

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



Inauguration of President Tamás Sulyok

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Szijjártó, Pellegrini to inaugurate new River Ipoly bridge connecting Hungary, Slovakia**

**Sulyok, Orbán, Kövér to meet Slovak officials**

**Events related to the wars in Ukraine, Middle East**

## TOP STORY

# ‘SERVING COUNTRY, NATION GREATEST HONOUR’

Serving the country and the nation “is the greatest honour”, President Tamás Sulyok said in his speech at his inauguration as head of state in front of Sándor Palace.

The president greeted Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin and in the wider world. “I did not plan this service; I did not prepare for this task,” the president said. “But if fate presents one with unexpected situations and calls one to serve, one should not shy away from it,” he said. “My oath sanctifies my loyalty and commitment to my country,” Sulyok said, adding he had always stood for enforcing the Fundamental Law which guaranteed the rule of law. As president, Sulyok said, he would protect “the dignity of Hungarians” and “follow the path of good examples” paved by his predecessors while also “paving my own path”. “The law has been ... the compass of my whole life, and I wish to work accordingly,” the president said. Sulyok said Hungary was a country with more than a thousand years of statehood, based on the principle of popular sovereignty, and the president’s task, he added, was to represent this state in his powers prescribed by the country’s Fundamental Law, adding that this law was “the cornerstone, framework and standard of my work”.

## **PRESIDENT 'EMBODIES UNITY OF THE NATION'**

Tamás Sulyok, Hungary's new head of state, said the Fundamental Law precisely stated that the president of the republic embodied the unity of the nation and oversaw the democratic functioning of the state. "This unity cannot and will not be broken..." he said.

Sulyok said he would not deviate from his predecessor's "excellent example" of pursuing openness in international relations and maintaining close ties with the Hungarian diaspora. Hungary's president, he emphasised, was not only responsible for compatriots in the homeland and beyond the border "in a spiritual sense" but also as a matter of public law. The president also said he considered the lives of Transcarpathian Hungarians in war-torn Ukraine with particular concern.

Sulyok said he considered it natural to support people in freely living according to their national and cultural identity. Further, he highlighted the importance of pursuing good relations with neighbouring countries and close cooperation with Visegrad countries. As between nations, mutual respect is also the standard between people, Sulyok said, adding that he and his wife would always stand with those who needed him most: those in need, the downtrodden and those fallen on hard times. "Christian culture, faith and values are inseparable from us; they

are the basis of our thousand-year-old statehood, an integral part of our past and the factor that determines our present," Sulyok said.

"As Hungarians, we have merged with the fate of Europe, enriching it with our uniqueness," he said, adding that "as Hungarians, we can strengthen the continent". The president said Europe's future hinged "not only on us but on each and every European nation and member of the community". This, he said, presented a difficult task ahead. He said this is why it was vitally important that, amid such uncertainty, Hungarians, at least, had a sure footing. "Our first and most sacred duty is to use all our strength and talent to ensure that Hungary remains Hungary and that its independence is maintained intact," Sulyok said.

The fulfilment of a good life, security, order, justice and freedom "are possible if the citizens and the state have a common goal," Sulyok said. "You cannot go against the will of the people; the state must serve its citizens." "Yet the state does not function flawlessly," he said, adding that it was the task of the remedial legal system, the courts and the Constitutional Court to eliminate any errors made.

Public trust "must be the binding material" of 21st century Hungary, President Sulyok said. "Our democratic state cannot be conceived without it," he said. "Without trust there can be no functioning state, economy or legal system," he added. "Without honesty, there is no trust, and honesty

can be shown in the existence of a dialogue," he said, pledging to "strive to strengthen mutual understanding instead of suspicion, to ensure respect instead of insults".

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his wife, Speaker of Parliament László Kövér and his wife, Deputy Prime Minister László Semjén, former presidents János Áder and Pál Schmitt, Interior Minister Sándor Pintér, Chief Prosecutor Péter Polt and Minister of Defence Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky, among others.

## **POLITICAL DIRECTOR: HUNGARY 'HAS MANY FRIENDS IN US'**

Hungary "has many friends" in the United States, Balázs Orbán, the prime minister's political director, said in an interview to public radio on Sunday, in connection with Viktor Orbán's meeting with Donald Trump in the former US president's residence Mar-a-Lago, in Florida. He said it was an honour for the Hungarian delegation to be hosted by the Republican Party's presidential candidate in his own home. Peace had endured in many parts of the world while Trump was president, including in the Middle East and Ukraine, he said. Hungary wants a ceasefire and peace talks, the political director said, adding that President Biden's "liberal US administration thinks differently". He added that the world and Europe would be best served if

Trump returned to the White House and then established peace. US-Russia talks could end the war with the involvement of Europe and the Ukrainians as well as possible third parties. "But America's stance on the matter is decisive," he said. Trump, he said, had warned about the mounting danger of nuclear confrontation, insisting that the US should try to do "something radically different". Orbán said a ceasefire would open up an opportunity to resolve the security relationship between the West, NATO and Russia in the long run. While not easy, "the sooner we start, the more lives we can save", he said.

