

PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTV/Zoltán Balogh

Marin Ranates from Croatia at the men's BMX freestyle qualifier during the World Urban Games in Budapest

UPCOMING EVENTS

Hearing about Hungary at EU ministerial meeting

Local election campaign events

Presser on cultural heritage day events

TOP STORY

FINMIN: HUNGARY TO PREPARE FOR NO-DEAL BREXIT

The United Kingdom leaving the European Union “in a regulated manner” is in Hungary’s interest, but Hungary needs to be prepared if Brexit happens without prior agreement between the UK and the community, the finance minister said.

Addressing a meeting of his European counterparts in Helsinki, Mihály Varga said that the Hungarian government has made preparations for legislative changes necessitated by Brexit. In a statement, the finance ministry quoted him as saying that in light of the Hungarian economy’s achievements in recent years “a no-deal Brexit would not cause significant recession”. On the second day of the informal Ecofin meeting, Varga said central and eastern Europe’s economic growth continues to be far above EU average, making the region an important factor in strengthening Europe’s economy. One of the meeting’s focal points was the role finance ministers can play in fighting climate change. The Hungarian minister said that tax and fiscal policies and budgetary planning can all support climate-friendly measures. These efforts, however, should not impose “unduly burden” on particular sectors, regions or citizens of the bloc or certain nations, nor should they cause a competitive disadvantage, the minister said.

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ORBÁN CALLS FOR CHRISTIAN FREEDOM

Hungarians should demonstrate to the world what life based on the ideals of Christian freedom looks like, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said in Budapest. Addressing a congress of the Federation of Christian Intellectuals, he said that central Europe was demonstrating the cultural vitality and civilisation stemming from Christianity as against liberal democracies that "have lost their mission". Central Europe has managed to repel the attacks of liberals threatening Christian freedom and seeking to give up Europe's Christian culture. Further, it could halt migration, an external threat to Christian freedom, Orbán said.

Hungary has become a "particular kind of Christian Democratic state" based on a new model of constitutional and political theory through two major changes in regime, the prime minister said. The first one, the "liberal change in regime", freed Hungary from oppression and Soviet rule, and produced a liberal democracy that focussed on "freedom from something", he said. However, some people, "you before me", realised that "declaring what we want to be free from is not enough. We should also answer the question of what we want to use our freedom for," Orbán said. This is why a "second change in regime, a constitutional revolution based on a two-thirds majority," followed in 2010, "correcting and giving sense" to the first

one, he said. "This second, national and Christian change in regime resulted in Christian democracy based on Christian freedom," the prime minister said.

Highlighting differences between liberal and Christian freedom, Orbán said the former's advocates argue that liberal democracies should finally merge in the spirit of liberal internationalism, and that the European Union should become the European pillar of a world government, cooperating with "the United States of Clinton and [George] Soros". In turn, "Christian freedom teaches us that nations are free and should not be subordinated to the laws of a global government, as empires oppress nations and are therefore dangerous and undesirable," he said.

Orbán said that although "the contemporary world is still dominated by the liberal spirit, the world order has tilted, witnessing a geopolitical transformation and technological revolution. European civilisation is facing crucial changes as the democracies based on liberal freedom can no longer give sense to the continent."

In his opening address to the conference, House Speaker László Kövér thanked Christian intellectuals for "teaching people how to read the signs of the times and always see the difference between good and evil, faith and unfaithfulness, virtue and sin." He asked participants to continue to help responsible Hungarian politics so that "it can stay focused on our shared historical goals."

GOVT SPOX: ATTACKS AGAINST HUNGARY IN EU REVENGE BY PRO- MIGRATION FORCES

Monday's EU ministerial hearing about Hungary will be a kind of revenge by pro-migration forces in the European Parliament that make every effort to attack the country, the government spokesman said. There are pro-migration forces in the governments of European Union countries that want to take revenge on Hungary, Zoltán Kovács told public radio Kossuth referring to the forthcoming ministerial meeting which will hear, on Finland's initiative, a representative of the Hungarian government. The hearing will be part of an Article 7 procedure launched by the EU against Hungary over rule-of-law concerns. Left-liberal pro-migration forces are trying to overrule the Christian system of values. One can hardly dare to talk about "the protection of Christianity" in Brussels these days and the new ideology focuses on the protection of migrants, he said.

Kovács noted that outgoing President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker recently criticised Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán in an interview for giving priority to the interests of Hungary and Hungarians. Hungary has trust in EC President-elect Ursula von der Leyen but its relations with her will depend on what happens in the months and years to come, the spokesman said.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARY WILL DEFEND ITS BORDERS DESPITE ITALY'S DECISION

Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said that all decisions that involved the opening of European borders to migrants were regrettable, including the Italian government's, but Hungary will continue defending its borders.

The Italian government's decision to open the country's borders to illegal migrants is regrettable and dangerous, Szijjártó told public news channel M1. What's more, after letting in masses of illegal migrants, they will want to distribute them among European Union member states, he added. It will be another attempt to exert pressure on member states to approve the migrant quota which shows that the mandatory distribution mechanism is still on the agenda, Szijjártó said. "We reject it", he said.

