
PROTESTING ARMENIAN STUDENT SPEAKS OUT ABOUT MESS IN ARMY

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The drama around the confrontation between Yerevan traders and the country authorities is still ongoing.

In November, large-scale student protests were held in the capital of Armenia against the amendments to the law on conscription, which was discussed in the parliament.

Under the new law, a male student desiring to continue his education and delay serving in the army, must sign a contract with the Defense Ministry in order to get a draft deferment. In this case, the person will have to serve three instead of usual two years in the military after completing his studies at the location chosen by the ministry. Moreover, during his study period the student will have to undergo military training.

The Armenian authorities imitated attention to the demands of youth and by deception forced the students to stop their protests. But after the adoption of the new law, the students realized that they were deceived and again went to a hunger strike.

Last week, member of the For Science Development initiative David Petrosyan, recorded a video message speaking about a number of problems in the Armenian army which must be eliminated.

We must speak loud about these problems if we want to bring the army to the level of Israels army, Petrosyan said. Mainly, the first sentiment of the recruit is that he arrived in an environment where he must fight for existence for two years.

There should be a statutory relationship, but this does not mean that the officer can talk with the soldier as he pleases, Petrosyan says.

The protester also spoke about 3,400 drams (\$7) that the Defense Ministry gives Armenian soldiers.

This is not enough for personal needs, so we have the institute of sending parcels. Parents send their children in army more than 10,000 drams (\$21) a month, but under current social conditions not all families are able to help their children, Petrosyan says. As a result, many soldiers remain hungry.

The student also touched upon the visits of Armenian officials to the border zone and their behavior there, noting that this is a way of hype.

They go to the military posts and take photos with soldiers. At best, they give chocolate to show that they allegedly think about the army, Petrosyan says.

The protester is sure that these actions come from the officials personal ambitions: Raising their own rating at the expense of soldiers and the army is unacceptable.

Petrosyan stopped the hunger strike after five days, on December 23, but stated that the students struggle continues: We decided to take a short pause. After the holidays, we will speak not only about the academic postponement, but also about other issues related to the sphere of education.

It is hard to say whether these students will succeed in their goals, but one thing is certain □ these protests and disclosure of facts about what is happening in the Armenian army will put the countrys population wise about the endless problems the army is mired in.

Kaynak/Source: