

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Ócsényi János Németh wins 15th National Gallop in Budapest

UPCOMING EVENTS

Hungarian, Austrian, Serbian leaders meet in Budapest, hold presser

Plenary session of parliament

Events related to war in Ukraine

New National Election Committee holds inaugural session

Statistical Office publishes foreign trade figures for July 2022 in 2nd reading

TOP STORY

ORBÁN INAUGURATES REFORMED CHURCH COMPLEX IN BUDAPEST

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán inaugurated a renewed complex of the bishop's seat, and the Ráday seminary and student hostel of the Reformed Church in central Budapest on Saturday.

In his address, the prime minister said "we have to stand the trials and carry our homeland to the other side unharmed, clinging to each other, trusting God, with our eyes on the other side and not on the floods".

Referring to the Reformed Church's forefathers, Orbán said their instructions were "a commandment to keep not only the faith but our Hungarian identity, too". He added it had been "no question" that his "national government" would stand by the Reformed Church and provide assistance in hard times, noting a devastating fire that had destroyed the seminary.

Praising the Ráday seminary, the prime minister said it had educated "generations of pastors to serve Hungary with full spirit, passing on their faith, knowledge, self-esteem and Hungarian identity, and braving vicissitudes and God made miracles through them".

Hungary has again and again been granted "strength to restart, renew and rebuild the country after destruction", Orbán said, adding that "this renewing strength... is at least as needed now than after the second world war or after the fall of communism".

NOVÁK: EU SANCTIONS ARE NEEDED THAT PUNISH RUSSIAN AGGRESSOR, NOT EUROPE

Types of EU economic sanctions are needed that would cause serious economic strife for the Russian aggressor, not the European economy, President Katalin Novák said on Friday in Bratislava after meeting Slovak counterpart Zuzana Čaputová.

Hungary's position, Novák told a joint press conference, was clear from the very beginning. "We condemn Russian aggression and its attack on Ukraine and support Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty," she said. Referring to exemptions from the oil embargo, the president said both Slovakia and Hungary had benefitted from "good compromises" in respect of sanctions against Russia. But an assessment of the impact of current and planned sanctions is needed, Novák added.

The president said she would propose at their meeting later on Friday that Slovak Prime Minister Eduard Heger also support sanctions packages that cause serious economic difficulties for the Russian aggressor rather than the European economy.

As regards the issue of military support to Ukraine, Novák noted a difference in the positions of Slovakia and Hungary, adding however that both countries had taken in a large number of Ukrainian refugees. "Creating peace is in the interest and

a primary aim of both of our countries, whereas the prospect of achieving that is not that positive," she said.

Concerning illegal migration, Novák called it a mutual interest to avoid the reinstatement of national border controls among countries of the Schengen zone as well as to strengthen Schengen's external borders.

She also addressed the issue of minorities, noting that Slovakia's recent census shows around half a million Hungarians living there. The possibility of exercising their rights is of primary importance for Hungary, she said, adding that she had asked her Slovak counterpart to do all she could to ensure that the Hungarian community could nurture their national identity. Novák said Hungary's 35,000-member Slovak minority has a parliamentary representative, adding that the number of Slovak schools had increased threefold and several Slovak cultural institutions had been established.

Novák highlighted the importance of cooperation in the Visegrad Group comprising Slovakia, Hungary, Czechia and Poland. The V4 "has no alternative, it is a platform for us to represent our common interests most effectively within the EU", she said, and asked for her Slovak counterpart's support in connection with the EU's allocation of the funds to Hungary which the country is entitled to.

Concerning economic ties, Novák noted that Slovakia is Hungary's second biggest economic partner. She

noted in addition that the number of border crossing stations between the two countries continues to grow with 41 operating by the end of 2023.

Speaking about culture, Novák noted that Slovakia is the guest of honour at this year's International Book Festival that opened in Budapest on Thursday.

Asked about Slovakia's upcoming municipal elections, Novák welcomed the cooperation among ethnic Hungarian parties and encouraged Hungarians to cast their votes.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: GOVT WON'T BACK SANCTIONS THAT GO AGAINST HUNGARY'S NATL INTERESTS

Hungary's government will not support EU sanctions that go against the country's national interests, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in Brussels on Friday, adding this meant that Hungary did not support imposing a price cap on Russian gas, which for now was off the agenda. According to a foreign ministry statement, Szijjártó told a press conference after a special session of the EU's Energy Council that the body had approved the European Commission's latest package of proposals "amid the most severe energy supply crisis of all time".

