

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

4/2016



PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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The Hungarian community in Slovenia is one of the strongest national communities

Addressing a conference entitled “The enforcement of interests and national municipalities in Slovenia”, held at the House of Hungarians in Budapest on Monday, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister’s Office Árpád János Potápi said that although the Hungarian community in Slovenia is one of the smallest Hungarian communities in number, it is one of the strongest national communities. The state secretary said that on Friday a government summit would be held in Slovenia, therefore, it is important to survey the situation of Hungarians living there before the meeting. Mr. Potápi said that the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad has launched several programs which are aimed to help Hungarian national communities, and cooperation with Hungarians living in Slovenia has been excellent. László Göncz, member of the Slovenian Parliament representing the Hungarian community said that the situation of the protection of minority rights in Slovenia is better than the European average, however, it would be a mistake to stop at this level. Ferenc Horváth, the president of the council of the Self-governing National Community of the Municipality of Muravidék stressed that there is still a lot to do regarding the practical realization of the protection of minority rights in Slovenia.

Donations worth HUF 280 million sent to Transcarpathia

On Tuesday at a press conference held in Tatabánya, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister’s Office Árpád János Potápi said that donations worth HUF 280 million (EUR 898,000) reached those in need as a result of the donation collection campaign launched by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad in aid of Hungarian communities in Transcarpathia. He added that the actual amount of the donations may have been even higher as in a number of instances twin localities and civil organizations also provided assistance for the Hungarians living in Transcarpathia. The State Secretary highlighted that the Hungarian Churches in Transcarpathia and their organizations played a key role in forwarding the donations to their intended destination, while Hungarian communities living in the Carpathian Basin and Hungarian diaspora communities, too, mobilized themselves in order to help the Hungarian community which is in the most difficult situation at present.



Hungarians in Transylvania’s Kovászna ask the US Ambassador to Romania to organize a Romanian-Hungarian roundtable discussion

On Friday, the president of the local government of Kovászna/Kovasna county Sándor Tamás asked the Ambassador of the USA to Romania Hans Klemm to organize a Romanian-Hungarian roundtable on interethnic relations. Mr. Tamás met the ambassador in Transylvania’s Árapatak/Araci where Mr. Klemm visited several Roma



communities living in different parts of Szeklerland on the invitation of a civil organization. The president of Kovászna county informed the ambassador about the situation of the Hungarian community in Romania and the investment opportunities in Szeklerland. Mr. Tamás added that since Romania's accession to the NATO and the EU, Hungarians in Romania have experienced several steps backwards in their community rights. He also drew the ambassador's attention to the fact that authorities in Romania discriminate the Hungarian national minority living in the country compared to Romanians. Therefore, the head of Kovászna county asked the ambassador to organize and be the patron of a Romanian-Hungarian roundtable discussion on interethnic relations.

The Civil Commitment Movement sues three towns in Romania

At a press conference held in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureș on Tuesday, the Civil Commitment Movement (Cemo) announced that it would initiate "strategic" legal proceedings aimed to ensure language rights. The president of the movement Enikő Szigeti said that the Cemo will take legal proceedings against state institutions which do not apply or only partially apply laws affecting the use of mother tongue in the Transylvanian Hungarian community. Ms. Szigeti added that the lawsuits – which might bring decisions of symbolic force – will concern the field of public administration and education.



Árpád János Potápi holds talks with the leaders of the Hungarian community in Slovakia

On Tuesday, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister's Office Árpád János Potápi held talks with the leaders of the Hungarian community in Slovakia in Révkomárom/Komárno, including the president of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) József Berényi and the leaders of the Association of Hungarian Teachers in Slovakia (SZMPSZ). Among other issues, the parties discussed topical questions affecting the Hungarian community in Slovakia, first of all, the expected consequences of the planned Slovakian public educational reform. They also discussed the possibilities of how to save the more than one hundred Hungarian-language primary schools which are likely to close down due to the new financing scheduled to enter into force from the fall 2016 as part of the Slovakian public educational reform. At a press conference held after the talks, the president of the MKP József Berényi and State Secretary Árpád János Potápi expressed their hope that the Slovakian ministry will amend the draft law before it enters into force. At the same time they added that if the expected amendments do not take place, the Hungarian Government will ensure financial support for the schools which are threatened to be closed down.



István Pásztor: talks with the Hungarian parties in Vojvodina were successful

Speaking at a press conference, the president of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) István Pásztor said that the talks between the VMSZ, the Hungarian Democratic Party of Vojvodina and the Party of the Hungarian Unity were successful. Mr. Pásztor said that the three parties intend to formulate joint aims and a unified program. The parties also agreed to participate in elections (at a nation-wide and provincial level) on the list of the VMSZ, while at local level local organizations would decide about a possible cooperation. The president of the VMSZ also said that his party does not plan to enter into coalition with other Serbian parties.



The Fidelitas holds seminar on the policy for Hungarian communities abroad in Transcarpathia

On Saturday in Transcarpathia's Makkosjánosi/Yanoshi, the Fidelitas (the youth organization of the Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance) handed over a financial aid of HUF 2.4 million (EUR 7,700) aimed to support school catering in Transcarpathia and held an extramural seminar on the situation of the Hungarian community in the region. Concerning the event, the president of the Fidelitas László Böröcz told the Hungarian news agency MTI that the organization started the donation collection program in summer 2015 to help Hungarian young people living in Transcarpathia. He added that the representatives of other Hungarian youth organizations operating in the Carpathian Basin (in Transylvania, Slovakia and Vojvodina) were also invited to the extramural seminar held in Transcarpathia. The seminar was also attended by the vice-president of the Cultural Association of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) and the Transcarpathian County Council József Barta who gave a presentation on the situation of the region and Transcarpathian Hungarian community, and government commissioner at the Prime Minister's Office István Grezsa who spoke about the aid system Hungary operates to help Hungarian-language education in Transcarpathia.



The world would be a poorer place if we did not exist

Speaking at the inauguration of the Hungarian cultural institute in Ljubljana on Friday, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said that the Hungarians have a nightmare that "The Lord of History" pays them a visit and asks who they are and why they are who they are. There is only one answer to that question, he said: "The world would be a poorer place if we did not exist". The Prime Minister added that we could validate this claim with our language, we could point to the Hungarian parliament building, or we could even justify our answer with the goal scored by Puskás against the English". Mr.



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Orbán encouraged the Slovenians to open a cultural institute in Hungary, similar to the Balassi Institute in Ljubljana.

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