

PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTV/Ferenc Czékman

Kissing flash mob at Budapest Pride march

UPCOMING EVENTS

Parliament meets

Budapest Mayor István Tarlós launches road construction scheme

Presser on national bus strategy

TOP STORY

ROGÁN: EC NEEDS LEADER WHO RESPECTS CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

The European Commission needs a leader who respects countries in Central Europe, cabinet chief Antal Rogán said on public radio.

Rogán said on Kossuth Radio that voters had given the government a mandate to stop immigration, thus supporters of immigration could not be among those nominated for the European Union's top jobs.

He said the Socialists' candidate Frans Timmermans as well as the European People's Party Spitzenkandidat Manfred Weber were clearly supporters of immigration. Weber has insulted Hungary and Hungarians in his statements on a number of occasions, saying he did not want the votes of Hungarians. "Somebody who doesn't enjoy the support of the new member states in Central Europe cannot become the head of the European Commission. That is a new development," Rogán said. "The voice of Central Europe has now been heard." Rogán said central European countries want leaders who won't force upon them the will of other countries.

He said Viktor Orbán had asked Ursula von der Leyen on the phone whether, as the candidate for the position of EC president, she was prepared to give the appropriate degree of respect to Hungary and Central European nations. He added that von der Leyen promised she would.

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>



BUDAPEST PRIDE - PRIDE MARCH HELD IN BUDAPEST

The 24th Budapest Pride Festival wound up with a march that started from Kossuth Square, in front of the parliament building, on Saturday.

LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer) people and their allies marched to March 15th Square, on the Pest side of the Erzsébet Bridge.

Before the start of the march, organised by the Rainbow Mission Foundation, spokesperson Kama Peksa said LGBTQ people had had enough of being treated as second-class citizens by those in power.

She noted that, according to leaks, the government plans to amend the constitution in September to prohibit LGBTQ people from adopting.

Peksa stressed that LGBTQ people would not give up their fight, rather their solidarity would grow as pressure from the established powers increases.

The poet and writer Orsolya Karafiáth, who is the MC for this year's event, said it would be good if the country was at least as open as the crowd gathered in Kossuth Square, unafraid and standing up for dignity and diversity.

While the speakers addressed the crowd, marchers held a "kiss flash mob" to mark International Kissing Day.

On their way to March 15th Square, the marchers waved rainbow flags, sang songs and danced. After the march

ended, Peksa said this year's event was the most peaceful and unhindered one in recent years. She noted that the participants marched without cordons this year, and in spite of that there were no disruptions. Peksa added that she knew of just one instance of a counterdemonstrator entering the crowd of marchers, but that person was escorted out by the organisers.

MTI's correspondents at the event saw the flags and banners of the opposition Democratic Coalition (DK) and the Socialists (MSZP) as well as the Liberal Party among the marchers. The organisers also said the march was supported by Momentum, Párbeszéd and the satirical Two-tailed Dog party.

While the march was held, national radical activists organised a counterdemonstration in the city centre demanding a ban of Budapest Pride. At one point along the route of the Pride march, the counterdemonstrators were separated from the marchers by a cordon of about 30 metres. There police with dogs stood between the marchers and the counterdemonstrators.

A spokesman for the counterdemonstration, the lawyer Tamas Gaudi-Nagy, said protesting against a "midget minority" who want to get additional rights under the aegis of equal rights is "a fundamental right and a national duty".

László Toroczka, the head of the radical nationalist Mi Hazánk party, was present at the counterdemonstration.

Many of the counterdemonstrators wore T-shirts on which were written

"normal" and "hetero". Some also waved flags with the national colours as well as the red and white Árpád Stripes.

MORE THAN 2,500 BIG FAMILIES APPLY FOR CAR SUBSIDIES

More than 2,500 big families submitted applications for subsidies to buy cars in the first week the funding was made available, Katalin Novák, state secretary for family and youth affairs, said at a press conference on Saturday.

The government has earmarked 5 billion forints (EUR 15.5m) for the subsidies this year and 10 billion forints for next year, but Novák said those allocations could be raised if demand is strong. The government hopes the funding can support purchases of vehicles by at least 10,000 big families, she added.

Families with three or more children are eligible for up to 2.5 million forints for the purchase of vehicles that seat at least seven passengers under the scheme which launched on July 1. The subsidies are one element of a package of family support measures the government is rolling out to deal with the problem of depopulation.

