

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Péter Komka

Early morning fog near Salgótarján, in northern Hungary

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Stats office report on commercial lodgings in Aug**

**Coronavirus updates**

**Hungary takes delivery of two H145M military helicopters**

## TOP STORY

# PARLIAMENT VOTES TO EXTEND STATE OF EMERGENCY

Parliament passed a law on the government's response to the second wave of the novel coronavirus epidemic, extending the state of emergency declared due to the pandemic for a period of 90 days.

The legislation was approved in an expedited procedure with a vote of 180 for and one against. Parliament may rescind the government's emergency powers before the state of emergency expires. Under the law, the government is required to regularly brief lawmakers on its pandemic response measures.

In its justification of the bill, the government said it aimed to "continue saving lives", adding that this required "quickness and an ability to respond" to the epidemic. The "special legal order" in connection with the coronavirus epidemic came into effect last Wednesday.

Hungary's constitution allows the government to declare a state of emergency for a period of 15 days, but the approval of two-thirds of lawmakers is required for any extension. A state of emergency allows the government to suspend the application of some legislation, diverge from legal provisions and take other extraordinary measures by decree.

The prime minister on Monday announced a new round of restrictive measures, including a curfew between 8pm and 5am.

Hungary Matters is an English-language newsletter produced and distributed by the Media Service Support and Asset Management Fund (MTVA) with content provided by Duna Media Service Provider exercises copyright over all content. No part of this publication may be copied, reproduced, redistributed or transmitted without prior written permission from the publisher, with the exception of copies made by individuals for private use, educational purposes or scholarly research, provided that such transmissions do not exceed the extent justified by the purpose and are not aimed at financial gain, even indirectly, and the source name are indicated at all times.

All rights reserved. Enquiries should be made to the English Help Desk at +361 441 9340  
For MTI's real time coverage please visit <http://english.mti.hu>, <http://econews.hu>



---

## **ORBÁN CALLS FOR OBSERVING NEW RESTRICTIONS**

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán called on Hungarians to observe the latest coronavirus restrictions after parliament voted to extend the government's state-of-emergency powers for another 90 days. "We will manage it together, if we band together and observe the restrictive measures coming into force in response to the coronavirus pandemic," Orbán said in a video on Facebook. "Parliament granted the government enhanced powers, the relevant decrees have been drafted and the restrictive measures will take effect as of midnight today," Orbán said after signing the decrees. "I ask you all to observe the rules," he said. "Let's take care of each other, in particular our parents and grandparents, and the elderly and the ill."

---

## **MÜLLER: FAVIPRAVIR ARRIVES FROM CHINA, EXPECTED FROM JAPAN**

Hungary received one million doses of Favipiravir last weekend from China, while the same amount of the Covid-19 drug is expected to arrive from Japan on Saturday, Cecília Müller, the country's chief medical officer, said. Speaking at the regular daily press conference of the central coronavirus board, Müller said that flu vaccines were being supplied to general practitioners "continuously".

She said the goal was to slow down the epidemic and to maintain the safe operation of the health system.

Outlining recent figures, Müller said that Nov. 4 had seen the highest number of daily cases so far (5,319), adding that during the past week the average age of new patients was 45 years. In every 100,000 residents 1,540 Covid-19 patients are in the 20-29 age group, 1,331 are between 30-39, 1,632 are 40-49, and 1,473 are 50-59. Fully 1,589 patients are aged 60-79, and 1,408 are older than 80 per 100,000 residents, she said. Müller also said that currently Győr-Moson-Sopron County, in the north-west, had the largest number of patients (1,174) per 100,000 residents so far.

---

## **103 CORONAVIRUS FATALITIES, INFECTIONS UP 4,140**

Fully 103 patients, mostly elderly with an underlying illness, have died over the past 24 hours, while 4,140 new coronavirus infections have been registered, bringing the total number of infections since the outbreak in the spring to 118,918, koronavirus.gov.hu said on Tuesday. The death toll has risen to 2,596, while 27,585 people have made a recovery. There are 88,737 active infections and 6,153 hospitalised patients, 461 on a ventilator. Fully 36,078 people are in official home quarantine, while the number of tests carried out stands at 1,238,467.

The government has restored the "special legal order", allowing it to take

fast action and a vote is being held today in parliament on extending by 90 days. Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, in a video on Facebook, announced the government will extend the curfew to be in force between 8pm and 5am, and restrict opening hours of shops and other services starting at midnight on Tuesday. Universities and secondary schools above the eighth grade will return to digital education while facilities for children under the age of 14 will remain open, he said. No more than ten people will be allowed to gather at private events or family gatherings, and sporting events will have to be held behind closed doors, he said. People can exercise outdoors but amateur team sports are banned, Orbán said. Parking has been made free of charge once again with a view to reducing crowds on public transport. So far most people have been registered in Budapest (29,358) and Pest County (15,451), followed by the counties of Győr-Moson-Sopron (8,468), Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén (7,002) and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg (6,236). Tolna County has the fewest infections (1,478).

