

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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Viktor Orbán meets with the Serbian president in Budapest

Bertalan Havasi, the Prime Minister's press chief, informed the Hungarian news agency MTI that at a meeting at the Carmelite Monastery in Budapest on Sunday morning, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić discussed coordinated action against the coronavirus epidemic and ongoing communication. At the meeting, which was also attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó and Serbian Finance Minister Siniša Mali, the parties assured each other of their mutual solidarity, and discussed the situation that had developed at the border. Mr. Orbán and Mr. Vučić agreed to coordinate Hungary and Serbia's containment efforts to the fullest possible extent. To this end, they decided on maintaining ongoing online and personal communication between the two governments.

The majority of scholarship students have already returned home

Addressing the Hungarian newspaper Magyar Nemzet, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi pointed out that the State Secretariat is providing every help for scholarship students serving in dispersed communities all over the world within the Petőfi Sándor Program and the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program. It is known that before the outbreak of the pandemic, across the world a total of 221 scholarship students were serving. The aim of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program is to help Hungarians living in dispersed communities, whereas the Petőfi Sándor Program was initiated to strengthen Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin. Mr. Potápi emphasized that at the moment there has been no information of any of the scholarship students being infected.

Let us take care of each other – Árpád János Potápi's video message

On his Facebook page State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi posted a video message related to coronavirus. "Our life has changed entirely, so the State Secretary kindly asks everyone in Hungary and beyond the borders to take the danger seriously. Let us take care of our parents and grandparents." The State Secretary is addressing every Hungarian in the world – it is important for them to know that the kinstate will not turn its back on them. 2020 is the Year of National Cohesion, the Year of Strong Hungarian Communities and now the Year of National Solidarity.





Peter Sziijártó guarantees the continuation of the economic development program in Cluj-Napoca/ Kolozsvár

In Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca) on Friday, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Sziijártó said that when the pandemic is over the Hungarian government will be ready to continue the economic development program supporting Hungarian communities abroad. The leader of Hungarian diplomacy had a meeting with the leaders of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) in its headquarters in Majális Street. At a press conference after the meeting, Mr. Sziijártó criticized Bucharest for letting the prefecture of Kovászna County (Covasna) fining the Mayor of Sepsiszentgyörgy (Sfântu Gheorghe) for using a national symbol, while the Romanian foreign ministry asked Budapest to ensure safe passage of Romanian citizens returning home from Western Europe.



Elections delayed, nightly curfew imposed in Serbia

In order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in Serbia, Vojvodina's provincial and local elections planned for 26 April will be delayed indefinitely, and the Government issued a nightly curfew from 8 pm until 5 am starting on Wednesday. A state of emergency was declared on Sunday, and the Government is announcing its stricter measures. The maximum number of people allowed at an indoor event was originally 100, but was later reduced to 50; according to an order announced last Tuesday, everyone indoors (including in restaurants, cafés, etc.) has to keep at a distance of two meters in every direction from others, meaning that there can be no more than one person for every 4 square meters.



KMKSZ expresses its disapproval of Zelensky signing the law on Ukrainian secondary education

The Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Association (KMKSZ) finds it shocking and outrageous that in the present situation, the Ukrainian president signed the law on secondary education – passed on 16 January – without any amendments. Addressing the Hungarian news agency MTI, the KMKSZ pointed out that the law deprives Hungarian minorities of their right to study in their mother tongue, completely ignoring the Ukrainian constitution and commitments. The Hungarian organization in Ukraine declared they find it worrying that in spite of their promise, new Ukrainian government seems to be continuing its predecessor's anti-minority politics. As the KMKSZ emphasized, "the new law is incredibly discriminative towards minorities; it takes no account of any of their suggestions or those of the Venice Commission. We find it unacceptable that Hungarians in Transcarpathia are not treated as natives in their own land, even though they have lived here for a thousand years."



Ildikó Orosz resigns as rector

On 19 March Ildikó Orosz, former rector of the Ferencz Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education, officially resigned her position. Speaking at a press conference in the college, she explained this by her having reached retirement age. She said that she had reached the age of retirement and would resign on 20 March. She added that she would still be president of the college. The press conference was only attended by a few people due to coronavirus. Ildikó Orosz talked about the preceding five years, and afterwards officially announced her resignation.

