



Culture and Innovation Minister János Csák among speakers addressing 5th Budapest Demographic Summit

UPCOMING EVENTS

Budapest Demographic Summit wraps up

Events related to the war in Ukraine

Cultural Heritage Days

Budapest Chain Bridge Festival

TOP STORY

GOVT 'TO DO EVERYTHING TO PROTECT FAMILIES'

Hungary's government will protect families by all means possible, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán told public radio on Friday.

The prime minister said he believed the measures introduced so far were enough to push inflation down to single digits by year-end. Multinational retail chains are taking advantage of the price increases resulting from the war and the related sanctions and trying to raise prices, Orbán said. This had a significant effect on inflation, "so steps must be taken against multinationals that act like speculators", he added, noting that the government had taken appropriate action. Other countries are introducing other kinds of measures, he said, adding that price caps had gone "out of style". Hungary, too, has switched to implementing mandatory discounts, but some countries are bringing back caps on the price of fuel and basic food products, Orbán said. There is a variety of measures that can be taken, and if necessary, the government will take further steps, he said, adding that they "won't sit idly by", but protect the people and families by all means possible. The war and the sanctions imposed in response to it also played a role, he said, and they, too, required action.

ORBÁN: WORSENING ECONOMIC SITUATION WILL FORCE EU STATES TO BE PRO-PEACE

Despite the fact that the European Union is fundamentally a “peace project”, right now the “pro-war” side is the one with an overwhelming majority, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán told public radio on Friday, adding that a worsening economic situation would be the deciding factor that forces the governments of European Union member states into “joining the peace camp” and bringing a swift end to the war in Ukraine. “Ukraine wouldn’t be able to fight this war if we didn’t give it weapons and a lot of money,” he said. “We’ve given Ukraine some 180 billion forints’ worth of EU funds since the start of the war, and in exchange we haven’t got a single step closer to peace; in fact, it’s more like we’re farther away from it,” he said. “The decisive means are in the hands of the Americans,” Orbán added.

As regards rising fuel prices, the prime minister said the 3.5-fold increase in the fee Ukraine charges for piping crude from Russia was costing Hungary an extra 48 billion forints (EUR 125m). Ukraine raised the fee overnight, he noted, adding that private players in the petrol trade in Hungary incorporated the extra fee into prices, pushing up the price of petrol and increasing inflation by half a percent. Orbán said he was conflicted about the price hike: angry but also

sorry for Ukrainians “fighting for their lives”. Even though Ukraine had “no money, no weapons, and face an overwhelming force”, they were not interested in peace but continuing the war, he said. To carry on, they were collecting money “from everywhere”, he added. “I’m going to do all I can to push the Ukrainians away from pursuing this policy,” he said.

ORBÁN: HUNGARY TO EXTEND UKRAINIAN GRAIN IMPORT BAN ‘IF BRUSSELS FAILS TO ACT’

Hungary will extend the ban on the import of Ukrainian grain on its own authority, alongside Romania, Poland and Slovakia, if Brussels fails to take appropriate action, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said in an interview to public radio on Friday. Orbán complained about “Brussels bureaucrats” who were unwilling to extend the ban which expires at midnight. “If they don’t extend it by midnight, then ... we will extend the import ban on our own national authority, which will mean a serious fight in Brussels,” he said. He said the European Union was “unwilling to side with member states and the European people”, and instead followed US interests when it came to the issue of grain. The prime minister insisted that “Ukrainian grain is not really Ukrainian but a commercial product from land that the United States likely owned a long time ago”. This, he added, put a different complexion on the debate

about who would win or lose the war. “It’s sure America will win and Europe will lose,” he declared.

Meanwhile, he called it a personal goal of his to make sure that families with children are financially better off than those without, and that young people are not deterred from having children because of financial difficulties. Europe does not have a common demographic policy, he noted. “That’s why we hold forums like yesterday and today’s Demographic Summit in Budapest: to convince decision-makers to put this issue on the agenda, too,” the prime minister added. Thanks to the family policy the government introduced in 2010, 160,000 more children were born, he said.

Orbán said that what was at stake in next year’s European Parliament elections was whether or not there would be an EU leadership that sought peace, whether it would isolate itself or cooperate with other regions of the world, whether it was able to stop migration, would abandon “gender propaganda” and support families and childbearing instead. Also at stake was whether it would ditch “double standards” applied to Poland and Hungary, he added.

