

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Hungarian flag raised at Parliament for August 20 national holiday

MTV/Noémi Bruzák

UPCOMING EVENTS

Events related to Hungary's EU presidency

Events related to the wars in Ukraine, Middle East

TOP STORY

AUGUST 20 - KRAUSZ RECEIVES SAINT STEPHEN ORDER

President Tamás Sulyok has decorated Ferenc Krausz, Nobel-laureate physicist, with the Hungarian Saint Stephen Order on the occasion of the August 20 national holiday.

At the ceremony, held in the presidential Sandor Palace on Tuesday, Sulyok highlighted Krausz's scientific discoveries concerning the changing energy levels of electrons "opening unlimited horizons" for nuclear research. Krausz's work "could save lives and renew many principles of physics and mathematics, urging other researchers to revisit accepted theories," the president added. Krausz's success "is a global achievement and will elevate us Hungarians, too," Sulyok said, adding that Krausz "has stayed Hungarian when abroad, helping Hungarian scientists and feeling responsible for Hungarian science." Krausz thanked Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and the Hungarian government for their assistance to build a team "unparalleled in a global comparison" aimed to "lay the foundations for preventive medical care for the future and build much more efficient health care not only in Hungary but worldwide." The ceremony was attended by Orbán, former President János Áder, Interior Minister Sándor Pintér, and House Speaker László Kövér.

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SULYOK: HUNGARY-GERMANY RELATIONS KEY

Relations between Germany and Hungary are of prime importance both in terms of their alliance and from a strategic point of view, President Tamás Sulyok said after talks with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the Pan-European picnic in Sopron, in western Hungary, on Monday. Sulyok said that though there were differences of opinion between the two countries on certain matters, "we presidents have a duty to overcome these." He said he was certain that honest dialogue and an approach based on mutual respect allowed Hungary and Germany to not only preserve but could also strengthen their relations. The president said the Pan-European picnic was a transformative event in European history, "effectively the Trojan horse of German reunification". He expressed his gratitude to the picnic's organisers and participants, saying that Hungary and Germany ought to follow their example and focus on what unites them. Sulyok said he and Steinmeier were in agreement that the two countries considered each other important political and economic partners and were allies on most European issues. "Preserving and strengthening our friendly relationship is our shared goal," he added. Sulyok said German businesses were the most active investor group in Hungary and were continuously expanding their

activities in the country. He praised the cooperation among their institutions in education, research and innovation, adding that both Hungary and Germany viewed each other's national minority communities as a strong link between their two countries. Budapest is home to the only Germany-language university outside German-speaking countries, he said. Sulyok also said that the different opinions about Europe "unite, rather than divide us". Steinmeier welcomed that the anniversary of the Pan-European picnic was being commemorated in Sopron. He said the event was not only something that led to Germany's reunification, but was also the end of Europe's division, noting its contribution to a Europe without borders. Meanwhile, Steinmeier highlighted Hungary's responsibility as the holder of the presidency of the Council of the European Union, especially in light of the Russia-Ukraine war. He underscored Hungary's role in strengthening the unity of the EU, saying it was the key to Europe's strength. Steinmeier said he and Sulyok will next discuss bilateral ties in Krakow in October, and that he has also invited his Hungarian counterpart to Berlin.

After the talks, the two presidents attended a ceremony at the Pan-European Picnic Memorial Park, where Sulyok said developments 35 years ago were "an important part of Hungary's and Germany's shared past" and paid tribute to "all victims of the Iron Curtain and separation ... and those that tore down the obstacles between

us". "Since the wall was dismantled economic and political links between Hungary and Germany have become stronger and stronger; we are close allies and matching partners," he added.

Steinmeier said Germany's reunification could not have happened "without Hungary's invincible quest and love for freedom or its passion for Europe." Developments in Sopron and Debrecen in 1989 acted as a "catalyst" for further events, and "the picnic evolved into the largest wave of refugees from the German Democratic Republic, and finally the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall collapsed," he said, adding that "the first important step in Germany's reunification was taken in Hungary." "Hungary opened a window for the world to look through; Germany will never forget that and will always be grateful to Hungary," the German president said. Steinmeier said it was his conviction that "Hungarians and Germans need each other and the European Union that they have built together, and wish to shape in the future as partners and friends."

