

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTVA/Tamas Soki

Light painting on the erstwhile Mosque of Pasha Qasim, now a Catholic cathedral, in Pécs

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Extraordinary session of EU heads of state and government on top EU posts**

**Orbán addresses disaster management and law enforcement officers' oath-taking ceremony**

**LMP presser on home care allowance**

**VéNégy art festival of Visegrad countries starts**

**Annual cross-Balaton swim**

## TOP STORY

### ÁDER: HUNGARY TO MEET 2030 CLIMATE GOALS

Hungary will honour its climate protection commitments for 2030, President János Áder said, adding that 90% of Hungary's power production could become CO<sub>2</sub>-free by 2030.

At an interview to public radio, Áder said those achievements would be made possible by the completion of the upgrade of the Paks nuclear plant and by further increasing solar energy production. Coal-fuelled power plants will also need to be shut down in part or in full by 2030, or they will need to be converted to other fuels such as natural gas, he added.

Citing European Union figures, Áder said that Hungary had reduced its carbon-dioxide emissions by 31.9% between 1990-2017. Climate protection requires "starting actual work at last" rather than "ceremonious declarations", Áder said and added that further delays could make the climate situation much worse in 5-10 years. He warned that the world's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have increased rather than the opposite since the Paris Climate Agreement was signed. To the question whether large companies could be convinced to contribute to climate protection, Áder said that they could either be made interested in doing so, or could be forced through legislation.

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## **ANOTHER VICTIM OF HABLEÁNY DISASTER IDENTIFIED**

A body found in the River Danube near Csepel Island in southern Budapest last Saturday has been identified as that of a victim of the sightseeing boat Hableány, the Budapest police headquarters said on police.hu. The Hableány collided with cruise ship Viking Sigyn and sank in the River Danube near Margit Bridge on May 29. It had 33 South Korean tourists on board and a crew of two Hungarians. Seven tourists were rescued from the water after the collision. A search continues along the river downstream from the city to recover the bodies of two South Korean tourists still missing.

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## **SZIJJÁRTÓ SLAMS EU FOR DRAGGING HEELS ON ENLARGEMENT**

Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said that the European Union's decision to slow down the bloc's enlargement in the Western Balkans by opening only one new accession chapter with Serbia was "risky and especially harmful".

Speaking to MTI in Brussels, Szijjártó insisted that Serbia was ready for as many as five chapters to be opened and there were no legal obstacles to opening all chapters. "Only the political will is missing." The minister said enlargement was the best way

to tackle the region's tensions. "We in the neighbourhood fully appreciate the importance of peace and calm in the region," he said.

Migration pressure is substantial in the region, and keeping the Western Balkan route closed is a crucial goal, he said, adding that Serbia had an important role to play accordingly. "Serbia's speedy accession is of strategic importance, a matter of national security to Hungary," he said. "The European Commission's enlargement policy has failed; we can only hope that the next establishment will be pro-enlargement," he said. Serbia launched membership negotiations with the EU in January 2014. So far, 17 of 35 chapters have been opened and two temporarily closed.

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## **ÁDER PROPOSES ÁKOS KOZMA FOR OMBUDSMAN**

President János Áder is proposing Ákos Kozma, the deputy head of the Independent Police Complaints Board, as the next ombudsman for basic human rights. The ombudsman is elected by a two-thirds vote in parliament for a six-year term and may be reelected once. The current ombudsman, law professor László Székely, has held the position since September 2013. Kozma is an expert in constitutional law and has held government positions during the first Orbán government between 1998 and 2002.

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## **NACSA PROTESTS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL 'CAMPAIGN FOR AHMED H'**

The parliamentary spokesman of the co-ruling Christian Democrats voiced indignation at press reports suggesting that Amnesty International, "a part of the Soros network", was preparing to "launch a global campaign for Ahmed H", a Syrian man earlier sentenced in Hungary for his participation in a migrant riot at Hungary's southern border in 2015. Lőrinc Nacsa insisted that "Soros's organisations not only help migrants enter but continue supporting them even if they commit serious crimes" and added that Ahmed H, who is currently awaiting expulsion from Hungary, is "simply a terrorist" who "still poses a risk to Hungarians' security".

Answering a question, Nacsa said that MEPs of the ruling parties had declined to support a Council of Europe (CoE) decision to launch a probe into the murder of Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia, because "the case would be used to attack Malta, an EU member, and question its rule of law". The CoE decided on Wednesday to launch an investigation in the 2017 car bombing which killed Caruana Galizia, who had been looking into graft associated with the Maltese government.

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## **KÖVÉR: V4 SOLUTION FOR EUROPE, NOT PROBLEM**

The Visegrad Group represents a solution rather than a problem for the European Union, Hungarian Parliamentary Speaker László Kövér said in Poprad. Kövér attended a meeting of parliamentary chairmen of the Visegrad Group, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia in the northern Slovak town. Kövér said the Visegrad cooperation has become indispensable in EU politics. This was a result of long years of consistent efforts by all four governments and parliaments, he said. Hopefully, the Visegrad Group will also be successful in the debate around electing the new heads of EU institutions, Kövér said.

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## **GOVT OFFICIAL: AUSTRALIA MODEL TO HUNGARY FOR HANDLING ILLEGAL MIGRATION**

Hungary sees Australian measures to stem illegal migration and protect borders as an example, Balázs Orbán, a state secretary at the prime minister's office, told MTI by phone, after talks with Australian officials in Canberra and Sydney. Australia turns back all vessels approaching its waters illegally and houses illegal migrants in camps outside the country, Orbán noted. Thanks to these measures, illegal migration to

Australia practically ceased, and the authorities have eliminated gangs specialised in human smuggling, he said.

