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# AN INVESTIGATION BY THE ANTI-CORRUPTION NATIONAL INITIATIVE (ANI)

# "THE SCHOOLMARM" OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY: MONEY, REFORMS AND SUREN PAPIKYAN'S SYSTEM

## Subject: SUREN PAPIKYAN

*Suren Papikyan is one of the most controversial figures in Armenia's post-revolutionary government. A former history teacher with no real military background, he rose within a few years from "Velvet Revolution" activist to defense minister of a country that has lived through war, territorial losses and a protracted security crisis.*

*Behind his back, people in the army often called Papikyan "the schoolmarm." The nickname blends his past as a schoolteacher with the attitude of part of the military toward a man who ended up at the head of the army without any command experience or a proper career in defense.*

*Over his years in office, questions around the Ministry of Defense have piled up to the point where they can no longer be written off as isolated scandals or political attacks. A criminal record and undisclosed episodes in his biography, a rapid rise after the 2018 revolution, a sharp change in his financial situation, luxury property, questionable appointments, closed procurement, criminal cases involving contractors and his inner circle, drawn-out reforms, tragedies in the army and an attempt to build a new "weapons zoo" out of incompatible military systems have added up to a political story of Papikyan's own.*

*This ANI investigation tries to put that story together in full. Taken together, the episodes show how, in post-revolutionary Armenia, a man with no military record came to run one of the country's most closed, cash-rich and crisis-hit systems.*

**A minister without a past. What Suren Papikyan's biography leaves out**

Suren Papikyan's biography on the website of Armenia's Ministry of Defense looks scrubbed clean: dates, posts, the revolution, family. Reading it, you would think it described a history teacher with a model résumé, not the defense minister of a country that has been through war and a severe security crisis.

According to the official version, Papikyan was born on April 26, 1986, in Stepanavan. From 2003 to 2010 he studied at the Faculty of History of Yerevan State University (YSU). The biography notes separately that he was conscripted into the army during this period, but gives no details of his service: it is not known where exactly the future defense minister served, in which unit, at what rank or with what service record.

After the army, Papikyan continued his studies: in 2010–2012 he completed a master's degree at YSU, and in 2012–2016 he pursued doctoral studies at St. Petersburg State University. Alongside his studies, he taught history at School No. 54 in Yerevan and at the Kvant school.

The official biography stops more or less there. Yet it was this "blank" period that later gave rise to one of the biggest scandals of Papikyan's political career.

**Papikyan's criminal record: a story people preferred to keep quiet**

In February 2020, a major scandal broke around Papikyan, then Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure. It was triggered by a Hraparak.am article headlined "Suren Papikyan concealed his criminal record."

The outlet claimed that during his compulsory military service Papikyan had been a defendant in a criminal case over an attack on his commanding officer. The published information said he had been charged with using violence against a superior during military service, including with a weapon.

The report said that on March 27, 2006, the 5th Garrison Military Court sentenced Papikyan to two years and three months in prison. The Erebuni district court of general jurisdiction later brought the sentence into line with Armenian law. It was also reported that Papikyan served his sentence at Nubarashen penitentiary and was released under an amnesty on February 23, 2007.

Once the story blew up, Papikyan had to explain himself publicly for the first time. On air, he confirmed that the conflict and the subsequent conviction had taken place, but denied the account of a knife attack. In his account, the conflict arose from hazing and "an affront to national dignity" in a unit with a multi-ethnic makeup.

The minister said the conviction had later been cleared under the amnesty, which allowed him to teach and to hold public office.

Papikyan called the article itself a political attack launched at the height of the campaign ahead of the 2020 constitutional referendum, in which he headed the "Yes" campaign.

He also pointed to the leak itself. Papikyan said the case files had been kept in the closed archives of the police and the National Security Service (NSS), so their publication could be linked to people from the former security establishment. He hinted at the circle of former NSS director **Artur Vanetsyan**.

Despite the wide public outcry, the scandal quickly dropped off the agenda. **Nikol Pashinyan** publicly backed his ally, and Papikyan faced no political consequences.

The public never got a complete account of the story. All that remained were fragments: a criminal case, a court, prison, an amnesty and a few terse comments from Papikyan himself. For a man who a few years later would take charge of Armenia's Ministry of Defense, it was a biography with too many gaps.

It was after this episode that Papikyan's political career took off especially fast.

https://am.sputniknews.ru/20200214/Luchshe-vyyasnite-otkuda-utechka-ministr-Papikyan-rasskazal-o-svoey-sudimosti-22054229.html

**How the leak about Papikyan's past led to a case against an NSS officer**

The story had a sequel just a few weeks after the scandal. On February 28, 2020, NSS Colonel **Serob Harutyunyan** was charged with abuse of office. Investigators alleged that he was the one who had organized the leak of information about Suren Papikyan's criminal record.

*Pictured: Serob Harutyunyan*

According to the Special Investigation Service, in January 2020 Harutyunyan, with no official need to do so, ordered a check on the minister's criminal record, after which a certificate with the details of the sentence was obtained from the Police Information Center: two years and three months in prison under the ruling of the 5th Garrison Military Court of March 27, 2006, and release under an amnesty on February 23, 2007.

The criminal case against the NSS officer himself eventually fell apart. His lawyer, **Yerem Sargsyan**, said the investigation lasted almost a year and every possible

investigative and operational measure was carried out, after which the prosecution was dropped and Harutyunyan was acquitted.

https://pastinfo.am/index.php/ru/news/2021/03/17/p5k50r6b8/1166073

But that was not the end of the story. After his acquittal, and amid demands for his reinstatement, Armenia's Prosecutor General's Office filed a new lawsuit against him on October 18, 2021, under the Law on Confiscation of Property of Illegal Origin. The defendants were Serob Harutyunyan himself and a person linked to him, Anush Antonyants. It was the first such lawsuit in Armenia's history.

https://rusarminfo.ru/2021/10/18/v-armenii-po-zakonu-o-konfiskacii-nezakonno-nazhitogo-imushhestva-podan-pervyj-isk/

From 2022 to 2025, the case was heard by the Anti-Corruption Court. At one of the hearings in 2023, Harutyunyan said outright that he believed the case against him was linked to the Suren Papikyan story.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0xI7leCvRU&t=350s

The sums in the case were relatively small by Armenian political standards. But the sequence of events said a lot: first an NSS officer is accused of leaking information about a minister's criminal record, then the case collapses, and after his acquittal a different legal mechanism is launched against him.

Over time, the scandal over Papikyan's biography turned into a separate story about how the Armenian system reacts when inconvenient information is made public. And the authorities, it seems, were less worried about the minister's conviction than about who had decided to make it public.

### The revolution as a ladder to the top

Suren Papikyan was an active participant in the 2018 "Velvet Revolution" and belonged to Nikol Pashinyan's inner circle. He was one of the organizers of the march from Gyumri to Yerevan, which later became the main symbol of the change of power.

After the revolution succeeded, Papikyan rose quickly. As early as May 11, 2018, by decree of President **Armen Sarkissian**, he was appointed Minister of Territorial Administration and Development, a post he held until August 2021.

This was also when his finances grew sharply. Judging by his asset declarations, Papikyan's income started climbing almost as soon as he came to power. About a year after his appointment, he bought an apartment in Yerevan's Arabkir district.

His image changed too. Not long before, Papikyan had looked like a young history teacher, but as his political influence grew, he came to look like a typical senior Armenian official. In the post-Soviet space, such transformations tend to happen suspiciously fast: for some reason, power almost always shows up on the waistline as well as in the declarations.

In the summer of 2021, Papikyan became deputy prime minister. The appointment was preceded by important changes within the executive. Shortly beforehand, Nikol Pashinyan had redistributed the government's powers: oversight of the regional governors was taken away from the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure and handed to the deputy prime minister.

https://news.am/hy/news/651600

This let Papikyan keep his grip on one of the main regional chains of command after he moved to his new post. The Armenian press noted these changes as early as July 2021, and in August Papikyan officially took up the new position.

However, he did not remain deputy prime minister for long. In November 2021, Papikyan was appointed Armenia's defense minister, and he still holds the post despite a series of major scandals, crises and tragic incidents in the army.

Papikyan's story shows how Armenia's "Velvet Revolution," besides changing who was in power, became a ladder to the top for Pashinyan's inner circle.

That brings us to the central question of this investigation: how a former history teacher ended up, within a few years, at the center of one of the country's most closed and cash-rich systems.

## Keeping it in the family

While serving as Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, Suren Papikyan met his future wife, **Armine Muradyan**, who was then his press secretary.

*Pictured: Papikyan and Muradyan*

The relationship soon went beyond a professional one. The Armenian press reported that even before they were officially married, Papikyan helped advance Muradyan's career. Among other things, she was given the post of deputy director of the Armenian Territorial Development Fund. Media outlets also claimed that the deputy director position itself may have been created specially for her.

The appointment raised eyebrows because the Territorial Development Fund handles major infrastructure programs and large sums of money. This meant that Papikyan, who was already preparing to move to the post of deputy prime minister, kept his influence over this area too.

Papikyan and Muradyan officially married in January 2022.

https://news.am/hy/news/652825

But the defense minister's wedding itself caused a far bigger stir. According to the Armenian press, the event may have cost 100,000–150,000 dollars.

It was reported that the venue was decorated by the company Mon amie, the filming was done by the company "Prekrasny Den" (Beautiful Day), and the wedding was hosted by the actor Khoren Levonyan, for a fee of around 15,000 dollars. The performers included Erik, Kamo Seyranyan, the band Arpi HayWay and "12 Klubov."

The reception was held at the Pharaon restaurant complex. With around 650 guests, the banquet alone may have cost more than 26 million drams (about $72,000), according to press estimates. The guests included members of the ruling elite, ministers and MPs.

The media also focused on cash gifts in envelopes. One report said MP **Gurgen Arsenyan** handed over an envelope containing 10,000 dollars in the presence of **Khachatur Sukiasyan** (Grzo).

https://armeniatoday.am/society-ru/415929/

The story drew even more attention because, according to Papikyan's declaration for 2021, his total income was about 23 million drams (about $63,000), while his outstanding loan liabilities exceeded 18 million drams (about $50,000). With figures like these, the scale of the wedding led people to ask where the money came from and whether there were corruption risks.

The issue was also raised in parliament. MP **Aregnaz Manukyan** said that Papikyan "could not previously have afforded a lavish wedding," adding that such an event was something "even members of the former oligarchic regime could not afford."

