

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Péter Komka

Moss near Salgótarján (NE Hungary)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Foreign ministers meet in Brussels**

**Plenary session of parliament**

**Coronavirus updates**

## TOP STORY

# FIDESZ CONGRESS RE-ELECTS ORBÁN AS PARTY LEADER

Viktor Orbán, the prime minister, was re-elected as leader of Hungary's ruling Fidesz at the party's 29th congress in Budapest on Sunday.

Addressing the congress, Orbán said Fidesz "has remained loyal to itself, to Hungary and the Hungarian people" ever since it was established, Orbán said, adding that Fidesz stands for loyalty, faith and trust and it is a loyal party. "Over the past 33 years, more Hungarians voted in favour of our party than in favour of any other party in the history of Hungarian parliament," he said.

"We are successful, because what Fidesz is doing is its passion," Orbán said. "We are aiming to reach the top, and that is where we want to take Hungary as well," he said. Orbán said that "sixteen years in opposition and sixteen years in government can only be done with unwavering optimism, confidence and deep faith", adding that Fidesz is a political community the members of which "believe in patriotism and productive life".

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**ORBÁN: ‘WE WILL PAY THE FULL 13TH-MONTH PENSION’**

Viktor Orbán, re-elected as the leader of governing Fidesz at the party’s 29th congress on Sunday, said that “In the coming months, we will see things that have not been seen before. It started with the 80,000-forint pension bonus paid to pensioners and will continue with the payment of the full 13th-month pension”. Young people will not be paying a personal income tax from January, the minimum wage will be 200,000 forints (EUR 548) and the minimum wage for skilled labourers will be 260,000 forints, the prime minister said, adding that members of the military and the police will be paid a six-month bonus. Wages for nurses and those working in the social and cultural sectors will increase by 20 percent. Families will be refunded the tax paid in 2021.

“This has never happened before,” Orbán said. He said a government or a country cannot be successful if it does not have clear objectives. He said Fidesz had set clear goals twelve years ago which included creating one million jobs, restoring public order and public safety, protecting pensioners and the value of pensions, giving priority to families, restoring Budapest to its earlier fame, caring for Hungarian communities abroad and standing up for the interests of Hungarians in Brussels, among others.

“We took over a bankrupted country from the Socialists which we revived and put on a growth path,” Orbán said. “This is our moral asset, and this is why we are asking for the support of Hungarian voters again,” he said.

Orbán said that if Fidesz-KDNP can continue to govern, Hungary can make huge progress again in the next ten years and move up to join the group of developed countries. “We can eliminate poverty. We can become a country that is green, healthy, preserves its natural treasures, and a nation that lives longer and healthier lives,” Orbán said. Others recommend that Hungary should not strive for more, the prime minister said. “We cannot settle for what we have achieved because there are still Hungarians who are poor. There are still not enough children being born. Not everyone has a nice home. Not everyone has a high enough pay or pension. Quite simply, we need more. Why would we settle for what we have?” he said.

**ORBÁN CALLS SECURITY MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR HUNGARY**

Addressing the 29th congress of ruling Fidesz on Sunday, Viktor Orbán said that security was the most important issue for Hungary as well when the world is faced by challenges posed by migration and a pandemic. “The most important goal for us is to safeguard what we have achieved so far; we must protect our borders from migrants,” he

said. Orbán said that another challenge was plans by “an international network led by Brussels” to levy “brutal taxes” on households, claiming that they should pay the costs of climate protection measures instead of multinational companies, the largest polluters. “The situation is quite worrying in the whole of Europe, and it is particularly dangerous in Hungary because there will be a general election here,” Orbán said. “Brussels must be completely renewed before it falls to pieces”.

Orbán said that the European Union is stumbling from crisis to crisis, “a rainbow-coloured shadow of itself,” and “if it goes on like this, it will waste away like the waning moon”. That is why Fidesz supports the Polish initiative to reorganise the entire European right, he said. “We must not passively accept every plan of Brussels,” Orbán said, adding that “we want to keep our sovereignty and do not want a United States of Europe instead of integration”.

“We support integration, but not unification,” the prime minister said.

Our goal is to bring about change, “we do not have the slightest intention to exit from the EU, it’s not that easy to get rid of us,” he said, adding that “we will stay and demand change”.

