

PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Zoltán Máthé

Car-free weekend held in Budapest

UPCOMING EVENTS

Local election campaign events

National Election Committee meets

Museum Festival presser

TOP STORY

ORBÁN ADDRESSES NATIONAL-CONSERVATIVE PARTY MEETING IN ROME

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán attended a meeting of Italy's nationalist-conservative Brothers of Italy (Fdl) party in Rome, and offered his government's help in his address.

„Hungary is prepared to help Italy, where it can; thus, if the country finally commits to protecting its borders, we will help to that end as well as to return migrants already in Italy back home,” Orbán said.

In his remarks, Orbán responded to Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, who said earlier at the event that the Visegrad Group - Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia - had not assisted Italy in the area of migration policy.

Orbán said Hungary cannot help if Italy brings into its territory migrants from anywhere.

He said that a number of Western European leaders believe that allowing in masses of migrants who are different from the Christian majority will create a new society from the mix, a society that is of a higher quality. Central Europe does not think along these lines, because integration will not come of this: they will not live together, but apart, he added.

Every people has the right to decide with whom they want to live together, and if a people decides they don't want to be a multicultural society, they have that right in a democracy, he said.

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SZIJJÁRTÓ: ‘ANTI-MIGRATION COUNTRIES’ COULD FACE INCREASING PRESSURE

Europe is entering a phase in which “anti-migration” governments could be subject to increased pressure and face attempts to “cram mandatory migrant quotas down the throats of European countries”, Foreign Minister Peter Szijjártó said on public Kossuth Rádió on Sunday morning.

Szjijártó noted that such quotas lack any legal foundation. He added that Hungary would not accept any quota and considers protection of the borders the highest priority.

The foreign minister said it was concerning that the new Italian government had opened south-Italian ports to ships carrying illegal migrants, and added that the move would give new impetus to migration as well as to supporters of the migrant quota proposal. Opening those ports is against Europe’s security interests and only benefits people smugglers, he insisted. “We have just enough illegal migrants in Europe already, no more must be allowed in,” he added.

Szjijártó said the situation in Greece is approaching that in 2015 and its islands have become “appallingly crowded” with migrants. He added that there are several thousand illegal migrants in the Western Balkans, that “wreak havoc on the life of locals and see use their extremely aggressive behaviour as a ticket to Europe”.

Szjijártó said that the Visegrad countries were unanimous on their stand against the migrant quota, and added that Hungary and Italy, under its earlier government, had proven that illegal migration could be stopped. Hungary, however, “suffered a political revenge” and Italy “dropped Salvini’s policy and returned to Brussels’ false narrative that illegal migration trends cannot be stopped,” he insisted.

The new Italian government’s position on major issues is “diametrically opposed” to the Hungarian stance as “it is a pro-migration leftist government”. The Hungarian government will reject any pressure from any European country aimed at Hungary’s allowing illegal migrants to enter, he added.

ORBÁN: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC STATE HAS BEEN BUILT IN HUNGARY

Hungary has in recent years postulated a political and state model: it has constructed a Christian democratic state, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said at a meeting of the national-conservative Brothers of Italy (Fdi) party in Rome.

This model works and is successful, Orbán said. The political success is obvious: Hungary’s governing alliance has won three parliamentary elections in a row with a two-thirds majority, and there have also been economic achievements, he added.

He said the model rests on three pillars: the family, the nation and Christian liberty. The basis for this

model is the new Christian constitution approved in 2011, he added.

Orbán said a family is a union between a man and a woman, adding that every child has the right to a father and a mother.

He acknowledged steps Hungary’s government has taken to support families, but said there are still too few children being born. If we don’t do something to counter the negative demographic trend, it will never change, he added.

Orbán said he could not support any policy that aims to replace the children who aren’t being born with migrants.

He said nations are supreme and cannot be forced under the laws of any kind of global government. That is an irreplaceable value which must be defended, he added.

Only we can say who can stay in the area of our state, he said. Everywhere else in the world, the nation is defended, but not in Europe, and that must be changed, he added.

Orbán explained Christian liberty as the right to defend one’s Christian way of life, adding that the new European Commission president wants to establish a new portfolio for the defence of the European way of life.

We are in the minority in the European political elite, but in the majority among nations and people, Orbán said. Our opposition is big, rich, strong and well organised, thus we must fight an unjustly difficult battle for what is right.

