

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

15/2019



PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

NPKI | RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD



Viktor Orbán receives the leaders of the Hungarian member organizations of the EPP

On Monday, Prime Minister and President of Fidesz Viktor Orbán welcomed the presidents of Hungarian member organizations of the European People's Party. The meeting was attended by: Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) Zsolt Semjén, President of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (Hunor Kelemen), President of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) József Menyhárt and President of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) István Pásztor. In addition to European political issues and current strategy for Hungarian communities abroad, the party leaders discussed preparations for the approaching European Parliament elections, with a view to achieving the strongest possible Hungarian representation in the next European Parliament. There was also discussion of Hungarian economic development programs in neighboring countries implemented with assistance from the Hungarian Government.



Prime Minister Viktor Orbán to visit Transylvania before EP elections

Speaking to a Hungarian newspaper, the chairman of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen said that Prime Minister Viktor Orbán will visit Transylvania in May, before European Parliament elections. Mr. Kelemen said this after he had talks with the Hungarian Prime Minister together with the leaders of the partner organizations of the European People's Party (EPP). The head of the RMDSZ added that they had also talked about a joint campaign as part of which they agreed that the Hungarian Prime Minister will make a visit to Transylvania in May. Mr. Kelemen added that "the RMDSZ will probably have political messages which have meeting points with those of the Fidesz."

Árpád János Potápi receives Rákóczi Award

On Thursday, Rákóczi Awards were presented for the first time at the Ferenc Rákóczi II Roman Catholic High School in Marosvásárhely/ Târgu Mureş to those persons who contributed to the re-establishment of the school. In March, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó received the award in advance and this time five further persons were presented the prize. One of them was State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister's Office Árpád János Potápi. Speaking at the ceremony, the state secretary stressed that the issue of the school mobilized a lot of people and many of them stood up for the institution. He added that "I know that today I am in the foreground but there many people behind us. The re-establishment of the school is the joint merit of Hungarians around the world, from Canada to Sweden, as well as Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin who joined together for the school." Mr. Potápi added that the issue of the Roman Catholic High school was



not only the issue of Marosvásárhely and the school but the entire nation, a question of human rights.” The state secretary added that “in addition to Hungarian political and public life, Romanians also stood up for the school, I would like to express my special thanks to them for it.”



The MKP launches a petition in the issue of the Hungarian national anthem

Speaking at a press conference in Pozsony/Bratislava, the leaders of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) announced that the MKP would launch a petition and would ask Slovakian President Andrej Kiska to veto the recently adopted legislative amendment which states that a foreign country’s national anthem cannot be sung or played in Slovakia unless an official delegation of that state is present. According to the amendment, singing the Hungarian anthem at public events is punishable by law. The new law was adopted by the Slovakian Parliament on 27 March and among others, it was voted on by representatives of the Hungarian-Slovakian mixed party Most-Híd. The law became widely known on Thursday and it caused public outrage among Hungarians living in Slovakia. From 15 May – if the law enters into force – singing the Hungarian anthem is punishable by a EUR 7,000 fine.

Péter Szijjártó: Hungarian-Slovakian relations must be placed on a foundation of mutual respect

Speaking to the Hungarian news agency MTI by telephone following a meeting with his Slovakian counterpart Miroslav Lajčák, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó said that “Hungarian-Slovakian relations must be placed on a foundation of mutual respect”. Mr. Szijjártó said he and the Slovakian Foreign Minister had agreed that relations between the two countries must be placed on a foundation of mutual respect, and that the Hungarian national minority represents a resource in this. The talks took place on the sidelines of the meeting of NATO foreign ministers held in Washington to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the alliance, after it became known that on 27 March the Slovakian Parliament adopted a legislative amendment based on which the national anthem of another country can only be sung in Slovakia if an official delegation from the given country is present. Mr. Szijjártó said he had spoken about the issue with the chairman of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) József Menyhárt, and with the parliamentary fraction leader of the country’s smallest coalition party, the Most-Híd (Bridge) party, Tibor Bastrnák.