Unification by stealth must be stopped, Orbán said, because that is not in the interest of the people of Europe, but of politicians and bureaucrats and the leaders of multinational companies. “We are opposed to the creation of a new European human race that is politically

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correct and thinks in multicultural terms, every state has the right to stay out of this just as we have the right to stay out of the great European resettlement scheme disguised as migration," he said. The prime minister said Western European countries and the United States are gradually losing their role as economic leaders. "This is a new situation, and we, Hungarians have to adapt to that," Orbán added.

"We have to establish the best possible trade and economic relations with Asia and China." "Mutual respect, good diplomatic relations, expanding investments, growing trade": this is the Hungarian interest," Orbán said.

If a party has found a way to serve not the ideals and ideologies but the people and is willing to act accordingly, it will become a force to reckon with, the prime minister said. "We were able to seize the opportunity: a strong, united party with a serious vision, passion and enthusiasm on one side, and tiny, power-hungry parties on the other side," he said.

"With our policies, even those who do not vote for us are better off, whereas with the policies of the left, even those who vote for them are worse off," he added.

"We believe in work, and that is why we will win," Orbán said. In recent months, in spite of the pandemic, "we re-ignited the engines" and "the economy is humming". "Our programme is backed by an overwhelming majority in society," Orbán said. "The only question is whether this social majority will

become an electoral majority," he said, adding that "I believe it will if we work hard in the remaining weeks".

He noted that many people attended the commemoration (of the 1956 uprising) on October 23, but "there will be twice or three times more of us when we turn into the home stretch, ... and we will go through the thickest wall and win again, because Hungary must go forward and not backward," the prime minister said.

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### **GULYÁS: 'NEXT YEAR'S PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION CRUCIAL'**

Next year's general election will be crucial, Gergely Gulyás, the Prime Minister's chief of staff, said at the 29th congress of ruling Fidesz in Budapest on Sunday. Next spring, "we will be choosing a future, we can decide between present and past", Gulyás said.

"After the left, led by Ferenc Gyurcsány, ruined the country in 2010, they set themselves two goals," Gulyás said. "They needed to get rid of the legacy of the former prime minister and quarantine Jobbik, which they called a Nazi party". "More than a decade later, the left, led by Ferenc Gyurcsány, is fighting for power with Jobbik in their ranks," he said.

While the left took the 13th-month pension away from pensioners, Fidesz is working to give it back to them. Today, the minimum wage is higher than the average wage was under the Gyurcsány era, Gulyás said.

He said the previous government had indebted and bankrupted the country while the current cabinet has cut taxes and managed to substantially reduce the country's debt by the start of the coronavirus pandemic. Gulyás contrasted the 7% contraction of the economy in 2009 with this year's 7% economic growth, pointing out that the left doubled the price of electricity and tripled the price of gas over eight years, while the incumbent government reduced utility prices by 20% over the past decade. He noted that the government had granted citizenship to more than one million Hungarians who are part of a unified Hungarian nation. The ten years before the outbreak of the pandemic was the most successful decade in the past century, and Fidesz is still the only hope for Hungary at the moment, Gulyás said.

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### **KÖVÉR: 'WE WILL WIN AGAIN IN 2022'**

Standing on the bulwark of Europe, we will win for the fourth time in 2022, László Kövér, the speaker of parliament, said at the 29th congress of ruling Fidesz in Budapest on Sunday. "The forces of globalism and their local representatives came against us three times over the past decade, but we, listening to both our minds and our hearts, have defeated them three times," in a democratic and peaceful manner, Kövér said. "We have helped Hungary win three times over the past decade, and we

have received strength from God and the confidence of our nation three times," he said.

"The lords of East and West are again playing their dirty games at our expense, in which we are once again destined to play the role of virtual cannon fodder", he said. If we cannot organise central Europe into a political factor worthy of its growing economic power and population, we deserve to have history repeated with us, Kövér said.

Addressing the congress, Zsolt Semjén, the leader of the allied ruling Christian Democrats (KDNP), said that "the Fidesz-KDNP alliance is a political community, the most successful one in the European Union and in the history of Hungarian politics. The essence of Fidesz-KDNP is that it is not only an alliance, but a real community, one that has won every parliamentary election with an absolute majority since 2008. And this is not going to be different this time," Semjén said, referring to the next parliamentary election in spring 2022. "Our goal, the reason why we are doing all this is to protect Christian civilisation against an invasion of migrants and the LGBTQ craze, as well as to protect our national sovereignty," he said.