ORBÁN GREETES JEWS ON ROSH HASHANAH

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has greeted “our Jewish compatriots” on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, the prime minister’s press chief said

on Friday. Orbán's letter delivered to the heads of Hungarian Jewish organisations said that it would "not be hard to bid farewell to the fraught year behind us" and to look to the year ahead with "fresh goals, plans, and faith in a more peaceful and calm future". The prime minister said he trusted that "the tones of the shofar" would make for an uplifting holiday and honey cake would "sweeten the New Year".

SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARY ALLOWING GRAIN DELIVERIES TO AFRICA BUT AGAINST RUINING HUNGARIAN FARMERS

Hungary is still allowing Ukrainian grain to be delivered to Africa, "but we won't allow Hungarian farmers to be ruined", Péter Szijjártó, the foreign minister, said on Facebook on Friday. Szijjártó accused the European Union and Kyiv of misleading the European public on the Ukrainian issue of grain exports. He noted that central European countries had opened up transit routes to ensure that Ukrainian grain reached seaports for transport to Africa. The aim, however, wasn't to flood central European countries with Ukrainian grain, he said. "We won't allow Hungarian farmers to be ruined," he wrote. "The deceitful propaganda in Brussels and Kyiv won't stop us from doing this," he wrote, referring to Hungary's declaration that it will extend the export ban on its own national authority if the EU refuses to do so.

DEFMIN: HUNGARY BACKS GEORGIA'S EURO- ATLANTIC INTEGRATION

Hungary supports Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration, Defence Minister Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky said after meeting Juansher Burchuladze, his Georgian counterpart, in Budapest on Friday. Hungary will have a chance to promote Georgia's aspirations for Euro-Atlantic integration when it assumes the presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of next year, Szalay-Bobrovniczky said. The minister said that after his visit to Tbilisi in the summer, Friday's meeting had been an opportunity to boost cooperation between the two countries. Dialogue between Hungary and Georgia was "easy" given their similar cultures and geographical characteristics, he said. Both nations speak a unique language, have a "closed culture", and are committed to the values of Christianity, he added.

Szalay-Bobrovniczky said they had reviewed the situation of the war in Ukraine, agreeing that it was a drawn-out bloody conflict that carried a risk of escalation. He said Georgia could be considered a "grandmaster of peace", even though it was locked in a serious conflict with its neighbour, and he underscored Hungary's support for Georgia's territorial integrity and independence. Georgia, he said, was capable of preserving peace, and

this was also Hungary's goal when it came to the Russia-Ukraine war, he said, adding that only a ceasefire and peace talks could lead to conflict resolution.

Szalay-Bobrovniczky said he and Burchuladze had also discussed possibilities regarding bilateral military and security policy cooperation. Hungarian and Georgian troops are both present in each other's training exercises, he noted. He added that he had also told Burchuladze about the military and economic opportunities in the defence industry investments being undertaken in Hungary. Burchuladze said he hoped Friday's meeting would help elevate the cooperation between Georgia and Hungary.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARIAN RESCUE TEAM TO ARRIVE IN FLOOD-STRICKEN LIBYAN PORT CITY SOON

Hungarian rescue teams will soon arrive in the Libyan port city of Derna to begin a search and rescue mission after the dams protecting the city collapsed due to heavy rain earlier this week, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said on Friday. Hungary has been in constant contact with the Libyan authorities since the disaster struck, and the foreign ministry has allocated 14 million forints (EUR 36,000) to send a team of 37 people and 3 dogs to help with search and rescue efforts, Szijjártó said in a post on Facebook. The members of

the Pest County Search and Rescue Service, the Budapest Rescue Organisation and the Inter Rescue Group are travelling to Libya via Türkiye, with the Turkish authorities and the diplomats of the Hungarian embassy there working to make sure that the Hungarian team can begin its mission in Derna as soon as possible, the minister said.

DEUTSCH TURNS TO VON DER LEYEN OVER FINANCING OF 'SOROS ORGS'

Fidesz MEP Tamás Deutsch has written to Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission president, complaining about EU financing of "Hungarian Soros organisations" in Brussels. "Hungarian Soros organisations" had been given 500 million forints by the "corrupt Brussels bureaucracy to work against Hungary", the head of the Fidesz EP delegation said in a video statement on Friday. He said Brussels "does not want to leave anything to chance" in next year's EP elections. "Brussels is already financing the campaign of the Hungarian dollar left," he said, adding that support for Soros organisations raised "lots of serious questions". Also, he said Hungary had not received the EU funding it was owed because the money may have been spent on the war in Ukraine. Von der Leyen, he said, should clarify the EC's connection to the "scandalous case".

