

# Prishtina Insight

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## Demolition Threat to Prishtina's Ottoman Heritage

Prishtina Insight can reveal that one of the Kosovo capital's last historic homes was removed from the list of protected buildings and was to be knocked down by the end of the month – before the intervention of the Minister of Culture yesterday

By Petrit Collaku

Last-minute protests by conservationists and intervention by this newspaper appear to have saved one of Prishtina's few remaining Ottoman-era town houses from demolition.

Kosovo's Ministry of Culture had removed the so-called Hyniler House, located in the Old Town, from the list of protected buildings, allowing the site to be redeveloped.

The Hyniler family, the owners of the building, which is one of the few surviving Ottoman konaks in the capital, told Prishtina Insight that they hoped the building would be knocked down by the end of the month.

However, following our intervention and other protests, including a Facebook campaign which attracted 1,500 members, the ministry sent a team of experts to the home yesterday.

And as Prishtina Insight went to press, the recently appointed culture minister, Lutfi Haziri, issued a ruling overturning the decisions of his predecessors to remove the building from the protected list.

The case has raised fears about the future of Prishtina's remaining heritage and the Ministry of Culture's commitment to maintaining historic buildings.

Conservation experts told Prishtina Insight that the Hyniler house is just one of many threatened buildings in the city and called for greater protection of



The Hyniler House in Prishtina's Old Town has been under threat of demolition

monuments, including those on the list and others currently not listed.

The Hyniler House, built in the late 19th Century, was placed under a protection order in 1967. But Prishtina Insight has seen a document issued by the Ministry of Culture, dated 2007, which says the house has been removed from the "register of cultural monuments". The document was

signed by the then Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Culture Mon Zhubi.

The owner of the house, Minir Hyniler, said the family had obtained two documents that gave them permission to knock it down, approved by two former culture ministers, Astrit Haraqija and Valton Beqiri. Prishtina Insight was able to confirm that both men issued such a

decision.

The family said they had reached an agreement with developers to demolish the building and erect a block of flats.

The news has shocked conservationists in Prishtina who have called for the home to be put back on the list of protected monuments.

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### Where the Streets Have Many Names

Prishtina's multiple street name changes are already a postman's nightmare.

But last week the situation became even more confused with the arrival of a new brand of guerilla street naming in the capital...

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### Stalled Reforms Delay Kosovo Donations

Kosovo's government has said it expects to receive the full 1.2 billion euro, pledged by international donors in July 2008. But economic experts warn that 150 million euro promised by the European Union, as well as other funds, could be at risk because ...

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# EU Mission Criticises Albania Over War Crimes Probe

EULEX says Tirana has not responded to requests for help in investigating claims about KLA-run detention camps in Albania in 1999



By Altin Raxhimi

The European Union rule-of-law mission in Kosovo, EULEX, says its requests for Albania to cooperate over alleged war crimes that took place in Albania in 1999 have fallen on deaf ears.

EULEX says it has at least twice asked Albania's Minister of Justice to assist investigators over two allegations.

These concern the alleged detention of Kosovo Albanian and Roma civilians by the Kosovo Liberation Army, KLA, in bases inside Albania in 1999, and separate allegations that the KLA detained and killed Serbs in its camps in Albania, trafficking their organs.

"We have been seeking cooperation from the Albanian authorities for some time," said Matti Raatikainen, chief of war crimes investigations with EULEX, adding that the mission had not received an answer.

EULEX still maintains responsibility for war crimes investigations, such responsibilities having not been transferred to the Kosovo government.

On May 12, Kosovo police working for EULEX raided the Kosovo home of one man that the EU mission suspects of involvement in these alleged crimes.

Xhemshit Krasniqi, a former regional KLA commander, was not at home during the raid. His whereabouts are unknown, though he is reported to be in Albania.

A week earlier, on May 5, under orders from EULEX, Kosovo police arrested another former KLA commander, Sabit Geci, 51. The former KLA commander in the Drenica region of central Kosovo was seized near his home in Pristina's Qyteza Pajton district.

Geci is reported in the Kosovo media to have been linked by EULEX to alleged war crimes in two KLA bases in northern Albania. A court in the northern Kosovo town of Mitrovica ordered his detention for 30 days

pending possible indictment.

Philip Alston, a law professor who is the special rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights on Extrajudicial, Summary, or Arbitrary Executions - and who urged Albania to cooperate with international investigating bodies last February - said on May 12 that the Geci arrest was important.

"It is a significant step forward in efforts to obtain the truth around allegations that war crimes were committed in Albania in KLA-run detention facilities," he told Prishtina Insight.

