

PHOTO OF THE DAY



President Katalin Novák with Major General Ferenc Kajári, commander of NATO's KFOR mission, in Pristina

UPCOMING EVENTS

President on official visit to Kosovo

Stats office releases 2nd reading of July industrial output data

European Parliament holds plenary session

TOP STORY

HUNGARY 'CONTRIBUTES TO NATO STRENGTH'

NATO would not be as strong without Hungary's military, the foreign minister said at the Siauliai Air Base in Lithuania, adding that Hungarian soldiers participating in the Baltic air policing mission also helped ensure Hungarian security.

The ministry cited Péter Szijjártó saying that the Russian exclave in Kaliningrad was one of the most heavily militarized areas in Europe. Geographically, the Baltics are perhaps the most complicated area to protect within NATO, he added. Szijjártó thanked Hungarian soldiers for their duty and composure, stating that their task represented the most difficult mission of the Hungarian armed forces under the current circumstances of war. As well as bearing great responsibility for NATO and Hungarian security, their most important duty is to prevent a direct conflict between NATO and Russia, he said. "We're proud that we Hungarians can also contribute to making NATO the strongest military alliance in the world," he added. "We can rightfully say that without Hungary, its army and air force, NATO would not be as strong as it is," he said. Hungarian soldiers, he added, may return to the Baltics in 18 months or two years' time because it was likely that the importance of the mission would only increase in the upcoming period.

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NOVÁK: HUNGARY MEDIATOR BETWEEN W BALKANS, EU

Hungary has a mediating role between the Western Balkans and the European Union, President Katalin Novák said on Tuesday in Pristina, after talks with her Kosovan counterpart, Vjosa Osmani. Peace and security in the Western Balkans is key to European peace and stability, Novák told a joint press conference. The peacekeeping mission stationed in the region, and EU membership for the countries there, are two contributing factors to that aim, she said. As commander-in-chief of the Hungarian armed forces it is traditional for the president to visit troops serving abroad, as she was now doing, visiting the 500-strong KFOR unit in Kosovo, she said. "Seeing a Hungarian commander heading the KFOR mission is especially gratifying," she said, congratulating Major General Ferenc Kajári. Hungary is committed to supporting the European integration of Western Balkan countries, including Kosovo, she said. The membership candidacy of Ukraine and Moldova, which the two countries received last year, was "both an opportunity and a danger", Novák said. The process could be accelerated for those meeting the requirements, "but it could also mean that countries with a politically motivated nomination might overtake others in spite of fulfilling the requirements only later." Hungary is working to achieve the integration of

Western Balkan countries, Novák said. Hungary has been supporting Kosovo's EU visa waiver from the start, she said.

Osmani thanked Hungary for its support of Kosovo, including its help during the pandemic. Besides historic links, Kosovo and Hungary also have shared values and aims, she said. Kosovo's future lies with maintaining Euro-Atlantic cooperation and European integration, she said. She praised Hungary's Stipendium programme which has supported 300 Kosovan students so far. Kosovo, as other European countries, is facing an energy crisis, Osmani said, and called for cooperation in the sector to be boosted to cushion individual countries' burdens. It is time to step up the relationship between Kosovo and the EU, Osmani said. Kosovo will apply for EU candidate status this year, she said. Kosovo is counting on Hungary's effective and constant support in the process that will help Kosovo to "take its well-deserved place in the larger European community," she said.

Defence Minister Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky accompanied the president on the visit.

NOVÁK: HUNGARIANS PROUD OF THEIR TROOPS' SERVICE

Hungarians are proud of the service and performance of their soldiers, President Katalin Novák said in Kosovo. Addressing the troops stationed in Novo Selo, Novák, in her capacity of commander-in-chief of the Hungarian

Armed Forces, thanked the soldiers serving in Kosovo on behalf of the Hungarian people. Hungarians are well aware of and support the soldiers stationed in the Balkan country, she added. The president thanked Major General Ferenc Kajári for his service in commanding the KFOR peacekeeping mission in Kosovo.

Novák noted the ongoing war in Ukraine, which she said every European country had wanted to avoid. Hungary is on the side of peace, she said, adding that an upset of the stability in the Western Balkans region could also affect Europe. "It is not just fighting a war that is hard, but so is creating and preserving peace," she said. Novák told the troops that as a wife and mother, she understood how hard it was for them to be far away from their families, and thanked their families for their patience and support.

