

# Hungary Forum picks candidate for presidency

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**Susan Viets in Budapest**

**T**HE Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), set to become the leading force in government after Hungary's multi-party elections, has chosen an historian, Mr Lajos Fur, aged 59, as its presidential candidate.

The Forum ended a three-day national meeting yesterday, at which it had refined the Forum's programme and worked on an election strategy.

Due respect was paid by both the Soviet Union and the Americans, whose ambassadors sat in front for the opening ceremonies.

With a membership exceeding 20,000 and victory in four of five recent by-elections, the MDF will have the biggest impact on Hungary's political future now that the country is, by law, a multi-party democracy.

The Forum, not yet a party, is a nationalist movement. The leadership is dominated by poets and writers who consciously lay claim to a populist heritage in a long-standing rift with the urbanist intellectuals.

The urbanists are often derided as Jews and the Forum admits it is having to battle against its image as an anti-Semitic movement.

In the meeting hall, an imposing statue of Karl Marx was tucked safely out of sight behind a banner which read "MDF — the party of the future".

Delegates endorsed the Forum's aim of creating a market economy through privatisation, foreign investment, deregulation and subsidy cuts to unprofitable industries.

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