP Development Company, with Armenia holding the remaining 26%. The company would manage and oversee the route.

The document repeatedly stresses that Armenia would retain "legislative, regulatory, and judicial authority" over all areas covered by the Trump Route, as well as 'control over national security and law enforcement." Armenian authorities would also retain powers over border control, taxes, customs duties, and other matters.

The framework proposes a "front office — back office" operating model to manage the route. Private operators contracted by the TRIPP Development Company would staff the front office, handling tasks such as collecting documents and fees and processing payments for people entering Armenia from Azerbaijan. Decisions would remain the responsibility of Armenian authorities.

The arrangement appears designed to address Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev's demand that Azerbaijani nationals not "see the face" of Armenian border guards.

Opposition Warns of Risks

On Tuesday, the opposition Armenia Alliance faction announced that it would vote against the agreement, arguing that "Azerbaijan's interests are reflected more directly in this document than the interests of Armenia."

In response to a question from Narek Karapetyan, the leader of the opposition Strong Armenia Alliance, Mirzoyan stated that the Trump Route could become operational before a peace treaty is signed, and that the development of cooperation could itself help accelerate its signing.

Karapetyan, however, counterargued that the Trump Route launch and the signing of a peace treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan should be interconnected. He warned that Azerbaijan could lose its incentive to sign the treaty once the route becomes operational and then introduce additional



Narek Karapetyan, Samvel Karapetyan's nephew (screengrab from vid-

conditions.

"If we ratify it early and Azerbaijan gets TRIPP [Trump Route], then the time comes when it puts forward unfeasible conditions, such as constitutional changes, I can see that it has set an unrealistic condition to obstruct the process, and that it will keep adding more conditions. In that case, our country will be screwed, excuse my language, because Azerbaijan will still get the road, but we will not get our share, so to speak, of the unblocking of regional transport routes," Karapetyan said.

In response to questions about guarantees of the project, he pointed at the interests of both Armenia and Azerbaijan, and third countries.

"It is impossible for Azerbaijan to transport cargo to Nakhchivan and there will be no possibility for Armenia to transport cargo through Azerbaijani territory," he said.

(This article first appeared online at OC-Media.org on October 28, 2026.)

Iran Still Concerned About 'Trump Route' Through Armenia

YEREVAN (Azatutyun.am) — Despite assurances made by the Armenian government, Iran remains concerned about its plans to open a US-run transit corridor for Azerbaijan along the Armenian-Iranian border, the Islamic Republic's ambassador in Yerevan said on Friday, October 30.

"We have serious concerns on this issue and expect Armenia to give us confidence that there will be no presence of any foreign forces on the Armenian-Iranian border and nobody could create a danger for Iran along that border and adjacent areas," Khalil Shirgholami told journalists.

"Armenian officials at the highest level have repeatedly affirmed that no such precedent will ever occur," he said. "It is precisely this mutual trust that we view as the guarantee that this project will never deviate from its course or pose any threat to Iran. So we should wait for further developments and see how the process unfolds."

The remarks contrasted with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi's comments to the press made during his October 16 trip to Yerevan. Araghchi said the Iranians "trust our Armenian brothers" and believe "they are doing nothing that would compromise Iran's security."

The issue was high on the agenda of Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan's October 5 talks in Tehran with Araghchi as well as Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian and parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf. Mirzoyan said afterwards that Tehran is "satisfied" with Yerevan's assurances on the planned Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP).



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi meets his Armenian counterpart Ararat Mirzoyan, Tehran, October 5, 2026

Earlier this week, the Armenian parliament ratified a US-Armenian framework agreement on practical modalities of the TRIPP. The agreement calls for the creation of a joint venture that will build and manage for at least 49 years a railway, a road, energy supply lines and other infrastructure connecting Azerbaijan to its Nakhichevan exclave and Turkey. The US government will own 74 percent of the TRIPP Development Company (TDC).

Mirzoyan said last week that a private TRIPP operator to be hired by the company may well have its own security service. But he insisted that this would not amount to U.S. military or security presence along Armenia's border with Iran. Also, Mirzoyan and other Armenian leaders have repeatedly denied opposition claims that the transit arrangement could call into question Armenian control of the strategic border.

Shirgholami stressed the importance of "mechanisms" for the implementation of the TRIPP project which have yet to be worked out.

"We hope that the Armenian government will have a correct, vigilant and cautious approach in the preparation and development of these mechanisms and that these mechanisms will be worked out in the best interests of Armenia," the envoy said. "Depending on any situation on the ground, we will make decisions and express our views on them."

In his words, Tehran is also seeking a special "format for discussions" with the Armenian side which would "enable us to resolve any challenges very quickly should they emerge."

INTERNATIONAL

Louvre, History Museum of Armenia Explore Deeper Museum Cooperation

PARIS (pan.am) — Armenia's Ambassador to France, Arman Khachatryan, met with Christophe Leribault, president-director of the Louvre Museum, at the end of October, to discuss expanding cultural cooperation between the two countries and prospects for developing joint initiatives between their museums, the Armenian Embassy in France reports.

The meeting addressed cooperation between the Louvre and the History Museum of Armenia under a memorandum of understanding signed in 2024. The exhibition "Sacred Dialogue: From the Louvre to the History Museum of Armenia," presented in Yerevan in 2025–2026, was highlighted as a significant milestone in this partnership. The exhibition brought together collections from both museums and provided an opportunity to showcase the richness of Armenian cultural heritage to an international audience. Ambassador Khachatryan emphasized the importance of continuously developing the partnership, particularly through joint exhibitions, scientific research, professional exchanges and broader presentations of Armenian art and cultural heritage in France.

Armenia, Azerbaijan May Fast-Track Border Demarcation Along TRIPP Route

YEREVAN (panorama.am) — Armenia and Azerbaijan may accelerate border demarcation work along sections of the planned TRIPP route in the southern Armenian province of Syunik, Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan said on November 2.

Speaking to reporters in parliament, Grigoryan, who heads Armenia's commission on border delimitation with Azerbaijan, said the two sides had yet to reach an agreement on the timing of the next phase of the process, but expressed hope that an understanding would be reached soon. He said the next phase would most likely cover sections of the border where infrastructure for the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP) is due to be built.

"It is quite likely that demarcation work related to TRIPP infrastructure will be carried out ahead of the regular schedule to ensure that the necessary construction work can be organized and carried out. We need to move quickly on TRIPP," Grigoryan noted. He said there were no significant obstacles to continuing the demarcation process along other sections of the Armenia-Azerbaijan border."Overall, there are no obstacles. It is true that the process has slowed down, but we now have the necessary regulations and legal framework in place. The remaining work should be largely technical, rather than involving the complex legal procedures we have already completed," he said.

TAP Helps Armenian Journalists Bring Environmental Stories to Global Audiences

YEREVAN — Ahead of the conference, TAP organized a series of workshops led by experienced international journalists Philippa Nuttall, Michael Kodas and Eric Niiler. The sessions equipped Armenian reporters with practical tools for covering major environmental events, developing compelling stories and navigating the editorial expectations of international news organizations.

The initiative sought to address a persistent challenge for journalists working in smaller countries: how to turn important local developments into stories that resonate with readers around the world.

While Nuttall and Kodas explored approaches to reporting on major environmental events, including the opportunities and challenges they present, Niiler led an intensive two-day workshop focused on identifying internationally relevant story angles, crafting effective pitches and understanding how editors at major publications evaluate submissions.

Niiler also brought three former colleagues from the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* into the sessions virtually, giving participants an opportunity to pitch their ideas directly to experienced international journalists and receive feedback on their potential for broader coverage.

The workshops have already generated promising follow-up activity. Two participating journalists developed story ideas identified as having potential for international audiences. One reporter continued refining her story after the sessions and received additional guidance from Niiler, who is supporting its further development.

"The goal is to go beyond simply teaching journalists how to cover an international conference, and help them frame stories emerging from places like Armenia to highlight their relevance to the wider world," said TAP Executive Director Gayane Ayvazyan. "By connecting Armenian reporters with experienced international journalists and editors, we are helping create opportunities for Armenian perspectives to reach a much wider audience."

Participant feedback underscored the value of the initiative. Attendees of Niiler's workshop reported plans to apply what they learned immediately, particularly in developing stronger headlines, identifying compelling international angles and using individual experiences to illuminate larger environmental issues.

The workshops also highlighted the continuing need for practical journalism training and direct engagement with international editors. Participants expressed interest in additional opportunities to develop story ideas, receive editorial feedback and better understand how major news organizations select and commission coverage.

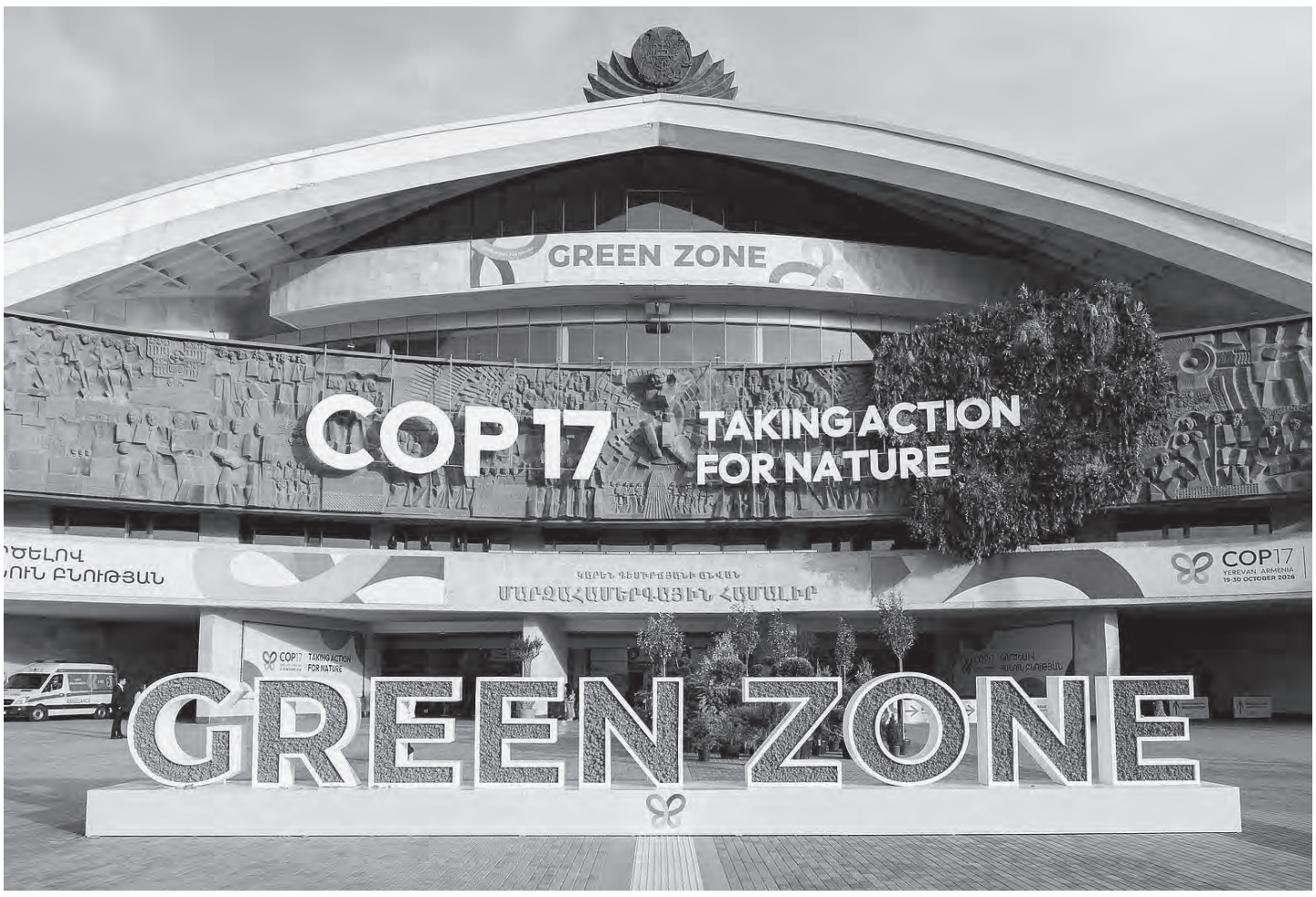
As the international spotlight turns to Armenia through COP17, TAP's initiative reflects a broader commitment to strengthening the country's journalistic capacity and ensuring that Armenian stories can continue reaching global audiences after the conference concludes.

Occupying just 0.02% of Earth's land area, Armenia is home to over 21,000 plant and animal species and some 60% of the Caucasus region's biodiversity (more information here). From October 19–30, Armenia hosted COP17, the UN Biodiversity Conference, placing its extraordinary natural heritage at the forefront of global conservation efforts.

Discussions focused on turning global commitments to protect nature into concrete action. Key negotiations concerned financing conservation, holding governments accountable for biodiversity targets, protecting forests and Indigenous communities, and requiring companies benefiting from genetic resources to share profits. Fourteen decisions have already been adopted, but major disagreements remain over funding and implementation. Delegates are considering mobilizing $200 billion annually for biodiversity.

About The Armenia Project (TAP)

The Armenia Project is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to advancing Armenia's democratic and economic development by enhancing its communications ecosystem. Through storytelling, media engagement, and global partnerships, TAP brings international attention to urgent challenges while empowering civil society.



The COP17 Green Zone in Yerevan, the public side of the UN Biodiversity Conference, which took place October 19 to 30 (photo COP17 Green Zone Armenia)

Baku Keeps Up Talk of 'Historic Azeri Lands' In Armenia

By Anush Mkrtchian

BAKU (Azatutyun.am) — Azerbaijan's top Shia Muslim cleric closely linked to the government on Monday added his voice to Baku's demands for Armenia to allow a mass influx of Azerbaijanis who had lived there in Soviet times.

Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazade referred to much of modern-day Armenia as "Western Azerbaijan" during a book presentation attended by pro-government Azerbaijani lawmakers and other officials.

In remarks cited by Azerbaijani media, Pashazade said his office supports Baku's policy of seeking "the return of our compatriots expelled from Armenia to their historical places of residence."

He said a book jointly published by the office and a government-linked group called the Community of Western Azerbaijan will serve the same purpose. The group's leader, parliament deputy Aziz Alekberli, accused the Armenians of having seized and ethnically cleansed "Azerbaijan's historical lands."



