

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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Hungarian nursery school development program starts in the Carpathian Basin

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 Hungarian Government would launch a large-scale Hungarian nursery school development program in the Carpathian Basin. Mr. Potápi said that as part of the HUF 17.2 billion (EUR 55 million) development program, 68 new nursery schools might be built, 215 new developments might take place and 1,500 Hungarian corners might be established. Out of the available fund, HUF 7.5 billion (EUR 24 million) might be to Hungarian kindergartens in Transylvania, HUF 6.2 billion (EUR 19 million) might be spend on nursery schools in Slovakia, followed by Slovenia, Croatia and Transcarpathia. The state secretary said that the Hungarian Government's main purpose is to preserve the Hungarian identity of children living in the Carpathian Basin. Mr. Potápi stressed that nursery school education is an important step in children's life that is why Hungary pays particular attention to it. Speaking at the press conference, government commissioner István Grezsa said that currently there 48,000 Hungarian nursery school children abroad and their main objective is to increase this number to 60,000. The government commissioner added that a further important goal is to persuade parents in mixed marriages to choose a Hungarian-language kindergarten for their children.

Hungarian Government earmarks HUF 200 million for Twin Town Programs

State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi announced that the Hungarian Government would allocate HUF 200 million (EUR 649,000) to promote twin town programs managed by local governments in Hungary and neighboring countries. The state secretary said that bids will be invited for programs that aim to further develop already existing twinning cooperation with Austria, Croatia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. Mr. Potápi added that the grants are also aimed at promoting exchanges in experience, knowledge and best practices. A further aim is to support joint commemorations marking the main events of the Hungarian history and promoting cooperation between educational institutions and new twinning agreements. Mr. Potápi added that the amounts to be awarded to individual programs range between 500,000 forints (EUR 1,630) and 2.5 million (EUR 8,030).



János Arany Memorial Year starts in Nagyszalonta

Hungarian President János Áder opened the memorial year marking the 200th birth anniversary of Hungarian poet and writer János Arany (1817-1882) in the native town of the poet Nagyszalonta/Nagyszalonta, in western Romania. Addressing the opening ceremony of the memorial year, the President said that the message hinted



by Arany's statue in front of the National Museum in Budapest is that "those can be part of a heroic fight "who serve not by standing in the front line," but by writing works that would last forever. Mr. Áder stressed that although reserved as a character, Arany still "became part through his writings of the greatest undertaking of the 19th century: the re-establishment of the Hungarian nation." Marking the bicentenary, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences held a conference at which interesting data and information connected with the life of the great poet were presented. During the János Arany memorial year, large-scale events, conferences and different programs will be held throughout the Carpathian Basin.

US State Department assesses the situation of minority issues in Romania

The US State Department released its annual Country Report on Romania in which it assessed the situation of Hungarian minority issues in the country: discrimination against the members of the Hungarian community, the prohibition of the use of community symbols, the case of the Mikó High School, the restitution of church properties, the general negative attitude towards Szeklerland, the restriction of linguistic rights and several other problems. In a statement issued in connection with the country report, the chairman of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen said that the USA sees the situation in Romania clearly. Mr. Kelemen stressed that "the United States of America is paying increased attention to the situation of Hungarians in Romania and sees their situation clearly, and this is due to the efforts of the RMDSZ." He added that in addition to the country report, the US stood up several times for Hungarians' issues and against the violation of minority rights in Romania."



Péter Szijjártó: Large-scale economic development program starts in Southern Slovakia

Hungary's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó made a one-day official visit to Pozsony/Bratislava. During the talks in the Slovakian capital, an agreement was concluded on the construction of a cross-border electricity line between Slovakia and Hungary. Mr. Szijjártó met with his Slovakian counterpart Miroslav Lajčák and made a visit to the headquarters of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) where he had talks with the leaders of the MKP. The parties discussed current issues affecting the Hungarian community in Slovakia. The chairman of the Party of the Hungarian Community József Menyhárt expressed his pleasure that Hungary's foreign minister - during his visits to Slovakia - regularly meets the leaders of the MKP which is a strategic partner of the Hungarian Government. Mr. Szijjártó said that "What Hungary and Slovakia have already shown in recent years, that through joint success stories even the most sensitive bilateral relations can lead to the development of an alliance, has been proven once again." After talks with the MKP, Mr. Szijjártó announced that Hungary will launch a large-



scale economic development program in Slovakia, based on the model of economic development programs in Vojvodina and Transcarpathia. Mr. Szijjártó said that MKP will play a leading role in the preparation of the program. He added that the program – similarly to the ones in Vojvodina and Transcarpathia – will be implemented in a transparent way and the Slovak Government will be regularly informed about the phases of its realization.



Miklós Soltész: Hungary helps Hungarian communities abroad

Speaking at a student hostel in Vojvodina's Tóthfalu where new developments were inaugurated due to the Hungarian Government's financial support, State Secretary for Church, Nationality and Civil Society Relations at the Ministry of Human Capacities Miklós Soltész stressed that "Hungarians living abroad need different kinds of help in order to be able to remain and prosper in their homeland, preserve their identity, mother tongue and Christian faith, and the Hungarian Government is ready to ensure this support." The IT room of the local school received 11 new computers from the Hungarian Government worth HUF 2.9 million (EUR 9,000).



Government Commissioner István Grezsa opens Transcarpathia's stand at the Travel Exhibition

Speaking at a press conference at the 40th Travel Exhibition in Budapest, government commissioner responsible for the development and cooperation between Hungary's Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County and Transcarpathia István Grezsa said that his office – in strategic partnership with the Rákóczi Association – will launch a HUF 25 million (EUR 80,000) program for the organization of trips and excursions in Transcarpathia. Speaking in front of a stand presenting Transcarpathia's tourism and traditions, the government commissioner said that civil society organizations operating in Hungary, pensioners' clubs and church communities can apply for the program and can receive up to HUF 200,000 (EUR 640) for the organization of trips in Transcarpathia. The press conference was also attended by the chairman of the Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) László Brenzovics who presented the main results of the Egán Ede Economic Development Program in the field of tourism (a program which was launched by the Hungarian Government to promote economic development in Transcarpathia).



Hungarian 1956 Monument to be Unveiled in New York on 15th of March

Hungary's consul general in New York Ferenc Kumin told Hungary's Kossuth Radió that the monument commemorating Hungary's 1956 anti-Soviet revolution has been put in place in New York and will be unveiled on March 15. He said that the abstract



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composition has been placed next to the full figure statue of 19th century Hungarian reform statesman Lajos Kossuth, erected in Manhattan in 1928. Mr. Kumin added that the monument depicts the actual position of the stars — “by freezing time in stone and steel” — on October 23, 1956, the day when the revolution broke out. The 1956 monument will be unveiled on March 15, Hungary’s national day marking the start of the 1848/49 revolution and freedom fight.