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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Haradinaj: Kosovo committed to good neighbourly relations (*media*)**

Kosovo Prime Minister, Ramush Haradinaj, is attending the Brdo Summit in Slovenia, part of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP). Kosovo will chair the SEECP in 2019-2020. “The South-East European Cooperation Process was built on the principles of a vision for the future and equality and it is scoring concrete results in bringing South-East European countries closer to the EU, and at the same time preserving the joint social, historic and geographical values. Kosovo has proved its commitment to good neighborly relations with Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro, and is working on building good neighborly relations with Serbia, too. Kosovo belongs to the European family, the family of Western values and there is no going back on this track,” Haradinaj said in his address at the summit. Haradinaj also talked about Kosovo’s position and engagement in strengthening regional cooperation, good neighborly relations, stability and security, better economic relations, the fight against organized crime and also the fight against terror. “Kosovo is proving its commitment to build good relations with its neighbors and other South-East European countries, by being part and contributing to joint initiatives and engagements for the good of peace and the future,” Haradinaj said.

**President to have absolute power on dialogue and Brussels agreements (*Koha*)**

The Kosovo Government has transferred to the President the competency for the implementation of agreements reached with Serbia so far and also competencies for the final phase of dialogue, the paper reports on the front page. The paper recalls that the government has adopted an action plan to address the recommendations of the European Commission’s Progress Report on Kosovo. Chapter four of the action plan includes two actions referring to the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. In there, the President is identified as the institution that intensifies the work on the implementation of agreements from the technical dialogue. Meanwhile, some members of the Kosovo Assembly have warned that this a new practice and that it poses a threat because the Assembly does not any supervisory authority over the President. Democratic League of Kosovo MP Vjosa Osmani, who chairs the Assembly’s Foreign Affairs Committee, said the decision to transfer the competencies to the President was absurd. “The only institution for implementing of agreements and implementing of laws, with executive powers, is the Government of Kosovo,” said Osmani.

**Opposition doesn’t want Thaci leading the dialogue (*Zeri*)**

Opposition representatives said in a conference organised in Pristina yesterday by the Group for Legal and Political Studies that they do not want President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci leading the dialogue for normalisation of relations with Serbia. Head of Vetevendosje parliamentary group, Glauk Konjufca, said the Assembly should have the key role in the process while the dialogue would have to be led by the government not the president. “The prime minister is not respecting Assembly’s resolution. Instead, he goes off and writes a resolution in which he says he is giving Thaci power over the dialogue platform,” Konjufca said. Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) has also opposed the idea of Thaci leading the dialogue.

**PDK doesn’t support LDK’s roundtable idea (*Zeri*)**

Officials from the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) have told the paper that they don’t think the roundtable organised by the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) for today is a good idea. PDK senior official Xhavit Haliti said he thinks there is no need to attend meetings called by political parties. “We have the parliament for such meetings,” he said. However, head of PDK parliamentary group, Memli Krasniqi, said the party is expected to come out with an official position on whether it will attend the event later today. Yesterday, media reported that LDK leader Isa Mustafa has invited political leaders to a roundtable in an effort to reach consensus on issues considered to be vital for Kosovo.

**Sherifi: NISMA to attend LDK-hosted roundtable (*Zeri*)**

Head of the Social Democratic Initiative (NISMA) parliamentary group, Bilall Sherifi, said his party would be taking part in the LDK-hosted roundtable today. Sherifi said NISMA considers that any meeting between political parties is positive and will attend today’s event.

**Hoti: If we want, we can take the country to new elections in 30 days (*RTK*)**

Avdullah Hoti, caucus of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), said his political party can lead Kosovo toward new elections in thirty days. Hoti told ***RTK*** on Tuesday that his party’s position is clear. “But we want to achieve this in an agreed manner. We want to create consensus in this society,” he said. Hoti further criticized the coalition government and added that “it does not have the legitimacy to govern.”