JÁNOS KENDERNAY ELECTED LMP CO-CHAIR

Opposition green party LMP elected János Kendernay co-chairman at an extraordinary party congress.

The new co-chair and other members of the board elected by the congress were presented at a press conference. The congress was unable to elect a co-chairwoman because no candidates were nominated. The party must decide on filling the post within sixty days. Kendernay, whose background is in international relations, diplomacy and European affairs, has been an LMP board member since last year. He competed for the post of co-chairman with István Ferenczi, a local council representative of Budapest's district 19.

Máté Kanasz-Nagy will continue in the post of national board secretary.

The other members of the board are Mária Szendefy, Krisztina Fábíán, István Ferenczi, Ákos Németh, Gábor Hanák and Dániel Pitz.

Kendernay told the press conference that the new board had received a "strong mandate" to carry out internal restructuring, strengthen the green character of the party and support preparations for the local council elections this autumn. The party had to elect new officials because its entire board resigned after disappointing European parliamentary election results on May 26.

ANOTHER KOREAN SHIP COLLISION VICTIM IDENTIFIED

A body found in the River Danube near Makád, around 50km south of Budapest, has been identified as a victim of the sinking of the sightseeing

boat Hableány, the Budapest police headquarters said on Saturday.

The female body found in the river was reported by officers on foot patrol involved in the search for victims on Friday.

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 body of one South Korean tourist still missing.

The 24 divers involved in the rescue of the passengers of the Hableány pleasure boat and the operation to raise the wreck were recognised for their efforts by the Hungarian Divers Federation (MBSZ) at a ceremony in Budapest on Friday.

The 15 divers who had taken part in the rescue operations following the collision between the Hableány and the Viking Sigyn cruise ship were also presented the Fourth Star, the highest honour awarded to divers. MBSZ president Iván Nyíri praised the divers saying that they "rewrote the rules of diving". He added that having seen the efforts put forth by the Hungarian divers, the World Underwater Federation was preparing to make changes to the rules on diving.

Song Sun-geun, South Korea's defence attaché accredited to Budapest, thanked the Hungarian

divers for their efforts on behalf of the Korean people. He noted that South Korean military divers had also taken part in the rescue operations. Song said the Korean and Hungarian divers had bonded over the operation and learned to overcome the difficulties they encountered together.

Daily Magyar Nemzet reported on Saturday that a memorial for the two Hungarian victims of the collision would be held next Friday. The paper said, citing the organisers, that twelve boats have indicated so far that they would participate, but their number may grow. Members of the public who wish to participate will be asked to gather on Margit Bridge and throw flowers in the river after the boats blow their horns between 11.30am and 12 noon, the paper added.

OPPOSITION PARTIES, CIVIL ORGS ENDORSE 1 HUNGARY DECLARATION

Six opposition parties and more than 40 civil organisations have acceded to the 1 Hungary Declaration on curtailing hate and making civil life more thoughtful and amicable, the Roma Press Centre said in a statement issued on Sunday.

The signers of the declaration committed to publically distance themselves from hate speech, stand up against fear-mongering, and strive for the peaceful coexistence of social groups in the country as well as seek out possible problems and try to resolve them sensibly.

"History has taught us that every Hungarian and every person living

here depends on each other. 1 Hungary exists which belongs to all of us and in which we must together find solutions to our problems," the declaration says.

The Roma Press Centre, the Civil Foundation, the Autonomy Foundation and the National Democratic Institute organised the 1 Hungary Picnic at which more than 40 civil organisations and six opposition parties participated. Among those representing the parties were Sándor Rónai of Democratic Coalition (DK), Anett Bósz and Ádám Sermer of the Liberal Party, Erzsébet Schmuck of LMP, Olivio Kocsis-Cake of Párbeszéd, Ágnes Kunhalmi of the Socialists (MSZP) and András Fekete-Győr of Momentum.

The signers committed to reporting declarations of a radical nature in "appropriate forums" and expect the state to ensure unconditional equality before the law. The full text of the declaration can be read, in Hungarian at https://www.facebook.com/RomaSajtokozyRomaPressCenter/posts/2396329933738528?__tn__=K-R

IT MINISTER ATTENDS HUNGARY-SERBIA-CHINA WORKING GROUP ON BUDAPEST-BELGRADE RAILWAY

The upgrade of the Budapest-Belgrade railway line is already under way on the Serbian side and works in Hungary are being prepared, Innovation and Technology Minister László Palkovics said after a meeting of the Hungarian-Serbian-Chinese working

group coordinating the project. The Budapest-Belgrade railway line is being upgraded with Chinese financial and technical contributions, including a Chinese loan covering 85% of the expenses. The railway is part of the Chinese Belt and Road initiative.

