

PHOTO OF THE DAY



St. Emeric Roman Catholic Church in Ghelinta (Gelence), Romania, renovated with support from the state of Hungary.

MTV/Editt Kátai

UPCOMING EVENTS

Stats office publishes tourism data for Sept 2022

Stats office publishes retail trade, industrial output data for Sept 2022

Plenary session of Parliament

Events related to war in Ukraine

TOP STORY

SZIJJÁRTÓ: SANCTIONS 'THREATEN OUR INTERESTS'

Hungary will not accept EU sanctions that threaten its energy security, the foreign minister said in an interview at the weekend.

Péter Szijjártó noted that the war in Ukraine has lasted for eight months so far and the European economy "is struggling". Household income is worth less and less owing to sanctions-fuelled inflation, he added in an interview to public radio. He said the mere mention of a new EU sanctions package had prompted another rise in gas prices on the world market. The new package, the ninth, reportedly covers nuclear power, he said, but this is a red line for Hungary, the foreign minister added. Hungary's sole nuclear power plant covers a third of Hungarian energy output, Szijjártó said, adding that the Paks plant's expansion would lock in caps on household energy bills. He noted that nuclear fuel rods are supplied solely by a Russian manufacturer, and the fuel rods are a guarantee of Hungary's energy security in the long term, he added. The minister emphasised the importance of dialogue "between the great powers" with the aim of securing peace between Russia and Ukraine. Russian-American communication channels are needed to end the war through negotiations, he said.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: WORLD IN SERIOUS DANGER UNLESS COMMON SENSE PREVAILS ON POLITICAL STAGE

The current situation on the global political stage poses a serious danger to the world unless common sense prevails, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó told an international conference in Tangier, Morocco. The East and the West should therefore reopen their communication channels, Szijjártó told a panel discussion at the MEDays Forum, according to a foreign ministry statement, adding that communication had often been enough to avert another world war during the Cold War.

Hungary considers 2022 “the year of big disappointments”, Szijjártó said. He said the “legitimate expectation” that the end of the coronavirus pandemic would be followed by a less difficult period had turned out to be a “naive illusion” because a war had broken out in Ukraine. Szijjártó urged the reopening of communication channels in the interest of settling the conflict. “Because if the communications channels are given up, then the hope for peace is being given up as well,” he said. The minister said the Cold War had been better in this respect because the opposing sides had been in constant communication. “We Hungarians really do try to maintain dialogue with the Russians, but whenever we do so, we always are faced with enormous unfair and vehement attacks” labelling the country “the spies of Putin, the

allies of the Russians, the breakers of European unity”, Szijjártó said, adding that Hungary only wanted to maintain communication. Szijjártó said those who believed the war could end with talks between Ukraine and Russia were “naive”, arguing that dialogue between Russia and the United States was needed. He said everything must be done to avoid a direct confrontation between NATO and Russia, arguing that such a conflict could lead to a third world war. Szijjártó said the Cold War had been “terrible” for central Europe, adding that the current global political situation carried similar threats “unless common sense can prevail and the voice of those who want peace will become louder”. He said that as a neighbouring country of Ukraine, Hungary had a vested interest in peace also because Europe was facing increasingly serious economic problems which were being aggravated by the European Union’s “failed sanctions”.

He argued that the sanctions had failed to live up to expectations because the war was becoming increasingly brutal while the European economy had spiralled into crisis. Because Hungary does not want to get dragged into the war, it has decided against delivering weapons to Ukraine and is the only EU country not taking part in the bloc’s mission to train Ukrainian troops, he said. “Of course, for these two decisions of ours we are under very, very heavy and severe attacks on a daily basis politically and media-wise as well,” Szijjártó said. “The voice of escalation is much louder than the voice of peace.”

