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FOREIGN NEWS



President Toomas Hendrik Ilves with Hungarian President László Sólyom, 5 October.

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President Ilves: Estonia and Hungary Share Common Values

5 October - **The states and people of Estonia and Hungary have had good, close relations throughout history, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said today in Budapest as he began his state visit to Hungary.** At his meeting with President of Hungary László Sólyom, the heads of states recognised that Estonia and Hungary share similar foreign policy priorities, which have contributed to good co-operation both in the European Union and NATO.

The heads of state expressed delight at the positive outcome of the Irish referendum on the Lisbon treaty and emphasised that Estonia and Hungary strongly support further enlargement of the European Union, including the Balkan states. Next week, President Ilves will visit Serbia and Macedonia with the aim of assisting in the negotiations on the enlargement of the European Union towards the Balkan states.

The subject of the IT Systems Agency of the European Union was one of the important issues raised by President Ilves at the meeting, and according to Ilves, Estonia is interested in putting itself forward as the agency's country of residence. According to President Ilves, both he and the President of Hungary agreed that there is a need for such an agency.

When speaking about NATO, it was mentioned that the alliance needs a new strategic concept. This means that new and old threats should be dealt with in a balanced way, said President Ilves. Defining new threats does not mean that old threats have disappeared.

Today President Ilves met also with Prime Minister György Gordon Bajnai, Speaker of the Parliament Béla Katona, and leader of the FIDESZ opposition party Viktor Orban.

At these meetings, Estonia's and Hungary's economic issues were discussed at length. It was mentioned that both countries have been severely hit by the global economic crisis. The countries were affected particularly because of the loss of export markets, as Estonian and Hungarian economies are strongly export-orientated. In overcoming the economic crisis, Estonia has made joining the euro zone its primary objective, stressed President Ilves.

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FOREIGN NEWS

Estonia Welcomes Ireland's Approval of Lisbon Treaty

3 October - **Foreign Minister Urmas Paet expressed his satisfaction that Ireland decided to approve of the Treaty of Lisbon during the referendum held on 2 October.** "The Irish people made a very good decision for the future of Europe," said Foreign Minister Paet.

Foreign Minister Paet stated that implementing the Treaty of Lisbon as soon as possible is necessary for the smooth introduction of upcoming institutional changes in the European Union.

"The Treaty of Lisbon coming into effect will create a lasting institutional framework for the European Union and allow us to address interior questions like developing competitiveness, strengthening energy policy, and advancing foreign and security policy in a more pointed way," Paet emphasised. "The Treaty of Lisbon guarantees a strong Europe, which is a prerequisite for responding to the challenges of globalisation—on the world stage we are a considerable partner only as a cohesive union, not as member states will separate interests," said Foreign Minister Paet.

Paet also expressed hope that the ratification process would come to a successful end in Poland and the Czech Republic soon as well. "Unnecessary dragging does not serve the interests of any member state," he added.

Ireland is the only EU member state that is bound by its constitution to put this type of agreement to a public referendum.

Hungary

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The issue of energy security was also discussed. It is obvious that the European Union requires a common energy policy. The prerequisite for implementing such policy is the diversification of energy sources, the range of countries where energy comes from and consumers as well as the liberalisation of energy markets, stressed President Ilves. The head of state added that Estonia was expecting significant steps in shaping the EU's common energy policy from Hungary's EU presidency in 2011.

Estonia and Hungary have both decided to participate actively in Afghanistan, where, according to President Ilves, in addition to ensuring safety, more attention should be given to civil missions.

Estonia and Hungary closely co-operate in preserving the culture and identity of Finno-Ugric peoples. A significant step in this is a co-operation programme for 2010–2012 being signed today by the ministries of education of Estonia and Hungary, stipulating the active exchange of students and teachers between Estonian and Hungarian universities.

The state visit of President Ilves continued today with a visit to Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) University in Budapest. The head of state laid wreaths at the Memorial of the Heroes of the Nation and the memorial to the victims of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

Estonian Programme to Help Afghanistan's Parliament Work More Effectively

5 October - **With the support of the Foreign Ministry, Estonia will begin holding consultations with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan geared towards making the work of Afghanistan's Parliament more effective.** The consultation project for improving the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Afghan Parliament's work is being carried out by the Chancellery of the Riigikogu.

