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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Collaku: Thaci and Vucic to meet in a matter of days (*Koha*)**

Bekim Collaku, chief of staff of Kosovo President Hashim Thaci, told ***KTV*** on Monday that the final phase of political dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia at the level of presidents will resume in a matter of days but the exact date is not known yet. Collaku said this will be the most important phase of the process as the two parties are expected to try and reach a final agreement for normalization of relations. He also said none of the parties could impose a topic in the process. “We have talked about missing persons several times, but there was no agreement. I hope this issue will be included in the final agreement. Lack of transparency in dialogue was imposed by the international community in order to reach the best possible agreement,” he added.

**Vucic and Thaci to meet in Brussels on Sunday? (*Lajmi/Tanjug*)**

Citing unnamed European diplomatic sources, Belgrade-based ***Tanjug*** news agency reports that Serbia and Kosovo presidents, Aleksandar Vucic and Hashim Thaci, will meet in Brussels on Sunday. The two leaders are expected to talk about a comprehensive agreement for normalization of relations between the two countries. According to ***Tanjug***, the second topic of the meeting will be the implementation of agreements reached so far.

**Arifi: EU supports ACSMM based on Kosovo Constitution (*Zeri*)**

Kosovo government’s coordinator for talks with Serbia, Avni Arifi, presented in Brussels yesterday results of the technical side of dialogue for normalisation of relations and said he raised the issue of implementation of agreements reached thus far in the process. Arifi said he expressed to EU representatives Kosovo side’s concern with the lack of progress in implementation of the agreement on energy, integrated border management, revitalization of the main Mitrovica bridge, recognition of diplomas and freedom of movement. Arifi said the issue of Association/Community of Serb-majority municipalities was also discussed in the meeting. “The Kosovo delegation, backed by the EU, made it clear once again that the Association of Serb municipalities will not have executive powers and will in no way be a third-level government,” Arifi said adding that Kosovo’s Constitution and its legislation will be the basis for the statute of the ACSMM.

**Visa liberalisation report to be published next week (*Zeri*)**

European Commission is expected to come out with its report on Kosovo’s implementation of the visa liberalisation criteria on 28 June, the paper reports on the front page quoting Kosovo’s Foreign Minister Behgjet Pacolli. Kosovo government officials are convinced the report will be positive and give green light for liberalisation but opposition representatives warn against mentioning dates at to when the people of Kosovo will actually be able to travel freely to Europe.

**European Commission without an assessment on visa liberalisation yet (*Koha*)**

The European Commission has yet to present the results of a fact-finding delegation that visited Kosovo to check the implementation of the final criteria for visa liberalisation – the fight against corruption and organized crime, the paper reports on page three. Sources in the European Commission told the paper that the process has yet to be finalized and that there is no exact date when this could happen. “The assessment of the criteria about the track record in the fight against organized crime and corruption is ongoing,” a source in the EC told the paper on Monday. The paper also quotes Kosovo’s Minister for European Integration, Dhurata Hoxha, as saying that Kosovo expects a positive recommendation for visa liberalisation by the end of June. Meanwhile, Ehat Miftaraj, from the Pristina-based Kosovo Democratic Institute, told the paper that Kosovo has not provided sufficient evidence about the fight against organized crime and corruption.

**France supports Kosovo on visa liberalisation (*Epoka*)**

The President of the Assembly of Kosovo Kadri Veseli, met on Monday with the President of National Assembly of France Francois de Rugy. They discussed continuance of France’s support for Kosovo, especially about European integration and visa liberalisation. “I am happy that we will have France’s support in parliamentarian field, with regard to the major decision of visa liberalisation,” Veseli said.

**Pacolli requests from Israel to recognize Kosovo (*RTK*)**

Deputy Prime Minister and minister for Foreign Affairs Behgjet Pacolli hosted a meeting with the Ambassador of Israel Alona Fisher Kamm. They discussed cooperation between Kosovo and Israel and finding of ways to enhance cooperation. Pacolli has also requested from Israel to recognize Kosovo. “Israel is already late on this issue. All Israel’s allies have recognized Kosovo and there is no reason for Israel not to make this decision,” Pacolli said.

He further expressed interest to open an Economic Office of Kosovo in Israel and to organize a joint economic forum.

**Vetevendosje accuses Thaci of obstructing work of CEC (*Zeri*)**

In a press conference yesterday, Vetevendosje officials accused President of Kosovo, Hashim Thaci, of obstructing the work of the Central Election Commission by not appointing opposition members. Vetevendosje MP, Albulena Haxhiu, said the president has only invited one representative from each opposition party out of two she said are required. “Hashim Thaci cannot use the post of president to deny the parties what the citizens entrusted them with,” Haxhiu said.

**EULEX deputy chief: We should not do Kosovo’s work (*Telegrafi/DW*)**

In an interview with ***Deutsche Welle***, deputy head of the EU rule of law mission (EULEX), Bernd Thran, said the ten-year performance of the mission is positive although in Kosovo peoples’ eyes it may look different. “The main problem of the mission at the start was the strategy of communication. Very often for example, there was talk of big fish: ‘EULEX will come to get the big fish and convict them’. This talk, that came from outside EULEX, did not communicate well,” Thran said. He said in its ten-year work, EULEX has done a very good job, particularly with regards to the executive part of the mandate which deserves recognition. Thran said that in the past, Kosovo institutions would prefer EULEX handling serious cases and if something went wrong, EULEX would take the blame. “We think the member states want the new mandate to say that we have come to the point where we should not continue doing the work of Kosovars. The work now moves to the Kosovo institutions and we will continue the support and assistance,” said EULEX official. He said the decision of the European Council stipulates that the mission in Kosovo will undergo a complete restructuring. “We will back down from the executive part, we will not hire anymore judges, prosecutors and police to close existing cases or take new ones. We will have a mandate on strengthening the work in support of Kosovo institutions,” Thran said further.

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