The political director said the Biden administration had shown Hungary "ideological hostility", even though Hungary was a good NATO ally which spent well above 2% of GDP on defence policy and contributed to numerous alliance missions. He insisted that "circles connected to the Democrats finance the Hungarian left", adding that Biden's administration was on the wrong side of the Hungarian government and Hungarian people's opinion. Many Republicans, on the other hand, saw Hungary as a model and an important European ally, he said. Europe, Orbán said, should be an interlocutor to both the current and future leaders of the United States. Western politicians, encouraged by Donald Trump's stance, were increasingly speaking in favour of peace, and this was in the interest of all Hungarians, he said.

### **POTÁPI: 'WE STAND BY SZEKLER FREEDOM'**

The Szeklers, like other Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin, can count on the support of the Hungarian government, the state secretary for Hungarian communities abroad said, marking the Day of Szekler Freedom. Árpád János Potápi said Hungarians today commemorated the Szekler martyrs who were executed in Targu Mures on March 10, 1854. "This day is a tribute to our Szekler compatriots fighting for national self-determination," Potápi said. Szeklers' demand for self-determination "is not an unprecedented desire" in the European Union, he said, citing the examples of the Austrians in South Tyrol and the Swedish-speaking residents of the Åland Islands in Finland. If an ethnic community can freely practice its identity, culture and traditions, as well as operate its own institutions, not only does the given community benefit but so does the successor state too, Potápi said. Territorial autonomy entailed protection, self-organisation and local legislation, he said, which was "good for everyone" and "not directed against anyone". Potápi urged as many people as possible to participate in the events commemorating the Day of Szekler Freedom, emphasising that this was a common cause of all Hungarians.

### **ORBÁN: TRUMP 'IS NAME OF PEACE'**

After meeting the former president of the United States, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán declared Donald Trump "the president of peace" who "commanded respect around the world and established conditions for peace". Peace endured in the Middle East in Ukraine while Trump was president, Orbán said in video released to MTI on Saturday. "If he were still the president of the United States, there would be no war today," he said, adding that peace would emerge when world leaders were around who wanted peace. "I'm proud that Hungary is among such countries."

The prime minister said opportunities abounded in US-Hungary economic relations, and while trade turnover has topped 9 billion US dollars, "we don't want to stop there". He said "when Trump returns" to the White House, "we'll reinvigorate US-Hungarian trade ties".

Orbán noted that the election campaign in America was "going full steam ahead", and it was up to Americans to come to their own decision, though Hungarians could "honestly admit that it would be better for the world and Hungary if President Donald Trump were to return."

### **TRUMP: 'NO ONE BETTER, SMARTER LEADER' THAN ORBÁN**

"No one is better, smarter or a better leader than Viktor Orbán," former US

President Donald Trump has said. Prime Minister Viktor Orbán published the video of Trump's remarks on his Facebook page on Saturday, together with a comment: "Thank you, Mr President!" Orbán met Trump on Friday in the former president's Mar-a-Lago residence in Florida. Talks were followed by a dinner and concert. In the video recorded at the concert, Trump said: "No one is better, smarter or a better leader than Viktor Orbán. He's fantastic".

"He's a non-controversial figure because he says: 'This is the way it's gonna be,' and that's the end of it. Right? He's the boss. No, he's a great leader." "Viktor is a Great Leader, respected all over the World," Trump said in a post on his messaging platform.

### **SZIJJÁRTÓ: 'TRUMP AS STRONG US PRESIDENT WOULD GUARANTEE STABILITY OF GLOBAL SECURITY'**

Having a strong president in the White House always ensures a form of stability for global security, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said on Friday ahead of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's meeting with Donald Trump in Florida, adding that if Trump returned, the United States could again be led by a strong president. Szijjártó said that the substantial lead Trump established in the Republican primaries this week practically guaranteed his nomination for the November election. "So we can say that our prime minister will soon

be meeting the Republican challenger [to the Democratic presidential candidate]," he said.

Szjijártó said he was convinced that had Donald Trump been elected US president in 2020, the war in Ukraine would not have happened, and the conflict in the Middle East could be resolved much faster. He underscored that Hungary-US relations were at their peak when Trump was the president of the United States.

Meanwhile, Szijjártó said he looked forward to talks on boosting bilateral economic ties, underlining the importance of cooperation with Florida. He said he was scheduled to meet the head of the recently established Hungarian Chamber of Business and Commerce in Florida as well as representatives of electronics maker Jabil, which employs 4,000 people in Hungary. Other Florida-based businesses also have significant investments in Hungary, he said, adding that the Hungarian Chamber of Business and Commerce could be of help to the several Hungarian companies interested in entering the Florida market.

