

## PHOTO OF THE DAY

MTI/Prime Minister's Press Office/Vivien Cher Benko



PM Viktor Orbán (r) receives Azeri economy minister Mikajil Dzabbarov

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**European Parliament holds plenary session**

**Events related to the war in Ukraine**

**Budapest Classic Film Marathon starts**

## TOP STORY

# NUCLEAR ENERGY 'POTENTIAL PLATFORM FOR EAST-WEST TIES'

Nuclear energy can serve as a platform for a pragmatic cooperation between East and West based on mutual interests, Hungary's minister of foreign affairs has said.

Even in times of conflict, rational thinking must be maintained, Péter Szijjártó said at the 8th Central and Eastern Europe Nuclear Industry Congress held in Prague. Europe had been hit by the gravest economic and security challenges of the past decades, with the energy crisis posing a major problem, he said. The continent has not given appropriate answers to the war in Ukraine, the EU's policy of sanctions has failed, energy resources have diminished while energy prices have soared which all have led to Europe losing competitiveness, he said, adding that "without nuclear energy, the continent would be unable to regain its competitiveness". He called nuclear energy important in achieving environmental protection goals. Szijjártó hailed the establishment of a nuclear alliance led by France which already has 16 European member states, and he pledged support for its plan to develop an integrated European nuclear industry reaching 150 GW of nuclear power capacity in the EU by 2050. This means building 30-40 new reactors while extending the life cycle of some operating power plants, he noted.

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## **SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARY REJECTS SANCTIONS ON NUCLEAR INDUSTRY**

Hungary would reject any “attempt to approve sanctions on the nuclear industry” as this would seriously hurt the country’s national security and economic interests, Péter Szijjártó, the foreign minister, said in Prague. Regarding Hungary’s sole nuclear power plant in Paks, Szijjártó said the government’s aim with its expansion was for the country to achieve “climate neutrality” by 2050. He noted that the new blocks to be built as part of the international project would have total capacity of 2,400 megawatts and pre-empt the emission of 17 million tonnes of carbon dioxide per year. Szijjártó said the expansion of the nuclear project, Europe’s largest, was progressing well with all permits obtained in the EU. He pointed out “attempts made regularly by certain players to stymie the projects”, adding however that for Hungary “the security of energy supply is a matter of sovereignty”. “We view attacks on the project as attempts to violate our right to make sovereign decisions about our national energy mix,” Szijjártó said.

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## **AGMIN: HUNGARY CONFIRMS GMO FREE STATUS**

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity entered force 20 years ago on Monday, the ministry of agriculture

said, noting that the protocol concerns the transboundary movement and handling of living, genetically modified organisms and that Hungary joined the agreement ratified by 173 countries in 2004. Hungary’s dedication to its GMO free status is reflected by the fact that it is also enshrined in the new constitution in force since 2012, the ministry said in a statement. Hungary opposes a recent proposal made in Brussels under which the European Commission would discontinue member states’ right of self-determination and loosen some restrictions for plants resulting from newer gene-editing technology and cancel certain labelling requirements, the ministry said.

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## **SZIJJÁRTÓ: BOSCH TO INVEST HUF 18 BN IN PLANT EXPANSION**

Germany’s Bosch Energy and Body Systems is investing 18 billion forints (EUR 46.7m) in expanding its plant in Miskolc, in north-eastern Hungary, creating 170 new jobs, Péter Szijjártó, the minister of foreign affairs and trade, said on Monday. The government is supporting the investment with a 3 billion forint grant, a ministry statement cited Szijjártó as saying. Some 4.5 billion forints will go towards the development and testing of electric drive units, and 13.5 billion will be ploughed into capacity expansion, he said.

Szijjártó said innovative technologies were key to the success of national

economies. Hungary spent a record 920 billion forints on research and development last year, he added. The number of employees working in R&D is around 95,000, expected to reach 100,000 soon, he said.

