

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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Forum on the policy for Hungarian communities abroad is held in Ajak

Speaking at a forum focusing on the policy for Hungarian communities abroad in Hungary's Ajak (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county), Deputy Prime Minister and head of the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) Zsolt Semjén said that the aim of Hungary is to improve Hungarian people's standard of living and help Hungarians living abroad remain and prosper in their homeland. Mr. Semjén stressed that Hungarians living in the kin-state and abroad are both indispensable elements of the Hungarian nation. He stressed that the Hungarian nation is able to survive if every constituent part of the nation survives. The Deputy Prime Minister stressed that it is the task and responsibility of Hungary to support Hungarian communities living beyond the countries' borders. Mr. Semjén said that a successful policy for Hungarian communities abroad requires five things: an economically strong Hungary, the preservation of the Hungarian identity of Hungarians living abroad, the permanence of Hungarians living in the diaspora, the supporting of Hungarians parties and organizations abroad and the extension of Hungarian citizenship.

The number of Minority SafePack signatures reaches 1 million

According to the numbers tallied by the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN), one million statements of support were signed for the Minority SafePack Initiative by Thursday. This estimate is based on the online signatures added up with the number of signatures collected on paper forms by the FUEN's member organizations and partners. Issuing a statement, the FUEN wrote that "It is paramount that we continue the petition campaign until the final deadline on Tuesday, 3 April at 23:59. We can only be sure about the success of the Minority SafePack Initiative when we will have comfortably passed the one million signature threshold." On Thursday evening Prime Minister Viktor Orbán had written to Hunor Kelemen, President of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ), congratulating him on the fact that the Minority SafePack European Citizens' Initiative had collected the one million signatures required for it to be submitted to the EU. The Prime Minister stressed that "We are proud of the fact that more than the required one million people have signed the initiative for the protection of minorities, which was jointly launched by the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) and the RMDSZ." Mr. Orbán noted that now it is up to the European Union to agree to the request from its citizens.

Exhibition about Hungarian King Matthias opens in Székesfehérvár

A travelling exhibition entitled King Matthias – Maecenas and soldier opened in Hungary's Székesfehérvár, as part of the King Matthias Memorial Year launched by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad of the Prime Minister's Office. Opening the travelling exhibition – which will be presented at different parts of the Carpathian Basin – Deputy State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Péter Szilágyi stressed that the aim of the exhibition is to present the legacy of King



Matthias at ten different points of the Carpathian Basin, paying tribute to the king who protected his country and made it great.

New Hungarian cultural center will be built in Sepsiszentgyörgy

Speaking at a press conference on Thursday, the mayor of Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorghe Árpád Antal announced that the Hungarian Government will ensure HUF 4 billion (EUR 12 million) for the building of a Hungarian cultural center in Sepsiszentgyörgy. Mr. Antal stressed that the construction will start in spring 2019. He added that the new building will give home to the Transylvanian Arts Center, the Tamási Áron Theater and the Bod Péter Library. Mr. Antal added that the new institution – which will be a modern building – will not only be a center for the local Hungarian community, but will also improve the image of the town.

New bridge will connect Hungary and Slovakia

Speaking in Ipolydamásd in Northern Hungary, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó and Minister for Economy of Slovakia Peter Žiga announced that a new bridge might be built between Slovakia's Helemba/Chl'aba and Hungary's Ipolydamásd. The Hungarian minister stressed that although relations between Hungary and Slovakia were difficult several times in the past, today cooperation between the two countries is excellent. Mr. Szijjártó said that it is also good that Hungary and Slovakia represent similar standpoints in several international issues. Both minister stressed that today borders between the two countries rather connect than separate them. They added that the building of the new bridge also proves that relations between Slovakia and Hungary are very good.

Serbia's minority protection model sets an example for the whole of Europe

In the city of Subotica/ Szabadka in Serbia on Monday, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said that the minority protection model which Serbia has implemented can serve as an example for the whole of Europe. Together with President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić, the Prime Minister inaugurated the city's renovated synagogue. The two leaders gave a joint press statement after talks following the inauguration. Mr. Orbán stressed that Serbia had managed to harmonise national pride and a commitment to territorial integrity with autonomy granted to minorities, whilst also guaranteeing and encouraging the operation of their institutions. The Prime Minister said that Hungary's position is that the European Union must look upon Serbia as a hitherto unexplored source of potential, which can add further energy to the EU's combined strength. He pointed out that in relation to its future EU accession Serbia can always



rely on Hungary. As an EU Member State, Hungary knows that the EU needs Serbia, he said, and Serbia is “not a problem, but a great opportunity”

Hungarian communities must gain strength where they reside

Speaking in Serbia’s Zombor/Sombor, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó stressed that “Hungarian communities must gain strength where they reside, and economic development stops assimilation as well as reinforcing bilateral relations.” The minister opened the signing ceremony for contracts concluded within the framework of the Vojvodina Economic Development Program. Mr. Szijjártó said that “The Vojvodina Economic Development Program could not have come about without a Hungarian Government that views cross-border Hungarians as a resource, and not a burden.” He added that it was shameful that in the Hungarian parliamentary election campaign there are parties that are sending the message that they are not counting on cross-border Hungarians on giant billboards. Mr. Szijjártó said that “We care about your opinion and would like you to tell us what kind of future you want for Hungary”. The minister said that the current Government wants the new National Assembly to express the political will of the whole Hungarian nation, and that can only be realized if, in addition to the votes of people living in Hungary, it also includes the votes of cross-border Hungarians. He called on as many Vojvodina Hungarians as possible to take part in the 8 April elections.



Transcarpathia Hungarian organizations: there is no agreement on the new Ukrainian act on education between the minister and Transcarpathian Hungarians

The Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) and the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Ukraine (UMDSZ) issued a joint statement in which they declared that in spite of the statement of the Ukrainian deputy minister of foreign affairs, no agreement has been reached between the Ukrainian minister of education and the Transcarpathian Hungarian community concerning the new Ukrainian act on education. On Wednesday, the Ukrainian Deputy minister of foreign affairs Olena Zerkal said in a radio interview that the Ukrainian minister of education and the representatives of the Transcarpathian Hungarian community met last Friday and reached an agreement in the issue of the new Ukrainian act on education. The KMKSZ and the UMDSZ declared in their statement that no such meeting took place, therefore, no agreement was reached.