In Armenian politics, luxury weddings have long been a kind of status symbol. In Papikyan's case, the ceremony got people talking, and so did the speed with which a former history teacher had become one of the most influential officials in the country.

**Bank loans, gifts and a 75-million-dram loan: what Suren Papikyan's declarations show**

The financial profile of Defense Minister Suren Papikyan has changed a great deal in recent years. In 2018 his declared income was about 8.8 million drams (about $24,000); by 2022 it had risen to 139 million drams (about $383,000). His salary accounted for little of that growth; most of it came from loans, gifts and other receipts.

Papikyan's official salary remained relatively stable from 2020 to 2024:

- 2020: 20.7 million drams (about $57,000);
- 2022: 21.5 million drams (about $59,000);
- 2023: 21.4 million drams (about $59,000);
- 2024: 21.1 million drams (about $58,000).

The sharpest jump came in 2022. That year his declarations listed:

- loans totaling more than 78 million drams (about $215,000);
- 19.75 million drams (about $54,000);
- 22,000 US dollars;
- 13,400 euros in gifts and assistance;
- rental income and other receipts.

One episode stands out: the one involving Jermuk Group CJSC. In 2022 Papikyan declared a loan of 75,573,379 drams (about $208,000) linked to the company. The same sum appeared unchanged in his declarations for 2023–2024.

In the same year, the minister also declared:

- a loan of 65.57 million drams (about $180,000) from Armeconombank;
- 12.5 million drams (about $34,000) from Converse Bank.

The declarations also showed mortgage liabilities. The documents state that the apartment in Yerevan's Arabkir district was bought in 2019 for about 27 million drams (about $74,000) with loans from Ardshinbank and VTB Bank (Armenia). The public declarations do not show clearly which part of the borrowed funds was related to property and which to other financial transactions.

Despite the loans, the mortgage and major expenses, the minister still kept large sums in cash and in bank accounts.

By the end of 2021, Papikyan had more than 22 million drams (about $61,000) in his bank accounts. He declared the following in cash:

- 5 million drams (about $14,000);
- 11,000 US dollars;
- 3,000 euros.

In 2022 his declaration again listed:

- 4.5 million drams (about $12,000) in cash;
- 21,000 US dollars;
- 10,000 euros;
- as well as more than 11 million drams (about $30,000) in bank accounts.

The trend continued in 2023–2024. The declarations went on listing tens of thousands of dollars and euros, account balances, mortgage payments, spending on property renovation and vacations, as well as the multi-million loan linked to a private company.

Since 2022, the declarations of Papikyan and his wife Armine Muradyan have also listed a private house in Yerevan's Kentron district, which the family used for more than 90 days a year. Formally, the property is not listed as theirs, but the fact that they used it is recorded in the documents.

There are also technical discrepancies. For example, the purchase date of the apartment in Yerevan is given differently in different parts of the declarations: February 11, 2019, and November 2, 2019.

The declarations do not in themselves prove any wrongdoing. But after 2021 the defense minister's finances became much more complicated: large loans, foreign-currency

savings, expensive outlays, multi-million gifts and a loan linked to a private company gave one of the government's leading figures a sizeable financial footprint.

With every new sum and every new transaction, Papikyan's biography looked less like the story of an ordinary history teacher from Stepanavan.

**Ties through real estate and the elite**

In the summer of 2022, already serving as defense minister, Papikyan bought an apartment in the Byuregh complex, then under construction (18/4 Arshakunyats Avenue, Yerevan), for 168,000 dollars. The deal was financed by Armeconombank, which belongs to the family of ruling-party MP Khachatur Sukiasyan (Grzo). The complex is being built by a company owned by former MP Ashot Arsenyan and his son, Vayots Dzor Governor **Vahagn Arsenyan.**

Vahagn Arsenyan took his "first steps" in public administration under Papikyan. He was appointed acting mayor of Jermuk despite having no experience in government.

*Pictured: Vahagn Arsenyan*

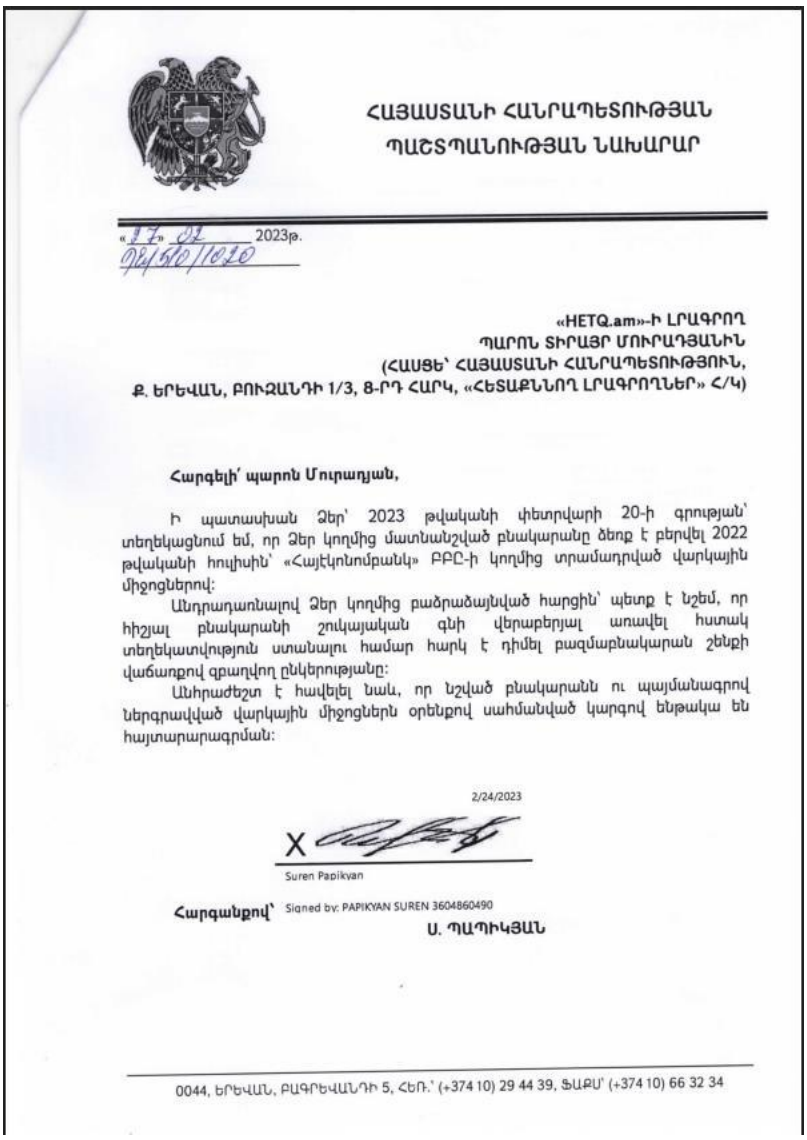
Arsenyan's name had already come up in a criminal case. In 2019, the Investigative Committee opened a case over his alleged evasion of military service through forged documents or other deception. Arsenyan had been exempted from service on health grounds, but a few months later the prosecution was dropped and the case closed.

That same year, 2019, Jermuk Group was on the list of companies that donated snowplows and garbage trucks to Yerevan Municipality.

None of this affected Arsenyan's career. Two months after his appointment as acting mayor he became mayor of Jermuk, and in October 2025 he was made governor of Vayots Dzor Province.

Papikyan's own apartment drew scrutiny too. According to the Cadastre Committee, in July 2022 Papikyan and Armine Muradyan registered the right to buy a 165-square-meter apartment in a building under construction. The deal was worth about 69 million drams, or roughly 168,000 dollars.

Press reports said the market value of a similar apartment in the complex could reach 412,000 dollars. Yet in his official reply to a journalist's inquiry, Papikyan declined to explain how he had obtained such a favorable deal and suggested asking the seller about prices.



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Ք. ԵՐԵՎԱՆ, ԲՈՒՋԱՆԴԻ 1/3, 8-ՐԴ ՀԱՐԿ, «ՀԵՏԱՔՆՆՈՂ ԼՐԱԳՐՈՂՆԵՐ» Հ/Կ)

Հարգելի՛ պարոն Մուրադյան,

Ի պատասխան Ձեր՝ 2023 թվականի փետրվարի 20-ի գրության՝ տեղեկացնում եմ, որ Ձեր կողմից մատնանշված բնակարանը ձեռք է բերվել 2022 թվականի հուլիսին՝ «Հայէկոնոմբանկ» ԲԲԸ-ի կողմից տրամադրված վարկային միջոցներով:

Անդրադառնալով Ձեր կողմից բարձրաձայնված հարցին՝ պետք է նշեմ, որ հիշյալ բնակարանի շուկայական գնի վերաբերյալ առավել հստակ տեղեկատվություն ստանալու համար հարկ է դիմել բազմաբնակարան շենքի վաճառքով զբաղվող ընկերությանը:

Անհրաժեշտ է հավելել նաև, որ նշված բնակարանն ու պայմանագրով ներգրավված վարկային միջոցներն օրենքով սահմանված կարգով ենթակա են հայտարարագրման:

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Suren Papikyan

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0044, ԵՐԵՎԱՆ, ԲԱԳՐԵՎԱՆԴԻ 5, ՀԵՌ.՝ (+374 10) 29 44 39, ՖԱՔՍ՝ (+374 10) 66 32 34

Other officials also own apartments in the upscale Byuregh complex, among them **Arayik Harutyunyan, Lilit Makunts, Trdat Sargsyan**, Civil Contract MPs and other members of the ruling elite.

https://yerkir.am/hy/article/2023/03/01/8560

What had looked like an ordinary upscale housing market was starting to resemble a map of where Armenia's post-revolutionary government lives.

## The story of Papikyan's financial success

In 2018–2021, while Suren Papikyan headed the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, the ministry changed how technical supervision of road construction

was organized. The Armenian press linked this period to the sharp growth in his personal finances.

What made this possible was Government Decision No. 1085-N of June 25, 2020, which allowed the ministry to buy technical supervision services from one company, Kocks Consult, without an open tender, as a single-source procurement.

The company, registered to German citizen **Karsten Griese**, was brought in to oversee the construction of 143.45 km of interstate, national and regional roads.