---

## **FIDESZ MEP SLAMS LEFTIST OPPOSITION FOR THWARTING PROPOSAL ON ISLAMIST TERRORISM**

Leftist MEPs of the European Parliament, including those of Hungary's Democratic Coalition and Momentum parties, on Monday voted down a right-wing proposal to put issues around Islamist terrorism in

Europe on the agenda, ruling Fidesz MEP Balázs Hidvéghi told public media. "Europe's left wing refused to talk about terrorist acts committed by migrants, while innocent Europeans are slain in the street" he said, insisting that "forced immigration and the wave of terrorism sweeping across Europe are closely related". He also suggested that the perpetrators "may have travelled on a migrant ship of a leftist NGO just a month ago". "Every life is equally important, but for the left wing, innocent European lives are just a little less," the MEP said, noting that a discussion in the European Parliament's LIBE civil liberties, justice and home affairs committee focused on the recent fire at a refugee camp in Greece.

### **KARÁCSONY: GOVT WOULD BE 'REJECTING HELPING HAND' BY VETOING EU BUDGET**

The Hungarian government would be "rejecting a helping hand" in the middle of the coronavirus crisis if it vetoed the European Union's next multi-year budget and post-pandemic recovery package, Budapest Mayor Gergely Karácsony said. Addressing an online press conference after a board meeting of the alliance of local governments MÖSZ, Karácsony, a co-chair of the alliance, said Hungary's local governments backed and were ready to implement the new round of virus-related restrictions announced by the government on Monday. He

added, at the same time, that the measures came at a cost to budgets and society that "needs to be paid together".

"The more restrictions that are implemented, the more we have to be prepared for an economic slowdown that will threaten jobs," Karácsony said. "That's why the government would be rejecting a helping hand in this crisis by ... vetoing the European Union budget with reference to the plan to tie the distribution of funds to rule of law criteria," he said. Karácsony said this was "irresponsible" on the part of the government and called on Hungary's leaders to do everything they can to ensure that the country and its localities have access to EU monies as quickly as possible. "This is practically Hungary's only option for staying afloat," Karácsony said, adding that it was the Hungarian people, and not the government, that was in need of the 2,500 billion forints' (EUR 6.96bn) worth of funding the country is entitled to. And since local governments are the ones closest to the people, he said, the direct funding of localities should be strengthened.

Concerning the initiative to ensure direct EU funding to localities, the mayor noted that the European Parliament's relevant committees on Monday passed resolutions that would ensure the involvement of localities in the decision-making process on the distribution of funds.

Benedek Jávor, representative of the Budapest Municipal Council in Brussels, said it was a testament to the lobbying

efforts of the municipal council over the past several months that the involvement of local councils when it comes to deciding on the use of EU funds, in particular of the recovery fund, was set to be strengthened.

### **REFORMED CHURCH TO STOP SERVICES, CATHOLICS TO CONTINUE**

The Hungarian Reformed Church has called on its communities not to hold services or other events starting on Wednesday. The presidium of the church said in a statement that Reformed communities should revert to online services as they did during the first wave of the coronavirus epidemic in the spring. Community board and other meetings should also be held online, the statement said. Weddings and funerals should be held in line with the government's new restrictive measures, the statement said.

The Catholic Church said earlier that masses could be held in line with the new restrictions. The Catholic Bishops' Conference (MKPK) said that "churches, as places for spiritual renewal and prayer, are especially important and will continue to be open". MKPK said that those who cannot attend mass in person could participate in services online or on television "to get confirmation, comfort, and encouragement". The conference also advised elderly church members and those feeling ill to stay away from the community and exempted them from the religious obligation of attending mass.

---

## **MINISTER: HUNGARY FAMILY POLICY AIMED AT SLOWING POPULATION DECLINE, SUPPORTING COUPLES WITH CHILDREN**

Hungary's family policy aims to slow the country's population decline by encouraging young couples to have children and to support those couples who have entered parenthood, Katalin Novák, the minister for family affairs, said at the second Hungarian-Polish Forum. Addressing a panel discussion, the minister said the biggest challenge facing Europe concerned demography. The matter of raising children has its own challenges during the novel coronavirus pandemic, Novák said, arguing that grandparents, for instance, were not able to be as active in looking after children as they normally would. The Hungarian government moved to extend the period of eligibility for childcare benefits as early as the first wave of the pandemic, she said.

Concerning education, she said the government was trying to continue on with in-person classes for younger students for the time being, arguing that it was better for children's intellectual and physical development. Though the switch to online classes worked out well in the spring, only universities and secondary schools above the eighth grade will return to that arrangement for now, Novák said. She noted that the government was not cutting back on, but rather

expanding its family benefits during the economic slowdown caused by the pandemic.

---

## **DRAMA, FILM UNIVERSITY STUDENTS VOW TO CONTINUE PROTEST OUTSIDE FACILITIES**

Students of Budapest's University of Theatre and Film Arts (SZFE) have decided to continue their protest against changes affecting the university outside the university's facilities, they said in the wake of new restrictions concerning the coronavirus pandemic. The university will switch over to digital education on Wednesday, they said. Under the new restrictions taking effect at midnight, students are obliged to leave the university buildings on Tuesday.

---

## **NATIONAL MUSEUM TO CLOSE DUE TO CORONAVIRUS**

The Hungarian National Museum and its affiliates will be closed from Wednesday on due to coronavirus-related restrictions. The museum said on Tuesday that its staff would be working on the museum's websites, making a large part of its programmes available online, including guided tours of the collections scheduled for November. Collections belonging to the National Museum that will also stay closed include the Semmelweis Medical History Museum, the Esztergom Castle Museum, the Rákóczi

Museum in Sárospatak and the King Matthias Museum in Visegrád and smaller museums elsewhere. The museums are planning to stay closed until December 10.

---

## **FIDESZ PROTESTS PLANNED CONSTRUCTION AT SWIMMING POOL SITE IN BUDAPEST**

Fidesz is protesting alleged plans by "Budapest's left-liberal leadership" to allow construction at the site of a former open-air swimming pool complex in Cinkota, in the eastern suburbs of the city, a ruling party lawmaker has said. Kristóf Szatmári said the metropolitan council was conducting a review of the capital's zoning rules under which the site of the recreational grounds may be classified as a development area. The 22,000sqm area could easily serve as the construction site for a shopping mall, Szatmári speculated. Szatmári said that the district government was working to preserve the area. The swimming pool was closed after the 1989 change in political system and is now a "community space" in private hands. "The city is seeking to bypass the district and re-zone the site" in an effort "to punish the district", he insisted.

---

## **SZIJJÁRTÓ ANNOUNCES SEMCORP INVESTMENT IN HUNGARY**

Shanghai-based Semcorp, a supplier of parts for electric vehicle batteries,

will set up a 65.5 billion forint (EUR 182.6m) plant in Debrecen, in eastern Hungary, Péter Szijjártó, the minister of foreign affairs and trade, said in a video message on Facebook. The government is supporting the construction of the lithium battery isolation membrane plant, which will create 440 jobs, with a 13 billion forint grant, Szijjártó said. The 100,000sqm plant will be Semcorp's first outside of China, he added. Szijjártó said Semcorp had picked Hungary over three other European countries competing to become the site for the new plant. With the plant, the volume of Chinese investments in Hungary will exceed 5 billion dollars. Chinese-owned companies employ more than 15,000 people in the country.

### **HUNGARY INFLATION EASES TO 3% YR/YR IN OCT**

Consumer prices in Hungary rose by an annual 3.0% in October, level with the medium-term target of the National Bank of Hungary (NBH), the Central Statistical Office (KSH) has said. Headline CPI fell from 3.4% in

September and 3.9% in August. Food prices rose by 6.5% and prices of spirits and tobacco - lifted by tax changes - were up 6.1%. Prices for both groups of products climbed at a slower pace than in the previous month. Prices in the category of goods that includes vehicle fuel fell by 0.9% as vehicle fuel prices dropped by 5.3%. Clothing prices edged 0.5% lower, consumer durable prices rose by 2.9% and household energy prices inched up 0.2%. Service prices were up 2.4%. Core inflation, which excludes volatile fuel and food prices, was 3.8%.

### **MUNICIPAL COURT INCREASES AFGHAN MAN'S PRISON TERM FOR RAPE**

A Budapest court increased the prison sentence of an Afghan national convicted of rape, coercion and indecency to six years and eight months in a bidding ruling on Tuesday, the court's press department said in a statement. The Budapest Municipal Court expelled the man from the country for seven years under the same ruling, the statement said. The

man was sentenced to five years and eight months in prison on March 4 by a Budapest district court. According to that ruling the man raped a woman in the toilet of a Turkish restaurant in downtown Budapest in September 2018. On a separate occasion, he forcibly kissed and groped a woman on the street in Budapest's 7th district and flashed another. He was arrested on a European warrant in Austria. The Afghan man received asylum protection in Hungary in the summer of 2017. It was lifted last summer.

### **TURKISH NATIONAL TRANSPORTING 38 MIGRANTS ARRESTED IN S HUNGARY**

Police arrested a Turkish national who transported 38 migrants in his van, the Tolna County police has said. The migrants, who claimed to be Syrian, could not prove their identity or that they were in Hungary legally, the statement said. The van was inspected at the Dunaszentgyörgy motorway stop. The police are questioning the driver and the migrants, it added.