

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



President Katalin Novák and Texas Governor Greg Abbott in talks in Austin

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Events related to the war in Ukraine

## TOP STORY

### SZIJJÁRTÓ: AID TO POOR COUNTRIES WAY TO PEACE

The best way to ensure peace and security is to provide economic assistance to the least developed countries, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said at the United Nations General Assembly session currently under way in New York.

According to a statement from the foreign ministry, Szijjártó said better living conditions in those countries helped reduce the risk of armed conflicts and further migratory waves. The Hungarian government has launched a country-specific development programme to assist those countries in job creation, as well as improving education and living conditions in general. The Doha Programme of Action opens a new chapter in cooperation based on solidarity, fairness and mutual respect, Szijjártó said. Development programmes should be based on mutual respect without donor countries interfering with the internal affairs of recipients, he insisted. Since 2010, the Hungarian government has raised Hungary's official direct assistance by 247%, from an annual 114 million dollars to 400 million, or from 0.1% of GDP to 0.3%, Szijjártó said. This year, the government has already spent tens of millions of dollars to improve health services in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Laos, and Uganda, he said. Hungarian companies are also active in water management, food, agricultural and IT projects, he added.

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## **ORBÁN HOLDS TALKS WITH EU COMMISSIONER FOR INTERNAL MARKET**

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán met European Union Commissioner for Internal Market Thierry Breton for talks in Budapest on Friday, Orbán's press chief said.

The meeting was also attended by Minister for European Affairs János Bóka, Minister for Economic Development Márton Nagy and Minister of Defence Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky. The talks focused on European industrial policy and ways to increase the EU's competitiveness.

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## **SZIJJÁRTÓ: CONDITIONS FOR PEACE NOT TO IMPROVE - CNN**

The circumstances for peace are not going to improve in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Péter Szijjártó, the minister of foreign affairs and trade, said in an interview with CNN posted on his Facebook page on Friday. Asked about signs of diminishing global support for Ukraine, Szijjártó said the "Ukraine fatigue in European national parliaments and in the US is proof that the circumstances for peace are not going to improve". "This is a major debate in Europe, between us and those that don't think that peace should come now, saying that the situation should improve on the battlefield day by day," he said. "But this is not the case," he added. The

goal should be to save lives, he said. "Then get Ukrainians and Russians ... negotiate a peace deal," he added. "This is not going to take place without the United States," Szijjártó said. He said the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all countries in the world must be respected. "We have never recognised the occupation of any territory of Ukraine," he added.

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## **PRESIDENT NOVÁK DISCUSSES COOPERATION WITH TEXAS GOVERNOR**

President Katalin Novák met Texas Governor Greg Abbott for talks on "opportunities in theoretical and practical bilateral cooperation" in Dallas late on Thursday. "The State of Texas holds just the same values as Hungary," Novák said.

Abbott said his state was open to build business relations with other countries, and noted that Texas in itself would be the eighth largest economy in the world. He voiced readiness to cooperate with special regard to car making and the space industry. The talks touched upon opportunities offered by Texas's oil and gas industry to meet Hungary's energy demands, too. Novák highlighted Texas's recent economic achievements, and said she was looking forward to the implementation of a recent agreement between Hungary and Axiom Space in Houston, adding that the partnership "could help a second Hungarian astronaut to space". Concerning shared values, Novák mentioned the fight

against illegal migration, the family, as well as "the fundamental values of security and the nation".

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## **SZIJJÁRTÓ: MEDIATION SHOULD BE IN FOCUS RATHER THAN WEAPONS DELIVERIES IN UKRAINE WAR**

The international community should focus on mediation and dialogue when searching for a solution to the war in Ukraine, rather than weapons deliveries, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in New York on Thursday, at a meeting of the UN Group of Friends of Mediation. According to a ministry statement, Szijjártó told the meeting that Hungary's stance was clear: the "circumstances and conditions [for peace] will not be improved on the battlefield, the conditions for peace yesterday were much better than today. And today they are still better than tomorrow, because with each and every day spent with this war, there will be more people dying and more destruction taking place." The solution to wars is always at the negotiating table, not on the battlefield, he said. "What we see on the battlefield are dead people and destruction." Noting that the co-moderator of the meeting was the Turkish foreign minister, Szijjártó praised Türkiye as the only country which successfully mediated between Ukraine and Russia, referring to an agreement on grain transports from which Russia has since withdrawn. To

the Turkish foreign minister, Szijjártó said, "I would like to ask you to continue your efforts and try to build on the first success[ful] one. Because every day in the war brings more casualties and more destruction". "We do believe that the whole international community should mostly concentrate on saving lives of the people ... In order to stop the war, we need immediate ceasefire, then peace talks to be established," he added.