The EC's package mandates a 5% cut in energy consumption in peak hours. It proposes allowing member states to intervene in the retail prices of electricity on a voluntary basis. Further, the plan proposes capping the revenues of so-called "inframarginal"



electricity producers and levying a solidarity contribution on the extra profits of companies in the oil, coal, gas and refinery sectors, Szijjártó said. Because these last two measures are already in effect in Hungary, they do not present new obligations, he added.

“This package is inadequate when it comes to resolving the current energy supply crisis in Europe,” Szijjártó said. “In any event, it perhaps doesn’t cause much harm at this point, but I doubt it will be of much help.”

Szijjártó welcomed that the proposals did not include a price cap on gas, saying that such a measure would make it impossible for Hungary to receive gas. “Everyone knows, because the Russians have made it clear, that if the European Union imposes a price cap, they will completely stop gas deliveries to Europe,” he said. The minister said such a proposal was “hypocritical”, arguing that it would clearly be a political decision rather than an economic one. It would also count as a sanction, whose approval requires unanimity among member states, he added.

Szijjártó said the gas price cap was being proposed by those who “are not in the least bit affected” by the issue, and called on them “not to try to be heroic at our expense”. He said that though the EC had “lost out to member states”, “we should have no naive illusions that this issue won’t come up again.”

Meanwhile, Szijjártó said Hungary was on schedule with filling up its gas storages and Russian gas was

continuing to flow into the country. The amount of gas in storage right now is enough to cover 46% of annual consumption, while the EU average is at 26%, he said.

Szijjártó also expressed support for investigating the suspected attack on the Nord Stream gas pipelines, calling the security of supply routes a shared international responsibility.

In response to a question, he said Russia’s Gazprom had assured Hungary that gas deliveries along the TurkStream pipeline would remain uninterrupted.

He also said that the EU’s planned new sanctions package included several proposals that could cause problems around the upgrade of Hungary’s Paks nuclear power plant, which Hungary “firmly rejects”. “We refuse to accept any form of blackmail,” Szijjártó said. “When it comes to the sanctions we will only make decisions that are in line with Hungarian national interests.”

ORBÁN: PENSION PREMIUMS TO BE PAID BETWEEN NOV. 10-15

Pensioners will receive their pension premiums to offset inflation between November 10 and 15, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said in a video published on Facebook on Saturday, international day of the elderly. “Even amid hard times in Europe we must not forget about our most important national priorities including appreciation for pensioners,” he said. Orbán noted

that the government had reintroduced 13th month pensions, adding that he considered it as “a matter of honour”, and pledged that “just as this year, each pensioner will receive their 13th month pension in 2023”.

Orbán said inflation had further increased in the whole of Europe “because of Brussels’ sanctions”, which necessitated providing pensioners with a premium, for the second time in November. “Without regard to hard times or a crisis, Hungary will give its pensioners what they are due,” he said.

GOVT OFFICIAL: ITALY AGREES CONSERVATIVES ARE ‘BEST CHOICE’

Given that the Hungarian government has long-standing and good relations with all the parties that will make up the incoming Italian government, cooperation on issues like illegal migration and family policy will not be difficult, Balázs Orbán, the political director of the Prime Minister’s Office, said in Rome on Friday.

Last Sunday’s elections in Italy showed that Italians know best what kind of government their country needs, the official told MTI on the sidelines of the Italian Conservatism: Europe, Identity, Freedom conference.

He said one area of cooperation between the Hungarian and Italian governments would be the fight against illegal migration. Italy is seeing



a huge number of migrants arriving at its southern shores, he said, adding that Hungary's southern border was also "under siege".

He said the EU had so far been unsuccessful in resolving illegal migration and Brussels was "continuing to attack every border protection measure that we think is needed to stop illegal migration throughout Europe".

The political director also suggested that the two governments could begin consultations on family policy over the coming months.

He said the impact of inflation caused by the sanctions policy and skyrocketing utility costs were visible on the streets of Rome as well.

It is clear even in the western countries that consumers are forced to pay a "surcharge" because of the sanctions, yet "we once again had to be the first ones to ask the people what they think about this," he said, referring to the Hungarian government's upcoming "National Consultation" public survey on EU sanctions against Russia.

The three-day conservative conference came after the election victory of the Italian right-wing coalition. Other speakers on the event's opening day included Fidesz MEP Balázs Hidvéghi.