Árpád János Potápi: the renovation of the Zenta High School is an example of excellent Hungarian-Serbian cooperation

On Wednesday, the new wing of the Zenta/Senta High School in Vojvodina – the building of which was supported by the Hungarian Government – was inaugurated. The total renovation of the building was supported by both Hungary and Serbia. Speaking at the event, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that the institution is an excellent example of how two countries can work together to help the region prosper. Mr. Potápi added that the Hungarian Government ensured HUF 120 million (EUR 380,000) for the expansion of the school which was built between 1906 and 1910. The state secretary added that the Hungarian government is ready to provide “all possible support to ensure Hungarian children and youth access to high standard education where they live and help them become a useful member of their communities in their homeland”. Mr. Potápi added that as part of the 2019 – Year of Hungarian children abroad, the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad continues its work the aim of which is to ensure better living conditions for every generation. He added that as part of the Carpathian Basin Nursery School Program, six kindergarten centers will be established for dispersed Hungarian communities in Vojvodina, 17 kindergartens will be renewed and near 70 playgrounds will be built.

The president of the VMSZ encourages Hungarians in Vojvodina to take part in EP elections

Speaking in an interview, the chairman of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) István Pásztor has encouraged Hungarians living in Vojvodina to take part in EP elections. Mr. Pásztor added that “it is not right that Serbia has to “wait” in the anteroom of the European Union.” He added that “through the participation in the work of the European Parliament, we will make every effort to accelerate this process.” As has been reported, 2019 is the first year when Hungarians living outside Hungary can vote in EP elections. This means that almost 50,000 Hungarians living in Serbia can vote for one of the Hungarian lists. Mr. Pásztor stressed that “it is important to take part in decisions which also have an impact on our life in the following five years.”



The KMKSZ celebrates its 30th anniversary

On Saturday, the Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) held its 30th general assembly in Ungvár/Uzhhorod. Addressing the event, the president of the association recalled the most important milestones of the past 30 years, stressing that the KMKSZ always represented the interests of the Hungarian community in Transcarpathia and it will continue this work in the future. Mr. Brenzovics added that this “advocacy work” has never been as important as today, in the current situation in Ukraine. Mr. Brenzovics added that the past five years was the



most difficult period since World War II due to the events which took place in Ukraine after the 2014 revolution.

RMDSZ leader Hunor Kelemen is banned from Ukraine

On Saturday, the Chairman of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen announced that he was banned from entering Ukraine. Mr. Kelemen said he was travelling to Ungvár/Uzhhorod to take part in the 30th general assembly of the Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) but he was stopped at the Hungary-Ukraine border. After one hour of waiting, the Ukrainian authorities told him - without any clear explanation - that he was banned from entering the country. Mr. Kelemen added that he will ask for explanations to the Ukrainian Embassy in Bucharest. On Monday, the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade summoned the Ukrainian ambassador because of the incident. State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Tamás Menczer said told the Hungarian news agency MTI that the entry ban was “unacceptable” and “anti-Hungarian”.



Péter Szilágyi: our culture connects us

Ministerial Commissioner Péter Szilágyi has made an official visit to Hungarians living in Florida. As part of the visit, the ministerial commissioner took part in the first regional diaspora meeting in Florida where he presented the most important programs and measures of the Hungarian Government focusing on the diaspora. After the meeting, Mr. Szilágyi took part in the 5th Hungarian Festival in Daytona Beach. Speaking at the event, the ministerial commissioner stressed that “our Hungarian identity is the secret force that connects us through seas and oceans.” He added that Hungarian events in the diaspora mean much more than “the mere brightening up of grey days: they give us an opportunity to be together, to prepare the great dishes of Hungarian cuisine together, to listen to Hungarian music, and to speak to one another in our mother tongue. We celebrate our Hungarian identity, Hungarian culture, and the bonds that unite us.” Speaking to the Hungarian news agency MTI, Mr. Szilágyi said that the Hungarian Government pays special attention to diaspora communities and “laid down a basis on which we can build in the future.”