"Albania has been very reluctant to facilitate any recent investigations on its territory and during my February 2010 mission to the country the government was still insisting that there were no foundations to [any of] these allegations," he added.

"Geci's arrest, the first related to war crimes in Albania, makes clear the need for the government of Albania to follow through on its recent commitment to cooperate fully and openly with all international investigators, including EULEX, the Serbian war-crimes prosecutor, and the Council of Europe."

Geci left Kosovo for Albania after being injured in skirmishes between the KLA and Serbian forces in Kosovo in 1998 and then served as KLA intelligence chief in Albania until the end of the war, according to Dilaver Goxhaj, a retired Albanian army officer attached to the KLA during the conflict.

Geci's lawyers told Kosovo media that the accusations being made against him were trumped-up, referring to claims by Serbia's war-crimes prosecutor, Bruno Vekaric, that Geci's arrest was related to the alleged detention and murder of Serb civilians in KLA camps in Albania.

However, EULEX spokesperson Kristiina Herodes in a statement said there was no connection between Geci's arrest and Vekaric's allegations about the existence of a so-called "yellow house" in northern Albania in which Serbs were held, tortured and killed, and

which is the second EULEX investigation for which they have requested assistance from the Albanian authorities.

In her 2008 memoir, Carla del Ponte, former chief prosecutor of the International Tribunal for Crimes in Former Yugoslavia, ICTY, says that the KLA might have kidnapped several hundred Serb civilians in Kosovo in 1999 and taken them to northern Albania, some of whom were sent to Burrel and had their organs harvested.

Raatikainen has said he is skeptical of the allegations concerning KLA organ trafficking of captured Serbs: "Based on the intelligence I have it is difficult to believe that it happened." But he added that the case could not be considered closed until a proper investigation had proved nothing of the sort had happened.

Tirana, meanwhile, says it is not aware of having received any demands from EULEX to cooperate in investigating either of the allegations about KLA-run camps in Albania.

"I have not heard of such requests," Arben Brace, head of the justice ministry's foreign relations, told Prishtina Insight. Foreign Ministry spokesman Ralf Gjoni said neither Justice Minister Bujar Nishani nor Deputy Prime Minister Ilir Meta knew of the requests.

Gjoni said Albania was willing to cooperate with its international partners on judicial matters, including EULEX. Albanian prosecutors were currently engaged in only one joint criminal investigation, but it was not about war crimes, Kosta Mertiri, deputy chair of the Prosecution for Serious Crimes office in Tirana, said.

Sources close to the EULEX prosecutors say they suspect KLA forces detained and tortured dozens of people whom they picked up among the masses of Kosovo Albanians fleeing the conflict.

They believe that the detainees were seized in different parts of Albania and sent to a detention facility in Kukes and a former



The prison allegedly used by the KLA in Kukes, Albania

Albanian army barracks in Cahan.

An investigation by BIRN last year concluded that up to two dozen people were detained in the KLA base in Kukes of whom as many as 18 appear to have disappeared, possibly killed.

The detainees were all Kosovo Albanians, apart from a few Roma, mostly suspected by the KLA of collaborating with the Serbian regime. However, one source from the former KLA detention facility in Kukes told Prishtina Insight last year he heard detainees shouting in Serbian, a language the source said he was able to identify.

Spiro Butka, another retired Albanian army officer formerly attached to the KLA, told Prishtina Insight he knew of two Serbian soldiers seized in Koshare, on the other side of the border, who were brought to the base.

But Butka told Prishtina Insight last year that they were handed over to the International Red Cross and he denied both the existence of a detention centre in Kukes or the detention of Serbian civilians there, as did Hashim Thaci, now Prime Minister of Kosovo, in a BBC interview in 2009.

The KLA maintained a strong presence in Albania in the run-up to and during the 1999 conflict in Kosovo. During the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia from March to June, the KLA tried to open two corridors along the Albanian border with Kosovo into Kosovo.

It used abandoned army barracks and industrial facilities in Albanian towns and villages close

to the Kosovo border and deeper inside Albania while maintaining support offices and bases in the capital Tirana and near the main Albanian port of Durres.

The KLA then tried to fight its way from Albania into Kosovo through two corridors, one in Koshare, in the district of Tropoja on Albania's eastern border with Kosovo, during the early stages of the NATO bombing, and, to its west, on the mount Pashtrik, in the region of Has, towards the end of the war.

The KLA bases in Kukes, just east of Pashtrik, and at Cahan, at the foot of Mt Pashtrik, where the makeshift jails were alleged to have operated, served mainly as planning and logistics centre for the KLA operation in Pashtrik.

