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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Dialogue to take place Sunday, Thaci keeps agenda secret (*Zeri*)**

The paper reports on the front page that as the dialogue for normalisation of relations between Pristina and Belgrade gets ready to resume, President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci has not revealed what will be the topics to be discussed in his meeting with Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic. Former Kosovo chief negotiator, Edita Tahiri, said building a political consensus is crucial at this stage of the process and added that mutual recognition, war reparations and border demarcation could be some of the topics Thaci and Vucic will discuss. Meanwhile, Vetevendosje leader Albin Kurti said Kosovo has no clear objectives as to what it wants to get out of talks with Serbia. Furthermore, he said, Thaci has no intention of concluding the dialogue with Serbia and wants to keep it running indefinitely. “Dialogue with Serbia has to keep going so that Thaci can keep on going,” Kurti said.

**Veseli: Agreement with Serbia will not be a new compromise (*Epoka*)**

The President of the Assembly of Kosovo Kadri Veseli said on Thursday that the final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia does not imply to any compromise that would paralyze Kosovo and it does not imply any kind of division. He told Radio Free Europe that he is optimistic that the EU member countries will decide to remove visas for Kosovo citizens in order for them to move freely as the other European citizens.

**LDK, Vetevendosje reject Thaci’s call for border demarcation with Serbia (*media*)**

Kosovo’s opposition parties the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), Vetevendosje and the Social-Democratic Party, rejected the proposal of the President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci, to be part of the process of the demarcation of the border with Serbia. “There is no reason to be part of the dialogue neither for the border, there are competent institutions, state commission that should deal with these matters. Our position on Thaci’s proposal is known and the same is valid for the border matter,” said Ismet Beqiri, LDK’s secretary.

**EULEX to carry out Specialist Chambers operations (*Koha Ditore*)**

The EU rule of law mission (EULEX) will retain certain executive powers mainly relating to operations of the Specialist Chambers, the paper reports on the front page. The EU mission is expected to offer support to the Specialist Chambers. In a response to the paper, EULEX said it according to its new mandate, the mission will cooperate with Specialist Chambers and the Office of Specialist Prosecutor by providing logistical and operational support in line with relevant Kosovo legislation. The new mandate will be carried out by Monitoring Unit and Unit for Operations, the paper adds.

**Specialist prosecutors interview witness in Belgium (*Indeksonline/Bota Sot*)**

***Indeksonline*** has reported quoting sources that the office of the Specialist Prosecutor has begun work on the ground and has to this end interviewed a potential witness in Belgium. The witness, whose identity is said to be known to Indeksonline, was asked about a certain murder case that took place after the conflict in Kosovo.

**Pacolli requests Lichtenstein’s support on visa liberalization (*Epoka*)**

Kosovo’s Principal Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Behxhet Pacolli met on Thursday with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Justice and Culture of the Lichtenstein, Aurelia Frick. They discussed further bilateral relations, visa liberalization, Kosovo’s membership at international organisations, advancing of European agenda and dialogue with Serbia. Pacolli expressed gratitude for Lichtenstein’s continuous support for Kosovo and requested support for Kosovo’s membership at international and European organisations as well as possible contribution on visa liberalization, despite the fact that Lichtenstein is not an EU member.

**“Kosovo’s diplomatic defeats” (*Koha Ditore*)**

The failure of the Kosovo’s Foreign Ministry to present *note verbale* from countries that have recognised Kosovo, according to the paper puts a question mark on the actual number of recognitions. The most recent case involves Liberia which Serbian authorities say has revoked recognition of Kosovo, a claim strongly rejected by Kosovo’s Foreign Ministry. Analyst Imer Mushkolaj said Kosovo has not managed to maintain relations with countries that have recognised its independence and this in turn has provided a safe ground for Serbia to stretch its diplomatic offensive against Kosovo’s independence. The Ministry meanwhile insist that 116 countries have so far recognised Kosovo and the figure also includes Guinea-Bissau, whose recognition has been disputed by Belgrade.

**Kosovo’s INTERPOL membership bid to be discussed today (*RTK*)**

Kosovo Assembly committee for internal affairs, security and supervision of the Kosovo Security Force will meet today. They will be discussing in principal the draft law number 06/L-082 for Protection of Personal Data as well as the process of Kosovo’s membership at INTERPOL.

**EU against government’s decision for salary increase (*Zeri*)**

Head of the EU Office in Kosovo, Nataliya Apostolova, has criticized the government of Kosovo for its decision to increase the salaries of its employees saying the decision needs to be withdrawn pending the Assembly’s approval of the law on salaries. “On 12 June, the Government reinstated its decision to grant an ad hoc salary increase to Cabinet members, certain advisers, some senior civil servants and support staff related to Cabinet. I regret this decision, as a new draft Law on Salaries is under preparation,” Apostolova said adding that the government’s decision goes against the commonly shared objectives of making Kosovo’s public administration more “equitable, merit-based, coherent and accountable” and should therefore be withdrawn.

**Arifi: Pay raise decision, legitimate and constitutional (*Bota Sot*)**

Avni Arifi, advisor to Kosovo Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj, said the government’s decision for increasing the salaries of its employees is legitimate and constitutional. “Instead of challenging such decisions from government’s scope of responsibility, it would be better for the EU to ensure implementation of agreements it has vouched for such as that on energy,” Arifi wrote on Facebook.

**KLA veterans oppose visit of Serbian town officials (*Klan Kosova*)**

***Klan Kosova*** reported that KLA war veterans in Peja/Pec have issued a statement against the recent visit of a delegation from the town of Sabac, Serbia saying they were they were deeply concerned with "dealings" of the local authorities in Peja/Pec for allowing the visit of a Serbian mayor at a time when Kosovo has no final agreement with Serbia. Peja/Pec officials said Peja and Sabac municipalities have decided to cooperate as part of an Austrian-sponsored project and that a delegation from Kosovo already visited Sabac two months ago.

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