Azerbaijan's Grand Mufti Allahshukur Pashazade

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev continued to make such claims even after he and Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan initialed an Armenian-Azerbaijani peace treaty in Washington last year. Pashinyan's domestic critics say the demands make mockery of his regular claims that peace has already been established between the two nations. They claim that Aliyev's ultimate goal is to end Armenia's existence as a viable state.

Campaigning for last June's parliamentary elections, the two main Armenian opposition forces said that Pashinyan will allow as many as 300,000 Azerbaijanis to settle in Armenia if he wins reelection. The Armenian premier reacted angrily to those claims.

Following the disputed elections, Pashinyan said that the continuing talk of "Western Azerbaijan" is a response to Armenian opposition and Diaspora efforts to champion the rights of Nagorno-Karabakh's ethnic Armenian population displaced during Baku's recapture of the region in September 2023.

Ministers Downplay Possible Surge in Russian Gas Price For Armenia

GAS, from page 1

Russia officially threatened to end this discount with a letter sent to Yerevan by Russian Energy Minister Sergei Tsivilev in May. It came as Russian authorities began banning imports of Armenian agricultural products and pressuring Yerevan to quickly choose between seeking to join the European Union and remaining part of a Russian-led trade bloc.

In a joint report released earlier this month, the governments of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan said the gas price for Armenia would soar by at least 69 percent in case of a suspension of the South Caucasus nation's membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) effectively recommended by them. They said that this, coupled with a loss of Armenian exporters' tariff-free access to the Russian market, would cause the Armenian economy to shrink by more than 15 percent.

Papoyan claimed that the economic contraction would not be so drastic even if Moscow were to quadruple the gas price.

"They made an incorrect calculation and submitted an incorrect document," he told journalists.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and the leaders of other EEU member states are expected to discuss the report at their next summit slated for December. Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan plans to meet with Putin separately before the summit.

Russia is Armenia's number one trading partner and export market, having accounted for 27.5 percent of its external commerce in the first half of this year. Armenian exports to Russia and the EU stood at $1.23 billion and $516 million respectively during that period.

While downplaying the cost of Armenia's possible exit from the EEU Yerevan is keen to prevent such a development. Echoing Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan's statement made last week, Papoyan insisted that that Russia and its ex-Soviet allies have no legal grounds to suspend his country from the bloc.

"Doing such a thing would be unlawful," he said.

Community News

Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church Celebrates First Anniversary of Fr. Sevak Gabrielyan

By Lisa Zaroogian-Bilodeau

PROVIDENCE — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church in Providence, Rhode Island, hosted a dinner-dance on October 24, celebrating the first anniversary of Reverend Father Sevak Gabrielyan's service as the church's priest.

Held at the Egavian Cultural Center, the special occasion brought together parishioners, family members, and friends for an evening of fellowship, delicious food, music, and dancing in honor of this deeply meaningful milestone.

The evening began with a welcoming toast delivered by Eric Stickler, the chairman of the Parish Council, followed by dinner and dancing. Guests enjoyed live entertainment by a talented Armenian band. Their music added a vibrant touch to the celebration, reflecting the rich musical heritage of the Armenian community.

As part of the evening's program, several welcome letters were received and read aloud, including messages from the Primate of the Eastern Diocese, Bishop Mesrop Parsamyan, the church's parish council, and fellow clergy. These messages conveyed warm wishes and support for Der Sevak as he marked his first anniversary.



Fr. Sevak Gabrielyan and family

The celebration also recognized the importance of family in Der Sevak's life and ministry. Joining him in this milestone were his wife and their three children, whose presence made the occasion especially meaningful.

Der Sevak announced a surprise that same day: they celebrated Der Vard Gyozalyan's birthday.

The dinner-dance was coordinated by the church's Cultural Committee, led by Maestro Konstantin Petrossian. The event's success reflected the dedication of committee members and volunteers who generously contributed their time and efforts to bring the community together.

The anniversary celebration offered parishioners and friends an opportunity to express their appreciation for Der Sevak and recognize his first year serving the congregation. It was also a testament to the strong bonds of faith, family, and fellowship that continue to unite theArmenian community in the Rhode Island area.

Through gatherings such as this, the church continues to celebrate its spiritual leadership, preserve Armenian cultural traditions, and strengthen the connections that bring generations together.



Ardem Patapoutian, left, and Dr. Herbert Wertheim (credit The Dr. Herbert Wertheim Trust for Humanity)

Scripps Research Nobel Laureates Ardem Patapoutian And K. Barry Sharpless Honored By Wertheim Laureate Prize

LA JOLLA, Calif. — The newly launched Wertheim Laureate Prize invites Nobel laureates across all six fields from the last five years to direct charitable funds to the causes they believe "will do the most good." Inspired in part by relationships with Scripps Research scientists, the prize also brings laureates to Wertheim institutions and affiliates around the world to share their knowledge with students, professors and researchers through an international lecture and visitation program.

The Dr. Herbert Wertheim Trust for Humanity is awarding millions of dollars in directed philanthropy to a total of 74 Nobel laureates through the Wertheim Laureate Prize. Among the honorees is Scripps Research professor Ardem Patapoutian, who received the 2021 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his discoveries in how the body senses physical and chemical forces, as well as Scripps Research professor K. Barry Sharpless, who has won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry twice: in 2001, for his work on chirally catalyzed oxidation reactions, and in 2022, for his pioneering work in "click" chemistry and bio-orthogonal chemistry.

Patapoutian and Sharpless will each receive $250,000 to donate to a qualified charitable organization of their choosing.

The Trust was founded by Dr. Herbert ("Herbie") Wertheim, an optometric physician, inventor, entrepreneur and philanthropist known as "the catalytic philanthropist." A member of the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame for pioneering ultraviolet- and blue-light-absorbing tint protection for eyeglass lenses, Dr. Wertheim is also a recipient of the Horatio Alger Award and has received many academic accolades, including honorary doctorates from several universities. Dr. Wertheim has contributed more than $300 million to Florida higher education alone and is a signatory of The Giving Pledge.

Dr. Wertheim has served on the Scripps Research Board of Directors since 2021, a role that has allowed him to form close relationships with Patapoutian and Sharpless both.

"Spending time with Ardem and Barry at Scripps showed me what happens when a great scientist walks into a room of young researchers," said Dr. Wertheim in the organization's press release. "The Nobel Prize honors what these scientists have already given humanity. The Wertheim Laureate Prize asks what they will give next. No one is better qualified to direct philanthropy in medicine and science than the men and women the world has just honored, and our students, faculty and researchers will be the richer for hearing them."

Laureates in the program will give lectures and make visits at Wertheim institutions and affiliates around the globe, including the Herbert Wertheim UF Scripps Institute for Biomedical Innovation & Technology and the Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science at UC San Diego.

Patapoutian's Nobel-winning work identified the PIEZO1 and PIEZO2 ion channels, which let cells detect pressure and stretch. This discovery explained how we perceive touch, sense the position of our bodies in space and regulate internal processes such as blood pressure. His research has opened new avenues for understanding and treating chronic pain, among other serious conditions.

"I'm deeply grateful to Herbie and the Dr. Herbert Wertheim Trust for Humanity for this recognition and for their generosity. Investment in science matters more than ever right now, especially the kind that requires taking risks and approaching problems differently," says Patapoutian. "I'm honored to be part of this inaugural group, and I look forward to sharing time with students and researchers who will carry that curiosity forward."

Meanwhile, Sharpless's Nobel-winning work has changed how chemists build molecules. His 2001 prize recognized methods for making chiral molecules,

see WERTHEIM, page 9

Glendale Unified Invites Families To Tour First Western Armenian Dual Language Immersion Program

GLENDALE, Calif. — A world of learning opportunities awaits families exploring Glendale Unified School District's dual language immersion (DLI) programs for the 2027–2028 school year. Registration is now available for school tours and virtual presentations, giving families an opportunity to explore participating campuses, learn how students develop skills in two languages and ask questions about the award-winning programs.

This year brings a special addition: families can tour Glenoaks Elementary School, which will welcome the first kindergarten class in GUSD's new Western Armenian Dual Language Immersion program in fall 2027. The program will offer students the opportunity to learn academic content in Western Armenian and English while building connections to language, culture and community.

Families can view tour schedules and register online. Applications for the 2027–2028 school year open November 1, 2026, with a January 31, 2027 deadline for consideration in the lottery.

"A school tour gives families a chance to picture their child's experience and ask the questions that matter to them," said Dr. Nancy Hong, Director of Dual Language Immersion and English Learner Services. "We are especially excited to introduce families to our new Western Armenian program at Glenoaks. Alongside our established programs, it offers another opportunity for children to grow as learners, develop language skills and connect across cultures. We encourage families to join us, explore their options and find the program that's right for their child."

A New Western Armenian Pathway at Glenoaks Elementary

Beginning with kindergarten in the 2027–2028 school year, students in the Western Armenian program will spend half of their instructional day learning in Western Armenian and half in English. Students will learn to speak, read and write in Western Armenian through their academic lessons, rather than studying the language only as a separate subject.

Upcoming tours for the Western Armenian program begin at 9 a.m. on November 10; and December 2 and 9. Additional dates and registration information are available on the district's tour webpage.

The new program builds on GUSD's longstanding commitment to multilingual education and creates an opportunity for families to help sustain Western Armenian across generations.

Explore GUSD's Award-Winning Dual Language Immersion Programs

Glendale USD is known for its high-quality dual language immersion

see GLENDALE, page 10

COMMUNITY NEWS

Botox Fraud Doctor Sentenced to 15 Years In Prison for $45M Medicare Scheme

WASHINGTON (US DOJ) — California doctor Violetta Mailyan was sentenced on October 29 to 15 years in prison for using her medical practice to fraudulently bill Medicare more than $45 million for Botox injection services that were medically unnecessary and never provided.

According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, Violetta Mailyan, 45, of Glendale, California, owned and operated Healthy Way Medical Center, a clinic that purported to provide beauty and cosmetic services.

Although Medicare reimburses medical providers for Botox injections when necessary to treat documented cases of chronic migraines, Mailyan billed and received payments for thousands of injections that were never provided, were provided only for cosmetic purposes, or were given to patients whose primary care physicians had not referred them for treatment of chronic migraines. Evidence also showed that Mailyan billed for thousands of injections, representing over $19 million, purportedly provided on days when her clinic was closed. Mailyan also billed for providing Botox injections when she was actually on vacation in Mexico, Hawaii, Las Vegas, Pennsylvania, and New York at various times throughout her fraud scheme. For example, Mailyan billed over $200,000 for purportedly providing Botox services to patients in California when she was actually relaxing on the beach in Cabo:

The evidence also showed that when Mailyan realized federal investigators were closing in, she tried to hide her tracks by falsifying medical records and forging Medicare beneficiary signatures, including for a man who was in federal prison during the time Mailyan claimed to have provided treatment. Mailyan submitted these records to federal investigators, intending to throw them off her trail and make it appear as though she had seen patients she had not actually seen.

Mailyan used the money she stole to purchase luxury goods, including a $12,000 17th century crossbow and a $3,000 painting, depicted below.



Joseph Anton Muxel, Portrait of Ludwig I, Crown Prince of Bavaria

Sale	The Vision of Aso O. Tavitian | The Coun
Sale number & date	N11701 - 9 February 2025
Lot number	1544
Shipping Dimensions (L x W x H)	8.50 x 1.25 x 10.00 IN
Purchase Price (excluding any taxes)	$3,000.00

$3,000 Painting that Dr. Violetta Mailyan purchased with Medicare fraud proceeds



A Florentine Mannerist Crossbow, Circa 1600

Sale	The Vision of Aso O. Tavitian | The Coun
Sale number & date	N11701 - 9 February 2025
Lot number	1655
Shipping Dimensions (L x W x H)	36.00 x 20.50 x 36.00 IN
Purchase Price (excluding any taxes)	$14,400.00

17th Century Crossbow that Dr. Violetta Mailyan purchased with Medicare fraud proceeds

In sentencing Mailyan, the Court commented that Mailyan's fraud "was truly breathtaking in scope and shocking in its duration," and that her actions were "almost unbelievable in their brazenness." In addition to the prison sentence, the Court ordered the immediate forfeiture of over $16,029,742 worth of property seized from Mailyan, including real property, personal property, securities, and bank funds, effectively returning this taxpayer money to the United States. Mailyan was also ordered to pay $32,904,049.41 in restitution to Medicare, and the United States will vigorously pursue the return of these stolen funds.

