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GREEK TRIBUNE

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Renmark: Ph/Fax: (08) 8586 5002 - Mobile: 04 0886 5004

AUSTRALIAN NEWS

QUEENSLAND FLOODS

SA Greek community supports victims

Greek community organisations in South Australia were quick to respond to the calls for relief assistance, in the wake of the unprecedented floods in the State of Queensland.

The Greek Orthodox Community of SA Inc in collaboration with the Greek Radio Program 5EBI FM has organised a Radio-Marathon, on Friday 14th January 2011, between 8:00 am and 9:00 am, to raise awareness and financial support for the victims of the destructive floods in the State of Queensland.

A press release issued by the GOCSA, called on all people living in Adelaide, to "tune in to the Radio Program 5EBI, 103.1 FM and to actively contribute to the fundraising appeal for the relief of the flood victims".

"You may contact Radio Program 5EBI on 8211 7066 or even come down to the station, located at 10 Byron Place, Adelaide to offer your donations. Donations can also be made through the central offices of the Greek

Orthodox Community of SA, 1st floor, 262 Franklin St, in Adelaide.

"The Greek Community would like to express its sincere sorrow for this terrible disaster affecting the people of Queensland, and wish a speedy recovery to our suffering compatriots", the press release says.

In the same press release, the President of the Community Mr Vassilis Elovaris highlights "the importance of generously donating and supporting this cause, keeping in mind the numerous times both the Federal and State Governments have responded to the Greek Community's appeals for assistance in the past".

People who haven't got the privilege of listening to 5EBI, such as those living in the Riverland and other regional communities, are encouraged by the Greek Tribune to either ring GOCSA on 8231 4307 or donate to the Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal, C/O Department of the Premier and Cabinet, PO Box 15185, City East QLD 4002.

Adelaide Greek workers contribute to Queensland's re-construction

In a letter to the Queensland Premier, Anna Bligh, the Greek Worker's Association of South Australia "Platon", expresses its solidarity to the flood affected state and announces the donation of \$2000 towards the Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal Fund.

The letter, a copy of which was sent to the Greek Tribune, reads as follows:

"The recent tragic events in Queensland, with unprecedented floods in a large number of towns and cities including Brisbane, causing the death of innocent civilians and destruction of homes, infrastructure and other property, have also caused a lot of pain and distress to us all as we watched the devastation unfolding through our screens.

"We would like to commend the people of Queensland for their collective effort to clean up and provide relief to the victims, demonstrating to the whole world that they are a well organised community of hard working people.

"Communities are inspired and achieve a lot more when they have good leadership. We would therefore like to congratulate you, for taking a position at the forefront of the battle, managing the crisis and demonstrating what it means to be a true leader.

"The Greek Worker's Educational Association of South Australia, "Platon", was formed in the 1950's to address issues faced by the then new Greek migrant workers and has always been an integral part of the Australian labor movement.

"Our group, offers its sincere condolences to your Government for the loss of human lives and stands wholeheartedly in solidarity with you for the difficult days ahead. As a token of support to the State of Queensland, please accept the amount of \$2000 raised amongst our members towards the reconstruction process".

The letter is signed by the President of the Association Mr Tony Marinos.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM DECISION

Victory for Modern Greek!

Education Minister Peter Garrett announced yesterday that the Modern Greek language will be one of the languages included in the new national school curriculum - as recommended by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA).

Since last year the Greek community has campaigned strongly for the inclusion of Modern Greek in the National School Curriculum as a language of economic,

social and cultural importance to Australia.

The decision will formalise decades of teaching of the language by schools, churches and community groups across Australia, many of which have developed significant language programs, infrastructure and specialist teaching capacity for Modern Greek.

Member for Hindmarsh, Steve Georganas and the Member for Calwell, Maria Vamvakinou, welcomed the

decision and pointed out the importance of Modern Greek for trade and investment. They also outlined the significant personal, professional, historical, social and cultural ties many Australians have with Greece.

Maria Vamvakinou said that languages other than English have an important role in Australian society as we are a multilingual community.

Modern Greek is one of the top five languages

other than English spoken in Australia, with more than 250,000 Australians stating in the 2006 Census that they spoke Greek at home.

Mr Georganas and Ms Vamvakinou said they were grateful for the support of their parliamentary colleagues including the Member for Indi, Sophie Mirabella and Senator Nick Xenophon in campaigning for the inclusion of Modern Greek in the National Schools Curriculum.

