

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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House Speaker László Kövér addresses the 21st Csángó Ball in Budapest

The Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér opened the 21st Csángó Ball in Budapest which was held on Saturday evening. Addressing the event, the house speaker recalled his recent visits to Transylvania's Csángó Land, and said that "today European people are threatened to become homeless in their European homeland, therefore, the fate of Csángó Hungarians – Csángós from Moldva, Gyimes and Hétfalu – is also a European fate." Mr. Kövér stressed that this danger is real even if many of our "European fellow citizens" cannot or are unwilling to recognize it. He added that today European people have to face a danger which Csángó Hungarians had been struggling with for a century: the danger of violent assimilation and the changing of their identity.

The Csángó Ball was organized for the 21st time by the Pro Minoritate Foundation and the Moldva Hungarians for Moldva Hungarians Association. The main patron of the ball was the President of Hungary János Áder.

Árpád János Potápi: Saint Ladislaus' heritage obliges us to strengthen the Hungarian nation

Speaking at the central opening event of the St. Ladislaus Year in Hungary's Győr, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi highlighted that "the heritage of the knight-king St. Ladislaus obliges us to strengthen Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin and undertake a common destiny based on close cooperation with Central European countries." The state secretary stressed that since 2010, the Hungarian Government has provided unprecedented support for Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin. He added that several programs and calls for applications had been launched to help Hungarians living outside the kin-state. Mr. Potápi said that in the next months, the Hungarian Government will launch a nursery school development program in the Carpathian Basin and will continue its sister city program between Hungary's towns and those abroad. He added that the unity between the Polish, the Czechs, the Slovaks, the Slovenians, the Croats, the Serbs and the Hungarians is further strengthened by their joint work done for the preservation of the Christian Europe. He added that the figure of St. Ladislaus is a symbol of Central European people and the Visegrad Four, since if we want to remain on the map of the continent during the next centuries, we must cultivate and preserve these friendships.

The St. Ladislaus Year was launched by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the end of 2016 marking the 940th anniversary of St. Ladislaus becoming a king and the 825th anniversary of his canonization. The aim of the memorial year is to make people familiar with the life and the achievement of the Hungarian medieval king.



The Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program and Petőfi Sándor Program continue in 2017

Speaking at a press conference in Budapest, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister's Office Árpád János Potápi announced that the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program aimed at the supporting of Hungarians living in the diaspora and the Petőfi Sándor Program focusing on dispersed Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin continue in 2017 and are open again for new applicants. The Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program (KCSP) was launched in 2013, while the Petőfi Sándor Program (PSP) – following the model of the KCSP – started in 2015. Mr. Potápi said that in 2013, 47 scholars were sent to the diaspora under the KCSP, and from 2014 – due to positive feedbacks – this number was raised to 100. He added that the main goal of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program is to strengthen Hungarian communities in the diaspora, while under the Petőfi Sándor Program the state secretariat supports dispersed Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin. Through the events operated as part of the KCSP and the PSP, the Hungarian Government intends to enhance the institutional system of Hungarian communities abroad which contributes to the strengthening of Hungarian identity and the cohesion of the Hungarian nation worldwide. Mentioning one of the results of the two programs, the state secretary said that due to the KCSP they managed to discover new Hungarian communities which had been unknown before. Speaking at the press conference, government commissioner István Grezsa said that due to the positive feedbacks and Hungarian organizations' requests, the number of interns will be raised in both programs: in 2017, 100 interns will travel to the Hungarian diaspora instead of the former 100, and 65 interns will be sent to dispersed Hungarian communities instead of the former 50.

The Hungarian Government allocates HUF 100 million for Hungarian youth communities abroad

Speaking at a press conference in Budapest, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi announced that the Hungarian Government launches a HUF 100 million (EUR 324,000) call for applications for Hungarian youth communities abroad. The state secretary said that Hungarian civil organizations and church legal entities abroad can submit their applications until 18 March 2017 and can receive fund from the Hungarian Government for the realization of their youth programs. Mr. Potápi said that the program is open for those Hungarian organizations abroad which organize cultural, traditional and community events. A further eligibility requirement is that the target group of the planned programs must be young people between the age of 15 and 29. The state secretary added that successful applicants can receive assistance between HUF 600,000 (EUR 1,900) and HUF 2 million (EUR 6,400). He added that the main purpose of the program is to help Hungarians remain and prosper in their homeland, and motivate young people



abroad to preserve their Hungarian identity, their Hungarian mother tongue and pass it on to future generations.