SZIJJÁRTÓ: EXTENDING HUNGARY NATIONAL CARD PROGRAMME TO BELARUS, RUSSIA NO SECURITY THREAT

Extending Hungary's National Card Programme to include Russian and Belorussian citizens poses no security threat to the Schengen Area, as card holders undergo comprehensive

vetting before they are allowed to enter or stay in Hungary, the foreign minister said on Sunday. "We are sorry to see that our north European and Baltic colleagues continue their smear campaign against Hungary," Péter Szijjártó said on Facebook. "The truth is that involving Belorussian and Russian citizens in the National Card programme poses no security threat whatsoever for the Schengen Area, as they have to go through a comprehensive vetting process before they enter or stay in Hungary," he said. "All statements to the contrary are lies, pure and simple, perpetuated by our northern European and Baltic colleagues blinded by their pro-war approach."

PARLT SPEAKER: NATIONS IN CARPATHIAN BASIN MUST COOPERATE TO SURVIVE

Nations in the Carpathian Basin can survive only if they cooperate "as the universal successors of King Saint Stephen", House Speaker László Kövér said in Velké Kapušany (Nagykapos), in southern Slovakia at a commemoration celebrating Hungary's statehood on Sunday. Speaking at a commemoration in the Slovak town with a sizeable ethnic Hungarian community, Kövér cited milestones of Hungary's history such as noted the settlement in the Carpathian Basin, the foundation of the Christian state. "Throughout history, every generation of Hungarians wanted to live under its own rules and freedom, and faced attempts by

various foreign empires to eliminate that freedom, to chase Hungarians away or exterminate them. But even if the country seemed to be on the brink of annihilation, it had the strength to find the path of survival and start again."

"Withstanding attacks from the east and the west by empires that finally disappeared in history ... Hungary always re-emerged on the foundations of St Stephen," Kövér said.

Referring to the situation in Europe, the house speaker said: "Private global powers concentrating wealth exceeding that of most states are trying to hold European nation states hostage ... the same powers are trying to turn our ideals -- peace, democracy, prosperity and a culture based on Christianity -- into tools of war, dictatorship, impoverishment and anti-Christianity." He said that only those states had a chance to survive against the global private powers that protected their national identity. "There is no nation without the sense of belonging together, and without a nation, nation states do not have the right to exist," the house speaker said. After the commemoration in a local reformed church, participants laid wreaths at the statue of St. Stephen in the nearby park.

NAVRACSICS: NATION HELD TOGETHER BY CLOSE-KNIT COMMUNITIES

In a world torn apart by crises, only nations with communities holding together can survive, the minister for

public administration and regional development said on Sunday, ahead of the August 20 national holiday celebrating Hungary's statehood. Speaking in Révfülöp, at Lake Balaton, Tibor Navracsics said Hungary would remain strong if its "close-knit communities" helped the weak and "if we don't let us be distracted by fake problems and fake debates." "The legacy of St Stephen ... was creating a church, a state and a community, providing security not only for those of Hungarian ethnicity but all nations who felt Hungary was their homeland." St Stephen, Hungary's first king and first Christian ruler, "created traditions ... that helped us and gave us strength to preserve the nation in the future as well," he said.

NAGY CALLS FOR BOOSTING HUNGARY-CHINA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Márton Nagy, the national economy minister, held talks with Ren Shengjun, executive director and vice president of the Export-Import Bank of China, in Budapest on Monday, his ministry said. Nagy and Ren reviewed the most important aspects of Hungarian-Chinese relations and the status of the upgrade of the Budapest-Belgrade railway line financed by the bank, the national economy ministry said in a statement. The talks also touched on potential future joint projects such as the V0 rail project, the high-speed rail link between Budapest with Liszt Ferenc Airport, the development of

the Hungary-Serbia border crossing station, the oil pipeline connecting to Serbia and the installation of charging stations promoting electromobility. The ministry said rail developments played an especially key role in achieving net-zero emission goals. It said Hungary had everything it needed to become a logistics hub for Chinese goods, arguing that the country had an "excellent" geographical location, developed infrastructure and a competitive investor environment. Chinese companies have invested 6,400 billion forints (EUR 16.2bn) in Hungary which are set to create 25,000 new jobs, the ministry said. Citing 2023 data, it said Hungary is China's ninth most important trading partner, including the most important one outside Europe. China is a key economic partner for Hungary, Nagy said, adding that cooperation also needed to be strengthened in the area of finance. The most important Chinese banks have established a presence in Hungary, the minister said, adding there was a "good chance" to expand the circle of partners, which would make Hungary a top regional financial partner for China as well.