From the Editors Desk

More difficult times ahead

During the difficult years of the drought, the Federal Government implemented a range of measures designed to assist struggling farmers to either survive on the farm if viable or if not, get out with dignity. One of those measures, the exit package offered by the Government last year, saw a number of Riverland small fruit growers leave the industry with a grant of \$150,000 to re-train and make a fresh start in a new field. Although reluctant at first, the growers who accepted the offer are now happy they made the right decision.

Another Federal Government scheme, the Exceptional Circumstances program, offered help to farmers and growers who were unable to service their farm loans by subsidising up to 80% of their interest as well as paying a Centrelink allowance for food on the table for struggling families.

Due to the break of the drought, this scheme is winding up on 31 March. A large number of Riverland winegrape growers who had been optimistic for better returns in the coming season, have just learned that the grape prices are actually going down and they won't be getting any payments for a while as the harvesting is at least one month late due to the cold weather conditions. This means, a large number of Riverland farming families are going to be left in an extremely difficult position as there will be no Centrelink payments from 1 April onwards and any income from their crop will be too little too late. All this will impact dramatically on the already struggling Riverland economy.

Selling a fruit property these days is not an option because no one will buy it. We feel that the Federal Government has an obligation to re-examine the Riverland situation and help those who have to adjust. Perhaps a new exit package will ease the pain and give the opportunity to more struggling families to get out of a troubled industry and do something different that will make life better for them.

Peter Ppiros

Greek community participates in Australia Day parade



One hundred organisations from 47 different ethnic communities participated in a multicultural parade held on 26 January as part of the celebrations of the Australia Day in Adelaide. Greek community organisations represented at the parade, were, the Greek Orthodox Community of SA, the Pan-Rhodian society "Colossos", the Greek Worker's Educational Association "Platon" and the Pontian Brotherhood. In the photo, the Minister for Multicultural Affairs Grace Portolesi and the Lieutenant Governor and chairman of SAMEAC Hieu Van Le amongst members of the Greek community

Direct your donations to the Premier's Relief Fund

On 29 December 2010, the Premier of Queensland, Anna Bligh, launched a disaster relief appeal to help those affected by wide spread flooding in Queensland.

The Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal is a Trust Fund established to assist those who have suffered a loss due to natural disaster. All money raised by the fund will be directed to

address the greatest need. The Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal Fund is audited by the Queensland Auditor-General.

The Premier has announced the establishment of a Distribution Committee, a committee including representatives from the Australian Red Cross, to manage the disbursement of the donated funds. None of the appointed representatives will

receive remuneration for their service, and none of the funds raised will be used to administer the fund with the costs being met by the government.

The Greek Tribune, urges organisations and individuals to post their cheques to: Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal, C/O Department of the Premier and Cabinet, PO Box 15185, City East QLD 4002.

GREEK COMMUNITY TRIBUNE

ABN: 55 829 388 691

EDITOR: Peter Ppiros

ADDRESS: BOX 3070, RENMARK, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 5341

PHONE/FAX: (08) 8586 5002

Mobile: 0408 865004

Website: www.greektribune.com.au

E-mail: info@greektribune.com.au

Community Life



Pontian dancers performing at the Pontian Synapantema, on Saturday 22 January at the Krystal Reception Centre in Port Adelaide.

trip to Crete for children of Cretan background to visit the learn more about the land of their ancestors. During the conference, the delegates were joined by locals and celebrated Cretan culture through music, dancing and other festivities. Next year's conference will be held in Sydney.

Australian Pontians converged in Adelaide, in large numbers, for three days starting on 21 until the 23th

of January, for the 2011 Pontian Synapantema - or re-union. The wide variety of cultural activities organised by the local Pontian Brotherhood of South Australia, included a visit to the Migration Museum where a plaque commemorates the Pontian genocide, which was officially recognised by the South Australian Parliament in a bi-partisan declaration in 2009. On Saturday night, more than 500 people attended an official din-

ner dance at the Krystal Function Centre, in Port Adelaide including State officials and community representatives. Internationally acclaimed Pontian musician Mathaios Tsahurides and band kept the dance floor alive until the early hours of Sunday. An all day Pontian panigiri (festival) was held on Sunday at the Olympic Soccer Grounds, 2 Perth Street, Ferryden Park. The event included soccer matches, live music by Mathaios Tsahurides, Greek food, drinks and sweets. The main feature at all the events held during the three day synapantema, were the many colorful Pontian dancing groups that came from all over Australia.