Sixty headboards unveiled in Sepsiszentgyörgy marking the anniversary of the 1956 Revolution

On Saturday, a composition of sixty headboards was unveiled at the Unitarian church of Transylvania's Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorghe, marking the 60th anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and Freedom Fight. The composition was prepared by artist Antal Balázs. The headboards were unveiled by ministerial commissioner responsible for cross-border investments at the Prime Minister's Office Dr. István Grezsa. Speaking at the ceremony organized by the Sepsiszentgyörgy Unitarian Church District, Mr. Grezsa said that the events of the 1956 revolution affected Budapest and Szeklerland equally, since in Romania the revolution was used as a pretext to introduce measures against the Hungarian community living in the country.

Katalin Szili: The future depends on today's Hungarians

A ceremony was held in Transylvania's Nyárádszereda/Miercurea Nirajului, marking the 460th anniversary of the birth of Transylvanian prince István Bocskai, who was elected prince of the Szeklers on 21 February 1605. As part of the ceremony, a service was held at the local Reformed church. The ceremony was addressed by Prime Ministerial Commissioner Dr. Katalin Szili who conveyed the message of the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad. Ms. Szili stressed that in 2010, the Hungarian nation was unified under the common law and since then 920,000 Hungarians living outside the kin-state have acquired Hungarian citizenship. She added that Hungary and Transylvania also agree concerning Szeklerland's autonomy, since both of them believe that a community should decide freely what flags and symbols it would like to use, what schools it chooses for its children and how it preserves its identity.

MKP: We must defeat indifference and save Hungarian communities

The Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) has issued a statement in connection with a proposed amendment to Slovakia's law on the financing of primary and secondary schools as well as educational institutions in the country. In its statement, the MKP declares that one of the most important positive features of the proposed amendment is that it does not suggest any negative measure concerning Hungarian schools in Slovakia. The MKP underlines that "we have to be pleased with this result, since at the end of 2016 there was a plan which suggested that schools which have less than 250 pupils should be deprived of compensational support." The MKP adds



that “This measure would have placed small Hungarian schools in a very disadvantageous situation.” In the statement, the MKP recalls that at that time, the Party of the Hungarian Community expressed its worry concerning the planned law amendment, and had sent its proposals to Slovakia’s ministry of education. The party also highlighted that its ultimate aim is to realize the complete independence of Hungarian schools in the field of methodology, control and financing.



Hungarian Greek Catholic community center to be built in Beregszász from Hungarian Government support

Government commissioner responsible for the development of Eastern Hungary’s Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county and Transcarpathia Dr. István Grezsa made an official visit to Transcarpathia. During his stay in the region, he held talks with the bishop of the Munkács/Mukachevo Greek Catholic Church District Milan Šašik on the building of a Hungarian Greek Catholic center in Beregszász/Berehove. The government commissioner stressed that the Hungarian Government – similarly to the Reformed and Roman Catholic Church – considers the Greek Catholic Church of Transcarpathia its strategic partner, that is why it is allocating HUF 600 million (EUR 1,9 million) for the building of a Hungarian Greek Catholic community center in Beregszász.



Hungarian Embassy is opened in Wellington

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó has officially opened the Hungarian Embassy in Wellington, which in his opinion will enable the reinforcement of contacts with the three thousand strong Hungarian community living in New Zealand, a heightened Hungarian presence in the pacific region, the further improvement of trade and cultural relations and the effective realization of economic policy goals. In a telephone statement to the Hungarian news agency MTI from New Zealand the minister said that Hungary is the eighth country of the European Union to open a diplomatic representation in New Zealand and the second Central European country after Poland.