Bosch, which employs nearly 20,000 people in Hungary, is a good example of how Hungary continues to draw investments in R&D as well as production, he said. Meanwhile, “Bosch is buying products and services from hundreds of SMEs in Miskolc, so the capacity expansion is good news for Hungarian SMEs, too,” he said. Road traffic generates 14% of emissions globally, he said. “The question isn’t whether European car manufacturing is going to transition to electric vehicles; the question is which countries will win and which will lose out on that transition,” he said. “Not only has Hungary kept pace in the global competition, it has emerged at the global vanguard of electromobility,” he said.

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## **SZIJJÁRTÓ INAUGURATES CHINA AUTOMOTIVE PLANT**

The government’s policy of opening to the East has turned Hungary into China’s primary investment destination in central Europe, Péter Szijjártó, the minister of foreign affairs and trade, said at the inauguration of a plant of Pex Automotive Systems in Szigetszentmiklós, near Budapest. Pex Automotive, a branch of Chinese car industry supplier Baolong, has

ploughed some 5.1 billion forints (EUR 13.2m) into the greenfield investment, Szijjártó said. The government supported the development with a 1.5 billion forint grant, he said, adding that the investment brought the European headquarters of its electromobility strategy to Hungary. The plant will also turn out products for the electric and intelligent vehicle industry, he said. Half of the plant's electricity needs will be covered by solar panels. Hungary is Baolong's third site outside China after the US and Germany, "so international competition for it was harsh," he said.

The production of Hungary's automotive industry jumped by 31 percent last year, to over 10,000 billion forints, he said. In addition, the sector grew by an annual 24 percent in the first six months of 2023, compared with a record performance in 2022, he said. "We Hungarians stand by East-West cooperation. We are dismayed to see that voices calling for the artificial decoupling of the Chinese and European economies have gained strength lately," he said. As bilateral between the EU and China comes to 875 billion euros a year, this could cause "damage the scope of which is impossible to foresee," he said.

**ORBÁN RECEIVES  
AZERBAIJAN ECONOMY  
MINISTER**

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán on Monday received Mikayil Jabbarov, Azerbaijan's economy minister,

in his office, with talks centred on energy cooperation, the PM's press chief said in a statement. Hungary's energy security has been enhanced thanks to Azeri natural gas storage in Hungary which began in July, Orbán said at the meeting attended by Péter Szijjártó, the minister of foreign affairs and trade, and Márton Nagy, the minister of economic development. Several Hungarian companies are expanding in Azerbaijan, and more Hungarian investments there are also on the horizon, the statement noted.

Regarding the reconstruction of Karabakh, Azerbaijan has designated the settlement entrusted to Hungarian companies for reconstruction, it said. Orbán also noted the 200 scholarships Hungary offers to Azerbaijani students pursuing their studies in Hungary.

**SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARIAN  
FIRMS TO PARTICIPATE  
IN KARABAKH  
RECONSTRUCTION FROM 2024**

A consortium made up of Hungary's largest construction companies will be involved in the rebuilding of Soltani, in Azerbaijan's Karabakh region, from next year on, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said. The foreign ministry quoted Szijjártó as saying at a press conference held jointly with Azeri Economy Minister Mikayil Jabbarov that both countries were "extremely committed" to further developing ties. Szijjártó called Hungary's participation in

Azerbaijan's reconstruction an important achievement, adding that the reconstruction plans have been approved and parts of the relevant agreements signed. The minister noted that Hungary started importing natural gas from Azerbaijan earlier this year, under an agreement aimed at importing an annual 100 million cubic metres of gas and storing 50 million cubic metres for Azerbaijan for a fee. He added, however, that increasing those amounts would necessitate "European Union measures to facilitate infrastructure developments in south-eastern Europe".

"We call on the European Union to do more for energy diversification than nudging member states ... Brussels should act, too, and ensure funds to increase gas transit capacities" through which central European countries could import more gas from Azerbaijan, he said.

Szijjártó said Hungary's exports to Azerbaijan increased 3.5 times in the first half of 2023, with its total value exceeding last year's grand total. He added that imports were also fast increasing. He noted that Hungarian energy company MOL was "an important player" in Azerbaijan's oil extraction, and increased volumes of oil imports from that country were contributing to Hungary's energy security. Hungary and its people "greatly profit from a long-term cooperation with Azerbaijan," Szijjártó said, noting that the two countries started their energy cooperation in 2010.