The General Archdiocesan Commissioner of the Autocephalic Greek Orthodox church of America and Australia Very Rev. Prokopios Kanavas, the St. Nicholas Church Youth Group in conjunction with the Greek Orthodox Community of SA inc. and the South Australian Police are holding an information night on the topic of "Cars Have Changed", on Tuesday 15 March 2011 at 7pm at Olympic Hall, 288 Franklin Street, Adelaide. The topic will be of interest to families with young adults intending to get their licence or have just got their licence. As seats are limited to 100, interested people, may contact the main offices of GOCSA on 8231 4307.

Peter Ppiros

Social, cultural, political events and entertainment

Email your community's news or a photo: info@greektribune.com.au



At the Pontian Synapantema, on Saturday 22 January at Krystal Reception Centre in Port Adelaide, were the Bishop of Dorylaeon Nikandros and the Consul General of Greece Mr Christos Maniakis-Grivas.



David Pisoni MP, second from right, attended the Pontian Synapantema, on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition Isobel Redmond. On the left is the Assistant Secretary of the Greek Orthodox Community of SA, Elias Mavrogiorgis, on behalf of the President Vasily Elovaris.



Members of the Greek community of Port Adelaide who worked tirelessly on 15 January to make the Semaphor Festival another great success



Minister for Communities Jennifer Rankine, representing the Premier Mike Rann, Peter Ppiros, representing the Chairman of SAMEAC and Lieutenant Governor Hieu Van Le and Michael Atkinson MP at the Pontian Synapantema, on Saturday 22 January at the Krystal Reception Centre in Port Adelaide.



Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Grace Portolesi, speaking at the Blessing of the Waters ceremony at the Henley Jetty, presided over by Archimandrite Prokopios (right) of the Greek Orthodox Community of SA. Also in the photo is the Treasurer of the GOCSA Angelo Stathopoulos



Greek Orthodox Community of SA Executive Director Nick Kyriazopoulos, David Ridgeway MP representing the Leader of the Opposition Isobel Redmond and GOCSA President Vasily Elovaris at the Blessing of the Waters at the Henley Jetty.

CYPRUS ISSUE

Leaders meet in Geneva as Turkish Cypriots protest against Turkey

Nicosia, (CNA) – Cyprus Government expects that there will be progress in the ongoing negotiations to resolve the Cyprus problem by the time UN Secretary General submits his report to the Security Council, Government Spokesman Stephanos Stephanou said on Friday.

However, he noted, progress can be achieved if constructive spirit is demonstrated on the negotiating table.

He added that President Christofias will continue to negotiate on the agreed basis for a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation in line with the UN resolutions, and expressed hope that the Turkish Cypriot side will also demonstrate such attitude.

As regards the Geneva meeting between President Christofias, Turkish Cypriot leader and Ban Ki moon,

Stephanou said that the UN Secretary expressed his readiness to make available to both sides UN experts on technical issues regarding property issue.

He pointed out however that it depends on each side how they will take advantage of the expertise, knowledge and assistance these experts could offer, explaining that the UN experts will not participate in the negotiations.

In the meantime, Turkish Cypriots protested on Friday 28 January against the economic policy of the so called government in the occupied areas of Cyprus.

The massive rally was organized by the platform of Turkish Cypriot Trade Unions comprising approximately 30 trade unions, organizations and political parties opposing the Dervis Eroglou illegal gov-

ernment.

The Platform demands civil and labour rights and the re-unification of the country. The demonstrators protested against the package of financial measures the illegal government, following Turkey's instructions, tries to implement in the occupied areas of Cyprus.

Participants were holding placards, inter alia, with slogans against Turkey and the Turkish government, while on two placards the flag of the Republic of Cyprus was pictured. The Turkish Cypriot parties "Turkish Republican Party", "Democratic Party", "Democratic Society", "United Cyprus" and "New Cyprus" were participating in the rally along with the biggest unions of workers in the occupied areas, in the so called state and semi state services, tele-

communications and electricity "authorities", health sector, banks and education system, teachers and professors.

The main slogan on the podium of the rally was "There is no salvation for ourselves. All together or none of us". Representatives of the organizers estimate that the participants in the rally exceeded 20,000, while other estimations refer to 40,000 people. The protesters adopted a declaration in support to a solution of the Cyprus problem the soonest possible.

Cyprus has been divided since 1974, when Turkish troops invaded and occupied its northern third. UN-led peace talks are currently underway between the leaders of the two communities, in an effort to find a negotiated settlement that will re-unite the country under a federal roof.