**Avdyli: We need four more votes to bring the government down (*RTK*)**

Kosovo Assembly MP from the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), Haxhi Avdyli said during a debate on RTK that his political party has so far ensured 47 votes and they will soon gain four more votes for extraordinary parliamentary elections. Blerim Kuqi from the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) said that the LDK does not even have forty votes to call an extraordinary session and added that if LDK gathers 57 votes, his vote will be the 58th. Kuqi and Avdylli debated harshly about the round table called by LDK and which will take place today. Kuci said AAK will participate at the roundtable however he said, there are contradictions because national matters cannot be conditioned with the date of extraordinary elections. Avdyli said that if consensus on the date of elections is not reached, then a motion to bring down the government will be unavoidable.

**Jeremic: Thaci, Vucic agreed to exchange territories, U.S. didn’t allow it (*media*)**

Vuk Jeremic, leader of the Serbian People’s Party, said on Tuesday that Serbia and Kosovo Presidents, Aleksandar Vucic and Hashim Thaci, agreed to exchange territories but that their plan failed because the international community, primarily the United States of America, said that any border changes even with mutual agreements would be unacceptable. In an interview to ***Vreme***, Jeremic said Vucic and Thaci met in Paris on March 13, and then a week later in New York, as part of preparations for their joint meeting with EU High Representative Federica Mogherini in Brussels on March 23. According to Jeremic, Vucic said he was ready to sign a comprehensive agreement for normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina, which would enable a UN seat for Kosovo, but that in return he wanted the northern part of Kosovo and Thaci rejected this. Then during the meetings in Paris and New York, “Vucic went a step further and offered exchange of territories, so in addition to the UN seat Kosovo would also get municipalities in southern Serbia, and Thaci agreed to this … The problem arose when international actors, especially the U.S., said that any border changes would be unacceptable because this would create a dangerous precedent that could be implemented in other parts of the Balkans then”.

**Belgian PM in Belgrade with new proposals on Kosovo (*Kallxo/RTK*)**

European integration and solution on the relations with Kosovo were the main topics discussed between the Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michell and Serbia’s President Aleksandar Vucic. According to ***N1*** news agency, Michell made some proposals on the manner of resolving problems between Kosovo and Serbia, however neither Belgian PM nor Vucic wanted to talk about the details prior to being accepted by the European Union. “We will try some ideas together. I will speak with the EU, and we will try to find a sustainable solution,” Michell said. “There are many processes that could happen in the following weeks and months, in order to make big steps forward,” he added.

**Women’s network concerned with Thaci’s pardoning decision (*Koha/KP*)**

Kosovo Women’s Network has expressed concern over the recent decision of Kosovo President Hashim Thaci to pardon a man who they say has family ties to Thaci. The pardoned man has been convicted of double murder in 2008. The Women’s Network claims the decision is in violation to the principles of pardoning as defined by the law.

**Prosecution investigating Kosovo telecom failure (*Zeri*)**

The paper reports on the front page that the Special Prosecution of Kosovo has launched an investigation into alleged violations at the Kosovo Telecom related to failure to implement judicial rulings. Kosovo Telecom was one of the most profitable companies and only in 2011 paid €80 million dividend to the Kosovo budget while days ago it became known that the company is over €60 million in debts. Haki Shatri, advisor to Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj, told the paper that a company such as Kosovo Telecom cannot be allowed to fail. “The state needs to think seriously on what led the company to bankruptcy. People that have managed it should be held accountable and not promoted but rather demoted,” Shatri said.

**“Pronto” to be tried by serious crimes department (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on its front page that the Basic Court in Pristina has decided that the so-called “Pronto” case will be tried by the Serious Crimes Department, following a request from the Special Prosecution of Kosovo. The decision however was opposed by the attorney of one of the key defendants in the case, Adem Grabovci. The attorney asked the Court that the case should be tried by the General Department arguing that the charges against Grabovci do not fall within the competencies of the Serious Crimes Department.

**Brnabic: There is no movement on investigation of Ivanovic’s murder (*RTK*)**

The Prime Minister of Serbia, Ana Brnabic, said there is no progress in investigations into the murder of Kosovo Serb politician Oliver Ivanovic. “Unfortunately, as President Aleksandar Vucic and Minister at Serbian government said, we do not have any movement on this investigation. Pristina has not done enough to find the perpetrators of this terrorist act,” Brnabic said.

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