Orbán met former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, who implemented those regulations during his tenure between 2013 and 2015, in Canberra. In Sydney, Orbán met government officials, politicians and researchers. He held a lecture at the University of New South Wales, and met representatives of the local Hungarian community.

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## **SOCIALIST BOARD SUSPENDS SZANYI'S MEMBERSHIP**

The national board of the opposition Socialists has suspended the memberships of Tibor Szanyi, outgoing MEP of the party, and Zoltán Fekete, Socialist leader of Pest county, the party said. The board passed its unanimous decisions in the wake of "remarks and acts" by the two politicians in the opposition's preselection campaign before the upcoming mayoral election, which it said have harmed the party's reputation.

Szanyi's and Fekete's membership will be suspended until completion of a disciplinary procedure, the statement said. Szanyi has publicly criticised the party's leadership since the European Parliament election, in which he could not renew his mandate. A letter written by Fekete was published in the press in February,

in which he accused party leaders of sweeping financial irregularities under the carpet.

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## **HUNGARY GROSS WAGES CLIMB 9.0% IN APRIL**

The average gross monthly wage for full-time workers in Hungary rose by an annual 9.0 to 371,131 forints (EUR 1,150) in April, the Central Statistical Office (KSH) said. Net wages grew at the same pace, reaching 246,802 forints.

Calculating with twelve-month CPI of 3.9% in April, real wages were up by 4.9%. Excluding the 101,900 Hungarians in fostered work programmes, the average gross wage rose by 7.9% to 381,749 forints, while net wages grew at the same rate to 253,863 forints. Also excluding fostered workers, the average gross wage in the business sector, which includes state-owned companies, rose by 10.2% to 390,243 forints. The average wage in the public sector increased by 0.8% to 364,073 forints. Full-time fostered workers earned gross 82,506 forints in April, 0.4% less than a year earlier.

The data sources show that in January-April average gross monthly wage was highest in the finance and insurance sector, at 671,600 forints, and lowest in social health care services, at 234,000 forints. In January-April, gross wages rose by an annual 10.4% to 356,900 forints and were up by 9.4% without fostered workers at 367,400 forints. Excluding fostered workers, business sector gross wages rose by 11.3% and public sector wages rose

by 4.1% in the period. Men employed full-time earned monthly gross 391,400 forints on average during the period, while women earned 322,900 forints. The rates rose by 11.3% and 9.2%, respectively, on an annual basis.

Analyst Péter Virovác of ING Bank said the April single digit wage growth came as somewhat of a surprise, as it was last seen in January 2017. The slower pace of wage increases was certainly tied to lower wage increases in the government sector. Wages in the private sector still kept growing at a double digit rate, with the pace above average in the construction and manufacturing sectors and below average in some segments of the services sector. In 2019 wage growth could average around 10% in the economy as a whole. Analyst András Horváth of Takarékbank said wages could grow by a little more than 10% this year and real wage growth could be 6.5% with chances of it being higher. Wage growth in April was driven by a shortage of skilled labour and the increase of minimum wages for said skilled workers.

### **HUNGARY PPI UP 2.7% YR/YR IN MAY**

Industrial producer prices rose by 2.7% in May from the same month a year earlier, the Central Statistical Office (KSH) said. Prices for domestic sales

were up by 5.4% while export prices rose by 1.4%. In a month-on-month comparison, industrial producer prices were up by 0.5% as domestic prices were up by 0.8 and export prices increased by 0.4%. KSH said price increases were driven by growing wages, the exchange rate change of the forint and changes in the international price of oil. In January-May industrial producer prices rose by an annual 3.2% compared to the same period last year as domestic prices climbed 5.7% and export prices were up by 2.0%.

### **BUDAPEST AIRPORT ANNOUNCES MANAGEMENT RESHUFFLE**

Liszt Ferenc International operator Budapest Airport said it is replacing its development and communications directors from July 1. René Droese, in charge of property management and cargo at Budapest Airport, will take over from Stephan Schattney as business development director, adding to his tasks at the company. Droese has worked at Budapest Airport for more than a decade and has over 25 years of experience in property and airport development.

Budapest Airport is replacing communications director Mihály Hardy and government communications director Gábor Szarvas with the

journalist and communications consultant Katalin Valentinyi.

A week earlier, a government official gave a dressing-down to Budapest Airport's management for failing to complete a scheduled runway maintenance project on time. Due to the delay, traffic at the airport was shut down for about an hour and a half after a piece of concrete came loose on its other runway. Speaking to daily Magyar Nemzet, Domonkos Schneller, deputy state secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, called the management "amateurish" and said that comments on the airport shutdown online and on social media had hurt the image of Budapest and Hungary.

### **ORBÁN ATTENDS CONCERT IN SUBOTICA SYNAGOGUE**

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán attended a concert in the synagogue of Subotica (Szabadka), Serbia, marking the first anniversary of the reconstruction of the historic building. Soprano Erika Miklósa, fifteen-year old pianist Soma Balázs-Piri and the Szeged Symphonic Orchestra performed at the concert in the Serbian town near the Hungarian border, local Pannon TV said. The synagogue's reconstruction was supported by a grant from the Hungarian government.