

PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Csaba Kirzsán

Kids get acquainted with goose on World Animal Day in Győr

UPCOMING EVENTS

Áder appoints Csaba Kandrács to central bank deputy governor

Local elections campaign events

Commemorations of martyrs of 1848-49 Hungarian freedom fight

TOP STORY

NÉMETH: COE'S TASK TO RESTORE EUROPEAN UNITY

The most important task of the Council of Europe (CoE) in the coming years will be to restore European unity, Zsolt Németh, the head of the Hungarian parliament's foreign affairs committee, said.

The body faces challenges as great as those at the time of its establishment 70 years ago, Németh said, after a one-week meeting of the CoE's Parliamentary Assembly. The Fidesz lawmaker, who also headed the foreign affairs committee's delegation to the assembly, said the divisions between East and West ran deep in the CoE, just as they did in the European Union and European Parliament.

With its 47 members, the council "reflects a Europe of nations and represents the ideal that Europe can be united again. We Hungarians are ready for that," Németh said. The CoE had a major role in integrating central and eastern European countries after the fall of communism 30 years ago. This facilitated their accession to the EU, Németh said. Therefore, the 70th anniversary of the council's establishment is as important for Hungary as the 30th anniversary of the fall of communism, he said. The European political system, rebuilt "from the ruins" 70 years ago, has ensured peace ever since, Németh said. The CoE had an important role in that, he added.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARIAN BUSINESSES 'SOUL' OF ECONOMY

Hungary's economy is small and extremely open so large international companies play an important role in its performance, but it is Hungarian companies that represent the "soul" of the economy, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said at the opening of a new plant by Kovács Kft.

One of the most important achievements of recent years is the increase in the number of Hungarian companies chosen as suppliers for large multinationals, Szijjártó told the event in Mezőkövesd in northern Hungary. "These Hungarian family businesses have stood the test of time and competition, and continually demonstrated world-quality production both in terms of quality and quantity," Szijjártó said. Their performance and development provide the basis for Hungarian economy to maintain its current growth rate and remain at least 2% above average European Union growth, he added.

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR PROPOSES SUSPENDING IMMUNITY OF DK'S LÁSZLÓ VARJU

Public Prosecutor Péter Polt proposed that the immunity of László Varju, a lawmaker of the opposition Democratic Coalition (DK) party, be suspended pending an inquiry into crimes against the order of the elections. According to

the charges, Varju met an independent candidate ahead of the 2018 general election and offered him money in exchange for stepping down as a candidate and endorsing him, the prosecutor's office said in a statement. The independent candidate is said to have refused the offer. If proven, Varju's actions might constitute election fraud, the prosecutor's office said. Varju's immunity has to be suspended before an investigation.

Earlier, the website PestiSrácok wrote that ahead of the 2018 parliamentary elections, DK "tried to bribe and then threaten" then Socialist Imre Horváth.

In response to a question at a press conference held by DK spokesman Balázs Barkóczi on a different subject, he said the party would support Varju to the hilt. He said he had not heard the audio recording that would be used as evidence against Varju, but, he added, he was certain that it was part of a smear campaign similar to recent campaigns against Budapest opposition mayoral candidate Gergely Karácsony and 11th district mayoral candidate Imre László.

RAIL CO. MÁV, ENERGY CO. MVM SIGN COOPERATION PACT

Hungarian railway company MÁV and energy company MVM signed a cooperation agreement with a view to strengthening relations and boosting cooperation in R&D&I, training and providing electricity. The agreement was signed by MÁV CEO Róbert Homolya and MVM CEO György Kóbor.

Andrea Bártfai-Mager, the minister without portfolio responsible for national asset management, present at the signing ceremony, said the main aim was to increase the state's wealth and that all state-owned companies should handle their portfolios according to unified standards.

The two companies are key factors in Hungary's strategic assets and public services, Bártfai-Mager noted. MÁV is the largest employer in the country and its infrastructure and services are integral to everyday life, while MVM covers all sectors of energy services, she said. Bártfai-Mager said it was important that state-owned institutions find opportunities to cooperate and share their experience. National asset management has changed greatly since 2010, she said, adding that the past nine years have seen efforts to increase public assets and use them responsibly and economically.

PILOTS COMPLAIN OF LASERS DISRUPTING TAKE-OFFS, LANDINGS AT BUDAPEST AIRPORT

Pilots of aircraft landing and taking off at Budapest's international Liszt Ferenc Airport often have to contend with the dangerous use of lasers from the ground, HungaroControl Zrt. said. Take-offs and landings have been affected by lasers almost 50 times so far this year, and a fifth of these have occurred in the past month. The authorities expect the frequency of such interferences to grow in the coming months. Almost

one hundred cases were recorded last year, when interferences started increasing in the autumn months.

Lasers can distract pilots from up to 10km away. From time to time, the co-pilot has had to take control due to the distraction, according to HungaroControl's statement. Disruption of aircraft is punishable by three years' imprisonment, it added.

CURRICULUM CHANGES AIM TO ENSURE TRADE SCHOOL STUDENTS HAVE COMMAND OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Hungary's government plans to add more foreign language hours at trade schools from next year, ensuring students can pass a mid-level foreign language exam, now a requirement for entry into institutions of higher education, daily Magyar Nemzet said. Deputy state secretary for vocational training and adult education Annamária Pölöskei told the paper that students in vocational schools would have as many foreign language hours as students in gymnasiums, that is, secondary schools that prepare students for entry into university. The only difference is that students in vocational schools will learn one foreign language while those in gymnasiums will learn two, she added. The number of foreign

language hours in vocational schools is set to rise from 2-4 a week to 6-8, depending on the type of school, a draft of the new National Core Curriculum shows. Pölöskei noted that vocational school students would also participate in a recently launched state programme funding two, two-week foreign language courses abroad for Hungarian language learners in secondary schools.

HUNGARY UTILITY-SCALE SOLAR CAPACITY REACHES 1.1GW

Hungary's utility-scale solar power capacity reached 1.1GW at the end of June, up from 726MW at the end of 2018, the latest data from the Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Agency (MEKH) show. The combined capacity of solar panels installed on homes rose to 388.5MW from 332MW during the same period, MEKH said. MEKH noted it has issued resolutions subsidising the addition of a further 1.4GW of solar power capacity which will be installed in the coming years.

GULYÁS: CONSERVATIVE TURNAROUND NEEDED IN EPP

There is a need for a conservative turnaround in the European People's Party (EPP) as its further

shift towards the Left would cost much in a European parliamentary election, the head of the Prime Minister's Office told a conference in Munich organised by Bavaria's Christian Social Union's (CSU) parliamentary group. The issue of a conservative turnaround is also a matter of important debates within the German union parties, namely the CSU and the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Gergely Gulyás told MTI by phone. "We would like to see the CSU return to a stance that represents a strongly conservative policy within the union parties," he said.

As regards [ruling Fidesz's] relations with the CSU, Gulyás said there were statements over the past six months by the Bavarian party that "did not point in the direction of deepening relations". But now the Bavarian partners "want to close that period, put their grievances aside and look to the future", he added. Gulyás is attending a conference of European conservative parties at the invitation of CSU parliamentary group leader Alexander Dobrindt.

Prior to the conference, Gulyás held talks with Hans Reichhart, Bavaria's transport and construction affairs minister, and Markus Blum, CSU's secretary-general.