

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTV/Zoltán Balogh

National Foreign Language Library launches lending automat

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**President Novák on official visit to Kosovo**

**European Parliament holds plenary session**

**Budapest Classics Film Marathon opens**

## TOP STORY

# SZIJJÁRTÓ: NUCLEAR ENERGY KEY AMID CRISIS

The importance of nuclear energy in ensuring supply security and a green transition has been made clear by the “largest ever” energy crisis hitting Europe, Hungary’s minister of foreign affairs and trade said in Prague.

Addressing the 7th Central & Eastern Europe Nuclear Industry Congress, Péter Szijjártó called on the European Commission to ensure that nuclear energy will not “in any way” be restricted by the sanctions imposed on Russia after it attacked Ukraine in February, the ministry said. The exemption was declared when the sanctions were adopted, and all EU and national institutions should respect that, Szijjártó said. “Delaying or hampering nuclear investments can in effect harm the sovereignty of European states, of which energy security is a key element,” Szijjártó said. Hungary sees nuclear energy, and the upgrade of its nuclear plant in Paks, as key to its energy security, and the institutions slowing the works are harming its sovereignty, he said. Due to the war in Ukraine and Brussels’ sanctions policy, Europe is now facing the “most severe energy crisis of its history”, which is now casting doubts on the continent’s energy security, he said, adding that nuclear energy provided an escape from “utterly irrational international energy prices”.

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## **FIDESZ MEP: SANCTIONS TO HAVE 'CATASTROPHIC CONSEQUENCES' FOR EU**

The EU's sanctions on Russian energy resources will have "catastrophic consequences" for the entire bloc, but little effect on Russia itself, an MEP of ruling Fidesz told public broadcaster Kossuth Radio on Monday. "When the Hungarian government expressed its doubts on the sanctions, if faced massive attacks in Hungary, in Europe and worldwide," Tamás Deutsch said, adding that the Hungarian political left supported sanctions "to an extreme extent".

Meanwhile, energy prices skyrocketed after the sanctions were introduced, and Russia had a record 158 billion euro revenue from energy exports, 85 billion of which was paid by the EU, Deutsch said. "While the EU is now buying less energy, it is paying more for it, inflation is soaring, and ensuring energy security is becoming more difficult," he said. Asked about reports that the Hungarian opposition had received 2 billion forints (EUR 5m) worth of dollars in funding from abroad for its election campaign, Deutsch said the left had breached election rules banning foreign campaign financing. "It is not difficult to draw the conclusion that George Soros has bought the Hungarian opposition which has never regained its independence since its election defeat," he said.

## **NÉZŐPONT: FIDESZ MAINTAINS LEAD**

Ruling Fidesz has maintained its lead over the opposition parties over the summer, while its support fell by 7 percentage points to 47%, the website mandiner.hu said on Monday, citing a poll by the Nézőpont Institute. Support for the opposition fell to "around 32%, even considering uncertain voters who might support a joint opposition list," Nézőpont said. Meanwhile, the ratio of undecided voters grew to 11%, Nézőpont said. It seems "those leaving Fidesz have become undecided rather than opposition supporters," Nézőpont said. The opposition Democratic Coalition (DK), Socialist, LMP, Jobbik, Párbeszéd and Momentum parties which set up a joint list in the April parliamentary election, had a 16% support at the end of August, down from 17% in July, Nézőpont said. DK and Mi Hazánk (Our Homeland) were the only parties to increase their support by 1 percentage point to 6%, respectively, the pollster said.

## **PRESIDENT NOVÁK TO ATTEND QUEEN ELIZABETH'S FUNERAL**

President Katalin Novák will attend the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom on September 19, the website Telex said on Monday, citing sources from the Sándor Palace, the president's office. Novák and her husband have received an invitation to

attend the ceremony, the website said. Queen Elizabeth II passed away last Thursday, at the age of 96. The funeral service will be held in Westminster Abbey in London, where Elizabeth married and was crowned queen.

## **IOI HEAD HAS TALKS IN HUNGARY CONCERNING UKRAINE REFUGEES**

Chris Field, the head of the International Ombudsman Institute, has started a visit in Hungary aimed at reviewing ombudsman services to refugees from Ukraine, the Hungarian ombudsman's office (AJBH) told MTI on Monday. Field arrived in Hungary at the invitation of Ombudsman Ákos Kozma. Earlier on Monday, Field visited the AJBH's regional office in Debrecen, and the Hungary-Romania border nearby. He was informed about ways of helping refugees, relevant measures taken, as well as about the information centres the AJBH had established along the Ukrainian and Romanian borders to assist new arrivals. According to the ombudsman's statement, the practice of setting up information points at the border is a novelty, and several countries have indicated their interests in building a similar system of offices in the provinces, to allow local residents easier access to ombudsman services. In the next few days, Field will visit the Hungary-Ukraine border, and meet the head of the Constitutional Court, as well as police, immigration authority officials and leaders of the penitentiary system.