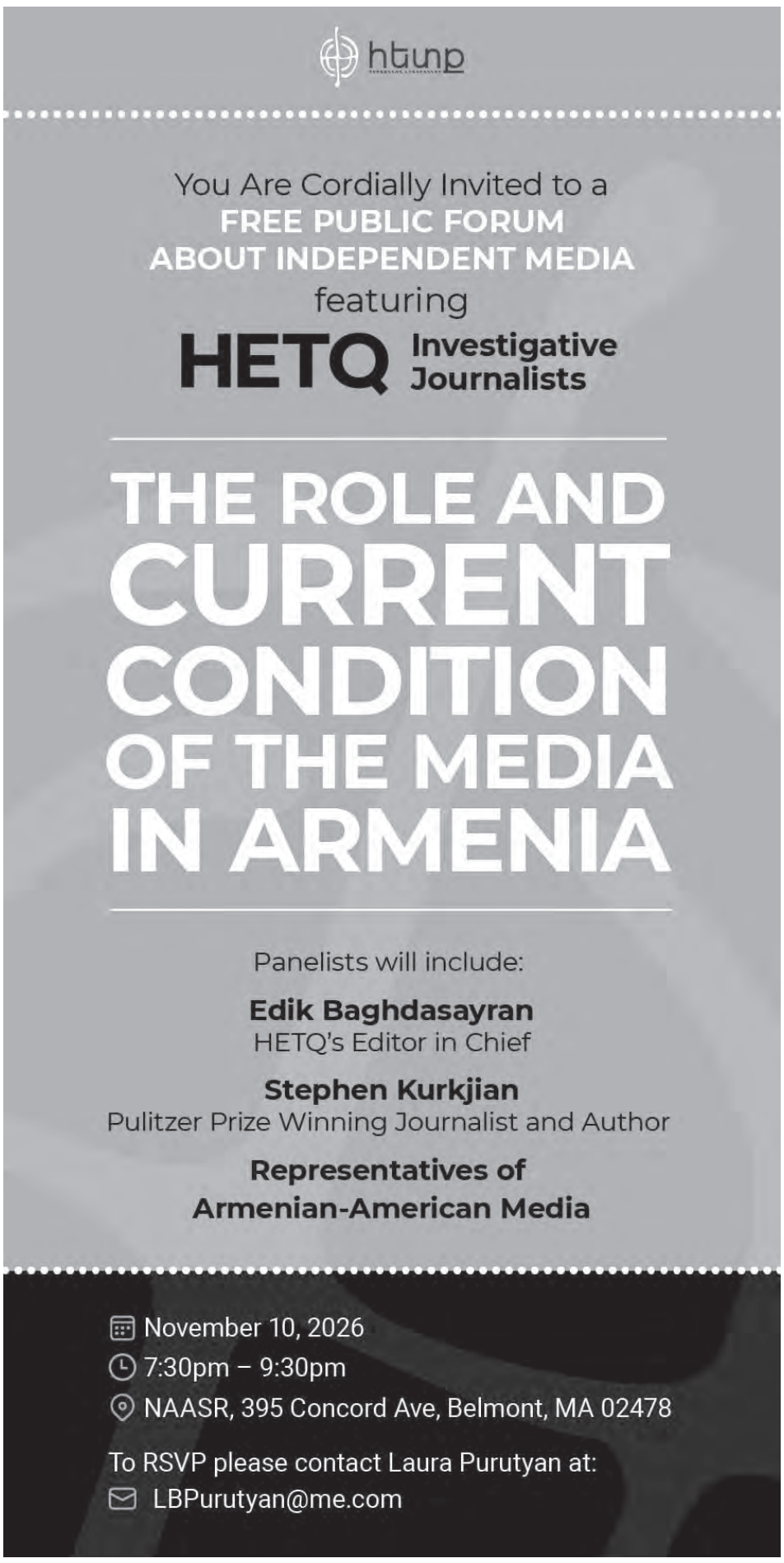
After a six-day jury trial ending in May 2026, Mailyan was convicted of nine counts of wire fraud and three counts of obstruction of a criminal investigation of a health care offense. The jury also found that Mailyan used the fraud proceeds to purchase two Tesla vehicles, including a Cybertruck, and five pieces of California real estate.

US Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General and the FBI investigated the case.

Trial Attorneys Sandor Callahan and Jeffrey A. Crapko of the Fraud Division's Health Care Fraud Section prosecuted the case. Assistant US Attorney Tara Vavere for the Central District of California's Asset Forfeiture and Recovery Section is handling asset forfeiture matters.



Photograph from Dr. Violetta Mailyan's phone, sent from Cabo, Mexico, the same day she billed Medicare $34,560 for services purportedly rendered in Glendale,



OBITUARY

Osheen Keshishian

Journalist and Educator Osheen Keshishian



LOS ANGELES — Prof. Osheen Keshishian, well-known intellectual, educator, and journalist in the California Armenian community, passed away on Monday, October 19, 2026, after a short illness in Los Angeles.

Osheen was born in Jerusalem on November 30, 1934. He attended the Holy Translators school there until 1948, the Arab-Israeli war, when his family first fled to Amman, Jordan and a year later to Beirut, Lebanon.

Osheen graduated from the Armenian General Benevolent Union's Hovagimian-Manougian high school for boys in 1955. He attended the American University of Beirut for one year and then immigrated to the United States of America, settling in California.

Osheen graduated from California State University, Los Angeles, and the University of La Verne with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Anthropology and American Studies. He served in the US Army for two years, 1959-61, as a medic, working in Madigan General Hospital, outside Lakewood, Washington.

Osheen was the owner and editor-in-chief of the English language weekly newspaper *The Armenian Observer*, which began publication in 1970 and continued till 2023. In the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, he was the editor of the first Diocesan-wide newspaper, the *Californian*. He worked as a professor in the Language Department of Los Angeles City College, following which, he was on the faculty of Glendale Community College from 1985 for 27 years.

Osheen was a member of the Central Board of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada for a number of years. He was also a long-time member of the Board of Trustees of the Tekeyan Cultural Association Arshag Dickranian school in Los Angeles.

A participant in the first Airlie conference that founded the Armenian Assembly of America, Keshishian remained a friend of the organization.

Osheen was on the Committee of the Armenian Genocide Monument, which was erected in 1968, in Montebello. Osheen was entrusted with the transfer of the remains of the famous author William Saroyan to Yerevan, Armenia in 1982. He was invited three times to the White House, once to accompany President of the Republic of Armenia Levon Ter Petrossian.

Osheen is the recipient of the St. Sahag-St. Mesrob Medal, with its accompanying encyclical, from the late Catholicos of All Armenians Vasken I. He has also received the Vartkes Balian award for Journalism, from the Central Board of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada.

He is survived by his wife, Natalia Shalikashvili and daughter, Kevork and Diana Boyajian and children; daughter, Michael and Knar Solakian and children; brother, Onnig and Kristine Keshishian; nephew, Nareg Keshishian; nephew, Kevork and Taline Keshishian; niece, Shogher Apelian and children; nephew, Viken and Sirvart Mouradian and children; Nune Gulakhnamian and children; cousin, Sossy Ashjian-Crilly and children; cousin, Jack and Arsine Megerdichian and children; cousin, Ani Babayan and family; Noyemi Berberian and family; and the entire Shalikashvili, Keshishian, Roupinian,, Solakian, Mouradian, Apelian, Ashjian, Bababyan, Boyajian, Gulakhnamian, Berberian and Megerdichian families, relatives and friends.

Funeral services took place on Monday, November 2, at the St. Leon Armenian Cathedral, in Burbank, CA. Interment followed at the Grand View Memorial Park in Glendale, CA.

Anahit L. Babajanian

Teacher Devoted to Family



SANTA ROSA, Calif. — Anahit Babajanian was a beloved wife, mother, grandmother and teacher whose life was defined by faith, kindness, generosity and devotion to family.

Born in Qoruq village, Gorgan, Iran, Anahit grew up deeply connected to her Armenian heritage and Christian faith. After her mother, Knar, died when she was six months old, she was raised by her devoted aunts, Aghavani and Gohar, and her father, Tigran Lusparian, whose family fled the Ottoman Empire during the Armenian Genocide and later immigrated to Iran during the Bolshevik Revolution.

In Armenia, Anahit met Dr. Ishkhan Babajanian, her husband and lifelong partner of more than 55 years. They married in Yerevan on December 13, 1970, and welcomed their first son, Dr. Masis Babajanian, in 1971. In 1975, they left Soviet Armenia for Italy before settling in the United States in pursuit of freedom. Their second son, Armen Babajanian, was born that December. Anahit served others as a teacher and nurse while building a loving home.

Guided by deep faith, Anahit treated everyone with warmth and compassion, answering even unkindness with generosity. An exceptional Armenian and Persian cook and gracious host, she expressed her love through food and hospitality. She also enjoyed sewing and gardening.

Her greatest joy was her family, especially her grandchildren, Gohar, Vartan and Davit. She cherished her sons, daughters-in-law Anna Babajanian and Maddy Dillon, and the traditions and love they shared.

Anahit passed away in Santa Rosa, California, on October 9, 2026, exactly nine years after the Tubbs fire destroyed her family's home and belongings.

She is survived by her husband, sons, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, half-siblings Ohan, Haykaz, Arevik and Azniv, and the extended Lusparian, Demirjian and Gidaryan families.

Her funeral service took place on October 31 at Daniels Chapel of the Roses in Santa Rosa, and her graveside service afterwards on the same day at Santa Rosa Memorial Park.

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Scripps Research Nobel Laureates Ardem Patapoutian, K. Barry Sharpless Honored

WERTHEIM, from page 7

which come in mirror-image forms that can behave very differently in the body, a challenge central to producing many medicines. His 2022 prize recognized "click" chemistry, a way of joining molecular building blocks quickly and reliably.

"I'm grateful to Herbie and the Trust for this generous recognition, and for the chance to decide where it can do the most good. Chemistry often moves forward when someone is willing to try a simpler, more direct way of doing things, and that kind of thinking depends on support. I look forward to meeting students and young researchers and hearing the questions they're asking," adds Sharpless.

The prize is an initiative of the Trust and is not affiliated with or endorsed by the Nobel Foundation, the Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institutet or any other Nobel Prize-awarding organization.



Patapoutian and Sharpless (credit Scripps Research)

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Councilmember Nazarian and City Partners Break Ground On New Project Turning Rainwater into Local Water Supply

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles (LA) Councilmember Adrin Nazarian, LA Department of Water and Power (LADWP), LA Recreation and Parks, and the LA Bureau of Engineering convened in Strathern Park North on the morning of October 29 to break ground on a stormwater capture project to collect rainwater and urban runoff at seven local parks in the East San Fernando Valley. Nazarian has worked on water conservation initiatives since his time in the Assembly, going all the way back to 2013.

"This innovative program will be instrumental in fortifying Los Angeles's water supply," said Councilmember Nazarian. "This initiative enables the capture of millions of gallons of water that would otherwise flow into the ocean. Once complete, this initiative enables the capture of millions of gallons of water that would otherwise flow into the ocean, especially in times of heavy rainfall. Consequently, municipal rates can remain stable by reducing reliance on imported water sources from hundreds of miles away. I'm so glad that the East San Fernando Valley will be the first region in the city to see the benefits of this new program."

Once complete, this project will deliver key environmental, water-quality, and recreational benefits, including an average stormwater capture capacity of 158 acre-feet per year, improved downstream water quality and reduced localized flooding, a significant reduction in local pollutants entering the Tujunga Wash, the Los Angeles River, and the ocean, and park upgrades such as, two new baseball fields with dugouts, bleachers with shade, and a batting cage, new sports lighting, hydration stations, new trees and more.

"The Stormwater Capture Parks Program reflects the modern, climate-responsive infrastructure Los Angeles must advance," said David W. Hanson, LADWP Interim General Manager. "Its ability to capture, treat, and store millions of gallons of stormwater strengthens system resilience, supports groundwater replenishment, and delivers long-term environmental benefits."

"The Bureau of Engineering is pleased to partner with LADWP, the Department of Recreation and Parks and the Council office to make these projects a reality," said Crystal Lee, City Engineer. "These collaborations are incredible examples of what we can do for communities when we work together. Bringing these projects to these parks not only provides new water retention opportunities and improves water quality, but they also provide park improvements that everyone can enjoy."



LA Councilmember Adrin Nazarian attends groundbreaking and news conference at Strathern Park North in North Hollywood

"This project at Strathern Park highlights the innovative, dual roles our public spaces can fulfill for the community," said Jimmy Kim, General Manager of LA City Department of Recreation and Parks. "By converting our parks through neighborhood stormwater capture initiatives into advanced water management systems, we are making a direct investment in sustainability and advancing the City's long-term water future goals."



LA Councilmember Adrin Nazarian

Valley Plaza Park South is one of seven parks included in the broader Stormwater Capture Parks Program. Other sites in this program include Valley Plaza Park North, Strathern Park North, Valley Village Park, Whitsett Fields Park, Fernangeles Park, and David M. Gonzales Park. For more information about the program, go to LADWP.com/parks.

Glendale Unified Invites Families to Tour First Western Armenian Dual Language Immersion Program

GLENDALE, from page 7

programs and was recognized in 2024 as the "District of Distinction" by the Association of Two-Way and Dual Language Education (ATDLE). The first DLI program was implemented in Spanish in 2003, and GUSD's language offerings now include Eastern Armenian, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean and Spanish, with Western Armenian joining in fall 2027. Dual language immersion combines academic instruction with language learning, supporting students as they develop literacy in English and a partner language.

Elementary programs use either a 90:10 or 50:50 instructional model. French, German, Italian and Spanish programs begin with more instruction in the partner language and gradually move toward an equal balance with English. Eastern Armenian, Western Armenian, Japanese and Korean use a 50:50 model where half the day is taught in English and the remaining half in the target language.



GUSD middle schools offer pathways to continue the DLI program with an advanced language arts course in the target language designed for DLI students. The Spanish DLI programs at Roosevelt STEAM Academy and Eleanor J. Toll Middle School also offer a second core-content subject in history/social studies.

Students in GUSD's established DLI pathways can continue their language studies through high school world language and advanced courses. Most languages offer a capstone exam for potential college credit, and students may qualify for the State Seal of Biliteracy.

Tour Registration and Applications

In-person tours and virtual presentations are available on scheduled dates, with options varying by school and language. Families are encouraged to review the schedules and register in advance online.

Families living within and outside GUSD boundaries are welcome to apply for dual language immersion programs. Students residing outside the district must complete the required interdistrict permit process if offered placement.

Applications for the Dual Language Program lottery open November 1, 2026, and must be completed by January 31, 2027, for consideration in the 2027/28 school year. Applications received after the deadline will be placed on a waitlist. Families can find application instructions through the tours webpage.

For more information, visit the District's Dual Language Immersion information page (https://www.gusd.net/DLI).

COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Culture Finds a Home at Fresno State

By Karen Creviston

FRESNO, Calif. (The Daily Collegian) — For Fresno State's Armenian Student Organization (ASO), preserving the generations of culture and tradition before them can be fun social events centered around building community. ASO has hosted events such as cooking nights, holiday parties and hikes. Through these activities, ASO helps college students make their heritage part of their college experience.

"ASO aims to connect Armenian students together," said Emily Sahakian, ASO vice president. "At Fresno State, it can be hard to meet other Armenians, so this club is the perfect opportunity to meet new people."

College is often a time of self-discovery and exploration. Cultural organizations can give students an opportunity to explore their heritage while connecting with people who share similar backgrounds.

"It matters for college students to have spaces where they can explore their cultural identities because college is a time for self-discovery and personal growth," Sahakian said. "These spaces can help students learn more about their backgrounds and traditions while connecting with others who have similar experiences."

For Jordan Mazmanian, ASO president, making those connections also means finding new ways to incorporate Armenian culture into the club's activities.

