

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini with Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó in Trieste

UPCOMING EVENTS

Presser on EU-funded developments in national parks

Budapest Pride march

Balaton Sound festival

Roma Press Centre's 1st Hungarian Picnic

TOP STORY

SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARY, ITALY STRATEGIC ALLIES

Hungary and Italy are strategic allies because they share a vision for a European Union of strong nation states that insist on preserving their national identity, history and religious heritage, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in Trieste.

At a joint press conference after talks with Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini, Szijjártó said they both wanted to see an EU that respected nation states and Brussels leaders who created strong external borders without attacking states that protect these borders. Italy should not be allowed to be flooded by migrants, he added. Szijjártó said it was intolerable that attacks had been launched against countries that protect their borders and citizens. EU bureaucrats, he said, supported illegal migrants and took the side of those who promote restricting the rights of member states. He said Salvini deserved praise for protecting Italy's borders and citizens. The Italian interior minister has been the first western politician to introduce regulations aiming to protect maritime borders, he said, adding that it was "disgraceful" that he was under attack for doing so. Szijjártó noted that Hungary had also been under attack when it spent 1 billion euros to secure borders against illegal migrants, which, he added, also protected Schengen and external EU borders.

SIX OPPOSITION PARTIES TO FIELD JOINT CANDIDATES IN BUDAPEST ELECTION

The opposition Socialist, Párbeszéd, DK, Jobbik, LMP and Momentum parties have agreed to field joint candidates in all 23 districts of Budapest for the upcoming municipal elections, Gergely Karácsony, Budapest mayor candidate of the Socialist-Párbeszéd alliance, told a press conference. Signatories to the agreement will support a single candidate in each district to challenge the nominee of ruling Fidesz, Karácsony told a press conference. They have "learnt the lesson that if we are divided Fidesz always wins", he said, adding that they have "left grievances behind and come together in an effort to make Budapest a freer, fairer and greener city again". Voters in the opposition primary have demonstrated that they want to see unity between the opposition parties and their cooperative effort will "meet the desire of voters and reinstate Budapest to its residents," Karácsony said. The cooperating parties will need to launch a fitting campaign to mobilise voters, he said.

Erzsébet Gy. Németh, municipal representative of the Democratic Coalition (DK), said that "Budapest deserves more than it has had in the past nine years" and expressed support for the cooperation as well as for Karácsony's candidacy for Budapest

mayor. Momentum board member Miklós Hajnal said that the agreement required "humility and sacrifice" from participants, adding that hopefully their efforts would "result in a team aiming to expose all graft cases". Nationalist Jobbik's Budapest leader János Bencsik said his party supported cooperation because "Jobbik has opted for a multiparty system rather than a single-party regime now being restored." He said that the dividing line was not between right and left but between "supporters and servants of autocracy" and "those committed to the rule of law and democracy". Green LMP executive Máté Kanász-Nagy said his party had joined the cooperation to facilitate a green programme for the city. It would involve protecting and increasing green areas, resolving issues along the River Danube in northern Budapest, reducing traffic and improving public transport, he said.

HUNGARY INKS DEAL ON TRIESTE PORT

The state of Hungary signed an agreement on establishing a port and logistics base in Trieste to give Hungarian companies easier access to export markets. Hungary has purchased a 32-hectare plot with 300m of seafront for 31 million euros in the framework of a 60-year concession agreement, Péter Szijjártó, the foreign affairs and trade minister, said at a joint press conference with Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini. Investments

worth close to an additional 100 million euros will be carried out at the site, he added. Traffic passing through the port is expected to reach about 2 million tonnes a year, or 78,000 containers.

Szijjártó called the agreement "one of the most important deals in recent years", saying it was a strategically important one for Hungarian firms and the country. The minister said the deal would open a new chapter in Hungarian-Italian relations, adding that cooperation between the two countries "has never been this encouraging". Szijjártó noted that Italy was Hungary's fifth largest trading partner and the fifth most important investor in the country. He noted that there are some 700 Italian firms doing business in Hungary employing over 15,000 people.

Salvini said he and Szijjártó had discussed cooperation in the areas of energy, farming and food production. The sides also touched on partnering on big infrastructure projects, he added.

Szijjártó initially announced the government's plans to set up a port in Trieste in June.

CHIEF PROSECUTOR SEEKS LIFTING DEMETER'S IMMUNITY

Chief Prosecutor Péter Polt has requested that parliament lift the immunity of MP Márta Demeter, who is believed to have disclosed confidential military information on social media. According to a statement from Polt's

office, Demeter in September last year published "information concerning the operations of the Hungarian Military" and claimed that the military had "illegally provided transportation to a family member of the prime minister". Demeter's act "could be termed as abuse of office", the statement said.

On October 16 last year Demeter, at the time vice-chair of parliament's defence and law enforcement committee delegated by opposition LMP, asked the interior and defence ministers about allegations that a military aircraft had brought one of Viktor Orbán's daughters from Cyprus to Hungary. All parties involved denied the allegations, and it was established that the family of an officer also called Orbán had travelled on the Airbus in question, the statement said.

