

PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Tamas Soki

Grape harvest in Villány, in southern Hungary

UPCOMING EVENTS

PM Orbán to attend V4, West Balkan summit in Prague

First Lady Anita Herczegh commemorates 1989 border opening in Munich

FM Sijjártó holds press on economic issues

Stats office releases 2018 July industry figures

TOP STORY

US PAPER ASSESSES ORBÁN'S POLICY

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's main aim is to avoid having to face problems associated with liberal, multicultural western societies, a US paper said.

After attending a conference for Christian communicators in Budapest last week, Rod Dreher of The American Conservative relates how he and other participants were invited by Orbán to meet in the Prime Minister's office, where they talked for around 90 minutes.

Dreher described Orbán as being vastly different to the portrayal of him in the western media. "Orbán — who speaks good English — was energetic, fiercely intelligent, funny, self-deprecating, realistic, and at times almost pugilistic in talking about defending Hungary and her interests," he wrote. Western politicians today cannot say what they think, Dreher quoted him as saying. "Orbán said that Hungary's was the only government in Europe to respond to the crisis in its own interests, and in the interests of Christianity in Europe." "[Orbán] understands that he is dealing with elites who believe that being a post-Christian, post-national civilization is a great and glorious thing," Dreher wrote. "He said the main political question in the West today is how fractious pluralities can live together peaceably."

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FIDESZ: 'OPPOSITION COOPERATION HAS COLLAPSED'

The opposition's goal of maintaining a "grand pact" for the October 13 local elections has collapsed, ruling Fidesz's campaign chief said. Lajos Kósa, head of the ruling Fidesz-Christian Democrat (KDNP) alliance's campaign in the local elections, said the opposition's "original aim was to field a single candidate everywhere" against the ruling parties. This is only taking place in six of the 23 Budapest districts and two of 23 cities with county rights, he said.

Fidesz-KDNP is fielding 828 mayoral candidates and supporting another 387 candidates nationwide, he said. The opposition is running 128 candidates, he said. Fidesz-KDNP has attained its aim to field a candidate in localities with a total population of 8 million, he said.

Regarding reports of incumbent Budapest mayor István Tarlós "not ruling out" a debate among candidates, Kósa said the decision was up to Tarlós. Kósa said he personally "sees no point" in a debate as "in this case, all it is incompetence up against competence".

KARÁCSONY: GOVT SOWING FEAR IN BUDAPEST WITH 'BLACKMAIL'

Opposition mayoral candidate Gergely Karácsony rejected as "blackmail" a government "threat" to voters to scrap the pact between the government and

Budapest -- which contains generous central government funding -- if incumbent mayor István Tarlós were to lose the October 13 local election.

Karácsony, the joint candidate of the Socialist, Párbeszéd, Democratic Coalition and Liberal parties, said that Gergely Gulyás, the head of the prime minister's office, had recently declared that the agreement had been signed by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán "as a private citizen", and that should Tarlós lose the election the agreement would be null and void. Karácsony called on Budapest voters "not to give in to blackmail". The government should support Budapest because it is the nation's capital not because it votes for the ruling Fidesz party, he said. Karácsony also called on Tarlós to "reject the government's approach on behalf of himself and the citizens of Budapest", and come clean about whether he finds it acceptable that Fidesz is helping his campaign by "blackmailing voters".

JUSTICE MINISTER PRAISES CLOSE HUNGARIAN-GERMAN FRIENDSHIP

Hungarians and Germans continue to maintain a close friendship and cooperation covering many areas, such as defence policy and digitalisation, Justice Minister Judit Varga after talks in Berlin.

The 30th anniversary of Hungary opening its borders which also paved the way for German reunification and the unification of Europe "offers a

good opportunity to remark that our nations have been linked by close friendship spanning hundreds of years," Varga told public media after meeting senior German politicians and attending a meeting of the Hungarian-German Forum.

She said the forum was important because it involved "political opponents sitting down for talks and discussing their differences". Commenting on migration policy, she said "it is now being understood in German mainstream politics that emphasis should be placed on resolving problems on the spot" and "joint development projects can be successful in preventing migration".

JOBBIK PROMISES MORE PLACES IN OLD AGE HOMES

Conservative opposition Jobbik promises an immediate increase in the capacity of old age homes as part of its programme for the upcoming local council elections. Ruling Fidesz has neglected old people and old age care has deteriorated over the past few years, party leader Tamás Sneider told a press conference.

More than 26,000 elderly people are waiting to be admitted to retirement homes and twice as many should be given access to such services, he said.

Everyone realises "except for the government" that the ageing of society poses several new problems, Sneider said. Hungary currently has 420,000 citizens aged over 80 as against 260,000 in 1990, he added.

Sneider noted that support for food supplies granted on the basis of social need has been unchanged at monthly 55,000 forints (EUR 165) for eight years despite growing food prices. He also said that financial rewards for people working in old-age services were record low and the system was on the verge of collapse because of the increasing labour shortage.

ORBÁN TO ATTEND V4, WESTERN BALKANS SUMMIT IN PRAGUE

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán will attend a summit of the Visegrad Group and countries of the Western Balkans in Prague on Thursday, the PM's press office reported. The prime ministers of the Visegrad countries are scheduled to meet at the invitation of Czech PM Andrej Babis, then have a working lunch with leaders of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia.

According to information from the Czech government, the summit is aimed at strengthening cooperation between the two regions. The talks will focus on composition of the new European Commission, the EU's next financial framework, as well as infrastructure, human resources, education, financial stability and climate change.

GOVT PROMISES JOB PLACEMENT SUPPORT FOR ELECTROLUX WORKERS IN JÁSZBERÉNY

Finance Minister Mihály Varga and Innovation Minister László Palkovics have promised the government's support in finding new jobs for some 800 workers at Swedish appliance maker Electrolux's plant in Jászberény, in central Hungary. Varga and Palkovics held a press conference in Jászberény, where Palkovics said 14 companies had already signalled interest in hiring workers now at the Jászberény plant, and that number is expected to grow.

Electrolux said on Tuesday that it would outsource production of vacuum cleaners and a "significant part" of freestanding refrigerators at its plant in Jászberény, a move expected to impact about 800 production employees.

EC ANNOUNCES EUR 553 M IN FUNDING FOR M30 CONNECTING HUNGARY, SLOVAKIA

The European Commission announced 552.6 million euros in funding for the expansion of a motorway connecting Miskolc, in north-east Hungary, with the Slovak border. The 60km M30 motorway investment will allow traffic to move faster, improve road safety and reduce congestion, the EC said. It

will also bring closer to fruition the "Via Carpathia" European transport network plan linking the Baltic with the Black and Aegean seas, it added.

"This road connection was long awaited and will directly benefit the one million inhabitants of the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén area, with faster, safer and more comfortable travel conditions. Ultimately, Hungary and Slovakia will benefit from the positive spillovers of better connectivity in terms of jobs, growth, tourism and trade," said Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Tibor Navracsics. Construction of the motorway running between Miskolc and Tornonyosnémeti is scheduled to be completed by February 2022.

WISEGRAD 4, TURKEY IN FOCUS OF PESTEXT LITERARY FESTIVAL

The literature of the four Visegrad countries and Turkey, as well as Hungarian authors writing in other languages will be in the focus of the first PesText International Literary Festival, organisers told a press conference. Events of the festival will be held in the Petofi Literary Museum, Lumen Cafe and the A38 ship on the River Danube between September 24 and 28. The 83 festival events will include conferences and roundtables, workshops and exhibitions. Guest of honour at the festival will be Polish author Piotr Szewc.