International News

Greek Government opens way for privatization of state companies

(ANA) The Greek government opened the way for the restructuring and privatization of state-run defense and gas companies, amidst continuing protests Thursday over austerity measures and structural reforms introduced to address a severe debt crisis.

The Interministerial Committee for Asset Restructuring and Privatization decided to assess the available options for the management of its holdings in Public Gas Corporation S.A. (DEPA) and Hellenic Defence Systems S.A. (HDS), the Finance Ministry said.

The decision was made as the Greek government focuses in 2011 on structural reforms to slash expenses and increase revenues through the restructure and partial privatization of loss-making public companies and the better management of state assets.

The implementation of this harsh austerity and reform program to exit the crisis and return to growth is supported by International Monetary Fund and European Union, but has triggered an ongoing wave of protests and strikes in Greece.

The government plans to increase fares in buses, trains and the subway by 40 percent starting from February and transfer personnel to other agencies.

Protesting transport services workers were joined by teachers who also protested austerity measures, particularly cutbacks and restructuring plans in the education sector. Civil servants claim that due to cuts in salaries and allowances and tax hikes introduced in 2010 to tackle the crisis, their average income has decreased by 25 to 35 percent.

BI-COMMUNAL POLL

Greek and Turkish Cypriots support federal solution

Nicosia, (CNA) - 68% of Greek Cypriots and 65% of Turkish Cypriots wish for a solution to be achieved according to a bi-communal poll presented here today.

Presenting the results of the poll researchers Alexandros Lordos and Spyros Christou from the research programme "Cyprus 2015" also said 83% of Greek Cypriots and 60% of Turkish Cypriots respectively believe that the ongoing negotiations should continue until a successful outcome is reached.

79% of Greek Cypriots and 76% of Turkish Cypriots reply that they would accept a federation as part of a compromise, whilst 88% of Greek Cypriots and 77% of Turkish Cypriots wish that a mechanism of informing citizens as to what is happening during the talks should be established.

However, a lack of trust between the two communities is also apparent in 84% of Greek Cypriots and 70% of Turkish Cypriots as well as a concern about being under the control of the other community by 87% of Greek Cypriots and 59% of Turkish Cypriots.

In reference with the EU it seems that participants in the poll approve that the EU is more actively involved in the negotiations as 59% of Greek Cypriots and 53% of Turkish Cypriots stated they approve the continuation of the talks with the participation of Greece, Turkey and the EU.

800 Greek Cypriots and 800 residents of the occupied areas took part in the poll and as Lordos noted the occupied areas sample included about 75% Turkish Cypriots and 25% settlers who had been awarded with the occupied areas "citizenship" before 2004.

The research programme "Cyprus 2015" is implemented in co-operation with the international non-governmental organization "interpeace", which is based in Geneva, whilst it is sponsored by the UNDP in Cyprus and the EU Representation in Cyprus.

The presentation was organized by the Association for Social Reform (OPEK) and the Office of the European Parliament in Cyprus.

Cyprus has been divided since 1974, when Turkey invaded and occupied its northern third.

President Christofias and Eroglu are currently engaged in UN-led direct negotiations with an aim to reunify the island under a federal roof.

Aboriginal dancers take "Zorba" the Greek to China!

Lionel Dhulmanawuy, an Aboriginal dancer from a remote tropical island off northern Australia and his fellow Chooky Dancers, who became a YouTube sensation with a quirky "Zorba the Greek" number, left Australia for the first time in January to perform in China's televised Spring Festival gala, seen by millions.

The aboriginal group from Elcho island, first developed their five-minute routine, which begins with a traditional dance with spears -- and ends with the barefoot men wearing loincloths doing Greek-style gyrations.

"Their eyes will be popping out of their heads," Gaymangura, one of the dancers, said through a translator when asked how he thought the Chinese audience would react to seeing half-naked men covered in white body paint.

The Chooky Dancers spent nearly 20 hours in four planes to reach the Chinese capital to star in the annual gala, to be broadcast by Beijing Television to a massive viewing audience during Lunar New Year festivities on February 4.

While the men have been performing at festivals around Australia for several years and starred in the television show "Australia's Got Talent", Dhulmanawuy admitted he was nervous about dancing for millions of people.

The dancers, whose performance for the gala was pre-recorded, were invited to Beijing as part of the Year of Australian Culture in China, which is aimed at strengthening relations between the two countries.