SZIJJÁRTÓ: INTL INSTITUTIONS ‘FAILED’ IN UKRAINE WAR

International institutions have so far failed in the Ukraine war because they deepened the conflict rather than ensuring a platform for the warring parties to engage in dialogue, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in Tangier. Szijjártó told a panel discussion at the MEDays Forum that “multilateralism has not passed the stress tests” of the coronavirus pandemic and the war in close succession. International organisations were “slow waking up” during the pandemic, and now they can’t seem to ensure a platform for the talks to settle the crisis in Ukraine, he said. “I’m representing a country, Hungary, [which is] usually attacked for not following the mainstream, but represents interests which are specifically Hungarian and are based on national interests,” he said.

The government’s responses to the crises were successful, and Hungary emerged strengthened from both ordeals, he said. Hungary orchestrated the swiftest vaccination campaign during the pandemic because the government did not wait for a joint response and ignored political or ideological considerations when green-lighting vaccines, he said.

Regarding the war in Ukraine, Szijjártó said Hungary, as a neighbouring country, had a vested interest in brokering peace in the region, and “that’s why Hungary is super concerned



that the world is running totally in the other direction," he said. Currently, most statements run the risk of escalating the conflict, "but hardly anybody talks about peace", he said. He said there was no immediate communication between the warring parties, and multilateral institutions had failed to create a platform for dialogue.

Szijjártó insisted that the UN had been unable to achieve dialogue, an institution that was created to be a "last resort for negotiations". "We see ... that multilateral institutions are ... misused to deepen this conflict," he said. "The politicisation of these organisations is a serious mistake, and ruining platforms of dialogue" was "almost a sin", he said. The UN was not created for dialogue between like-minded countries but to offer a platform for negotiations between warring or enemy countries, he said. Noting the "attacks" after he was the only European foreign minister to meet his Russian counterpart on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September, Szijjártó said it seemed "there are strong forces in the world against opening the communications channels."

DEMO HELD IN FRONT OF PUBLIC MEDIA HEADQUARTERS

A demonstration organised by independent lawmaker Ákos Hadrázy was held in front of the public media headquarters in Budapest on Friday evening. The demonstration began with a minute of silence in honour of the revolutionaries of 1956.

Addressing the event, historian Krisztián Ungváry said: "Lies are not only told by spewing severe untruths ... [but also through] fake national consultations, fake parties, a fake parliament and a thousand other means." Orsolya Varga, a teacher, said teachers had been deprived of their security, peace and freedom, which "have been replaced by lies, hate and intimidation". She said it was now doubtful whether teachers could continue making a living, adding that there was no future without teachers.

Hadrázy said that "since we're living in a hybrid regime rather than a democracy", a "hybrid revolution" was needed for there to be a chance of ousting the government in an election. "Propaganda serves to divert the anger of our compatriots [from those in power], and success depends on how many people join in on putting pressure on propaganda," he said. Hadrázy called for protests and demonstrations aimed at "causing a disturbance" so that the government would take notice of the strength of the protests. "A lot of people must peacefully create the conditions for fair elections," he said, calling on the demonstrators to form a blockade around the public media headquarters, vowing the protests would continue until the head of public media provider MTVA stepped down.

Krisztina Baranyi, the mayor of Budapest's 9th district, said Hungary had not been in such a desperate situation as it was today since the crushing of the 1956 revolution.

She said that while Hungary's neighbouring nation was fighting for its homeland, "Hungary again finds itself on the dark pages of history because of the Putinist Hungarian government". Baranyi insisted that Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's policies "reflect the interests of Russian President Vladimir Putin".

She said Orbán was isolated in Europe, but was "taking the Hungarian nation down with him as well". The mayor said it could not be ruled out that the government was setting the stage to take Hungary out of the European Union and NATO. "This is what we must prevent," she added.

Edina Hajnal, of the action group Hungarian Mothers - creative resistance, protested at what she called "lies pouring on people, [produced] from their own taxpayer monies." Gábor Polyák, a communications expert, said MTVA had been set up to dilute editors' responsibility. The institution served one party rather than the public interest, he said. The opposition, he added, "still have tools in their hands". "It is time to use local media to inform people of reality," he said.