Foreign Minister Urmas Paet stated that Afghanistan's parliamentary leaders have shown interest in how Estonia's e-state, ID card usage, and voting system work. "One very important step in building up Afghanistan is strengthening the activities of state institutions and establishing transparent government practices," noted Foreign Minister Paet. "The skilled use of information technology will improve the effectiveness and transparency of administration. Afghanistan can certainly learn a lot from Estonia's experiences," Paet added.

During the course of the Chancellery of the Riigikogu's project, Afghanistan's parliamentary representatives and officials will be introduced to Estonia's successfully implemented e-state and e-voting as well as the working principles and advantages of the Riigikogu's digital stenography system.

Afghanistan is one of Estonia's priority development co-operation partner countries.

Estonia Provides Aid to Victims of Indonesia Earthquake

1 October - **Estonia will be sending an information technology expert to Indonesia along with the UN Disaster Assessment and Co-ordination (UNDAC) team, and the Foreign Ministry has also decided to support victims of the earthquake in Indonesia with 1 million kroons.**

Foreign Minister Urmas Paet said that the situation in Indonesia is very complicated and the nation has asked for help in stabilising the situation. "We have decided to send an Estonian expert to Indonesia who will help the UN aid mission with information technology matters," said Paet.

The Estonian information technology expert will go to Indonesia within the framework of the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP), which aims to support the activities co-ordinated by the UN in alleviating the results of humanitarian disasters.

The Indonesian government issued a plea for aid to the international community for, among other things, rescue teams, medical supplies and personnel, medicines, foodstuffs and tents. The UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Aid (OCHA) has sent an assessment and co-ordination team to the region.

On 30 September the West Sumatra province of Indonesia was hit by two powerful earthquakes. The regions that suffered the most are Padang, Pariaman and Mentawai. As of the morning of 1 October, there were 460 known casualties. At least 500 buildings have collapsed and thousands of people are feared to be trapped under the rubble. The Indonesian authorities estimate that the number of dead is much higher than the known number at the moment, since rescue operations are still in the beginning phases. Because of heavy rains and flooding, thousand of people have been forced to leave their homes. Initial reports state that infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and telecommunication and water supply systems, have been badly damaged.

Estonian Alpinists Celebrate 180 Years Since Conquering of Ararat with Climb

6 October - **Estonian Ambassador to Turkey Aivo Orav, Tartu University rector Alar Karis, and Ağrı County Governor Mehmet Çetin opened an exhibit in Ishak Pasha Palace at the foot of Mount Ararat in the region of Ağrı in Eastern Turkey to celebrate 180 years since the conquering of Mount Ararat.** On 9 October 1829, the first person ever to reach the peak of the legendary Mount Ararat was Johann Jakob Friedrich Wilhelm Parrot (1792 – 1841), Tartu University physics professor and later rector.

Ambassador Aivo Orav expressed his satisfaction over the good relations between Estonia and Turkey, adding that the exhibit in Ishak Paşa Palace brings a little piece of Estonia to Turkey and gives Estonians a good reason to discover Turkey's beautiful nature. Alar Karis highlighted the importance of Parrot's conquering of Ararat to academic European circles of the time. The county governor of Ağrı thanked the Estonian Embassy in Turkey as well as all of the

institutions and individuals that helped with the creation of the exhibit.

The exhibit was compiled by science historian Erki Tammiksaar of Tartu University, and help in preparing the exhibit was provided by the Foreign Ministry, the Tartu University History Museum, the Cultural and Tourism Directorate of Ağrı Province, and many others.

The mountain climbers began their group ascent to the top of Ararat on 5 October. The group includes members of the Estonian Hiking League and Jaan Künnap's Alpinist Club. Participating alongside the Estonians are mountain climbers from Turkey, Iran, Greece, Poland and Russia, for a total of nearly 60 alpinists. The arrival at the peak is scheduled for 9 October, exactly 180 years since it was first conquered. A documentary film is being made about Parrot's historical ascent of the mountain.

The bio and travelogues of the man who conquered Ararat as well as other materials are available on the webpage www.agridagi.info.

