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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Thaci threatens Haradinaj with elections (*dailies*)**

On the front page ***Zeri*** reports today that disagreements between President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci and Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj over the ‘border correction’ idea reached the peak yesterday with Thaci saying that any prime minister of Kosovo can easily be replaced if one does not stand corrected. Similarly, ***Koha Ditore*** reports that rhetoric between Thaci and Haradinaj has deteriorated and suggests that fresh elections could be an option to resolve the current crisis. Thaci’s statement came as a response to the one made earlier by Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj who declared that the border change idea is dead. Thaci in a press briefing yesterday following Haradinaj’s statement said that dialogue is not dead and is at a very important stage. “This statement from the prime minister is quite interesting. It shows that he is either in good humour or has become overly comfortable in his seat. To be honest I expected the prime minister to be more rational and responsible in his statements relating to dialogue,” Thaci said. He called on all leaders, including the prime minister, to adopt a “wiser” stance and “correct” statements on dialogue with Serbia.

**Thaci: There were no more than 15,000 KLA members (*Zeri*)**

President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci said yesterday that Kosovo does not have more than 12,000-15,000 “genuine” KLA war veterans and added that “abuses” with the lists of veterans need to be investigated. “Everyone knows that in the official lists of Kosovo veterans there were no more than 12 to 15,000. When I speak of this figure, I refer to fighters with arms and in uniforms,” Thaci said.

**Collaku: Border correction eliminates threats to Kosovo statehood (*Klan Kosova*)**

Bekim Collaku, advisor to President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci said in an interview with ***Klan Kosova*** that the ‘border correction’ idea has been introduced to eliminate other possible scenarios that would threaten Kosovo’s statehood. “The idea as such came from the two parties involved by ruling out scenarios that lead nowhere. This could be considered as the most feasible scenario for enabling an agreement,” Collaku said. “We know what we want: formal recognition from Serbia and the very realistic option of Presevo joining the Republic of Kosovo,” he added. “Kosovo borders are not wrong, they are very good, but they would become even better and more significant if we corrected historic mistakes by incorporating Presevo Valley within Kosovo’s new borders.”

**Veseli calls opposition leaders to a meeting (*Zeri*)**

Kosovo Assembly Speaker Kadri Veseli has sent invitations to leaders of oppositions parties to meet this Thursday to discuss harmonising the draft resolution prepared by ruling coalition parties. Veseli said internal political cohesion is necessary for strengthening Kosovo’s negotiating position in dialogue with Serbia. Veseli in his invitations said in principle all parliamentary parties support dialogue but that their differences can be harmonised through an Assembly resolution.

**Alternativa: Resolution needs substantial improvements (*Epoka*)**

Alternativa, a political party led by Mimoza Kusari-Lila, issued a press release on Monday saying that the resolution presented by the ruling parties on the final phase of dialogue with Serbia requires broad-based discussions and substantial improvements. “The parties in government must understand that consensus cannot be achieved through unilateral actions. Consensus must be a product of a joint position of all parliamentary parties,” the statement noted.

**Surroi: A single person cannot redesign the borders of a state (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on page two that while Kosovo President Hashim Thaci and Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj are engaged in a war of statements over borders, Thaci is receiving messages even from abroad that his initiative for border changes is wrong. Publicist Veton Surroi said in a debate in Skopje on Monday that 80 percent of people in Kosovo are against the border correction idea. “The moment that people start talking about borders, it means that something has gone terribly wrong and this is not the case only with Kosovo and Serbia, we have heard discussions about borders in other parts of Europe too, when the refugee crisis began. In Kosovo’s case, there has been an asymmetry of discussions with an individual that discusses borders with the state of Serbia or representatives of this state. This is wrong. 80 percent of people in different polls have opposed border correction and a high percentage of them are Kosovo Serbs. No one wants to wake up one day and find themselves on the other side of the border. It is clear that a new proposal is needed,” Surroi said.

**Two Albanian youths physically assaulted in Novi Sad (*media*)**

The Association of Albanians of Serbia reported that two Albanian youths were physically assaulted in the city of Novi Sad by a group of four unidentified persons, media reported on Monday. According to the Association, the two youths were attacked Sunday night near a taxi stop for no obvious reasons. One of the youths is reported to be in a critical condition while the other sustained minor injuries. ***Zeri*** reports that the attack was condemned by Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic who called on relevant authorities to swiftly apprehend the attackers. Kosovo Assembly President Kadri Veseli said Serbia must prove it is committed to the protection of all communities, regardless of their ethnic background, and that it must renounce an approach that incites violence. Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj took to Facebook to say that “the attack on two Albanians shows that freedom of movement in Serbia is not guaranteed and that every acts of violence goes against European values”. Foreign Minister Behgjet Pacolli too called on Serbia to refrain from a language that incites violence and called on Serbian authorities to apprehend the perpetrators as soon as possible. Kosovo’s Ambassador to the U.S. Vlora Citaku, tweeted about one of the victims that sustained serious bodily injuries. “His name is Çlirim Maloku. He is from Kosovo. His name means Liberation. He was born in ‘99 , the year Kosovo was liberated from Serbian occupation. Last week he was beaten in #Serbia because he spoke his native language. Today he is fighting for his life. Let that sink in,” Citaku wrote. The Pristina-based Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF) too reported on Monday that Maloku was fighting for his life after the assault.

**Veseli: Dialogue, the only way of communication between nations (*Epoka*)**

Kosovo Assembly President and Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) leader, Kadri Veseli, said on Monday in Prague that on dialogue with Serbia, Kosovo is committed to peace and cooperation and to pave way for the integration of both countries in Euro-Atlantic structures. He said a final agreement between the two countries would give Kosovo membership of UN, NATO and EU.

**Kosovo DPM Hoxhaj invited to event in Belgrade, waits reply (*Klan Kosova*)**

Kosovo’s Deputy Prime Minister Enver Hoxhaj has been invited to take part as a panelist at the Belgrade Security Forum next week. Hoxhaj said he did not expect any obstacles to his visit to Serbia in case he decides he want to go.

**“I meet with internationals, they don’t understand Thaci’s actions” (*Telegrafi*)**

Mitrovica South Mayor, Agim Bahtiri, said in an interview to ***RTV Dukagjini*** on Monday that Kosovo President Hashim Thaci was wrong to visit Gazivoda Lake in the company of police special forces. “He should have gone there normally, because there is no reason for anyone to threaten the President from visiting his own territory. The President is free to visit every corner of the country,” he said. Asked to comment on his visit to Gazivoda and reactions from Prime Minister Haradinaj, Bahtiri said the issue was not about his visit there but rather some problems he had with the Mitrovica North Mayor. “I can assure you Prime Minister Haradinaj that nothing will happen in the north after my visit there and that there is not going to be a protest there,” he added. Bahtiri also said that in his meeting with international representatives, the latter tell him that they don’t understand President Thaci’s initiative on border correction.

**Kosovo doctor detained for two months in Serbia, released (*Zeri/RTK*)**

Kosovo doctor, Ibrahim Matoshi, arrested two months ago by Serbian authorities has been released, said Kosovo Foreign Minister Behgjet Pacolli. Pacolli said Kosovo’s Liaison Office in Belgrade informed him of Matoshi’s release and that they were still waiting for official confirmation and his return to Kosovo. Matoshi was arrested on 13 August at the “Dheu i Bardhe” border crossing point as he was returning to Kosovo from Germany where he resides.

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