Demonstrators chanted "Come out!", "Wake up!", "Free country!", "Free education", "Russkies go home!" and lit torches around MTVA headquarters. The stage sported banners saying "1848, we demand the freedom of the press and the abolition of censorship", and "1956, free Kossuth Rádió", referring to two Hungarian revolutions against tyranny.



FIDESZ MEP: EP CULT CTTEE 'ARRIVED WITH PRECONCEPTIONS'

Since the delegation of the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) arrived in Budapest with preconceptions, "the consequences they will come to in Brussels next week are predictable", a Fidesz MEP said after the visit wrapped up on Friday in Budapest. "The programme was clearly skewed," Andrea Bocskor told MTI. Bocskor insisted certain panels leaned on left-liberal players, such as the discussion with FreeSzfe, the NGO of teachers and students who left the University of Theatre and Film Arts after its government-led reform. The current leadership of the university was not invited, she noted. "They tried to paint the picture that the reform was negative in all aspects, the other side had no chance of talking about its advantages for the university," she said. The head of the mission headed off the discussion with the presumption that academic freedom was under duress in Hungary, and asked the teachers whether they were "afraid of photos being taken" of the talks, Bocskor said.

Bulgarian MEP Andrey Slabakov called the meeting "important and useful", and noted it had been originally scheduled two years ago, before Covid-related lockdowns. Slabakov noted that education was an area in the hands of sovereign states, and the EU was not entitled to make categorical decisions.

"In that case, the European Union would become the European Soviet Union..." he said. He said he stood on the side of the Europe of sovereign states, the "basic tenet of the union". "Free speech is not the problem, more when it is used badly," he insisted, adding that "a dearth of independent media" was problematic throughout the EU.

OFFICIAL: PENSIONERS 'CAN COUNT ON GOVT'

The government plans both a hike in pension payments next year and a one-off pension bonus this month, a government official said on Sunday. The Fidesz-led government promised in 2010 to serve the interests of the elderly and protect their benefits, and Hungary's more than two million retirees have received four pension bonuses and the government also restored the 13th monthly pension, Zsolt Nyitrai, the prime ministerial commissioner for social policy, said on Facebook. Zsuzsanna Hulák of the Council of the Elderly said pensioners can expect to receive a pension increase and a pension bonus in this month, which will be transferred along with the November pension.

GOVT OFFICIAL MARKS CRUSHING OF 1956 UPRISING

Hungarians can only count on themselves, as demonstrated by the events of November 4, 1956, a government official said on Friday,

marking the national day of mourning in remembrance of the crushing of the anti-Communist uprising in 1956. Árpád János Potápi, the state secretary for policies for Hungarians across the borders, said in Dombóvár, in southern Hungary, that although the United Nations had then condemned the Russian intervention into the Hungarian revolution, "Hungary received no meaningful help". "We could learn then that we are only entitled to what we fight for ourselves," he said. The victims of the uprising included some 3,000 dead, 20,000 injured, hundreds of executed revolutionaries, tens of thousands of ruined people and some 200,000 exiles, he said.

Referring to the Fidesz rule since 2010, Potápi said the past 12 years had shown "that if we stand together, we can do anything." National cohesion was strengthened, but was now threatened by "the war on our doorstep", he said. "That is why we need peace. Peace is what will curb the crisis caused by wartime sanctions," he said.

LMP URGES NATIONAL ENERGY SUMMIT, ENERGY PRICE CAP FOR MUNICIPALITIES

Green opposition party LMP has called for a national energy summit, the introduction of an energy price cap for municipalities, and the promotion of green energy through government subsidies. At a press conference

streamed on Facebook, the party's welfare and family affairs spokesperson Krisztina Hohn said the energy crisis was felt by every Hungarian, adding that LMP urged the government to introduce measures to manage the crisis, such as promoting the use of renewable energy by households, institutions as well as municipalities. Hohn said municipalities, often facing tenfold price increases, were unable to cope with soaring energy prices. Even if local councils did everything possible, they would still not be able to cut their energy consumption by more than 20-25% during the winter, she added.

