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Péter Szilágyi: Relations between the kin-state and the diaspora have strengthened

Speaking at a conference in Budapest attended by the scholarship holders of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program who served in the countries of the Southern Hemisphere, Ministerial Commissioner Péter Szilágyi said that the Kőrösi Program has greatly contributed to the strengthening of relations between the kin-state and Hungarians living in the diaspora. The scholarship holders of the program – the participants of the conference – returned home after seven months of service in Hungarian communities in Latin America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The ministerial commissioner stressed that the scholarship holders were sent to those communities which are farthest from the kin-state and had a chance to meet Hungarians who had not been to Hungary for many years. Mr. Szilágyi stressed that it is good to read the reports of the scholarship holders, since they show that these young people could help in a lot of communities and Hungarians in the diaspora can feel that their ties with Hungary are stronger and stronger. The ministerial commissioner stressed that before 2010 this network of relations was much weaker and the good results are in a great part due to the work of Kőrösi scholarship holders.



Romania's Csángós hear first Hungarian mass in decades

A Catholic church in Bákó/Bacau in eastern Romania, was full to capacity on Sunday, when members of the small ethnic Hungarian Csángó community attended their first Hungarian-language mass in decades. The Catholic Bishopric in Jászvásár/Iasi has granted permission for a mass to be held in Hungarian once a month. It was the first time since the fall of communism that the bishopric in Iasi had agreed to allow a regular Hungarian-language mass for the community. Previous requests submitted by local Csángó associations had been rejected. Speaking to the Hungarian news agency MTI, ethnographer and member of the Association of Csángó Hungarians of Moldva Tinka Nyisztor said that the atmosphere was celebratory: Csángó Hungarians from 6-8 villages arrived in traditional costumes. The first Hungarian mass was held by retired priest János Ciobanu, who earlier served in Belényes (Bihar County), and who after retirement returned to his homeland. In his speech he stressed that the most important thing is to live an exemplary life in everyday life as well.

Miklós Soltész: papal visit to Csíksomlyó is a “historic opportunity” for the region’s nations to come together

Speaking at a press conference in Csíksomlyó/Șumuleu Ciuc, State Secretary for Churches, Minorities and Civil Society Relations Miklós Soltész said that Pope Francis’s upcoming visit to Csíksomlyó is a “historic opportunity” for the region’s nations to come together and make peace with one another. The state secretary encouraged everyone to take part in the event in a large numbers, insisting that it



could help support the survival of Christianity and the nations. Mr. Soltész stressed the importance of the visit by claiming that there have been several examples of increased minority inclusion following other such high-profile events. The state secretary announced that the Hungarian government will support the city's preparations for the papal visit with an initial grant of HUF 20 million (EUR 63,000). He added that the government will soon receive a detailed funding request for the visit from Csíkksomlyó's Franciscan monks, adding that Hungary will aim to transfer the funds as quickly as possible.



Sándor Márai exhibition opens in Kassa

On 22 January, the Day of Hungarian Culture, an exhibition paying tribute to Hungarian writer Sándor Márai opened in Kassa/Kosice, in the former house of the writer. The Hungarian Government ensured HUF 170 million (EUR 533,000) for realization of the exhibition. Speaking at the ceremony, State Secretary for Hungarian communities abroad at the Prime Minister's Office Árpád János Potápi said that for Márai Kassa was a "magic shell", which always reappeared in his poems and journal entries. The state secretary stressed that "in this town, Hungarian history has an essence which can be felt everywhere." Mr. Potápi added that the realization of the exhibition was an old dream. He added that "today the great author returned home", and the Hungarian Government considered it extremely important to help this return.



The Day of Hungarian Culture in Vojvodina

The central Hungarian Cultural Day of Vojvodina Hungarians was held on 25 January in Zenta/Senta. Addressing the event, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that "there have always been Hungarians who have kept culture alive and shaped it; and due to them Hungarian culture has remained so that we can pass it on to further generations." As part of the event, various prizes were handed over to prominent figures in Hungarian cultural life in Vojvodina. Mr. Potápi stressed that "the preservation of our culture depends on us. He also recalled that it has been a tradition that, on the Day of Hungarian Culture, the representatives of Hungarian cultural associations in the Carpathian Basin gather in Zenta to discuss the situation of the Hungarian nation and to think together about the future. Addressing the forum, Mr. Potápi recalled the main results of the "2018 – Year of Hungarian families abroad." He stressed that, as part of the thematic year, they reached 6500 families and 10,000 children. The state secretary highlighted that although today Hungarians live in different countries – due to historic reasons – their number worldwide is still 15 million. He also stressed that the three main goals of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad for the 2018-2022 period is the strengthening of Hungarian identity, the supporting of families and economic development.



Exhibition on renovated monuments in the Carpathian Basin opens in Ungvár

An exhibition entitled “It is time for building – renovated monuments in the Carpathian Basin” was opened in Ungvár/Uzhhorod on the Day of Hungarian Culture. The aim of the exhibition was to present all those monuments which were renovated from the Hungarian Government’s support. Addressing the event, ministerial commissioner István Grezsa said that “since the 20th century was the century of loss for Hungarians, in the 21st century it is high time to start building again.” Mr. Grezsa stressed that the term “Carpathian Basin” is also very important in this sense, since “we Hungarians are at home in every corner of the Carpathian Basin, from Ungvár/Uzhhorod to Pozsony/Bratislava.” The ministerial commissioner emphasized that the preservation of traditional architecture is as important as mother tongue education or music. Therefore it is very important that, within the Rómer Flóris Plan, Hungary has managed to save frescos, churches in small villages and several emblematic buildings for future generations.



Péter Szilágyi: Hungary supports relations between the diaspora and dispersed Hungarian communities

Ministerial commissioner responsible for Hungarian communities abroad Péter Szilágyi has made a visit to Hungarian communities in Minneapolis and Chicago. Speaking to the Hungarian news agency MTI, he stressed that Hungary supports strengthening ties between diaspora Hungarians and Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin. During his visit, Mr. Szilágyi visited North Memorial Hospital, the local Hungarian school, and attended an oath-taking ceremony of people granted Hungarian citizenship as part of Hungary’s simplified naturalization procedure. The ministerial commissioner praised the work of Hungarian volunteers at North Memorial, who collect medical supplies and send them to Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. He stressed that “The initiative is an excellent example of cooperation between Hungarians around the world, who, despite huge distances, make an attempt to help each other in all areas of life.” Mr. Szilágyi added that the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad was pleased to support this initiative. In a presentation summing up Hungary’s main programs and measures for diaspora Hungarians, Mr. Szilágyi recalled that 2010 was a symbolic date in the policy for Hungarian communities abroad, since this was the year when Hungary declared that Hungarians living in the diaspora are equal members of the Hungarian nation and are entitled to Hungarian citizenship.