European unity stands before a great test, the cause of which is migration, Orbán said. There are countries in which

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migration was successful, and part of their populations no longer belongs to Christian culture, thus they think they know how two entirely different cultures can live together in one country. For other European countries, among them Hungary, there are no Muslim migrants, and they are working to see that such a dilemma of co-existence never has to be weighed, he added.

Orbán said it was clear from the start of the migrant crisis that nine out of ten migrants were not refugees but economic migrants. But the left wing uses migration in the service of an intellectual concept, the aim of which is for Europe to shed its national and Christian lifestyle and cross over into the post-Christian era, he added.

The left wing has a vested interest in migration, because when migrants come, votes for the left wing are imported, he said. They think that migrants will never support politics that rest on Christian foundations, and if a lot come, it will reduce or even eliminate the chance that Christian-based politics can gain a majority in Europe, he explained.

Orbán said left-wing politicians' desire to bring in migrants is evidenced by the renewed inclusion on the agenda of the issue of migrant quotas.

He said Hungary's firm stand on migration in Brussels is the reason for pressuring the country and exercising a campaign of vengeance against it. If Hungary should take in migrants, problems pertaining to the rule of law would no longer be an issue, he added.

He pointed to "exciting times" in national politics with the approaching

elections in Austria and Poland, as well as local council elections in Hungary. We expect Italy to "return to the club", too, he added.

Orbán said it is worth remembering that what made Europe great was establishing a way of life in which people work for themselves, for the good of their country and for the glory of God. A modern form of this calling needs to be found for Europe to become great again, he added.

NÉMETH CALLS FOR TRANSYLVANIA-BUCHAREST- BUDAPEST ALLIANCE

Romania's Hungarian minority in Transylvania needs a "new kind of Transylvanism", based on their alliance with both the Romanian and Hungarian governments, against the "globalist mainstream", Zsolt Németh, head of the foreign affairs committee of the Hungarian parliament, said in Targu Mures (Marosvásárhely) on Saturday.

Speaking at a congress of deputies at the Transylvanian Hungarian People's Party (EMNP), Németh said that nation states and national regions must cooperate in order to preserve their national identity. "If Transylvania wants to survive it must organise and maintain these alliances... we must make all parties interested in the success of Transylvania," he added.

Hungary is stable and its international weight is growing, and Hungarian communities can "rely on it as a strong mother country", Németh said.

Németh voiced support for ethnic Hungarian organisations such as EMNP and the Szekler National Council (SZNT), which "have promoted the cause of ethnic Hungarians' survival and self-determination for decades".

V4 DEFENCE MINISTERS URGE CLOSER COOPERATION

The defence ministers of the Visegrad Group agreed at their meeting in Ostrava on Friday that cooperation must be strengthened in all areas of defence between the four countries.

The three-day meeting hosted by Czech Defence Minister Lubomír Metnar began on Thursday. Hungary was represented by Tibor Benkő, Poland by Mariusz Blaszczak and Slovakia by Peter Gajdos.

The ministers called for strengthening cooperation between the four countries' armed forces, defence industry development and joint procurement.

They agreed that their armed forces should be equipped with modern, advanced technology and more focus must be given to training and personnel.

"Every country, every nation, has its history, its interests, its values, which we must collectively protect, preserve and serve. This is what cooperation within the V4 is about," Tibor Benkő told a joint press conference.

He said Europe was facing new challenges, risks and threats, stressing the need for the European nations to be assured that increasing their national defence spending serves their own interests.

KARÁCSONY PLEDGES TO MAKE BUDAPEST 'FREE, GREEN'

Gergely Karácsony, the opposition's candidate for Budapest mayor, presented his election programme on Sunday, in which he pledged to build a free, green, and socially inclusive city.

Karácsony said he sought to be "a strong leader, not an arrogant one, for a strong community".

He insisted that the city's mayor "should be on good terms with residents rather than with the government", as opposed to what István Tarlós, the incumbent mayor, has advocated.

The confidence of having a say in public decisions needs to be returned to people, Karácsony said. "It's the job of city leaders to open the doors when the people want to weigh in on matters," he said.

The candidate said he insisted on having a public discussion with Tarlós, and added that he was not familiar with Tarlós's programme.

Concerning details of his programme, Karácsony said he would initiate a dialogue with local residents to draw up a "Budapest constitution" outlining the "basic values of representing voters".

As mayor, Karácsony said he would work together with the districts to "re-establish" healthcare services, fill vacant physician positions and finance screening programmes. He argued that it was a "scandal of global proportion" that 80% of

Hungarians over 75 die of conditions that could be prevented through better services. "No sports stadiums will be built before each district has a CT scanner of their own," he insisted. He also added that he would address the housing crisis, and noted it as the source of a number of maladies.

