



## IN BRIEF

### LABOR DAY

#### Strikes, work stoppages to disrupt transport services

Several strikes and work stoppages will cause disruptions in public transportation services on Monday, as workers mark Labor Day. A 24-hour strike will be staged by Hellenic Railways Organization (OSE) employees, as well as workers on the capital's Proastiakos suburban railway, starting midnight tomorrow and ending midnight on Monday, which will affect services to Athens airport. Workers on the ISAP electric railway will hold a work stoppage Monday from the beginning of services until 8 a.m. Athens buses will not be running between the start of services and 9 a.m., and again from 9 p.m. until the end of the shift. Trolley buses will be out of service the entire day.

### VAROUFAKIS

#### Former finmin speaks out

Former finance minister Yanis Varoufakis presented the "agenda" of his DiEM25 movement in Thessaloniki yesterday and called on the government to abandon the repayment of Greece's debts to international creditors. He also proposed a six-point plan that he said would put the country back on the road to economic and social recovery. His proposed measures include reducing taxation, restructuring public and private debt, and the creation of a new development bank that would capitalize on state assets.

**FYROM protests.** The Greek Foreign Ministry expressed concern yesterday after protesters stormed the parliament of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) on Thursday and attacked MPs. In a statement, the ministry bemoaned the fact that FYROM "is slipping into a deep political crisis" and urged that a "culture of compromise" prevail in the tiny Balkan nation. Protesters, some wearing masks, barged past police and stormed the parliament to protest the recent election of a new house speaker.

**Pakistani anarchist.** Police are seeking a 28-year-old Pakistani national in connection with an attack by anarchists on a riot police unit outside the 1930s refugee housing blocks on Alexandras Avenue in Athens last October, Kathimerini has learned. The 28-year-old, who was identified by the security police, faces charges of causing grievous bodily harm, damaging public property and violating weapons laws. In the clashes last October, anarchists clashed with supporters of neo-Nazi Golden Dawn and then with riot police. According to police sources, the 28-year-old was an active member of an anarchist squat in Exarchia.

**Dog attack.** Two men were hospitalized on the island of Crete yesterday after being mauled by a pit bull in Mesambelia, Iraklio. According to reports, the dog jumped out of its owner's backyard and attacked a smaller dog being walked by a little girl. The girl's father and a neighbor were mauled as they sought to help her. Both men, aged 61 and 70, suffered non-life-threatening injuries. The dog's owner has been arrested.

**Soccer mad.** Tensions rose late Thursday evening when around 50 AEK soccer supporters gathered outside a building in Nea Philadelphia in northern Athens where the anti-capitalist party Antarsya was preparing to host an event. The supporters exchanged insults with those attending the event before leaving the premises, heading for their team's Greek Cup semifinal clash with crosstown rivals Olympiakos.

**Note to readers.** Neither the International New York Times nor Kathimerini English Edition will be published on Monday May 1 due to Labor Day. We will be back on Tuesday.

### WEATHER

Athens	↑	☁	13°/27°
Thessaloniki	↔	☁	12°/25°
Patra	↔	☁	14°/24°
Iraklio	↔	☁	15°/26°
Santorini	↔	☁	15°/23°
Nicosia	↔	☀	12°/30°
Limassol	↔	☀	15°/26°

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police	Ambulance	Fire dept	Coast Guard	SOS Doctors	Directory
100	166	199	108	1016	11888

### Η ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ

Ethnarchou Makariou & 2 Falireos, Athens  
185-47 GREECE Tel: 210.4808000, Fax: 210.4808460

### KATHIMERINI

English Edition

PUBLISHED BY I.H.T.-KATHIMERINI S.A.

Editor Nikos Konstandaras

E-mail: editor@kathimerini.com

CALL 210.4808222 TO ORDER A SUBSCRIPTION

SUBSCRIPTION RATES	12 months	EUROS	430.00
	6 months	EUROS	235.00
	3 months	EUROS	125.00

# Gov't upbeat that deal is near

## As Athens moves closer to agreement with institutions, Tsipras looks to turn tide of discontent

The government was confident yesterday that negotiations with the country's creditors could be wrapped up soon.

Speaking to Sto Kokkino FM yesterday, government spokesman Dimitris Tzanakopoulos said he believed Greek officials and foreign auditors will have finalized "complementary" agreements with Greece's creditors by tomorrow.

"We have reasons to hope that, by Sunday, we will have finished the text of the complementary memorandum and the agreement with the International Monetary Fund so that

the bill with the prior actions can be finished and submitted to Parliament and voted on," he said.

From then on, he said "the institutions will have to write up a compliance report which will be submitted to the Eurogroup on May 22," he added.

But it won't be an easy ride for the government, as it will have to pass into legislation highly unpopular measures - including pension cuts and a lowering of the taxation threshold.

With this in mind, Prime Minister Alexis

Tsipras has turned his focus on overcoming dissent within the coalition and turning the political tide by bidding to win back the confidence of a severely disillusioned electorate.

According to secret polls conducted by parties, the government, and especially Tsipras, are steadily losing ground. This also explains why the prime minister has taken it upon himself to appeal directly to the electorate with a series of countermeasures.

These measures include revisiting the public debate regarding a review of the Constitution which, he hopes, will highlight the stark dif-

ferences between the government's progressive profile and conservative New Democracy.

The government also plans to conduct regional conferences in order to persuade local authorities that stabilizing the economy by clinching a deal with the creditors will work in their interest.

Tsipras further plans to hold a SYRIZA congress to affirm his leadership of the party.

Close aides to Tsipras and government officials do not expect any serious "leakage" and say that all 153 coalition MPs will vote through the measures.

