

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Chinese President Xi Jinping, with their spouses, at lunch in Budapest

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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

**Hungarian Olympic Committee general assembly meets**

## TOP STORY

# SZIJJÁRTÓ HAILS HUNGARY-CHINA SUMMIT RESULTS

Chinese President Xi Jinping's visiting Hungary is of historic importance and the summit has yielded results matching the occasion, the foreign minister has said, adding that representatives of the two countries had signed 18 key agreements.

Péter Szijjártó called Xi's visit "historic" as it was the first time for a Chinese president to visit Hungary in the past twenty years. He also noted that Hungary and China were celebrating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties. Szijjártó said talks between the Chinese President and Prime Minister Viktor Orbán had been "extremely successful". He said the two sides expanded an earlier list of joint projects under the Belt and Road Initiative aimed at developing East-West connections, and would start preparations of a Hungarian-Chinese project to build a railway ring around Budapest. The ring, he said, was needed to make transport between large Chinese investments in the eastern parts of Hungary and western markets more efficient and sustainable.

"Similarly, we will start preparations for an express rail link aimed at providing fast and civilised access from central Budapest to the airport," he said. Preparations for the development of a nationwide network of charging points for electric cars will also get under way, the minister said.

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**SZIJJÁRTÓ: SERBIAN,  
CHINESE PARTNERS  
TO WORK ON BOOSTING  
ENERGY SUPPLY SECURITY  
FOR REGION**

Péter Szijjártó, the minister of foreign affairs and trade, on Thursday announced that Serbian and Chinese partners would examine how to build a crude pipeline in the shortest possible time between Hungary and Serbia, with the goal of beefing up the security of energy supplies for the two countries and the whole region. Szijjártó said Hungary and Serbia was embarking on building Europe's most modern, biggest, safest and fastest border crossing. "The road crossing at Röszke is extremely busy. We're all too familiar with the images of long lines of lorries and cars. We don't want this to be the case in the future..." he said. Meanwhile, he said farm exports were important to bilateral trade, noting that Hungary has the most Chinese export licences in central Europe. Thanks to today's agreement, more produce has been added to the list, he said, citing the example of cherries. Also, cooperation will be extended to nuclear energy, he said. "We have now agreed with the Chinese government on drafting a cooperation agreement covering the length and breadth of the nuclear industry to ensure both countries' access to the cheapest, safest, most efficient way of producing electricity," Szijjártó said. Demand for electricity will increase sharply the world over, he said, adding that nuclear energy best met such demand.

**ORBÁN: CHINA,  
HUNGARY AGREED ON  
STRENGTHENING TIES  
AS EARLY AS 2009**

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife, Peng Liyuan, ended their three-day visit to Hungary with lunch with Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his wife, Anikó Lévai, the PM's press chief said. During the lunch, Orbán noted that he and Xi had agreed to strengthen ties between the two countries already in 2009, when Xi was deputy president and himself the leader of the opposition. Fifteen years later, they signed 18 cooperation agreements and outlined new plans and goals, he said.

**NAGY ON HUAWEI, 4IG  
COOPERATION PACT:  
CHINA, HUNGARY TIES  
'REMAIN STRONG AND  
UNBROKEN'**

Addressing a press conference during which the leaders of China's Huawei and Hungary's 4iG signed a cooperation agreement in Budapest, Márton Nagy, the national economy minister, said ties between China and Hungary had "always been strong" and would remain "unbroken in the future". Nagy described discussions between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and government members as "fruitful", noting that during Xi's visit to Budapest numerous economic agreements

were also signed. These cover rail development, electromobility, telecommunications, energy and nuclear energy, he added. Nagy noted that Huawei and 4iG are prominent players in telecommunications. A joint statement by 4iG and Huawei said the aim of the agreement was to enhance 4iG's cloud services by establishing a new joint cloud service for domestic companies and large Chinese and Far Eastern companies operating in the region. The pact will also help Hungary to continue developing in an industry that harmonises with its manufacturing-centric economic structure, he said. He noted that Chinese investments in manufacturing, electric car and battery production and IT here were breaking records, and this was underpinned by similar unprecedented levels of financing. Infrastructure, too, was crucial to the flow of goods and data, and cooperation of the two companies would aid this, he added.

Gao Weijie, chief executive of Huawei Technologies in Hungary and the Western Balkans, said Huawei was steadily increasing its investments thanks to Hungary's "fair, transparent, objective and friendly market environment". Péter Fekete, the chief executive of the 4iG group, said its purchase of Vodafone Hungary had had the effect of deepening ties between Huawei and 4iG, and now they were "opening a new chapter" in cooperation, strengthening the strategic partnership of the two companies as well as between China and Hungary.

Answering journalists' questions, Nagy noted that several important agreements have been reached between Hungary and China concerning various infrastructure developments, and he mentioned five projects in particular: the V0 rail project, the high-speed rail link between central Budapest and Liszt Ferenc Airport, and the installation of charging stations promoting electromobility, all of which are Hungarian projects. In addition, two more are shared with Serbia: the logistical development of the Röske border crossing and the connection of the Algyő oil pipeline with Serbia. Their total value is between 5 billion and 10 billion euros, he added. The CATL Debrecen battery plant will start production in the upcoming period, he noted, adding that its products would end up in the West, mainly in Germany. Regarding the electricity network, Nagy said this was important to Hungary given its commitment to the transition to electric cars. A related action plan will be sent to EU member states, he added.

