

Troika's Vardanyan Co-Funds 'World's Longest' Cable Car

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TATEV, Armenia — Armenia on Saturday opened a \$45-million aerial tramway that it claims is the world's longest and that was co-financed by Troika Dialog chairman and CEO Ruben Vardanyan.

The tramway across the Vorotan River gorge in the country's south spans 5.7 kilometers, Armenian officials said, longer than the rival 4.5-kilometer Sandia Peak Tramway at the eastern edge of Albuquerque, New Mexico, known as the world's longest passenger tramway.

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan and other officials attended a ceremony opening the tramway, which links the highway from Armenia's capital, Yerevan, with the 9th-century Tatev Monastery, a UNESCO World Heritage candidate and one of Armenia's oldest and most prominent monasteries.

The line, named Wings of Tatev, took nearly a year and \$45 million to build. At least \$28 million was donated by Vardanyan, a prominent Moscow-based businessman who was born in Armenia.

Although Armenian authorities said they would apply to Guinness World Records to officially confirm that the tramway is the world's longest, they say it was primarily built for practical use.

"By building this road, we did not mean to take anyone by surprise," said Sargsyan, who earlier took an 11-minute ride on the tramway.

The link has been designed to help local residents and boost the area's tourism potential, he said.

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