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ARMENIAN CHURCH HEAD TO SHUN STATE TV FOR NEW YEAR ADDRESS

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Catholicos Garegin II's New Years Eve address to the nation will not be made available to Armenian Public Television because the government-controlled broadcaster has again refused to air it right before Prime Minister Nikol Pashinians message, the Armenian Apostolic Church said on Thursday.

The annual addresses by Garegin and his two predecessors, followed by similar speeches delivered by the incumbent president or prime minister of the republic, had been aired shortly before midnight on December 31 ever since 1990. Public Television broke with this post-Soviet tradition on December 31, 2023 amid Pashinians heightened tensions with the supreme head of the church. The church's Echmiadzin-based Mother See rejected its last-minute offer to air the pontifical message during an earlier news program.

The press office of the Mother See said the television management decided to schedule the message for 9:55 p.m. local time without consulting with it.

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