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Zsolt Semjén: Autonomy is the basis of Hungarian communities' permanence

Speaking at a conference entitled "Do we understand each other?" organized on the Day of the Hungarian Language in the House of Hungarians in Budapest, Deputy Prime Minister responsible for Hungarian communities abroad and president of the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) Zsolt Semjén said that the realization of autonomy is one of the most important bases of the permanence of the Hungarian nation. The Deputy Prime Minister said that every effort striving to achieve autonomy is good while everything that is aimed to give it up is bad. Mr. Semjén said that neighboring states in which Hungarians live should understand that our endeavours for autonomy are not directed against anybody and do not violate anyone's interests. The Deputy Prime Minister stressed that countries in which autonomy was realized, started to develop economically. Speaking at the conference, Commissioner of the Prime Minister Katalin Szili said that in addition to Hungarian-Hungarian dialogue, dialogue with the leaders of neighboring states should also be strengthened and the real European practice should be realized. Ms. Szili added that her task is to enhance cooperation and dialogue.

László Kövér: Dispersed Hungarian communities might disappear if population decline is not stopped

Speaking in connection with the Day of Dispersed Hungarian Communities (November 15), the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér said that Hungarian communities living in the Carpathian Basin sporadically (dispersed Hungarian communities) might soon disappear if population decline among them is not stopped. The house speaker highlighted that some of Hungary's neighboring countries pursue conscious, state-level policies to assimilate Hungarians by weakening or eliminating their education system. Mr. Kövér stressed that education plays a key role in preventing dispersed Hungarian communities' assimilation. He added that the right of national minorities to equality must be enforced at European Forums and it must be made clear that national minorities – whose number in the European Union is about 50-60 million – do have collective rights.

Dispersed Hungarian communities are in the center of Hungary's kin-state policy

Speaking on the thematic day of dispersed Hungarian communities, Deputy Prime Minister responsible for Hungarian communities abroad and president of the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) Zsolt Semjén said that it is a moral duty of Hungary to stop the decline of dispersed Hungarian communities. The Deputy Prime Minister stressed that Hungarian communities living in the Carpathian Basin sporadically need special attention, therefore, the Hungarian Government launched several programs aimed at supporting them.



Addressing a conference on the Day of Dispersed Hungarian Communities in the House of Hungarians (Magyarság Háza) in Budapest, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that Hungarians living sporadically in the Carpathian Basin are in the center of the policy for Hungarian communities abroad. Mr. Potápi added that the policy for Hungarian communities abroad pays particular attention to these communities who constitute “the border of the nation”, since assimilation processes are very intensive among them and the network of institutions reproducing national identity is less effective. He added that almost half of Hungarians living abroad are the members of dispersed Hungarian communities. Mr. Potápi recalled that the initiative to celebrate their day comes from Transylvania. The creator of the idea was Franciscan monk Csaba Bőjte, whose initiative was also supported by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ). The state secretary added that it was on 28 September 2015 when Deputy Prime Minister and head of the KDNP Zsolt Semjén, the president of the foreign affairs committee of the Hungarian National Assembly Zsolt Németh, the head of the Committee on National Cohesion of the Hungarian National Assembly Károly Pánczél and State Secretary Árpád János Potápi submitted their proposal to the Hungarian Parliament with the aim to declare November 15, the birthday of Gábor Bethlen, “the greatest prince of Transylvania during its golden age”, as the Day of Dispersed Hungarian Community. The proposal was accepted by the Hungarian National Assembly on 3 November 2015.

Committee on Legal and Foreign Affairs of the Hungarian Standing Conference holds its session

The Committee on Legal and Foreign Affairs of the Hungarian Standing Conference has held its session. The session which was organized at the Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade was opened by State Secretary for security policy and international cooperation István Mikola. Speaking at the event, the state secretary said that migration crisis and the Ukrainian situation pose a serious challenge to European leaders, and have a great impact on the life of Hungarians living both in the kin-state and abroad. Ministerial commissioner responsible for the supervision of cross-border investments Dr. István Grezsa highlighted that 25 years after the change of regime, Hungary lives historic times again, and the policy for Hungarian communities abroad has new opportunities to unite Hungarians living throughout the world and organize them into communities. The ministerial commissioner stressed that this year several important project affecting Hungarians living outside the kin-state were launched and realized by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad. Mr. Grezsa highlighted the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program which was launched three years ago and is aimed to support the Hungarian diaspora, and the Petőfi Sándor Program the purpose of which is to help dispersed Hungarian communities living in the Carpathian Basin.



