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Zsolt Szilágyi is re-elected chairman of the EMNP

On Saturday, the Hungarian People's Party of Transylvania (EMNP) held its congress in Székelyudvarhely/Odorheiu Secuiesc where former president Zsolt Szilágyi was re-elected for a period of further two years. At the congress, the number of representatives in the EMNP's board was increased from seven to nine, and – due to new members – the number of young people in the party also increased. The representatives of the congress elected the former head of the party's strategic committee Tibor T. Toró executive chairman of the party, while the president of the party's youth organization Ervin Tőke became the EMNP's deputy chairman responsible for youth programs. Speaking at a press conference after the congress, Zsolt Szilágyi said that the EMNP "retained its experience and renewed." He added that the party will continue its main programs, one of the main goals of which is to bring more and more issues from Bucharest to Transylvania and help the local Hungarian community decide independently on its own issues.

3rd Szekler Congress opens in Marosvásárhely

On Thursday, the 3rd Szekler Congress was opened in Marosvásárhely/ Târgu Mureș. At the three-day scientific conference, more than 100 presentations were held in 16 sections in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureș, Csíkszereda/Miercurea Ciuc and Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorghe. The presentations focused on topics connected with Szeklerland like the depository of Szeklerland, the social situation of Szeklerland, linguistic rights, the role of regional development in Szeklerland's public administration and the operation of municipalities, enterprises and entrepreneurs in Szeklerland and the situation of education. The main patron of the event, Deputy Prime Minister for Hungarian Communities Abroad Zsolt Semjén sent his written greetings to the conference, stating that "the permanence of Hungarian communities in Szeklerland depends on whether we are able to preserve our traditions while performing our professional, scientific and economic tasks."

The RMDSZ will have a new motto

"We will not give in!" – this will be the new motto of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) in the next years which will officially start at the alliance's congress scheduled to take place in Zilah/Zalău. In his address, the chairman of the RMDSZ Hunor Kelemen said that "it is time to decide on the main guidelines of the RMDSZ for the following two years." He added that it is also important to "hold the congress in different regions of the country in order to show the alliance's increased attention and willingness to engage in dialogue." Mr. Kelemen stressed that the fruits of the RMDSZ's efforts made so far are already visible. As an example, he recalled that in its annual country report, the US Department of State presented the violations of minority rights the Hungarian community had regularly faced in Romania. The chairman of the RMDSZ stressed that the United States pays attention to these infringements and is able to put pressure on Romania in order to improve the situation of the Hungarian minority.



Hungarian-language place-name signs at railway stations are installed in Dunaszerdahely and Komárom

On Friday, Slovakia's Minister of Transport, Construction and Regional Development Árpád Érsek unveiled Hungarian-language place-name signs at the railway stations of Dunaszerdahely/Dunajská Streda and Révkomárom/Komárno. The Hungarian community welcomed the action and said "it was looking forward to further positive measures in their battle for bilingual Slovakia." Mr. Érsek said that an amendment to the current law might be adopted in the field this year, however, the planned law is not likely to realize complete bilingualism in the field of rail transport. In connection with the installation of Hungarian-language place-name signs, the head of the National Council of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) Péter Óry said that "the MKP considers the action a step forward which can be the beginning of a process." He added, however, that although some Hungarian-language signs have been installed, there are no laws behind the action, therefore, the legal background must be settled. Mr. Óry stressed that the goal of the MKP and civil organizations is to realize complete bilingualism in the field of transport since they believe that it might have a positive impact on the preservation and strengthening of the Hungarian community's identity. Mr. Óry added that complete bilingualism is an existing practice in several countries of Europe.



Informative forums in Transcarpathia on the Hungarian Government's economic development program are successful

Speaking to the Hungarian news agency MTI, State Secretary for Economic Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Levente Magyar said that the informative forums held in Transcarpathia presenting the Hungarian Government's economic development program – the aim of which is to support Transcarpathian Hungarian entrepreneurs – were successful. During the tour, Mr. Magyar held forums in more than 40 towns and villages and met with more than 3,000 Hungarian entrepreneurs. The state secretary said that the aim of his personal presence was to strengthen local Hungarian businessmen's trust in the Hungarian Government's program and show the kin-state's support. He added that a further factor which increased people's trust in the program is that about 97% of the applicants - more than 1,000 entrepreneurs - received non-refundable grants in the program's first phase. The state secretary expressed the hope that this year the number of Transcarpathian Hungarian families which receive direct or indirect support from the Hungarian Government in the framework of the scheme will reach or even exceed 20,000.



The HUF 32 billion (EUR 102 million) Transcarpathian economic development program was launched by Hungary at the end of 2016 with the aim to strengthen Hungarian economic life in the region.

Hungary allocates HUF 500 million to help Hungarian enterprises in Muravidék

Deputy State Secretary for economic development in border regions Péter Kiss-Parciu announced that Hungary will allocate HUF 500 million (EUR 1.5 million) for economic development in Slovenia's Muravidék. The deputy state secretary spoke about the program at a public forum in Dobronak where he announced the launch of the Muravidék economic recovery program in the presence of 300 people. Mr. Kiss-Parciu said that entrepreneurs can apply for the program in three categories. The first category is for businesses operating in the field of agriculture. In the second category, small and medium size enterprises can apply for asset purchases or small investments. The third category focuses on tourism, providing an opportunity for micro- and small enterprises to apply for capacity enhancement and innovation.

Hungarian weekend schools will receive more attention

On Saturday, Deputy State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister's Office Péter Szilágyi attended the Hungarian Educational Forum in Hessen. Speaking after the event to the Hungarian news agency MTI, Mr. Szilágyi said that since more and more Hungarian children living in the diaspora are enrolled in Hungarian-language weekend schools, Hungary will pay even more attention to the supporting of these schools. At the educational forum, the deputy state secretary had an opportunity to get acquainted with the current situation, main problems and needs of Hungarian weekend schools in Germany. The teachers of the schools said that Hungarian-language courses – in which teachers usually work voluntarily – are also attended by students who emigrated from the kin-state's Hungarian-populated neighboring countries. They added that while some schools have only 20-30 children, others operate with 130-150 students. Mr. Szilágyi said that with respect to the growing number of students, Hungary will pay increased attention to these schools and will ensure more funds for them. He recalled that in December 2016, a Hungarian diaspora strategy was adopted after which questionnaires will be sent out to those diaspora schools which offer Hungarian-language courses. With the help of these questionnaires, a conception will be worked out in the summer on the basis of which diaspora schools will receive the professional and financial support they need.



1956 memorial unveiled in Warsaw

On Wednesday, a monument symbolizing the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the solidarity of Poles was unveiled in Warsaw. The ceremony was attended by the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér and Polish House Speaker Marek Kuchcinski. Speaking at the unveiling ceremony of the monument which is situated near the building of Hungary's embassy, Mr. Kövér recalled that "at the same place in 1986, on the 30th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution, a banner was stretched out by the activists of the Fighting Solidarity, the radical wing of the Polish Solidarity movement with signs indicating: "Wegry 1956. Pamiety" ("Hungary 1956 We Remember"). Mr. Kövér stressed that the general message of Poles' solidarity shown in 1986 is that the friendship between the two nations is not an empty phrase but does really exist.