Allegations that a detention facility was also attached to the KLA base in Cahan surfaced in the Kosovo press several years ago. Bota Sot, a Kosovo daily close to the Democratic League of Kosovo, LDK, carried an interview in 2005 with man who claimed he had been among 17 Kosovo Albanian LDK sympathizers detained in Cahan, several of whom were detained and tortured, he said. Prishtina Insight has not verified the claims.

If these or similar allegations are ever proven by the Kosovo courts, they would cast fresh light on the fierceness of the conflict that emerged in the 1990s between the more moderate LDK and more radical ethnic Albanian groups that formed the backbone of the KLA - and which saw armed conflict as the only way to obtain independence for Kosovo from Serbia.



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EULEX head Yves de Kermabon and Prime Minister Hashim Thaci. Relations between EULEX and Kosovo's government have been strained over the 'Limaj Case'

## Limaj Case Strains Political and Diplomatic Ties

The corruption probe into Transport Minister Fatmir Limaj is testing the government's relationships with the EU mission, as well as prompting opposition demands for early elections.



By Petrit Collaku

Kosovo's Minister of Transport, Fatmir Limaj, and the ministry's head of procurement, Nexhat Krasniqi, could face up to 55 years in jail if they are found guilty of corruption charges. Another six ministers are also under investigation for corruption. This was the hard-hitting assessment of EULEX's Chief Prosecutor, Johan van Vreeswijk, in an interview with the Prishtina daily Koha Ditore on May 7.

The front-page article was evidence of the dramatic fallout of the raids conducted by the EU rule-of-law mission on the Ministry of Transport and on properties connected to Limaj, a member of the Democratic Party of Kosovo, PDK.

Vreeswijk's reaction followed government officials' criticism of the raids as a "media spectacle". But EULEX has received strong support from civil society groups in Kosovo, which have joined forces to issue a statement in support of the mission's crackdown. Meanwhile, some opposition parties have taken advantage of the government's embarrassment to call for early elections.

Calls for the coalition between the PDK and the Democratic League of Kosovo, LDK, to be dissolved have come from within the partnership. Isa Mustafa, mayor of Prishtina, seen by some as a future leader of the LDK, said that in the light of the raids, "It is time to break from the coalition."

Mustafa said EULEX's action against Ministry of Transport had compromised the image of the country and of the government, which had failed to fight corruption.

The largest LDK branch in Prishtina is creating a special "solidarity" fund, drawn from all LDK members' contributions, to support any ministers and deputy minister who leave the coalition. The head of the branch, Sami Hamiti, is president of Prishtina's municipal assembly.

But high-ranking members of the LDK were quick to dismiss Mustafa's claim that the coalition was on the verge of breaking up. Eqrem Kryeziu, vice-president of the LDK, told Prishtina Insight there would be "no change at all with the governing coalition".

While there were clear signs of friction between the PDK and EULEX and the head of the International Civilian Office, Pieter Feith, following the raids, the government has taken a less confrontational approach in recent days.

In an interview on May 6, Kosovo's Prime Minister, Hashim Thaci, claimed the EULEX raids sent out a message that "Kosovo's institutions were at war with the international institutions".

Thaci also questioned whether Feith, the International Civilian Representative, had interfered in the judicial system. The speaker of parliament, Jakup Krasniqi, meanwhile described the raids as "a spectacle", maintaining that EULEX could simply have asked for the necessary documents instead of raiding the ministry.

Limaj received official backing from his party in a statement. "Minister Limaj has done great

job, not only in road infrastructure which is supported widely," a PDK press release read, referring to his ambitious road-building activity.

In his first interview since the raids on Radio Television of Kosovo, RTK, Limaj last week insisted that he and his co-workers were not guilty of corruption, and the truth about him and his work would come to light. "I am as clean as a tear," said Limaj, who maintained that the actions against him were principally aimed at humiliating him and his family.

"We can help them [EULEX] without delaying their work and as for the others [my political opponents] I would remind them that they cannot politically lynch people," Limaj said.

For the first time since the raids, Thaci met with the head of EULEX, Yves de Kermabon on Monday. The Prime Minister's press office said the "Limaj case" was not a topic of discussion between Thaci and Kermabon.

Thaci struck a less critical tone towards EULEX after the meeting. "I am very satisfied with the cooperation between Kosovo's government and EULEX," he said.

The Interior Minister, Bajram Rexhepi, a PDK member and former prime minister, told Prishtina Insight that the EU mission had a right to conduct such probes. "They can start now to investigate the times when I was the prime minister too," Rexhepi said.

