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PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
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COMMUNITIES ABROAD

NPKI | RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD



Árpád János Potápi: Hungarian Standing Conference and Hungarian Diaspora Council to hold meeting in the middle of November

Speaking at the meeting of the Committee on National Cohesion of the Hungarian National Assembly, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that it is planned for the two most important forums for Hungarian communities abroad – the Hungarian Diaspora Council (MDT) and the Hungarian Standing Conference (MÁÉRT) – to hold their plenary sessions in the middle of November, on 15 and 16 November respectively. Both forums will be addressed by the Hungarian Prime Minister. The state secretary said that in 2019 the focus of the field will be on Hungarian communities. Mr. Potápi stressed that in the current government term – 2018-2022 – the policy for Hungarian communities abroad will be formed on the basis of three main objectives: the strengthening of Hungarian identity; supporting families; and enhancing competitiveness and society, based on work. The state secretary recalled that 2018 was declared the Year of Hungarian Families Abroad, as part of which HUF 1 billion (EUR 3 million) is being provided for the support of Hungarian families abroad. Mr. Potápi also recalled that since 2018 maternity allowance and baby bonds have also been available for Hungarian families abroad. He added that since the beginning of the year, 7,557 families abroad have applied for the maternity allowance and 6,642 baby bonds have been opened outside Hungary.

István Grezsa: the number of renovated kindergartens in the Carpathian Basin is continuously growing

On Friday, the Research Institute for Hungarian Communities Abroad (NPKI) held a conference in Budapest presenting the results of large-scale research carried out on the Carpathian Basin Nursery School Program. Opening the conference, ministerial commissioner responsible for the program István Grezsa said that as part of the Carpathian Basin Nursery School program, 450 Hungarian kindergartens will be renovated in the Carpathian Basin; among these, more than 100 institutions have already been completed and inaugurated. Mr. Grezsa stressed that the program is “mobilizing great resources.” The ministerial commissioner added that the main goal is to ensure the opportunity for every Hungarian child born in the Carpathian Basin to attend Hungarian-language education institutions. He added that the HUF 38.5 billion (EUR 118 million) program is being implemented in two phases and will come to an end in December 2020. Mr. Grezsa said that the program involves 1,641 creches and kindergartens, and more than 47,000 children. The ministerial commissioner expressed the hope that – due to the program – this number will increase to 60,000. He added that within the program there will not only be renovations, but new kindergartens are also being built. So far, four new institutions have been built and 11 ground-breaking ceremonies have taken place.



New program to support economic development in Szeklerland

Mónika Kozma, Executive manager of the Pro Economica Foundation – which is responsible for the implementation of the Hungarian Government’s economic development program in Transylvania – has announced that a new economic development program named “Szeklerland program” will soon be launched in the region. It will focus on agriculture, forestry, tourism and human resources development activities. Ms. Kozma added that after the successful Mezőség program, the economic development program will be expanded to Kovászna/Kovasna, Hargita/Hargitha and Maros/Mures counties. She added that the main goal is to create an economic development environment in which Hungarian communities in Romania can “easily prosper” in their homeland. She recalled that the previous program was a huge success: 600 applications were received, and 495 of them were supported.

Hunor Kelemen: “Hungarians cannot score goals if they are not on the field”

Speaking at a meeting of the Council of Alliance’s Representatives, the chairman of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen said that “the RMDSZ wants to build a Hungarian community in Romania which is competitive in 21st-century circumstances, which is able to create values, and can remain in its homeland as a Hungarian community. Mr. Kelemen said that the main task of the RMDSZ’s election congress scheduled for the New Year will be to create a vision which serves community-building. The head of the RMDSZ stressed that Hungarian advocacy in Romania can rely only on its own strength and can reach results only if it has partners (in the shorter and longer term). He added that, in the current political situation in Romania, neither “becoming part of the government” nor “stepping aside to the opposition” is an option. Currently the RMDSZ is trying to represent Hungarians’ interests within the framework of a parliamentary cooperation concluded with social liberal government coalition.