Investigative reports say Kocks Consult received contracts worth about 4 billion drams (about $11 million), even though officially it had only two employees on its staff: a driver and a designer, **Sahak Aleksanyan.**

https://archive.yerevan.today/all/society/84757/papikyani-asfaltayin-karieran%e2%80%a4-4-mlrdanoc-patver-e-stacel-ynkeroutyoun,-orn-ouni-erkou-ashxatakic

Publications claimed that about 410 million drams (about $1.1 million) of this was transferred to Road Project, the company that actually did the work. What happened to the remaining 3.5 billion drams and more (about $9.6 million) has never been publicly explained.

Eighty-eight percent of Road Project belonged to **Bagrat Badalyan**, described in the media as a close associate of Papikyan. The company was run by a former ministry employee, **Davit Kartashyan.**

On April 22, 2021, the government made another decision in favor of Kocks Consult, extending its role to the North–South highway program.

Even by the standards of Armenia's large road budget, these sums stood out. Armenia's 2020 budget allocated 83.3 billion drams (about $229 million) to the "Improvement of the road network" line, and in 2021 more than 66 billion (about $182 million).

Back in 2019, Papikyan set the technical supervision rate **at 5%.** This meant that in 2020–2021 alone, the money for technical control could have reached 7.46 billion drams, more than 14 million dollars at the exchange rate of the time.

Critics of the government argued that road policy was used to build infrastructure and also to channel money to entities close to the system.

It was during this period that the press began writing regularly about the sharp growth in Papikyan's finances, even before he became defense minister.

After the publications, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure issued denials and explanations. Still, the questions about how contracts were distributed, the amounts involved and the role of affiliated companies were never answered in public.

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Ընդունված է 2019 թվականի դեկտեմբերի 6-ին

## ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ 2020 ԹՎԱԿԱՆԻ ՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ ԲՅՈՒՋԵԻ ՄԱՍԻՆ

| Ծրագրային դասիչը | Ծրագրի անվանումը | Գումարը (հազար դրամ) |
|---|---|---|
| 1041 | Մեծ նվաճումների սպորտ | 2,342,071.4 |
| 1042 | Ռադիո և հեռուստահաղորդումների հեռարձակում | 7,520,042.9 |
| 1043 | Բարձր տեխնոլոգիական արդյունաբերության էկոհամակարգի և շուկայի զարգացման ծրագիր | 3,009,736.4 |
| 1045 | Նախնական (արհեստագործական) և միջին մասնագիտական կրթություն | 12,645,205.0 |
| 1047 | ՀՀ Այունիքի մարզում տարածքային պետական կառավարում | 634,971.0 |
| 1049 | Ճանապարհային ցանցի բարելավում | 83,308,242.7 |
| 1050 | Միջազգային հարաբերությունների և դիվանագիտության ոլորտում մասնագետների պատրաստում և վերապատրաստում | 69,660.8 |
| 1051 | ՀՀ Վայոց ձորի մարզում տարածքային պետական կառավարում | 482,893.8 |
| 1052 | Քաղաքացիական կացության ակտերի գրանցում | 330,585.8 |
| 1053 | Առողջապահության համակարգի արդիականացման և արդյունավետության բարձրացման ծրագիր | 3,038,874.3 |
| 1054 | Միջուկային և ճառագայթային անվտանգության կարգավորում | 320,709.0 |
| 1055 | ՀՀ Տավուշի մարզում տարածքային պետական կառավարում | 605,658.9 |
| 1056 | Կինեմատոգրաֆիայի ծրագիր | 842,017.1 |
| 1057 | Արդարադատության ոլորտում քաղաքականության մշակում՝ ծրագրերի համակարգում՝ խորհրդատվության և մոնիտորինգի | 1,790,369.8 |
| 1058 | Էկոնոմիկայի ոլորտում պետական քաղաքականության մշակում՝ ծրագրերի համակարգում և մոնիտորինգ | 2,394,437.3 |
| 1059 | Բուսաբուծության խթանում և բույսերի պաշտպանություն | 515,387.2 |
| 1060 | Մարդու իրավունքների պաշտպանություն | 515,412.3 |
| 1061 | Արտաքին գործերի ոլորտում Կառավարության քաղաքականության մշակում և իրականացում | 1,992,347.0 |
| 1062 | ՀՀ հատուկ քննչական ծառայություններ | 737,869.9 |
| 1064 | Հանրային ծառայությունների ոլորտի կարգավորում | 842,907.7 |

ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ
ՕՐԵՆՔԸ

Ընդունված է 2020 թվականի դեկտեմբերի 10-ին

## ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ 2021 ԹՎԱԿԱՆԻ ՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ ԲՅՈՒՋԵԻ ՄԱՍԻՆ

| Ծրագրային դասիչը | | Բյուջետային գլխավոր կարգադրիչների, ծրագրերի և միջոցառումների անվանումները | Գումարը |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 12001 | *Միջոցառման անվանումը՝* | 323,952.2 |
| | | Վերակառուցման և զարգացման եվրոպական բանկի աջակցությամբ իրականացվող «Երևանի կոչտ թափոնների կառավարման» դրամաշնորհային ծրագիր | |
| | | *Միջոցառման նկարագրությունը՝* | |
| | | Կոշտ թափոնների կառավարման համակարգի բարելավում և նոր աղբավայրի ստեղծում | |
| | | *Միջոցառման տեսակը* | |
| | | Տրանսֆերտների տրամադրում | |
| | 12002 | *Միջոցառման անվանումը՝* | 123,793.3 |
| | | Վերակառուցման և զարգացման եվրոպական բանկի աջակցությամբ իրականացվող «Կոտայքի և Գեղարքունիքի մարզի կոշտ թափոնների կառավարման խորհրդատվության համար» դրամաշնորհային ծրագիր | |
| | | *Միջոցառման նկարագրությունը՝* | |
| | | Կոշտ թափոնների կառավարման համակարգի բարելավում և նոր աղբավայրի ստեղծում | |
| | | *Միջոցառման տեսակը* | |
| | | Տրանսֆերտների տրամադրում | |
| | 32004 | *Միջոցառման անվանումը՝* | 709,419.1 |
| | | Վերակառուցման և զարգացման եվրոպական բանկի աջակցությամբ իրականացվող «Կոտայքի և Գեղարքունիքի մարզի կոշտ թափոնների կառավարման» դրամաշնորհային ծրագիր | |
| | | *Միջոցառման նկարագրությունը՝* | |
| | | Կոշտ թափոնների կառավարման համակարգի բարելավում և նոր աղբավայրի ստեղծում | |
| | | *Միջոցառման տեսակը* | |
| | | Այլ պետական կազմակերպությունների կողմից օգտագործվող ոչ ֆինանսական ակտիվների հետ գործառնություններ | |
| | 32006 | *Միջոցառման անվանումը՝* | 2,044,747.8 |
| | | Եվրոպական միության հարևանության ներդրումային գործիքի աջակցությամբ իրականացվող «Երևանի կոշտ թափոնների կառավարման» դրամաշնորհային ծրագիր | |
| | | *Միջոցառման նկարագրությունը՝* | |
| | | Կոշտ թափոնների կառավարման համակարգի բարելավում և նոր աղբավայրի ստեղծում | |
| | | *Միջոցառման տեսակը* | |
| | | Այլ պետական կազմակերպությունների կողմից օգտագործվող ոչ ֆինանսական ակտիվների հետ գործառնություններ | |
| | 3200 | *Միջոցառման անվանումը՝* | 511,186.9 |
| | | Արևելյան եվրոպայի էներգախնայողության և բնապահպանական գործընկերության ֆոնդի աջակցությամբ իրականացվող «Երևանի կոշտ թափոնների կառավարման» դրամաշնորհային ծրագիր | |
| | | *Միջոցառման նկարագրությունը՝* | |
| | | Կոշտ թափոնների կառավարման համակարգի բարելավում և նոր աղբավայրի ստեղծում | |
| | | *Միջոցառման տեսակը* | |
| | | Այլ պետական կազմակերպությունների կողմից օգտագործվող ոչ ֆինանսական ակտիվների հետ գործառնություններ | |
| 1049 | | *Ծրագրի անվանումը՝* | 66,013,586.2 |
| | | Ճանապարհային ցանցի բարելավում | |
| | | *Ծրագրի նպատակը՝* | |
| | | Ճանապարհային ցանցի բարելավում և անվտանգ երթևեկության ապահովում | |
| | | *Վերջնական արդյունքի նկարագրությունը՝* | |
| | | Ճանապարհների ծածկի որակի և փոխադրումների արդյունավետության բարելավում, ճանապարհների վիճակով պայմանավորված պաստահարների նվազում | |

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|---|---|---|---|
| *Համարը* | N 1085-Ն | *Տեսակը* | Հիմնական |
| *Տիպը* | Որոշում | *Կարգավիճակը* | Գործում է |
| *Սկզբնաղբյուրը* | ՀՀՊՏ 2020.06.30/72(1627) Հոդ.913 | *Ընդունման վայրը* | Երևան |
| *Ընդունող մարմինը* | ՀՀ կառավարություն | *Ընդունման ամսաթիվը* | 25.06.2020 |
| *Ստորագրող մարմինը* | ՀՀ վարչապետ | *Ստորագրման ամսաթիվը* | 29.06.2020 |
| *Վավերացնող մարմինը* | | *Վավերացման ամսաթիվը* | |
| *Ուժի մեջ մտնելու ամսաթիվը* | 01.07.2020 | *Ուժը կորցնելու ամսաթիվը* | |

Կապեր այլ փաստաթղթերի հետ
Փոփոխողներ և ինկորպորացիաներ

ՀՀ ԿԱՌԱՎԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՈՐՈՇՈՒՄԸ ՀՀ 2020 ԹՎԱԿԱՆԻ ՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ ԲՅՈՒՋԵՈՒՄ ՎԵՐԱԲԱՇԽՈՒՄ, ՀՀ ԿԱՌԱՎԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ 2019 ԹՎԱԿԱՆԻ ԴԵԿՏԵՄԲԵՐԻ 26-Ի N 1919-Ն ՈՐՈՇՄԱՆ ՈՒ ՀՀ ԿԱՌԱՎԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ 2020 ԹՎԱԿԱՆԻ ՄԱՅԻՍԻ 21-Ի N 827-Ն ՈՐՈՇՄԱՆ ՄԵՋ ՓՈՓՈԽՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐ ԵՎ ԼՐԱՑՈՒՄՆԵՐ ԿԱՏԱՐԵԼՈՒ ՈՒ ՄԵԿ ԱՆՁԻՑ ԳՆՄԱՆ ԸՆԹԱՑԱԿԱՐԳՈՎ ԳՆՄԱՆ ԳՈՐԾԸՆԹԱՑ ԿԱԶՄԱԿԵՐՊԵԼՈՒ ՄԱՍԻՆ

## ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԿԱՌԱՎԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

# Ո Ր Ո Շ Ո Ւ Մ

25 հունիսի 2020 թվականի N 1085-Ն

**ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ 2020 ԹՎԱԿԱՆԻ ՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ ԲՅՈՒՋԵՈՒՄ ՎԵՐԱԲԱՇԽՈՒՄ, ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԿԱՌԱՎԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ 2019 ԹՎԱԿԱՆԻ ԴԵԿՏԵՄԲԵՐԻ 26-Ի N 1919-Ն ՈՐՈՇՄԱՆ ՈՒ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԿԱՌԱՎԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ 2020 ԹՎԱԿԱՆԻ ՄԱՅԻՍԻ 21-Ի N 827-Ն ՈՐՈՇՄԱՆ ՄԵՋ ՓՈՓՈԽՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐ ԵՎ ԼՐԱՑՈՒՄՆԵՐ ԿԱՏԱՐԵԼՈՒ ՈՒ ՄԵԿ ԱՆՁԻՑ ԳՆՄԱՆ ԸՆԹԱՑԱԿԱՐԳՈՎ ԳՆՄԱՆ ԳՈՐԾԸՆԹԱՑ ԿԱԶՄԱԿԵՐՊԵԼՈՒ ՄԱՍԻՆ**

Հիմք ընդունելով «Հայաստանի Հանրապետության բյուջետային համակարգի մասին» Հայաստանի Հանրապետության օրենքի 23-րդ հոդվածի 3-րդ մասը, «Գնումների մասին» Հայաստանի Հանրապետության օրենքի 23-րդ հոդվածի 1-ին մասի 2-րդ կետի, Հայաստանի Հանրապետության կառավարության 2017 թվականի մայիսի 4-ի N 526-Ն որոշման 1-ին կետով հաստատված գնումների գործընթացի կազմակերպման կարգի 23-րդ կետի 5-րդ ենթակետի «բ» պարբերության պահանջները՝ Հայաստանի Հանրապետության կառավարությունը ***որոշում է.***

1. «Հայաստանի Հանրապետության 2020 թվականի պետական բյուջեի մասին» Հայաստանի Հանրապետության օրենքի N 1 հավելվածի NN 2 և 3 աղյուսակներում կատարել վերաբաշխում և Հայաստանի Հանրապետության կառավարության 2019 թվականի դեկտեմբերի 26-ի «Հայաստանի Հանրապետության 2020 թվականի պետական բյուջեի կատարումն ապահովող միջոցառումների մասին» N 1919-Ն որոշման NN 3, 4, 5, 9, 9.1 և 10 հավելվածներում կատարել փոփոխություններ և լրացումներ՝ համաձայն NN 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 և 8 հավելվածների:

2. Անհետաձգելի համարել սույն որոշման N 9 հավելվածում նշված ավտոմոբիլային ճանապարհների շինարարական աշխատանքների նկատմամբ տեխնիկական հսկողության ծառայությունների գնման կարիքը:

3. Թույլատրել Հայաստանի Հանրապետության տարածքային կառավարման և ենթակառուցվածքների նախարարությանը սույն որոշման 2-րդ կետում նշված տեխնիկական հսկողության ծառայությունները ձեռք բերել «Կոքս Քոնսալթ» սահմանափակ պատասխանատվությամբ ընկերությունից՝ մեկ անձից գնման ընթացակարգով:

4. Սահմանել, որ սույն որոշման 2-րդ կետում նշված ավտոմոբիլային ճանապարհների և տրանսպորտային օբյեկտների շինարարության որակի տեխնիկական հսկողության ծառայություններ մատուցող ընկերությունը պարտավոր է որակավորման ապահովման փոխարեն ներկայացնել մասնագիտական պատասխանատվության ապահովագրություն՝ պայմանագրի արժեքի չափով, իսկ մասնագիտական ապահովագրությանն առաջադրվող պահանջները և պայմանները սահմանվում են տեխնիկական հսկողություն իրականացնող կազմակերպության հետ կնքվելիք պայմանագրով:

Հավելված N 12
ՀՀ կառավարության 2020 թվականի
մայիսի 21-ի N 827-Ն որոշման

ՑԱՆԿ

ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ 2020 ԹՎԱԿԱՆԻ ՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ ԲՅՈՒՋԵՈՎ ՆԱԽԱՏԵՍՎԱԾ՝ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ ՆՇԱՆԱԿՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԱՎՏՈՃԱՆԱՊԱՐՀՆԵՐԻ ԵՎ ՏՐԱՆՍՊՈՐՏԱՅԻՆ ՕԲՅԵԿՏՆԵՐԻ ՀԻՄՆԱՆՈՐՈԳՈՒՄ ԾՐԱԳՐԻ ՇՐՋԱՆԱԿՆԵՐՈՒՄ՝ ՇԻՆԱՐԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՈՐԱԿԻ ՏԵԽՆԻԿԱԿԱՆ ՀՍԿՈՂՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ ԻՐԱԿԱՆԱՑՆՈՂ ԿԱԶՄԱԿԵՐՊՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԿՈՂՄԻՑ ՀՍԿՎՈՂ ԱՎՏՈՄՈԲԻԼԱՅԻՆ ՃԱՆԱՊԱՐՀՆԵՐԻ

| NN ը/կ | Օբյեկտի անվանումը | Երկարությունը (կմ) | Տարածաշրջան/մարզ |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | 2020 Պետական բյուջե | 143.45 | |
| 1. | Միջպետական նշանակության ավտոճանապարհներ, այդ թվում | 54.23 | |
| 1.1. | Մ-2, Երևան-Երասխ-Գորիս-Մեղրի-Իրանի սահման | 11.5 | |
| | կմ167+600-կմ174+100 հատվածի հիմնանորոգում | 6.5 | Սյունիք |
| | կմ265+000-կմ270+000 հատվածի հիմնանորոգում | 5 | Սյունիք |
| 1.2. | Մ- 3, Թուրքիայի սահման-Մարգարա-Վանաձոր-Տաշիր-Վրաստանի սահման | 7.7 | |
| | կմ45+300-կմ53+000 հատվածի հիմնանորոգում | 7.7 | Արագածոտն |
| 1.3. | Մ-4, Երևան-Սևան-Իջևան-Ադրբեջանի սահման | 0.26 | |
| | Մետաղական արգելափակոցների տեղադրում 15 կմ երկարությամբ | | Կոտայք<br>Գեղարքունիք<br>Տավուշ |
| | կմ 96+176-կմ 96+433 (օղակաձև մաս) հատվածի հիմնանորոգման աշխատանքներ | 0.26 | Տավուշ |

## The Proshyan Brandy Factory

As minister, Papikyan met frequently with representatives of the alcohol industry, and later, as deputy prime minister, he oversaw the grape harvest procurement.

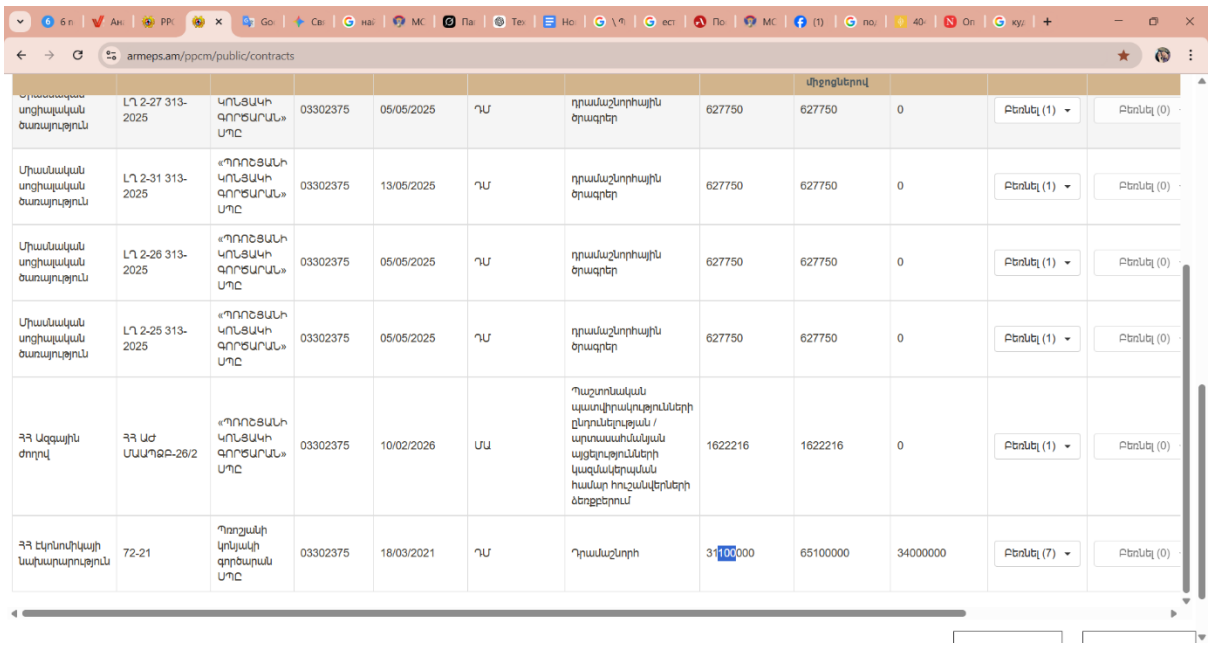
Officially, the government said it was supporting farmers and set a minimum purchase price for grapes of 130 drams (about 36 cents).

Later, however, farmers staged protests, accusing the government and the Proshyan Brandy Factory of cheating them. They said that after Papikyan's intervention, purchase prices were cut by about 20%.

A few months later, media reports said that representatives of big business, including people connected to the alcohol industry, had also attended Papikyan's wedding.

Overall, Papikyan was often accused of favoring big business during his time as minister of territorial administration and infrastructure.

