

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Péter Lakatos

Budapest docks in front of Parliament under water

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**European Parliament elections**

**Local elections**

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

## TOP STORY

# ORBÁN: SUNDAY'S EP VOTE 'CHANCE TO STOP WAR'

Whereas hope of bringing an end to the war in Ukraine appears to be fading every day, "we still have a chance to vote in the European Parliament elections and stop it", Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said on Friday in an interview to public radio.

There are points in history before every war when the clock cannot be turned back, Orbán said, adding that "we are very close to that point". The prime minister said that France was handing over fighter planes to Ukraine and Russia had stated their ability to deliver weapons to any US enemy, which, he said, were "no longer simply statements but actions". Russian ships were on their way to Cuba and Russia was engaged in conflicts in Africa, "and everywhere circumstances are getting increasingly tense", he added. The war in Ukraine, he said, was turning from a regional conflict into a European and West-East standoff, "and regional wars usually develop into world wars". "We'll have a chance to stop the war" in the EP elections, he said. "Then there'll be a few difficult months until the American elections, during which we can survive". Orbán said that "when Donald Trump returns -- and with a good European election behind us -- we can form a pan-Western transatlantic peace coalition and stop the war," he said.

Hungary Matters is an English-language newsletter produced and distributed by the Media Service Support and Asset Management Fund (MTVA) with content provided by Duna Media Service Provider exercises copyright over all content. No part of this publication may be copied, reproduced, redistributed or transmitted without prior written permission from the publisher, with the exception of copies made by individuals for private use, educational purposes or scholarly research, provided that such transmissions do not exceed the extent justified by the purpose and are not aimed at financial gain, even indirectly, and the source name are indicated at all times.

All rights reserved. Enquiries should be made to the English Help Desk at +361 441 9340  
For MTI's real time coverage please visit <http://english.mti.hu>, <http://econews.hu>



## **ORBÁN: EUROPE IN STATE OF WAR PSYCHOSIS**

Europe "is in a state of war psychosis" that could logically result in the arrival of western European military units in Ukrainian territories, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said on Friday in an interview to public radio. Looking back to the past, he added, it was easy to see that "we are entering an open conflict at accelerating speed". "Those who say there is no direct threat of war are misleading the people," he added. "Unfortunate Hungarian leftists", he said, were "torn between war and peace, while the Hungarian people -- even on the left -- want peace". But those who "pay the left, from Soros to Brussels to Washington, want war." Attempts were being made to silence pro-peace politicians, he said, citing the attack against Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico and the blocking of online reports about the Peace March held in Budapest last Saturday. A direct military conflict was being prepared, Orbán said, adding that Russia "is not a third-rate country, however, and there will be a response to every Western move, which will result in the escalation of the war," he added.

"We are in the last moments; we are only centimetres from the point of no return," Orbán said. "We must act now," he added. Orbán also stated his objection to a European decision to ban member states from receiving Russian broadcasts, insisting that

Hungarians and the citizens of other EU countries were prevented from getting hold of Ukrainian and Russian news and then deciding "where they think the truth lies".

## **ORBÁN: HUNGARY 'MUST STAY OUT OF NATO MISSION' IN UKRAINE**

Hungary must stay out of a NATO mission in Ukraine at all costs, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said in an interview to public radio. He said Hungary should not even "dip its toe" in the planning phase, adding there was a risk that Hungarian military units could be transferred to NATO command if the alliance mission in Ukraine were to get under way, and Hungarian territory used for the mission. "We'd lose a vital part of our sovereignty if that happened ... and then we wouldn't be able to keep the Hungarian troops out of the war," he said.

Orbán said the point at which Hungary withdrew from all NATO preparations for a Ukraine mission was "very close", adding that such a step must be first discussed with the alliance's current and future secretary-general. "We must make clear that Hungary has the right to stick to the NATO basic treaty that we joined," he said, noting that it was defined as a defence treaty. Orbán said nobody could force Hungary to participate in military action outside the territory of NATO member states or to contribute money to such activity. He said NATO

was "demanding" some 40 billion dollars for this purpose from alliance members, adding that he had so far refused to approve a Hungarian contribution. He said it was possible to make divisions within Western coalition governments as a result of their members' different value systems and this gave way to interference which endangered sovereignty "but we can protect our country's independence" because in Hungary "there is one camp and one flag" and "we have learnt how to handle pressure from Brussels". Orbán said that at the same time it was important at the EP election to support government measures aimed at protecting the country's sovereignty and preventing Hungary from being "pushed into war". The prime minister said that regardless of Sunday's election results, Hungary's government would "stick to supporting peace as long as it can, the only question being is how long that is possible", and that was linked to the outcome of the election. He said staying out of the war was a matter of strength, insisting that it was "easy" to participate in a war. "All you must do is swim along the others, but going against it and staying out is difficult," he added. Orbán said the difference between the eras of the past world wars and today was that instead of the great powers making decisions at the negotiating tables, people could now choose in free elections whether to support war or peace. He said people had already lost much due to the war. "Perhaps they don't

realise, but they're financing the war without actually wanting to, with prices in the shops being wartime prices." The war, he added, pushed up interest rates on loans, transport costs, energy prices, "and Brussels has made it even worse by introducing a completely ill-devised sanctions system." An additional problem is that Hungary must make continuous payments to European Union coffers, "and Brussels then sends the money to Ukraine," Orbán said. "What I fight for most frequently is that they should not send money due to us to Ukraine, but at least if they want to send money there, then they should act fairly and instead of sending the Hungarians' money, they should send some money from everyone, with everyone making a separate contribution for this purpose," he added. Commenting on the NATO demand that "we should commit ourselves to 40 billion dollars", Orbán said any amount of money that appeared sufficient today would soon turn out not to be enough "because the war will eat up everything". "Quitting the war now would mean that the sacrifices made so far have been futile and pro-war people refuse to admit this, which is why they refuse to even talk about stopping; they keep throwing fresh money, fresh resources behind the money already wasted," Orbán said. The prime minister said that "speculators led by George Soros" had got rich off the war and governments had acted in line with their demands, saying "if we have already invested this much in the war,

we should not allow it to get wasted and we should add more," he said. "But this will never end, or rather, it will end with millions of people dying," he added.

---

### **ORBÁN: 'HUNGARY RECOVERS UNIQUE ASSET' THROUGH REACQUISITION OF INTL AIRPORT**

By repurchasing majority ownership in Liszt Ferenc International Airport "we have repossessed a unique asset, one that must not be given over to anybody but always must be preserved," Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said in an interview to public radio. He said that in times of war it was in any case better to have the country's only serious international airport under Hungarian control. By taking the airport into state ownership, the assets of all Hungarian citizens had increased, he added. In order to rapidly increase the value of the airport, the world's largest airport operator France's Vinci is involved, Orbán said. There are further plans to involve investors from Qatar, "though we definitely want to preserve the majority", he added.

---

### **SZENTKIRÁLYI WITHDRAWS CANDIDACY FOR BUDAPEST MAYOR**

Alexandra Szentkirályi is withdrawing her candidacy for Budapest mayor and asking her supporters to vote for Dávid Vitézy. Szentkirályi, the candidate of the ruling Fidesz-

Christian Democrats, announced her withdrawal on Facebook early on Friday morning. She asked her supporters to vote for Vitézy as Budapest mayor and for the Fidesz-Christian Democrats list. Vitézy, who has been put forward by green opposition party LMP and a local association, said "the first win is there the second will come on Sunday". He said on Facebook that when he embarked on his campaign he knew he would have to defeat the government policy associated with transport minister János Lázár, "which is stymieing all key developments", as well as the "national political ambitions" of Gergely Karácsony, the incumbent, "who complains and procrastinates while doing nothing". He said that as mayor he would not form a coalition with either Fidesz or the leftist Democratic Coalition. Budapest and the capital's companies would be "run by professionals rather than failed party cliques". "Gyurcsány's people are off, but Orbán's people can't take their place either," he said, referring to the former Socialist prime minister who leads the Democratic Coalition and the current premier, respectively. Reacting, Karácsony said on Facebook: "So the charade is over." He insisted that Szentkirályi's withdrawal was part of a "dark and cynical political deal" and that Vitézy was "Fidesz's candidate". He called the "deal" a "betrayal" of voters. "Fidesz has betrayed its voters just as it has betrayed Budapest over the last five years," he added.

## **SZIJJÁRTÓ: CAR MANUFACTURERS, SUPPLIERS CREATING 'UPWARD SPIRAL'**

The investments of automotive suppliers are drawing manufacturers to Hungary and vice versa, creating an "upward spiral" in the Hungarian economy, Péter Szijjártó, the minister of foreign affairs and trade said on Thursday, receiving an award at an event organised by the subsidiaries of Indian-owned Motherson Group. Szijjártó noted that earlier in the day he signed an agreement with the automotive giant's leadership on a 33 million euro investment to expand capacity at the company's plants in Kecskemét, Mosonszolnok, Mosonmagyaróvár and Túrkeve. The government is supporting the investment with a 6.6 million euro grant, he added. Motherson currently employs over 3,000 people in Hungary, he said.

## **HUNGARY APRIL INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT UP 6.4% YR/YR**

Industrial output in April rose by 6.4% year on year, according to unadjusted data, though working-day adjusted figures showed a 2.4% decline as there were three more working days this month than in April last year, the Central Statistical Office (KSH) said on Friday in a first estimate. Seasonally and working day-adjusted data show industrial output fell by 0.7% month on month. Most manufacturing sub-sectors such as vehicle manufacture, computer, electronic and optical product manufacture, as well as food, beverage and tobacco, added to output, while output of electrical equipment shrank. Industrial output in March-April was 1.7% lower than in the same period of 2023.

Commenting on the data, the national economy ministry said

Hungarian industry continued to be weighed by an ailing European economy affected by the war's fallout. The statement said the Hungarian economy's fundamentals were healthy as the twin deficits had dissolved and real wages had been growing steadily for six months, while more inactive people were entering the workforce. Improved domestic demand as households gradually abandon caution over inflation and government measures supporting investments would help to get industry back on track, it added. Real wages in foreign markets are also improving and interest rates abroad may decrease, the ministry said, so a small improvement in other economies are likely in the second half of the year, providing a modest fillip to Hungarian manufacturers. The economy is expected to grow by 2.5% in this year and by 4.1% in 2025, the statement said.