### **GOVT OFFICIAL: EU 'TOOL FOR HUNGARY'S PROGRESS'**

The European Union is not a goal for Hungary but a means to achieve progress, the prime minister's political director said on Friday. Hungary cannot rise without participating in EU cooperation, but "the EU won't solve Hungary's problems or raise the

country, only we are capable of that," Balázs Orbán said at the Ludovika Festival in Budapest. He said the EU's 2004 enlargement, when Hungary joined the bloc along with 9 other states, had been the "last success story of the EU's history". The EU itself has called the period since a "decade full of challenges", in view of a range of crises from Brexit to the war in Ukraine, he said. The countries joining in 2004 have benefited enormously from the accession, he said, but added that those countries had gone through a period of disillusionment in the subsequent period, when the EU "failed to provide a magic recipe during the 2008-2009 economic crisis". Orbán said representing Hungarian interests in Europe "is a serious, everyday political struggle". "If we don't raise our voices, they won't consider our interests."

Regarding the Hungarian EU presidency, he said the key issue would be "whether Europe sees a major war or not". He insisted the bloc was drifting towards direct confrontation between NATO and Russia. Many European countries "thinking differently from Hungary" are using "all propaganda tools at their disposal" to convince their citizens that continuing the war by supporting Ukraine is the only way they to save their country, he said. Hungary, on the other hand, "was pushed into two wars it didn't want to get involved in during the 20th century, and it lost the majority of its territory and inhabitants as a result," Orbán said.

So the government's opposition to be dragged into the war "is an axiom that bears no compromise or relenting. We must keep that position as it is in Hungary's interest to do so," he said.

### **GOVT SENDS EMAIL TO PUBLIC CONCERNING STANDPOINT ON NATO PLANS**

The government has sent out an email concerning its standpoint on NATO plans in Ukraine to members of the public who had already provided their contact details. There is no possibility of a settlement on the battlefield and a return to negotiations is therefore needed, the Government Information Centre (KTK) said on Friday in connection with reports of a NATO plan to set up a mission in Ukraine encompassing military training and the coordination of arms shipments. The email said NATO wanted to "pump" 100 billion dollars into the war over a period of five years, "so it's likely that the conflict will be prolonged by at least five years". "What we see is the worst-case scenario that could lead to a world war," the statement said, adding that Hungary was under huge pressure to back plans broadening the war. It said the government's position was clear: "We want to stay out of the war. We do not want to take part in the NATO mission." The statement added that the government would do everything to ensure that Hungary "does not send weapons and soldiers". "Lives can be saved only with a ceasefire and through peace," it added.

## **PÁRBSZÉD: XI'S VISIT RAISES SECURITY POLICY ISSUES**

Opposition Párbeszéd is turning to the Sovereignty Protection Office over the security policy and national security issues raised by the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Hungary, and is initiating a meeting of parliament's national security committee, the party said on Friday. Tímea Szabó, the party's co-leader, told a press conference that she hung a Tibetan flag from a window of the lawmakers' office building during the visit. Afterwards, the office said they had informed secret services and Speaker of Parliament László Kövér of her act, which she stressed was not a crime under Hungarian law. "How is it possible that, at the behest of the Chinese government, so-called volunteers in red baseball caps harassed a parliamentary

representative, Márton Tompos of Momentum, who wanted to fix an EU flag on a bridge?" Párbeszéd is calling on the Sovereignty Protection Office to review "how is it possible that Hungarian citizens are being regularly harassed in Hungary during visits of Eastern dictators?" Meanwhile, Párbeszéd continues to protest against installing "poisonous battery plants" in Hungary, she added.

## **HUNGARY APRIL ANNUAL INFLATION 3.7%**

Hungary's consumer price index in April was 3.7% higher than the same month a year earlier, the Central Statistical Office (KSH) said on Friday. Compared with March, prices rose by an average of 0.7%. Food prices rose by 1.0%. Household energy prices fell by 4.5%, albeit from a high base. Gas prices were 9.2% lower and electricity prices declined by 2.9%. Consumer

durable prices edged down by 1.7%. Prices in the category of goods that includes vehicle fuel rose by 3.9%, with vehicle fuels up by 3.5%. Harmonised inflation, adjusted for better comparison with other European Union member states, was 3.6%. Core inflation, which excludes volatile fuel and food prices, was 4.1%. The CPI calculated with a basket of goods and services used by pensioners was 3.7%.

Commenting on the data, Márton Nagy, the national economy minister, said inflation remained low, in line with the trend in earlier months. Inflation, which fell to one-seventh of last year's CPI, posed no challenge to the national economy, he added. Nagy said the government had successfully protected families, companies and jobs through targeted and effective measures. Stable, low inflation contributed to restarting the economy through growing real wages and a gradual pickup in consumption, he added.