Speaking to MTI, Hidvéghi highlighted the importance of a nationally minded, patriotic right-wing alliance winning in one of the EU's founding member states. "We share the same positions on a

number of issues and have reason to hope that national identity, culture, border protection, guaranteeing the security of the people, support for the traditional family model and the strive for peace will all have a place in the new Italian political leadership," he said.

Rome and Budapest are in agreement on the need to confront centralisation by Brussels so that it is not "bureaucrats who are accountable to no one" telling European member states what to do and think, he said.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: RUSSIA STARTS MANUFACTURING NUCLEAR REACTOR VESSELS FOR PAKS

While earthworks are underway for the upgrade of the Paks nuclear power plant in central Hungary, the manufacturing of reactor vessels for the facility has started in Russia, Péter Szijjártó, Hungary's minister of foreign affairs and trade, said on Saturday.

Reactor vessels are essentially the heart of the plant, where controlled chain reaction takes place generating energy, he said on Facebook. "As the nuclear authority has issued all permits and the Hungarian experts have carried out all the required examinations, all conditions are in place for manufacturing the 330-tonne, over-11-metre-high reactor vessels. The first phase of the technology is forging," he said.

PALKOVICS: GOVT EXAMINING WAYS TO RESCUE DUNAFERR STEELWORKS

The government is looking into rescuing the ISD Dunaferr steelworks in Dunaújváros, in central Hungary, the minister of technology and industry told a press conference in the city on Friday. László Palkovics said the plant was the victim of a "botched privatisation" which resulted in "uncertainty as to who the real owner is" and left the plant without a legitimate leadership. He said he will submit a proposal at next week's cabinet meeting regarding the resources necessary to support the group of companies running the plant. Based on operation costs, he said 5-10 billion forints (EUR 12-24m) could suffice to keep the works operating for two months, although the company also faces multiple liquidation procedures, he added.

MEP UJHELYI QUILTS SOCIALIST PARTY

István Ujhelyi, an MEP of the opposition Socialists, has decided to quit his party, he told MTI on Sunday. In a letter written in a personal tone he said he had made his decision after "a long mourning process and trepidation" as "something has been irreparably broken". He said he had been a member of the party since he was 18, and considered the party

as a second family. "I am not saying goodbye to them but to the party's current mechanisms and shortsighted futurelessness," he said. Ujhelyi said he had called for reviving the party after its latest election defeat, but he "could not break through the wall of internal petrification". Ujhelyi said he would keep his mandate in the European Parliament.

The Socialists in reaction said the party regretted to acknowledge that Ujhelyi had decided to quit their ranks. The party said in a statement that "we are disappointed, but think of István Ujhelyi as a friend" and called on the politician to return his EP mandate.

DK NOT TO SUPPORT FIDESZ'S ANTI- CORRUPTION DRAFTS

The opposition Democratic Coalition will not support ruling Fidesz's corruption-related proposals now before parliament, an MP of the party said on Sunday, adding that the drafts would result in "pseudo-measures". László Sebián-Petrovski said the package was aimed at accessing EU funds "which could then be stolen". Prime Minister Viktor

Orbán "wants to make the European Commission believe that he would put an end to looting community funds", he insisted, adding that "they try to keep up appearances of the rule of law, independence of the judiciary and a fight against corruption". "DK will not support those appearances", he said.

DK does not support setting up an Integrity Authority, nor another draft under which "Fidesz's ministers and deputies could continue sitting on the boards of foundations set up using public funds", he said. "If the government wanted real change, it would support Hungary's joining the European Prosecutor's Office, it would make courts and prosecutor's offices independent, and it would restore the balance of the media and freedom of the press," he said.

UKRAINE CRISIS - NEARLY 12,000 REFUGEES ARRIVE FROM UKRAINE ON SATURDAY

Fully 6,212 people crossed into Hungary directly from Ukraine on Saturday, while another 5,641 crossed from Romania, the

National Police Headquarters (ORFK) said. Police issued temporary residence permits valid for thirty days to 224 people, ORFK told MTI on Sunday. 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 received 30 people, 14 children among them, by train, ORFK said.

JAZZ ICON SZAKCSI LAKATOS DIES

Bela Szakcsi Lakatos, an iconic figure of Hungarian jazz, died on Sunday morning, at the age of 79, the Hungarian Jazz Federation said. Multiple award winning Szakcsi Lakatos was a pianist, composer, holder of the Artist of the Nation title and "a towering figure of Hungarian jazz", the federation said on Facebook. Szakcsi Lakatos received the highest state honour, the Kossuth Award in 2005 and the Artist of the Nation title in 2014. In 2019, he was the artistic director of the European Roma Festival Orchestra project.