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## **CULTURE AND INNOVATION MINISTER DISCUSSES COOPERATION IN ISRAEL**

Culture and Innovation Minister János Csák has paid an official visit to Israel, discussing cooperation opportunities. Csák told MTI that he had met Israel's Minister of Culture and Sports Miki Zohar and discussed cultural and scientific ties. The sides agreed on a number of new projects, he added. Csák also visited the Weizmann Institute, a partner of the Hungarian Research Network, accompanied by HUN-REN head Balázs Gulyás.

Csák also visited Jordan, where he discussed cultural and scientific initiatives and education. He met Prince El Hassan bin Talal, who heads a number of Jordan's cultural and scientific institutions. The sides discussed prospective joint initiatives in areas ranging from climate change to water management, he added. Csák also met Haifa Najjar Jordania's culture minister.

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## **LMP PLEDGES 'HONESTY' IN EP ELECTION CAMPAIGN**

Opposition LMP will represent an "honest attitude" in the upcoming European Parliament election campaign, the green party's deputy group leader, Máté Kanász-Nagy, told a press conference. LMP, he added, was best positioned to promote a "fair green transition" in Europe. He said

parties campaigning in the context of the EP elections on a platform of low inflation and higher wages were being deceitful because "the European Parliament has no powers" to shape those areas. Kanász-Nagy said Hungary's alliances should be the focus of the election campaign, and he blamed the government for "dismantling ties with its natural allies in the region just to meet the expectations of the Russian president". "We must put an end to the era of expecting cheap fossil fuels from the East to undergird European competitiveness," he said.

Meanwhile, he said LMP's campaign was targeted against government efforts to "make Hungary into a battery-plant colony" adding that efforts to turn the country into "a waste dump for the East or the West" must be countered.

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## **JOBBIK: MIGRANT GHETTOS 'MUST BE PREVENTED'**

The government plans to set up "migrant ghettos" in Hungary, according to an opposition Jobbik-Conservatives official, who called for the prevention of "migrant imports". Instead of tapping Hungarians, the government has decided to draught in half a million migrant workers, László Lukács, the party's parliamentary group leader, told a press conference in front of City Hall in Debrecen, in eastern Hungary. He insisted that the "migrant ghetto" planned for the city would house Asian migrant workers,

who would take the away the jobs of "the people of Debrecen" and depress local wages. Their presence would also compromise the culture and civic life of the city, he added. To draw attention to this, he said Jobbik was placing a sign next to the construction of China's Catl battery plant, pointing out that "thousands of migrant workers will come to this city and take away the work of Hungarians". Lukacs added that the plant would "leach Chinese chemicals into Hungarian soil". Referring to the prime minister, he said the "Orbán plan" for "the resettlement of migrant workers must be stopped".

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## **UKRAINE CRISIS - SOME 14,000 UKRAINIAN CITIZENS ENTER HUNGARY ON SUNDAY**

Fully 6,757 Ukrainian citizens entered Hungary at the Ukraine-Hungary border on Sunday, while 6,967 came to the country via Romania, according to the national police headquarters (ORFK). Police issued temporary residence permits valid for 30 days to 113 people, ORFK said on Monday.

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## **SUDANESE WOMAN SENTENCED TO 9 YEARS OVER CHILD PORNOGRAPHY, DRUGS**

A Budapest court has sentenced a Sudanese woman to nine years in prison on charges of child pornography and illegal possession of drugs. According to municipal prosecutor's

office, pornographic images of children were stored on the defendant's mobile phone, and a "significant amount" of drugs were seized from her apartment in Budapest. The defendant had stayed in Hungary as a refugee since 2003, until the authorities initiated stripping her of her refugee status because she

was believed to have been using a false identity.

In January 2021, the inspectors "seized the woman's telephone and found three images of child pornography". They added that the defendant had "shared two such images with other users" in September

2019. In the woman's rented home in Budapest's eighth district, the inspectors found 400 grams of cocaine. On top of her prison term, the defendant has also been banned from Hungary for nine years, as well as from any occupation involving minors. The sentence is can be appealed.