Later on Thursday, Szijjártó attended a preparatory meeting for the Summit of the Future, to be held in 2024, and told the event that the world was living in the decade of dangers and crises, "let us think about the financial crisis, migratory challenges, COVID, economic challenges, and the war in our neighborhood. On top of that, there's a growing threat of terror," he said. "We see as a serious danger that the world is now going to be divided into blocs again," he said, calling for "a civilized East to West cooperation in the future." Szijjártó said that when it came to a vision of the future, Hungary wants "no war, no migration, and no aggressive gender propaganda." As regards the war in Ukraine, Hungary is in a very specific situation, he said. "We are faced with two serious security threats by the war from the east and by illegal migration from the south." Hungary also sees it as a priority to "tackle the root causes which are causing migration ... Instead of encouraging the migratory flows all over the world,

we do have to destroy together the business model of the smugglers. And we have to make sure that we bring help where it is needed and we do not bring problems where there are no problems yet," he said. Further, Hungary strives to protect families against "the very aggressive gender propaganda". "We are sticking to our more than a thousand-year-long heritage: the father is a man, mother is a woman and our children must be protected and must be ensured that they can grow up under safe circumstances." Hungary will always reject aggressive gender propaganda, and sees families as the foundation of society, he said.

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### **OFFICIAL: HUNGARY HELP PROGRAMME INCREASES PRESENCE IN SAHEL**

The Hungarian government provides humanitarian aid in the Sahel region through its Hungary Helps programme, with those efforts also restricting migration to Europe, Tristan Azbej, state secretary in charge of assistance to persecuted Christian communities, told public media on Friday. Stability in the Sahel is key for security in Europe, Azbej said, but pointed to recent civil wars and coups in the region. He said Chad was "the last pillar of stability" in the area, adding that the country had recently accommodated hundreds of thousands of refugees. He said one third of Chad's population of 18 million required humanitarian aid, while

climate change, and a shortage of food and drinking water were further worsening the situation.

Concerning the Hungarian government's attitude of providing assistance, Azbej said it was "different from one-time colonists ... it does not force its ideologies onto locals, but tries to improve the situation in cooperation with them." "A personal, informal, and respectful approach is fundamental, which could be an example to be followed by others," he added.

Hungary has sent a team of doctors to Chad, while agricultural and water management experts would also arrive soon to help with long-term water and food supplies, the state secretary said.

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### **FINMIN: CURBING INFLATION GOVT'S TOP ECONOMIC POLICY GOAL**

Hungary's government, in agreement with the central bank, considers curbing inflation its most important economic policy goal, Finance Minister Mihály Varga said on Thursday. In a roundtable discussion at the opening day of the 61st Itinerant Conference of Economists in Eger, in north-eastern Hungary, Varga said the government's measures to reduce inflationary risks were successful. This is also reflected in the analyses of the major credit rating agencies, which are full of positive findings, he added. Monetary and fiscal policy were kept particularly loose in Hungary in recent years, until the pandemic created a new situation for the government's

economic policy with the primary need to save jobs, keep the economy afloat and ensure that workers in the sectors hit hardest by the crisis were not left without income, the minister said. He said the budget deficit would continue to decline this year, too, and would fall to the 2.9%-of-GDP target in the 2024 budget bill next year. He noted that a number of big state investments had been postponed at the end of 2021, and said projects underway now could also be delayed, if necessary. He said the government could weigh tax measures to boost budget revenue if banks book record profits this year. The cabinet could also consider delaying acquisitions of equipment by the Defence Ministry and undertake a review of subsidised credit programmes, he added.

Opposition DK's group spokesperson Olga Kálmán said Varga had "admitted that the budget is in trouble". "He suggested that further austerity might be on its way and pointed fingers at bank's profits," she added. Kálmán said the forint exchange rate plummeted "at the news of further austerity". Hungarian families and businesses cannot tolerate further austerity, she said. The consequences of past austerity measures cannot be handled with further austerity, she added.

