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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Ramush loses the battle! (*Zeri*)**

The battle of Ramush Haradinaj, leader of the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK), to bring down the Thaci government through a motion of mistrust in parliament has failed in the start. It seems that Haradinaj was "de-conspired" even before the start of the project to secure 61 MP votes required for a motion of mistrust against the government.

Haradinaj's initiative failed after Isa Mustafa, leader of the biggest opposition party, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and Prime Minister and PDK leader Hashim Thaci agreed that national elections should be held after election reforms, namely in June. The LDK issued a media communique confirming the agreement.

"LDK leader Isa Mustafa and Prime Minister Hashim Thaci met on Friday and discussed election reform and general elections. The two leaders agreed that the parliamentary committee should conclude election reform, and then the government would submit it for approval to parliament in March," the press release said.

"Leaders also agreed that all necessary preparations should be made for free and democratic elections monitored by international observers and an official request will be sent to the European Union and the OSCE".

"The two leaders believe that necessary preparations need to be made in coordination with political parties and after a consensus in parliament to hold general elections in the first half of the year. Meetings with leaders of other political parties will be held in the coming days."

**Thaci prefers abolishment of parliament (*Tribuna*)**

In a few months, Kosovars will go to polling stations for parliamentary elections. The biggest political parties in Kosovo are expected to agree on the abolishment of parliament 45 days before elections. Sources told the paper that the dissolution of parliament would accelerate elections and that it is a preferred scenario of PDK leader and Prime Minister Hashim Thaci. The reasons behind such a scenario are related to the rule of law package that needs to be passed by parliament. This would be soon followed by a decision on the establishment of a European Tribunal for the former Kosovo Liberation Army.

**Ashton hails progress by Kosovo and Serbia (*dailies*)**

European Union's diplomacy chief Catherine Ashton said on Friday that Belgrade and Pristina have achieved historic progress in dialogue for normalization of relations and that it is important for the parties to maintain the same commitment.

"Historic progress has been achieved in the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina. The United Nations Security Council heard the statements of Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dacic and Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaci on how important and positive this is for their citizens, for stability in the Western Balkans and for their European future," Ashton said.

"The first agreement on the principles of normalization of relations reached last year was a turning point in their relations. The implementation of principles included successful local elections in Kosovo and for the first time in northern Kosovo and the integration of all judiciary and security structures in Kosovo's legal framework," Ashton added.

**Government hesitates to declare Vulin "persona non grata" (*Tribuna*)**

Authorities in Pristina could declare persona non grata the Serbian Government's Minister for Kosovo. The Government of Kosovo is considering the possibility, but some members of Thaci's government are still uncertain if such a decision should be made at this point.

Sources told the newspaper that Vulin's provocative actions in Kosovo have irritated both local and international authorities. Government officials neither denied nor confirmed the decision. A senior government member said "media and the public would be informed on every detail in due time".

**Lute: United States of America fully support Kosovo (*Koha*)**

"The United States of America fully support Kosovo - 100 percent," U.S. Ambassador to NATO, Douglas Lute, said in an interview for ***Koha Ditore*** during his visit to Pristina. Lute, who visits Kosovo ten years after he led the U.S. KFOR contingent, said he sees great progress in Kosovo. He positively evaluates processes in Kosovo and confirms Washington's support for Kosovo's path.

Lute said the agreement with Serbia in April last year was historic and adds that implementing the agreement is even more difficult than reaching one.

Asked to comment on the eventual transformation of the Kosovo Security Force into an army, Lute said the decision is up to Kosovo, but adds that advises for the government are not to rush any decisions, "because a quick decision can endanger support from NATO".