People also pointed out that in 2021 the Proshyan Brandy Factory received a grant of 31.1 million drams (about $86,000) from the Ministry of Economy.



armeps.am/ppcm/public/contracts

| | | | | | | | | միջոցներով | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| սոցիալական ծառայություն | ԼՂ 2-27 313-2025 | ԿՈՆՑԱԿԻՀ ԳՈՐԾԱՐԱՆ» ՍՊԸ | 03302375 | 05/05/2025 | ԴԱ | դրամաշնորհային ծրագրեր | 627750 | 627750 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| Միասնական սոցիալական ծառայություն | ԼՂ 2-31 313-2025 | «ՊՈՈՇՑԱՆԻ ԿՈՆՑԱԿԻ ԳՈՐԾԱՐԱՆ» ՍՊԸ | 03302375 | 13/05/2025 | ԴԱ | դրամաշնորհային ծրագրեր | 627750 | 627750 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| Միասնական սոցիալական ծառայություն | ԼՂ 2-26 313-2025 | «ՊՈՈՇՑԱՆԻ ԿՈՆՑԱԿԻ ԳՈՐԾԱՐԱՆ» ՍՊԸ | 03302375 | 05/05/2025 | ԴԱ | դրամաշնորհային ծրագրեր | 627750 | 627750 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| Միասնական սոցիալական ծառայություն | ԼՂ 2-25 313-2025 | «ՊՈՈՇՑԱՆԻ ԿՈՆՑԱԿԻ ԳՈՐԾԱՐԱՆ» ՍՊԸ | 03302375 | 05/05/2025 | ԴԱ | դրամաշնորհային ծրագրեր | 627750 | 627750 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ Ազգային ժողով | ՀՀ ԱԺ ՄԱԱՊՁԲ-26/2 | «ՊՈՈՇՑԱՆԻ ԿՈՆՑԱԿԻ ԳՈՐԾԱՐԱՆ» ՍՊԸ | 03302375 | 10/02/2026 | ՄԱ | Պաշտոնական պատվիրակությունների ընդունելության / արտասահմանյան այցելությունների կազմակերպման համար հուշանվերների ձեռքբերում | 1622216 | 1622216 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ էկոնոմիկայի նախարարություն | 72-21 | Պոռշյանի կոնյակի գործարան ՍՊԸ | 03302375 | 18/03/2021 | ԴԱ | Դրամաշնորհ | 31100000 | 65100000 | 34000000 | Բեռնել (7) | Բեռնել (0) |

http://vdzor.mtad.am/structure/bio/678/

https://armeniatoday.am/politics-ru/588721/

https://fip.am/ru/35658

https://news.am/hy/news/648307

https://armeniatoday.am/economica/360320/

https://news.am/ru/video/683473

https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=975102381281432&set=a.414294680695541

## Family ties and "cushy jobs"

On November 10, 2022, the media reported that **Armen Muradyan**, the brother of Defense Minister Suren Papikyan's wife, had been appointed logistics adviser to the director of HayPost.

https://am.sputniknews.ru/20221110/brat-zheny-ministra-oborony-armenii-poluchil-khlebnuyu-dolzhnost---smi-51097059.html

The appointment looked odd given the new adviser's background. Before that, Muradyan had worked as a delivery driver for Coca-Cola and had then been listed as unemployed for several months.

Although he had no relevant education or experience in logistics, he got a well-paid position. The media reported that some details in his documents had been changed so that the candidate would formally meet the requirements.

After the publications, journalists asked HayPost for an explanation, but the company refused to comment, citing the confidentiality of personal data.

**Relatives, tenders and contracts**

In July 2023, a public contract in the Lori Berd community for renovating and landscaping community centers in the villages of Bovadzor, Koghes, Lejan, Yaghdan and Urrut went to a company linked to relatives of Suren Papikyan.

https://hetq.am/hy/article/172435

The tender was won by Lorshin LLC, registered only six months before the competition, in January 2023. It was also the only bidder to submit a price offer.

*Pictured: Vahagn and Vahram Papikyan*

Lorshin is owned by **Vahagn Papikyan**, the brother of **Vahram Papikyan**, first deputy head of the Lori Berd community and chair of the party's regional council. Both are relatives of Suren Papikyan.

The contract, worth 21.3 million drams (about $59,000), was signed on August 1, 2023. Its terms were later changed twice in the contractor's favor: first the payment schedule was adjusted, then the deadline for the work was extended by a month.

The head of the community, **Arayik Nersisyan**, rejected accusations of a conflict of interest. He said family ties had no effect on the outcome of the tender, since Vahagn Papikyan allegedly had no contact with his brother, the official.

**The minister's circle: advisers, assistants and personnel questions**

After Suren Papikyan moved to the Ministry of Defense, his former colleagues and members of his old team began to appear there. Some appointments raised questions over possible corruption risks, and others over whether the appointees were professionally qualified.

With the country in a postwar crisis and the government constantly talking about army reform, such personnel decisions were regularly criticized in public, above all over the appointees' qualifications and whether they matched the level of responsibility in the defense system.

Over time, a model familiar from post-revolutionary Armenia took shape around the Ministry of Defense: senior positions were increasingly held by people from the personal and political circle of the government, and less often by specialists from within the system.

One of the most discussed advisers was **Razmik Petrosyan**, former governor of Aragatsotn Province. He served as governor from October 2021 to January 2022 and had earlier been deputy governor. In the 1990s, Petrosyan fought in the Karabakh war with the Aparan volunteer detachment and served as deputy company commander in a special regiment of the Armenian Armed Forces.

*Pictured: Razmik Petrosyan*

His appointment, however, came with a scandal over his education. Armenian media had earlier reported that Petrosyan lost the governor's post because of problems with his diploma and his failure to meet the qualification requirements. Questions were also raised about his supposed higher military education, which, according to the press, may have amounted to specialized courses.

The appointment of **Melikset Poghosyan**, former governor of Syunik Province, as an adviser was also controversial. Almost as soon as he appeared in government, the media began publishing reports about possible problems with his diploma. Reporters pointed out that the university named in his biography received its license only after he had supposedly finished his studies.

*Pictured: Melikset Poghosyan*

The secrecy around part of the advisory staff raised further questions. Of the minister's six advisers, almost nothing is publicly known about two, **Davit Aghabalyan** and **Davit Ghazaryan**. Aghabalyan was appointed in 2022, while Ghazaryan had worked in the system before Papikyan came to the Ministry of Defense.

Decisions about the minister's assistants drew just as much discussion. On December 13, 2021, less than a month after Papikyan became defense minister, Mane Markosyan, born in 1999, who had previously worked as Papikyan's aide, was made his assistant.

Markosyan is a lawyer by training.

https://www.ysu.am/user/3289

Judging by her academic publications and professional specialization, her main fields were subsoil use and natural resources law, areas with no direct connection to defense.

**Former staff, business ties and criminal cases**

The day after Mane Markosyan's appointment as the minister's assistant, on December 14, 2021, Suren Papikyan appointed **Vahe Makunts**, the brother of Armenia's ambassador to the United States **Lilit Makunts**, as another assistant. Makunts had already worked with Papikyan when he was deputy prime minister.

Besides Papikyan himself, the two assistants shared an interest in subsoil use. Markosyan specialized in its legal side, and Makunts soon became involved in the practical side of the mining business.

Less than a year after becoming the minister's assistant, Makunts left the post, and from 2023 he joined several companies engaged in extracting and selling sand in Armavir Province.

One of them, X Mining LLC, received a sand extraction permit only two months before it began operating. It was reported that the company had been extracting sand illegally from time to time since January, as shown by administrative proceedings against it. After Vahe Makunts joined, the latest of these proceedings was dropped.

X Mining LLC was founded on May 4, 2022, by **Harutyun Voskanyan**, the son of former Goris community head **Nelson Voskanyan.** Voskanyan later left the company.

Today, 56.6% of the company belongs to Vahe Makunts and the other 43.4% to **Tigran Sedrakyan**. Sedrakyan is the father of **Karen Sedrakyan**, a member of the State Commission for the Protection of Economic Competition, whose wife is the daughter of **Gagik Jhangiryan**, former acting chair of the Supreme Judicial Council.

*Pictured: Lilit Makunts, Suren Papikyan, Vahe Makunts*

Makunts and Sedrakyan own Sanding Mining LLC in the same proportions. The company was founded in 2022 by **Gayane Dumanyan**, the sister of former Health Minister **Derenik Dumanyan**. In April 2023 she left the business, and Makunts and Sedrakyan took her place.

Another company in which Vahe Makunts became a co-owner was Wolf Mining LLC. Its original owners included Russian citizen Leonid Yeghiazaryan, former Deputy

Minister of Trade and Economic Development Karen Sargsyan, and Tigran Sedrakyan. Makunts joined them in January 2023.

Sand was also mined by First Construction Company LLC. After a series of ownership changes, it too ended up under the control of Vahe Makunts and his partners.

Other people from Papikyan's circle have also faced questions.

A criminal case was opened against former ministerial adviser **Arshak Ordukhanyan** on charges of creating a criminal organization, theft of computer data on a particularly large scale, and organizing illegal migration using forged documents. Datalex records show that the case went to court in May 2024, and Ordukhanyan is in custody.

Another former adviser of Papikyan, Major General **Artak Tonoyan**, left his post after his son Artashes Tonoyan was arrested in the murder of 24-year-old Mamikon D. Investigators allege that the killing took place near the house of crime boss Rustam Stepanyan, known as "Fat Rustam."

Separately, the Military Prosecutor's Office filed a lawsuit against Artak Tonoyan in the Anti-Corruption Court seeking compensation for damage to the state.

Scandals also touched **Diana Gasparyan**, former mayor of Vagharshapat (Etchmiadzin), whom the media likewise linked to Papikyan's inner circle. Earlier, an audio recording leaked online in which Gasparyan criticized Nikol Pashinyan and said the prime minister "should go for the sake of the country." Later her name came up at the center of a corruption investigation involving alleged fraud with community land, a conflict of interest and municipal contracts with affiliated parties.

*Pictured: Diana Gasparyan and Suren Papikyan*

Acquaintances, connections or the later activities of former staff do not prove that Papikyan was involved in any possible wrongdoing. But the recurring overlaps between his circle, the mining business, criminal cases and the same family names form a persistent set of questions about personnel policy inside the system.

