

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Tamás Kovács

Budapest Mayor Gergely Karácsony taking over office from István Tarlós

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Closing day of EU summit in Brussels**

**Potápi lectures at free university  
in Velký Meder (Nagymegyer)**

## TOP STORY

# ORBÁN: BUDAPEST PACTS STILL VALID

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has vowed to honour the agreements made with outgoing Budapest Mayor István Tarlós.

Orbán, who is also the leader of the ruling Fidesz party, told commercial channel HírTV that the local council elections had been won despite some "poignant losses" suffered especially in Budapest and a few other large cities. What's most important from the government's point of view is that an overall 1.8 million supporting votes were cast for the ruling parties, significantly more than for the opposition, Orbán said. "As a result, I would like to see the bold and self-confident governance of the past nine years continue, because the support necessary for good work has been expressed for the government's programme," Orbán said. The decision of the people of Budapest must be accepted, he said. "Budapest has had a Demszky era, then a Tarlós era and now people have decided that something new should follow," he added. People voted in support of Gergely Karácsony, the joint opposition candidate for Budapest mayor, hoping that he would be a better leader for the city, Orbán said. "My job is to give him a chance and provide the necessary conditions," he added.

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## **ORBÁN WISHES KARÁCSONY SUCCESS**

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said the new Budapest leadership would work under unchanged conditions. Hungary is a democracy and people expect their leaders to work together, Orbán added, wishing Karácsony success. The government developed fair relations with all local governments in the past and this will remain unchanged, regardless of party affiliations, he said.

Commenting on Zsolt Borkai, the mayor of Győr, in north-western Hungary, who has been linked to a sex scandal, Orbán said it was difficult to tell how much this case had affected the local elections. He said it was not his job to pass judgement on the private life of any politician but in his capacity as Fidesz leader he had an obligation to make it clear that some things "just don't fit" in the community. "The consequences had to be drawn and that's why Zsolt Borkai has left our political community," Orbán said. First it was necessary to wait for the people of Győr to decide about Borkai's candidacy to remain the city mayor but after that Orbán said he had to act as party leader and do what was "evident".

Concerning his party's group meeting to be held in Balatonalmádi, Orbán said he would speak about the cabinet's upcoming tasks. These tasks, he said, could be divided into three categories: the implementation and possible expansion of the family

protection action plan, sustaining economic growth and bolstering the Hungarian Village Programme. Regarding the government's measures aimed at sustaining growth, Orbán noted that his cabinet was drafting an economy protection plan to be launched in the coming months.

On the topic of Turkey's military incursion into northern Syria, Orbán said Hungary needed to view the affair with its national interests in mind. "This is not a conflict that's distant from, and irrelevant to, Hungary where we can choose sides based on sympathy," he argued. More than three million migrants and refugees have fled from Syria into Turkey, the prime minister said, adding that Turkey would have to decide what to do with them over the coming weeks. Either the Turkish authorities could decide to return them to Syria or to set them off toward Europe, Orbán said. "If Turkey chooses the latter option then these people will arrive at Hungary's southern border in huge numbers." He said this was why he recommended that the European Union should provide financial aid to Turkey so that it could build cities in Syria with a view to sending the migrants and refugees there. Otherwise, Orbán added, these people will end up in Europe and Hungary is in a different situation than the European countries that are not adjacent to the Balkan migration route. "They're safe because we're protecting them," he said. The prime minister warned that the current developments in Syria could soon have consequences in

Hungary as well, given that it is an EU border country. Orbán said there were currently 90,000 people trying to make their way to the EU via the Balkan route, adding that their numbers would soon reach 100,000. "And if Turkey adds hundreds of thousands more to this wave, we'll have to secure the protection of the Hungarian-Serbian section of the border by force," he said.

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## **KARÁCSONY PROPOSES HONORARY CITIZEN'S TITLE FOR FORMER BUDAPEST MAYORS**

Mayor-elect of Budapest Gergely Karácsony has proposed granting the title of honorary citizen to predecessors Gábor Demszky and István Tarlós next year when the city will celebrate the 30th anniversary of free local government. Speaking at a press conference after formally assuming his post as mayor, Karácsony said he would initiate the move with the Budapest General Assembly, adding that "the past thirty years represent important lessons and achievements to us". Karácsony said both Demszky and Tarlós had been elected and re-elected with strong mandates during their respective tenures. "Neither of them were perfect," he said. "They both made good and bad decisions but they both loved Budapest very much."

