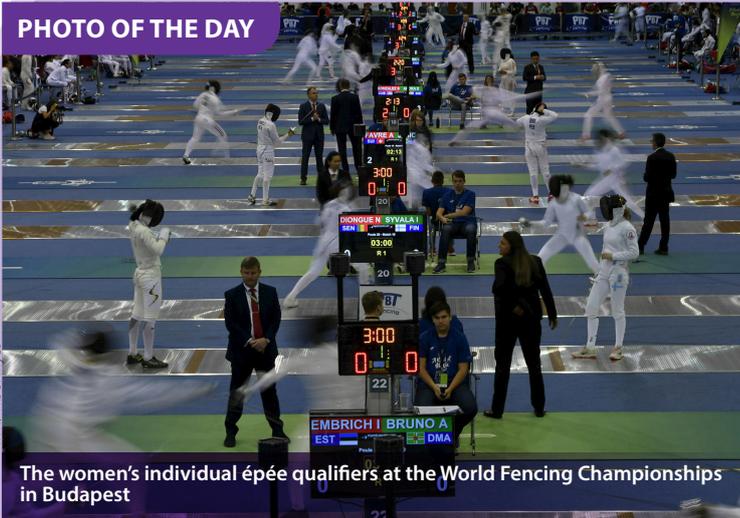


PHOTO OF THE DAY



The women's individual épée qualifiers at the World Fencing Championships in Budapest

UPCOMING EVENTS

Stats office releases May construction data

MEPs vote on new European Commission president

Rákóczi Association's camp for ethnic Hungarians opens

Summer camp for ethnic Hungarians opens in Gombaszög, Slovakia

TOP STORY

FM: BRUSSELS SIDING WITH PEOPLE SMUGGLERS

Hungary's foreign minister has accused Brussels of "openly siding with people smugglers", arguing that an "internationally organised" and politically-backed human smuggling operation was being carried out on the Mediterranean.

"Brussels and certain western member states of the European Union have revealed themselves," Péter Szijjártó told Hungarian reporters during a break in a meeting with his EU counterparts in Brussels. "Because while it has become clear that migration can be stopped not only on land but also on the Mediterranean Sea, they are continuously and openly encouraging human smuggling."

The minister said it had become clear that Brussels and certain western EU member states had an interest in having more and more migrants come to Europe. "The forces organising migration are on the offensive again," Szijjártó cautioned. He said Europe had two options as regards migration: it could either choose to "side with the people smugglers" or require that everyone enter the continent legally. Szijjártó said human smuggling and support of "civil groups involved in human smuggling activities" would set off new migration waves towards Europe, adding that this "would be a good excuse" for arguments to be brought forth again in favour of a migrant distribution scheme based on quotas.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: NEW UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT 'NEW HOPE' FOR HUNGARY

Hungary sees Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine's new president, as a "new hope" and hopes that his recent encouraging statements become reality, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said during a break in a meeting with his EU counterparts in Brussels. If the new president's words are reflected in actions and if the Transcarpathian Hungarian community regains its rights, Hungary will be happy to get back to cooperating closely with Ukraine, Szijjártó told Hungarian reporters. Hungary sees a possibility for this with Zelensky's taking office, he said, adding, at the same time, that "there are many whose interests run counter to good Ukrainian-Hungarian relations."

Meanwhile, Szijjártó slammed as "unprecedented, unacceptable and un-European" a series of searches carried out by Ukrainian authorities at the homes of the leaders of Transcarpathian Hungarian organisations on Monday morning.

FINANCE MINISTER DISCUSSES BILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH US AMBASSADOR

Economic and financial ties between Hungary and the United States are on the up and an increasing number of Hungarian companies are entering

the American market, Finance Minister Mihály Varga said after talks with David B. Cornstein, the US Ambassador to Hungary. There are a number of schemes available to Hungarian firms that can help them break into the US market, the finance ministry quoted Varga as saying in a statement. Varga and Cornstein agreed that bilateral economic cooperation was successful, noting that the US is Hungary's top export partner outside Europe and American companies are Hungary's biggest non-EU investors. The increase in American investors indicates that they are satisfied with the local business environment and the country's political stability, Varga added, noting that the US is Hungary's third largest investor in terms of FDI.