"ASO's mission is to not only spread Armenian awareness but also make Armenians feel welcome within our Armenian community at Fresno State," Mazmanian said. "This year, ASO is trying to focus more on making our events more cultural to keep our Armenian heritage alive."

One way the club shares Armenian culture with its members is through food. On Oct. 3, the club hosted its first cooking night. Members' parents and grandparents taught the group how to prepare traditional Armenian dishes such as sarma, manti and pilaf.

The event brought generations together through a shared experience, giving younger students the opportunity to learn recipes directly from older generations. Rather than simply discussing Armenian heritage, students could participate in it firsthand.

"We want our activities to revolve around Armenian culture and teach students something new they may not have known before," Sahakian said.



Members pose for a group photo during Fresno State Armenian Students Organization cooking night October 3. Participants made manti, sarma and pilaf. (Courtesy of the Armenian Students Organization)

For Matthew Krikorian, ASO treasurer, preserving that connection also means remaining involved in the broader Armenian community.

"Being Armenian, to me, means being engaged in our community and involved in the churches associated with it," Krikorian said. "Armenians tend to stick together as a community, and for me, it's very important to be a part of it."

While family and church traditions remain important, ASO is finding ways to carry that sense of community into students' everyday college experiences. Mazmanian said the club is adapting its approach to appeal to younger generations, using social media to reach students and encouraging them to connect with each other.

"Older generations may have preserved the Armenian culture through church, family traditions, or passing down stories, but ASO is trying to preserve the Armenian culture through the younger generation by posting on social media and by creating new cultural events such as cooking and Armenian dancing," Mazmanian said. "As generations change, we need to adapt how our events are to make them more enjoyable to the younger generation."

That approach extends beyond events specifically designed to teach Armenian traditions. ASO also hosts holiday parties that give students a chance to socialize.

Although these events may not center on cultural education, they create opportunities for students to meet, build friendships and become part of the community. For a generation accustomed to connecting through screens, gathering in person offers another way to form relationships and create shared memories.

"Even if the Halloween party and Friendsgiving, for example, are not solely educational events, students will always be exposed to Armenian culture in one way or another, and it's just a great chance to meet new people," Sahakian said.

Cultural preservation does not always require a formal lesson or a traditional ceremony. For Mazmanian, one of the most memorable examples was the club's Halloween party last year. The evening included dinner, karaoke and an impromptu swim.

"We ate dinner, hung out with each other, did karaoke, and some people even ended up jumping in the pool," Mazmanian said. "Nothing about the party went how the board expected it to, but that was what made it so much fun!"

ASO also welcomes students who are not Armenian, giving them an opportunity to experience the culture while connecting with people from different backgrounds.

"These events bring all sorts of students together," Krikorian said. "Being in ASO doesn't directly mean that we share a cultural background. This organization prioritizes connecting, regardless of cultural background, but it does teach everyone what our culture is like."



Arts & Culture

Armenian Genocide Researcher Featured on Philadelphia Radio

PHILADELPHIA — Germantown Community Radio (WGGT LP, 92.9 FM) in Philadelphia recently aired a radio program about the Armenian genocide that is now available to hear as a podcast.

The program features an extensive interview with Regina Galustyan, senior researcher at the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, who explains the history of the museum and institute, the politics surrounding its creation, the development of its collection, and the achievements of its work as the most important site of memory for the Armenian genocide.

Titled "Remembering the Armenian Genocide," the broadcast also discusses how the genocide is taught in schools, remembered in popular culture, and factors into international politics and world history. Listeners hear music by Adana Project, Sevak Amroyan, Armenoids and more.

The show was produced by Janis Chakars, a professor at Neumann University, as an episode of the monthly program "Items of Interest" and can be heard at G-Town Radio's website here: https://gtownradio.com/podcast/items-of-interest-remembering-the-armenian-genocide/

Saints Vartanantz Food Festival Set For November 21

CHELMSFORD, Mass. — Saints Vartanantz Armenian Church of Chelmsford will host its annual food festival on Saturday, November 21.

Lunch and dinner will be served all day, and will include lamb shish kebab, chicken kebab and losh kebab (spiced Armenian burger), a vegetarian platter, and *lehmejune* (*lahmajun* – Armenian pizza pie) served with salad. Also available will be stuffed grape leaves, and a pastry table featuring baklava, *kadayif*, spinach pita, and cheese *beureg* (cheese-filled filo triangles).

A country store will offer a wide variety of Middle Eastern delicacies. The festival will also include jewelry and Armenian souvenir booths as well as raffles and silent auctions. Special highlights of this year's bazaar will be a backgammon tournament starting at 2:00 pm with a cash prize for the winner, a narrated slide presentation about the church's history and a tour of the church's traditional orthodox sanctuary offered at 1:00 pm.

The festival will take place at Sts. Vartanantz Church, 180 Old Westford Road, Chelmsford, 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. For more information, call 978-256-7234, or email Lori at lori.Kayajanian@gmail.com.



Tatyana Yangaykina

From the Depths of Mordovia to the Heart of the Armenian Soul

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN–SARANSK, Republic of Mordovia, Russia — Tatyana Yangaykina (born in 1978 in the village of Adashevo, Republic of Mordovia) is a Russian ethnologist. A member of the Moksha people, she was born in the Republic of Mordovia, a region in European Russia that is the historical homeland of the Finno-Ugric Moksha and Erzya peoples.

In 2000, she graduated from Mordovia State University. In 2008, she defended her doctoral dissertation at Mari State University. Since 2011, she has been a senior researcher at the Research Institute of Humanities under the Government of the Republic of Mordovia. Her research interests include Moksha vocabulary, the spiritual and material culture of the Mordovian people, and Armenian community of Mordovia. Since 2023, one of her research areas has been the artistic legacy of K. M. Magomedov, an Honored Artist and jeweler of the Russian Federation. In June 2026, she was awarded a certificate of honor by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Dagestan for her educational work, active promotion of Dagestani art. She is the author of more than 130 scholarly works.

Yangaykina was a finalist in the Second International Nikolai Marr Armenian Studies Competition, founded by Garnik Asatryan, director of the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Russian-Armenian University, and Vadim Fefilov, head of the Russian House in Yerevan. For her scholarly publication *Armenia–Mordovia: Intercultural Interaction and Dialogue of Cultures*, she received a special certificate of honor from the organizers.

Dear Tatyana, I have always been interested in how less numerous peoples (I dislike the term "small peoples") preserve their languages. In our globalized world, this challenge is becoming increasingly difficult. How are the Mordovian people dealing with this problem?

Barev dzez, Artsvi Genrikovich! I also do not accept the term "small peoples." It is inappropriate when referring to different ethnic groups; a people cannot be small. Every people is a separate, distinctive universe with its own unique cultural code. Is there a problem with preserving the Mordovian languages in the republic? I don't think so. Today, schools in Mordovia are the main foundation for preserving Moksha and Erzya languages. We have good radio and television programs in the national languages. The state has established a continuous system: the foundations are laid already in kindergartens, while at school the languages are studied in class and reinforced through digital platforms and ethnographic museums. School prevents native speech from disappearing from the official sphere and makes studying it a normal part of life. But it is important to understand that school provides the foundation and knowledge; whether children

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David Zakarian Lectures in Fresno On 'Armenian Treasures in Oxford's Bodleian Library'

FRESNO, Calif. — Dr. David Zakarian will present a talk on "Armenian Treasures in Oxford's Bodleian Library" at 7:00 p.m., on Friday, November 6, in the Grosse Industrial Technology Building, Room 101 (2255 E. Barstow Ave.) on the Fresno State campus. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Established in 1602, the Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford holds world-renowned treasures, including a 1217 Magna Carta, a copy of the Gutenberg Bible, and Shakespeare's *First Folio*. Among these treasures is a distinguished collection of medieval Armenian manuscripts, which began taking shape in the 17th century through the efforts of Archbishop William Laud and now numbers around 120 manuscripts. The Bodleian Armenian collection is the second largest of its kind in the United Kingdom after the British Library, with the oldest manuscript dating to the eleventh century.

This talk will examine the history of this collection and highlight specific remarkable samples from its holdings.

Zakarian is Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies at Fresno State. He holds a DPhil in Oriental Studies from the University



Dr. David Zakarian

of Oxford. His doctoral thesis focused on the representation of women in early Christian Armenian texts. He taught Classical and Modern Armenian at Oxford from 2020 to 2024. Dr. Zakarian is the author of *Women, Too, Were Blessed: The Portrayal of Women in Early Christian Armenian Texts* and co-editor of *Armenia through the Lens of Tim*e. He has also published extensively on Armenian manuscripts and early Christian literature.

Free parking is available in Fresno State Lot P23, near the Industrial Technology building. Parking permits are not required for Friday night lectures.

For information about upcoming Armenian Studies Program presentations, please follow the Facebook page, @ArmenianStudiesFresnoState or the Program website, https://fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies.

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will come to love the language and speak it in the future depends on the atmosphere in their families.

You study the material and spiritual culture of the Armenian community in Mordovia. How did your interest in Armenia begin? Do you speak Armenian?

My path toward the study of Armenian culture began with a chance meeting in Saransk with a shoemaker, Ishkhan Djanibekovich Chakhoyan. One day, during a conversation, he told me bitterly that his father — a well-known builder who had helped shape the appearance of our city — had been unjustly forgotten, and that his family was not mentioned in any book. His words touched me deeply. I promised the craftsman that I would piece together the history of his family and preserve it for the city. It was this human story that became the spark from which my major scholarly journey into the depths of the Armenian soul began.

As for Armenian studies and the Armenian language, I am still at the beginning of this profound journey. I know Armenian at the basic level of etiquette and greetings. For me, this is a sign of deep respect: whenever I speak before the Armenian scholarly community, I always greet them and say my first words in their native language, although I am still learning to speak it properly.

Your book *Armenia–Mordovia: Intercultural Interaction and Dialogue of Cultures* was recently published in Yerevan. Would it not have been more appropriate to publish it in Russia rather than here?

My monograph is, from the outset, a Russian publication. The first, electronic edition of the book was published in Moscow under the prestigious imprint of the Dmitry Likhachev Russian Research Institute for Cultural and Natural Heritage (Heritage Institute). It is an academic work recognized by the Russian scholarly community. As for Yerevan, the book was published there as a second, expanded print edition. In other words, Armenia was chosen as the place where the book would be printed, making it accessible to colleagues abroad as well, but its scholarly "heart" is entirely Russian.

How many Armenians live in Mordovia today, and what particular contribution would you highlight from the Armenian community to the life of the republic?

According to official figures, 1,356 Armenians live in Mordovia today. Their contribution is very diverse: they include builders who helped shape our cities, entrepreneurs, doctors, talented artists, and skilled craftspeople. I think census statistics do not always reflect reality with complete accuracy. Many Armenians are constantly on the move, creating and working, so not everyone ends up in official reports. I am convinced that there are many more Armenians living in the republic. And now, as a researcher, I am considering new ways — through personal meetings and the community's internal networks — to establish their exact number.

The Russian linguist Roman Stackelberg compared 58 words from Finno-Ugric languages with Iranian languages and Armenian, and among other things identified a similarity between words meaning "person": in Armenian, *mard* (man), and in Mordovian, *mirti*. Have you found other interesting parallels between Armenian and the Mordovian languages?

Yes, and these parallels are truly astonishing. The earliest layers of the Mordovian languages are connected precisely with ancient contacts. But the most remarkable thing happens when you encounter such parallels in real life.



Tatyana Yangaykina and Erzya woman Evdokia Matveevna (Shoghakat village, Armenia)

In 2025, I took part in an international Armenian studies conference in Gyumri. As I listened to a presentation in Armenian, I suddenly realized that I was hearing familiar Moksha sounds. After the presentation, I approached the speaker and asked about the Armenian word *verev*. It turned out to mean "upper" or "above." And in my native Moksha language, the word *vyare* has exactly the same meaning. It was an incredible moment of discovery. This layer of ancient linguistic connections still needs to be studied in depth, and this accidental thread, Artsvi Genrikovich, you have now opened up for me, giving me a new subject to think about.



Tatyana Yangaykina and Erzya man Isai Ivanovich (Yerevan)

I would also like to share an amazing story. Recently, when I visited the editorial office of *Literaturnaya Armenia* magazine in Yerevan, I met with its editor-in-chief, the respected Albert Mamikonovich Nalbandyan. He told me that he had heard the surname Yangaykina for the first time and was struck by how deep and interesting it sounded. Albert Mamikonovich said with a smile: "Tatyana, there is a lot of Armenian in your surname—YAN is the ending of Armenian surnames, GAY (hay) means Armenian, and KIN means woman." I should note that my family name has purely Moksha roots, with the following etymology: YAN means path or footpath, GAY means resonantly or loudly, and KI means road.

Did you know that another of Mordovia's smaller ethnic groups, the Erzya, also lived in Armenia? According to 1934 statistics, 419 Mordovians lived in Soviet Armenia. In 1994, the Armenian press published an article by Harutyun Minasyan about the small community of Erzya Molokans in Armenia.

They still live in Armenia today, and I know them personally. It all began during my first trip to Yerevan, when I was invited by the Russian House. Professor Viktoria Aleksandrovna Arakelova introduced me to the well-known journalist and poet Elena Shuvaeva, who studies the Molokans of Armenia. Thanks to her, I was able to visit the village of Shoghakat (formerly Nadezhdino or Shorzha), where our Mordovian Molokans were settled as early as 1840. I spent several days there collecting unique ethnographic material and studying an old Mordovian cemetery. In 2025, I then researched the cemetery in Nubarashen district of Yerevan and met with Mordovians living in Yerevan. One of the things I was especially proud of was that a representative of the Molokan community, an Erzya man named Isai Ivanovich Grigoriev, attended the presentation of my book. It was incredibly gratifying to see a fellow countryman in the audience. Thus, the history of the Mordovian Molokans in Armenia is another important area of my scholarly work — one that was born thanks to this remarkable country.

Last August, you climbed Mount Ararat. Please share your impressions and tell us about the experience.