AUGUST 20 - FLAG RAISED AT PARLIAMENT UNDER MILITARY HONOURS

Hungary's national flag was raised under military honours at an event attended by President Tamás Sulyok at Parliament to mark the August 20 national holiday. Defence Minister

Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky told the event that "some forces today expect to gain profits and power from war" but Hungarians want peace and "our generation" gets its share of the efforts to defend the country. "No country and nation can neglect this, the most important duty to itself, because any country and nation can only exist if it defends its borders, citizens, faith, language and culture," he added. The event was also attended by House Speaker László Kövér, government members and representatives of state and military organisations. An air parade was held by the Hungarian military over the river Danube after the event.

AUGUST 20 - GULYÁS: HUNGARY'S HISTORY PROOF THAT 'WAR IS AGAINST OUR INTEREST'

Hungary's thousand-year history has proven that "war is against our interest", and it is not its conquests that Hungary is proud of but its wars of independence, the head of the Prime Minister's Office said on Tuesday. Gergely Gulyás told an event including an awards ceremony marking the August 20 national holiday that during a thousand years, Hungarians had witnessed centuries of peace, wars and internecine wars, and "the second half of the millennium was dedicated to the Hungarian state's fight for survival".

Hungary's heydays were not linked to colonialism but to the periods of independence and freedom, he said,

adding that it was "a firm foundation and immovable goal" ever since King Saint Stephen that "Hungary's fate must be decided in Hungary." "We are proud that a thousand years ago, Saint Stephen placed the Hungarian state on a firm foundation and made it a part of Christian Europe", Gulyás said.

AUGUST 20 - SOLTÉSZ CALLS ON HUNGARIANS 'TO INSIST ON CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS'

Hungarians "must insist on the Christian foundations of their statehood" and seek alliance with communities that "have the courage to speak up against the destructive and violent frenzy mocking Christian teaching", István Soltész, state secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, told a Saint Stephen's Day celebration in Szekler Land, in Romania, on Tuesday. Referring to the remonstrances of Stephen I, Hungary's sainted king, to his son, Soltész said "it is important to welcome and take care of strangers but only as long as it does not jeopardise the Christian faith, the nation, and the homeland." He also suggested that law was crucial but it should not be used "to tie up" countries or "to destroy the moral foundations of the created world". Soltész lambasted the European Union for what he saw as misinterpreting Christian teachings "for ideological and economic reasons" and for "abusing the patience and good nature of Christians to make them accept its

destructive, pro-war ideology". The state secretary said it had been a major mistake by Europe's Christian community "to accept the French Revolution's ideals of separating church and state". "We have allowed for the destruction of Judeo-Christian teachings, the foundations of Europe," he insisted. "We should bravely confess that we are proud that King Saint Stephen built the Hungarian state on solid foundations a thousand years ago and made Hungary a part of a Christian Europe," Soltész said.

AUGUST 20 - AGRICULTURE MINISTER HANDS OVER STATE DECORATIONS

István Nagy, the minister of agriculture, handed over state decorations and professional awards at a ceremony held at the Hungarian Agricultural Museum on Monday, the eve of Hungary's August 20 state holiday. In his address, the minister said August 20, "the holiday of [King] Saint Stephen is to celebrate Christian faith, traditions, and culture, a three-fold unity that serves as a foundation for the cohesion and survival of the Hungarian nation". "For a thousand years ... we have been building our homeland, our shared home; the thousand-year-old Christian Hungarian state is therefore the shared achievement of the whole nation," he said. "We Hungarians will continue on the path determined by the brave decisions and wise vision of Saint Stephen," Nagy said. "Freedom and free self-determination, faith, culture, and

respect for the traditions," the minister mentioned as the foundations for that path. "This is the path of survival for us, one which Europe should return to before it is too late," he added.

BUDAPEST DISTRICT MAYOR ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF GRAFT

The mayor of Budapest's 3rd district was arrested on Friday, on suspicion of abuse of influence as a public official and bribery as member of a criminal organisation, and hindering competition in public procurement procedures, among others. The Budapest district court said 3 people have been arrested under similar suspicions. They will remain in pre-trial detention until the trial, as there is a danger of them trying to exert influence over the witnesses if allowed to leave detention, the statement said. The mayor and two co-defendants are suspected of having agreed to provide the companies of an acquaintance with municipal assignments in exchange for kickbacks.

