

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

51/2014



PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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Potápi: assimilation can be reversed

Speaking at the closing session of the conference on the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Scholarship Program which is aimed at preserving the identity of Hungarians living in diaspora, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities abroad Árpád János Potápi said that we must never give up the fight against assimilation and the loss of identity. The State Secretary highlighted that the ten-day conference had not been in vain: suggestions and experiences which had been mentioned at the conference would be taken into account during the continuation of the program. Mr. Potápi added that the program of the previous four years had proved to be successful since it had been not only of symbolic importance but also brought tangible results. He added that “we must never give up the fight since the loss of identity and assimilation can whenever be reversed”. The State Secretary confirmed that the Kőrösi Csoma Program would be continued, the necessary resources are available, therefore, those who have started their work at some community in the diaspora would be able to return and continue it.

The aim of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program is to encourage the community activity of Hungarians living in diaspora and strengthen their relations with Hungary. Within the framework of the program, Hungary sends interns to the diaspora to aid Hungarian communities with the preservation of various levels of Hungarian culture, and fostering Hungarian organizations’ ties to the motherland.

The Hungarian Youth Conference might become a legal organization

At the session of the Hungarian Youth Conference (MIK) which was celebrating the 15th anniversary of its establishment on Saturday in Parliament, State Secretary of Family and Youth Affairs at the Ministry of Human Capacities Katalin Novák said that the MIK might become a legal organization next year and the government is already working on the law amendment making this possible. Over the past fifteen years, the Hungarian Youth Conference has been operating as the umbrella organization of Hungarian youth organizations both in Hungary and abroad. Ms. Novák added that it is an old demand of the member organizations of the MIK to leave the “informal existence” and operate in an organized legal form. The State Secretary added that this would ensure a right to proposals, legal advice, opinionating, and – occasionally – consent, as well as tendering opportunities for the MIK. The session of the Hungarian Youth Conference was also attended by State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi.



The RMDSZ quits the Romanian government

After a lively debate in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş, the Council of Representatives (SZKT) of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) decided unanimously to quit the Romanian government. Out of the 113 representatives of the



alliance, only three voted against the leave and seven of them abstained. Evaluating the political situation, the President of the RMDSZ Hunor Kelemen also argued to leave. The president said that the RMDSZ must remain loyal to the basic values it has been representing over the past 25 years, but it has to “restructure” its policy. Mr. Kelemen added that according to the results of the opinion poll made after the election, the number of Transylvanian Hungarians who consider the continuation of governance useful, dropped dramatically. The president of the RMDSZ said that the current task of his party is to strengthen the trust of those who have been loyal to the alliance and to convince those who have left it. He said that “Our supporters must regard us as an ally and reliable partner”. Hunor Kelemen added that the RMDSZ has to find the good answers to the new challenges until its congress scheduled for April.

Fine for singing the Hungarian national anthem in Romania

On Wednesday the head of the Hungarian Civic Party (MPP) Zsolt Biró informed the Hungarian news agency MTI that his party was fined 5000 lei (EUR 1140) by the prefect of Szeklerland’s Kovászna county/Județul Covasna because the members of the party had sang Hungary’s national anthem in Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorghe at a commemoration held on 4 June, marking the 1920 Treaty of Trianon. The head of the MPP said that the fining was provoking and can be considered an open attack against the Hungarian community in Transylvania. He added that his party would not pay the fine and would challenge it before court. Mr. Biró added that the Hungarian community in Romania has been singing Hungary’s national anthem at its public events since 1990, emphasizing that “if 25 years after the regime change such a law exists in Romania, it can be considered a serious deficiency of democracy.”



János Áder holds talks with Slovakian President Kiska in Bratislava

President of Hungary János Áder held talks with his Slovakian counterpart Andrej Kiska in Bratislava on Wednesday. At a press conference held after the talks, both presidents praised the results of their joint economic cooperation and infrastructural developments. They highlighted the success of the connection of the Hungarian, Slovak, and Czech electricity market and the increased number of border crossing points. Although the use of minority languages and the situation of minorities were not among the topics of the meeting, the presidents also made statements concerning these issues. President Kiska emphasized that every conditions is given for the Hungarian community in Slovakia to be able to raise their children using their mother tongue and preserve their traditions, adding that the relations between Slovaks and Hungarians in Slovakia are outstanding.

President Áder said that Hungary also supports Slovaks living in Hungary, it is proved by the fact that the number of Slovaks in Hungary has almost doubled since the census held ten years ago.



MKP: Slovakia's ministerial decree reminds of the Beneš decrees

The Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) has said that the ministerial decree of Slovakia's Ministry of Interior – due to its extreme cynicism – reminds of the Beneš decrees. According to the ministerial decree, it is in the interest of Slovakia to restore Slovak citizenship to those who leave Slovakia voluntarily and might never come back if their nationality is Slovakian, while it is not in the interest of the country to grant Slovak citizenship for Hungarians who live, work and pay taxes in Slovakia.

The ministerial decree proposed by Minister of Interior Robert Kaliňák would restore Slovak citizenship to those who lost it as a result of the 2010 Act. The 2010 Act states that those who acquire of the citizenship of another country are deprived of their Slovak citizenship.



The UMDSZ appoints new president

On Saturday László Zubánics was elected president of the Democratic Association of Hungarians in Ukraine (UMDSZ) in Beregszász/Berehove, after the former president of the party István Gajdos had resigned from his post in June. State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi sent a welcome letter to the participants of the meeting in which he emphasized the importance of national unity, the cohesion of national communities and their mutual responsibility for each other. The State Secretary underlined that the Hungarian Government needs reliable partners who represent the interests of the Hungarian community consistently, and community leaders, who can contribute to the creation of unity by means of their personal activity.



The closing event of the “2014 – the year of Hungarian senior school children abroad” in Croatia

As the closing event of the program entitled “2014 –the year of Hungarian senior school children abroad” in Croatia, the Forum of Hungarian Teachers in Croatia organized a teachers' training course on 6 December in Eszék/Osijek for pedagogues teaching in Hungarian. The event was attended by Deputy State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Tamás Wetzels who handed over the methodological packages of the program serving the strengthening of Hungarian-language education. The Deputy State Secretary emphasized the importance of Hungarian-language education in the motherland.