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**Kosovo** Media Highlights

**Ruling coalition and opposition heading to session on dialogue, divided (*Koha*)**

The paper reports on its front page that representatives of the ruling coalition and opposition parties have talked about the need to set principles for the final phase of dialogue with Serbia, but they still have differences over a joint platform. Assembly President Kadri Veseli, who is also leader of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), said on Monday he was optimistic that consensus will be reached. “We will proceed today based on the request of the MPs and there will be an extraordinary session. I call on you for greater awareness, greater state responsibility of all political forces, in defense of the territory of the Republic of Kosovo. Energy against each other should transform into a positive energy for each other. We have only one opponent against our independence, and that is Serbia. We should not be seeking opponents among us, I hope that grudges of the opposition colleagues will pass, Kosovo belongs to all of us”. On the other hand, Isa Mustafa, leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), said his party will not become a servant of the PDK. “We will be ready to enter this process [final phase of dialogue] only after the legitimacy from the people. Free elections must be held as soon as possible; the institutions must be legitimized, because none of us have told the people that we will engage in final dialogue with Serbia,” Mustafa told his party’s chairmanship on Monday.

**EU: No date for visa liberalisation (*Zeri*)**

European Union Office in Kosovo said through a written reply to the paper that there is no agreed timeframe for visa liberalisation and that Kosovo authorities need to continue working on cases relating to organised crime and corruption before the actual decision is taken. The EU reiterated that the European Commission has concluded that Kosovo has met all visa liberalisation criteria and has recommended EU member states and the European Parliament to grant visa-free travel to Kosovo. However, the EU explained, the ultimate decision lies with the European Council.

**Haradinaj believes on visa liberalisation decision before year’s end (*media*)**

Prime Minister of Kosovo Ramush Haradinaj said yesterday after meeting Pristina Mayor and leader of the Social Democratic Party (PSD) Shpend Ahmeti that he believed the decision on visa liberalisation for Kosovo will be reached by the end of this year. Haradinaj said Kosovo is currently focusing its efforts on the Interpol membership bid but that the good news on visa liberalisation will arrive by the end of December. He also said there are no countries that actually oppose visa-free travel for Kosovo but there are some that have sought out additional clarifications. He further called on Kosovo political parties to support the visa liberalisation process and not convey pessimistic messages.

**Mustafa: Government to step down, not wait for no-confidence motion (*Zeri*)**

Leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) Isa Mustafa said in a press conference following the party’s leadership meeting that the current situation in Kosovo calls for the resignation of the government. “Citizens of Kosovo do not deserve a government that only deals with budget spending,” Mustafa said adding that it would be better for the people of Kosovo if the government were to step down now and not wait for the no-confidence motion. Speaking about Kosovo-Serbia dialogue, Mustafa said the process cannot be led by a government that has no majority in parliament and by a president that has no legitimacy. “Dialogue cannot put under question the statehood and needs to continue within the constitutional framework,” Mustafa underscored.

**Kusari-Lila: We shouldn’t discuss border changes with Serbia (*Express/T7*)**

Alternativa leader, Mimoza Kusari-Lila, said in a debate on ***T7*** on Monday that Kosovo should not discuss border changes with Serbia. She said she was not against dialogue with Belgrade but that she does not agree to discuss border changes with Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic. Kusari-Lila said numerous agreements have been reached with Serbia but that Belgrade has never implemented some of them. “Serbia works around the block to ruin every diplomatic relation that Kosovo has established with other countries … Serbia actively works on ruining what has been achieved through dialogue so far,” she said.

**Haradinaj asks for Germany’s support for KSF transformation (*media*)**

Kosovo Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj met on Monday in Pristina with the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Germany, General Eberhard Zorn. “The contribution of the German state to Kosovo at all stages, and in particular the security issue through German KFOR troops, has played a decisive role in the liberation and now in creating a stable and secure environment for the citizens of the country. Therefore, on behalf of the government and the people of Kosovo, I thank every German soldier who has given his contribution serving in the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo,” said Haradinaj. During the meeting, Prime Minister Haradinaj informed General Zorn about the priorities of Kosovo government, the political developments, the strengthening of the rule of law, the transformation process of the KSF into the army, seeking from the German state to continue supporting for all major processes. “Bilateral relations between Kosovo and Germany are at an excellent level since the difficult times. While, we are now working to make this cooperation fruitful in economic development and other areas of common interest,” Haradinaj said. Germany’s Armed Forces Staff Chief, General Eberhard Zorn, praised Kosovo’s achievements in the area of security and creating a peaceful environment for all citizens, confirming Germany’s continued support for Kosovo. In gratitude, Prime Minister Haradinaj honored General Eberhard Zorn with the Gjergj Kastrioti – Skanderbeg Medal.

**“Thaci expected to visit Belarus” (*Kosovapress*)**

Quoting sources, ***Kosovapress*** reports that President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci is expected to pay a visit to Belarus following his trip to Istanbul where he took part in the opening ceremony of the new airport. The reasons behind Thaci’s reported visit are not known, adds ***Kosovapress***.

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**German ambassador Heldt meets LDK leader Mustafa (*Bota Sot*)**

German Ambassador to Kosovo, Christian Heldt, met yesterday leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), Isa Mustafa, and discussed current developments in Kosovo. According to a press release issued by LDK after the meeting, Mustafa briefed the German official on the party’s position concerning dialogue with Serbia.

**Kosovo, Serbia reach deal for repatriation of mortal remains (*RTK*)**

Head of the Kosovo government’s commission on missing persons, Prenk Gjetaj, said an agreement paving way for repatriation of identified mortal remains has been reached between delegations of Kosovo and Serbia. Gjetaj said the agreement was initially between Serbia and UNMIK, later EULEX, but that now Kosovo institutions have taken over the responsibility. Meanwhile, head of Forensics Department in Pristina, Arsim Gerxhaliu, who said they were waiting for the UN to submit findings of the test carried out by a ground-penetrating radar to detect human remains in several locations in Serbia and Kosovo.

**Bus carrying Kosovo passengers stoned in Serbia (*RTK*)**

A bus travelling from Kosovo to Austria was stoned last night in Krusevac of Serbia by yet unidentified persons. A passenger told ***RTK*** that the incident took place at around 10 p.m. and that the police was called in to the site.

**Privatisation agency chairman resigns post (*dailies*)**

Chairman of the Privatisation Agency of Kosovo (PAK) Petrit Gashi has resigned his post in sign of protest over the dismissal of PAK director Ekrem Hajdari. Gashi said Hajdari’s dismissal was groundless and that the real reasons behind the move will be known once his successor is named. Kosovo Assembly Speaker Kadri Veseli in a statement made to ***Kallxo.com*** said Hajdari’s dismissal and Gashi’s resignation are bad news for Kosovo.

**Eight state officials interviewed over deportation of Turkish nationals (*media*)**

Most media report that eight officials of Kosovo’s Ministry of Internal Affairs that work at Pristina Airport were interviewed on Monday by a parliamentary committee over the deportation of six Turkish nationals. The hearings were held behind closed doors. ***Koha Ditore*** reports on its coverage that “the eight MIA officials have given contradictory statements” over the deportation of the Turkish nationals. The head of the committee, Xhelal Svecla, later told reporters: “we have heard contradictory statements today and we need to consider them. I cannot say that we have enough information unless we interview all officials”. Svecla said that among other state officials that will be interviewed is also Shpend Maxhuni, current head of the Kosovo Intelligence Agency who at the time of the deportation was General Director of Kosovo Police.

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