Parts: Fight Against Cyber Threats Must Take Ordinary Users into Account

6 October (BNS) - **In reducing cyber threats and developing the economy, it is first and foremost ordinary users who have to be taken into account, Estonian Minister of Economy and Communications Juhan Parts said at the International Telecommunication Union forum in Geneva.**

In Parts' view, under the impact of the growing role of information and communication technologies on people's everyday lives it is important to avoid getting trapped by do's and don'ts and preserve a reasonable balance where ensuring cyber security will not start blocking the development of the Internet as a tool that eases everyday life, the Ministry of Economy and Communications said today.

Cyber threats in global economy and international cooperation opportunities were the main topics of the cyber security panel discussion on the second day of the ITU forum.

Lessons of the 2007 cyber attacks on Estonian websites were among the subjects discussed. Parts singled out three factors that helped avert major harm. In his words, Estonia's strength lies above all in an IT policy based on international practices and a functioning safe environment for data exchanges among government institutions. Due to that, Estonia is well equipped to share e-governance know-how and experience.

Secondly, the cyber attacks showed that in extreme situations it is not vertical management schemes which work best, but that horizontal co-operation between businesses and the public sector gives considerably better results.

Thirdly, the state must not overlook the needs of ordinary users when defending its information systems, the minister said.

Estonia became a member of the ITU in 1992.

DEFENCE NEWS

Aaviksoo: Symmetrical and Asymmetrical Security Threats Cannot be Separated

2 October - **Yesterday in London, Minister of Defence Jaak Aaviksoo opened the second part of a reputable security conference which centred on curbing cybercrime.**

Secretary General of NATO Anders Fogh Rasmussen opened the conference entitled "Managing risk in the XXIst century: climate change, cyber risk and piracy". In his keynote speech, Aaviksoo said that the threat of cybercrime has increased significantly in recent years and figuratively speaking, every computer could turn into a potential weapon.

The Minister of Defence also said that, based on the experiences of recent years, the possibility that conventional and symmetrical conflicts in Europe could re-erupt, cannot be excluded. "At the same time, we must find a balanced solution on how to react adequately to such asymmetrical security threats as cyber warfare. All of the conventional conflicts of recent years have been accompanied by cyber attacks, and therefore symmetrical and asymmetrical threats must not be separated artificially from each other," Aaviksoo said.

According to the Minister of Defence, the NATO Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence that was established in Estonia is a good example of how to include different countries and both civilian and military organisations. "Unfortunately, our experience has shown that very often there is a lack of co-operation between civilian and military organisations, which on their own deal in parallel with the same topics. This problem has been noted in many countries and also in the co-operation between the European Union and NATO," he said. The conference was organised by NATO in co-operation with the international insurance market Lloyd's.

Commander of Task Force Helmand Praised Estonian Soldiers

3 October (BNS) - **Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces Lt. Gen. Ants Laaneots met in Afghanistan with Task Force Helmand Commander Brig. Gen. Tim Radford, who acknowledged the Estonian soldiers serving under him.**

Estonian soldiers have this summer been fighting like tigers, bravely and furiously, in Helmand, the brigadier general said about the infantry company ESTCOY-8 serving in this restless southern province of Afghanistan. "Estonian soldiers are very good and excellently guided."

Radford briefed Laaneots, who is visiting Estonian units stationed in Afghanistan, about the security situation and operations in the province of Helmand, the area of responsibility of the British 19th light infantry brigade, the General Staff here said.

Laaneots has during his visit met with the deputy chief of NATO forces in Afghanistan, U.S. Lt. Gen. David M. Rodriguez, Afghanistan's Defence Minister Gen. Abdul Rahim Wardak, and chief of operations of the Afghan armed forces Lt. Gen. Sher Mohammad Karim.

At present Estonian infantry companies ESTCOY-8 and ESTCOY-E, logistics support unit NSE-7 and staff officers, some 300 personnel in all, are deployed in Afghanistan. ESTCOY-8 is serving under British command and ESTCOY-E, sent to Afghanistan to secure the presidential election, under the U.S. 2nd marine brigade.

The Estonian Defence Forces have been participating in the NATO-led military operation since 2003.

