

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTV/Szilárd Koszticsák

Renoir's oil-on-canvas *The Swing* unwrapped at the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Stats office releases 2nd reading of July industrial output**

**Events related to the war in Ukraine**

## TOP STORY

### HUNGARY 'TO SEEK COOPERATION AT EU HELM'

As president of the Council of the EU next year, Hungary will seek constructive cooperation with every institution of the European Union including the European Parliament, the minister for EU affairs has said.

János Bóka told reporters in Strasbourg on Tuesday that he held talks in preparation for the Hungarian presidency with EP President Roberta Metsola, as well as with EP group leaders and the heads of EP committees. "I plan to have further meetings to present the priorities of the Hungarian presidency and to have consultations about the framework of cooperation with the EP," he said. The minister said the Hungarian presidency's priorities were still being drafted. "We agreed [at today's talks] that those must include common issues that are important for the EU and on which we must take a decision; issues concerning which cooperation is important in order that the integration process can be moved forward," he said. Asked about concerns expressed recently by left wing MEPs over the Hungarian presidency, Bóka said no such concern had been expressed at his talks. "The Council has approved the programme of the trio presidency [of Spain, Belgium and Hungary]. Hungary is preparing to hold the Council's presidency in the second half of 2024 and this is what everyone else is preparing for," he said.

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## **AGRICULTURE MINISTER HOLDS TALKS ON UKRAINE GRAIN BAN**

Agriculture Minister István Nagy on Tuesday discussed the extension of the ban on Ukrainian grain imports into the European Union with his central European counterparts. At his talks with his Romanian counterpart, Florin-Ionuț Barbu, in Bucharest, Nagy said both countries allowed the transport of Ukrainian grain across their territory "because we don't want to harm Ukraine, but we want to preserve the competitiveness of our farmers." "We must work to deliver Ukrainian grain to ports as soon as possible so it can find its way to the traditional markets in north Africa and the Middle East," he said.

At his talks with Kiril Vatev, his Bulgarian counterpart, in Sofia, Nagy highlighted the need for joint action against the glut of Ukrainian grain and a joint long-term solution to market disruptions. He said the three biggest challenges faced by the countries most affected by the grain imports were finishing the harvest, storing the products and selling them at good prices. Bulgaria's situation is made more difficult by the fact that its storages are full of domestic sunflower seed, yet demand for the much cheaper Ukrainian grain is higher, he said. "There is no doubt that we must continue to support the export of Ukraine's agricultural products, especially following the collapse of

Black Sea shipping," the agriculture ministry cited Nagy as saying.

In a Facebook post ahead of the talks, Nagy said the European Union's ban on the import of certain Ukrainian grain products, introduced earlier this year to protect the markets of neighbouring countries from a glut, should be extended at least until year-end. "We can only protect the interests of farmers together," he said.

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## **SZIJJÁRTÓ: AUDI CONTRIBUTING TO HUNGARIAN ECONOMY'S SUCCESS**

Audi and the western Hungarian city of Győr have developed close ties, and the company has made a significant contribution to the success of Hungary's economy, the minister of foreign affairs and trade said on Tuesday, announcing a training scheme linked to the transition to electromobility. The Audi Ahead competence development project at the regional service centre for subsidiaries of Volkswagen AG will provide training for 500 people, and the 1.5 billion forint (EUR 3.9m) investment will receive 750 million forints in government support, Péter Szijjártó said at the launch event. "Beyond the physical preparations for the new car industry, involving the purchase of machinery, the necessary technological know-how must be acquired by everyone who will provide the basis for the new era," Szijjártó said. He said the German company had

demonstrated trust in Hungary in an area that was vital to its own global operations. "These days when rumours and fake news are being spread, it is worth making clear that cooperation between Germany's industry and economy with Hungary is expanding fast," he added. "We will make every effort to ensure that cooperation continues to be characterised by mutual respect and mutual interests," Szijjártó said. Without Audi's activities, Hungary could not have broken the investment and export records set in recent years, he said. Audi has invested around 4,500 billion forints and has become one of the largest exporters, putting Hungary in 34th place globally in terms of exports, even when it is ranked 95th in terms of population size, he added. He noted that one of Europe's largest solar power plants is located at the company's Hungarian factory, helping Hungary to be among the twenty countries in the world able to increase economic output while cutting emissions.

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## **ENERGY MINISTRY, FRAMATOME SIGN MOU ON EXPANDING COOPERATION**

Energy Minister Csaba Lantos on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding with the CEO of French nuclear industry giant Framatome, with an aim to step up and expand cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the ministry has said. While the first agreement between

the government and the Hungarian branch of Framatome in 2021 focused on training and R&D, Tuesday's agreement signed by Lantos and the parent company's CEO Bernard Fontana included cooperation on prolonging the lifespan of nuclear plants and fuel supplies, the ministry said in a statement. Climate friendly, sustainable nuclear energy plays a great role in Hungary's energy mix and in fulfilling its climate protection goals, the ministry cited Lantos as saying. France, and Framatome, are also key to Hungary's efforts to promote cooperation among European Union member states in using nuclear energy, he said. It has a large role in maintaining European energy sovereignty and competitiveness, he said.