Hohn said as many green solutions as possible should be offered for the operation of municipal institutions, such as solar panels, biogas and wind power, adding that the end of the energy crisis was not yet in sight. She called on the government to provide subsidies for these rather than restricting the construction of wind farms and penalising the installation of solar systems.

**ROMANIAN POLITICIANS,
PRESS PROTEST MI
HAZÁNK POLITICIAN'S
REMARKS AGAINST
JOURNALIST**

Romanian Prime Minister Nicolae Ciucă, politicians, and Romanian media outlets have protested against remarks of a Mi Hazánk politician targeting an ethnic Hungarian journalist living and working in Romania. Last week,

at an event in Sfântu Gheorghe (Sepsiszentgyörgy), Barna Bartha said of Boróka Parászka, a journalist of public broadcaster Târgu Mureş Radio: "If Hungarians can't hang these people, if they can't eliminate them, then it's no wonder we are where we are." He went on to make anti-Semitic and anti-Roma remarks.

Prime Minister Nicolae Ciucă and Deputy Prime Minister Hunor Kelemen, head of the ethnic Hungarian RMDSZ party, condemned the statement on Facebook. "Freedom of opinion for journalists is a basic requirement of the rule of law, and a fundamental value in any democracy. I call on the relevant institutions of the state to ... protect journalists and hold those inciting to hatred and discrimination accountable," Ciucă said.

**KÖVÉR: EUROPEAN
RECESSION ON HORIZON
DUE TO SANCTIONS**

European Union sanctions against Russia have produced high inflation, an energy crisis and the threat of a European recession, László Kövér, the speaker of parliament, has said, adding that Europe had willed itself into an economic war, and the government's chief task was to make sure a European recession on the horizon did not weigh down Hungary's economy. Speaking in Békés County, in south-eastern Hungary, on the latest leg of his nationwide tour, the speaker said that whereas they had been "trying to convince Hungary" for a decade that

"the Russians are unreliable partners", Russian had not weaponised gas but instead the European Commission had tried to "turn it against them through sanctions". He said, however, that Hungary's gas supplies were secure for the time being, and gas storage was sufficient to cover 60-70 percent of annual needs.

Hungary, Kövér noted, had condemned Russia's military aggression against Ukraine from the very beginning, adding that the national interest was for Ukraine to be independent, democratic and prosperous. Meanwhile, the Hungarian minority there should also be allowed to prosper without facing discrimination, he added.

The speaker said there were reports of a ninth EU sanctions package under way with a view to broadening the restrictions to nuclear energy. Hungary's sole nuclear power plant can only operate with Russian fuel rods, he noted, adding that sanctions on nuclear energy would be a "disaster" both for Hungarian households and industry. Hungary can only support nuclear sanctions if the country is exempted from them, he said.

Kövér, who is also the head of the ruling Fidesz party's national board, insisted that the Hungarian left wing was financed by George Soros and had "sided with sanctions and the war". The speaker said there was no democratic mandate for decisions being passed in Europe today, and no attempts had been made to consult ordinary people about

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migration or “whether they wanted to pay the price of the sanctions”. Kövér said the government’s National Consultation survey would help the Hungarian government when it came to protecting national interests in Brussels.

BIRD FLU DETECTED IN 5 HUNGARY

Bird flu has been identified at two goose farms in Bács-Kiskun County, in southern Hungary, food safety authority Nébih said on Friday. Protection and surveillance zones were established after the virus subtype H5N1 was detected at the farms, Nébih said, adding that more than 1,200 geese were being culled. An order for poultry to be kept indoors is in effect in Hungary’s seven high-risk counties.

DEFENCE MIN: HUNGARY AIMS TO BECOME C EUROPE’S DEFENCE INDUSTRY HUB

The government aims to make Hungary central Europe’s top defence industry hub for production and R&D, according to a defence ministry statement. On Saturday, Defence Minister Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky visited the state-of-the-art vehicle test track in Zalaegerszeg alongside the minister of technology and industry, László Palkovics, and the minister of culture and innovation, János Csák.