Awards Conferred to Reserve Officers Who Won Swiss Military Competition

1 October - **Yesterday, Minister of Defence Jaak Aaviksoo conferred 3rd Class Crosses of Merit of the MoD to the members of the team of the Estonian Reserve Officers' Association that won the prestigious Swiss military competition Swiss Raid Commando.**

The team of the Estonian Reserve Officers' Association, which was made up of Captain Raul Hindov, Lieutenant Kaido Ruul, Second Lieutenant Tiit Riisalo and Ensign Alar Nigul, won one of the most prestigious military competitions at the end of last week. This is the first time in the 44-year history of the competition that the Swiss Raid Commando has been won by a foreign team. Altogether 160 teams from across the world participated in the competition.

According to Minister of Defence Jaak Aaviksoo, it is difficult to imagine something more patriotic and at the same time providing personal growth than winning a competition like that. "I hope that winning the Swiss Raid Commando will set an example for all those engaging in military sports in Estonia and that it will raise the international visibility of our own similar national competitions," the Minister of Defence said to the reserve officers.

In 2007 the team, led by Captain Hindov, also won Erna Raid, the toughest military-athletic competition in Estonia.

The third class of the Cross of Merit of the Ministry of Defence is awarded for consequential activity in the advancement of the national defence of Estonia, also to freedom fighters who have achievements of special merit in the fight for the restoration of Estonia's independence.

ECONOMIC NEWS

Sweden's Trelleborg to Invest EUR 6.4 Mln in Plant Expansion in Saaremaa

2 October (BNS) - **The Swedish industrial group Trelleborg is planning to invest about 100 million kroons (EUR 6.4 mln) in expanding its moulded rubber and metal products plant on the Estonian island of Saaremaa.**

The regional newspaper Oma Saar, which reported about the plan, said 230 new jobs would be created and a fully new building erected.

However, the company wants to get rights of edifices for the property on Pikk Street 62f for 30 years before the project in the Estonian island capital is launched.

The state put the piece of land up for auction in mid-September. Last week, Trelleborg Sigma AB executive Mikael Fryklund sent a letter to Estonia's Environment Minister Jaanus Tamkivi asking to halt the auction and rent the piece of land to the company instead.

It stood on the web page of the Estonian Land Board on Thursday that the auction has been cancelled.

Kuressaare Vice Mayor Kalle Koov told Oma Saar that a joint delegation of Enterprise Estonia and Trelleborg visited the town government in mid-September.

The topic discussed was Trelleborg's interest to expand its operation in Kuressaare and build an annex to the plant building completed in 2007.

"The town of Kuressaare has expressed its readiness to provide all-around help to Trelleborg in its expansion," Koov said.

The town government decided on 29 September to satisfy Trelleborg's request from 25 September to initiate a detailed plan for the plot situated in Pikk Street 62e that would foresee expanding the present production facility.

Kalver Kirs, manager of Trelleborg Moulded Components Estonia, told the paper that the management of Trelleborg will not offer its comments concerning the expansion plan before 19 October.

Freight Handling at Port of Tallinn Up 9 Percent in September

5 October (BNS) - **Estonia's Tallinna Sadam (Port of Tallinn) handled 2.56 million tons of freight in September, 8.7% more than in the same month last year.**

In all, 23 337 thousand tons of goods passed through the Port of Tallinn in the period from January to September, 6.7% more than in the same period last year, the port said.

Carriage of the biggest commodity, oil products, increased by 14.2% to 17 357 thousand tons over January-September.

Carriage of timber freight increased by 24.9% in the nine months. Carriage of coal increased by 370%, that of chippings by 42% and of fertilizer by 39.6%.

The number of containers carried contracted by 28.2% to 98 951 containers in January-September. The number of passengers passing through the Port of Tallinn in January-September totalled 5 669 thousand, 0.5% fewer than in the same period last year.

Krimelte to Start Exporting to South America

6 October (BNS) - **The Estonian producer of joint sealants and insulation foams Krimelte has concluded a contract with a Brazilian importer and plans to start exporting insulation foams to other South American countries as well, the business daily Äripäev reports.**

"After the whole system is in place, opening the new market is just a matter of time. This will happen in six or 12 months," CEO Jaan Puusaag told the paper.

