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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Haradinaj: KSF transformation through Constitution, nearly impossible (*media*)**

Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, admitted that for the time being, transformation of the Kosovo Security Force to Kosovo Armed Forces through constitutional changes is almost impossible due to Serbian List’s refusal. “The constitutional basis as an option is nearly impossible at the moment as it requires two-thirds of qualified votes,” Haradinaj said yesterday.  “At a certain moment we will be forced to set up the Kosovo army through a law,” he added. Haradinaj said Kosovo needs to close this issue as quickly as possible and reiterated that an armed force would not present a threat to anyone and would in fact provide support to regional security.

**Constitutional Court rules in favour of government’s pay raise (*dailies*)**

Kosovo’s Constitutional Court announced the ruling on the legality of the government’s decision to increase the salaries for its staff finding that the move does not violate the Constitution of Kosovo. The court stated that it is not under its scope to assess or replace public policies set out by legislative or executive mechanisms. It also underlined that government’s sublegal acts need to be in line with the Constitution and that it is obliged to implement the budget approved by the Assembly.

**Hoti: We will prevent implementation of pay raise decision (*Bota Sot*)**

Head of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), Avdullah Hoti, commented on the decision of the Constitutional Court in favour of government’s decision to increase salaries for its employees saying the ruling merely establishes that the government’s move is not a constitutional level matter. However, he expressed resolve to prevent the implementation of the pay raise decision through legal, political and democratic means.

**EC: Final visa liberalisation criteria still under review (*Zeri*)**

The European Commission said in a written response to the paper that they are still reviewing implementation of the final visa liberalisation criteria for Kosovo – fight against corruption and organised crime. “Although Kosovo has met standards for ratification of the Border Demarcation Agreement with Montenegro, the assessment of the track record of fight against organised crime and corruption is still ongoing,” the EC said.

**Hoxha: European agenda needs to be implemented by September (*Zeri*)**

Kosovo’s European Integration Minister, Dhurata Hoxha, said that tasks stemming from the European Reform Agenda (ERA) need to be implemented by September as these are directly related to the visa liberalisation process. “We need to demonstrate we have the will and commitment to achieve results in pushing forward the integration process,” Hoxha said after the meeting of the Ministerial Council for European Integration yesterday.

**Haradinaj called to accountability for Prizren incident (*Koha/Insajderi*)**

Vetevendosje MP, Albulena Haxhiu, has demanded Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj apologise and step down after he seemingly forced a woman off stage at the Assembly of Kosovo’s solemn session in Prizren to commemorate 140th anniversary of the Prizren League. Haxhiu said Haradinaj’s actions were “bandit-like” and in a normal country he would have to resign. “Unfortunately, the evil in Kosovo has become the norm,” Haxhiu wrote on Facebook. Head of the Kosovo Women Network, Igballe Rogova, also condemned Haradinaj’s actions in Prizren as “shameful”. Haradinaj meanwhile said he realized his actions were “unbefitting” but the woman was not an invited speaker and he intervened to avoid the police from doing so. “If she were a man I would act differently,” Haradinaj told the reporters yesterday when asked to comment on the incident.

**Djuric meets UN officials, expresses concern over Pristina statements (*Klan K*.)**

Head of the Serbian Government’s Office for Kosovo, Marko Djuric, met the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Bintou Keita, and head of UNMIK, Zahir Tanin, with whom he discussed the recent attacks on members of the Serb community in Kosovo. Djuric also expressed concern over the statements made by Albanian leaders in Pristina which he categorized as “warmongering”.

**Sahatcija: It is time for UNMIK to conclude its mission in Kosovo (*Bota Sot*)**

Teuta Sahatcija, Kosovo’s consul in New York, told the paper that Serbia continues to be the obstacle for Kosovo’s membership at the United Nations. She said that Russia and Serbia are leading a harsh fight against advancing of Kosovo’s issue and against the proposal for less frequent meetings of the UN Security Council. “Through the regular session, they are trying to keep alive the anachronic Resolution 1244 of 1999 which refers to Yugoslav Federation, a state that does not exist for quite some time. UNMIK also represent a structure which does not comply with time and reality in Kosovo, being that it is not any more neither a peacekeeping mission nor an administrating mission. Peace has been prevailing in Kosovo for two decades now and since 2008, Kosovo is being administered by the institutions of the independent state. Therefore, it is time for this mission as such, to conclude its mandate and transform into a UN political mission, by recognizing the reality of the independent state. We have to stress that thank to the tireless and continuous work of the diplomats in New York, discussions of the member states are focusing each day more on and rightful request for a strategic review of UNMIK, a thesis presented in February by the Polish Ambassador and supported in May by all EU countries and the U.S.,” Sahatcija said.

**Rohan: Today, I would add ‘advising’ to the Association of Municiplaities (*RTK*)**

Albert Rohan deputy of the Special Envoy Marti Ahtisaari, during the Vienna discussions, told *Klan Kosova* that he would have added only a single word to the Association of Serb-majority Municipalities. “When I took it from the European chapter, it was clear what it was, but when observed deep down, from the perspective of Serbs, I should have made it clearer and say that municipalities can cooperate in an advising association. I would add the word advising,” Rohan said.

**Vetevendosje initiates bill for trying war crimes in absentia (*Zeri*)**

Vetevendosje has submitted to the Assembly of Kosovo a bill for trying in absentia crimes committed by Serb forces against civilian population during the conflict. In a press conference, Vetevendosje MPs Albulena Haxhiu and Saranda Bogujevci said that 19 years on, the perpetrators of war crimes have not yet faced justice. “International missions in Kosovo, UNMIK and EULEX, possessed the names of perpetrators and never acted. [Kosovo] institutions followed the same line. We expected the state to sue Serbia for genocide but this did not happen either. We therefore began the legal initiative to trying in absentia Serb criminals,” Haxhiu said.

**Hoxhaj: Kosovo borders are untouchable and unchangeable (*Epoka*)**

Enver Hoxhaj, Deputy Prime Minister at the government of Kosovo, said on Monday on the occasion of the inauguration of the new border crossing between Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, that political maps borders in Balkans have continuously changed during the two last millenniums. However, he stressed Kosovo’s current borders are untouchable and unchangeable.

**Kosovo hopes to join Parliamentary Assembly of Francophonie (*dailies*)**

Kosovo Assembly Speaker, Kadri Veseli, said Kosovo will soon be admitted to the Parliamentary Assembly of Francophonie as a full-fledged member. In a Facebook post, Veseli said that the decision to accept Kosovo will be taken in July. “I invited for this reason to Kosovo, Jacques Krabal, General Secretary of the Assembly, who confirmed that Kosovo has met all necessary criteria to be admitted as a permanent member,” Veseli wrote.

**Tahiri: Illegally-obtained wealth will be confiscated (*Epoka*)**

Kosovo’s Minister of Justice, Abelard Tahiri, warned at a press conference on Monday on rigorous measures of the justice system to confiscate illegally-obtained wealth of state officials’ which amounts ten thousand Euros or more. He announced that the government draft law on extended competencies and confirmation of wealth would come into effect today (Tuesday.)

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