Azerbaijan’s Over $1 Billion Budget Will Not Do Good To The Country

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/PanARMENIAN.Net/ "Two significant trends have recently emerged in the South Caucasus. First, a serious increase in defense spending, which threatens to impact or even impede the course of economic reform and social sector spending in each country. Second, a profound shift in the regional balance of power," said Richard Giragosian, an expert of the Jane's Information Group (Washington) analytical center.

"Azerbaijan has increased its defense budget to over $1 billion. But given the extent of corruption within the country, there is doubt that whether the higher defense budget will actually be used to invest in developing a modern and more capable of armed forces, or used for acquiring military hardware and weapons or for funding military training," he said.

As to Georgia, Mr Giragosian said, "While Georgia's increased defense spending is linked to the country's strategic priority of closer integration into Western security institutions, reflected by the recent deepening of its ties with NATO, there are concerns over a newly assertive and increasingly confrontational Georgian policy toward its unresolved conflicts."

"Armenia has the strongest regional army against Azerbaijan's 72 000 men in uniform. Armenia's military prowess is generally identified as a result of discipline, morale and combat training. Georgia has the smallest force in the region numbering only about 17 500 active duty personnel," he said.

"Against the backdrop of these two trends, the real imperatives for regional security and stability are, nevertheless, internal in nature and depend on institutional legitimacy, the rule of law and good governance, and on local economic and politics much more than grand geopolitics," he concluded