

PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Zsolt Czeglédi

Renault's Daniel Ricciardo at the first practice session for the Formula One Hungarian GP

UPCOMING EVENTS

34th Formula One Hungarian Grand Prix

Members of Hungarian K2 expedition return to Budapest

TOP STORY

HUNGARIANS MARK ROMA HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

Hungarian officials and politicians on Friday commemorated the victims of the Roma Holocaust.

August 2 was named international day of the Roma Holocaust in 1972. Over 3,000 Roma prisoners killed that night in Auschwitz in 1944 are commemorated on that day. About 500,000 Roma, 10,000 Hungarian Roma among them, are estimated to have been killed in Nazi camps, 23,000 of them in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Friday marks its 75th anniversary.

Erzsébet Sándor Szalay, the deputy ombudsman for ethnic minorities, said that accurate teaching of the Holocaust in public education was important for young people to recognise and reject extremist ideologies. Marking the international Memorial Day of Roma Holocaust, Szalay Sándor made reference to present-day attacks by neo-Nazi paramilitary groups against Roma, such as the series of attacks in 2009 in which six people died, saying that in order to prevent such actions, legislators, NGOs, religious and professional groups must work together to shape society's attitudes.

Fidesz MEP Lívía Járóka, a vice-president of the European Parliament, has initiated the "Citizenship and Anti-poverty" cross-party working group to combat discrimination and poverty in Europe.

FIDESZ MEP ON ROMA HOLOCAUST: ACTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION OF MINORITIES 'DUTY'

It is "our duty" to create laws combatting the discrimination of the Roma and other minorities, and take a stand against racially motivated crime, Fidesz MEP Livia Járóka said in a statement late on Thursday, ahead of the European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day on August 2. Járóka, who is also vice-president of the European Parliament, said the EU and national authorities ensuring equal treatment for minorities should be strengthened, and EU funding should be channelled into evening out historical differences. She has initiated a multiparty working group to promote the plan.

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OPPOSITION: IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER HORRORS OF HOLOCAUSTS

The opposition Democratic Coalition (DK) underlined the importance of remembering the victims and the horrors of the Holocaust era. DK deputy leader Péter Niedermüller and

deputy group leader Gergely Arató said in a statement that remembrance was even more important "now that Hungary is again flowing with hate, when the Roma Holocaust Memorial is regularly desecrated, when people are being starved in the transit zones at the border, when the Roma community has its water supply cut off during a heatwave..." "But European Hungarians can prevent any new horrors together," the statement said. "They can eliminate hate forever and create a liveable, peaceful world."

Opposition LMP said it believed Roma people should never be "second-class citizens" in Hungary. "Their identity, culture and customs are an integral part of Hungarian national culture, making our shared homeland stronger and richer," LMP co-leader János Kenderney said in a statement. He said it was vital to prevent expressions of racism, exclusion and hate from gaining a foothold in the future.

The opposition Socialist Party said Europe and Hungary were only whole with the Roma people. "We live in a time in Hungary when hate has become commonplace and when acts of discrimination against minorities aren't isolated incidents," Csaba Horváth, the joint mayoral candidate of the Socialists, DK, Párbeszéd and the Momentum Movement in Budapest's 14th district, said in a statement. He noted last month's vandalism of Budapest's Roma Holocaust Memorial, saying it demonstrated that "the one-time [Holocaust] perpetrators still have their spiritual heirs..." He said Roma

Holocaust Memorial Day was the right time to stand up against hate, "but we must reject racism, hate-mongering and intimidation during the rest of the year, too". Horváth noted that it was still unclear to this day exactly how many Roma people were taken away, maimed or killed during the Holocaust.

TARLÓS: 'BLUFFING WILL NOT FOOL BUDAPEST VOTERS' IN LOCAL ELECTION

In the October local elections, bluff, fearmongering and promises of simple solutions will not fool Budapest voters, Budapest Mayor István Tarlós said in an interview published in the Friday edition of the daily Magyar Hírlap.

Tarlós said there was no real unity among the opposition parties vying for the mayoralty. Any "formal" alliances will dissolve right after the election, he insisted. The "great allies" have incompatible programmes, with "no logic or principles" behind them, Tarlós said, adding they were motivated by a hunger for power.

Regarding the individual candidates, Tarlós said they all lacked the experience to lead a metropolis. Gergely Karácsony, mayor of Budapest's 14th district and the candidate of the Socialists, the Democratic Coalition and Párbeszéd parties, tried to become prime minister after three years as a district mayor and is now trying his hand at the local election without having "real insight" into the workings of such a complex system, Tarlós said.

HUNGARIAN DOCTORS SUCCESSFULLY SEPARATE SIAMESE TWINS CONJOINED AT HEAD

A team of Hungarian doctors has successfully separated Rabeya and Rokaiya, Siamese twins conjoined at the head, in a 30-hour operation ending on Friday in Dhaka, Bangladesh, the Foundation for Defenceless People that organised the operation, told MTI. The three-year-old Bangladeshi twins are in a stable condition but complications cannot be ruled out, the foundation said.

Apart from ensuring a better quality of life for the children, "Operation Freedom", as the series of operations has been dubbed, is also a trailblazer for new treatment methods, the foundation said. 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. Preparatory surgery to separate the twins was performed in Hungary on January 25 this year. During the operation led by Dr Gergely Pataki, the tissue expander system was implanted. A team of 35 Hungarian doctors and assistants led

by András Csóky from Budapest's Honvéd Hospital carried out the final procedure in Dhaka.

RETAIL SALES GROWTH ACCELERATES TO 4.3% IN JUNE

Retail sales in Hungary grew by 4.3% in June from the same month a year earlier, accelerating from a 3% increase in May, data released by the Central Statistical Office (KSH) on Friday show. Calendar-adjusted data show retail sales were up an annual 5.2% in June. Adjusted food sales rose by 2.1% while non-food sales grew by 8.7%. Vehicle fuel sales were up an annual 7.4%. In January-June calendar year-adjusted retail sales rose by an annual 5.7% while unadjusted sales were up 5.6%. Adjusted food sales rose by 2.9% while non-food sales grew by 8.5%. Fuel sales increased by 7.9%.

Real wage rises are keeping retail sales buoyant, though as more income is spent on services, investments and savings, a decline in retail sales is possible, financial analysts told MTI after the data release. Péter Virovác of ING Bank said retail data from the second quarter and confidence surveys indicated a slowdown in economic growth going into the

third quarter. He said retail sales were likely to grow at around 5% during the year, while economic growth was expected to ease to 4.5% from 4.9% last year. György Vámos, the head of the National Retail Association, said the slowdown in retail sales growth was due to adjustments in spending priorities, as many households start to save, assess their needs and eye various loan opportunities and government securities. András Horváth of Takarékbank said real wage growth was likely to surpass 6.5% this year, so spirited growth in retail sales may continue. Nevertheless, growth of 5.5% rather than last year's 6.5% is on the cards, he added.

BUDAPEST AIRPORT GETS NEW CEO

Rolf Schnitzler has been appointed CEO of Budapest Airport, the operator of Liszt Ferenc International said. Schnitzler will replace Jost Lammers, who is leaving to take the top spot at Franz Josef Strauss International Airport in Munich, with immediate effect. Schnitzler has worked for AviAlliance, Budapest Airport's majority owner, for more than 14 years. He has sat on Budapest Airport's supervisory board since 2011.