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Hellenic News, Culture & Lifestyle



## \$50,000 FOR THE 2013 GREEK FESTIVAL OF SYDNEY FROM THE NSW STATE GOVERNMENT

The NSW State Government has donated \$50,000 to the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW to assist in staging the annual 2013 Greek Festival of Sydney. Celebrating the Greek identity and its influence on Australian culture, the Greek Festival of Sydney is one of New South Wales' most dynamic cultural festivals. Launching on the 16-17 March 2013 at Darling Harbour, this 2 day festival is followed by 6 weeks of theatrical performances, exhibitions, concerts, lectures, folkloric activities, music and cross cultural activities taking place at various locations throughout Sydney.

Harry Danalis, President and Nia Karteris Vice-President, of the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW were formally presented with the cheque at the office of The Hon Victor Dominello MP, Minister for Citizenship and Communities.

"The dedication to social cohesion and harmony acknowledged through this financial contribution to the Greek Community reinforces the huge stamp of approval for multiculturalism by the NSW state government" said Nia Karteris, Vice President and Festival Chair.

"This \$50,000 goes a long way in assisting to produce an event

that costs the Greek Community of NSW in excess of a quarter of a million dollars. We couldn't be more grateful for the state government's support" added president, Harry Danalis.

Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello said the Greek Festival of Sydney is a wonderful example of the benefits of multiculturalism in NSW.

"The NSW Government is happy to support this event, which is so popular not only with Greek Australians, but the wider NSW community as well, because it highlights the colour, vitality, energy and enterprise that multicultural communities bring to our great state," Mr Dominello said.

"Multiculturalism is one our state's greatest assets and has strengthened our social fabric and enhanced peoples' ability to quickly participate in Australian society."

The grant sends a clear message that the NSW state government not only listens to communities but most importantly, they engage and partner with communities and support the multiculturalism that makes Australian society so unique.

## Greek among seven foreigners kidnapped in Nigeria

The Greek Foreign Ministry confirmed on Monday that a Greek is among seven foreigners who were kidnapped in Nigeria on Sunday. Gunmen kidnapped seven foreigners and killed a security guard when they stormed the compound of Lebanese construction company Setraco in northern Nigeria's Bauchi state early on Sunday. Those abducted were a Briton, an Italian, a Greek and four Lebanese workers, including two women.

"We are in touch with the European crisis team and other relevant countries," Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigoris Delavekouras told Skai TV on Monday. "Our embassy personnel in Abuja are also

in contact with other embassies and we have an airplane on standby to bring our fellow citizen home."

No one took responsibility for the raid but northern Nigeria is plagued by attacks and kidnappings by Islamist groups. Al Qaeda-aligned group Ansaru, which rose to prominence only in recent months, claimed the kidnap in December of a French national who is still missing. Bauchi Police Chief Mohammed Ladan said the gunmen attacked a police station and a prison overnight before storming the construction firm's compound in the town of Jama'are. "We don't know at this stage who is behind the kidnapping," said Delavekouras.



The identity of the Greek national was not made public but Delavekouras said that his family had been informed.

## Prosecutor drops charges in Helios air crash trial

Cyprus's attorney general dropped all charges against four men on trial for a Cyprus-based Helios Airways plane crash in Grammatiko, northeast of Athens, in 2005, in which 121 people were killed.

The decision was upheld by the Nicosia-based criminal court, which said that a Greek tribunal had already delivered a ruling regarding the crash, which was deemed to have been caused by human error.

## Man taken to hospital after car plunges into sea

A 53-year-old man was hospitalized after his car plunged into the sea at the port of Piraeus on Monday. His life was not in danger. The vehicle was pulled out of the water by a crane. Police said the cause of the accident was under investigation.

## Ministry general secretary receives bullet in mail

Finance Ministry general secretary Giorgos Mergos received a bullet in the mail Monday, police officials said.

Mergos sparked controversy last week after suggesting that Greece's basic salary was too high.

Earlier this month, Finance Minister Yannis Stoumaras was sent a bullet and a death threat from a little-known group called Cretan Revolution that was protesting his support of austerity measures.



## Domestic employee found dead

A 25-year-old man who was found dead at his employers' home in the Thessaloniki suburb of Pylaia was strangled, a coroner found Monday. The domestic employee was found by a colleague half-submerged in the family's indoor swimming pool though yesterday's autopsy concluded that he had been strangled.

A search of the home found no evidence to suggest a break-in. Investigations were continuing.

## 2,389 buildings leased by state

The state has leased 2,389 buildings to house its various agencies, according to Finance Minister Yannis Stouraras's response to a question from Independent Greeks deputy Vassilis Kapernaros in Parliament on Monday.

The reduction of lease contracts for such buildings in a bid to reduce each ministry's budget is among the government's stated priorities.