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László Kövér: we have to protect our values in all circumstances

The third Székely Ball was organized in Budapest on Friday. The event was addressed by the Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament László Kövér who was the patron of the ball. The house speaker expressed the hope that the ball would become a tradition, which is good both for Budapest and the Szeklers, and “strengthens everyone in spirit.” Mr. Kövér said that Szeklers and Transcarpathian Hungarians who were the beneficiaries of the 2016 ball, justify – by their faith and work – the thoughts of author Áron Tamási who said that “We are in this world in order to be at home in it.” Mr. Kövér added that it is a joint aim that every Hungarian living either in the Carpathian Basin or elsewhere in the world feels at home not only in their homeland, but in Hungary and Budapest as well. He stressed that “If we, Hungarians, do not want to sink in this absurd world, we have to pay attention to three things: to each other, our values and our interests.”

Speaking at the event, the mayor of Budapest István Tarlós said that one of the aims of the Székely ball is to express national cohesion, stressing that the event has a very important mission. The proceeds of the ball will be offered for charitable purposes.

Navracsics: we have to settle our problems by means of intercultural dialogue

At a conference held at the National University of Public Service (NKE) in Budapest, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Tibor Navracsics said that one of the most important aspects of handling problems in Europe is intercultural dialogue based on mutual goodwill. Mr. Navracsics said that he considers multiculturalism neither a positive nor a negative phenomenon; he believes it is a necessary form of coexistence, and if we want to treat it somehow, we should notice its problems and advantages instead of developing it into a doctrine. He emphasized that the purpose of intercultural dialogue is to get to know each other, to get acquainted with each other’s past and symbols. He added that the most important aim is to find common points and understand differences.



Romania continues to reject Hungary’s request to open new consular offices

The negative attitude of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning the opening of new Hungarian consular offices in Nagyvárad/Oradea and Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş has not changed since the change of government. In a response to the Hungarian-language newspaper Krónika, the officials of the Romanian ministry said that “Concerning the request of Hungary according to which it would open two new consular offices in Romania, in Oradea and Târgu Mureş, we have already made clear the standpoint of the Romania Ministry of Foreign Affairs.” The Hungarian Government initiated the opening of two new consular offices in Romania in April 2013. Currently, Hungary has an embassy and consulate in the



capital, Bucharest, and two consulates general in Kolozsvár/Cluj Napoca and Csíkszereda/Miercurea Ciuc. After Romania's rejection, Hungary summoned the Ambassador of Romania to Budapest, however, the Romanian Government stated that they had justified the refusal. The official response the Romanian Government gave in 2013 was the following: "It is a sovereign right of Romania to not accept a state's request to expand its consular representation in the territory of Romania. (...). Hungary has significant consular representation in Romania, and the principle of mutuality and proportionality must be considered in the field of interstate relations."

Final decision: The Szekler flag is not an "advertising flag"

The local police of Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş which had fined the Transylvanian Hungarian National Council (EMNT) because it had used an "advertising flag" (a Szekler flag), lost a lawsuit. According to the decision adopted on Friday, the court accepted the appeal of the Transylvanian Hungarian National Council against the ruling of the first instance which annulled the fine of 30,000 lei (EUR 6,700) but did not dispute the standpoint of the local police according to which the Szekler flag is an advertising flag. The lawyer of the plaintiff EMNT, Előd Kincses told the Hungarian news agency MTI that the final decision of the court clearly states that the Szekler flag cannot be considered an advertising flag and its use is not illegal.



More than 70,000 people have signed the petition of the MKP

The head of the petition committee of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP), Péter Óry announced that the petition of the MKP which had been launched in October 2015, has been signed by more than 70,000 people. The aim of the petition is to make the adoption of the results of local censuses compulsory for the Slovakian Government. Mr. Óry said that the petition proves that "the Party of the Hungarian Community is on the side of the citizens. It represents issues which affect people directly, like the refusal of the compulsory quota system on the reception of migrants, the restoration of the use of the historical names of towns or the issue of certain environmental protection investments." He added that in the recent period, the Slovakian Government ignored the results of several valid local censuses. Mr. Óry added that the aim of the petition is to change this situation and to make the results of local censuses compulsory for the government.



Levente Magyar: The Hungarian community in Vojvodina is able to make the Hungarian Government's program successful

One of the offices of the Prosperitati foundation (which will have 8 offices altogether) has been inaugurated in Serbia's Szabadka/Subotica. Speaking at the event, State Secretary for economic diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign affairs and Trade



Levente Magyar said that the current economic development program in Vojvodina is of historical significance. Mr. Magyar stressed that it is not accidental that Vojvodina became the target region of the program, since it has the necessary political and professional capacity to realize such a large-scale program. He added that the Hungarian community in Vojvodina is one of the most organized and successful national communities which is able to make such a great program fruitful. The state secretary added that the friendly relationship between Hungary and Serbia also contributed to the program. Mr. Levente stressed that the aim of the Hungarian Government is not to expect Vojvodina Hungarians to remain in their homeland, but to help them to create the necessary financial basis for their prosperity. As it is known, the Hungarian government launched a HUF 50 billion (EUR 160 million) economic development program in Serbia's Vojvodina. The Prosperitati foundation is responsible for the distribution for the money.
