



Samaras and Tsipras clash in rare Parliamentary exchange

A parliamentary debate about the agricultural sector in Greece provided a rare opportunity Tuesday for Prime Minister Antonis Samaras and SYRIZA leader Alexis Tsipras to engage in a fierce verbal exchange.

Despite the debate's topic, Samaras and Tsipras referred to a range of subjects that included the fiscal adjustment program, investments, the role of the police and Samaras's habit of avoiding prime minister's question time in Parliament.

After Tsipras's criticism, Samaras defended his rare appearances in the House by saying that he works 18 hours a day, seven days a week. The SYRIZA leader slammed the coalition's austerity program and gave the example of the

Bulgarian government resigning amid protests against cuts and rising electricity prices.

Tsipras came under attack from PASOK leader Evangelos Venizelos, who accused SYRIZA of not "telling the Greek people what it wants." Tsipras rejected claims it was driving investors away from Greece and accused the government of doing just that. He gave the example of Germany company Deutsche Aeolia, which he said wants to invest in renewable energy but has not been granted the relevant permits.

Venizelos questioned Tsipras's motives for referring to this example. "How acceptable is it in institutional terms for a party leader to talk about a specific investor?" he said.

Greek man charged in NY Dali theft pleads guilty

A Greek man has admitted to stealing a Salvador Dali painting from a New York City gallery, only to return it in the mail. Phivos Istavrioglou pleaded guilty on Tuesday following his arrest in the theft of a work titled «Cartel de Don Juan Tenorio.»

Prosecutors say the fashion industry publicist walked into the Manhattan gallery in June, put the painting valued at about \$150,000 in a shopping bag and walked

out. He anonymously mailed the piece back to the United States from Greece after seeing news coverage of the theft. Under the plea deal, Istavrioglou avoids additional jail time if he remains incarcerated until his formal sentencing on March 12.

He also must pay more than \$9,000 in restitution. His lawyer said it was a stupid thing to do.

EU to back Greek exclusive economic zone, says Greek MEP

While the declaration of an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) by Greece would lead to friction with Turkey, the European Union is expected to throw its support behind the member-state, said Niki Tzavella, a member of the European Parliament and Rapporteur of the European Parliament's Energy Roadmap to 2050.

Speaking on the issue of the European energy roadmap for southeastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean on Tuesday, the second day of the Athens Energy Forum co-hosted by Kathimerini and the International

Herald Tribune, Tzavella noted that the European Parliament was expected to reach a decision backing member-states wishing to declare exclusive economic zones. While Greek hydrocarbon reserves were 'national,' the country's borders were European, she added.

Also speaking at the conference, SYRIZA representative Thanassis Petrakos noted that the main opposition party would consider supporting the three-party coalition government with regard to energy issues, provided that the country's energy companies remained under state control.



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