GOVT OFFICIAL: HUNGARY-UKRAINE WORKING GROUP TO DISCUSS RIGHTS OF TRANSCARPATHIA HUNGARIANS

A Hungarian-Ukrainian inter-ministerial education working group is holding its fourth meeting in Budapest to discuss the settlement of the rights of ethnic Hungarians living in Transcarpathia and the situation of Ukrainian refugees, a foreign ministry official said on Friday. Levente Magyar, the ministry's parliamentary state secretary, told MTI that he was optimistic that the sides could agree on a roadmap for settling their disagreements. Ukraine in recent years has introduced a number of measures that restrict ethnic Hungarians' right to education in their mother tongue, Magyar noted, adding that Hungary has kept this matter on the agenda for years. "This is important enough for us that we've even blocked Ukraine from joining and deepening its ties with the EU and NATO," he said. Hungary has again made it clear to Ukraine that it will not budge on this decision unless relevant steps are taken to restore the rights of the local Hungarian community, the state secretary said. He added, however, that the early indications in connection with the talks gave cause for optimism. Even if the sides failed to reach agreement on every detail, they could still agree on a roadmap that may lead to a settlement of these issues in

the foreseeable future, Magyar said. The working group will also discuss the situation of Ukrainian refugees in Hungary, he said. The thousands of children who have stayed in the country must be taught Hungarian and integrated into the school system, he noted. Magyar, who is deputy foreign minister, signed a declaration of intent on cooperation within the framework of the Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship programme with Yevhen Kudriavets, Ukraine's deputy education minister, according to a statement.

MAYOR LAUNCHES EUROPEAN MOBILITY WEEK PROGRAMME IN CAPITAL

The message of European Mobility Week is that Budapest is not just made up of motorists, cyclists and public transport passengers, but also residents who want to get around, Gergely Karácsony, the city's mayor, said on Friday, opening the environmental campaign in the capital. The Budapest city council's job is to offer Budapest residents sustainable means of transport, Karácsony told a press conference in City Hall Park. The city has become less liveable in recent years, with more and more people moving outside its borders and driving in to work, putting a burden on the environment, he said. "This negative spiral is what we'd like to reverse," he said, adding that the city council's aim was to add more pedestrian crossings and protected bicycle lanes while

keeping public squares for residents. Karácsony noted that the mobility week had started out as a single car-free day, but the city administration today “thinks about this issue in a far more complex way”. Budapest’s leadership does not see the parts of the city as mere “transport vessels” between the workplace, school and the home, but rather as “the place where we live, and whose quality fundamentally impacts how we live”, he said. Meanwhile, the mayor said the claim that the city was seeing a sudden surge in congestion was false, citing international statistics as showing that there were fewer traffic jams in the capital.

HUNGARY JULY CONSTRUCTION OUTPUT UP 3.4% YR/YR

Output of Hungary’s construction sector grew by an annual 3.4% in July, after contracting for seven months, the Central Statistical Office (KSH) said on Friday. Output of the buildings segment rose by 11.6% while civil engineering output dropped by 5%. In absolute terms, construction sector output was worth 675.7 billion forints

(EUR 1.8bn) in July. Month on month, output increased by 8.5%, adjusted for seasonal and working day effects. Order stock was 24.4% lower at the end of July than twelve months earlier, while new orders slipped by 7% during the period. In January-July, output fell by 5.3% from the base period.

MORE THAN 13,000 UKRAINIAN CITIZENS ENTER HUNGARY ON THURSDAY

Fully 6,232 Ukrainian citizens entered Hungary at the Ukraine-Hungary border on Thursday, while 6,929 came to the country via Romania, according to the national police headquarters (ORFK). Police issued temporary residence permits valid for 30 days to 133 people, ORFK said on Friday.

LISZT FERENC MUSIC ACADEMY ESTABLISHES CENTRAL EUROPEAN MUSIC HISTORY RESEARCH GROUP

The Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music has set up a group to research central European music history

with the aim of exploring the past 350 years of Hungarian music in the context of its region. The group has started carrying out research covering Hungarian language culture, the former Kingdom of Hungary and Habsburg Empire, central and eastern Europe in Soviet times, and connections with various German-speaking countries under the auspices of the musicology department headed by Lóránt Péteri, the academy said on Friday.

The group also held its first international conference under the title “Rethinking Central European Music” as part of this year’s Bartok World Violin Competition, organised by musicologists Anna Belinszky, Gergely Fazekas and Péteri.

Academy of Music teachers and other Hungarian institutions are joined by specialists from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Romania, Switzerland and Serbia, including the University of Cambridge, the University of Surrey, Royal Holloway (University of London), and researchers from Leiden University.