He said a new era must be started for Budapest in order to "give the city back its battered freedom and prepare it to react to the great challenges that

all metropolises in the world face". Karácsony said metropolitan council employees did not have to expect a "massacre or a political witch hunt" by the new leadership, adding that they would be given a grace period of six months for the two sides to see how they can work together.

In response to questions from journalists, he said he will take a look at the construction permits for new buildings in Budapest's City Park. In its first session, the new metropolitan assembly will pass the necessary resolutions to block further construction in the park.

Karácsony arrived at City Hall by bicycle and met Tarlós who was wearing a leather jacket. Tarlós said he started his political career thirty years ago wearing a leather jacket and was now finishing it the same way.

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### **BUILDING PERMITS ALREADY OBTAINED, MUSEUMS QUARTER ON TRACK, SAYS PROJECT COMPANY**

Városliget, the state-owned company in charge of transforming Budapest's City Park into a museums quarter, said the project is moving forward as planned, adding that building permits have been issued for all project elements.

Gergely Karácsony, who was elected mayor of Budapest on Sunday with the backing of opposition parties, said a day earlier that the new municipal council would vote on freezing

building permit issues for the project, dubbed Liget.

Városliget said building permits had been issued for all Liget buildings on the basis of a set of construction rules that apply to the City Park approved by the municipal council years earlier. Before modifying these rules, the council is required to hold consultations with industry professionals as well as civil organisations, a process that would take several months at least. Városliget added that it was continuing to fulfil all of its tasks on the basis of a legal mandate and in line with the relevant regulations. At present, the municipal council has no legal authority over the Liget project which is fully state funded, it said, adding that it had no knowledge of any initiative by the government or its owner, the minister without portfolio in charge of state assets, to make any changes to the project.

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### **HUNGARY HOSTS INTL MILITARY EXERCISE AIMED AT MANAGING MIGRANT CRISIS**

Hungary has been selected to host the Central European Defence Cooperation's international military exercise aimed at managing the migrant crisis. Speaking to MTI, Defence Minister Tibor Benkő said illegal migration continues to be one of the biggest threats facing Europe. This is proven by the number of countries taking part in the

Cooperative Security 19 (COOPSEC19) exercise, he said. The exercise is being attended by some 500 military and law enforcement officers from Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia and Poland. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Greece, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia have delegated observers. The event's final day, Thursday, is being attended by the defence ministers and chiefs of staff of the participating nations.

"The Hungarian government's position on migration is unchanged," Benkő said. "The problems that make people leave their homelands should be dealt with where they arise." The minister noted that some 2,000 Hungarian soldiers take part in international peacekeeping missions each year with a view to preventing people from having to flee their homelands. "Our job is to preserve the values, customs, traditions and culture established by our forebears," he said.

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### **HUNGARIAN, CYPRIOT MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE SIGN COOPERATION PACT**

Minister of Agriculture István Nagy signed a cooperation agreement with Cypriot Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment Costas Kadis which will serve as an important basis for cooperation between the two countries in agriculture and environmental protection, the ministry said. Under the agreement,

Hungarian web-based solutions will be introduced in Cyprus for agricultural data services. The agreement covers measures connected to irrigation, effective support against climate change, desertification and soil degradation, the development of innovative forestry techniques, effective utilisation of water resources, as well as animal and plant health protection, the statement showed. The sides were in agreement about issues concerning the European Union's common agricultural policy (CAP), the ministry added.

Nagy held talks with Gilberto Silva, the minister of agriculture and environment in Cape Verde. He offered Hungary's help in improving food safety in the archipelago by transferring high level professional know-how. Hungarian technologies and agricultural and environmental developments will be presented and made available with the help of a model farm network currently being set up in various countries, the ministry said. This will also support export efforts by Hungarian companies, it added. Climate change adaptation and the challenges of secure food production were also addressed during the meeting. One of the solutions the government proposes is to increase the size of irrigated areas and expand effective irrigation in farming. To serve this aim, Hungary is preparing an irrigation development strategy and agricultural water management scheme, the statement said.