Dacian Cioloș presents the list of members of his technocratic government

On Sunday, appointed Romanian Prime Minister Dacian Cioloș presented the list of the members of his new, technocratic government. According to the list, the new government will include experts working in Brussels, ambassadors, former Social Democratic minister as well as managers working in the private sector. Mr. Cioloș – who is a former EU commissioner for agriculture – said that the members of the new government would be considerably various, including experts working in Romanian or European public administration, individuals from the private sector as well as representatives of different civil organizations, with experience in the field of management. The appointed prime minister stressed that he would also pay attention to gender balance, therefore, women will constitute one third of his government.

President Klaus Iohannis announces the law on the day of Hungarian language in Romania

On Wednesday, President of Romania Klaus Iohannis announced a law initiated by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) which declares 13 November the Day of Hungarian Language in Romania. The draft law was adopted by the senate of the RMDSZ in June 2015 with no votes against, while in the house of representatives of the RMDSZ it received 264 votes in favor, 10 votes against and 19 abstentions. According to the law, towns in Romania inhabited by Hungarians are allowed to organize different cultural programs on this day, and the events can also be supported by civil organizations. The law also allows the Romanian public media to broadcast different programs on this day connected with the Hungarian language. After the announcement of the law, Hungarian-language schools in Romania will be allowed to celebrate the day of Hungarian language officially.



Slovakia constrains the activity of foreign political parties in its territory

Due to an amendment to the law on political parties and groups, from December 2015 the activity of foreign political parties in Slovakia will be constrained. The law amendment was initiated by the Speaker of the national council Peter Pellegrini, and was adopted by the 115-member Parliament with 115 votes in favor. According to the initiator, the reason of the amendment was the fact that in recent times, certain foreign political parties started different political activity in Slovakia which had not been typical before. The initiation of the amendment was also connected with the fact that the vice-president of the Hungarian far-right Jobbik party István Szávay opened an office in Slovakia's Dunaszerdahely/Dunajská Streda.





The Hungarian National Council amends its budget

The Hungarian National Council (MNT) has amended its budget for the second time. In connection with the amendment, the head of the MNT Jenő Hajnal said that due to the favorable territorial expenses, the MNT will be able to allocate more financial support for the Vackor program responsible for ensuring Christmas presents for children. During the session, the members of the MNT also discussed the issue of the Szabadka Hungarian Radio (Subotica Hungarian Radio), among others. In connection with the Day of Dispersed Hungarian Communities, Mr. Hajnal said that he would like to make the celebration of this day official in Vojvodina as well.



State Secretary Judit Czunyné Bertalan holds talks with Ukrainian officials on education

State Secretary responsible for public education at the Ministry of Human Capacities Judit Czunyné Bertalan made a two-day visit to Transcarpathia. During her stay, the state secretary handed over Hungarian grammar books to Ukrainian schools educating the Hungarian language as a second foreign language. Besides, the state secretary was informed about the general situation of Hungarian-language education in Transcarpathia. At the Ferenc Rákóczi II. Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute, Ms. Czunyné met the leaders of the institution as well as those of the Association of Hungarian Teachers in Transcarpathia (KMPSZ). The Transcarpathian parties informed the state secretary about the main problems of Hungarian-language education in the region, mentioning the lack of textbooks, and the low number of students and teachers as the most serious problems. Ms. Czunyné also met the leaders of the county. The president of the Transcarpathian County Council Volodimir Chubirko expressed his thanks to Hungary for the support given to Transcarpathia and Ukraine since the beginning of the crisis in the country.

