

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Night of Museums visitors at the National Museum in Budapest

UPCOMING EVENTS

Plenary session of parliament

FM addresses AVL Hungary groundbreaking ceremony in C Hungary

Government, farm company Master Good sign export partnership agreement

TOP STORY

HUNGARY REJECTS WEBER, TIMMERMANS FOR EU TOP

Hungary does not support Manfred Weber or Frans Timmermans, the lead candidates of the EPP and the European Socialists, for top EU positions because they do not meet the expectations of the Hungarian people, the foreign minister has said.

Péter Szijjártó said in a radio interview that Hungary will only support candidates who have respect for European nations, take up the cause of protecting Christian culture and stand for stopping migration rather than supporting it. Central Europe has become Europe's engine of growth with its national economies growing at a rate twice higher than that of the bloc's average, he said. "And behind the economic and security policy decisions of these countries there is rationale," Szijjártó said. All this gives Hungary a mandate to support the position that out of the top four EU positions, one at least should be filled by a leading politician representing central Europe, he added. Hungary already called into question the Spitzenkandidat system when it was introduced, Szijjártó said, adding that "now many in the EU are of the opinion that it should be scrapped altogether". "The Visegrad Four [the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia] have found several allies on the matter," the minister said, calling the grouping "the strongest and most effective cooperation within the EU".

Hungary Matters is an English-language newsletter produced and distributed by the Media Service Support and Asset Management Fund (MTVA) with content provided by Duna Media Service Provider exercises copyright over all content. No part of this publication may be copied, reproduced, redistributed or transmitted without prior written permission from the publisher, with the exception of copies made by individuals for private use, educational purposes or scholarly research, provided that such transmissions do not exceed the extent justified by the purpose and are not aimed at financial gain, even indirectly, and the source name are indicated at all times.

All rights reserved. Enquiries should be made to the English Help Desk at +361 441 9340
For MTI's real time coverage please visit <http://english.mti.hu>, <http://econews.hu>



SZIJJÁRTÓ: LONG-TERM CLIMATE GOALS NEED WELL-PREPARED PROJECTS, FUNDING

It would be irresponsible to commit to climate goals for the long term without clearly defining the development projects and funding required for their implementation, the foreign minister said. Hungary supports efforts to fight climate change and will fulfil its international environment protection obligations, but will stress the need to devise an EU-level framework before the adoption of climate goals for 2050, Péter Szijjártó told MTI.

He noted the International Energy Agency cautioning against the phasing out of nuclear power plants which the authority said could fully thwart climate protection efforts. Szijjártó said Hungary rejects politically or otherwise motivated “negative discrimination” against the use of nuclear energy. Hungary’s per capita carbon emission is 40% lower than that of Germany, a champion in the fight against climate change, the minister said. In addition, Hungary aims to generate by 2030 up to 90% of its domestic energy using nuclear and solar plants which emit no greenhouse gases, he said.

VARGA: HUF 2 BN AWARDED FOR NEW CRECHE PROJECTS

The government has awarded close to 2 billion forints (EUR 6.2m) in

central funding for creche capacity development projects to be implemented by an additional 20 localities, the finance minister said. The allocation has been made under the government’s family support programme, Mihály Varga told MTI. Last year, 14 localities received 1.3 billion forints for creche projects, he said. Since the scheme’s launch last year, a total of 3.2 billion forints has been awarded to projects that will create over 600 creche places in the country, he said.

BUDAPEST MAYOR UNVEILS INFRASTRUCTURE PLANS

A refurbishment of Budapest’s iconic Chain Bridge with the two squares it spans over the Danube and the nearby tunnel under Buda Castle will get under way in late October, the mayor of Budapest said. An at least six-month refurbishment of downtown Blaha Lujza Square will also begin this year with an upgrade of transport junction Széna Square on the Buda side planned to start in 2020, István Tarlós told a press conference. Other projects include upgrading the speedway to the International Liszt Ferenc airport, reducing noise levels around the airport, constructing a bridge at Aquincum in the north and providing further support for the homeless, he said. Commenting on the opposition’s ongoing preselection process of a candidate to challenge him in the autumn municipal elections, Tarlós, a

candidate of ruling Fidesz, said that it was nothing else but “a propaganda campaign”. The opposition parties would not need the preselection, had they had a charismatic candidate they could trust, or ones who could really come close to challenge me, the incumbent mayor said.

LMP SLAMS GOVT ON CLIMATE NEUTRALITY VETO

Green opposition LMP said that the Hungarian government’s argument that vetoing the European Union’s 2050 targets for climate neutrality was necessary to protect low Hungarian utility prices was “incorrect”. Péter Ungár, a lawmaker of the party, told a press conference on Sunday that Prime Minister Viktor Orbán had not explained why Hungary, along with Poland and the Czech Republic, had vetoed the EU agreement on Thursday. In a radio interview on Friday, Orbán said Hungary was committed to addressing climate change alongside other countries. But in order to commit to the 2050 targets, there would have to be signs of the money being made available, he said.

Ungár said “real” utility cost cuts would constitute installing solar panels on all homes, using the money allocated for the upgrade of the Paks nuclear power plant to building insulation, and raising funding for e-mobility. The government has done nothing to refresh the ageing bus fleets and has been idle on the issues

of plastic and antibiotics pollution, he added. These issues have direct bearing on citizens' health, he said. Climate change is an imminent threat and finding a solution is a matter of life and death, he said.