DEFMIN: HUNGARIAN TROOP PRESENCE IN BALKANS A NATIONAL INTEREST

The presence of Hungarian troops in the Balkans is a key national interest of Hungary, Defence Minister Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky told Hungarian public media from Kosovo on Tuesday. Stability in the Western Balkans determines the security of the entire region, including Hungary, the minister said in connection with NATO's KFOR peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. Szalay-Bobrovniczky highlighted the importance of the

KFOR mission having been led by a Hungarian commander for one year. The minister praised the service of the Hungarian troops, which he said was a "great success" both locally and internationally. He said the situation in Kosovo was calm, but memories of the war 20 years ago still lingered. The wounds inflicted by the war are still causing tensions, which is why the peacekeeping mission carries a great responsibility, Szalay-Bobrovniczky said. He noted that the KFOR mission will soon have a new commander, but the deputy commander will be Hungarian. The minister emphasised the importance of the presence of "Hungarian military excellence" in the mission, saying it helped with boosting the military's readiness. Szalay-Bobrovniczky said Hungarian soldiers were expected to be committed in their service, and received all the support they needed from the government. Troop salaries are being raised by at least 26% in every area, and every Hungarian soldier will have modern, quality, safe and comfortable personal equipment by the middle of next year, he said.

KÖRÖSI SWORN IN AS UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT

Hungarian diplomat Csaba Kőrösi was sworn in as the new President of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Monday. Kőrösi took his oath of office on the Charter of the United Nations in the

presence of UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the former UN General Assembly president, Abdulla Shahid. In his speech following his inauguration, Kőrösi said the war in Ukraine must end as soon as possible and a ceasefire must be achieved. He thanked Hungary and the countries of the eastern European region for their support. Kőrösi said his work as president would be guided by trust, solidarity, sustainability and science. Kőrösi's inauguration marks the start of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly.

QUARTER OF HUNGARIAN BUSINESSES PLAN LAY- OFFS

A quarter of Hungarian businesses plan lay-offs by the end of the year, according to a survey by ManpowerGroup. While half of companies forecast no changes to headcount, only 20% plan new hires, so lay-offs could exceed the latter for the first time since the outbreak of the pandemic, the survey found. Lay-offs are mainly expected in the capital and in western Hungary. Headcount may expand in manufacturing while remaining stagnant in banking, insurance and the real estate sector. A decline is expected in raw material production, IT, technology, telecommunication, communication and the media. Also, 39% of hotels and restaurants plan cutbacks, ManpowerGroup said.

BUDAPEST ADMINISTRATION DRAWING UP ACTION PLAN FOR HEATING SEASON

The Budapest local authority is working with trade unions to draw up an action plan to slash energy use in public buildings, the metropolitan council said on Tuesday. City Hall in downtown Budapest was the first to come under scrutiny, the statement said. The 50,000sqm building is served by the district heating system. The aim is to cut its energy use by 20%, the municipality said. In line with relevant health and safety regulations, the building will be heated to 20°C rather than the usual 22°C, which is expected to save 10-12% of the energy consumed, the municipality said. The action plan, to be completed by the end of September, will look into saving more energy on office heating and other means. Erzsébet Boross, the head of public servants' trade union MKKSZ, thanked the local authority for "fast and effective cooperation" on the measures planned for the heating season, and lamented the lack of cooperation with the government. It is very important that the health risks and stress on employees should only grow to the least possible and "manageable" extent, she said.

DK DEMANDS EXPLANATION FOR NEW ABORTION RULES

The opposition Democratic Coalition has called on the government to explain why it had tightened abortion rules. Judit Földi Ráczné, a party board member, told an online press briefing that Interior Minister Sándor Pintér, “inspired by the hard-right”, had decreed changes without any form of preliminary consultations. Before every abortion, pregnant women must now obtain a certificate attesting to hearing their baby’s heartbeat, she said, adding that the real reason for the new rule was to introduce a document which is time-consuming to acquire; women waiting for an abortion may “slip beyond” the deadline within which it is still possible. DK, she said, wanted to know how such an important decision could be introduced in the form of a ministerial decree, bypassing parliament. “In several countries restrictions like this were the starting point of a process which culminated in the ban of abortions,” she added.

PÁRBESZÉD PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS’ STRIKE

The opposition Párbeszéd parliamentary group has pledged its support for a planned teachers’ strike and has also offered financial aid for the action, a party MP said. At an online press briefing, Tamás

Mellár appealed to the public to express solidarity with teachers and support the strike. He said teachers were not calling for the action out of self-interest but because they were in the midst of an education system “in a state of deep crisis”. Mellár insisted that Hungary’s education system had been degraded by the government, which had also placed “severe restrictions” on the right to strike. He added that civil disobedience in such a legal environment was “necessary” as well as “understandable and forgivable”. Noting that striking teachers had been threatened with dismissal, he said “incompetent and unscrupulous” government officials should be sacked instead.

