

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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Árpád János Potápi: Hungary expands the Without Borders! program

Speaking at a press conference in Budapest, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister's Office Árpád János Potápi announced that the Hungarian Government will expand the Without Borders! program: in the future – in addition to 7th grade students living abroad – students of secondary schools and high schools will also have an opportunity to take part in the program. The state secretary added that the calls for application for the program are available from 1 March on the website of the Bethlen Gábor Fund Management Ltd (bgazrt.hu). Mr. Potápi added that the total budget of the program is HUF 5.5 billion (EUR 17 million): HUF 3 billion (EUR 9.4 million) will be spent on excursions for 7th grade students, HUF 600 million (EUR 1.8 million) on excursions for students of high schools and HUF 1.3 billion (EUR 4 million) on cooperation between high schools. Mr. Potápi added that in the future the lengths of planned excursions will also be taken into account when deciding on the sum of assistance. He added that a further novelty is that parents can also accompany children and – in order to help small schools – institutions which have a low number of students can organize tours together with 2-3 other schools.

Events of Ferenc Rákóczi II Memorial Year start

On Saturday, the Rákóczi Association held a commemoration in Budapest with the participation of 300 Hungarian students studying abroad, as part of the Rákóczi Ferenc II Memorial Year. The event was addressed by State Secretary Árpád János Potápi. Welcoming the students, Mr. Potápi stressed that “the eternal message of the freedom fight lead by Ferenc Rákóczi II is that the homeland can be made free and comfortable only by those who live there, nobody else will do instead of them.” The state secretary stressed that Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II is historic figure who is able to connect Hungarians living in different parts of the world, that is why 2019 – in addition to historic anniversaries – has been declared Ferenc Rákóczi II Memorial Year. He stressed that the aim of the memorial year as well as other programs of the Hungarian Government is to help Hungarians abroad remain and prosper in their homeland.

In addition to the commemoration held at the Kossuth square in Budapest, further official programs of the Ferenc Rákóczi II Memorial Year will start in March. The official opening event will be held at the Heroes' Square in Budapest on 27 March – the birth anniversary of Ferenc Rákóczi II. The main patron of the memorial year is Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén, its patrons are State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi and Parliamentary State Secretary of the Ministry of Defense Szilárd Németh.



Competition marking Ferenc Rákóczi II Memorial Year starts with the participation of Hungarian students abroad

A national competition entitled League of the Brave – Rákóczi Cup organized by the Defense Sports Association started in Gyula on Friday. The competition is organized every year with the participation of students of 7th and 8th grade, but this year – in cooperation with the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad, marking the Ferenc Rákóczi II Memorial Year – the competition has been expanded to Hungarian students living abroad. The first round of the competition was attended by Hungarian students from Vojvodina and Transylvania. Speaking to the Hungarian news agency MTI, State Secretary Árpád János Potápi said that the event is part of the 2019 – Year of Hungarian Children Abroad program series. He added that in addition to the preservation of our language and culture, the field of sports is also very important, since it is also part of our national identity. He added that this is why the League of the Brave – Rákóczi Cup is extremely important.



Orbán: Strong Hungarian presence is a key goal in EP Elections

On Thursday, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán received the president of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen in Budapest. The parties agreed that securing a strong Hungarian presence in the next European Parliament is a key goal for the May elections. The Hungarian Prime Minister congratulated Mr. Kelemen on his recent re-election to the post. The two politicians discussed preparations for the EP elections within the European People's Party. Mr. Orbán and Mr. Kelemen also reviewed progress in the Hungarian Government's economic development program in Transylvania. Mr. Kelemen highlighted that the Hungarian community in Romania shows a keen interest in the program which help create jobs and promote economic growth in Transylvania.



Potápi: the Hungarian Government makes every effort to help the preservation of Hungarian identity in Slovakia

Speaking at a conference in Szeged focusing on the history of Hungarians living in the territory of the current Slovakia, State Secretary for Hungarian communities abroad Árpád János Potápi stressed that the Hungarian Government makes every effort to help Hungarians living in Slovakia remain in their homeland and preserve their Hungarian identity. Mr. Potápi added that in this work Hungary has important strategic partners: Hungarian organizations, civil associations and historic churches. The state secretary said that the strengthening of culture, education and churches is extremely important in this respect. Among examples, he mentioned the establishment of the Hungarian college in Pozsony/Bratislava and the Carpathian



Basin Nursery School Program which are extremely successful in Slovakia. He added that historic churches and municipalities have an important role in the realization of these programs. The conference was also attended by Prime Ministerial Commissioner Katalin Szili.



Accelerating Serbia's EU integration is in the interests of Hungary and Europe

Speaking at a press conference after talks with Serbia's Minister of European Integration Jadranka Joksimović, Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó said that "the acceleration of Serbia's European integration is in the interests of Hungary and Europe, and accordingly Hungary will continue to provide Serbia with all possible support." Mr. Szijjártó stressed that "one of the key elements of the debate on the future of the European Union is enlargement, but unfortunately there is significant resistance towards enlargement within the EU today, which is a problem, because this year, for the first time in the EU's history, the number of member states will be reduced". He added that "Hungary's goal is for the EU to gain strength, and this requires new member states, countries that reinforce the EU's security and economy, and the countries of the Western Balkans are such countries". The Hungarian Foreign Minister also mentioned that a Hungarian-Serbian cabinet summit will be held in March. He added that "Now that the Hungarian economy has moved forward into a new phase of its growth, the time has come for the foreign investments of Hungarian enterprises to play at least as important a role as foreign investments in Hungary do, and Serbia is an important target country in this respect". Mr. Szijjártó added that "the Vojvodina Economic Development Program will continue, and a budget of 7.5 billion forints (EUR 24 million) has been earmarked for this purpose for this year."



Ministerial Commissioner Péter Szilágyi on official visit in Transcarpathia

On Thursday, Ministerial Commissioner responsible for Hungarian Communities Abroad Péter Szilágyi made an official visit to Transcarpathia. As part of his official program, the ministerial commissioner inaugurated two Hungarian health centers the renovation of which was supported by the Hungarian Government. Speaking in Tiszakeresztúr/Perehresztya, he stressed that since 2010, the Hungarian Government adopted several measures the aim of which is to support Hungarians in Transcarpathia and make them feel that they can always rely on the Hungarian Government.

Speaking at a graduation ceremony at the Vocational Institute at the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute, Mr. Szilágyi stressed that the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute is much more than a mere education institution in Transcarpathia: it is a higher education institution, vocational education and cultural center. He stressed that "it is a place where students receive not only



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knowledge but the love of homeland, mother tongue and culture, and teachers give not only information but the opportunity to experience one's Hungarian identity." Mr. Szilágyi stressed that the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute is a key education institution in the Carpathian Basin, therefore, Hungary will continue to support it in the future.