KARÁCSONY ANNOUNCES 'ANIMAL PROTECTION CHARTER'

Gergely Karácsony, the Budapest mayoral candidate of the Socialist-Párbeszéd party alliance, pledged to create an "Animal Protection Charter" to help the peaceful coexistence of men and domestic animals. The charter promotes the funding of new, modern animal shelters and action against illegal breeding, Karácsony said. It also calls for expanding a sterilisation programme implemented in Budapest's 14th district, where Karácsony is currently mayor, and turning Budapest a "bee-friendly city", he added. Among its long-term goals, the charter lists environment friendly mosquito spraying and securing living space for birds and bats in the city, he said. Ágnes Kunhalmi, the head of the Socialist party's board, told the same press conference that if Karácsony was elected mayor, the Socialists would propose that the city set up an ombudsman for animal protection issues. The local authority should open tenders for sterilisation and for electronic chipping of pets, she said. Gergely Perédi, head of an animal rescue organisation, noted that 90% of animal protection tasks are currently

undertaken by civil organisations. They would welcome an effective cooperation with local authorities, he said.

NO OPPOSITION CANDIDATE COULD DEFEAT INCUMBENT BUDAPEST MAYOR - NÉZŐPONT

None of the opposition candidates could defeat the incumbent mayor of Budapest, István Tarlós of ruling Fidesz, if the municipal elections were held this weekend, a poll released by Nézőpont Institute on Saturday showed. Tarlós had the support of 71% of Budapest respondents, according to the poll Nézőpont conducted this month for daily Magyar Nemzet. If challenged by Gergely Karácsony, the joint Socialist-Párbeszéd candidate, Tarlós would win the ballot 50:36. Should Olga Kálmán, a television personality backed by the Democratic Coalition, come out as a winner of the opposition's ongoing preselection process for fielding a candidate against Tarlós in the autumn municipal elections, the incumbent mayor would defeat her 48:38. Tarlós, serving as mayor since 2010, would defeat Momentum Movement's Gábor Kerpel-Fronius 54:22 and independent Róbert Puzsér 55:18, the poll showed. According to the poll, 62% of Budapest respondents see Tarlós fit to serve as mayor, as against 35% saying the same about Karácsony and 31% holding this view about Kálmán. Nézőpont

conducted the poll by asking 1,000 voting age adults by phone between June 14 and 19.

CZECH REPUBLIC, HUNGARY DEFENCE MINISTERS IN COOPERATION TALKS

The defence ministers of Hungary and the Czech Republic met in Budapest on Friday to discuss cooperation between the two countries' armed forces.

Tibor Benkő said military capability development and the general security environment were also topics of discussion. The need for security in Europe is intensifying, and Visegrad Group cooperation would address one aspect of this need, he added. They agreed that both countries have the same views on how changes have taken place in Europe in respect of challenges, risks and threats, as well as the general public's sense of security. The officials discussed two threats -- originating from the East and South -- identified by NATO. Hungary wants central Europe to put a greater premium on security, Benkő said.

He said talks also covered two Hungarian components, namely the Central European Division and the regional special operations forces. Benkő said the two countries see eye to eye when it comes to development of their armed forces and agree on which areas of forces development needed to be focused on. He noted Hungary has purchased

licences from the Czech Republic to assemble weapons as well as training equipment. In addition, the ministers agreed on joint training and exercises. They discussed Hungary's Copsec 2019 exercises, focusing on the protection of external borders, which 15 countries have indicated they will join.

Lubomír Metnar said cooperation on security was of vital importance given the security situation in the region. He emphasised the importance of cooperation between NATO, the European Union and the Visegrad Group countries, adding that one of the best aspects of V4 cooperation was the V4-EU battle group.

He said Hungary had similar thinking regarding V4 cooperation and EU structured defence cooperation within PESCO, the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation.

THYSSENKRUPP BUILDING HUF 17.4 BN CAMSHAFT PLANT IN S HUNGARY

Germany's Thyssenkrupp is building a 17.4 billion forint (EUR 53m) camshaft plant in Pécs, in south Hungary,

the foreign minister announced in Budapest on Friday. The government is supporting the investment, which will create 200 jobs, with a 5.57 billion forint grant, Péter Szijjártó told a press conference. Marc de Bastos Eckstein, Thyssenkrupp's executive director, said the Pécs plant will be the company's fifth base in Hungary. The construction will get under way in a greenfield investment already this year and the production is slated to start mid next year.

GOVT OFFICIAL: MALAYSIA TAKING AFTER HUNGARY WITH LEGAL REFORMS

Malaysia is carrying out a comprehensive reform of its legal system similar to the changes Hungary has implemented since 2010, a Hungarian official has said. Much like the Hungarian reforms, the Malaysian government's measures are also highly popular, the state secretary said, summing up his visit to Kuala Lumpur.

Balázs Orbán, parliamentary and strategic state secretary of the Prime

Minister's Office, paid a three-day visit to the Southeast Asian country to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Hungarian-Malaysian diplomatic ties. Speaking to MTI by phone, Orbán said bilateral ties were "excellent" while trade relations were continuously expanding. Malaysia's political system is stable and the country has shown impressive levels of economic growth, becoming one of the most influential countries in the region, he added.

"We believe a politically and economically stable Malaysia can become a bridgehead for Hungarian companies looking to invest ... and gain market position in Southeast Asia," he said. Orbán said an ongoing week-long technological forum in Malaysia would help Hungarian firms advance their business ties there. During his visit, Orbán discussed bilateral ties with the minister for legal affairs at the Malaysian PM's office. The two countries also opened the second Hungarian film festival in Kuala Lumpur, which Orbán called an "extraordinary tool of soft diplomacy".