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## **SPEAKER ADDRESSES TRIANON MUSEUM REOPENING**

House Speaker László Kövér highlighted the importance of

recognising the right to a national identity as a human right in his address to the reopening ceremony of the Trianon Museum in Várpalota, in western Hungary, on Friday. "The first step in Hungary's own way out of the [trauma] of Trianon and the first step in Europe's avoiding its own Trianon are the same: recognising the right to national identity as a human right and mutually promoting that right by states," Kövér said. Ensuring that right would allow Europeans to "freely inherit and pass on the language, culture, and homeland of their ancestors," he added. The right to a national identity is "crucial in protecting a general human dignity" and key for "reinforcing peace, security, and stability", he said.

Ensuring the right to a national identity could be "the cornerstone of rebuilding a European Union which has by now disastrously lost its way and purpose," Kövér insisted. Kövér said the concept of Trianon was to "artificially, often violently change the ethnic composition of a geographical region, or strip communities of their national identity, to destroy them economically", and said "the European Union itself is staggering towards its own Trianon".

"Europe's spiritual self-defence is in ruins, its inability to defend itself politically or economically is terrifying, and its military capabilities for self defence have been nonexistent since WWII," he said. Europe is currently the target of "an operative manoeuvre disguised as illegal migration and

aimed at a scheduled exchange of population," Kövér insisted. That operation is aimed at "estranging Europeans from their own selves, their homeland and national identity," he added. He also suggested that Hungarians were "survivors of Europe rather than its martyrs ... ready to share the formula for survival". "We don't want anyone else to meet the fate of Trianon again in Europe ... we believe that "Europeans could have no better and more secure lives than that offered by a cooperation of democratic states," he said.

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## **MORE THAN 12,000 UKRAINIAN CITIZENS ENTER HUNGARY ON THURSDAY**

Fully 6,203 Ukrainian citizens entered Hungary at the Ukraine-Hungary border on Thursday, while 6,145 came to the country via Romania, according to the national police headquarters (ORFK). Police issued temporary residence permits valid for 30 days to 67 people, ORFK said on Friday.

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## **LMP MARKS WORLD CAR FREE DAY**

Budapest has never been a city that is "prosecuting" drivers, with a great part of public spaces reserved for car infrastructure, an opposition LMP lawmaker said on Friday, marking World Car Free Day. Bernadett Bakos said that despite only 30-40% of residents used cars in the city, cars

occupied some 80% of public spaces. She added that the problem was that the number of cars increased by 1 million in Hungary, including by 300,000 in Budapest, in the past ten years. The real solution to traffic jams would be reducing the number of cars instead of making developments for car users, she said. Alternative means of transport, such as community and bicycle transport must be developed, Bakos said. It would be most important to return public spaces to pedestrians and enable a safe and healthy environment for them above ground in the centre of the city, she added.

### **FINANCE MINISTRY: BUDGET ENSURES RESOURCES EVEN DURING WARTIME**

The budget ensures the resources necessary to maintain the

regulated utilities price scheme for households, protect the security of the country, and defend family subsidies and pensions, even during wartime, the finance ministry said on Friday. Hungary's cash flow-based general government balance reached 3,298.7 billion forints (EUR 8.5bn) at the end of August, the ministry confirmed in a detailed release of data. The deficit widened from 2,940.3 billion forints at the end of July. The central budget deficit reached 3,330.8 billion forints at the end of August and the social security funds were 93.0 billion forints in the red. Separate state funds had a 125.1 billion forints surplus. "In addition to the extraordinary expenditures, the budget continues to pre-finance European Union programmes, the resources for which Brussels is

keeping from Hungary for political reasons," it added. The ministry noted that spending on European Union-funded programmes came to 1,813.8 billion forints in January-August, while transfers from Brussels reached just 1,040.9 billion forints. Expenditures related to the regulated utilities price scheme for households came to 1,085.1 billion forints by the end of August. Expenditures on compensation for suburban and long-distance public transport reached 440.5 billion forints. "In spite of the unfavourable international circumstances, the government remains committed to reducing the deficit and state debt level from year to year," the ministry said. The full-year deficit target is 3,400.2 billion forints. The deficit reached 4,753.4 billion forints in 2022.