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News in Brief



A representative of the Association of Clerics of Greece, Arch-Priest Georgios Konstantinou, on Thursday stressed that the association will adamantly stand by positions and decisions regarding the government's intent to alter the payroll regime for Orthodox clergymen in the country.

His statement came after the conclusion of a general assembly of clerics, which was held at a central Athens cathedral.

Asked by the Orthodoxia news agency how his association will react in case the government does not back down, Konstantinou referred to peaceful mobilizations, and, to the fact that elections are pending in the country.

In other news, the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens' Department of Theology, in cooperation with the Inter-Orthodox Centre of the Church of Greece, and the Wikipedia Community of Greece's Schools Association, commenced a new training workshop, entitled "Introduction into writing Wikipedia entries".

Post-graduate students, Ph.D candidates and researchers, accompanied by theology professor Sotiris Despotis, will have the opportunity to combine scholarly work with contributions to the free and open online encyclopedia.

An exhibition showcasing print paper illustrations used by hagiographers to create Russian Orthodox icons is set to open at the Andrei Rublev Museum in Moscow. The illustrations depict saints and scenes from the Gospel.

The Orthodox Patriarch of Romania, His Beatitude Daniel, this week chaired sessions of a national church council, convened in Bucharest.

Members of the council are tasked with assessing the Romanian Orthodox Church's activities and initiatives in 2018.

Daniel cited the report, presented on Tuesday to members of the council, and stressed the importance of building new places of worship, as well as the spiritual foundations of the faithful.

The Patriarch of Georgia, His Beatitude Ilia II, on Wednesday received the Metropolitan of Borispol and Brovary, His Eminence Anthony, who is the chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP).

The meeting was unofficial in nature, and reportedly aimed to exchange information over recent developments in the Ukraine.

The discussion, nevertheless, touched on the fact that conflicts often arise in certain Churches and regions.

The Georgian Patriarch thanked the members of the visiting delegation and again expressed his concern over the situation in the Ukraine, calling on the former to pray that conflicts are overcome, and that the unity of Orthodox Christians is maintained.

His Beatitude, Theodore II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, this week flew from Poante-Noire, in the Republic of the Congo, to the country's capital, Brazzaville. Theodore toured Orthodox parishes in the west Africa country.

In Brazzaville, the Patriarch traveled by boat along the Congo River to Kinshasa, the capital of the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo, where he will tour the Holy Archdiocese of Kinshasa.

Monks at the Monastery of Valaam, located in the extreme northwest Russian

republic of Karelia, this reported that they have managed to cultivate pineapples in a special greenhouse at the monastery.

Karelia is located in a subarctic climate zone.

The tropical fruit have been cultivated by the monks for the past two years, with production steadily increasing.