

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

5/2015



PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

NPKI | RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD



State Secretary: Kőrösi Csoma Sándor program continues

At a press conference held in Budapest on Tuesday, State Secretary for Hungarian communities abroad Árpád János Potápi announced that the Hungarian government's Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Scholarship Program designed to help diaspora Hungarians maintain their Hungarian identity and language would continue this year. The state secretary added that the deadline for submitting applications is 27 February. Mr. Potápi said that this year 100 young people will have an opportunity to assist local Hungarian communities in five continents. The state secretary added that there is no maximum age for participation and that those who have taken part in the program in the previous two years will be invited to apply again. Mr. Potápi said that new destinations this year include Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain. The state secretary expressed his hope that through the program assimilation in Hungarian diaspora communities can be stopped, or even reversed. The program's budget for this year is 1 billion forints (EUR 3.2m) and its aim is to encourage the community activity and cultural life of Hungarians living in diaspora and strengthen their relations with Hungary. Within the framework of the program, in 2013 Hungary sent 47 interns to the diaspora, while in 2014 the number of participants was raised to 100.



Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén expresses his gratitude to the RMDSZ in Kolozsvár

On Sunday the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) held a large-scale gala in the Hungarian Opera at Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the party's establishment. Speaking at the event, Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén said that "A scenario in which the RMDSZ does not play an important role in Romania's legislation should not be allowed." The Deputy Prime Minister expressed his gratitude to the RMDSZ, because the party had supported the idea of parties organized along ethnic lines. Mr. Semjén said that only ethnic Hungarian parties operating in neighboring countries can ensure the permanence of Hungarian communities abroad. The Deputy Prime Minister highlighted that Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin have never demanded rights which do not exist or are not generally accepted in the countries of Europe. He added that "If we accepted that there are rights others are entitled to but we are not, we would accept that we were second-class citizens in the European Union."

Addressing the event, the president of the RMDSZ Hunor Kelemen said that "Our great task is to work for and build Hungarian communities living either in a bloc, in a mixed area or in diaspora in a way that makes every Hungarian find their individual or family future in their homeland."

Among the guests who addressed the event and saluted the RMDSZ were the head of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) István Pásztor, the President of the



Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) József Berényi and the head of the Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) László Brenzovics.

Zsolt Szilágyi is appointed new president of the EMNP

The third national assembly of the Transylvanian Hungarian People's Party (EMNP) held its session in Romania's Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureș on Saturday and elected the party's former vice-president and former presidential candidate Zsolt Szilágyi as head of the party. Earlier the regional organizations of the EMNP appointed five politicians for the presidential position, including Mr. Szilágyi and the former president of the party Tibor T. Toró, who had resigned from his post after the Romanian presidential election held in November 2014. Speaking at the event, the outgoing president Tibor T. Toró said that "Zsolt Szilágyi might be that 'integrating' person who can give new faith and drive to the EMNP for its further development and the party's successful participation in the 2016 elections." During the session held behind closed doors, the other candidates withdrew, thus Mr. Szilágyi remained the only candidate for the post and was elected by a majority of the assembly's representatives. After his election, the new president told journalists that he would cooperate with those who would like to create a future for Hungarians living in Transylvania by means of a "sincere, clean and autonomy-centered policy."

MEP László Tőkés loses lawsuit on the use of the Szekler flag

The court of Nagyvárad/Oradea has dismissed MEP László Tőkés' application, in which Mr. Tőkés had demanded the nullifying of a police report calling on him to remove the "advertising flag" (Szekler flag) from his office. In August 2014 the police of Nagyvárad drew up a report ordering Mr. Tőkés to remove a Szekler flag he had placed in front of his office as a symbol of solidarity, since the police had declared it an "advertising flag". Mr. Tőkés' lawyer Előd Kincses said that they will appeal against the ruling of the first instance, and if they lose the lawsuit by final decision in Romania, they will address the European Court of Human Rights. Mr. Kincses added that "On the basis of the Strasbourg court's case law, we are certain to win, but this would be an expensive lesson for Romania."



Slovak citizenship can be restored from Sunday

From Sunday Slovakia's Ministry of Interior will restore Slovak citizenship to those who lost it after 2010. Those people are entitled to apply for the restoration of their Slovak citizenship who have a permanent residence in another country. This means that those people who would like to have both Hungarian and Slovak citizenship must have a permanent residence in Hungary. Applications can be submitted at local governments or Slovakia's embassy. Due to the 2010 law, the majority of people lost their Slovak citizenship because of acquiring citizenship of the Czech Republic.



As a result of the 2010 law, more than 970 people have lost their Slovak citizenship so far because of acquiring the citizenship of another country. The 2010 amendment to the Act on Citizenship in Slovakia was a reaction to the simplified naturalization procedure adopted by the Hungarian government in the same year. The aim of the current ministerial decree launched by Slovakia's Ministry of Interior is to relax the current law.

MEP Andor Deli: It is in Serbia's interest to respect minority rights

The members of the Fidesz-KDNP Group have submitted a proposal to the European Parliament in which they have urged Serbia's accession to the European Union and the enhancement of minority issues. The preparation of the proposal was coordinated by MEP Andor Deli (Fidesz), who represents Vojvodina Hungarians in the European Parliament. Mr. Deli said that their proposals can be divided into two parts, adding that "A part of them aims at supporting the efforts of the Serbian Government to gain accession to the European Union, since it is in our joint interest." He said that the second part of the proposals deals with minority issues in which they "are demanding the preservation of the national councils' current sphere of competence, as well as their enhancement and financing." He added that regarding Serbia's minority action plan, which is currently under preparation, they expect the establishment of a minority protection mechanism which ensures a more efficient implementation of laws and their accountability in fields like language use or proportionate employment in public institutions.

Exhibition for the 70th anniversary of the "Malenkij Robot"

An exhibition was opened in Budapest on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the "Malenkij Robot" (deportations in 1944 which affected huge numbers of Transcarpathian Hungarians). The opening ceremony was held on 29 January and was addressed by Lajos Gulácsy (former bishop of the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia, who was among the men deported in 1944) and MEP Andrea Bocskor (former leader of the Tivadar Lehoczky Research Institute of the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute), who represents Transcarpathian Hungarians in the European Parliament. In her address Ms. Bocskor said that "This issue is very important for us and we would like to present the troubled fate of this region to the wider social community as well."

At the end of 1944 the Soviet Red Army rounded up and deported Hungarian and German men between the ages of 18 and 50 who were living in Transcarpathia, and forced them to work for years in Soviet labor camps. Many of the deported men, who worked in inhumane conditions, never returned to their families. For the 70th anniversary of this deportation – known as "Malenkij Robot" ("a little work")– the historians of the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute prepared a Hungarian-English language exhibition; the Hungarian People's Party Group arranged



for this to be presented last year in the European Parliament in Brussels, while this year it can be seen in the House of Hungarians (Magyarság Háza) in Budapest.