Rexhepi said such investigations formed part of EULEX's mandate, noting that the mission had been invited to the country under the terms of the so-called Ahtisaari plan, named after the

Finnish negotiator who came up with the plan for Kosovo to gain international recognition in exchange for agreeing to "supervised" independence.

Kryeziu, of the LDK, said he was "happy that such actions have started", adding that no one should be above the law.

The largest opposition party, Alliance for the Future of Kosovo, AAK, strongly supported the EULEX raids. "EULEX has a mandate to do this, if Kosovo cannot manage to fight corruption," Blerim Shala, vice-president of the AAK, said.

Another opposition party, New Kosovo Alliance, AKR, went further. The investigations should expand to cover all the main government ministries "in order to solve all suspected cases of corruption", Ibrahim Makolli, vice-president of the AKR, said.

"AKR considers that the only solution to go forward with Kosovo's state-building is holding early elections early in autumn," he added.

However, political commentator Bardh Hamzaj noted that other opposition parties were remaining quiet on the subject of demanding early elections. "They're staying silent for now because they think that what EULEX has started will help them," he said.

Hamzaj said the relationship between the Kosovo government and international community had been worrying, having in mind the initially strong statements of Thaci and Krasniqi. But matters had since settled down and it was clear that Krasniqi had made his aggressive statements "for one single purpose", which was to soothe the anger of some frustrated PDK members.

### Editor's Word

## Mbrojtje



By Lawrence Marzouk

Prishtina's Ottoman past was ravaged by the Yugoslav regime, intent on 'modernising' the city. Unfortunately, the remnants of Prishtina's history are now facing another wave of destruction.

After the fire that razed the grand Union Hotel, now the Hyniler House, one of Prishtina's finest Ottoman homes, is under threat from the bulldozers.

This is truly dispiriting for those who are passionate about architecture and feel strongly about preserving the past, as I do.

I understand that in developing economies there will be tension between the need for people to scrape together a living and the need to retain historic buildings.

It would be a cold-hearted man who would look down on an impoverished family which planned to sell their outdated, rundown Ottoman home in order to survive.

But the state must have an active role to play in these matters. Important structures need to be protected by law and if they are to be removed from a conservation list, this must be done transparently.

It's excellent news that the recently appointed Minister of Culture Lutfi Haziri looks set to reverse the decision of his two predecessors and retain the Hyniler House on the protected list, but the whole episode raises worrying questions about the state's commitment to heritage.

The government and its agencies could play a role in preserving historic building by buying them up from families who are desperate to sell, or facilitating the work of NGOs who are looking to purchase them for restoration.

Certainly, a compromise between allowing people to sell their home and conservation cannot be found if a home is surreptitiously removed from a preservation list and handed over to a developer, as was nearly the case with the Hyniler House.

If government institutions and ministries do not take a firmer and more proactive role in this task then Prishtina's past will be all but wiped out in the next decade.

For a city looking to attract tourists, this would be a disaster.

Kosovo's capital is gaining a reputation for its café culture and nightlife, but you need more than macchiatos and mojitos to draw in the tourist dollar.

Already, in beauty terms, Prishtina is a hard sell, but it does still retain enough history to complement its vibrant street life.

Protection, or Mbrojtje in Albanian, may seem like a trivial issue today, given the great problems Kosovo faces in terms of tackling poverty and the rule of law, but with relatively little effort Prishtina's past can be properly preserved.

And, in the future, the past could be key to the country's tourism appeal and, perhaps more importantly, to its identity.

# Hague Backs EU Expansion in Balkans



By Bojana Barlovac

Britain's new Foreign Secretary, William Hague, has renewed his country's support for the expansion of the European Union into the Western Balkans and Turkey.

In a comment piece for the magazine *Europe's World*, he said the Conservative Party was 'convinced of the merits of further EU enlargement'.

Hague, former leader of the Conservatives, became the UK's new Foreign Secretary after his party took the largest number of seats in the May 6 election, but not enough to form a majority government. The Tories have now formed a coalition with Britain's third largest party, the Liberal Democrats.

Hague wrote in his editorial: "The prospect of membership is crucial in entrenching stability in the western Balkans, where so much European blood has already been shed. The western Balkans are the backyard of the EU, and its credibility in foreign affairs depends on the effectiveness of its policy there."

He added that 'a more muscular and demanding European policy' was needed in Bosnia.