Official Greek figures show that some 224,000 migrants arrived in the first seven months of this year, he said. The situation is exactly like it was in 2015, Europe is in danger and the Italian decision is an invitation to those who plan to set off for Europe, he added.

The only clear dividing line in Europe is between the opponents and supporters of illegal migration, Szijjártó said. "Hungary will not accept any type of quota and will defend its borders by all means," he said.

ORBÁN MEETS BURGENLAND GOVERNOR

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán met Hans Peter Doskozil, governor of Austria's Burgenland province, for talks on border control and bilateral cooperation in Budapest, the prime minister's press chief Bertalan Havasi said. Reviewing ties between Hungary and Austria's north-eastern province, the parties agreed to launch major development projects to make better use of cooperation opportunities. Orbán and Doskozil agreed on the key importance of border control in stemming illegal migration, while Orbán thanked his guest for Austria's help in protecting Hungary's southern borders.

AUTHOR GYÖRGY KONRÁD DIES

Author, essayist and sociologist György Konrád died on Friday afternoon, his family said. Konrád died after a long illness at the age of 86. He was one of the best-known representatives of Hungarian prose around the world, with works translated into many languages.

Born in Debrecen in 1933, Konrád survived the Holocaust in a safe house in Budapest. He graduated as a teacher from Budapest's Eötvös Loránd University in 1956. After serving in the National Guard during the 1956 revolution, he made his living through ad hoc jobs for a few years. In 1959

he got full-time state employment, working as a children's welfare supervisor until 1965. The experience amassed during this time served as the basis for his first novel *The Case Worker*.

He was working closely with urban sociologist Iván Szelényi with whom he wrote a book on the sociological problems of new housing estates. Citing political reasons, the communist authorities banned the publication of his second novel, *The City Builder*.

After losing his job in 1973, Konrád, together with Szelényi, wrote *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*, a sociological analysis of political history questioning workers' rule in then Hungary. The political police, however, confiscated the manuscript and arrested the authors for incitement against the state. They were informed that they would be permitted to emigrate with their families. Szelényi accepted the offer, while Konrád remained in Hungary, choosing internal emigration.

He published in Hungarian samizdat and through western publishing houses. Virtually from this period until 1989, Konrád was a forbidden author in Hungary, deprived of all legal income. In 1987-88 he taught world literature at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. In the 1980s Konrád was member of the Democratic Opposition and in 1988 became a founder of the liberal Alliance of Free Democrats.

In 1990 he was elected president of PEN International, holding the post full time until 1993. Between 1997 and 2003, Konrád was twice elected

president of Berlin-Brandenburg's Akademie der Künste.

His long list of awards included the Kossuth Prize (1990), the peace prize of PEN International (1991), the French Legion of Honour (1996), the Charlemagne Prize (2001), the Hungarian Republic's Order of Merit Middle Cross with Star (2003), the honorary citizenship of Budapest (2004) and the Franz Werfel Human Rights Award (2007).

CARDINAL ERDŐ STARTS COUNTDOWN TO INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS OF 2020

Cardinal Péter Erdő, Archbishop of Esztergom-Budapest, started the countdown to the International Eucharistic Congress of 2020 in front of the Saint Stephen Basilica on Friday afternoon. The congress will be held from September 13 to 20 with guests expected to arrive from about 100 countries, the cardinal said. Asked whether a visit by the Pope can be expected, he said that the latest Eucharistic Congress had been attended by a papal legate. However, considering that the Pope

recently said he would like to visit small countries, "we would be at his service", he said. A clock has been set up in front of the Basilica which will show the countdown to the event during the year ahead. Hungary will host the event for the second time. The 34th Eucharistic Congress was held in Budapest in May 1938, with half million people attending a mass at Heroes' Square.

FOREIGN NATIONALS ARRESTED IN BUDAPEST UNDER CHARGES OF FRAUD

The National Investigation Bureau, in cooperation with the US's Federal Bureau of Investigation, has arrested two foreign nationals under international warrants on charges of fraud, the Hungarian police said.

A 44 year-old US national was arrested in Budapest under charges of defrauding American investors of some 3.5 million dollars by promising them high returns which have never been realised. In a separate case, a 28-year-old French-Israeli citizen was arrested and charged with being part of an international criminal gang which caused some 145 million

dollars' damage by defrauding tens of thousands of people, mostly pensioners, of their savings, with promises of high returns. The two men await in custody the Hungarian court's decision on their extradition to the US.

WW2 BOMB DEFUSED NEAR BUDAPEST PUBLIC TRANSPORT HUB

A 250 kg US-made WW2 bomb was defused near Móricz Zsigmond körtér, a major transport hub in Budapest, on Sunday, the communications officer of the Hungarian army's bomb squad Zita Markovics said. The bomb was found on a construction site.

Péter Debrődi, a member of the bomb squad, said that a total of 686 flats inhabited by around 2,000 people had to be evacuated in the neighbourhood during the operation. The neighbouring streets and squares were closed and detours were implemented for public transport services.

According to estimates, around 10% of the bombs dropped on Budapest by the Allies during WW2 failed to detonate and some of them are still underground, he said.