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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Thaçi: I stopped the train, I feared repetition of “Panda” case (*Epoka e Re*)**

The President of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, said for ***TV Dukagjini*** that the provocative train from Serbia would have entered Kosovo if he wouldn’t engage to stop it. He praised the work of the Minister of Internal Affairs, Skender Hyseni, for demonstrating determination as well as the Director of Kosovo Police, Shpend Maxhuni, however he did not speak about Prime Minister Isa Mustafa. He said that in the train case, he feared repetition of “Panda” case, when Serbian state killed five youngsters in Peja/Pec, and blamed Albanians afterwards. Thaçi added that he did not order to stop the train, but he requested from the Minister and the Director of the Police to undertake measures to prevent it from entering Kosovo.

**Kosovo FM writes to 49 countries about Serbia’s provocations (*Zeri*)**

Kosovo’s Foreign Minister, Enver Hoxhaj, has written to his counterparts from 49 countries informing them about recent developments in Kosovo regarding the Serbian train that attempted to enter Kosovo without the permission from its authorities. Hoxhaj said the train is not an isolated case, but rather, part of a systematic hostile approach Serbia has been employing towards Kosovo. In his letter, Hoxhaj also spoke about the detention of AAK leader Ramush Haradinaj by the French police on an Interpol warrant issued by Serbia and the construction of the wall in Mitrovica North. “The international community needs to remain vigilant and consider taking preventive measures for preserving peace and stability in the region. Serbia’s continuous threats to Kosovo also represent threats to the regional security,” Hoxhaj said.

**Thaci thanks Biden for efforts in de-escalating Kosovo-Serbia tensions (*Telegrafi*)**

President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci had a telephone conversation with US Vice President Joe Biden whom he thanked for his and the US immediate efforts to avoid tensions between Kosovo and Serbia. “Thank you for sending out messages to all sides to refrain from actions that create tensions,” Thaci is quoted to have told Biden. The two agreed that dialogue and cooperation are the only way forward for the Western Balkans.

**Veseli: We are much stronger than in the nineties (*RTK*)**

The President of the Assembly of Kosovo, Kadri Veseli, said for RTK that threats of the Serbian President Tomislav Nikolić could be very realistic and serious, however, he added, “we will not back away because we are much stronger than in the nineties.” According to him, Serbia’s action on Saturday was a testing provocation but added that “we are not able to know the intentions of Serbia with this testing.” He also said that the wall in Mitrovica north will be removed, however Serbia will be responsible for undertaking such actions.

**KLA veterans ready to fight again with Serbia (*Lajmi*)**

The President of the KLA War Veterans’ Organisation, Hysni Gucati, said that KLA veterans followed with concern the most recent provocations of Serbia towards Kosovo. He said that Kosovo already has institutions, the Presidency, the Assembly, government, police and KSF, in order to defend itself as a state against any reaction of Serbia. However, he added that if required, veterans of the KLA war are ready to respond to their state for any kind of help. In an interview for the paper, Gucati also spoke about the protest called in support of Ramush Haradinaj, and added that they are going to present some demands for France and Kosovo institutions. He appealed to Kosovo institutions to make pressure on Brussels for removal of the former KLA warriors from Interpol lists.

**Vucic: Majority of agreements reached with Pristina are only verbal (*Koha*)**

The Prime Minister of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic, said that most of the things reached in the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, are verbal and not in a written form.

“And now here they say that we do not have a written agreement, but it is part of what we agreed verbally,” said Vucic reacting to the Brussels statement, which says that the Brussels Agreement of 2013 referred to by Serbia, says that Kosovo authorities do not have to request KFOR’s permission for the north of Kosovo. Speaking to the journalists in Davos, B92 reports, Vucic said that only two agreements from the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue are in the written form, respectively only two times something was signed, while all the rest remain as “verbally reached agreements.” “And what was reached about Mitrovica, about the bridge, we have reached them only in a verbal form. Also the one on Telecom, until the finale, I would say of the initials, everything is only verbal,” Vucic said. “We have had some direct contacts with Kosovo Albanians and I believe that we will resolve all the problems in a peaceful and rational manner, in a reasonable way,” concluded Vucic.

**Kosovo Government refutes Vucic (*Lajmi*)**

The government of Kosovo has refuted statements attributed to Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic that he had contacts with Kosovo Albanians following the train incident last week. Faton Abdullahu, government’s spokesperson, said they had no type of contact with anyone from the Belgrade government.

**Musliu: Serbia has increased armament at the border with Kosovo (*Lajmi*)**

Head of the National Council of Albanians in Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedje, Jonuz Musliu, told TV Dukagjini that the current provocations from Serbia are planned and induced by the presidential elections that will be held this year in Serbia. He also blamed Russia for trying to become a relevant factor in the Balkans. According to him, Serbia has increased heavy armament at the base which is 15 kilometers from the border with Kosovo. He also complained about the lack of engagement of the governments of Kosovo and Albania towards Presevo Valley Albanians.

**Association makes Kosovo Serbs independent from Belgrade (*Lajmi*)**

The European Parliament Rapporteur for Kosovo, Ulrike Lunacek, said that the Association/Community of Serb-Majority Municipalities should be established in accordance to the reached agreement in Brussels and with the decision of the Constitutional Court. She stressed that this Association will not have an executive mandate adding that the municipalities are there to offer service to the citizens, not to make national policies. Speaking about the agreement for the demarcation of the border with Montenegro, Lunacek said that any delay of this agreement will harm the citizens of Kosovo.

**New border demarcation commission to meet on 24 January (*Kosova Sot*)**

The government of Kosovo has set the date for the first meeting of the new border demarcation commission that is expected to include independent experts as well as representatives from the ruling and opposition parties and whose task will be to measure the territory of Kosovo and determine whether the agreement on border demarcation with Montenegro is accurate. In a press release, the government of Kosovo announced that the meeting will take place on 24 January and called on three opposition parties – Vetevendosje, the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK), Initiative for Kosovo (NISMA) – to send their representatives to the commission.

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