As the circle widened, the Ministry of Defense looked less like a closed professional institution and more like a continuation of the old model of personal ties, loyalty and mutual obligations.

https://168.am/2022/02/14/1652912.html

https://www.4rd.am/news/togheq_hangist_ashxati_ayd_aghjiky/2022-01-11-6965

https://168.am/2022/05/19/1706273.html

https://armeniatoday.am/politics-ru/433972/

https://hetq.am/ru/article/158667

https://www.ysu.am/user/3289

https://am.sputniknews.ru/20250812/arestovan-chlen-partii-gd-i-eks-sovetnik-surena-papikyana-92218426.html

https://golosarmenii.am/%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA-%D0%B3%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B2%D1%8B-%D0%BC%D0%BE-%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%BE%D1%8F%D0%BD-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B0%D0%BB-%D0%B2-%D0%BE%D1%82%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0/

https://hraparak.am/am/post/d1be320b25d0eab790294906cf54dd58

https://news.am/ru/news/648708

**Defense Ministry procurement: large contracts, suppliers and criminal cases**

After Suren Papikyan took over, the opposition and the media kept pointing to the growing number of single-source purchases by the Ministry of Defense, made without a full competitive procedure. The government explained this by the need to rearm the army urgently after the 2020 war.

Critics noted, however, that the mechanism was being used for a much wider range of goods and services, beyond weapons and special equipment. This fueled questions about corruption risks, a possible return of kickbacks, and the appearance of contractors closely tied to the government.

On January 25, 2024, the Armenian government effectively classified a large part of the information on Defense Ministry procurement. Under the cabinet's decision, the following became state secrets:

- the Defense Ministry's procurement plans,
- purchase requests,
- technical requirements,
- the process of organizing purchases of military products,
- information on companies supplying weapons, services and works for the defense sector.

Formally, the decision was justified by national security. In practice, it further limited the public's ability to monitor how the defense budget is spent.

https://eadaily.com/ru/news/2024/01/25/armeniya-otnesla-k-gostayne-plan-zakupok-vooruzheniy

Despite the secrecy of the system, some criminal cases still become public from time to time.

On May 5, 2025, it became known that a case against seven people, including Defense Ministry officials and company executives, had been sent to court. Investigators allege that ministry officials took particularly large bribes and abused their authority while carrying out construction contracts at a military unit.

According to the investigation, the contractor used cheap materials instead of those specified in the project, and fictitious certificates of completed work were drawn up with the help of the technical supervision company. The damage to the Defense Ministry budget was estimated at more than 81 million drams (about $223,000).

Investigators also allege that ministry officials took bribes for accepting unfinished or poor-quality work. One episode involved 10 million drams (about $28,000), another 2.1 million drams (about $5,800), paid for ignoring violations in carrying out the contract.

In addition, investigators believe representatives of contractor companies may have interfered in the tender procedure itself. They allege that an illegal payment was made to a former Defense Ministry employee to help secure a win in a procurement, which harmed the other bidders.

The defendants face charges of embezzlement on a particularly large scale, taking and giving bribes, abuse of office and other crimes. The case is being heard by the Anti-Corruption Court of Armenia.

https://www.anticorruption.am/ru/post/dolzhnostnye-litsa-minoborony-poluchali-vzyatki-v-osobo-krupnykh-razmerakh-ot-direktorov-ooo-i-zloupotreblyali-svoimi-dolzhnostnymi-polnomochiyami-ugolovnoe-proizvodstvo-v-otnoshenii-7-chelovek-nakhoditsya-v-sude

As defense procurement became ever more closed, such cases only added to the questions about how contracts are distributed inside the Ministry of Defense. This matters all the more now that the public can no longer see the tenders, the suppliers or the volume of work.

With less and less information made public, corruption stories tended to come to light through criminal cases.

**Non-military procurement at the Defense Ministry: fuel, banks, grants and "events"**

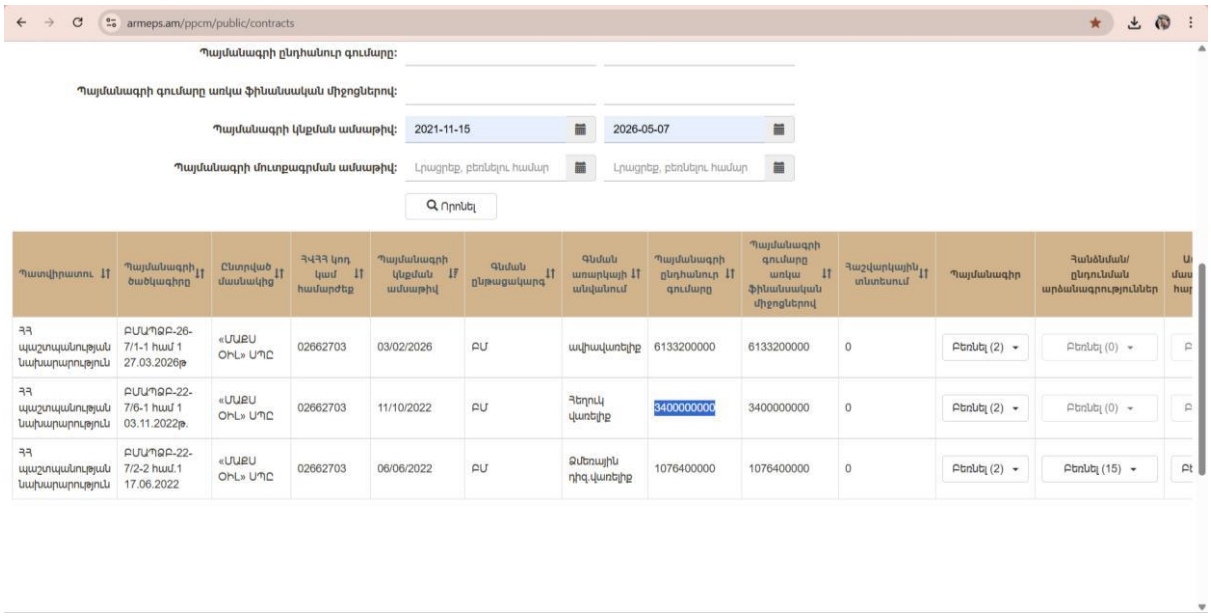
After much of defense procurement was classified as a state secret, relative transparency remained mainly for the ministry's non-military contracts. This data gives a partial view of the ministry's largest financial flows.

One of the largest contracts during Suren Papikyan's time as minister was a deal with Max Oil for the supply of aviation fuel, signed in February 2026. The contract was worth 6.13 billion drams (about $16.9 million).

Media reports link the company to Armenian businessman and former Republican Party MP **Harutyun Pambukyan.**

Max Oil became an active player in public procurement at the end of 2021, supplying fuel both to the Ministry of Defense and to the Office of the Prime Minister. It signed a number of large contracts with the Defense Ministry:

- July 2022: 1.07 billion drams (about $2.9 million) for diesel fuel,
- October 2022: 3.4 billion drams (about $9.4 million) for liquid fuel,
- February 2026: 6.13 billion drams (about $16.9 million) for aviation fuel.


armeps.am/ppcm/public/contracts

Պայմանագրի ընդհանուր գումարը:

Պայմանագրի գումարը առկա ֆինանսական միջոցներով:

Պայմանագրի կնքման ամսաթիվ: 2021-11-15 2026-05-07

Պայմանագրի մուտքագրման ամսաթիվ: Լրացրեք, բեռնելու համար Լրացրեք, բեռնելու համար

Որոնել

| Պատվիրատու | Պայմանագրի ծածկագիրը | Ընտրված մասնակից | ՀՎՀՀ կոդ կամ համարժեք | Պայմանագրի կնքման ամսաթիվ | Գնման ընթացակարգ | Գնման առարկայի անվանում | Պայմանագրի ընդհանուր գումարը | Պայմանագրի գումարը առկա ֆինանսական միջոցներով | Հաշվարկային տնտեսում | Պայմանագիր | Հանձնման/ ընդունման արձանագրություններ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԲՄՄՊՁԲ-26-7/1-1 համ 1 27.03.2026թ | «ՄԱՔՍ ՕԻԼ» ՍՊԸ | 02662703 | 03/02/2026 | ԲՄ | ավիավառելիք | 6133200000 | 6133200000 | 0 | Բեռնել (2) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԲՄՄՊՁԲ-22-7/6-1 համ 1 03.11.2022թ. | «ՄԱՔՍ ՕԻԼ» ՍՊԸ | 02662703 | 11/10/2022 | ԲՄ | հեղուկ վառելիք | 3400000000 | 3400000000 | 0 | Բեռնել (2) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԲՄՄՊՁԲ-22-7/2-2 համ.1 17.06.2022 | «ՄԱՔՍ ՕԻԼ» ՍՊԸ | 02662703 | 06/06/2022 | ԲՄ | Ձմեռային դիզ.վառելիք | 1076400000 | 1076400000 | 0 | Բեռնել (2) | Բեռնել (15) |

Another major fuel supplier to the Defense Ministry was CPS. In 2022 alone, it signed three contracts with the ministry:

- for 4.48 billion drams (about $12.3 million),
- for 2.23 billion (about $6.1 million),
- for 2.27 billion drams (about $6.2 million).

armeps.am/ppcm/public/contracts

Պայմանագրի կնքման ամսաթիվ: 2017-07-12 2026-05-07

Պայմանագրի մուտքագրման ամսաթիվ: Լրացրեք, բեռնելու համար Լրացրեք, բեռնելու համար

Որոնել

| Պատվիրատու | Պայմանագրի ծածկագիրը | Ընտրված մասնակից | ՀՎՀՀ կոդ կամ համարժեք | Պայմանագրի կնքման ամսաթիվ | Գնման ընթացակարգ | Գնման առարկայի անվանում | Պայմանագրի ընդհանուր գումարը | Պայմանագրի գումարը առկա ֆինանսական միջոցներով | Հաշվարկային տնտեսում | Պայմանագիր | Հանձնման/ ընդունման արձանագրություններ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԲՄՄՊՁԲ-22-7/6-2 | ՍԻ ՓԻ ԷՍ ԷՆԵՐՋԻ ԳՐՈՒՊ ՍՊԸ | 02847546 | 11/10/2022 | ԲՄ | Հեղուկ վառելիք | 2273872000 | 2273872000 | 50813000 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԲՄՄՊՁԲ-22-7/6-3 համ 1 11.11.2022թ. | ՍԻ ՓԻ ԷՍ ԷՆԵՐՋԻ ԳՐՈՒՊ ՍՊԸ | 02847546 | 11/10/2022 | ԲՄ | Հեղուկ վառելիք | 2234782360 | 2234782360 | 0 | Բեռնել (2) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԲՄՄՊՁԲ-22-7/2-1 համ1 30.06.2022թ. | ՍԻ ՓԻ ԷՍ ԷՆԵՐՋԻ ԳՐՈՒՊ ՍՊԸ | 02847546 | 06/06/2022 | ԲՄ | Հեղուկ վառելիք | 4482500000 | 4482500000 | 0 | Բեռնել (3) | Բեռնել (32) |