Yes, I really did have that experience. A year ago, my colleague, friend and intellectual inspiration, Elena Alekseevna Shuvaeva, suggested that I climb to the peak of Ararat. It happened just before the presentation of my book, which took place on August 11. Two days earlier, on August 9, as preparation and acclimatization, Elena, an experienced mountaineer, took me to Mount Aragats, the highest point in Armenia. To be honest, it was not easy: I have a phobia and am terrified of heights. But I successfully overcame that barrier and unfurled the flag of my native Mordovia at the summit of Aragats. We spent several days making our way toward the sacred Mount Ararat. We set off on August 14, and on August 16 an initiative group from the organization DIALOG — Elena Shuvaeva, as its adviser, and myself, as a regular contributor to an information portal — together with our friends from Russia, Armenia and Italy, successfully reached the peak of Greater Ararat (5,165 meters).

I often hear people say that this sacred mountain does not allow everyone to reach it. Perhaps that is true. Anyone can set out toward it, but how you make that journey is what matters. And this is not really about physical preparation, but about one's spiritual state. A person who goes there with impure intentions, envy, or malice in their heart truly will not make it to the top.

Do you know what this mountain gave me? Humbleness and tremendous patience. Up there, I was not fighting physical hardship or the peak itself. A mountain is a mirror: it exposes a person's true nature and shows who they really are.

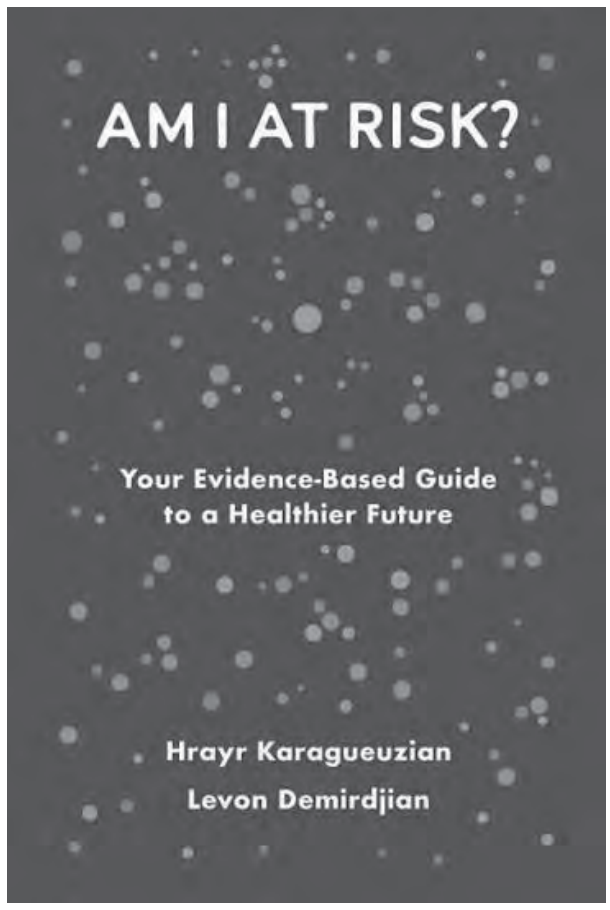
Do you have any further plans connected with Armenia?

You know, I am a cautious and somewhat superstitious person, so I am always afraid of jinxing my future plans by talking about them too soon. But I can say this much: Armenia is a country that has entered my soul forever and become part of my scholarly projects. God willing, I will continue to visit this remarkable land with pleasure. And not only for research anymore—my dear Armenian friends live here, and I deeply value my conversations and friendship with them.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to say: Artsvi Genrikovich, thank you very much for this profound and heartfelt conversation.

Books

New Book Offers Guide to Empower Readers Against Chronic Disease



LOS ANGELES — Dr. Hrayr Karagueuzian and Dr. Levon Demirdjian have announced the release of their book, *Am I at Risk? Your Evidence-Based Guide to a Healthier Future*. This 334-page, science-based health guide equips readers with tools to understand, measure, and reduce their personal risk for chronic diseases, providing a practical and empowering resource designed for individuals seeking clarity in a sea of confusing health advice.

Chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes and obesity continue to affect millions, often driven by preventable risk factors like high blood pressure, smoking, physical inactivity and diet-related issues. *Am I at Risk?* tackles these challenges head-on, offering authoritative, evidence-backed insights to help readers take charge of their health trajectories. Using accessible language free of overwhelming medical jargon, Karagueuzian and Demirdjian translate decades of medical research into actionable guidance, enabling readers to cut through misinformation and avoid unnecessary anxiety about unsubstantiated health claims.

"Health is not a prophecy; it's a trajectory, one that can be shifted with informed choices and purposeful action," said Karagueuzian, a cardiology researcher whose work has shaped the scientific understanding of hidden cardiac risk factors. Dr. Demirdjian adds, "This book is a call to action for health literacy. It empowers readers by decoding the complexity of medical data into insights that genuinely matter."

Key highlights of the book include: Identifying potential health risks such as obesity, diabetes, and lifestyle factors — and addressing them through sustainable, evidence-based interventions; Dispelling myths and fear around health claims, with tools to differentiate between fact, fiction, and marketing spin as well as guided steps to reduce risk factors early, long before they culminate into more serious conditions.

Karagueuzian, Adjunct Professor Emeritus of Medicine at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, and Demirdjian, a bioinformatics and medical research expert, bring unparalleled authority and passion to the topic. Their combined expertise represents nearly five decades of research and advocacy at the intersection of prevention, science, and public health.

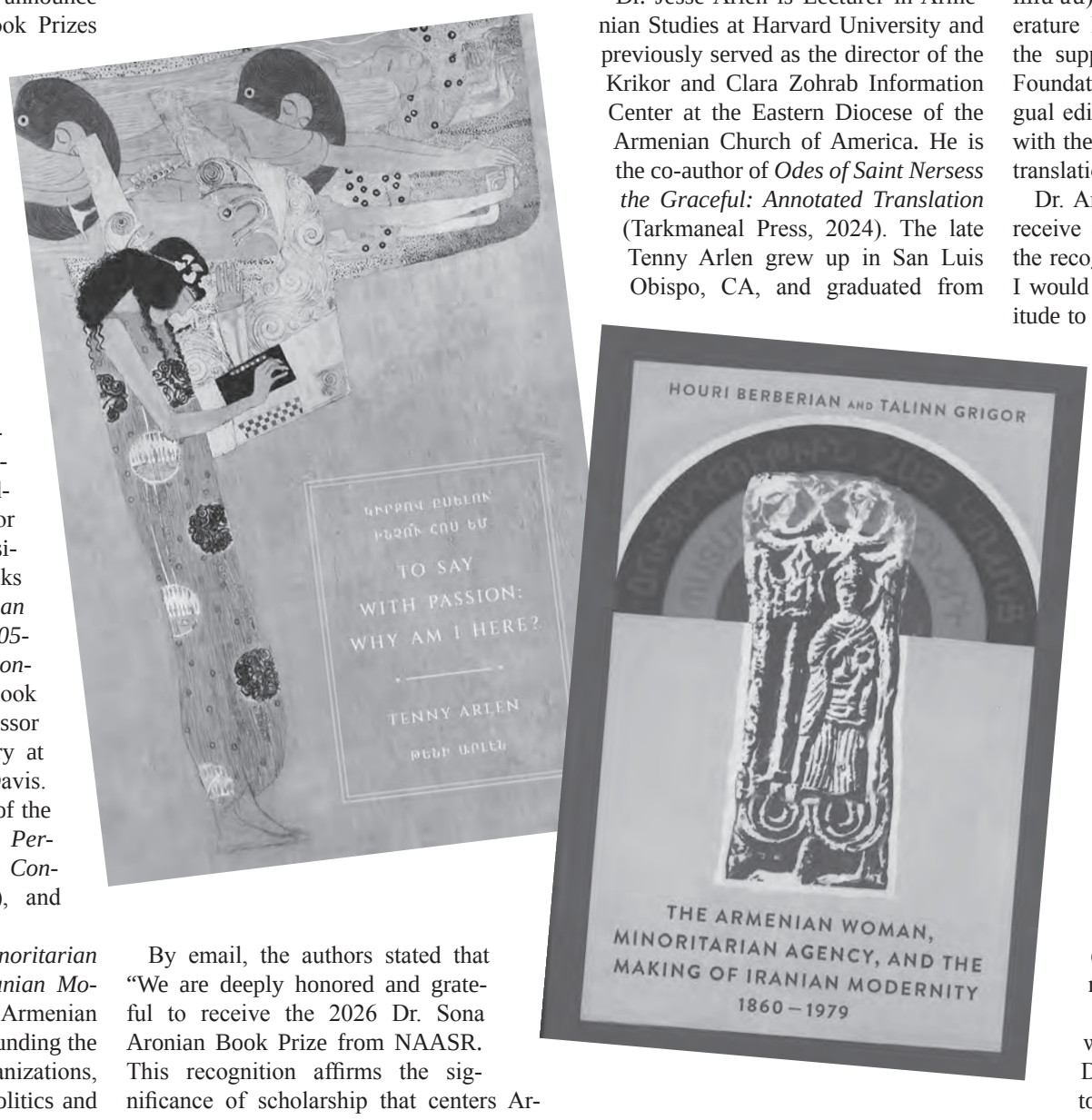
Purchase the book on Amazon.

NAASR Announces Winners of 2026 Dr. Sona Aronian Armenian Studies Book Prizes

BELMONT, Mass. — The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) is pleased to announce the 2026 Dr. Sona Aronian Book Prizes for Excellence in Armenian Studies, awarded to Dr. Houri Berberian and Dr. Talinn Grigor for *The Armenian Woman, Minoritarian Agency, and the Making of Iranian Modernity, 1860–1979* (Stanford University Press) and Tenny Arlen and Dr. Jesse Arlen for *To Say with Passion: Why Am I Here?* (Tarkmaneal Press). The 2026 awards are for books with a 2025 publication date.

Berberian is Professor of History, Meghrouni Family Presidential Chair in Armenian Studies, and Director of the Center for Armenian Studies at the University of California, Irvine. Her books include *Armenians and the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911* (2001) and *Roving Revolutionaries* (2019), a 2020 Aronian Book Prize winner. Grigor is Professor of Art and Architectural History at the University of California, Davis. She is the author of the winner of the Saidi-Sirjani Book Award, *The Persian Revival* (2021), as well as *Contemporary Iranian Art* (2014), and *Building Iran* (2009).

The Armenian Woman, Minoritarian Agency, and the Making of Iranian Modernity offers the first history of Armenian women in modern Iran. Foregrounding the work of Armenian women's organizations, the authors trace minoritarian politics and the shifting relationships among doubly minoritized Armenian female subjects, Iran's central nodes of power, and the Irano-Armenian patriarchal institutions of church and political parties. Engaging broader considerations around modernization, nationalism, and feminism, it stands as a rich contribution to how we think about the history of women and minoritized peoples.



By email, the authors stated that "We are deeply honored and grateful to receive the 2026 Dr. Sona Aronian Book Prize from NAASR. This recognition affirms the significance of scholarship that centers Armenian women's critical role in shaping Armenian history. That it resonates with scholars, students, and readers invested in these questions offers encouragement that such histories remain vital to our collective understanding. Thank you to NAASR, the selection committee, and all who continue to sustain the intellectual community that makes work like ours possible."

Dr. Jesse Arlen is Lecturer in Armenian Studies at Harvard University and previously served as the director of the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center at the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. He is the co-author of *Odes of Saint Nersess the Graceful: Annotated Translation* (Tarkmaneal Press, 2024). The late Tenny Arlen grew up in San Luis Obispo, CA, and graduated from UCLA in 2013. In 2015, she was admitted to the University of Michigan's doctoral program in Comparative Literature with a plan to study French and Armenian symbolist poetry, but she passed away in a car accident in the summer of 2015 before beginning the program.

Her book of poems *To Say with Passion: Why Am I Here?* (Կիրքով ըսելու՝ ինչո՞ւ հոս եմ) was first published by the ARI Literature Foundation (Yerevan, 2021) with the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, and was republished in a bilingual edition by Tarkmaneal Press in 2025 with the original poems alongside English translations by Tenny and her brother.

Dr. Arlen remarked, "I am delighted to receive this award, first and foremost for the recognition it brings to Tenny's poetry. I would like to express my profound gratitude to NAASR and the award committee for acknowledging the significance of this book for Armenian Studies and the American Armenian community. I am grateful to those who contributed to this book, including my and Tenny's teacher and mentor Hagop Gulludjian, who wrote the afterword reflecting on her journey to acquire Armenian and write creatively in the language; to my friend and colleague Arthur Ipek, who contributed an insightful essay interpreting Tenny's poetics and place in Armenian literature; to Meghan Arlen for the beautiful cover and Matthew Sarkisian for the attractive layout and typesetting. I hope that this award will have the effect of bringing Tenny's beautiful poems into the hands and hearts of more readers."

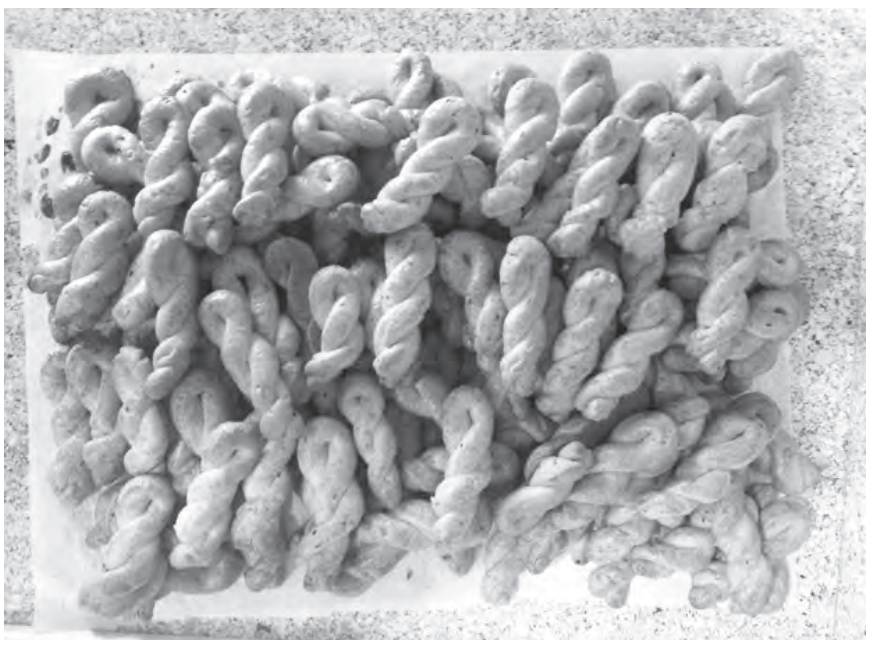
NAASR's Aronian Book Prizes were established in 2014 by the late Dr. Aronian and Dr. Geoffrey Gibbs, to be awarded annually to outstanding scholarly works in the English language in the field of Armenian Studies and translations from Armenian into English.

