

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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Maintaining the Hungarian identity of the diaspora is of crucial importance

At the opening event of this year's Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program held in the House of Hungarians (Magyarság Háza) in Budapest on Monday, Deputy Prime Minister responsible for Hungarian communities abroad and president of the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) Zsolt Semjén said that having a strong Hungary or a well-organized Hungarian community in the Carpathian Basin is not enough for the survival of the Hungarian nation; maintaining the Hungarian national identity of the diaspora is also crucially important. The Deputy Prime Minister stressed that the work of the young people participating in the program is of vital importance for the unity of the nation, as they often arrive in the diaspora at the eleventh hour. Mr. Semjén recalled that the vision for the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program came about in 2011. He added that "the program was a great success – which was surprising, even to me". Mr. Semjén said that while in the first year only fifty young Hungarians had the opportunity to travel to diaspora communities, by 2014 and 2015 this number was increased to one hundred. The Deputy Prime Minister emphasized that those travelling to the Hungarian communities this year will have the task of turning traditionally emigrant organizations into communities, where those living in a particular country and those who have just gone there for a few years to study or work can find a home. Speaking at the event, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi expressed the hope that the program will help to put a halt to – or even reverse – the assimilation processes in the communities concerned.



The EMNP informs international organizations of the current state of restitution in Romania

The Hungarian People's Party of Transylvania (EMNP) considers it unacceptable that over the past 25 years Romania still has not been able to restitute the properties confiscated during the era of communism, as a result, the party has decided to inform international organizations about the current situation of restitution in Romania. The president of the party Zsolt Szilágyi said that the communist state confiscated almost 2140 properties from Hungarian historic churches, and only less than half of them have been restituted. Mr. Szilágyi welcomed that the special representative of the US in charge of the restitution of Jewish properties continues to show interest in the issue. Mr. Szilágyi added that they do not want to leave former owners alone, "since this is not only a legal but also a political issue." He added that the current state of restitution shows that successive Romanian governments did not have a political will to restitute properties, and they all endeavored to avoid the restitution of confiscated church properties to the original owners.



László Kövér: Hungarians in Slovakia look forward to Slovakia's moral recompense

Speaking at a commemoration on the memorial day of the forced displacement of Hungarians from Slovakia held in Komárom, the Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament László Kövér said that similarly to Jews and Germans in Slovakia, Hungarians living in the country are looking forward to Slovakia's moral recompense because of declaring them collectively guilty and forcibly displacing them from their homeland. The House Speaker added that it would strengthen Hungarians' trust in Slovakia if the country apologized from those banished from their homeland, abolished the regulations keeping the principle of collective guilt in force, and would settle the issue of dual citizenship in Slovakia.

On the occasion of the memorial day of the forced displacement of Hungarians from Slovakia, the head of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) József Berényi issued a statement, stressing that "Slovakia has never apologized from Hungarians for the hardship they have suffered because they were declared collectively guilty, and the principle of collective guilt has still not been abolished." Mr. Berényi added that his party would continue to urge the Slovakian government to change its attitude towards the issue.

The Most-Híd will not participate in the meeting initiated by the Roundtable

The Roundtable of Hungarians in Slovakia has recently initiated a tripartite meeting with the participation of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) and the inter-ethnic party Most-Híd in order to create a unified representation for Slovakian Hungarians in the parliament. The president of the MKP József Berényi announced on Tuesday that his party was ready to take part in the meeting, while the Most-Híd refused to participate in it. In its statement issued on Thursday, the Most-Híd called the initiative manipulative and asked for explanations from the Roundtable. In its response, the Roundtable declared that "their organization continues to operate independently from political parties, while – with respect to the approaching parliamentary elections – it pays special attention to public issues."



István Pásztor is the only candidate for the presidency of the VMSZ

Member of the presidency of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) Sándor Egresi has confirmed that the VMSZ will hold its general assembly on 25 April in Magyarcsernye/Nova Crnja. The current head of the VMSZ István Pásztor is the only candidate for the presidency of the party. The council of the VMSZ will also be elected at the session. Mr. Egresi added that 21 members of the council would be elected as



members of the presidency, while the head of the party would nominate three members for the post of vice president.



The Hungarian Government calls on Hungary's towns to help Transcarpathian Hungarians

At a press conference held in Budapest on Thursday, Minister of the Prime Minister's Office János Lázár said that the Hungarian Government called on Hungary's county seats again to support Hungarian towns in Transcarpathia in order to avoid a humanitarian disaster. The minister added that the Hungarian Government provides considerable support for every Hungarian teacher working in Transcarpathia, and helps Hungarians parents provide the daily meal for their children.

At a press conference held in Budapest on Monday, Deputy Prime Minister responsible for Hungarian communities abroad and president of the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) Zsolt Semjén said that the Hungarian Government earmarked more than 650 million HUF (EUR 2.2 million) to support the Hungarian community in Transcarpathia, with respect to the current difficult situation in Ukraine. The Deputy Prime Minister added that out of this amount, a total of 486 million forints would be provided towards the wages of about 2,000 teachers in the region, 116 million forints would be contributed towards providing meals for children in kindergarten and another 50 million to support the work of pastors. The head of the Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) László Brenzovics expressed his thanks for Hungary's support and said that the Hungarian community in Transcarpathia is "in the gravest crisis in its history", therefore, they are extremely grateful for the expression of solidarity and the kin-state's support. Mr. Brenzovics added that they hope this difficult period of war and crisis would end soon, since Hungarians in Transcarpathia would like to remain and prosper in their homeland. State Secretary for Hungarian communities abroad Árpád János Potápi recalled that Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Minister of the Prime Minister's Office János Lázár called on Hungary's county seats to help Hungarian towns in Transcarpathia. The state secretary added that they would like to coordinate this process, therefore, they will contact every Hungarian municipality and ask them to take part in this assistance.