Earlier, the suppliers also included Mega Trade, which the media linked to the circle of MP **Khachatur Sukiasyan** (Grzo). The company received contracts worth about 5.5 billion (about $15.1 million) and 1.3 billion drams (about $3.6 million).

armeps.am/ppcm/public/contracts

Պայմանագրի կնքման ամսաթիվ: 2017-07-12 2026-05-07

Պայմանագրի մուտքագրման ամսաթիվ: Լրացրեք, բեռնելու համար Լրացրեք, բեռնելու համար

Որոնել

| Պատվիրատու | Պայմանագրի ծածկագիրը | Ընտրված մասնակից | ՀՎՀՀ կոդ կամ համարժեք | Պայմանագրի կնքման ամսաթիվ | Գնման ընթացակարգ | Գնման առարկայի անվանում | Պայմանագրի ընդհանուր գումարը | Պայմանագրի գումարը առկա ֆինանսական միջոցներով | Հաշվարկային տնտեսում | Պայմանագիր | Հանձնման/ ընդունման արձանագրություններ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ՀԲՄՄՊՁԲ-21-7/1-2 | ՄԵԳԱ ԹՐԵՅԴ ՍՊԸ | 00489503 | 01/10/2021 | ՀԲՄ | բենզին, ռեգուլյար/ Ավտոբենզին Ռեգուլյար (ԱԻ-92)/ դիզելային վառելիք, ամառային/ Ամառային դիզ.վառելանյութ/ | 5449746480 | 5449746480 | 80489442.5 | Բեռնել (3) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԲՄՄՊՁԲ-20-7/17-3 | ՄԵԳԱ ԹՐԵՅԴ ՍՊԸ | 00489503 | 13/08/2020 | ԲՄ | հեղուկ վառելիք | 1328592000 | 1328592000 | 457958400 | Բեռնել (2) | Բեռնել (0) |

The deal drew attention because of its political context as well as its size. The media pointed out that one of the founders of Mega Trade, **Tigran Badalyan**, had earlier set up Sil Capital, which was later transferred to a relative of the Sukiasyan family.

More questions arose after reports that Mega Trade was connected to the Ran Oil gas station chain, which was later bought by Sil Concern, owned by the Sukiasyan family.

https://hetq.am/hy/article/137142

The speed of the company's growth also attracted attention. Founded in February 2020, within a few months it had won a 1.3-billion-dram contract (about $3.6 million), and less than a year later another urgent contract worth 5.5 billion drams (about $15.1 million).

Ardshinbank was among the large recipients of funds too. In 2024 and 2025, the ministry signed contracts with the bank for 3.71 billion (about $10.2 million) and 3.28 billion drams (about $9 million), respectively.

The money was transferred under the Defense Ministry's agreements with KAMAZ's foreign trade company, VTK KAMAZ, and was recorded as expenses "not considered procurement."

After Papikyan arrived, funding rose sharply for the state non-commercial organization Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise. From 2022 on, it regularly received grants worth hundreds of millions of drams:

- February 2022: 317.5 million drams (about $874,000),
- December 2022: 295 million (about $812,000),
- 2023: 215.3 million (about $593,000),
- 2024: 483.7 million (about $1.3 million),
- 2025: 144.4 million (about $397,000),
- 2026: 306.6 million drams (about $844,000).

armeps.am/ppcm/public/contracts

Պայմանագրի կնքման ամսաթիվ: 2017-07-12 2026-05-07

Պայմանագրի մուտքագրման ամսաթիվ: Լրացրեք, բեռնելու համար Լրացրեք, բեռնելու համար

Որոնել

| Պատվիրատու | Պայմանագրի ծածկագիրը | Ընտրված մասնակից | ՀՀՀՀ կոդ կամ համարժեք | Պայմանագրի կնքման ամսաթիվ | Գնման ընթացակարգ | Գնման առարկայի անվանում | Պայմանագրի ընդհանուր գումարը | Պայմանագրի գումարը առկա ֆինանսական միջոցներով | Հաշվարկային տնտեսում | Պայմանագիր | Հանձնման/ ընդունման արձանագրություններ | Ա մատ հարկ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ՀԱՓԿ-2026 | ՀԱՓԿ ՊՈԱԿ | 04724306 | 25/02/2026 | ԴՄ | դրամաշնորհ | 306676900 | 306676900 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) | Բե |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ՀԱՓԿ ՊՈԱԿ | ՀԱՓԿ ՊՈԱԿ | 04724306 | 27/03/2025 | ԴՄ | դրամաշնորհ | 144496000 | 321100600 | 176604600 | Բեռնել (2) | Բեռնել (0) | Բե |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ՀԱՓԿ-2024-1 | ՀԱՓԿ ՊՈԱԿ | 04724306 | 30/01/2024 | ԴՄ | Դրամաշնորհ | 483792500 | 483792500 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) | Բե |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | դրամաշնորհ 03.02.23թ | ՀԱՓԿ ՊՈԱԿ | 04724306 | 03/02/2023 | ԴՄ | Դրամաշնորհ | 215320000 | 316158000 | 100838000 | Բեռնել (2) | Բեռնել (0) | Բե |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | դրամաշնորհ 26.12.22 | ՀԱՓԿ ՊՈԱԿ | 04724306 | 26/12/2022 | ԴՄ | Դրամաշնորհ | 295000000 | 295000000 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) | Բե |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | Դրամաշնորհ 11.02.2022թ | ՀԱՓԿ ՊՈԱԿ | 04724306 | 11/02/2022 | ԴՄ | դրամաշնորհ | 317591900 | 317591900 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) | Բե |

No public data could be found on grants of comparable size in earlier years.

The Defense Ministry also stepped up its work with Deluxe Dental Lab. Before Papikyan arrived, only one contract had been recorded: 2 million drams (about $5,500) in 2019.

Later, the sums began to rise sharply:

- 2022: 17 million drams (about $47,000),
- 2023: 17 million (about $47,000),
- 2024: contracts for 51 million (about $140,000) and 8 million (about $22,000),
- 2025: dental implants for 126.1 million drams (about $347,000) and one more contract for 16.3 million (about $45,000).

armeps.am/ppcm/public/contracts

| Պատվիրատու | Պայմանագրի ծածկագիրը | Ընտրված մասնակից | ՀՀՀՀ կոդ կամ համարժեք | Պայմանագրի կնքման ամսաթիվ | Գնման ընթացակարգ | Գնման առարկայի անվանում | Պայմանագրի ընդհանուր գումարը | Պայմանագրի գումարը առկա ֆինանսական միջոցներով | Հաշվարկային տնտեսում | Պայմանագիր | Հանձնման/ընդունման արձանագրություն |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| պաշտպանության նախարարություն | 9/1-1 ՀՅ, 27.03.26. | Դելյուքս Դեևտաշ Լաբ ՍՊԸ | 00886975 | 20/02/2025 | ԲՄ | Ատամնաբուժական իմպլանտներ | 16393000 | 16393000 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԲՄԱՊՁԲ-25-9/1-1 , ՀՅ 12.09.25. | Դելյուքս Դեևտաշ Լաբ ՍՊԸ | 00886975 | 20/02/2025 | ԲՄ | Ատամնաբուժական իմպլանտներ | 126100000 | 109707000 | 0 | Բեռնել (3) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԲՄԾՁԲ-24-9/3-1, Համ. 1, 29.07.2024թ. | Դելյուքս Դեևտաշ Լաբ ՍՊԸ | 00886975 | 16/05/2024 | ԲՄ | Ատամնաբուժական ծառայություններ | 51000000 | 17000000 | 0 | Բեռնել (2) | Բեռնել (2) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԲՄԾՁԲ-24-9/3-1 Համ. 3 30.03.2026թ. | Դելյուքս Դեևտաշ Լաբ ՍՊԸ | 00886975 | 16/05/2024 | ԲՄ | Ատամնաբուժական ծառայություններ | 8000000 | 8000000 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԳՀԾՁԲ-23-9/3-1 | Դելյուքս Դեևտաշ Լաբ ՍՊԸ | 00886975 | 18/04/2023 | ԳՀ | Ատամնաբուժական ծառայություններ | 17000000 | 17000000 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (2) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԳՀԾՁԲ-22-9/3-1 | Դելյուքս Դեևտաշ Լաբ ՍՊԸ | 00886975 | 02/05/2022 | ԳՀ | Ատամնաբուժական ծառայություն (ատամների պրոթեզավորման ապրանքների պատրաստման ծառայության) | 17000000 | 17000000 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ԳՀԱՊՁԲ-9/12-1 | Դելյուքս Դեևտաշ Լաբ ՍՊԸ | 00886975 | 18/10/2019 | ԳՀ | ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարության կարիքների համար ատամնաբուժական | 2005000 | 2005000 | 70000 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |

The company was founded in 2014, and its listed owner is **Robert Hakobyan.**

https://old.e-register.am/am/companies/954836/declaration/89168c0a-a78d-4101-98fe-c764ed29a19e

A Defense Ministry contract with Domino Video Production worth 419.6 million drams (about $1.2 million) was also widely discussed. The subject of the contract was listed as "expenses related to an event," namely the May 28 celebrations.

armeps.am/ppcm/public/contracts

Որոնել

| Պատվիրատու | Պայմանագրի ծածկագիրը | Ընտրված մասնակից | ՀՀՀՀ կոդ կամ համարժեք | Պայմանագրի կնքման ամսաթիվ | Գնման ընթացակարգ | Գնման առարկայի անվանում | Պայմանագրի ընդհանուր գումարը | Պայմանագրի գումարը առկա ֆինանսական միջոցներով | Հաշվարկային տնտեսում | Պայմանագիր | Հանձնման/ընդունման արձանագրություն |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ՀՀ պաշտպանության նախարարություն | ՀՄԱԾՁԲ-26-12/1-1 համ. 1 առ 08.05.2026թ. | Դոմինո Վիդեո Փրոդաքշն ՍՊԸ | 02249552 | 27/04/2026 | ՀՄԱ | միջոցառումների հետ կապված ծառայություններ | 419638800 | 419638800 | 0 | Բեռնել (2) | Բեռնել (0) |
| Երևանի քաղաքապետարան | ԵՔ-ՄԱԾՁԲ-25/185 | ԴՈՄԻՆՈ ՎԻԴԵՈ ՓՐՈԴԱՔՇՆ ՍՊԸ | 02249552 | 13/10/2025 | ՄԱ | մշակութային միջոցառման կազմակերպման ծառայություն | 34800000 | 34800000 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ առողջապահության նախարարություն | ՀՀ ԱՆ ԳՀԽԾՁԲ-2025/53 | Դոմինո Վիդեո Փրոդաքշն ՍՊԸ | 02249552 | 25/09/2025 | ԳՀ | Առողջության համապարփակ ապահովագրության հիմնադրամի ապրանքանիշի ձևավորման (բրենդինգ) | 32760000 | 32760000 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |
| ՀՀ վարչապետի աշխատակազմ | ՀՀՎԱ-ԲՄԾՁԲ-25/3-1 | Դոմինո Վիդեո Փրոդաքշն ՍՊԸ | 02249552 | 28/07/2025 | ԲՄ | Մշակութային միջոցառումների կազմակերպման հետ կապված ծառայություններ | 130569600 | 130569600 | 0 | Բեռնել (1) | Բեռնել (0) |

The size of the spending raised fewer questions than the lack of detailed information on the most expensive parts of the events business: renting stage structures, LED screens, lighting and sound equipment, installation work and decorations.