At a joint press conference with Serbian Transport Minister Zorana Mihajlović after the meeting, Palkovics said the railway was going to become the flagship project of Sino-Hungarian cooperation but has also a cornerstone of cooperation among central European countries. One of the problems to be solved, he noted, was creating fast and efficient border control while adhering to Schengen standards. Mihajlović said the working group reviewed the tasks ahead to make sure the high-speed railway between Budapest and Belgrade is operational as soon as possible. The Serbian section is expected to be ready by 2022, she said. Mihajlović said that the project's possible expansion had also been discussed. In order for Chinese goods to reach western Europe from the Greek ports, the parties are mulling involving North Macedonia and Greece, she said. On the sidelines of the meeting, Palkovics also met Nenad Popović, his Serbian counterpart. They signed an agreement on cooperation between researchers, students and companies.

NBH JOINS ENERGY EFFICIENT MORTGAGES INITIATIVE

The National Bank of Hungary (NBH) on Friday said it has joined the Advisory Council of the Energy Efficient Mortgages

(EEM) Initiative. The initiative is aimed at delivering a mortgage financing mechanism incentivising borrowers to improve the energy efficiency of their properties or to acquire highly energy efficient properties. The central bank expects the scheme to help increase on average the disposable income for borrowers and potentially lead to lower credit risk in the banking sector and at the same time mitigate greenhouse gas emissions related to properties.

FARM MINISTER CALLS FOR MAINTAINING CAP FUNDING

István Nagy, the farm minister, called for keeping funding of the EU's common agricultural policy (CAP) at its current level in the next financial cycle between 2021 and 2027. CAP should be kept at the current level even if that means raising the contributions of individual countries, Nagy said at a meeting of central European agricultural chambers in Bábolna, northern Hungary. Nagy urged central European countries to stand up for funding that "ensures a decent living for farmers and quality food for citizens". Hungary expects the new CAP to have an "ambitious budget" and provide policy tools and simple, easy-to-implement regulations, Nagy said.

NÉMETH: HUNGARY TRUSTS IT CAN NORMALISE TIES WITH UKRAINE

Zsolt Németh, the head of parliament's foreign affairs committee, expressed

hope that recent changes in Ukraine will enable the restoration of Hungarian-Ukrainian ties. Addressing the 27th Transcarpathian Summer University in Synevyr'ska Poliana (Felsőszinevér) in western Ukraine, Németh said Hungary hoped that the outcome of Ukraine's recent presidential election meant that "the Poroshenko era has come to an end and with it so will the institutionalised, centrally organised anti-Hungarian measures". Hungary has high hopes for the future policies of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, Németh said. At present, he said, Hungary's job is to get the major world powers to see how Ukraine's education and language laws violate minority rights in the country. Hungary therefore will continue to block Ukraine's aspirations to join NATO and will continue to stand up for Transcarpathian Hungarians, he added.

Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Association (KMKSZ) leader and member of the Ukrainian parliament László Brenzovics said the situation in Ukraine would remain unchanged in the short run. However, he said the events of the last five years have shown that "a lot can be accomplished with faith and perseverance." Brenzovics said that in spite of the pressures faced by Transcarpathian Hungarians, the community had accomplished a lot during this time, mainly thanks to the support of the Hungarian government.

DEUTSCH: "GYURCSÁNY'S PEOPLE", OPPOSITION CONSPIRE AGAINST HUNGARY IN BRUSSELS

The Hungarian opposition has, "under the leadership of Gyurcsány's people", started to conspire against their own homeland and the will

of the Hungarian people in the European Parliament, Fidesz-KDNP MEP Tamás Deutsch said at a press conference in Balatonfüred, on Lake Balaton.

Deutsch said that MPs of the "pro-migration opposition" - the Democratic Coalition (DK), Momentum and the Socialists - had already tried to "torpedo" the election of Fidesz MP Lívía Járóka as an EP vice-president. He added that their attempt was a "complete failure" thanks to the resolute response of Fidesz-KDNP MEPs.

Deutsch said he had learnt that the Hungarian opposition, led by DK, were continuing their intrigue. They are doing everything possible to prevent Fidesz-KDNP MEPs from being elected to EP committee positions at inaugural meetings in Brussels next week, he added.