### **DEFMIN: PILOTS, TECHNICAL STAFF TO GET BIG WAGE RISE**

Hungarian air force pilots and technical staff are getting a big salary increase retroactive to December, Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky, the defence minister, said. The raise applies to fighter pilots, transport and training aircraft pilots, transport and combat

helicopter pilots, as well as advanced flight control specialists. Experienced pilots will see their pay increase from 1.5 million forints (EUR 3,800) to 2-3 million forints, depending on their years of service and ability. His statement noted that Hungary polices the airspace of other countries as part of NATO and V4 cooperation, with Hungarian Gripens helping to protect the airspace of Slovenia, Slovakia and the Baltic countries.

### **KOCSIS: PARLT CTTEE TO INVESTIGATE MOMENTUM MP'S STATEMENT**

The Fidesz parliamentary group leader has slammed Momentum MP Miklós Hajnal for lobbying in Brussels "against the interests of his country" and "boasting" about it, saying that parliament's European affairs committee should put the matter on its agenda as soon as possible and hold an extraordinary meeting. Kocsis said on social media on Saturday that it was "outrageous" that Hajnal had "openly and proudly" attempted to prevent Hungary from receiving EU funds and to tie it up in legal procedures. "Whereas it's not out of the ordinary for a Hungarian left-wing politician to lobby abroad against the interests of his country, the Momentum politician's boasts are truly outrageous," he said, adding that Hajnal's actions were political and an attack on Hungary's sovereignty. He added that the opposition had been "paid in dollars by foreign speculators" in the past.

Fidesz MEP Tamás Deutsch earlier proposed holding an extraordinary meeting of the European affairs committee with a view to investigating “political influence manoeuvres” by the “dollar left”. He said the Momentum board member had recently told commercial television channel ATV that party MEPs Anna Donath and Katalin Cseh had played a major role in the European Union’s rule-of-law and infringement proceedings against Hungary, resulting in funds being withheld from Hungary. Deutsch said the Momentum MEPs had betrayed their electorate and had seriously harmed millions of Hungarians. He insisted that an elected representative “must act in the interest of his country and its citizens under all circumstances”.

### **LMP CALLS FOR GUARANTEE FOR HUNGARY’S GMO-FREE STATUS**

The green LMP party has submitted a political statement to parliament calling for a guarantee of Hungary’s GMO-free status. Mária Szendefy, a member of the party’s national board, said genetic modification was a brutal intervention in the order of nature, the long-term effects of which were not yet known. Genetically modified crops must not be allowed in the European Union and Hungary’s GMO-free status must be guaranteed, she added.

Szendefy said her party had submitted a political statement on the issue to parliament but it was rejected by the Fidesz majority of the relevant parliamentary committee, so they were turning to the minister of agriculture, saying that Hungary’s food safety and food sovereignty were at stake. She noted that a united stance was important as the European Parliament had already approved significant exemptions in its new GMO regulation, allowing the release of such crops without a prior risk assessment, while GMO produce could be marketed without labelling or monitoring.

### **DK ACCUSES MOMENTUM OF JEOPARDISING OPPOSITION VICTORY**

The opposition Momentum party’s refusal to take part in primary elections in the voting districts of Győr, Szigetszentmiklós and Dunakeszi -- where no agreement has been reached on a joint candidate -- jeopardises the victory of the opposition, László Varju, an MP of the opposition Democratic Coalition (DK), told a press conference. Varju called on Momentum not to boycott the primaries and let voters decide on the joint opposition candidates in the city and towns in question. In 2019, Fidesz was defeated in Budapest and a number of other cities precisely because the opposition fielded joint candidates everywhere, Varju said.

### **FIDESZ MEP: PARTY EP DELEGATION WORKS TO DEFEND WOMEN’S RIGHTS, DIGNITY**

Ruling Fidesz’s MEPs work every day to defend the rights and dignity of women and girls, and oppose the “gender ideology” of the leftist and liberal MEPs, Livia Jároka, an MEP of the party, said on the occasion of International Women’s Day on Friday. Jároka told MTI in a statement that the European Parliament’s women’s rights and gender equality committee organised a committee meeting on women in sport in collaboration with the national parliaments. At the meeting, Jároka highlighted the importance of sports programmes for young women when it comes to integration, as well as of the participation of Roma women in politics. She said sports programmes helped the integration of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, adding that International Women’s Day provided a good opportunity to highlight the challenges faced by women and the difficult situation of Roma women today. She noted that 40% of all MEPs are women, and only two of them Roma. Jároka, herself a Roma, underlined the importance of representing the Roma community and the rights of Roma women.