
MANVEL GRIGORYAN AND ARTUR ASATRYAN (DON PIPO) ARRESTED IN ARMENIA

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Following the session held on Tuesday in Armenia's Parliament, Armenia's parliament abolished the immunity of General Manvel Grigoryan, former deputy defense secretary and member of parliament, who is also the head of Armenia's biggest war veterans' organization, and Grigoryan was arrested. A large number of unlicensed weapons and ammunition were found at Grigoryan's house in the search of prosecution. According to the Armenian press, Grigoryan was arrested on the basis of Article 235 of the Criminal Code of Armenia. It is also reported that, according to some sources, the supplies to support the Armenian soldiers during the 4 Day War in Grigoryan's house were also found, and the inquiry could be extended to include Grigoryan's wife and many others. As a matter of fact, General Grigoryan's son Karen Grigorian, who has been running the office of Deputy Mayor of Etchmiadzin since 2008, has resigned from his position because of increasing reactions and calls for resignation in the city.

The arrests were not limited to Grigoryan. Artur Asatryan (also known as Don Pipo) who is considered to be one of the strongest oligarchs in Armenia, was arrested in his mansion in Echmiadzin city along with 4 Russian nationals. The investigation against Asatryan continues with up to 8 years of prison sentence for crimes which are possession of unlicensed guns and forced detention. According to reports in the Armenian press, Asatryan usually resides in Italy and Russia, however there were also reports that he recently bought a large amount of real estate in Etchmiadzin. According to the statement made by the National Security Service of Armenia, Asatryan is accused of kidnapping three people who attempted to assassinate him a few years ago. It is also reported in some news sources that Asatryan was behind the protests against Grigorian's son Karen Grigoryan asking him to resign organized a few days ago.

It is interesting to see that the arrest warrant on Manvel Grigoryan and the investigation against him are only limited to corruption allegations. Grigoryan was behind the torture and ethnic cleansing committed against Azerbaijani people during the occupation of Fuzuli and Cebrayil cities and occupation of Nagorno Karabakh by the Armenian army. Grigoryan admitted in his past interviews his ill-treatment and tortures against Azerbaijani captives and how he brought some of those captives back to Armenia. It therefore increases doubts on the impartiality of the judiciary and the new government's stance on dealing with such problems.