Kinga Gál, an MEP of Fidesz, who was elected a vice president of the party, said that a major difference of opinion in Europe was the way the issue of demography is addressed. "A certain part of the continent wants to resolve the problem with migration," she said, adding, however, that Fidesz's position is that a different composition of the population in Europe would change

Europe's identity. "We must avoid that," Gal said, adding that "the future of Hungary, and the whole of Europe, is in families".

Judit Varga, the justice minister, told the congress that "It was worth taking on the conflicts with the bureaucrats in Brussels and represent the interests of Hungarians despite all the difficulties, because with our persistent policies we can slowly change the whole of Europe". "We have been proven right. The Hungarian people has been proven right on the really important issues," she said. Varga said the government was right not to support the banks during the financial crisis but the people, it was right on public utility price cuts and on stopping illegal migration, and many countries are now following the Hungarian model. Hungary, along with its allies, stands up for the sovereignty of nation states because "we believe that everyone should put their own homeland and the interests of their own people first", the minister said.

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### **ORBÁN: HUNGARY INITIATES BUDAPEST SUMMIT OF TURKIC COUNCIL, V4 IN 2022**

Hungary is initiating a high-level summit of the leaders of the Turkic Council and the Visegrad Group (V4) in Budapest in the first half of 2022, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said at the summit of the Turkic Council in Istanbul on Friday. Addressing the summit, Orbán noted that Hungary is holding

the presidency of the Visegrad Group it forms with the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia until July 1 next year. The prime minister also touched on the shared historical and cultural heritage of the Hungarian and Turkic peoples, saying Hungarians were proud of that heritage. As regards Hungary's previous commitments to the Turkic Council, Orbán said Hungary had elevated its ties with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to a strategic partnership and had opened an embassy in Bishkek. Concerning education ties, he said Hungary has increased the number of scholarships it offers to university students from the Turkic countries to 870. Turning to economic relations, Orbán said Hungary's Eximbank has opened a 545 million dollar credit line to help finance business cooperation and Hungary and Kyrgyzstan last week launched a 16 million dollar joint development fund. Orbán said the Hungarian government supported the establishment of a Turkic investment fund and asked the council to enable Hungary to join it once it is set up. Hungary is prepared to contribute to the fund's capital, he added.

As regards the situation in Afghanistan, Orbán said Europe was facing an "unprecedented challenge" when it came to migration and for the first time was under pressure from three directions. Stopping the emergence of new migration waves from Afghanistan, he added, was a fundamental security interest for Hungary. The prime minister assured

the Turkic Council that he would not approve any European Union decision that ignores the security interests of the Turkic countries.

### **EC ASKS CJEU TO FINE HUNGARY FOR ASYLUM RULES NON-COMPLIANCE**

The European Commission on Friday said it decided to ask the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) to start fining Hungary for the country's failure to comply with a CJEU ruling on the application of rules on asylum and return. The EC is asking the CJEU to impose financial sanctions in the form of a lump sum and a daily penalty payment. The EC noted that the CJEU ruled on December 17, 2020, that Hungarian legislation on rules and practices in transit zones on the country's border

with Serbia violated EU law. "As of today, Hungary has not addressed several aspects of the judgment. In particular, Hungary has not taken the measures necessary to ensure effective access to the asylum procedure. Hungary has also not clarified the conditions pertaining to the right to remain on the territory in case of an appeal in an asylum procedure, in the event where there is no 'crisis situation caused by mass immigration,'" the EC said.

In response, the Hungarian government's communications centre (KTK) said that "Brussels won't rest" until it forces another procedure and penalty onto Hungary over its migration rules. In a statement, the KTK insisted that the EU was "putting pressure on Hungary for our protecting the borders and saying no to accommodating migrants".

### **FINANCE MINISTER: ECONOMIC CABINET DECIDES ON HUF 750 BN OF TAX CUTS**

The economic cabinet has decided on 750 billion forints (2.044 billion euros) of tax cuts, with payroll taxes to be reduced further, Finance Minister Mihály Varga said on Facebook on Saturday. Social security contributions will be reduced by 2.5 percentage points from January 1, the vocational training contribution will be abolished, the small business tax rate will be cut to 10% and the local business tax relief for SMEs will be extended so these companies will again pay a maximum of 1% tax next year, Varga said. The total amount of the tax cuts this year and in 2022 will reach 2,000 billion forints, he said.