GOVT OFFICIAL: 'EUROPE MUST RETURN TO JUDEO-CHRISTIAN CULTURAL ROOTS'

Europe must return to its Judeo-Christian cultural roots, continuing down the path that the founders of the European Union envisioned, Magdolna Závogyán, the state secretary for culture, said at an event in Sopron,

in western Hungary, on Saturday. Hungary must play a key role in that return by "protecting the flame, the hearth", Závogyán said, speaking at the three-day Sopron Picnic, named in homage of the 1989 Pan-European Picnic, as part of the opening ceremony of the "1,100 years in Europe, 20 years in the Union" programme. "The fire must be fuelled by strong, sovereign nation-states, member states that protect the interests and safety of their citizens and their proud cultural traditions while respecting those of others," the state secretary added. Závogyán said the 1,100 years in Europe programme aims to raise awareness "of the values Hungarians contributed to universal culture". The Petőfi Cultural Agency (PKÜ) earlier said the Hungarian Heritage House, the National Institute of Culture, the National Centre for Circus Arts, the Hungarian National Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, the National Dance Theatre and the National Film Institute would host events in Sopron as part of the programme series.

DK: SPENDING HUF 15BN ON FIREWORKS 'IRRESPONSIBLE WASTE OF MONEY'

The opposition Democratic Coalition (DK) has criticised the 15 billion forints (EUR 37.9m) earmarked by the government to be spent on the August 20 firework display. "The fireworks show is an important tradition and a good holiday programme for families, but spending this much on it is an

irresponsible waste of money," the party's spokesman said on Saturday. Balázs Barkóczi told an online press conference that he agreed that the August 20 celebrations of the foundation of the Hungarian state were one of the most important events for the country "this amount of money cannot be spent when the state is otherwise defunct in practically all areas of life." He pointed out inadequate air conditioning in hospitals causing postponement of surgeries, financial difficulties of thousands of families with the school-start for their children and cuts in the central budget affecting the financing of public transport. Barkóczi said that part of the 15 billion forints should be spent to remedy those problems.

MOB HEAD GYULAY, OLYMPIC CHAMP GULYÁS RECEIVE STATE AWARDS

Zsolt Gyulay, the president of the Hungarian Olympic Committee (MOB), and pentathlon Olympic champion Michelle Gulyás have received state awards, the MOB said late on Friday. The awards were presented by Interior Minister Sándor Pintér in the interior ministry. Gyulay Zsolt received the

Hungarian Cross of Merit with a Gold Cross in recognition of his outstanding work in supporting the organisations managed by and cooperating with the ministry and the ministry's partner bodies. Michelle Gulyás also received the Hungarian Cross of Merit with a Gold Cross in recognition of her outstanding performance at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

CHOREOGRAPHER NOVÁK 'TATA' DIES AGED 93

Renowned choreographer, ethnographer and director Ferenc "Tata" Novák died on Saturday morning, aged 93, his family told MTI. Born in Transylvania, Novák made his first choreography during his military service, and founded the Bihari dance ensemble in 1954. He later led the choir of dancers of Honvéd Ensemble, Hungary's oldest art ensemble. In the late 70s, he worked as a choreographer-director at Amsterdam's Folklore Dance Theatre. In his choreographies, Novák adapted to stage the traditions of Hungarian folk dance and folk music presenting their diversity. He was the founder of the Táncház (dance-house) model of teaching folk dance and music to

the public, listed by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage. Novák received the Kossuth Prize, the highest state award, in 1993 and the Republic of Hungary's Order of Merit Middle Cross with the Star in 2005 and is a holder of several other prestigious awards.

HIGHEST EARLY-MORNING LOW TEMPS MEASURED FOR FOURTH DAY IN A ROW ON SAT

Record high early-morning temperatures were recorded for the fourth day in a row on Saturday, when a weather station in Pécs, in southern Hungary, measured 27.7 degrees Celsius, the national HungaroMet weather service reported on Sunday. The highest early-morning temperature that day so far, 24 degrees, was measured in Berettyóújfalu, in eastern Hungary, in 1952. Saturday also saw the maximum temperature record for the day broken. A weather station in Baja, in southern Hungary, measured 40.4 degrees. The earlier record temperature measured on this day was 37 degrees, measured in Baja and Kübekháza in 2022.