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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**EU: Trepca is an important issue for Kosovo (*Koha Ditore*)**

The paper writes that while the EU has no clear stance on the recent verbal conflict between Pristina and Belgrade on the fate of the Trepca mining complex, it did say that it has taken note of the Kosovo Assembly’s approval of the Trepca Law and also of Serbia’s position on the matter. Nevertheless, the EU further stated: “The European Union encourages all political representatives of Kosovo, whether they come from majority or minority political parties, to remain engaged in the political dialogue concerning such an important issue for Kosovo”. According to the paper, this sentence seemingly implies that the EU’s position is more in line with that of Kosovo than of Serbia.

**Mustafa expects Serbian List to return to institutions (*Zeri*)**

Kosovo’s Prime Minister, Isa Mustafa, said on Wednesday that he expects the Serbian List to continue their work in Kosovo institutions. “I can say that this boycott will end because it does not benefit anyone to continue with this situation,” Mustafa said. The Serbian List announced they will boycott the Kosovo institutions as a sign of protest against the Trepca Law.

**Bennoune: Cultural heritage should be depoliticized (*Kultplus, RTV21*)**

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights, Karima Bennoune, told a press conference yesterday in Pristina that the cultural heritage in Kosovo is extremely politicized. Bennoune said it was very important to depoliticize the issue of cultural heritage and not to repeat the damage caused to heritage in 1999 and 2004.“I am happy that even according to the police, the number of cultural damage cases is reduced. But if there will be such cases of destruction of cultural objects, then it should be condemned immediately”, she said during the press conference where she did not allow media to record her, even though she invited media to follow the event.  During her visit, Bennoune met with central and local authorities and other groups of stakeholders from the fields of cultural policies, cultural heritage and cultural rights, including academics and other relevant institutions. She also met with civil society organizations, representatives of UN agencies and regional organizations to discuss best practices and challenges about equal enjoyment of cultural heritage. Bennoune, who is visiting Kosovo at the invitation of the Serbian authorities, will, after her stay in Kosovo, travel to Serbia and prepare a comprehensive report, which will be presented at UN headquarters in Geneva.

**Kosovo protects and guarantees the cultural and religious rights of all communities (*Koha*)**

Kosovo’s Deputy Prime Minister, Hajredin Kuci, met on Tuesday with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights, Karima Bennoune. Kuci informed Bennoune that Kosovo is a state that guarantees equal rights for all communities, and respect for religious and cultural rights without discrimination. “Protection of cultural heritage in Kosovo is guaranteed by the Constitution of Kosovo and has its protection foundation since the Ahtisaari Plan. Kosovo institutions are committed to ensure the protection of cultural heritage in Kosovo, regardless of ethnic or religious affiliation,” Kuci said. Bennoune and Kuci discussed the importance of culture as a factor in creating a peaceful environment and harmonious coexistence for all communities. Kuci also stressed that the government of Kosovo has a clear pro-European orientation, where cultural and religious rights of all communities are protected and guaranteed.

**Belgrade presents its concerns over Trepca to UN in Belgrade (*Klan Kosova*)**

The head of the Serbian Government’s Office for Kosovo, Marko Djuric, met yesterday the head of the UN Office in Belgrade, Simona Miculescu, and informed her about “Pristina’s unlawful attack against Trepca complex” and the steps that the Government of Serbia is planning to undertake to raise the issue at the UN.

**Serbia’s telecom becomes official in Kosovo (*Zeri*)**

The paper reports in a front-page story that Serbia’s mobile telephone operator MTS has been registered as a business in Kosovo. According to the certificate of business that the paper claims to possess, exactly one year ago the Telekom Serbia was established in Kosovo and has an initial capital of 25,000 euros. MTS operation in Kosovo is the product of Pristina-Belgrade agreements reached in Brussels. Also, citing what the paper says are very reliable sources, this business is currently active in Kosovo. Vetevendosje Movement representatives told the paper that the agreement on telecom is a violation of Kosovo sovereignty since it legalizes a state operator of Serbia in Kosovo.

**Pristina-Belgrade dialogue at a crossroad (*Koha Ditore*)**

Panelists at the Belgrade Security Forum’s session on Pristina-Belgrade dialogue said the process has lost its meaning and turned into a revenge tool used by the politicians on both sides. The lack of results in the dialogue and recent flaring of tensions between Pristina and Belgrade were evident at the session where most of Kosovo representatives were absent in a sign of protest over the arrest by Serbian authorities of Kosovo Police director Nehat Thaci. “The time has come to review this dialogue and see what can be done to change its course to enable implementation of agreements”, said the session’s moderator, Alex Roinishvili Grigorev.

**Tahiri: Of 33 agreements with Serbia, 29 implemented (*Koha*)**

Kosovo’s Minister for Dialogue, Edita Tahiri, said in an interview for ***KTV*** that out of 33 agreements reached in the framework of the EU-facilitated dialogue with Serbia, 29 are being fully implemented. She also said that the vast majority of Serb parallel structures in Kosovo have been dissolved and that while there are occasional problems in Kosovo-Serbia relations, “they are generally normalized”. Tahiri commented on her recent statements to the Assembly committee regarding the lists of missing persons. “The issue concerned two different lists but the MPs did not understand. Kosovo does possess the list of missing persons and we know exactly who they are, but it was up to Serbia to present the list of the missing persons’ whereabouts”, Tahiri said. In another interview for ***Zeri***, Tahiri said that Serbia is not willing to open military archives on where the missing persons from Kosovo are since, according to her, it was the Serbian military forces that committed genocide in Kosovo. "The Serbian side was never willing to provide full information on the fate of the missing,” she said. Tahiri also said that Kosovo cannot stop the dialogue with Serbia until the latter releases Kosovo Police regional director Nehat Thaci from detention, since according to her, this would also jeopardize Kosovo’s European perspective.

**No demarcation without consensus (*Zeri*)**

Boycotting the work of the Assembly by the Serbian List has only made it more difficult for the ruling coalition to secure the votes needed to ratify the demarcation deal with Montenegro. In this situation, it is estimated that the government will be forced to seek consensus with the opposition in order for the visa liberalization process not to be delayed further. Faton Abdullahu, advisor to Prime Minister Isa Mustafa, told the paper that it is in everyone’s interest that the issue of demarcation be finalized as soon as possible. According to him, government is making preparations to resubmit the demarcation deal to the Assembly. On the other hand, representatives of the opposition parties reiterated that the current version of demarcation deal cannot pass the Assembly.

**Buja: Consensus with AAK and Nisma on demarcation, possible (*Epoka)***

Kosovo Assembly MP from the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) Shukri Buja told the paper that a political consensus between the government and opposition is required to ratify the agreement on demarcation of the border with Montenegro. He said that such consensus with the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) and the Initiative for Kosovo (NISMA) is possible if a joint parliamentary commission is established to review the entire process of demarcation. Buja spoke in this interview also about the possibility of early elections, saying that they would be favorable for PDK.

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