## Artist takes over Syntagma Square for documenta 14



Artist Maria Fragoudaki staged a performance titled 'BedSheets: The Duality of Freedom' as part of the documenta 14 art exhibition at Athens's Syntagma Square on Thursday night. The international contemporary art exhibition that this year is taking place in both Athens and Kassel, Germany, opened in the Greek capital on April 8 and is spread out over more than 40 different galleries, museums, squares, cinemas, university campuses and libraries across the city, with more than 160 artists displaying their work.

## Skourletis aims at more hirings through back door

The government appears intent on moving ahead with its plan to push through backdoor hirings in the civil service as Interior Minister Panos Skourletis reiterated his aim to grant permanent jobs to contract workers.

Speaking at an event of the ruling SYRIZA party this week, Skourletis pledged that once the bailout negotiations are concluded, all the political parties and relevant bodies will be summoned for a meeting to discuss how to restore the rights of contract workers in accordance with European Union standards.

Skourletis said that around 30,000 people have been working for too many years on a contract basis, mainly at municipalities across the country, and the minister appears intent on making a large chunk of them permanent.

Critics have slammed the government, and Skourletis in particular, for needlessly burdening the country's bloated state sector without any consideration for its efficiency or the citizens it is supposed to serve.

"The law stipulates eight-month contracts in emergency situations or 12 months for people working in social welfare-related programs," Andreas Varelas, the former Athens deputy mayor in charge of sanitation, told Kathimerini. But, he added, "when the government unilaterally decides to extend these contracts it implicitly admits that this is not about meeting emergency demands."

"This way the road is paved to make [workers] permanent," he said.

The contracts of municipal workers were initially extended last year to the end of 2016 and, according to recent a government amendment, they will be extended until the end of 2017.

## Man 'dumps' dead daughter

A 61-year-old man from Aghia Varvara, western Athens, is to face an investigating magistrate on murder charges on Tuesday after allegedly killing his 6-year-old daughter and disposing of her body in a garbage dumpster.

The man, who made no statement to the media after leaving the prosecutor's office yesterday, allegedly claimed that the child's death was accidental and occurred after he "hugged her a bit harder than usual."

The suspect also faces charges of desecrating the dead after allegedly dumping his daughter's body in a dumpster in his neighborhood.

According to sources, the 61-year-old has displayed suicidal tendencies and is taking prescribed medication.



## Ex-defense minister set to stay in his cell a bit longer

Despite initial expectations that former defense minister Akis Tsochatzopoulos would be released from prison yesterday on the grounds of his ailing health, it appeared that he will stay in Korydallos Prison for a few more days for bureaucratic reasons.

Tsochatzopoulos, convicted to 20 years in prison for money laundering in 2013, had been scheduled for early release from jail after he managed to raise a 200,000-euro bail payment de-

manded by an Athens appeals court.

His lawyers had originally objected to the court's demand, noting that the former minister's bank accounts have all been seized. Eventually, however, the money was raised by relatives and friends.

Tsochatzopoulos, 77, has been in frail health since undergoing a triple bypass operation last month. His lawyers have said his return to prison is putting his life at risk.

## Swiss probe yields more details about Papantoniou

A judicial investigation into defense contracts signed by former Socialist defense minister Yiannos Papantoniou is deepening, Kathimerini understands, with information from Swiss authorities allegedly linking him and his wife to two foreign bank accounts and a life insurance policy though the search continues for evidence incriminating him for kickbacks.

According to sources, Greek judicial authorities have asked their Swiss counterparts for permission to open the accounts in question.

Meanwhile a parliamentary committee investigating the defense deals signed by Papantoniou when he was minister between 2001 and 2004 has asked Greek prosecutors to determine whether transactions involving his accounts during this time period point toward money laundering. If they do not, committee members say, the probe is pointless as any alleged offenses of breach of faith or bribetaking will have expired under the statute of limitations, which does not apply to money laundering.

### COMMENTARY | BY ALEXIS PAPACHELAS

## Cyprus can, so why can't Greece?

Every visit to Cyprus is like a punch to the gut to me, because it reminds me of what Greece could be like if it was free of its hang-ups. Take education, for example. With the consensus of the left, Cyprus established private universities, some of which are quite exemplary, resembling good European and American institutions, and making significant strides. Today, thousands of Greeks are studying in Cyprus, along with young people from China, the Middle East and Russia. Cyprus's private universities generate hundreds of jobs and boost the economy. Over the past 20 years, many major foreign

universities have wanted to do something similar in Greece, but to no avail. A golden opportunity was lost when Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis was prevented from amending Article 16 of the Constitution and now Greece is littered with dozens of colleges of negligible quality, with just a few shining exceptions. As a result, Greeks pay thousands of euros a year to send their children abroad, even though we have the talent, manpower and geographical position to become a major private education hub in the broader region. Instead, we are consumed by our petty ways, continuing to support vested interests at universities.

Another area of interest is attracting wealthy foreigners who want a residence permit for a European Union country and are ready to invest, mainly in real estate. Cyprus chose an easy and practical model by which to achieve this and is now constructing buildings that will sell at more than 10,000 euros a square meter. Greece's effort to this end has been lackluster and requires a ton of paperwork from the brave potential investors. If Cyprus can fetch such prices, then how much could a flat on Athens's beautiful southern coast fetch? Or the berths at the country's marinas? And how many thousands of jobs would be created?

No, we prefer to consign the capital's coast to a camp/hellhole for refugees and migrants. As for our marinas, we just let municipalities, ministries and port authority funds bicker over them so that various opportunists can swoop in.

So why has Cyprus succeeded where Greece continues to fail? Because Cypriots are practical-minded and their politicians can agree on the basics. Because it has a working state and every investor knows what lies ahead. And because Cypriots wake up every morning to the Turkish flag across the Green Line, spurring their self-preservation instinct.