Authors or publishers wishing to submit books for consideration for future Aronian Prizes may contact NAASR at hq@naasr.org.

Recipe Corner



by Christine Vartanian Datian



Lynne Gregorian's Mother's Simit

FRESNO — For high school birthdays, graduation parties, engagements, showers, and weddings, my beloved mother, Alice Vartanian, and her best friends, Mary Hokokian, Lynne Gregorian, and Gladys Jamgotchian always came together at each of their homes to prepare large trays of mouth-watering yalanchi (grape leaves), desserts, and other dishes to serve at these special events. These talented ladies were the closest friends and confidants for over 50 years in Fresno and enjoyed making many memorable dishes for family events and celebrations throughout their lives.

For over 50 years, these ladies volunteered at our church (the historic Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church located in downtown Fresno) making gata, choreg, simit, kufta, yalanchi and other specialties for the church dinners, bazaars, and picnics held throughout the year. During their lives, they shared major milestones together – they were devoted daughters, sisters, wives, mothers, aunts, and grandmothers. They were proud first-generation Armenian women of great character and substance who deserve to always be remembered and cherished – they dedicated their lives to their husbands, children, families, their church, and their dearest friends.

Lynne (Aslanian) Gregorian was born on November 4, 1923, in Fresno to Jack and Lousaper Aslanian. Lynne was a longtime member of the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church and Trinity (now Ladies') Guild in Fresno. Her immigrant parents were from Ourfa (Urfa), Turkey, and were survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

Her obituary reads, "She was born in the Greatest Generation. Her kind, caring, and generous soul will be dearly missed. She was preceded in death by the love of her life, her beloved husband, Woodrow (Woody) Gregorian; brother, Harry Aslanian; and her parents. She was survived by her sons; Ronald and Richard; and grandson, Dakota Lyn."

Lynne's husband owned Woody's Mobil Station at Tulare and O Streets in Fresno for 35 years after which he served for 20 years as the plant manager at Gregor Boats. He served in the United States Army Aviation Engineer Corp in WWII in the Southwest Pacific. Woody and Lynne were married for 53 years. Lynne passed away on December 19, 2011.



Lynne and Woodrow Gregorian on their wedding day, December 21, 1946, in Fresno, CA

A funeral service was held for Lynne at Whitehurst, Sullivan, Burns & Blair Funeral Home on December 22, 2011. Interment was at Masis Ararat Cemetery in Fresno.

Simit

Simit is a traditional, not-too-sweet Christmas and holiday bread. It is light with a buttery texture; in combination with sesame seeds; it will give your mouth a luxurious treat. Simit is generally served plain, or for breakfast with hot tea, coffee, fruit preserves, or assorted cheeses. Many Armenians grew up enjoying simit made by their mothers, aunts and grandmothers at the holidays. I received this recipe from "Auntie" Lynne Gregorian many years ago and have always enjoyed making it for my family.

Auntie Lynne made this simit recipe for special occasions throughout the year. It was her beloved mother Lousaper Aslanian's recipe. She was very proud of this recipe, and she took great pride in telling her friends about her mother and her incredible cooking and baking skills.

INGREDIENTS:

6 eggs
1 lb. melted butter
2 cups sugar
11 cups all-purpose flour
4 teaspoons baking powder
1 cup milk
Egg for egg wash
Sesame seeds, optional

PREPARATION:

In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients together. Do not knead. Make about 110 walnut-size balls, and cover. (Add a touch of water to the dough if dough is a bit dry.)

On an un-floured work surface, roll each ball by hand into a nine-inch rope. Twist each rope into a simple braid and place it on an ungreased baking sheet. (These don't spread, so you can place them fairly close together. There is no yeast involved in this recipe.)

Brush tops with egg and sprinkle with sesame seeds, if desired.

Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 18-22 minutes or until golden, depending on the heat of your oven.

Gold Earrings, Roman Coin and Bronze Dagger Unearthed at Armenia's Metsamor Site

YEREVAN (panorama.am) — Archaeologists have unearthed a collection of artifacts dating back thousands of years at the Metsamor archaeological site in Armenia, including gold earrings, a coin from the reign of Roman Emperor Augustus and a bronze dagger.

The finds were discovered during ongoing excavations by the Service for the Protection of Historical Environment and Cultural Museum-Reserves at a site adjacent to the Metsamor Historical and Archaeological Museum-Reserve.

The artefacts span several periods, from the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age to antiquity, offering further insight into the burial site's long history and its use across different eras, the service said on Tuesday.

Excavations resumed in 2026 at a burial structure where archaeological work first began in 2024. The site is located on privately owned land.

The structure consists of a stone-built burial chamber surrounded by a circular stone arrangement known as a cromlech, measuring about 20 metres in diameter. Built from tuff and basalt, it contains a large stone-lined tomb at its centre, measuring approximately 6 meters by 4 meters internally.

Excavations in previous years revealed a burial dating to the first century AD in the upper layers of the tomb. It contained a rich assemblage of grave goods, including gold ornaments, a coin and other artefacts characteristic of the Roman-era ancient world.

The 2026 excavations uncovered additional layers containing artefacts from different periods. Among the discoveries was an Iron Age burial of a single individual, accompanied by grave goods and a large quantity of pottery.

In the lowest layer, near the floor of the burial chamber, archaeologists identified the primary burial, which preliminary analysis suggests dates to the 14th–13th centuries B.C., during the Late Bronze Age.

Finds from this layer include substantial concentrations of horse bones, numerous pottery fragments, a Lchashen-type dagger, belt fragments, pieces of various bronze objects and bell-shaped pendants.

The variety of artifacts and the sequence of archaeological layers indicate that the burial structure remained in use over an extended period and was reused by different communities in successive historical eras.



Earring found at Metsamor

ARTS & CULTURE

‘After Dreaming’: A Haunting Journey Through War-Torn Armenia

By Christopher Atamian
Special to the Mirror-Spectator


Scene from “After Dreaming”

It may be unfair to fault an experimental film for having little conventional plot or dialogue. Yet when the lights came up after Christine Haroutounian’s “After Dreaming,” there was a palpable sense of unease in the audience — not simply because of the tragic events the film recounts, but perhaps because of the distance it creates from the viewer.

Surreal, unforgettable landscapes, strong performances, and a striking visual sensibility distinguish this 2025 feature film. A brooding, lanky soldier named Atom (Davit Beybutyan) escorts a young woman, Claudette (Veronika Poghosyan), across a war-ravaged Armenia, eventually becoming her lover and husband. As Atom drives through a rainy winter countryside toward her family and the promise of safety, Claudette is unaware that her father has been shot dead by another Armenian in a border misunderstanding. Haroutounian’s unhurried camera, muted sepia palette, and close attention to the faces of professional and nonprofessional performers give the film much of its emotional force. As the relationship between Claudette and Atom unfolds, the director explores the effects of trauma on those involved, alongside recurring concerns with family, religion, and Armenian national identity. The film also incorporates real-life footage of a 2008 mass wedding in Stepanakert, where some 700 Armenian couples married in a single ceremony — a poignant document given subsequent events.

Haroutounian is an intellectually curious filmmaker. During the post-screening Q&A, she invoked thinkers such as Roland Barthes and his concept of the punctum, suggesting how seriously she thinks about the relationship between image and meaning. She also made a convincing case that, while the film is firmly rooted in contemporary Armenian history and the recent loss of Artsakh, its concerns extend beyond this one conflict to generalized questions of war, intimacy, and human relations. There is much to admire in that ambition.

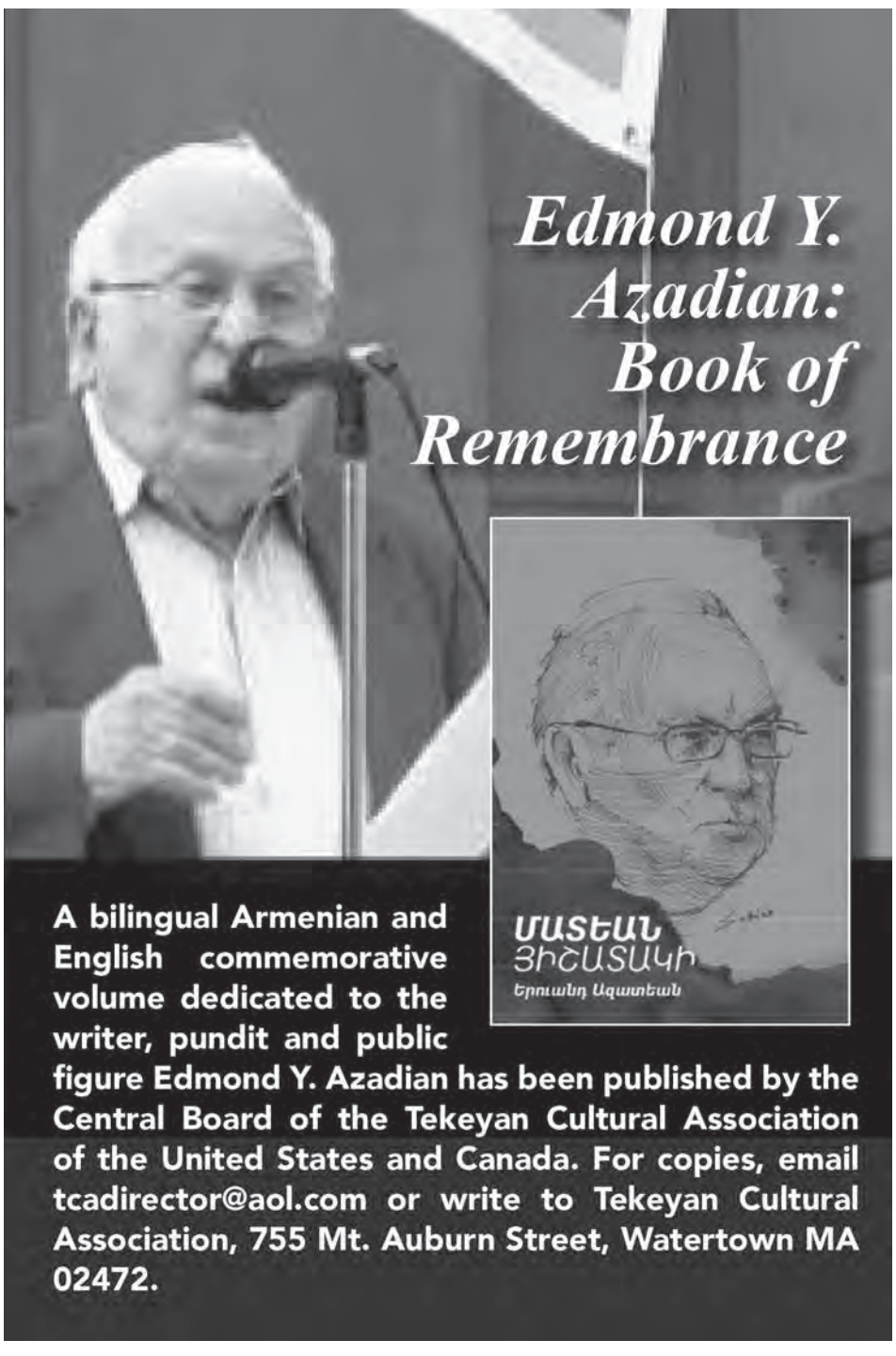
Still, “After Dreaming” goes on too long and would have been more effective as a substantial short film than as a feature. Like Armenian history itself, it can feel relentlessly somber, allowing little room for tonal variation or release. I also found the central relationship troubling in ways the film never quite resolves. Poghosyan plays Claudette as sheepish and whiny, while Beybutyan gives Atom a virile, intimidating presence. Before the couple ever have sex, he announces matter-of-factly: “Even God couldn’t help the last woman I screwed.” The line seems to promise a disturbing encounter, or at least one that might illuminate something essential about his character. Instead, when sex finally occurs, it is surprisingly tame. We are also once again presented with full-frontal female nudity but no equivalent male exposure — a familiar cinematic asymmetry.


Davit Beybutyan

The dialogue between Atom and Claudette feels stilted, repeatedly circling the question of whether they “understand one another.” The effect is less an accumulation of meaningful ambiguity than juvenile banter. Some scenes test the viewer’s patience, notably the seemingly interminable car ride at the beginning and the extended sequence

continued on next page


Scene from “After Dreaming”



CALENDAR

OF EVENTS & PROGRAMS

MASSACHUSETTS

NOVEMBER 10 — "The Role and Current Condition of the Media in Armenia" panel discussion with intro by Pulitzer-Prize winning investigative reporter Steve Kurkjian, speakers Edik Baghdasaryan, editor in-chief of Hetq, Aram Arkun, managing editor of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, and Ara Khatchatourian, executive editor of Asbarez,with Dikran Kaligian, managing editor of the Armenian Review serving as moderator. 7:30 p.m. at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), 395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, in collaboration with the Armenian Assembly of America, Armenian National Committee of Eastern Massachusetts and the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

NOVEMBER 12 — An enchanting evening to benefit children in Armenia with cancer, hosted by City of Smile USA. Special performance by illusionist Joel Acevedo from Boston's Hit Show "Four-Handed Illusions." Thursday, 7 p.m., at Oakley Country Club, Watertown. Cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, live performance. Tickets $150 per person. For tickets: call Cynthia (339-222-9900) or online see QR code in Mystical Illusions Flyer.

NOVEMBER 14 — Annual Fall Bazaar 12-5 PM Lamb, chicken & Losh Kebab Dinners, Cuisine Table, Pastries, Hayastan Table & Farmer's Market. Holy Archangels Armenian Church 1280 Boston Rd. Haverhill.