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### **ORBÁN'S SPEECH ON OCT 23 DEPENDS ON BREXIT TIMETABLE**

Whether or not Prime Minister Viktor Orbán is present in Hungary to give a speech marking the October 23 national holiday commemorating the anniversary of the 1956 revolution will depend on the Brexit timetable, the PM's press chief said. It is as yet unknown whether a second European Union summit is to be convened to address Brexit and on which day that would fall, Bertalan Havasi said. If Orbán is not scheduled to represent Hungary at an EU summit in Brussels on Oct. 23, he will deliver a festive speech in Budapest, he added. On Thursday and Friday the prime minister is attending a European Council session in Brussels, focusing on Brexit.

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### **JOBBIK'S SNEIDER WON'T SEEK RE-ELECTION AS PARTY LEADER**

Tamás Sneider, leader of nationalist opposition Jobbik, has said he won't seek re-election as his party's leader at its upcoming congress. Addressing a press conference, Sneider said that regardless of his decision, he would continue to "fight firmly to enforce Jobbik's policies". Sneider said he had taken over Jobbik's leadership during the party's most difficult period. During his time as party chief, the leadership launched

a series of reforms, he said, adding however that someone else should lead Jobbik in the run-up to the 2022 general election. He said group leader Péter Jakab, who is running for the leadership role, was "perfectly qualified to complete the task of creating a very strong Jobbik by 2022". The party could then work together with other political forces in "ousting [Prime Minister Viktor] Orbán's corrupt system", he added.

Sneider welcomed that in Sunday's local elections Jobbik had doubled its vote tally compared with the European Parliament elections. Sneider noted that Jobbik received around 11% of the vote in counties where it contested the election alone. Jobbik's congress is scheduled to take place on Nov. 9.

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### **HUNGARY, JAPAN TO ISSUE COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS FOR DIPLOMATIC ANNIVERSARY**

Hungary and Japan will mark the 150th anniversary of their diplomatic relations with a sheet of ten commemorative stamps to be issued by their national postal services. The stamps, which were unveiled in Budapest, will feature elements pertaining to the two countries' gastronomy, architecture and folk art, foreign ministry deputy state secretary András Baranyi said.

Hungary and Japan established diplomatic relations during the time of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy,

Baranyi noted, adding that the two countries will organise a number of different commemorative events to mark the 150th anniversary. The deputy state secretary noted the recent visit to Budapest by Japanese Princess Kako of Akishino, adding that Hungarian President János Áder is scheduled to attend Japanese Emperor Naruhito's enthronement ceremony in Tokyo later this month. Kuni Sato, Japan's ambassador to Hungary, noted that Japan and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy concluded their friendship, trade and shipping agreement on October 18, 1869.

Two of the stamps to be issued jointly by the Hungarian and Japanese postal services were designed by Yasuko Yamada. The remaining eight will feature the same themes for both countries but were designed individually by the national postal services. The Hungarian stamps were designed by Ágnes Berta.

## SZIJJÁRTÓ IN TALKS WITH MINISTERS OF WATER MANAGEMENT

Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Péter Szijjártó has had talks with ministers of water management concerning business opportunities linked to Hungarian water technology. Szijjártó met the Indian, Laos and Kuwaiti ministers of water management as well as North Macedonia's environment minister at the 2019 international Budapest World Summit, the foreign ministry said in a statement. The engineering expertise of Hungarian companies is in demand in Asia, the Middle East and the Balkans when it comes to irrigation, sewerage and waste-water treatment systems, the statement said.

India's Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said his government regards water infrastructure and security as a strategic issue, adding that Hungarian

companies and their services were welcome in India. The Ganges purification scheme could provide a good opportunity for cooperation between Hungarian and Indian water operators, he said.

Laos's minister thanked Szijjártó for Hungary's provision of mobile water purifiers which ensure drinking water for around 3,000 people each day in Attapeu province.

Kuwait's minister of oil, electricity and water, Khalid Ali Mohammad Al-Fadel, said that the medium and long-term management of water resources in the Middle East was a high priority, adding that Kuwait, too, is interested in Hungarian water technology and training provided by Hungarian water management experts.

Szijjártó also met North Macedonia's environment minister, Naser Nuredini, and discussed business opportunities for Hungarian companies, including sewage treatment and building irrigation and sewerage systems.