

PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTVI/TiborIllyés

Flashmob at Parliament on World Fencing Day

UPCOMING EVENTS

V4 EU affairs committees meet in Budapest

Local election campaign events

ITU Telecom World 2019 conference opens in Budapest

TOP STORY

ROGÁN: GOVT TO FOCUS ON BOOSTING NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

Over the coming period, Hungary's government will turn its focus to boosting the country's national independence, the cabinet chief said over the weekend.

Antal Rogán told a press conference ahead of the 19th annual Civic Picnic in Kötcse, in southwestern Hungary, that Prime Minister Viktor Orbán address to the event would focus on Hungary's achievement and protection of its independence and the need to strengthen it in the coming years. This requires a strong and successful economy, which is achieved through a sovereign and independent economic policy like the one the government has been pursuing in recent years, he said. Not only has Hungary had an outstanding economic growth rate in recent years, it has been one of the fastest growing countries in the EU, and specifically central Europe, Rogán said. The edge Hungary has over its central and eastern European peers right now in terms of growth is the result of the government's economic policy and economy protection action plan, he added. In the coming years, the government will focus all its resources on creating a strong economy, the cabinet chief said, emphasising that this was crucial for supporting families and maintaining the stability of the value of pensions. Asked about the upcoming local elections, Rogán said they would be about the suitability of the candidates rather than politics or ideology.

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ORBÁN: HUNGARY READY TO CONTINUE COOPERATION WITH ITALY

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has congratulated Giuseppe Conte on his appointment as prime minister of Italy, in a letter, Orbán's press chief said. "I salute you as a Prime Minister of Italy who has recently proved his commitment to the development of relations between our two countries," Bertalan Havasi quoted Orbán as writing in the letter. "I trust that, as in our joint efforts to date, in the future we will also be able to rely on you in the further enhancement of Hungarian-Italian cooperation and the creation of a competitive Europe comprising strong nations," Orbán wrote, assuring his counterpart that Hungary was ready to continue working with Italy. "I wish you good health and much success in the continuation of your responsible work," Orbán concluded.

Italy's new coalition government between the anti-establishment Five Star Movement and the centre-left Democratic Party (PD) was sworn in on Thursday.

ÁDER: HUNGARY COULD ACHIEVE CLIMATE NEUTRALITY BY 2050

By meeting several conditions, Hungary has a realistic chance of achieving climate neutrality by 2050, President János Áder said at the closing plenary

session of a conference of economists in Nyíregyháza, in north-eastern Hungary. This requires, among other things, the decarbonisation of almost 100% of the power generation industry, improving the energy efficiency of buildings, a higher utilisation of thermal energy, phasing out coal and significantly reducing emissions in the transport sector, Áder said.

The president called for a technology shift in the so-called carbon-intensive industries such as cement production and the steel and rubber industry and, in agriculture, for reducing methane emissions and improving the efficiency of fertilizers. As for the transformation of the power sector, Áder said completing the upgrade of the Paks nuclear power plant and expanding solar power plant capacities were key conditions. He said photovoltaic power generation was expected to double every year, just as it has in the past four years, and with this and the construction of the new block of the Paks facility, more than 90% of Hungary's power generation would be carbon-free by 2030.

SEMJÉN: HUNGARIAN STATE AIMED AT ENSURING NATION'S SURVIVAL

The "meaning and goal" of Hungarian statehood is to ensure the Hungarian nation's survival and provide a better life for the people, Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén said on Friday, at the closing session of the Budapest Demography Summit,

adding that "these are foundations to build everything else on". Semjén said that the nation was a "unique and unreplicable value" and insisted that "mankind would be poorer" if Hungarians disappeared. Preserving the national identity is a primary obligation for Hungarians, he added. The nation's survival can only be ensured if "the country is populated by Hungarian people"; it requires that Hungarian babies should be born and "raised in the Hungarian culture, in the Hungarian language", he said. Semjén said that though the country's population could be increased by allowing migrants to settle, "the Hungarian population cannot be replaced that way" and insisted that "the goal is that as many Hungarian babies should be born as needed to ensure the nation's survival". In another development, Semjén said that Hungary is a country "of Christian civilisation" and "stands on the ground of common sense", referring to the constitution with stipulated that "marriage, as the basis for a family, is a link between a man and a woman". Each child has the right to have a father and a mother, Semjén said, adding that "in their private life everyone can do as they like but they should not call it marriage and should not adopt children". "The right of a child to a healthy upbringing is stronger than homosexual couples' demand to have children," he insisted. The Hungarian government's support for families is "not aimed at financing the sexual self-expression of citizens" but

at promoting child birth in families “to sustain the nation through becoming working and tax-paying adults”, Semjén said.

FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS BULGARIAN DEPUTY PM

The Hungarian and Bulgarian governments have “outstandingly supported families rather than migration”, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said after talks with Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister Mariyana Nikolova in Budapest on Friday. The two countries are in full agreement concerning crucial issues and challenges for the future, Szijjártó said after the talks. He said that migration had been in the focus of talks, with regard to Bulgaria being on a migrant route. Hungary and Bulgaria share the position that the external borders of the EU must be protected and that migration is a security issue, he said. He warned that the pressure of migration was on the increase, with some 224,000 illegal migrants arriving in Turkey in the first eight months of the year.