Péter Szilágyi: Hungary continues to support its compatriots living abroad

Speaking at the 8th Municipal Free University in Slovakia in Nagymegyér/Vel’ký Meder, ministerial commissioner responsible for Hungarian communities abroad Péter Szilágyi stressed that on the basis of its programs, the Hungarian Government will continue to support Hungarian communities abroad. In his presentation Mr. Szilágyi stressed that the amount of the Government’s large-scale economic development program will be increased to HUF 50 billion (EUR 150 million) in 2019 and – as part of the 2018 Year of Hungarian Families Abroad – a new call for applications will be launched next week for Hungarian civil and church associations



which offer family-friendly services. The event was also attended by ministerial commissioner István Grezsa, who spoke about the Carpathian Basin Nursery School Program. Mr. Grezsa said that this is one of the largest programs of the Hungarian Government, and he expressed the hope that the program will “leave a visible trace” on the Hungarian nursery school system. Mr. Grezsa highlighted that “Slovakia receives positive discrimination” in the program: out of the total amount of HUF 38 billion, the region will receive HUF 11 billion (EUR 33 million). He added that this large-scale development will certainly make Hungarian kindergartens more popular in Slovakia, and more and more parents will enroll their children in Hungarian-language institutions.



Andor Dali: Serbia must respect minority rights if it wants to be an EU Member State

Speaking about the new country report on Serbia, MEP Andor Deli (Fidesz, representing the Hungarian community in Vojvodina) said that “questions affecting national minorities – including Hungarians in Vojvodina – received appropriate attention in the 2018 country report on Serbia, which was adopted by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament.” Mr. Deli added that they managed to ensure that “the document welcomes the adoption of new laws on minority rights, and, in addition to education, language use and media, culture has been also added as a “major priority” area for national minorities. He stressed that “all in all, a balanced document has been adopted, which recognizes the results of the past eighteen months, pays due attention to national minorities, but also points out deficiencies.”



Ukrainian politics has sunk to appalling depths

After talks with the NATO Deputy Secretary General, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó said that Ukrainian politics has sunk to appalling depths. The Minister was asked with relation to the Mirotrovec (Peacemaker) extremist Ukrainian website, which has published a list including the personal data of three hundred Transcarpathian Hungarian state or local government officials, who the website claims are dual citizens. The minister explained that the list includes personal data that is not available from public sources, but exclusively from secret service or government sources. According to Mr. Szijjártó, it is therefore a lie that the Ukrainian state has nothing to do with the website. Mr. Szijjártó also spoke about the fact that what is happening in Ukraine is “to all intents and purposes a hate campaign against the members of the Hungarian national community that is being run with state support and state encouragement”. He said that in his opinion the current President, Petro Poroshenko, who will be running for office again at the spring elections, gave his consent to the hate campaign in an attempt to increase his popularity. The



Minister was also a guest on Hungarian M1 television's Thursday morning current affairs program, where he highlighted the fact that Ukraine is continuously going against the most fundamental norms and interests and is violating its international commitments, but Hungary will continue to take action against this on every possible international forum.

On Saturday, Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs Pavlo Klimkin made an official visit to Uzhorod/Ungvár where he took part in the extraordinary meeting of the Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ). Speaking at a press conference held after the event Mr. Klimkin said that tension should be "decreased" between Ukraine and Hungary while dialogue between two countries – concerning especially issues like Hungarian education in Transcarpathia and dual citizenship – should be strengthened.



Árpád János Potápi: Strengthening identity is in the focus of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad

On Wednesday, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister's Office Árpád János Potápi made an official visit to Prekmurje/Slovenia. During his stay in the region, he delivered a speech at the inauguration ceremony of the so-called "House of handicrafts" the building of which was supported by the Hungarian Government. In his speech the state secretary said that "remaining loyal to our culture is one of our most important tasks." He stressed that "we must preserve the traditions we received from our grandparents and great-grandparents" since our future depends on this legacy. Mr. Potápi stressed that the main goal of the Hungarian Government is to have economically strong and stable Hungarian communities abroad.

As part of the state secretary's official program, two renovated bilingual (Hungarian-Slovenian) kindergartens were also inaugurated (one of them received a new playground). Both institutions were developed as part the Carpathian Basin Nursery School Program.

