
PASHINYAN GOVERNMENT WINS CONFIDENCE VOTE

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Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan lambasted one of the two opposition parties represented in Armenias parliament as he secured parliamentary approval of his governments five-year policy program on Thursday.

In what amounted to a vote of confidence, the National Assembly endorsed the program by 88 votes to 40 after three days of heated debates which involved bitter recriminations between some opposition lawmakers and Pashinyan.

The governments action plan was rejected by the deputies representing the opposition Bright Armenia (LHK) and Prosperous Armenia parties. Both parties said that it lacks concrete socioeconomic targets that would back up Pashinyans repeated pledges to carry out an economic revolution.

The LHK was particularly scathing about the 70-page document. Its leader, Edmon Marukian, said that an annual economic growth rate of 5 percent promised by the government is too modest.

Marukian also claimed that the government is full of second-tier players from former President Serzh Sarkisians administration. With those cadres its impossible to do an economic revolution, he said.

My worry is that the majority of the public has started losing faith in their future, said Mane Tandilyan, another LHK leader who served as labor minister in Pashinyans cabinet until last December.

A furious Pashinyan rejected the criticism in his final speech before the parliament vote. He was especially incensed by parallels drawn by the LHK between the current and previous Armenian governments.

Dont you try again to put me and them on the same plane, he said. Put yourself and them on the same plane because you were saying the same thing in 2018.

Pashinyan recalled in this regard that the LHK refused to back him and his Civil Contract party when they started campaigning in March 2018 against Sarkisians attempt to cling to power. He charged that Marukians party, which holds 18 seats in the current parliament, favored instead behind-the-scene deals with Sarkisian and is now keen to whitewash the latters legacy.

Theyre saying that there was no revolution, scoffed the premier. Look around you. If there was no

revolution, what are 18 of you doing here?

The government program was drawn up and submitted to the parliament for approval last week two months after Pashinyans My Step alliance scored a landslide victory in snap general elections. The LHK finished a distant third in those polls.

Kaynak/Source: