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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Haradinaj: Abrogation of special court, parliamentary initiative (*dailies*)**

Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, said that the role of the government on the initiative for abrogation of the law on specialist chambers “is not that relevant” for the fact that this is a parliamentary initiative. Haradinaj however noted that once the government receives the initiative, it will respect all standard procedures.

**Government lacks unity on special court (*Koha Ditore*)**

There is no unity in the government of Kosovo regarding the abrogation of the law on specialist chambers, the paper reports on the front page. Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj said yesterday that the government’s opinion on the matter will not carry that much validity saying it is the Assembly that has “ownership” over the initiative. The government however did not say what it plans to do with the initiative that the Assembly presidency decided to send to it for review. “There are standard procedures in place used in the past in similar situations. However, we cannot reply what the action will be in this case until we receive official request from the Assembly,” the government of Kosovo said in a written response to the paper. At the same time, the government’s secretary Fitim Krasniqi confirmed that the initiative has reached the government yesterday afternoon and added that it will be forwarded to the Ministry of Integration and the Ministry of Finance to give respective opinions. “After these ministries give their opinion, the government will forward its opinion to the Assembly in line with those received from these ministries,” Krasniqi said.

**U.S. Embassy repeats calls against abrogation of special court (*Bota Sot*)**

The U.S. Embassy in Kosovo has yet again voiced its opposition to the initiative for abrogating the specialist chambers. In a written reply to Arbresh.info news website, the Embassy said it calls on all institutions, MPs and political leaders to abandon all ideas of abrogating or renegotiating any aspect of the law on specialist chambers.

**Stavileci: Special Court and demarcations should have speedy epilogue (*Epoka*)**

Blerand Stavileci, political adviser to the Kosovo Assembly President, told the paper that major issues such as the Special Court and demarcation should be closed as soon as possible. He said that Kosovo and its people can be hostage of certain matter to eternity. Stavileci, added that people need free movement, jobs and strong partnership with developed countries.

 **“LDK opposes abrogation of special court and supports demarcation” (*Klan Kosova*)**

The Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) secretary, Ismet Beqiri, said his party is against the initiative to abrogate specialist chambers and in favour of the border demarcation agreement with Montenegro. Beqiri said he presented this position in a meeting with Joseph Daul, President of the European People’s Party, during his visit to Strasbourg. Beqiri said he also met Jordi Roca, Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Rapporteur for Kosovo.

**Vetevendosje would not vote for abrogation of the Special Court (*Insajderi*)**

Kosovo Assembly MP from the Vetevendosje Movement, Albulena Haxhiu, told KTV that Vetevendosje will not vote for abrogation of the specialist chambers. She said that the reason for this is Hashim Thaci being behind this initiative and added that the initiative is not serious because it is initiated by personal reasons. “In the past, MPs were considered as means to vote when requested by Thaci, Veseli or Mustafa. It used to be a continuous pressure, at that time they did not speak about MPs integrity. This is dangerous, this does not abrogate the Special Court. This is not for the benefit of the Kosovo Liberation Army, but for personal interests,” Haxhiu said. “We expect from Hashim Thaci to have a serious approach. Vetevendosje cannot support private initiatives,” she added.

**Zaharieva: Brussels should be clear on Kosovo’s path (*Koha*)**

Bulgaria’s Foreign Minister, Ekatarina Zaharieva, whose country presides the European Union, called for endorsement of the agreement for demarcation of the border with Montenegro, in order for Kosovo to gain visa liberalization. She said at the European Parliament that besides the lack of consensus with regards to the independence of Kosovo, Brussels should show clearly what should be done with Kosovo on the direction of European integration.

**Hoxha: Kosovo not ready to meet international obligations (*Bota Sot*)**

Kosovo’s Minister of European Integration, Dhurata Hoxha, said Kosovo needs to respect international obligations. “We have not yet managed to ratify the border demarcation agreement and this is a bad signal. In a word, Kosovo is not ready to meet international obligations. This is why we continue to be isolated in 2018,” Hoxha said.

**Deda: Efforts underway to find a solution for border demarcation (*Zeri*)**

Alternativa MP, Ilir Deda, said in an interview to ***Tribuna Channel*** that coalition partners, Initiative for Kosovo (NISMA) and New Kosovo Alliance (AKR), are making efforts to find a solution that would secure sufficient votes for the border demarcation agreement with Montenegro. According to Deda, the two parties are trying to come up with a statement that would be signed by both the government in Pristina and the one in Podgorica stipulating that in two years’ time additional documents for the border demarcation process will be taken into account. Deda said he believes the initiative would get the support of everyone in the Assembly of Kosovo.

**Matoshi: EU integration also depends on international developments (*Zeri*)**

Prime Minster of Kosovo’s advisor, Halil Matoshi, told the paper that Kosovo has to do its homework regarding European integration but that this process also depends on internationals political developments. “As to when it will become [EU] member or when it will get the candidate status it does not always depend on Kosovo but also international political circumstances,” Matoshi said.

**Trajkovic: Kosovo is becoming estranged from the West (*KTV*)**

Former Kosovo Assembly MP, Rada Trajkovic, told ***KTV*** broadcaster that she has the impression that Kosovo is leaving its Western European identity. According to her, late President Rugova and the others tried to lead Kosovo towards Europe, however, “Rexhep Qosja and some others have tendencies to orient Albanian population of Kosovo towards the Muslim world.” Speaking about Oliver Ivanovic’s murder, Trajkovic said that Milan Radojcic was not in Mitrovica a day before Ivanovic’s murder. “I do not know anything, but I have great suspicions, considering that a day before the murder he was not in Mitrovica. I was there yesterday to give signatures to the students and they told me that his cafeteria, where everyone used to go. Including government representatives, is shut down. So, he had direct connections with Belgrade government, but also with Pristina. He had bodyguards, that no one ion Mitrovica knew, they were brought from aside. Haradinaj could not make a single institutional solution without Radojcic’s support. So, he completely, in an institutional manner controlled the system on the Serb’s side,” Trajkovic said. She added that Serb citizens in Mitrovica North are afraid from Radojcic’s revenge if they speak to the media after Ivanovic’s murder.

**COMKFOR meets Mitrovica North Mayor Rakic (*Klan Kosova*)**

The current security situation in the north of Kosovo following the killing of Serb leader, Oliver Ivanovic, was focus of the meeting between Mitrovica North Mayor, Goran Rakic, and KFOR Commander, Major General Salvatore Cuoci yesterday. KFOR said it will continue its regular activities in the north aimed at maintaining peace and security while Rakic noted that it is crucial to strengthen cooperation of all security structures involved in the investigation into Ivanovic’s murder.

**Jevtic: Vucic’s visit calmed down tensions (*Klan Kosova*)**

Kosovo’s Minister for Communities and Returns, Dalibor Jevtic, told Serbian broadcaster ***RTS*** that the visit of the Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic to Kosovo calmed down tensions. “It was a positive decision on the part of the Serbian president although difficult due to security but he came immediately to talk to everyone,” Jevtic said.

**Surroi: This government should fall within six months (*Koha*)**

Publicist Veton Surroi, assessed that the current government of Kosovo, led by Ramush Haradinaj, should leave as soon as possible. “It would have been normal perhaps if this government wend down within six months,” Surroi said. “This government has brought each day more surprises, so that each surprise left behind the previous one,” he said. “While a part of the public opinion dealt with the numbers of the Ministers and deputy ministers, the same government gave away legally, unconstitutionally, the debt of 58 million Euros to water packers, and so for the participants of Kumanovo group,” Surroi said. “It brought decisions for increase of salaries which are also in contradiction with the law and finally brought a decision which perhaps is the most harmful one for the country, the contract for Kosova e Re power plant,” Surroi assessed.

**Haxhiu rejects dismissal from PDK branch (*media*)**

Several online media report that the MP from the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), Bekim Haxhiu, has rejected his dismissal from the party branch in Skenderaj/Srbica. Haxhiu said the head of the branch, Sami Lushtaku, cannot decide on his dismissal and that this move can only be taken by the party at the central level. “I will continue to be in my position,” Haxhiu said. Meanwhile, Lushtaku told ***Insajderi*** that the decision to dismiss seven members of the PDK branch in Skenderaj/Srbica, amongst whom is also Haxhiu, has been taken after they tried to create divisions within the party.

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