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world

EUROPE

Budapest Police Chief Bans, Unbans Pride

Budapest Police Chief Gábor Tóth banned the city's Pride parade June 11, then unbanned it June 13. The parade will take place July 5.

Tóth originally said the parade would cause too much disruption of traffic.

That led to a denunciation from Patricia Prendiville, executive director of the European Region of the International Lesbian and Gay Association, who said: "We consider his decision as a sign of giving in to the threats of ultranationalists. The traffic hindrance explanation and an earlier suggestion to the LGBT activists to organize a stationary event in an area remote from the city center are just excuses for the unwillingness of the Budapest police chief to take his responsibilities seriously to ensure order."

In changing his mind, Tóth said freedom of assembly and opinion should take priority over traffic delays.

"We hope the police have understood that it is their job to protect the march from attacks, and not to try to avoid the attacks by banning the march," said Gábor Kuszling of Hungary's Association of People Challenging Patriarchy. "We hope that they have learned from last year's serious attacks and will appear in adequate numbers to protect us."

Last year, hundreds of skinheads, neo-Nazis

and others threw eggs, bottles, smoke bombs, Molotov cocktails and plastic bags of sand at the 2,000 marchers. They also pelted police with beer bottles and physically attacked several marchers. One truck in the parade caught fire when a Molotov cocktail landed on it.

The counterdemonstrators shouted, "Faggots into the Danube, followed by the Jews," "Soap factory" and "Filthy faggots."

Dozens more of the Pride attendees were attacked in the vicinity of the post-parade party at the open-air, riverside Buddha Beach nightclub, the parade's endpoint.

Parade organizers said police failed to protect Pride celebrants from anti-gay mobs, did not patrol the area of the post-parade party and did not respond to emergency calls.

Anglican Church Gay Wedding Causes Uproar

Yet another gay uproar occurred in the worldwide Anglican Communion last month when newspapers reported that two male priests had sealed their civil partnership using a traditional wedding rite at London's St. Bartholomew the Great Anglican church.

The ceremony, which included Holy Communion, was carried out by the Rev. Martin Dudley in violation of guidelines issued by the Church of England and the bishop of London, the Rt. Rev. Richard Chartres.

As the fallout from the news reports escalated, one of the partners, the Rev. David Lord, resigned from the priesthood June 15. The other partner, the Rev. Peter Cowell, is a priest vicar at St. Margaret's Church, a parish attached to Westminster Abbey that falls under the jurisdiction of the queen rather than the bishop.

The Church of England allows civil partnership celebrations to include prayers and hymns, but not a formal blessing or use of a wedding rite.

Policies at Anglican churches in the United States and Canada are generally more liberal, although they vary among dioceses. The Episcopal Church is the U.S. branch of the Anglican Communion.



Thomas Hammarberg, the Council of Europe's commissioner for human rights, says Albanian gays face persecution from citizens and the police.

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