

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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Presidential election in Romania – candidates’ application period has been closed

Romania’s central election office announced on Wednesday that the period of application for the approaching presidential election had ended: by the deadline (midnight on Tuesday), 14 candidates had submitted the necessary 200,000 supporting signatures. Out of the 14 candidates, current Prime Minister of Romania Victor Ponta and Romanian politician of German origin Klaus Johannis are the most likely to win. Current President Traian Băsescu’s second mandate will expire on 21 December 2014. This is the first time that two Hungarian candidates have collected the necessary amount of supporting signatures for participation in the election: the President of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen and the candidate of the Hungarian People’s Party of Transylvania (EMNP) Zsolt Szilágyi.

Hunor Kelemen meets the President of the EPP

On Wednesday, the head of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen held talks with the President of the European People’s Party (EPP) Joseph Daul. During the talks Mr. Kelemen informed Mr. Daul about Romania’s upcoming presidential election scheduled for November, the RMDSZ’s draft law on Szeklerland’s autonomy and his party’s political and community aims. Mr. Kelemen said that “In every election year since 1996 the RMDSZ has put forward a candidate for the presidential election in Romania. (...) These occasions provide great opportunities for dialog. It is an excellent opportunity for us to express our opinion about Romania, its place in Europe, in the region, and to draw attention to the role of the Transylvanian Hungarian community in the country.” Speaking about the party’s draft law on autonomy, Hunor Kelemen said that the aim of the document presented a week ago is to preserve Hungarians’ identity, similarly to the draft law on cultural autonomy prepared by the RMDSZ in 2006. Mr. Kelemen added that before the first round of the presidential election the RMDSZ would not decide whom it would support in the second round, adding that in his opinion his party would be a “balance factor” in the election campaign.

Lomnici: we will not give up the fight

The head of the Council for Human Dignity Zoltán Lomnici said that his organization promises the Hungarians in Slovakia who have been deprived of their Slovak citizenship that they will not give up fighting for their rights; therefore, after the decision of the Slovak Constitutional Court, the council is considering further measures. Mr. Lomnici added that in Slovakia no further legal remedy exists, but they can turn to the European Ombudsman. MEP Pál Csáky from the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) said that both the European Convention on Human Rights and several European laws have been violated by the Constitutional Court’s



decision, adding that they commissioned international lawyers to examine what further steps could be taken. Mr. Csáky said that Hungarians in Slovakia are discriminated against unfairly, and Slovakia's manner of treating this question is appalling. He added that the fact that people are deprived of their citizenship against their will on the basis of a law which has an unclear status leaves a lot to be desired from a legal point of view.

Berényi: we would like to achieve the results we had four years ago

After a meeting of the National Council of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) held on Saturday in Pozsony/Bratislava, the leaders of the party announced their aims concerning the municipal elections scheduled for 15 November and stated that they would like to achieve the results they had four years ago. The party will put forward candidates in 445 towns, and in two-thirds of them it will also have mayoral candidates. This number is similar to the one the party had four years ago. In 205 towns the MKP has independent mayoral candidates, while in 34 towns its candidates are in coalition. In 27 towns it supports the candidates of other parties (under coalition), while in 70 cases it supports independent candidates.

The first round of the "2014 – Year of Hungarian Senior Elementary School Children Abroad" is successful

The first stop in the fall tour of the "2014 – Year of Hungarian Senior Elementary School Children Abroad" program in the Carpathian Basin was the Jókai Mór Elementary School in Slovakia's Komárom/Komárno. The primary aim of this year's tour is to make natural sciences popular among children. The program focuses on children between the 5th and 8th grades and their communities. The most important aim of the program is to enhance Hungarians' welfare in their homeland, strengthen their relations with the kin-state and their Hungarian identity in the field of education and culture.



László Kövér opens the 21st Vojvodina Hungarian Festival

The 21st Vojvodina Hungarian Festival began on Sunday with an ecumenical service held in the St. George Church in Szabadka/Subotica. The participants had an opportunity to visit the Vojvodina Hungarian Gallery, the Synagogue in Szabadka and the Kosztolányi Memorial Park, after which they took part in an exhibition at the conference hall of the Vigadó in Palics/Palić organized on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of painter József Ács's birth. Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament László Kövér also participated in the event. Speaking at the festival he said that "We would like to enhance a Hungarian nation which makes no distinction between Hungarians living abroad and those living in the kin-state, which considers that there is only one Hungarian issue, and serving it does not prejudice anyone's interests and does not endanger but strengthens political stability in the Carpathian Basin." Mr. Kövér added



that “We live in an age in which political systems and countries were overturned and communities were torn apart, while the Hungarians in Vojvodina – by reviving and preserving the tradition of the Vojvodina Hungarian Festival – were able to strengthen their community and make it prosper.



Prime Minister Viktor Orbán visits Transcarpathia

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán participated in the academic year-opening ceremony at the Ferenc Rákóczi II. Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute in Ukraine’s Beregszász/Berehove on Friday. The Prime Minister was accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi and the president of the Hungarian Parliament’s committee on foreign affairs Zsolt Németh. Speaking at the ceremony, the head of the Institute Ildikó Orosz spoke about the day some eighteen months ago when Prime Minister Viktor Orbán signed the partnership agreement between the Ferenc Rákóczi II. Institute and the Hungarian government – which expressed the fact that the local Hungarian community can rely on the kin-state – saying that it was a milestone in the life of the educational institution. The Prime Minister said that the students of the institute who were present at the ceremony prove that this institution not only has a past and a present but also a hopeful future. Mr. Orbán added that within Hungary’s policy for Hungarian communities abroad, the largest amount of money is spent on Hungarian-language education. The Government maintains Hungarian universities and colleges across the Carpathian Basin, enhancing instruction in the mother tongue at all levels of education. Addressing the students of the institute, the Prime Minister said that “by choosing this institution, you said yes to your homeland, yes to the preservation of the values of Hungarians in Transcarpathia, and yes to passing on your knowledge. You all deserve respect for this decision.”