Palkovics called the test track one of the world’s fastest developing

innovation ecosystems. As well as providing a research backbone for Hungary’s car industry, the test track is now being used by universities, too, while two multinationals are building their own research centres at the site. Further, German defence contractor Rheinmetall is building its new factory here, the minister noted. Speaking in front of the site where Rheinmetall is building its factory, Szalay-Bobrovniczky said the knowledge and technology at the Zalazone were central to the development of Hungary’s armed forces. Csák said the Zalaegerszeg site had become a hub where universities, private companies, state developers and research institutes can work together. The results of innovation and research provide a springboard for the creation and development of Hungarian companies that can then enter the international market and also grow their role in supplying the domestic car industry and other industries, he added.

AG MIN SUPPORTING FARMERS WHO REAR INDIGENOUS BREEDS

The Ministry of Agriculture has allocated 19.2 billion forints (EUR 47.6m) to farmers for the purpose of preserving indigenous breeds of domesticated animals, state secretary Zsolt Feldman said. The aim of the tender is to maintain a viable stock of protected or endangered native agricultural breeds of animals in their

natural environment and according to the traditional ways of rearing and feeding them, Feldman said. Interest in the funding was beyond expectations, with farmers applying for support for a significantly larger number of animals than in earlier similar tenders, the state secretary said. In the first round, around 1,720 livestock owners became eligible for funding over three years. Further applications may be submitted in January 2023, and the commitment period for all beneficiaries will last until the end of 2024, the state secretary said.

MORE THAN 12,000 REFUGEES ARRIVE FROM UKRAINE ON SATURDAY

Fully 6,215 people crossed into Hungary directly from Ukraine on Saturday, while another 5,940 crossed from Romania, the National Police Headquarters (ORFK) said. Budapest received 194 people, 65 children among them, who travelled by train, ORFK said.

SZILI: HUNGARIAN COMMUNITY IN LATVIA CAN COUNT ON HUNGARY

The Hungarian community in Latvia can count on Hungary, the prime ministerial commissioner for Hungarian communities abroad, Katalin Szili, said after returning home from Riga. During her three-day visit, Szili met the president of the Balaton Association of Hungarians living in Latvia, Sándor

Molnár, and assured all Hungarian communities of the country's staunchest support.

Molnár paid tribute to the work of the Hungarian embassy in Riga in providing help for the Hungarian community there, which is largely made up of Hungarians of Subcarpathian origin.

Szili emphasised the importance of their Hungarian hinterland, especially in light of the war in Ukraine, and she noted the undertaking of responsibility for preserving the culture of the Hungarian diaspora in the Fundamental Law. Hungarian communities abroad are important regardless of their size, she said, adding that they were "an inseparable part of the Hungarian nation".

Meanwhile, Szili said tensions in Latvia owing to the war in Ukraine were a matter of concern. Whereas

the Hungarian community was not affected by this tension directly, she said, it was important that measures initiated by EU member states should not hinder the cause of national minorities in any European country when it comes to their linguistic and cultural rights.

Szili attended a Hungarian evening of film screenings organised by the embassies of the Visegrád Group of countries.

FILM PORTRAIT OF OLYMPIC FENCING CHAMP SZILÁGYI SCREENED IN NY

A film about 3-times Olympic fencing champion Áron Szilágyi has been screened at the Hungarian Consulate General in New York, and the head of the United States Fencing Association and American athletes

were among those who viewed the portrait and sports documentary directed by András Pires Muhi. During his visit to the US, Szilágyi, a Hungarian ambassador of talent, has attended several fencing clubs and centres for fostering talent, and on Saturday he visited a foundation set up by Olympic bronze medallist Peter Westbrook, whose goal is helping poor children to integrate socially through sports. Szilágyi told MTI that sport is a great tool for community-building and social integration, as youngsters are given opportunities to show their talents at an early age. The film entitled One for All is not only a portrait of Szilágyi but also depicts the rollercoaster ride of successes and failures that an elite athlete goes through. The screening was organised in cooperation with Hungary's National Talent Centre (NTK).