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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Thaci wants to take command over dialogue with Serbia (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on its front page that Kosovo President Hashim Thaci is “preparing to take over command of dialogue with Serbia”. Unnamed sources told the paper that Thaci will soon include in his team Blerim Shala, member of the Kosovo Assembly and the government’s coordinator for talks with Belgrade. The Office of the President and Shala did not comment on the issue. Political analysts in Pristina meanwhile argue that given the delays in the process of talks when Thaci was Prime Minister of Kosovo, significant progress cannot be expected even if the Pristina-Belgrade talks are held at the level of presidents. The paper also recalls that Thaci recently argued in favour of taking dialogue with Belgrade to another level. “Kosovo is ready and in fact it wants dialogue to be raised to another level and to have a different quality. We are ready for a genuine process of cooperation, friendly relations and reconciliation. There was never a better opportunity for Kosovo, Serbia and the region, to establish safe channels of cooperation,” Thaci said during a recent NATO seminar in Pristina.

**Kosovo Police Regional Director released from Serbian jail (*media*)**

All media report that Serbian authorities on Tuesday have released from detention the Kosovo Police regional director Nehat Thaci who was arrested on suspicion of terrorism over a month ago. The news was confirmed by Kosovo’s Foreign Minister, Enver Hoxhaj, who welcomed Thaci at the border crossing point. Hoxhaj said Thaci was kept unjustly in Serbia for a long time. Serbian media reported that prosecution dropped the investigation after hearing witnesses who did not identify Thaci as a perpetrator.

**Signs of elections in spring (*Zeri*)**

The paper reports on its front page that the leader of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), Kadri Veseli, has reiterated his stance that Kosovo could go to early elections if political parties agree on this. Veseli’s remarks are seen as readiness for new elections. Opposition parties and political analysts meanwhile argue that elections could be held in spring next year. Kosovo Assembly Deputy Speaker, Xhavit Haliti, told the paper that the ruling coalition is not seeking new elections but that “Veseli is not ruling out this possibility”.

**LDK is not against early elections (*Kosova Sot*)**

The paper quotes Arban Abrashi, member of the chairmanship of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, as saying that if there is agreement among all political parties then the LDK will oppose the idea of early parliamentary elections. Abrashi however said that he does not see readiness among the ruling coalition partners for early elections.

**Tahiri: Kelmendi’s arrest, arbitrary act (*Zeri*)**

Kosovo’s Minister for Dialogue, Edita Tahiri, told the paper on Tuesday that the arrest of Kosovo citizen Hilmi Kelmendi by Serbian authorities a few days ago is an arbitrary act. She said Kosovo citizens can travel to Europe through Serbia, because this was guaranteed by Serbia in the Brussels dialogue. “Kelmendi’s arrest is unacceptable and seriously damages dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia,” Tahiri said. She added that with such actions, Serbia is showing that it is not interested in dialogue. “We immediately informed the European Union on this matter,” she said. The paper also reports that representatives of Vetevendosje Movement, the biggest opposition party in Kosovo, have suggested adopting a resolution that would stop negotiations with Serbia.

**Demolli: Serbian List did not request post of deputy commander (*Epoka*)**

Haki Demolli, Minister for the Kosovo Security Force (KSF), said on Tuesday that the Serbian List never asked for the post of KSF Deputy Commander in exchange for their vote in favor of the transformation into the Kosovo Armed Forces. Demolli also said that the Serbian List did not request regional mono-ethnic units either. During the meeting of the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs, Demolli reiterated the need to transform the KSF into the Armed Forces.

**Veseli: KSF will become an army soon (*Epoka*)**

Kosovo Assembly President, Kadri Veseli, said during a visit to Kosovo Security Force facilities in Mitrovica on Tuesday, that the KSF is ready to become an army. “The Army of Kosovo is a necessary element of the architecture of national, regional and broader security. We will soon have this army as partner of the North Atlantic Alliance, a proud emblem of a developed Kosovo and integrated in the European Union,” Veseli said.

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