

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Péter Komka

Partial lunar eclipse as seen from Salgótarján (N)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Informal meeting of EU interior ministers in Helsinki**

**EU affairs ministers meet in Brussels**

**Presser on cooperation pact between Hungarian, Russian Olympic committees**

**State secy for church relations at Christian youth camp in N Hungary**

## TOP STORY

# FM SLAMS UN MIGRANT HEALTH-CARE PROPOSAL

Hungary's foreign minister has slammed as "unacceptable" a United Nations proposal that would mandate countries to provide illegal migrants equal health care to that available to nationals.

Recounting his address to the United Nations Economic and Social Council in New York, Péter Szijjártó said he had underlined that those who enter a country illegally should not be entitled to the same level of health care as those who have been honest taxpayers for decades. The minister insisted that the UN's "bureaucrats" were attempting to "stealthily force" the proposal onto the organisation's member states "under the guise of good intentions". He argued that their reason for doing so was that the UN had previously "failed to force through" its complete global migration compact, noting that Hungary, the United States, Israel, the Czech Republic and Poland had voted against it and several other European Union member states had not voted for it, either. Szijjártó said the aim of the global compact was to legalise illegal migration, irrespective of the security risks it poses. Hungary believes that illegal migration is dangerous and therefore should not be legalised or organised but rather stopped altogether, he noted.

## **FOREIGN MINISTRY REJECTS UKRAINE'S 'BASELESS ACCUSATIONS'**

A state secretary of the foreign ministry on Wednesday called on Ukraine's leadership to restore the acquired rights of ethnic minorities instead of making "baseless accusations".

The Ukrainian foreign ministry announced on Tuesday to seek legal evaluation of Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó's visit to Berehove (Beregszász) on Tuesday, which they said went against the Ukrainian ministry's previous recommendations. The ministry said they had earlier received a diplomatic note from the Hungarian embassy in Kiev, saying that Szijjártó had been invited by Ukrainian lawmaker László Brenzovics, leader of the Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Association (KMKSZ).

In response, Tamás Menczer, the Hungarian foreign ministry's state secretary in charge of communications and international representation, said that Szijjártó's statement was "clear and unequivocal." Hungary had supported Ukraine "in countless ways", while that country's previous president and "the forces connected to him" stripped ethnic Hungarians of their rights, violating thereby international agreements, he said. "Hungary aims to improve its ties to Ukraine and hopes that the new Ukrainian president will steer his own country that way," Menczer said. During his

visit to Berehove on Tuesday, Szijjártó said, "we sincerely hope – and hoping does not equal meddling in internal affairs – that the makeup of the new parliament in Kiev will allow for the two countries to significantly improve their relations."

## **TOP COURT REJECTS MOTION AGAINST ROLLBACK OF HOME SAVINGS BANK SUBSIDIES**

Hungary's Constitutional Court rejected a motion by opposition MPs against amendments to legislation ending state subsidies for deposits in home savings banks. The opposition MPs argued that putting the amendments to a vote in an expedited procedure was unwarranted and gave those affected by the measure too little time to prepare for the consequences. They also argued that the change excluded a large part of the population from access to home subsidies.

Parliament voted in October to phase out the state subsidy on deposits with home savings bank, one day after the bill was tabled. The government argued that the scheme, which matched 30% of deposits up to 72,000 forints (EUR 220) a year, was no longer functioning efficiently, and said the CSOK home purchase subsidy scheme for families was fulfilling its purpose.

In its decision on Wednesday, the Constitutional Court said the manner in which the amendments were approved was in line with the letter

of the law. The Court said the principle of ensuring adequate time to make preparations cannot be interpreted to mean that would-be beneficiaries should be allowed more time to avail of a state subsidy that is being phased out.

## **OFFICIAL WARNS OF MIGRATION AS SECURITY RISK**

"Migration poses a security risk," a state secretary of the Hungarian foreign ministry said in response to a recent statement by Felipe Gonzalez Morales, rapporteur of the United Nations, concerning his findings in Hungary. Tamás Menczer cited the rapporteur as "criticising Hungary for considering migration a security risk." "Thirty terrorist attacks have been carried out, in which over 300 people died and 1,300 were injured," he said. "We have seen parallel societies and a number of other crimes."

Menczer said migration was an "open issue", adding that "according to the most cautious estimates 30-35 million people living east and south of Europe could decide on setting off for Europe any time". The UN rapporteur "also criticises us for not allowing migrants free movement in Hungary, as well as for the border fence and transit zones," the state secretary said, adding that the fence along Hungary's southern border with Serbia "will stay where it is because it serves the security of Hungarian people".

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## **BUDAPEST HOSPITAL TEAM TO ASSIST SIAMESE TWINS' SEPARATION IN DHAKA**

A team of 11 doctors and medical assistants led by neurosurgeon András Csóky from Budapest's Honvéd Hospital will assist with the last operation to separate a pair of Siamese twins conjoined at their skulls and brains, the hospital said on Wednesday. Preparatory surgery to separate three-year-old Rabeya and Rokaiya was performed in Hungary on January 25 this year. During the operation led by dr Gergely Pataki, a tissue expander system of Hungarian design was implanted, the Action For Defenceless People Foundation said earlier. The operation was part of the second phase of a series on interventions aimed at separating the twins. The first phase, including groundbreaking work to separate the blood flow of the brains, was conducted by a Hungarian team led by István Hudák in Bangladesh in August 2018. The foundation said that their medical team will perform the final operation in Bangladesh within a short period of time. The Honvéd hospital said that the operation will take place in the central military hospital of Dhaka

at the end of July and is expected to take two days.

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## **HUNGARY CHEMICALS INDUSTRY EXPANDS 7.8% IN 2018**

Hungary's chemicals industry grew 7.8% last year, outpacing average growth of the sector in the European Union, but this year's expansion is likely to be more modest because of the high base, the head of the Hungarian Chemicals Industry Association said in Wednesday's issue of business daily Világgazdaság. Iván Budai noted that exports account for almost 70% of chemicals industry revenue, and three-fourths of that comes from orders in the EU. He said an increase in domestic sales last year, after several years of declines, was a favourable development. Managing the labour shortage, boosting energy efficiency and meeting emissions targets are among the challenges the industry faces, he told Világgazdaság.

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## **PERMITS ISSUED FOR 844 EV CHARGING STATIONS IN HUNGARY**

The Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority (MEKH) has issued permits for 844 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations since January 1, 2016,

and 470 of those were installed by April 2019. MEKH said the stations were used for more than 97,000 charges in the first quarter, up from around 13,600 in the fourth quarter in 2017. Charging volume rose to 326,348kWh from 46,570kWh during the same period.

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## **SUMMER CAMP IN NE HUNGARY HOSTS 350 DIASPORA HUNGARIANS**

A group of 350 young people from 15 countries in four continents have arrived in Sátoraljaújhely, in north-eastern Hungary, to spend vacation in a summer camp. They will participate in Hungarian language workshops and sports events and will learn folk dancing. Other programmes include excursions to the historic town of Sárospatak and southern Slovakia, and a visit to Parliament in Budapest over the next ten days, the president of the Rákóczi Association, the host, told the formal opening of the camp. Participants aged between 10 and 28 years in the current group have arrived from North and South America, Australia, New Zealand, and among European countries from France and Britain, Csongor Csáky said. The camp established six weeks ago will host altogether 4,500 foreign and Hungarian youth this year, he said.