These are considered the least transparent part of the events market, where prices for the same services can differ several times over.

Domino Video Production, founded in 2010 and owned by **Ashot Arakelyan**, began bidding actively for public contracts only in recent years.

Apart from the Defense Ministry, in 2025 the company received:

- a contract from the Office of the Prime Minister for 130.5 million drams (about $359,000) to organize a cultural event,
- a contract from the Ministry of Health for 32.7 million drams (about $90,000) for branding the Comprehensive Health Insurance Fund,
- a contract from Yerevan Municipality for 34.8 million drams (about $96,000) to hold a cultural event.

An analysis of non-military procurement shows a steady trend: a group of companies that regularly win contracts worth billions of drams has formed around the Ministry of Defense, while the system grows ever more closed.

With so little information left in the public domain, even purchases that seem minor deserve a close look, from fuel and bank transfers to dental implants and holiday celebrations.

### High-profile episodes and unfinished reforms

During Suren Papikyan's years at the Ministry of Defense, the ministry has been caught up in several widely reported stories, from tragedies in the army to drawn-out reforms and conflicts over the role of the Church in the Armed Forces.

### Fire in the village of Azat: 15 soldiers killed

On the night of January 19, 2023, a fire broke out in the quarters of an engineer and sapper company in the village of Azat, Gegharkunik Province. Fifteen conscripts were killed, and seven more suffered injuries and burns.

https://news.am/hy/news/740920

It later emerged that the building, used as temporary barracks, was not even officially registered in the cadastre.

https://am.sputniknews.ru/20230210/kazarma-v-kotoroy-sgoreli-15-armyanskikh-voennykh-okazalas-bez-adresa---poyasnenie-kadastra-55188339.html

A few hours after the tragedy, Nikol Pashinyan said the fire had been caused by a breach of the rules for handling gasoline. In his account, an officer tried to light a stove with gasoline and threw the burning canister back into the room.

Later, however, the platoon commander told journalists there had been no gasoline in the room, which effectively cast doubt on the official version.

After the tragedy, the commander of the 2nd Army Corps and several other senior officers were dismissed. The main question in society was why the soldiers were living in an ordinary village house that did not meet the safety requirements for barracks in the first place.

There were calls for Suren Papikyan to resign as the person politically responsible for the state of the army. The minister refused, saying he would continue his "reforms."

The case is still in court. Relatives of the dead soldiers and their lawyers want the country's top leadership questioned, including Nikol Pashinyan and Papikyan himself.

**The drawn-out uniform reform**

Another long-running project was the so-called "uniform reform."

In November 2023, Papikyan told parliament that the army would receive new uniforms as early as 2024.

https://fip.am/ru/41017?utm_source

The reform ran into problems right at the tender stage: Armenian specialists submitted proposals for only one branch of the armed forces. After that, the Ministry of Defense decided to adapt designs from "international partners" with Armenian insignia.

Despite the loud announcements, 2024 ended without the army switching to the new uniform.

By 2026, full-scale purchases had not begun: the ministry was still testing prototypes and patterns from the American company Milliken.

So three years after its official launch, the reform had not got past the testing stage.

https://newsarmenia.am/news/armenia/novuyu-voennuyu-formu-planiruetsya-vnedrit-v-armenii-v-2026-godu/

**"Border fortresses" and security concerns**

In recent years, the government has been actively promoting a project to build so-called "border fortresses."

In February 2026, Papikyan posted a video of underground reinforced-concrete fortified areas, saying they were protected from drones and allowed all-around defense.

https://www.facebook.com/reel/876796858473838

The project also raised security concerns. Sources in the Ministry of Defense say the facilities are being built through open tenders that describe the technical specifications of the fortifications in detail.

Critics said this practice makes sensitive information available to a wide range of people.

Further questions arose over the use of foreign workers, including citizens of India, Egypt and Iran. This prompted public debate about how carefully the people who get access to strategic sites are vetted.

As a result, a project presented as a symbol of stronger borders also set off a debate about the transparency of tenders and the risk of data leaks.

https://hraparak.am/am/post/ae6366aa673271f94284e4c7eceff78d

**Conflict with the Church and the abolition of the Chaplaincy Service**

In early 2026, the Ministry of Defense was drawn into another major conflict, this time with the Armenian Apostolic Church.

On January 30, it became known that an order of the defense minister had dissolved the Chaplaincy Service of the Armenian Armed Forces, which had existed for more than 20 years. The service was created in 1997 on the initiative of **Catholicos Garegin I** and Defense Minister **Vazgen Sargsyan.**

https://golosarmenii.am/%D0%BC%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D1%80-%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%BD%D1%8B-%D0%BE%D0%BF%D1%83%D0%B1%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BB-%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%88%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5/

Lawyers and representatives of the Church said the decision violated the Law on Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian Apostolic Church, which gives the Church the right to have permanent spiritual representatives in the army.

Critics of the government directly linked the reform to the wider conflict between Nikol Pashinyan and the Church. In their view, this went beyond an internal reorganization and was an attempt to gradually push the Church out of the army.

Papikyan himself rejected the accusations. He said the chaplaincy service was not being abolished, only placed under the single command of the Armed Forces Directorate of Moral and Psychological Support.

Much of society, though, saw it less as an administrative change than as another sign of a growing conflict between the state and one of the central institutions of Armenian identity.

https://verelq.am/ru/node/169495

Put side by side, these episodes (the fire in Azat, the drawn-out reforms, the closed procurement, the personnel scandals and the conflict over the Church) show that Papikyan's time at the Ministry of Defense has come to be associated with constant crises, scandals and unfinished processes, and much less with completed changes.

This is probably the main result of his work in the defense system: the army kept changing, but public debate kept returning to the latest crisis at the Ministry of Defense rather than to the results of reform.

**Defense procurement: diversification or a costly experiment?**

One of the main issues around the Ministry of Defense under Suren Papikyan has been the policy of diversifying arms suppliers and gradually ending dependence on Russian weapons.

Yet each new announcement of deliveries from Western countries drew sharper criticism from the opposition and some former military officers.

Critics argue that some of the weapons being bought are poorly suited to the needs of the Armenian army or create serious technical and logistical problems. Deliveries arranged with French mediation were mentioned especially often in this context.

Former Defense Minister **Arshak Karapetyan** said that much of the weaponry Armenia bought from Western countries was unfit for full use. He said some systems ran into incompatible standards, and some artillery units lacked the ammunition they needed.

Karapetyan also claimed that operating Western weapons costs much more than their Russian counterparts, and that the Armenian economy is not ready for such expenses.

With the security crisis continuing and resources limited, such statements added to public doubts about whether diversification is a real modernization of the army or is turning into an expensive and poorly calculated experiment.

https://am.tsargrad.tv/news/90-zapadnogo-oruzhija-hlam-jeks-ministr-oborony-armenii-raskritikoval-oboronnye-zakupki_1265753

**India, France and the "weapons zoo"**

Although defense procurement has become far more secretive, some information about the Defense Ministry's new contracts has still become public. After 2020, India and France emerged as the Armenian army's main new suppliers.

The most discussed purchases included:

- Indian Pinaka multiple rocket launchers,
- Akash air defense systems,
- 155 mm artillery systems,
- French CAESAR self-propelled howitzers,
- Bastion armored vehicles,
- GM200 radars,
- Mistral air defense systems.

Experts paid special attention to the Armenian army's gradual move from the Soviet 152 mm caliber to the NATO 155 mm standard. This meant buying new artillery and also having to rebuild the entire system of supply, maintenance and specialist training.

This is why some military experts and opposition politicians began to criticize the Ministry of Defense for creating a so-called "weapons zoo." The Armenian army was using all of the following at once:

- Soviet systems,
- Russian weapons,
- Indian platforms,
- French systems,
- elements of future NATO standards.

Critics believe such a patchwork structure creates serious problems with:

- buying ammunition,
- maintenance,
- spare parts supply,
- repairs,
- training specialists,
- compatibility between systems.

The Armenian army has ended up having to service several military ecosystems at once, each with its own standards and way of operating.

Supporters of the government call this a necessary diversification after many years of dependence on Russia. Critics call it a costly experiment on the Armenian army that nobody properly thought through.

As the list of supplier countries grew, more people asked whether Armenia was building a new defense system or simply collecting incompatible weapons from around the world.

https://euro-sd.com/2025/05/articles/44516/diversifying-armenias-defence-shifting-alliances-and-military-modernisation/

**The bottom line**

Suren Papikyan's story matters beyond the man himself. It has become one of the clearest examples of how Armenia's post-revolutionary system began, step by step, to reproduce many features of the old model of power.

The 2018 revolution promised transparency, professionalism and a break with the logic of personal connections. Yet around the Ministry of Defense under Papikyan a familiar structure took shape: a cult of political loyalty, closed decisions, limited public oversight, financial flows concentrated around a narrow circle of people, and a rapid, destructive transformation of the new elite.

Seen this way, Papikyan himself is no longer an exception. He is better understood as a symptom of a system in which personal closeness often counted for more than professional experience, and in which reforms brought new crises, well-founded suspicions and accusations against the government more often than they built trust.