NOVEMBER 13 —Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) Boston's Child Care Committee presents an evening in support of the Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School in Yerevan. The event will feature Manet-Miriam, star of "La Voix" (The Voice) Canada, with special guest Melanya Geghamyan, founding principal of the Avedisian School. 6 p.m. Dinner and live auction. Wellesley Country Club, Wellesley Hills. For more info and reservations visit: https://amaa.org/hyeminds2026/

NOVEMBER 15 — Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church invites the community to its Thanksgiving Luncheon at 12:30 PM in Nishan & Margrit Atinizian Hall, 200 Lexington Street, Belmont, MA 02478. Join us for an afternoon of thanksgiving and fellowship. Sunday. Tickets: Adults $40; youth and children $25. Reservations: Parish Office, (617) 489-2280, or Ingrid, (617) 312-0805. Online registration and Venmo payment QR codes are available on the attached flyer.

NOVEMBER 15 — GIVING THANKS! TOGETHER IN CELEBRATION. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Sunday at 2pm./Meet & Greet. Share the Warmth: Bring a Winter Hat, Scarf or Gloves for the ABCD Winter Drive, Seasonal Refreshments. RSVP appreciated hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

NOVEMBER 15 — Holy Trinity Armenian Church's Dr. Michael and Joyce Kolligian Distinguished Speaker and Performing Arts Series presents pianist Karine Poghosyan, performing works by Liszt and Khachaturian. Poghosiyan has appeared at Carnegie Hall, Vienna's Musikverein and the Chicago Cultural Center, with acclaim from Gramophone Magazine and the American Record Guide. Sunday, 4 p.m., Holy Trinity Church Sanctuary, 145 Brattle St,. Cambridge. For info, visit www.htaac.org or call 617-354-0632. Free and open to the public.

NOVEMBER 21 — Saints Vartanantz Armenian Church Food Festival. 11 a.m. – 6. p.m., 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford. Eat-in or Take-out. The Food Festival menu includes lamb, chicken, and losh kebab dinners, and a vegetarian platter, a country store with a variety of Armenian specialties and deserts. The festival also features a jewelry table, an antique treasures boutique, gift items from Armenia as well as a backgammon tournament and narrated tours of the church's sanctuary. For further information, call the church office at 978-256-7234.

NOVEMBER 21 and 22: Save the Date. America's oldest Armenian Church Celebrates 135 years. Banquet November 21. Divine Liturgy November 22. Details to follow.

DECEMBER 6 — Join Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church for an evening of sacred music and a Christmas pageant on Sunday at 6 p.m. at 200 Lexington St., Belmont. Featuring Fr. Ghazar Bedrossian, Angeline Nazarian and Maria Emma Lyons, with pianist Marina Margarian and violinist Armenuhi Hovakimian. Refreshments will follow in Nishan & Margrit Atinizian Hall. Tickets: $25, available through Venmo @HCACCMA or at the entrance. Everyone is welcome! Email:holycrossbostonma@gmail.com

DECEMBER 6 — CANDLELIT LABYRINTH WALK: IN PEACE & HARMONY Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Sunday at 4:45pm. Meet & Greet. Walk the Candlelit Labyrinth Walk. Enjoy Hot Chocolate & Sweet Treats. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

MICHIGAN

NOVEMBER 9 — The Tufenkian Foundation and the Women's Support Center are jointly sponsoring a luncheon featuring a talk by Maro Matosian, the executive director of the Women's Support Center in Armenia, on November 9, at the Iroquois Club, 43248 North Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Tickets are $35. Luncheon will be served at 11:30 a.m. To attend, RSVP Linda Karibian by October 26, at (248) 496-6292 or ldkaribian@yahoo.com

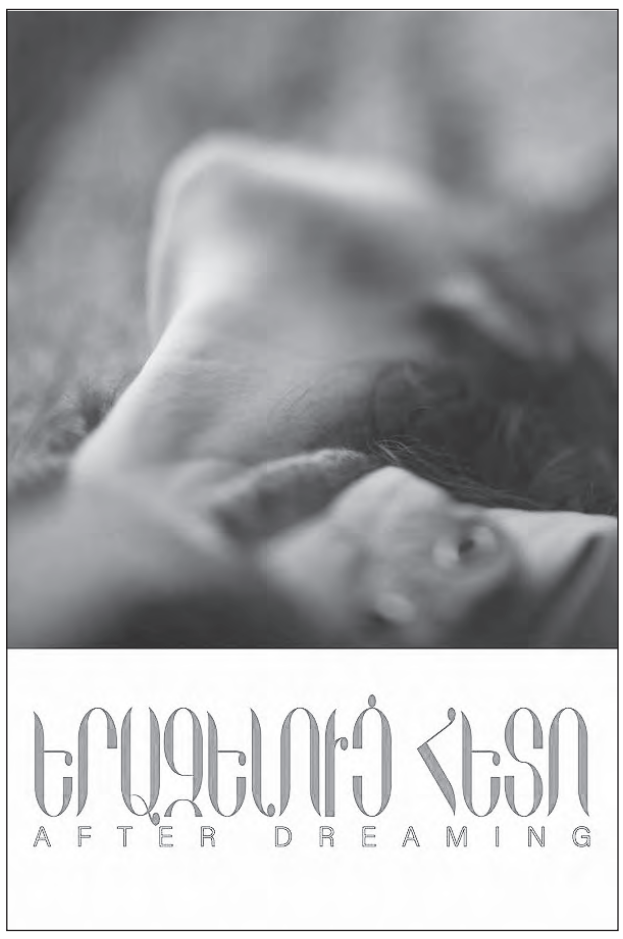
To send Calendar items email alin@mirrorspectator.com or alin.gregorian@gmail.com. You can also visit our website, www.mirrorspectator.com, and find the "calendar" section under the heading "More" or mail them to the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, 755 Mount Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472. All calendar entries must be received by noon on Monday before publication.

from previous page

of musicians playing at the wedding. By contrast, the *berd*, a traditional Armenian circle dance performed here by male soldiers, is genuinely powerful. And the final sequence, in which fireworks become indistinguishable from bombs, is a remarkable piece of filmmaking: a devastating visual transformation that communicates in an instant what the film's more protracted passages struggle to express.

I am a devotee of experimental cinema. But experimentation doesn't exempt a film from the demands of timing, development, and communication — even when what it communicates is deliberately elusive. "After Dreaming" contains images that linger long after the screening. If she develops a more disciplined sense of duration, Haroutounian could become a formidable filmmaker. Cinematographer Evgeni Rodin deserves considerable credit for the film's haunting visual force.

In Armenian with English subtitles (105 minutes), "After Dreaming" was screened as part of "Our Century: Spiraling through Armenian Cinema," curated by Sona Karapoghosyan, at New York's Asia Society, October 23–25.



Movie poster for "After Dreaming"

Preparing Pickled Vegetables at Boston TCA Workshop

TOURSHI, from page 1

The key, according to Arouyan, is the pickling fluid. For one liter of regular tap water at room temperature, 3 tablespoons of kosher salt, 1 tablespoon of white vinegar, and ½ teaspoon of sugar are added. The vegetables are kept in a closed jar for at least three days. Some bubbling will take place indicating fermentation.



A table of happy customers, including some Tekeyan Boston Chapter members (photo Aram Arkun)

Sponsor a Teacher Program

Any inquiries for information about the Sponsor a Teacher Program or donations should be henceforth directed to the central office of the Tekeyan Cultural Association at 755 Mount Auburn Street, Watertown MA 02472, or emailed to Aram Arkun at tcadirector@aol.com.

THE ARMENIAN MIRROR SPECTATOR
SINCE 1932

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COMMENTARY

Armenia, CSTO, and Russia: A Struggle For Strategic Clarity

By Suren Sargsyan
Special to the Mirror-Spectatowr

In recent days, the issue of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) has once again been brought into circulation, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia addressed it, stating that Armenia does not wish to return to the CSTO.

Armenia froze its membership in the CSTO two years ago, in February 2024. Since then, Armenia has not participated in the organization's activities or in the adoption of its decisions. Recently, discussions surrounding the CSTO have intensified. Former CSTO Secretary General Nikolay Bordyuzha has stated that Armenia should be expelled from the organization, taking into account the political course adopted by the country, leading to the response of Armenia's foreign minister noted above.

At the same time, Armenia has not made a clear statement about definitively withdrawing from the organization. There are also legal issues that need to be resolved in order to understand the mechanism through which Armenia could be expelled from the CSTO.

Of course, the CSTO and the EAEU are two different organizations with different charters, objectives, and tasks. Although Armenia has frozen its membership in the CSTO, it continues its relations with the EAEU. Moreover, the Armenian authorities state that, under the current circumstances, the country does not consider withdrawal from the EAEU appropriate.

In sum, a situation seems to be emerging in which Armenia and Russia are unable to make a clear decision about who should initiate the expulsion process for both organizations. Neither want to assume the initiative so neither side is taking concrete steps, although both sides recognize that Armenia's membership in the CSTO is currently ineffective for Armenia and for the organization itself.

The EAEU is a rather interesting structure. In certain respects, it resembles a club of Turkic and Slavic countries. In fact, Armenia is the only state among the organization's members that is neither Slavic nor Turkic. In the case of the CSTO as well, most member states are Turkic or Slavic countries, joined by Tajikistan, which is not a Turkic state, and Armenia, which is also not a Turkic state.

Armenia's withdrawal from the CSTO could serve as a precedent for other countries, and Moscow understands this. It also understands that in Central Asia, whose members Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan are facing strong competition for influence among the United States, China, and Russia, this means that they could subsequently use this precedent to build their security architecture or become involved in another system, particularly if they receive support from the United States and China in establishing security systems.

Consequently, Moscow will try to do everything possible to prevent the collapse of the CSTO, because this is not only a matter of prestige. It is particularly noteworthy that, under Article 20 of the CSTO Charter, mechanisms for terminating membership do in fact exist, and a member state can be expelled from the organization for failing to fulfill its obligations. This is an article relevant to Armenia, given that its membership status has been frozen.

The same cannot be said about the EAEU, whose charter does not contain a similar provision. However, it cannot be ruled out that the Armenian authorities also want to turn this issue into a broad subject of discussion in relations with Russia. Since Moscow views its relations with Armenia as a package, Yerevan acts in the same way.

The CSTO meeting is scheduled to take place in November, while the EAEU summit will be held in December. It cannot be ruled out that Armenia wants to clarify its part of the package of Armenian-Russian relations before then. This may be why Armenia has decided to establish a working group to discuss the Russian railway issue, as well as the future of the Armenian nuclear power plant, regarding which discussions are currently underway with various countries, including Russia.

All of this serves to demonstrate that Armenia simply wants to introduce certain final clarifications into Armenian-Russian relations, rather than take clear political steps against Russia's interests – an issue I have had the opportunity to discuss before. Once again, it should be noted that Armenia has not yet taken any practical steps against Russia's regional interests; it has only been employing tough rhetoric. Whether Moscow is determined to keep Armenia within its orbit or let it go will probably become clear sooner than expected.



(Suren Sargsyan is an expert on US foreign policy, researcher and author. He is a graduate of Yerevan State University, American University of Armenia and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Suren Sargsyan is a founder of the Armenian Center for American Studies, a research center based in Yerevan.)

LETTERS

Protect Free Speech In Armenia

Dear Editor,

I agree completely with Harut Sassounian's article, "Long Live Pashinyan's Democracy! Cramming the Jails with Facebook Critics" (*Mirror-Spectator*, October 17, 2026). The cases he describes raise serious concerns about freedom of expression and the treatment of people who criticize Armenia's government.

In a democracy, citizens must be able to question their leaders, share their views, and criticize government policies without fear of arrest or retaliation. Social media has become an important public forum, and expressing an unpopular opinion online should not, by itself, be treated as a crime. When people are detained or prosecuted after criticizing those in power, it can discourage others from speaking openly—even when their comments are peaceful and intended to hold officials accountable.

The article's examples are especially concerning because they suggest that the pressure may reach beyond the people who post criticism. Reports of legal difficulties, restrictions on travel, and consequences for family members or colleagues can make dissent feel risky for an entire community. Government officials should ensure that laws are applied fairly and transparently, not used to silence opposition or intimidate critics.

Armenia's democratic future depends on strong institutions, an independent judiciary, and protections for civil liberties. Those principles matter most when the speech is uncomfortable or sharply critical of the government. Officials should investigate the cases described, protect the right to peaceful expression, and make clear that citizens will not be punished simply for disagreeing with those in power.

I hope Armenia's leaders will uphold the democratic values they claim to represent and ensure that criticism is answered with open debate — not detention or intimidation.

Sincerely,

Robert Odabashian
Bel Air Maryland

COMMENTARY

MY TURN



by Harut Sassounian

Enemies Abroad, Pashinyan Within: Armenia Faces Threats On Both Fronts

Dozens of Armenian Parliament members engaged last week in an ugly physical altercation, punching each other and even throwing a chair, resulting in bloody noses and torn clothes.

In addition to having menacing neighbors on both sides of the border, Armenia has an enemy within that is far more dangerous.

Last week's brawl, broadcast live on television, was shameful conduct unbecoming of the elected representatives of a people who pride themselves on belonging to the world's oldest Christian nation and who live in an alleged democracy.

Regrettably, Parliament Speaker Ruben Rubinyan refused to interrupt the live broadcast of this scandalous behavior. He said he wanted the public to see what was happening. Videos of the brawl were posted extensively on social media, and were covered by NBC, Al Jazeera, and CNN, embarrassing Armenians worldwide.

Rubinyan acts more like a thug more than as Speaker of Parliament. He allows his party members to insult the opposition, yet the moment one of its members makes a critical comment about the majority, he quickly cuts off the microphone and orders the security agents to remove that member from the chamber.

To make matters worse, when Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan was asked about the brawl, he said that he "supported the measures taken by the Civil Contract faction.... Whether with a chair or something else, it is proportionate and right.... If anyone thinks that they can raise their hand and hit a Member of Parliament...then we will break that hand." A chair was hurled at opposition members by Vahagn Aleksanyan, Deputy Speaker of Parliament and a member of the majority Civil Contract party. Even though Pashinyan promised to break the hand of anyone who hits a Member of Parliament, no one has been charged with assault.

Having repeatedly claimed, falsely, that he has brought democracy and peace to Armenia, he admitted last week that if the peace agreement is not signed and ratified during his time in office through 2031, "I will consider it a personal failure."

