

PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTVI/Tiborlivics

Deputies take an oath at the inaugural session of parliament

UPCOMING EVENTS

War in Ukraine

Coronavirus updates

Plenary session of European Parliament

TOP STORY

LAWMAKERS TAKE OATHS

Hungary's lawmakers took their oaths on Monday at the start of the new parliamentary cycle.

The ruling Fidesz-Christian Democrat alliance has 135 seats in the 199-seat parliament, the Democratic Coalition has 15 seats, while Jobbik, Momentum and the Socialists have 10 each. The radical Mi Hazánk (Our Homeland) party, which passed the parliamentary threshold for the first time in 2022, garnered six mandates, as did Párbeszéd. The green LMP party has five seats. The German minority has one seat, and one lawmaker was expected to sit in the assembly as an independent. The new parliament's inaugural session was opened by President János Áder.

Lawmakers of the opposition Democratic Coalition (DK) and Momentum parties left the session immediately after the oath-taking ceremony. Momentum said on Facebook ahead of the session that its lawmakers had taken an "alternative oath" to serve the "entire society rather than a small privileged elite."

Ákos Hadrházy, who won a mandate as an independent, did not attend the ceremony, and since he did not take his oath, he is not entitled to exercise rights as a lawmaker.

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KOC SIS CALLS ON OPPOSITION LAWMAKERS TO TAKE THEIR JOBS SERIOUSLY

Máté Kocsis, the group leader of ruling Fidesz, reacting to the walk-out by DK and Momentum lawmakers, said parliament was their “workplace” and they must take their work as seriously as they would in any other workplace.

The work of a lawmaker is regulated by the Hungarian constitution and parliamentary law, Kocsis said on Facebook, adding that a lawmaker who disregarded the law and only cared about being paid was unworthy of his or her parliamentary position.

Opening the inaugural session, President János Áder called on lawmakers to “affirm national interests” as well as support the prosperity and security of Hungarians, and to reject “self-serving, myopic politics” or actions which “serve foreign interests and sow discord and lies”. Given that Hungarian voters expressed their will in the general election, the new parliament and government is legitimate and must be respected by all, he said. Áder proposed that the parliament elect Viktor Orbán as Hungary’s next prime minister.

The outgoing president noted that the 2022 election had witnessed more observer missions and fewer procedures seeking legal remedy than any other election since 1990.

Áder warned Hungary faced “difficult years to come”, with the coronavirus pandemic lingering, albeit in a “milder

form”. “The war in Ukraine also seems to be dragging out and an economic crisis is about to kick our door down,” he said, adding that the war was expected to keep prices high and possibly raise them further. The new parliament will need “all its experience in crisis management” to steer Hungary amid those circumstances, he said.

“The voters’ mandate is clear... Success requires superhuman effort. But no matter the difficulties, the debates you have to stand your ground in, no matter how the vile attacks you will be exposed to, never forget: the country before all,” Áder said.

KÖVÉR: HUNGARY DOING BETTER NOW THAN AT ANY TIME POST-1990

The Hungarian nation, its society and families are doing better today than at any time since the 1989/1990 change in political system, László Kövér (Fidesz) said after being reelected Speaker of Parliament on Monday. It is this improvement and increasing prosperity that are behind the election result, he said during the inaugural session of the new parliament. “At the same time, we’re living in times of danger, and the achievements of the past 32 years are endangered by the financial and economic crisis, illegal migration, the pandemic and the war in our neighbourhood,” he said. Kövér was elected speaker in a secret ballot. As the sole candidate, he received 170 votes in favour and 13 against out of the 183 MPs present in the chamber.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARIAN EMBASSY REOPENS IN KIEV

The Hungarian embassy has moved back to Kiev, Péter Szijjártó, the foreign minister, said on Monday. Given the improving security situation in Kiev, Hungary, like other European Union countries, decided to transfer its embassy back to the Ukrainian capital from Lviv. The necessary security arrangements have been put in place, and the embassy can now maintain close contact with Ukrainian government bodies and provide assistance to Hungarian or other EU citizens in need, he said on Facebook. Szijjártó said he leaves Budapest for talks in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan later in the day.

GOVT SPOX: HUNGARY GOVT CONTINUES TO REJECT GAS AND OIL EMBARGO ON RUSSIA

Hungary’s stance on embargoes on Russia oil and gas has not changed, Zoltán Kovács, the state secretary for international communications, said in a Facebook post. “We do not support them” Kovács said, reacting to the German ZDF television channel’s reports on Hungary, Slovakia and Austria withdrawing their veto blocking sanctions on Russian crude oil imports into the European Union. Citing a high-ranking EU official, ZDF said that Germany’s announcement in support

of the veto had tipped the balance, with all EU countries now in favour of stopping the imports of Russian crude oil, as a punitive measure in response to Russia's attack on Ukraine.

TOROCZKAI: 'JOBBIK WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RUN ON ITS OWN ANY MORE'

Several parties including Jobbik would not be strong enough to run on their own in a general election, László Toroczkai, the leader of the radical Mi Hazánk (Our Homeland) party, said ahead of the inaugural session of Hungary's new parliament. Toroczkai told public news channel M1 that the opposition parties' decision to set up a joint list was "unfair", as it allowed parties "without nationwide representation" to enter parliament. He called the meeting of parties on distributing house positions after the ballot "a circus" arguing that "left liberal lawmakers did indeed appear at the talks but left short after which forestalled real work".

