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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Haradinaj: Kosovo would not recognise Catalonia’s independence (*Lajmi*)**

In an interview to the Spanish paper ***El Pais***, Prime Minister of Kosovo Ramush Haradinaj that Kosovo and Catalonia have nothing in common and that any parallel drawn between the two cases is “offensive”. “There is no possible analogy between Kosovo and Catalonia. Making such comparisons would mean to ignore or badly misinterpret history,” Haradinaj said adding that there can be no comparisons between the violence employed by the Serb regime under Slobodan Milosevic and the Spanish government. “Spain is an advanced democracy. Our case derives from disintegration of former Yugoslavia in the 90s. There is a deep difference: we have fought above all for fundamental human rights,” Haradinaj said. He added that the veto used by Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy on the joint EU-Western Balkans declaration which also includes Kosovo as a signatory party is “unnecessary” and “regrettable”.

**EU visa liberalisation team to visit Kosovo this week (*Zeri*)**

The paper reports on the front page that an EU delegation for assessing implementation of the visa liberalisation criteria will begin its three-day visit to Kosovo this Thursday. Kosovo’s Minister of European Integration, Dhurata Hoxha, confirmed the dates of the visit and said Kosovo institutions have made all necessary preparations to meet the delegation. She also said she believed Kosovo will receive positive assessment at the end of the visit. “Our only way towards integration is zero tolerance for crime and corruption at all levels. We believe the efforts and progress of institutions will be positively assessed,” Hoxha told the paper.

**Serwer: Association, UN seat and army – Kosovo’s final issues (*Koha Ditore*)**

In a front-page interview with the paper, the U.S. Balkans analyst Daniel Serwer said that the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb-majority municipalities, Kosovo’s membership at the UN, and the formation of a Kosovo army are main issues in the final Kosovo-Serbia settlement. Serwer however cautioned against the prospect of Kosovo’s partition or territorial exchange as part of the settlement. “Kosovo should make it clear there is no partition,” Serwer said. He added that Kosovo should use to its advantage the change of the strategic environment in the Balkans and the fact that the EU has conditioned Serbia with a legally-binding agreement with Kosovo. “To me this environment is very clear – Serbia wants to integrate into the European Union and cannot achieve this without a binding agreement with Kosovo,” Serwer said.

**Serbian authorities detain then release Serb member of KSF (*Koha*)**

A Serb member of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) was detained and later released by Serbian authorities at the border crossing of Koncul on Saturday. KSF Minister Rrustem Berisha accused Belgrade of intentionally targeting members of the Serb community who are willing to integrate into Kosovo institutions. Berisha said they have no information as to the reason of the KSF member’s detention but noted that this is the third similar case in the last days. Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, expressed concern over the incident saying it is in violation of Kosovo government’s efforts to integrate Serb community. President Hashim Thaci also condemned the act saying it is in conflict to the principle of free movement, human rights, and European values. At the same time, Foreign Minister Behgjet Pacolli said he would raise the concern with EU.

**Kosovo army draft law expected to reach government today (*Zeri/Epoka*)**

The Ministry of the Kosovo Security Force is expected to submit to the government today the package of draft laws paving way for creation of Kosovo armed forces, ***Zeri*** reports. According to the legislative package adopted by the government of Kosovo, the draft law on Kosovo army should be submitted by respective ministry by 30 April. ***Epoka e Re*** however quoting ***Kosovapress*** says it is not certain whether the draft law will be presented to the government today.

**Search underway for two police officers missing after accident (*Koha*)**

A search operation is underway for two Kosovo Police officers missing after their vehicle fell of a 300-metre-high cliff near Kacanik. Kosovo Police said in a statement that the two officers were on duty and traveling in a police vehicle at the time of the accident on Saturday evening. Their car was found at the Lepenc river but the officers are feared to have been carried down the stream of the river. The search and rescue teams are expected to resume their activities today.

**CEFTA holds meeting in Pristina (*Klan Kosova*)**

A high-level meeting of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) took place in Pristina under Kosovo’s presidency of the mechanism. The meeting was attended by representatives of all CEFTA members as well as the EU. In a Facebook post, chief of staff to Kosovo’s Minister of Trade and Industry Bajram Hasani, Durim Limaj said that a number of decisions were taken at the meeting.

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