Krimelte has to date delivered a couple of containers of goods to the Brazilian importer Ancora, which Puusaag said represents a tiny part of the company's sales that exceed one billion kroons (EUR 64 mln).

As exporting to Brazil started only this year, shipments to that country could make up 2 to 3% of the turnover next year, which is more than 30 million kroons, Puusaag said.

Krimelte is holding talks with another importer in Brazil. The company has found an importer in Argentina as well, but getting the necessary certificates is going to take some more time. Puusaag predicts that first deliveries could reach Argentina already in six months. The next target in South America is Chile.

The chief executive noted at the same time that Krimelte's sales have shrunk by 30% this year in comparison with 2008 and the company will

probably end the year with sales of around 700 million kroons, slightly less than a year earlier.

Puusaag did not rule out the possibility that in addition to all the cuts made to date, costs will have to be reduced more in the future.

The Estonian-equity Krimelte exports its products to more than 30 countries.

812 New Cars Registered in September

5 October (BNS) - **In September offices of the Estonian Roads Administration traffic registry made first entries of 1 959 cars into their lists in September, of these 812 new cars.**

In August first entries were made of 600 new cars, the lowest monthly result this year. Of the 3 418 cars registered in September, 1 680 were new.

In September the most popular new car model was Renault Megane, of which 11 were registered, followed by Hyundai model i20 (54 cars) and Skoda Octavia (39 cars). In terms of makes Renault was the most popular with 165, Hyundai 103 and Toyota 96 cars registered.

The first registration of trucks added up to 235 in September and of buses 20, half of them new. The number of motorcycles registered was 70, of which 33 percent were new, and of small ships 79, of which 60 were new.

Postimees Has Biggest Increase in Circulation Among Estonian Newspapers in September

5 October (BNS) - **According to the Estonian Newspaper Association (EALL), Postimees increased the number of copies printed the most in September among the major Estonian dailies, by 1 100 copies to 58 000.**

Of Estonian-language dailies, the business daily Äripäev also increased the number of copies printed, by 400 copies to 14 800. The print runs of Õhtuleht and Eesti Päevaleht, however, contracted by 1 500 and 400 copies respectively to 53 700 and 30 900 copies.

Of Estonian-language weeklies, only Maaleht saw its print run increasing by 500 copies to 42 500. The print run of Eesti Ekspress, 35 200, was unchanged during the month.

CULTURAL NEWS

Estonian Seto Leelo Singing Tradition Entered into UNESCO List

30 September (BNS) - **The UNESCO oral and intangible heritage committee has decided to enter the Estonian Seto leelo polyphonic singing tradition into the UNESCO list of Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.**

Estonian Culture Minister Laine Janes said the decision served as great recognition to the Seto community and its leelo choirs. On behalf of the Seto community, she expressed pleasure that the Estonian application, which had been thoroughly prepared, earned approval for entry into the list.

The minister added that the Seto area state cultural programme had helped support it and a programme document for the next period, 2010-13, was now being prepared at the ministry.

In addition to the members of the ministerial commission and members of the Seto community,

several other people also took part in writing the Estonian application and added to it video materials about the leelo tradition and a CD with Seto songs.

The leelo is the traditional Seto singing method of original music, text corresponding to fixed rules, traditional rules of creating that text and traditional singing situations.

Since 2003 the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian song and dance festival traditions and the Kihnu cultural space were declared Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Estonian Puppet Films Won Top Prizes in Ukraine

5 October - **According to Eesti Nukufilm, the Grand Prix at the famed Krok Film Festival, which took place on a riverboat heading from Kiev to Odessa, went to Riho Unt's film "Lili".**

The special prize created in the memory of well-known Moscow film persona Alexander Tatarski, however, was awarded to Rao Heidmets's film "Kaasasündinud kohustused".

The Tatarski prize is awarded to the most striking professional achievement at the festival; therefore the prize can be considered a recognition for all of Nukufilm. Both awards are accompanied by a monetary prize.

The international jury included representatives from the USA, France, Belgium, Russia and Ukraine.

The Krok festival is organised by Ukraine and Russia and its distinctive characteristic is its venue—a riverboat. One year the festival attendee ride along a river in Ukraine and the next year along a river in Russia, and during the ten days or so all the films are screened and the winners are chosen.

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