SOME 11,000 REFUGEES ARRIVE FROM UKRAINE ON MONDAY

Fully 5,894 people crossed into Hungary directly from Ukraine on Monday, while another 5,308 from Ukraine crossed from Romania, the national police headquarters (ORFK) said. Police issued temporary residence permits valid for thirty days to 164 people, ORFK told MTI on Tuesday. 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 87 people, 30 children among them, arrived in Budapest by train, ORFK said.

ELTE UNIVERSITY COORDINATOR OF INTERNATIONAL SPACE SECURITY SCHEME

A space science research team at Budapest ELTE University’s department of geophysics and space science will lead an international project assisting the undisturbed operation of satellites and spacecraft by providing forecasts based on data recorded on land. The launch of the project dubbed FARBES is being supported by Horizon Europe with a total budget of over 850,000 euros, of which ELTE will receive 242,625 euros, the university said. The FARBES project aims at utilising plasmasphere and radiation belt models in the European Space Agency’s space security programme, it added. Other participants of the project are the Office National d’Études et de Recherches Aérospatiales from France, the British Antarctic Survey, the Czech Academy of Sciences’ institute of thermosphere physics, the University of Athens and the US New Mexico Consortium.

FUJIMOTO: HUNGARY HOUSE OF MUSIC ‘PERFECT REALISATION OF MY VISION’

Hungary’s House of Music (MZH) is a “perfect realisation of my architectural vision”, Sou Fujimoto, the architect of MZH, told MTI in an interview in Budapest on Tuesday. The Japanese

star architect visited MZH only now because of the coronavirus pandemic. "It is fantastic," Fujimoto said after a tour of the facility in City Park. "As I was walking under the canopy, it appeared as if it was levitating and through it the whole house was bathing in a breath-taking golden shine," he said, noting that his vision had been to create an overlap of nature and architecture. He said it was an outstanding experience to see his design in reality, "how the house itself has immersed in the fabric of the park". Fujimoto noted that the Budapest House of Music was the first cultural institution he had designed for a country outside Japan. "It very well represents the approach seeking to dismantle the boundaries between the built and the natural environment," he said. "This is a project that can also show the future of architecture," Fujimoto said.

NATIONAL GALLERY EXHIBITION FEATURES OVER 20 UNKNOWN VASZARY PAINTINGS

An exhibition showing 24 completely unknown paintings of celebrated Hungarian artist János Vaszary (1867-

1939) will open at the Hungarian National Gallery on Wednesday. The 24 canvases form part of the altogether 40 Vaszary oil paintings experts discovered in two rolls during the process of inventorying the complete material held in the National Gallery that began in 2016, the director of the gallery told a press conference on Tuesday. These works which "lay hidden" in the museum's own collection, proved to be entirely unknown to everybody, even to art historians, László Baán said. "There were no known reproductions made of them, not even during Vaszary's lifetime and had presumably entered the gallery's collection directly from the artist's studio," he said. "Our exhibition presents the most beautiful and most exciting, duly restored 24 paintings of the recently found treasure." The canvases represent virtually every period of Vaszary's oeuvre: from his early impressionistic pieces to his expressive compositions, from his art deco works in Paris to his Danube Promenade pictures and seaside scenes with a Mediterranean atmosphere, Mariann Gergely, the exhibition's curator, said. The exhibition supplements the newly

discovered paintings with other Vaszary masterpieces from the museum's collection and less known works from private collections and drawings. It also shows a film about Vaszary's life. The exhibition entitled Vaszary Rediscovered will run until January 15.

TEN PEOPLE CHARGED WITH FORGING HUF 20,000 NOTES

The Budapest Public Prosecutor's Office has charged ten people with forging and distributing 20,000 forint (EUR 50) banknotes, the office said. Two men made at least five hundred 20,000 forint fakes using the paper of genuine 500 forint banknotes in a flat in Budapest's 14th district in 2019. They used digital equipment, chemicals and other methods to imitate the security features of the originals, the public prosecutor's office said. Others distributed the forgeries by using them at small-value purchases in tobacco shops, fast food restaurants and other shops. They were charged with forgery as part of a criminal conspiracy, the public prosecutor's office said.