With each passing day, Pashinyan is taking more ominous steps to incite domestic instability. He accepted Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev's demand to remove the reference in the preamble of Armenia's Constitution to the 1990 declaration of independence. Aliyev has made its deletion a prerequisite for signing a peace treaty with Armenia. It is incredible that Armenia's enemy is dictating the content of its Constitution and that Pashinyan is going along with it by describing Armenia's declaration of independence as "anti-state."

Fortunately, there is a major obstacle to the adoption of a new Constitution. Pashinyan's party does not have the two-thirds majority in Parliament required to authorize a nationwide referendum. Without such approval, Aliyev has said he will not sign the peace treaty. This would be a major blow to Pashinyan's central political objective and could lead to his political downfall.

In trying to resolve this dilemma, Pashinyan initially said that he would have to hold snap parliamentary elections, hoping they would enable his party to gain enough votes to reach the required two-thirds majority. However, Pashinyan quickly abandoned this option, seeing that his party members were alarmed that they might end up in the minority as a result of those elections.

Pashinyan needs to come up with a new plan that does not require snap parliamentary elections. He mysteriously said: "I will make an offer the opposition cannot refuse." He will probably fabricate charges against at least six opposition members of Parliament and threaten them with imprisonment. If his blackmail succeeds, he will get the required two-thirds majority. However, the two opposition factions have announced that they will block the referendum.

Notably, Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan told members of Parliament last week that the government "will resign and leave" if the people vote against the new Constitution in the referendum. That would put an end to Pashinyan's beloved peace treaty as well as his premiership.

Another major issue is Pashinyan's order to arrest several hundred opposition supporters for allegedly bribing voters during the June 7, 2026, parliamentary elections. They have been in jail for months without a trial, while Pashinyan keeps referring to them as bribe-givers. No court has found them guilty of anything. Meanwhile, not a single voter for Pashinyan's party has been arrested for bribery.

Ironically, a video surfaced recently showing Pashinyan himself giving a bribe to a voter during his campaign for the June 7, 2026 parliamentary elections. Why was he not arrested for his apparent crime?

A second legal problem is the arrest of several prominent and wealthy Armenians under Pashinyan's orders. Former Pres. Robert Kocharyan and businessmen Gagik Tsarukyan and Samvel Karapetyan were arrested on unproven charges and had their properties and businesses confiscated, and their bank accounts seized. They have been accused merely on the basis of Pashinyan's words. Not one of them has been found guilty of any crime by a court. Therefore, confiscating their assets is a violation of due process and the rule of law.

All three, along with many others, should apply to the European Court of Human Rights, asking it to order their release and impose financial penalties on the Armenian government for its multiple violations.

COP17 Put Forth a Clearer Picture of the Biodiversity Crisis — But Not the Ambition to Solve It

YEREVAN (Wildlife Conservation Society/WCS) — The UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP17), with nearly 200 governments participating, put forth a clearer picture of the global biodiversity crisis and the gaps that must be closed to meet the world's 2030 targets. But the Yerevan Pathway and the conference's other outcomes do not deliver the new level of ambition needed to put the world on track, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) said today.

Said Dr. Susan Lieberman, WCS Vice President for International Policy: "COP17 was well organized by the Government of Armenia and provided a great platform for sharing, networking, and learning.

"But the negotiations themselves ended up weak on ambition. We are in the midst of a biodiversity crisis, and timidity will not save nature–we need strong outcomes for wildlife and wild places, not only outputs and great speeches.

"This meeting should have been a turning point, not just a stocktake. Success required governments to commit the political will and financing needed to reverse biodiversity loss. That means protecting and restoring ecological integrity, respecting the rights and leadership of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and reducing the drivers of decline. With just four years until 2030, we cannot afford another conference that diagnoses the crisis without accelerating the cure.

"The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework from 2022 remains a vital and ambitious global agreement. If all of the targets are delivered, as governments committed, then nature will indeed be on the path to recovery. COP17 has clarified the challenge; now governments must summon the political will, resources and resolve to meet it. We applaud the Armenian Government, the CBD Secretariat, and many governments and partners for a keeping the momentum moving toward achieving the 2030 goals and targets. But 'good enough' should never be acceptable."

Said Alfred DeGemmis, WCS Director of International Policy: "This year's UN biodiversity summit was the crash after several years of sugar-rushed optimism about global biodiversity targets. The obstructionist politics of the climate talks have entered the biodiversity negotiations, and identifying transformative actions will require ambitious leaders willing to spend political capital."

The first global review of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework underscored urgency. While countries have made progress in developing national biodiversity targets and plans, fewer than half of the national targets are on track. Current ambition also falls short of the goal to conserve at least 30 percent of land and sea by 2030, while gaps in finance, capacity and data continue to impede progress. The review of the targets provides an important basis for action. The test now is whether governments use it to change course and accelerate implementation.

WCS Assessment of Key COP17 Outcomes:

Yerevan Pathway: Governments completed the global review of collective progress, adopting a decision that included a forward-looking 'Yerevan Pathway.' However, the final version largely refers to previously agreed text and is often imprecise on practical steps to close the implementation gap. Positive developments include the inclusion of language on ecosystem monitoring and subsidy reform, which are both critical to reversing biodiversity loss.

30x30 and Biodiversity Outcomes: Collectively, governments are inching toward the global goal terrestrially and making significant progress in coastal waters–and some have made outstanding progress. However, the long-term goal is to successfully halt and reverse biodiversity loss, and to ensure that protected and conserved areas are effectively and equitably managed. The CoP adopted an updated program of work on protected areas that presents an opportunity to refocus on reversing biodiversity loss.

30x30 and the OECM Action Hub: WCS welcomes the launch of the Yerevan Global OECM Action Hub as a positive step toward advancing other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). The Hub must contribute to real progress toward 30x30, alongside the expansion of protected areas, and that all protected and conserved areas must be effectively and equitably managed and deliver measurable biodiversity outcomes.

Climate and Biodiversity Synergies: WCS came to COP17 hoping for concrete steps to address the interlinked climate and biodiversity crises: stronger synergy among the Rio Conventions and a roadmap to help countries coordinate action under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Paris Agreement. High-level events convened by the CBD COP16, UNCCD COP16, and UNFCCC COP31 presidencies reinforced the urgency and showcased integrated action already underway.

Unfortunately, the COP17 outcomes are too timid. The COP17 decision merely encourages countries to begin applying a set of voluntary guidelines, which will be negotiated further before COP18. This "kicking the can down the road" falls far short of what is needed at a time when climate change poses a significant threat to biodiversity ecosystems, and the loss and degradation of ecosystems is driving emissions and reducing the capacity of people and nature to adapt.

And where will CBD CoP18 be? Delegates voted for CoP18 to be in Quito, Ecuador, in 2028.

Vanity Fair: Trump Son-In-Law Received $750M From Azerbaijani Bank

Reports have emerged of hundreds of millions of dollars being transferred through Azerbaijan to a secret bank account that Jared Kushner, the son-in-law and former senior adviser to US President Donald Trump, allegedly had access to.

However, no evidence has been presented that the money belonged to the Azerbaijani state or that Azerbaijani authorities were involved in arranging these transactions.

The name of the Azerbaijani bank through which the transfers were allegedly made has also not been disclosed.

According to an investigation published in Vanity Fair, Dutch intelligence, while monitoring Kushner's phone, discovered that a large sum of money had been transferred from an Azerbaijani bank to an account in the United Arab Emirates.

The claims were detailed in an article by American investigative journalist Matthew Cole, published on October 22. The article is an excerpt from his new book, *Princes and Thieves*.

The investigation refers to a bank account holding approximately $750m, as well as an additional $1bn allegedly transferred to Israel through Azerbaijan. The author links these financial transactions to unofficial diplomatic negotiations involving the United States, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Israel.



How Did Dutch Intelligence Gain Access to Kushner's Phone?

According to Matthew Cole's investigation, the Netherlands' Military Intelligence and Security Service (MIVD) gained access to data from Kushner's phone in late 2017 through a hacker linked to Russian military intelligence.

Dutch intelligence officers initially discovered screenshots from Kushner's iPhone on Russian military intelligence servers. Then, exploiting the same technical vulnerability, they were able to monitor activity on his phone screen in early 2018.

The intelligence officers' attention was drawn to Kushner's use of a bank account in the UAE. According to the investigation, hundreds of millions of dollars had previously been transferred to this account from an Azerbaijani bank.

Dutch intelligence initially suspected that the bank account from which the funds originated might have been linked to the Azerbaijani government. However, the article does not provide any banking documents confirming this connection.

$750m and Possible Intermediary Role of Azerbaijani Bank

The account, referred to in the investigation as Alpha, was held at First Abu Dhabi Bank, one of the UAE's largest banks.

According to the author, the Saudi and UAE leadership transferred around $750m into the account from 2017 onwards. The funds were allegedly intended to finance unofficial foreign policy initiatives.

The account did not legally belong to Kushner. It was held by Watani Al Emarat, a charitable organization funded by the UAE government. However, according to the investigation, Kushner had signing authority over the account, allowing him to carry out certain banking transactions.

The section of the investigation concerning Azerbaijan focuses particularly on the mechanism used to transfer the funds.

According to Cole, all the funds deposited into the account monitored by Dutch intelligence arrived in US dollars from an Azerbaijani bank.

The author claims that some Azerbaijani banks acted as intermediaries in transferring large sums of money abroad. They accepted funds in Saudi riyals and UAE dirhams before transferring the equivalent amounts overseas in US dollars, charging a commission of 6–7%.

Under the arrangement described, a client would transfer funds in local currency to an Azerbaijani bank, which would then send the equivalent amount in US dollars to a recipient abroad from a separate internal account. The author notes that such transactions could make it more difficult to trace the original source of the funds.

Additional $1bn Allegedly Transferred to Israel

The investigation also describes a second major financial transaction allegedly carried out through Azerbaijan.

According to the author's sources, by spring 2018, UAE leader Mohammed bin Zayed had transferred around $1bn to Israel through Azerbaijan, allegedly intended for Kushner.

The second account, referred to by Cole as Beta, was reportedly held at the Bank of Israel.

The article claims that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was to be informed of any potential transfers from this account. According to the author, former US ambassador to Israel David Friedman acted as an intermediary between Kushner and Netanyahu.

Friedman categorically denied these allegations. Kushner's lawyer also stated that his client was unaware of the accounts in question, had no involvement with them and had not broken any laws.

Kushner's Financial Ties Have Previously Come Under Scrutiny

The new allegations come amid ongoing debate in the US over Kushner's business ties with Gulf states.

In March 2026, US Senator Ron Wyden and House Representative Robert Garcia launched an investigation into Kushner's continued efforts to raise funds from foreign governments for his investment firm while simultaneously engaging in diplomatic activities.

The members of Congress sought to establish whether investments received by Kushner's firm, Affinity Partners, from Middle Eastern governments could have influenced his involvement in US foreign policy.

An investigation published by The New Yorker in September reported that Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund had invested $2bn in Kushner's firm in 2021. The UAE and Qatar also invested in Affinity Partners.

These were separate financial arrangements, not directly linked to the alleged secret banking transactions of 2017–2018 described in the Vanity Fair article.

In addition, on October 1, CNN published an investigation into investments made by Kushner's firm in Israeli financial group Phoenix Financial. According to CNN's analysis, Phoenix Financial had invested in at least nine companies supplying equipment to the Israeli military.

However, CNN said it had found no evidence that Kushner's diplomatic decisions had directly influenced these investments. Kushner's lawyer also stated that his client had not been involved in the companies' investment decisions.

On 8 October, Kushner published a detailed response on his website to the earlier New Yorker article, rejecting allegations that he had used his diplomatic activities for personal financial gain.

Which Previous Investigations Have Implicated Azerbaijani Banks?

Azerbaijan's role in international financial transactions has previously been the subject of journalistic investigations.

In 2017, the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), together with its partners, published a major investigation titled The Azerbaijani Laundromat.

The investigation documented financial transactions totaling around $2.9bn, carried out between 2012 and 2014 through various companies and bank accounts.

According to OCCRP, around $1.4bn of this amount was transferred through Baktelekom LLC, a company that held an account at the International Bank of Azerbaijan.

The investigation highlighted the role of Azerbaijan-linked financial entities in international money transfers. However, there is no confirmed link between this scheme and the recently reported accounts allegedly connected to Kushner.

Meanwhile, in January 2026, the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) reported progress by Azerbaijan in this area.

The committee upgraded Azerbaijan's compliance ratings against international standards in seven areas, including money transfer controls, identification of the ultimate beneficial owners of legal entities and banking supervision.

However, the country remained subject to enhanced monitoring.

(This article first appeared on Jam-News.net on October 23, 2026.)

Armenia Plans to End Prison Packages from Relatives

YEREVAN (pan.am) — Armenia's Justice Ministry plans to end the practice of relatives sending packages to prisoners in the near future and provide adequate food at penitentiary institutions instead. Justice Minister Srbuhi Galyan announced the initiative during a joint meeting of the National Assembly's standing committees on state and legal affairs and on financial, credit and budgetary affairs, held as part of discussions on the draft 2027 state budget.

"In the near future, we intend to abandon the practice of prison packages altogether. This is an accepted practice in advanced countries; such packages have traditionally been common only in post-Soviet countries," she said, adding that the measure is also intended to combat criminal subculture, Sputnik Armenia reports.

Galyan also outlined restrictions already in force at penitentiary institutions aimed at preventing relationships associated with criminal subculture from developing among inmates. According to the minister, the delivery of large quantities of certain identical goods and food products is currently prohibited. As an example, she cited restrictions on accepting large portions of barbecued meat. The purpose, she said, is to ensure that each inmate receives packages exclusively for personal use rather than distributing their contents among or sharing them with other inmates. Such restrictions are intended to prevent behavior associated with criminal subculture.

The justice minister also addressed measures already implemented to ensure security and discipline in penitentiary institutions. Galyan recalled that video surveillance systems had been installed to strengthen efforts against criminal subculture and improve oversight of order within the facilities. In addition, measures have been taken to restrict the delivery of various objects into penitentiary institutions using unmanned aerial vehicles. In particular, protective netting has been installed over the territory of Armavir Penitentiary Institution to prevent prohibited and other objects from being delivered into the facility by drone.