Karácsony also pledged to grant needy pensioners and big families each an annual 20,000 forints to help with their heating bills.

Concerning his plans to make the city greener, Karácsony said that one million trees were "missing" in Budapest, and promised to plant some 15,000 a year, about as many as the number of babies born in the city annually. He mentioned plans to plant a large forest in the north of Csepel Island and adjacent District 9, as well as creating a 10-kilometre-long green corridor between Margaret and Hajógyári islands.

Budapest currently has too many cars, and the city should offer modern and comfortable alternatives to driving, Karácsony said. He said that under his leadership the city could cut public transport prices and would make public transport free for children under age 14 for a start.

Karácsony said it was a "myth" that the government "brings money to Budapest", adding that the reality was "just the opposite". He argued that a mere 2% of the revenues generated in the city was left in place, therefore "the city must use its own resources" and voiced hope that Budapest could win more direct subsidies from the European Union in the next cycle.

GULYÁS CALLS FOR MOBILISATION OF NATIONAL-CONSERVATIVE VOTERS

Prime Minister's Office chief Gergely Gulyás mentioned mobilisation of "civic, national-conservative" voters as one of the major tasks before the upcoming municipal elections, at a press conference on Saturday.

Gulyás warned that parties of the opposition have "made it their goal to topple the government". He pledged the government's readiness to support all municipalities but added that "it is easy to see that cooperation will be more fruitful with those officials who do not consider their positions as platforms from which to fight the government".

Gulyás voiced incomprehension at the opposition parties' efforts to seek broad cooperation "not only to win the local governments but to use them as tours de force to declare total war on the government". He also criticised opposition candidates for making campaign pledges "in areas such as taxation or healthcare which are outside mayors' scopes of influence".

JAPAN'S PRINCESS KAKO VISITS BÁBOLNA EQUESTRIAN MUSEUM, STUD FARM

Princess Kako of Japan visited the Equestrian Museum and the National Stud Farm at Bábolna, in north-western

Hungary, in the company of Minister of Agriculture István Nagy.

The princess visited Hungary to mark the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Japan and Hungary.

After the visit, the minister noted that representatives of Japan had visited Bábolna 130 years ago. The princess was shown the terrace from which the emperor's envoys had surveyed studs to select for the Japanese court to take back in 1889, Nagy added.

The princess was also shown the farm's rose garden and its finest thoroughbreds in the riding hall.

MAYOR, MINISTER LAUNCH CAR-FREE WEEKEND IN CAPITAL

Central and local government officials launched a car-free weekend in Budapest on Saturday, the culmination of European Mobility Week, a campaign to promote clean and sustainable urban transport.

László Palkovics, the innovation and technology minister, said Hungary had participated in European Mobility

Week since 2002, and almost 300 communities around the country had joined the initiative this year.

He said digitalisation, self-driving vehicles and alternative fuel vehicles would shape the future of the automotive industry, one of the engines of economic growth in Hungary. He also noted government efforts to support the conditions necessary for environmentally-friendly transport solutions, among them subsidies for electric vehicles and the procurement of "green buses".

STATUE OF FOOTBALL GREAT SÁNDOR KOCSIS UNVEILED AT GROUPAMA ARENA

A statue of the great Hungarian footballer Sándor Kocsis, a prolific scorer who was a member of the Mighty Magyars, the national football team of the 1950s, was unveiled near the main entrance to Budapest's Groupama Arena stadium on Saturday, on the 90th anniversary of Kocsis's birth.

Kocsis played for the Budapest clubs Ferencváros and Honvéd as

well as for FC Barcelona. He was the top goal scorer in the 1954 World Cup with eleven goals.

Speaking at the ceremony, Budapest Mayor István Tarlós noted that Kocsis had scored 75 goals in 68 appearances for Hungary, making his goal/game average among the highest ever.

"Seeing his technical solutions, his header bravura, his acrobatic style of play and his exceptional team play, he was said to be among the greatest after just a few matches," Tarlós said of his favourite footballer.

LOT LAUNCHES DIRECT FLIGHT BETWEEN BUDAPEST, SEOUL

LOT Polish Airlines launched a direct flight between Budapest and Seoul on Sunday.

The aircraft, a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, took off from Liszt Ferenc International Airport in the afternoon and will arrive in the South Korean capital after about ten-and-a-half hours.

LOT CEO Rafal Milczarski said the aim is to boost the flight's frequency from three to six times a week, or, optimally, seven.