The government's aim is to make Hungary one of the most competitive investment environments in Europe, the minister said. To this end, the government is working to boost vocational training and continue lowering taxes on labour, having already reduced the corporate tax rate to 9 percent, he added. More and more Hungarian companies are establishing a presence on the American market mainly in the infocommunication technology and biotechnology sectors, Varga said. The recently inaugurated Business Promotion and Development Campus in Washington, DC, will provide further support for innovative Hungarian firms looking to enter the US market, he added.

The minister praised the role Cornstein has played in promoting

bilateral business relations, noting that he was the American head of the Hungarian delegation at the SelectUSA investment summit in June. Plans are in place for the US to host the first Hungarian start-ups in the framework of a pilot scheme from the autumn, he said. Varga cited the tax information exchange agreement signed between the two countries last year as an "important milestone" in bilateral financial ties.

AUTHORITIES CRACK DOWN ON UNLICENSED TAXIS

Hungarian authorities have tightened scrutiny of taxi drivers in the capital in the past two weeks, acting on an initiative of Hungary's National Taxi Association, the association's head said on public radio. Zoltán Metál said the association had asked the prime minister in a letter to crack down further on unlicensed taxis. He noted that unlicensed taxis may charge fares five times or ten times the regulated rate.

HUNGARIAN, CZECH SUPER LASER FACILITIES TO FORM CONSORTIUM

Super laser research facilities in Hungary and the Czech Republic will form a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC), Innovation and Technology Minister László Palkovics said after meeting with Czech Deputy Prime Minister

and Minister of Industry and Trade Karel Havlíček in Prague. Palkovics told MTI that the ERIC is expected to start operating in January 2020, and that other countries could join the consortium later. Italy is expected to join first, and a number of other countries, such as Germany, France and the UK, are also interested in the ERIC, he added.

The ELI (Extreme Light Infrastructure) research facilities in Szeged, southern Hungary, and in Dolní Břežany, on the outskirts of Prague, offer excellent conditions for researchers in a number of sciences in addition to physics and biochemistry, Palkovics said.

The ELI facility in Hungary focuses on experiments using ultrashort light pulses and the ELI facility in the Czech Republic experiments using ultrahigh intensity light. An ELI facility near Bucharest conducts photo-induced nuclear experiments.

The two ministers also discussed bilateral cooperation opportunities in the areas of energy, innovation and modern technologies. Fielding a question on possible cooperation in the area of nuclear energy, Palkovics said an upgrade of Hungary's Paks plant is further along than the planned expansion of the Czech Republic's two nuclear power plants, but added that

Hungary would be happy to share its experience.

BĂILE TUȘNAD SUMMER UNIVERSITY TO OPEN ON JULY 23

This year's Bálványos Summer University, traditionally held in central Romania's Băile Tușnad (Tusnádfürdő), will take place between July 23 and 28. Zsolt Németh, the head of parliament's foreign affairs committee, told a press conference that the event was a "blend of free universities and festivals". This year, it would be held under the motto "There is only one camp" referring to national cohesion, he said. Németh also noted that the summer university, held in 1989 for the first time, was as old as Hungary's democracy, and added that similar traditions in central Europe "have since been mostly swept away by history". Similarly to earlier years, the event will be addressed by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and other Hungarian leaders.

The event provides a forum for ethnic Hungarians to talk with each other as well as the many visitors from the Carpathian Basin, the Hungarian government and neighbouring countries, with guests from Slovakia, Croatia and Serbia as well as Hungary and Romania.

SZEGED THEALTER FESTIVAL TO OFFER 30 PERFORMANCES

A total of 30 performances including adaptations of classical and contemporary plays will be offered at this year's Thealter international theatre festival next month in Szeged, the organiser told MTI. The festival opening on August 2 will feature last year's award-winning director Kristóf Kelemen's *Surveillance* about a Hungarian-born British man who was followed around by the security services while he studied drama in the 1960s in Budapest, the Mask Association said.

Last year's celebrated group FAQ Theatre will show an adaptation of Franz Kafka's *The Trial* and Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*. Directed by Anna Adam, in *Sorry Not Sorry* three dancers will simultaneously perform their solo acts about sin on three separate stages. Nyíregyháza Street will show the life of Hungarian Roma prostitutes working in The Netherlands.

The programme will include productions from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Romania and a master class by London-based Bulgarian choreographer Ivo Dimchev.