“We are talking about two countries that support their families, operating powerful family assistance systems... We think that families should be promoted rather than migration,” Szijjártó said.

On another subject, Szijjártó said that Hungary and Bulgaria share the goal of diversifying their energy supplies and urge early completion of a southern supply route connecting Turkey, Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary.

Concerning migration, Nikolova said that Europe must protect its residents through protecting the external borders and withstand the pressure of migration. Nikolova added that her country was preparing to celebrate the centenary of establishing diplomatic ties with Hungary.

ORBÁN MEETS METROPOLITAN HILARION

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán held talks with Metropolitan Hilarion, who is in charge of external church relations at the Patriarchate of Moscow, in Budapest on Friday, Orbán’s press chief said. Topics they discussed included the persecution of Christians, cooperation between the eastern and western Orthodox churches and the Russian Orthodox church’s work in Hungary. Orbán praised Metropolitan Hilarion for defending at the most prestigious international forums the victims of modern-time persecution of Christians and for pointing out the dangers of losing Christian roots. They also discussed the planned visit of Patriarch Kirill, the Orthodox church leader, to Hungary, as well as the Russian Church Cultural Days event to be held in Hungary in November and December. Metropolitan Hilarion thanked Orbán for the ongoing and planned renovation of Orthodox churches in Hungary. The meeting explored the possibilities for future cooperation to save and strengthen persecuted Christian communities. After the meeting, Zsolt Semjén,

Hungary’s deputy prime minister in charge of religious affairs, presented Metropolitan Hilarion the Hungarian Republic’s Order of Merit, Middle Cross with the Star. Hilarion received the high state honour in recognition of his diplomatic work and commitment towards developing international cooperation among Christian communities, as well as for defending Hungary’s policy of protecting and supporting Christianity.

TARLÓS ‘NOT CONCERNED’ WITH MAYORAL CHALLENGERS

Arriving at the annual Civic Picnic in Kötöcs, in southwestern Hungary, Budapest Mayor István Tarlós told reporters he was “not concerned” with his challengers in the upcoming municipal election. Tarlós said he was focusing on his own record as mayor as well as his future plans for the capital. “I’ve been doing this for 30 years,” he said. “I’m not making any predictions. We have to wait until October 13.”

KARÁCSONY CALLS FOR HEALTH-CARE DEVELOPMENTS IN BUDAPEST

Gergely Karácsony, the joint Budapest mayoral candidate of the leftist opposition parties, called for developments in the capital’s health-care sector instead of stadium constructions in Budapest on Sunday. Karácsony said their

activists are collecting signatures to stop “the stadium construction craze” as part of the election campaign for the October 13 local elections. Speaking at a joint press conference with András Fekete-Győr, head of the opposition Momentum Movement, Karácsony said Budapest Mayor István Tarlós had become “a puppet” of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and represented the will of the government on every issue rather than the interests of the city’s residents. He said he does not think there is anyone in Budapest who would favour another stadium instead of a well-functioning health sector or well-maintained green areas in the city. Karácsony noted that the Budapest mayor has a veto against every government investment but Tarlós had never exercised this right. He has never done anything to ensure that the hundreds of billions of forints spent on unnecessary or harmful investments in the city should be used to fund meaningful developments improving the quality of life of those living here, he said.

VARGA CALLS FOR MAINTAINING FISCAL DISCIPLINE

The global economy is slowing down but not in recession, Finance Minister Mihály Varga said at a conference of economists in Nyíregyháza, in north-eastern Hungary, calling for maintaining fiscal discipline in the Hungarian economy and keeping up the country’s recent high investment rate. The minister outlined a proposal package aimed at ensuring the continued sustainable growth of the Hungarian economy. He said fiscal overspending and using up the reserves should be avoided, and workforce reserves should be mobilised while maintaining the current 25% investment rate. The forint exchange rate should remain predictable, policy proposals should be implemented and the competitiveness of the SME sector needs to be improved, Varga added. Economic policy measures have played a great part in strengthening the Hungarian economy, which means that

in spite of the global effects, economic growth is expected to continue, he said.

Assessing the performance of the Hungarian economy in the first half of this year, Varga said the slowdown of the German economy does not yet have its effect felt, which shows that Hungary’s vulnerability to external risks has lessened. Of the 5.1% GDP growth achieved in the first half, 2.4% was generated by domestic factors such as household growth, 1.6% by government policy measures, 0.9% by external demand, with European Union resources contributing just 0.2% to growth, the minister said. It is also a positive sign that participants of the Hungarian economy now have significant reserves compared to the time of the 2008 crisis, Varga said. Households and businesses have a low level of indebtedness, the bank sector has a strong shock-absorbing capacity, the general government budget has a high level of reserves, the ratio of the government debt denominated in foreign currency and held by foreigners has been reduced, and employment has exceeded 70%, he added.