He slammed the former radical-now-moderate conservative Jobbik party as a "threat for national security ... as the party has cozied up first to Russia, then the United States, and changes its stance according to its needs."

He said Mi Hazánk was vying for the leadership of parliament's national security and business development committees. "We would however welcome if talks on assigning positions would be held publicly instead of in smoke-filled rooms," Toroczkai said.

RMDSZ LEADER CALLS ON ROMANIAN HUNGARIANS TO DECLARE NATIONALITY IN CENSUS

Hunor Kelemen, leader of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ), called on Hungarians to participate in Romania's ongoing census, saying that "if the Romanian state sees Hungarians in Romania as a robust community, it will have a different approach to them." Speaking to public news channel M1, Kelemen noted that in the previous census ten years ago, 1,260,000 respondents had declared themselves Hungarian. This year's census results will determine the public policy decisions towards ethnic communities for the next ten years, including language use, education in the mother tongue and the level of state support, he said. "It is most important that the Romanian state should see us as a strong community as much as we should also see ourselves as a strong community," the RMDSZ leader said. He called on people to filling out the questionnaire online by May 16 and answer every question, including those on ethnic and religious identity.

POLICE: OVER 11,000 REFUGEES ARRIVE FROM UKRAINE ON SUNDAY

Fully 4,596 people crossed into Hungary directly from Ukraine on Sunday, while another 6,826 from

Ukraine crossed from Romania, the national police headquarters said. Police issued temporary residence permits valid for thirty days to 679 people, the police website said on Monday. Holders of such permits must contact a local immigration office near their place of residence within thirty days to apply for permanent documents, it added. Budapest police received 675 refugees, 251 children among them, by train, according to the municipal police website.

Meanwhile, the municipal government office of Budapest said staff at the BOK sports and events centre serving as a humanitarian transit point had helped 408 refugees on Sunday, accommodating 103 of whom stayed overnight.

HUNGARY RECORDS 65 COVID DEATHS, 2,183 NEW INFECTIONS OVER WEEKEND

Altogether 65 patients died of a Covid-related illness over the weekend, while 2,183 new coronavirus infections were registered, koronavirus.gov.hu said on Monday. So far 6,407,042 people have received a first jab, while 6,193,238 have been double-jabbed. Fully 3,865,508 Hungarians have received a booster third shot and 289,852 a fourth shot. The number of active infections dropped further, to 48,873, while hospitals are treating 1,310 Covid-19 patients, 40 of whom are intubated on a ventilator. Since the first outbreak, 1,903,200 have been registered with

the virus, while 46,266 deaths have been recorded. Fully 1,808,061 people have made a recovery.

In view of improving numbers, the government website announced it will publish pandemic-related data once a week from May.

KSH: HUNGARY TRADE BALANCE SHOWS EUR 117 M DEFICIT IN FEB

Hungary's trade balance showed a 117 million euro deficit in February, the Central Statistical Office (KSH) confirmed in a second reading of data. In Hungary, an export-driven economy where trade surpluses are the norm, had a trade deficit for the eighth month in a row, KSH said. Exports rose by an annual 18.7% to 11.500 billion euros and imports climbed by 30.5% to 11.617 billion euros. Trade with other European Union member states accounted for 76% of exports and 70% of imports. Hungary's terms of trade deteriorated by 7.1% during the period as the forint edged up 0.3% to the euro but weakened by 6.3% against the dollar.

PMI CLIMBS TO 58.9 IN APRIL

Hungary's seasonally-adjusted Purchasing Managers Index (PMI)

rose to 58.9 points in April from 57.6 in March, the Hungarian Association of Logistics, Purchasing and Inventory Management (Halpim) said on Monday.

A PMI over 50 signals expansion in the manufacturing sector.

Among the PMI sub-indices, the new orders index climbed from the previous month and remained over 50. The production volume index also rose and stayed over the 50-point mark. The employment index increased, and showed growth. Delivery times were longer than in March.

The gauge of purchased inventories rose at a slower pace and was over the 50-point mark.

SAMARANCH URGES HUNGARY TO BID FOR SUMMER OLYMPICS

Juan Antonio Samaranch, deputy head of the International Olympic Committee, has proposed that Hungary should aim to host the Summer Olympic Games.

Paying a visit to Budapest to attend a pentathlon world cup competition, Samaranch praised Hungary for its many new sports facilities, and said that the Hungarian Olympic Committee was on the up and up. He also spoke highly of the country's commitment to the Olympic

movement, adding that the Hungarian government was "sports-driven". Samaranch said "very few countries in Europe are more suited" to host Olympic Games than Hungary.

GIRO D'ITALIA TO START FROM BUDAPEST ON FRIDAY

Annual cycling race Giro d'Italia will set off from Budapest on Friday, with its first three stages taking place in Hungary. The competitors will include Hungary's Erik Fetter (EOLO-Kometa), Barnabás Peak (Intermarche-Wanty-Gobert Materiaux), and Attila Valter (Groupama-FDJ). The teams will be presented in a celebration in Heroes' Square on Wednesday afternoon, while the actual race will start with a 195km stage via Székesfehérvár and Esztergom to Visegrád on Friday, to be followed with a 9.2km time session in the heart of Budapest, from Heroes' Square to Buda Castle, on Saturday. The last stage in Hungary will start from Kaposvár, in south-western Hungary, on Sunday, with the cyclists covering 201km through Nagykanizsa, Badacsony and Tihany to Balatonfüred. Hungary was to have hosted the "Grande Partenza" of the 2020 Giro d'Italia, but the race was postponed because of the pandemic.