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## **GOVT OFFICIAL: 'AFRICA CONTINENT OF OPPORTUNITIES, FUTURE'**

Hungary regards Africa as a continent of opportunities and the future, and will seek to build cooperation based on mutual respect and interests with the countries there, the foreign ministry's state secretary for aiding persecuted Christians told the opening of the Hungary-Africa Week event in Budapest on Monday. "Hungary is aware of the challenges and threats facing Africa. Slow economic growth, food crisis, armed conflicts, religious persecution, natural disasters and climate change all need to be tackled as humanitarian issues," Tristan Azbej said.

At the same time, "finding a solution for those challenges is also in Hungary's national interest because the deepening crises could result in tens of millions of people setting off to Europe, to Hungary," he said, adding that "the outer line of defence for Europe's security is in Africa". Hungary will strive to shape ties based on mutual dependency, rather than "condescending aid policy which does not contribute to lasting development", he said. The "Hungarian model" will approach ties in foreign policy, trade, education, culture and humanitarian cooperation with the recognition that "Africa is closer than we think

... and we need a safe, stable and prosperous Africa," he said. The main aim of the Hungary Helps programme is to present developing countries with a "vision of the future" through mutually beneficial cooperation, he said. Hungary will not try to determine the solutions its African partners need, he said.

France Mutombo, the honorary consul of the Democratic Republic of Congo to Hungary and head of the organising For Africa Foundation, highlighted the importance of international cooperation, development and humanitarian work. Africa's stability is key to that of the rest of the world and especially Europe, he said. Europe's development will not be sustainable without a stable Africa, he said.

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## **OFFICIAL HAILS NEW REGIONAL FLIGHTS BETWEEN HUNGARY, ROMANIA**

Ensuring flights between cities in the Carpathian Basin is a top priority for the government, foreign ministry state secretary Levente Magyar said in Debrecen on Monday, at an event marking the launch of flights connecting Budapest, Debrecen, Cluj (Kolozsvár) and Târgu Mureş (Marosvásárhely) by regional airways Aeroexpress. Magyar noted that the government had purchased a majority stake in Debrecen's airport earlier this year, with the aim of "having a modern,

large capacity airport in the region". The government is committed to flight development, an endeavour also supported by the European Union, he added. The new flights will operate three times a week in September and October.

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## **SOCIALISTS PLEDGE SOLIDARITY WITH PROTESTERS FOR EDUCATION REFORM**

The Socialist Party stands with the participants demanding wage raises for teachers and "restoring professionalism and trust" in education in a demonstration at the Herman Ottó Secondary School in Miskolc, in northeast Hungary, co-leader Ágnes Kunhalmi told a press conference streamed on Facebook on Monday. The demonstrators formed a human chain around the school on Monday morning in protest against the firing of its deputy headmaster for participating in an action of civil disobedience organised by teachers last week.

Kunhalmi, who is vice-president of parliament's cultural committee, told the press conference held in front of the interior ministry in Budapest that Hungarian public education was "over-politicised, with rampant unprofessionalism". Students drop out in droves and more than 10,000 teachers are missing from the public education system, she said.

While the government spent 5.4% of GDP on education in 2010, that ratio will drop to 3.4% next year, she said,

calling for the funding to be raised to 6% of GDP. She also called for wage hikes for teachers, for the autonomy of education to be restored, and for trust to be rekindled between teachers, students, parents and the government. "Prime Minister Viktor Orbán set an example of civil disobedience in the past, when he dismantled the metal barriers [raised against protesters in 2007] in Budapest's Kossuth Square. But we all know that was a democracy, and this isn't one," Kunhalmi said.

### **SZIJJÁRTÓ: UNIVERSITIES CRUCIAL TO HUNGARY'S COMPETITIVENESS**

Hungary's competitiveness and future are greatly dependent on universities, the minister of foreign affairs and trade said in Zalaegerszeg, in western Hungary, on Monday, arguing that the international race for investments was increasingly decided by countries' supply of skilled professionals. Péter Szijjártó attended the inauguration of Széchenyi István University's incubation and lodging building at the ZalaZone science park next to Europe's largest vehicle test track, the foreign ministry said in a statement. Szijjártó emphasised the "fierce" global competition to secure investments amid the ongoing crisis. Tax rates and political stability can be critical in such a competition, he said, noting that Hungary's 9% corporate tax rate was the lowest in Europe and that Hungary offered a predictable and politically stable environment. The quality of human resources is becoming the key

factor in the race for investments, the minister said. "It's not an exaggeration to say that Hungary's competitiveness and future are greatly dependent on universities and the quality of the work being done there," he said. Szijjártó stressed the importance of linking higher education and economic processes, highlighting the cooperation between Széchenyi István University and German engineering giant Bosch as a good example.