Commenting on the prosecutor's move, the LMP group said Demeter had learned of Polt's request from the press and she was ready for the procedure. During the past few months, she has won "a series of court cases demanding corrections to be published by media outlets that had incorrectly accused her of violation of secrecy and publishing classified information." "In the same vein, she is willing to undergo any procedure that proves her right in other cases," the statement said.

ORBÁN SENDS CONDOLENCES TO TAMÁS UNGVARI'S FAMILY

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has sent a letter of condolences to the family

of author, translator and literary historian Tamás Ungvári, the prime minister's press chief told MTI. In his letter, Orbán called the recently deceased author "a courageous and committed representative of Hungary's bourgeois intelligentsia, an internationally acclaimed chronicler of Hungarian and global cultural history," Bertalan Havasi said. "We are grateful for Ungvári's contribution to Hungary's culture through his translations, literary and scientific work... It is my conviction that his books will be the watchfires against oblivion for many people." Ungvári died on June 29, at age 88.

INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT CLIMBS 8.7% IN MAY

Industrial output in Hungary rose by an annual 8.7% in May according to unadjusted data, the Central Statistical Office (KSH) said in a first reading of data. Industrial output rose by 6.1% according to workday-adjusted data, KSH added. In a month-on-month comparison, industrial output was up by a seasonally and working day-adjusted 1.4%.

Growth in industrial production was broad-based in May. The pace of output growth accelerated in vehicle manufacturing. Output in the computer, electronics and optical products segment and in the food, drink and tobacco products segment grew, but in both cases the pace was below the industrial average, KSH added.

In the first five months of the year, industrial output was up 6.7% from a year earlier.

Analyst Péter Virovác of ING Bank said May industrial output growth was above expectations. For the year output could grow by 6% as maintaining the 6.7% growth seen in the first five months is a significant challenge in the face of a weak external economic environment. K&H Bank chief analyst Dávid Németh said based on current prospects industrial output could grow by 5% in 2019. During the rest of the year new production capacity will come online because of earlier investments but this could be offset by a weaker European economy. Orsolya Nyeste of Erste Bank said industrial output is proving to be resilient taking into account a slowdown in Europe and deteriorating business confidence. In the short term industry could continue to perform well but in the long run it could be affected by the slowdown in Germany.

BIG FAMILIES COULD BUY CLOSE TO 18,000 CARS WITH GOVT SUBSIDIES

Hungarians with big families could use government subsidies available until the end of 2022 to buy almost 18,000 cars, the Hungarian Leasing Association told MTI. The association said 35%-40% of those families could opt to lease their vehicles. Fully 175,000 families are eligible for the subsidies, and around 2% of Hungarian households buy a new vehicle each year, but the association expects as many as 10% of those eligible to avail of the support by the end of 2022.

The government is making 2.5 million forints available to families with three or more children for the purchase of vehicles that can seat at least seven passengers until the end of 2022. The measure is part of a package of family support measures unveiled by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán early in the year to manage Hungary's depopulation problem. The subsidies were launched on July 1. By noon on Thursday, July 4, more than 2,000 families had applied for the grants, state secretary for family and youth affairs Katalin Novák told MTI.

EC: HUNGARY SIGNS TWO DIGITAL COOPERATION INITIATIVES

Hungary has signed declarations on two European initiatives concerning digital cooperation, the European Commission said. Hungary is the 26th country to sign the Declaration of Cooperation on advancing the digitalisation of cultural heritage, the EC said. The scheme aims to bring Europe's rich cultural heritage to one platform using the latest digital technology. It also aims to allow

broader access to heritage data and integrate it with systems supporting cooperation in education and tourism, the statement said. The programme will also be instrumental in tackling risks posed to cultural heritage by natural disasters, mass tourism and environmental pollution.

The other initiative signed by Hungary is aimed at introducing and promoting the development of quantum communication infrastructure. It has been joined by seven other EU member states so far.

HUNGARIAN, JAPANESE GOVT OFFICIALS DISCUSS PORK EXPORTS

Hungarian pork exports were the focus of talks between Hungarian and Japanese officials in Budapest on Friday. The Hungarian foreign ministry's commissioner for coordination and development of external markets pressed for the application of regionalisation – the practice of banning exports of animals only from regions in which they are affected by outbreaks, rather than whole countries – to pork, the same as poultry, at the

talks with the head of the Japanese farm ministry's Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau.

Hungary was the first country in the European Union to agree with Japan on adopting regionalisation, but only for poultry, the foreign ministry said in a statement. The ministry is in talks on regionalisation with China, Vietnam and South Korea, too. The success of the talks could translate into tens of billions of forints of new exports orders for Hungarian companies.

MÓRAHALOM MUNI COUNCIL INAUGURATES HUF 441 M WORKERS' HOSTEL

Local and central government officials inaugurated a 441 million forint (EUR 1.36m) workers' hostel in Mórahalom, south-western Hungary. Construction of the 94-bed hostel was supported by a 263 million forint government grant. Finance Minister Mihály Varga said at the ceremony that the government is supporting labour mobility in a number of ways as the demand for skilled workers grows. Bauszer was the general contractor for the hostel.