### **FIDESZ MEPs TO BACK EU DEFENCE FACILITY**

The MEPs of ruling Fidesz are backing the European defence industry reinforcement through common procurement act (EDIRPA), because "strengthening the European defence industry is in our fundamental interest", the group said in a statement on Monday. The statement, published after an EP discussion on the report on setting up the facility, said: "The new facility is key to strengthening European defence industry and capacity, weakened by failed leftist-liberal policies, and so our group supports the initiative." Group leader Kinga Gál said the Ukrainian war

had highlighted that strengthening European defence industry and infrastructure was long overdue. That is in Europe's fundamental interest, she said. "The European Union can only face escalating security challenges with globally competitive defence and military capabilities," Gál said. The facility will offer an opportunity to improve responsiveness and production capacities through the cooperation of member states, she said. "All that is key to lasting peace and long-term stability." MEP András Gyürk said the new facility could create value-added when the European defence industry was "brought back on its feet". "The war in a neighbouring country has shown the strategic failure of the leftist-liberal defence policy aimed at dismantling the defence industry. To ensure the security of EU citizens, the most critical deficiencies of the defence industry should be addressed at lightning speed. That warrants the cooperation of European countries as well as strong national defence industry programmes, and the facility can contribute to that. Besides, the new act may help defence investments in central Europe and in Hungary," he said.

### **FIDESZ HOLDS COMMANDING LEAD IN NEW NÉZŐPONT POLL**

Ruling Fidesz holds a "commanding" lead over the other parties ahead of the start of the

autumn session of parliament, according to a fresh poll released by the Nézőpont Institute on Tuesday. Fidesz's voters, however, are less committed to the party, Nézőpont told MTI. If elections were held this Sunday, Fidesz would be likely to receive 51% of the vote, but around 10% of its voters, or 5% of the electorate, are not certain that they would choose the ruling party. Nézőpont pointed out, however, that the "partial uncertainty" among Fidesz voters did not mean that they intended to vote for another party. It also noted that Fidesz still polls over 40 percentage points higher than the strongest opposition party, the Democratic Coalition (DK), which has a backing of 10%. The ruling party's numbers are also close to double the combined support held by the opposition parties that contested the 2022 election together, it added. Radical party Mi Hazánk is supported by 9% of the electorate, while Momentum would receive 8% of the vote, as would the satirical Two-Tailed Dog Party. The party of former Jobbik leader Péter Jakab would get 3%, and Péter Márki-Zay's Everyone's Hungary People's Party would receive 2% of the vote. The Socialist Party and green LMP would also get 2% each. Nézőpont's phone poll was carried out between September 4 and 6 with a sample of 1,000 adults.

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## **SOME 12,000 UKRAINIAN CITIZENS ENTER HUNGARY ON MONDAY**

Fully 5,653 Ukrainian citizens entered Hungary at the Ukraine-Hungary border on Monday, while 5,993 came to the country via Romania, according to the national police headquarters (ORFK). Police issued temporary residence permits valid for 30 days to 81 people, ORFK said on Tuesday.

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## **STADLER TO INVEST HUF 17 BN IN CAPACITY EXPANSION**

Swiss train carriage manufacturer Stadler is investing 17 billion forints (EUR 44.2m) to expand production capacity at its plant in Szolnok, in eastern Hungary, creating 170 jobs, Péter Szijjártó, the minister of foreign affairs and trade, said on

Tuesday. The investment will expand production capacity by 20%, so that Stadler will be able to turn out 750 carriages every year, Szijjártó said. The government is supporting the project with a 4.8 billion forint grant, Szijjártó said. Around half of the railway and suburban railway carriages currently used in Hungary have been made by Stadler, Szijjártó noted, while 90% of its production goes towards exports to European and US cities, he added.

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## **FINE ARTS MUSEUM PREPARES FOR LARGE- SCALE Renoir EXHIBITION**

Pierre-Auguste Renoir's oil-on-canvas *The Swing* was unwrapped on Tuesday in the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts which is getting ready to open the first-ever large-scale exhibition of the French master's works in Hungary. "We practically

have an embarrassment of choices this time with the number of main titles we have managed to loan for the exhibition," László Baán, the director of the museum, told reporters at the event. He noted that with the Hungarian government's support, the museum had acquired Renoir's 1903 work *Reclining Nude* for 12.3 million US dollars in 2019. Renoir painted two more versions of that work which have never been seen together before, sparking the idea for the museum's exhibition entitled "*Renoir - The Painter and His Models*", Baán said. In addition to the other versions of *Reclining Nude*, on loan from the Musée d'Orsay and the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris, around 70 works from over 20 public collections will be on display at the Museum of Fine Arts from September 22. The works have been insured for around 400 billion forints (EUR 1bn), said Baán. The Renoir show will run until January 7, 2024.