### **SOME 14,000 REFUGEES ARRIVE FROM UKRAINE ON SUNDAY**

Fully 6,269 people crossed into Hungary directly from Ukraine on Sunday, while another 7,785 from Ukraine crossed from Romania, the national police headquarters (ORFK) said. Police issued temporary residence permits valid for thirty days to 291 people, ORFK told MTI 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. Fully 263 people, 87 children among them, arrived in Budapest by train, ORFK said.

### **BOSCH BUILDING HUF 4.2 BN ENGINEERING CENTRE IN W HUNGARY**

German engineering giant Bosch is building a 4.2 billion forint (EUR 10.6m) engineering centre in Zalaegerszeg, in western Hungary,

the minister of foreign affairs and trade said on Monday. The investment that will create 200 advanced-skill jobs is receiving a 1.2 billion forint government grant, the foreign ministry cited Péter Szijjártó as saying at the ground-breaking ceremony. The engineering centre is expected to be completed in 2025, he said. Bosch will use the engineering centre to carry out developments and tests related to autonomous driving, Szijjártó said.

He noted that Hungary is the third country in the world, besides Germany and China, to house plants from all three premium German car makers, adding that other top German companies also considered Hungary a key location for research on autonomous driving. Szijjártó said the goal was to get the Hungarian economy to shift from the "Made in Hungary" era to the "Invented in Hungary" era. Hungary has become a leader in the European electric vehicle industry, thanks in part to having the lowest corporate tax rate and the government's refusal to treat the question of energy supply as a political or ideological issue, he said. Szijjártó said German companies were still the largest investors in Hungary, noting that bilateral trade turnover hit a new record last year and grew by 8% in the first half of 2022 to exceed 32 billion euros.

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## **FRESSNAPF OPENS SERVICE CENTRE IN BUDAPEST**

The local unit of German pet food retailer Fressnapf is opening its shared services centre in Budapest, state secretary Levente Magyar said on Monday. The SSC will create 150 jobs, Magyar said. Fressnapf already operates its regional centre from Hungary, he added. Fressnapf regional operative manager Patrick Bontenakels said they were exploring options to further expand into central and eastern Europe from Budapest, and potential in online expansion in southern Europe. Magyar said more than 70,000 Hungarians were currently working in SSCs in the country.

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## **SOVIET WW2 AERIAL BOMB LIFTED FROM DANUBE, SAFELY DEFUSED**

The bomb disposal unit of the Hungarian Armed Forces lifted a Soviet second world war bomb weighing

100kg from the Danube riverbed on Monday morning, a communications officer told MTI. The aerial bomb containing a live detonator was found between Chain Bridge and Elisabeth Bridge by divers of the Budapest Fire Brigade during a training exercise last week. The device was lifted by a crane and placed on board of an army ship where experts defused it safely, Lieutenant Milán Gajdos said. The area within 400m of the site in central Budapest was closed for the duration of the operation.

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## **BUDAPEST CLASSICS FILM MARATHON TO OPEN ON TUES**

The National Film Institute is organising on September 13-18 the 5th international festival of restored films which this year will focus on the central European roots of Hollywood, the institute said on Monday. "This year's selection at the Budapest Classics Film Marathon is a chance to discover the dynamic collaboration with which talented Hungarians

enriched universal cinema over the past 121 years," they quoted Csaba Káel, government commissioner for the development of the Hungarian motion picture industry and chairman of the National Film Institute, as saying. The festival will open with a gala evening showing Michael Curtiz's 1958 noir drama King Creole with the hero played by a youthful Elvis Presley, who throughout his life always cited this role as his favourite. The event will be addressed by Thierry Fremaux, director of the Cannes Film Festival. A highlight of this year's festival is the screening of the rarely shown The Son of the Sheik, an iconic creation of the era of Hollywood silent films. It features Vilma Bánky, the first Hungarian actress to become an international movie star. Another highlight is Curtiz's drama The Undesirable from 1914, the only surviving film starring Mari Jászai, a monumental figure in Hungarian theatre. Venues of the Film Marathon include the square in front of St. Stephen's Basilica, the Uránia National Film Theatre, Toldi cinema and the French Institute in Budapest.