He wrote: "The consequences of Bosnia's disintegration would be catastrophic. The breakdown of the country into independent ethnic statelets would not only reward ethnic cleansing - surely a



William Hague - Britain's new Foreign Secretary

moral anathema - but would also risk the creation of a failed state in the heart of Europe. A robust approach should focus on a single goal: a central government in Bosnia effective enough to meet the responsibilities of both EU and NATO membership.

"Success in attaining that aim would be proof to the world of the EU's seriousness as a regional actor."

His comments were criticised by the leader of Republika Srpska, who called Hague a 'bully'.

Milorad Dodik sharply attacked the new British Foreign Secretary, advising him to stay away from Bosnia.

"I see that this new British foreign minister, who said that Bosnia should be shown some muscle, acts like a bully," Dodik told journalists on Tuesday.

Dodik said that "foreigners are

excessively interfering with Bosnian affairs", calling on Hague "to show muscle somewhere else".

"I would like to see what kind of muscle he has...(but) we do not need such bullies who are trying to solve problems here by using muscle," Dodik added.

## William Hague on Turkey

"The case for Turkey's accession to the EU is as strong as ever. As well as offering considerable mutual economic benefits and profoundly strengthening the EU's security of energy supply, Turkey's membership would refute those who claim that there is a clash of civilisations between the West and Islam, and would make Turkey an ideal interlocutor between Europe and the Middle East."

## News in Brief



## Albania's Thirre Tunnel to Kosovo to Reopen

The Thirre tunnel, part of the newly built Rreshen-Kalimash road that links Kosovo with the Albanian seaport of Durres, will be reopened on May 21 following an eight month closure for repair work.

The Albanian Ministry of Transportation and Public Works announced on Tuesday that one lane of the tunnel, which is the centrepiece of the estimated one billion euro highway project, will be opened.

The tunnel was inaugurated in early June 2009 with a celebration ceremony attended by Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaci and Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha.

The milestone, which was transformed into an electoral rally by the Albanian leader ahead of the June 28 parliamentary poll, saw deputies from both countries and hundreds of supporters congregate in the tunnel in a show of unity between the two sister nations.

The Rreshen-Kalimash road, although it was not yet completed, was also inaugurated in an electoral stunt on June 26 by Prime Minister Berisha and his Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Albania's largest public works project in decades, the four-lane highway is expected to strengthen the already deep ties between Albania and Kosovo, where more than 90 per cent of the population of 2 million is of Albanian descent.

## 15cm of Snow in Brezovica

Some 15cm of snow has fallen in Brezovica in the past week, as temperatures plunged in Kosovo. While May appeared to usher in summer, with temperatures reaching the late 20s, the last week has brought heavy rain to Prishtina and snow to the mountains.

The ski season in Brezovica has lasted up until early May in previous years, but closed this year in early April.

## Republic of Somalia Recognises Kosovo

Somalia has become the 69th Country to recognise Kosovo. In a diplomatic note addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, Somalia confirmed on May 19 the decision to recognise Kosovo's declaration of independence.

The diplomatic note stated that the decision was taken based on the official request for recognition signed by the President Fatmir Sejdiu.

The note said that the government of Somalia was aware of the vital contribution that the Republic of Kosovo has made for stability and peace in the Balkans.

# Prishtina Airport Splashes 30,000 Euro on Puff Piece

Prishtina's International Airport spent almost 30,000 euro on placing an interview in a business magazine, after the shortlist of bidders for its privatisation had been selected.

Prishtina Insight can reveal that in November 2009, the airport awarded a tender to the British-based *European CEO* magazine for 25,000 pounds for an article to appear.

The tender for "publication in *European CEO* magazine" unsurprisingly received just one bid, from *European CEO* magazine.

The 1,300 word piece cost the airport more than 20 euro per word.

The interview with chief executive Agron Mustafa was accompanied by a front page photo and

appeared on Monday, January 18, according to the website.

Altin Ahmeti, spokesman for the airport, told Prishtina Insight that 30,000 euro was not a large sum of money compared to offers it received from other international magazines when it was seeking to advertise the airport's privatisation.

But the interview with Mustafa came after the shortlist for the privatisation had been announced. In the interview, Mustafa lists the firms which were shortlisted for the bid.

According to *European CEO*, the magazine reaches the desks of more than 50,000 chief executive officers and decision-making executives.



The news emerged as the row over the award of the 20-year concession for the airport rumbled on.

Last Friday, Kosovo's government announced that the French-Turkish consortium Limak - Aeroport de Lyon had won the deal ahead of Turkish-German group Fraport-

ICTAS and the Bouygues Batiment-Egis-PAIC international consortium. Allegations from businessmen and opposition politicians that the deal was not transparent have been strongly criticised by the American Ambassador to Kosovo, Christopher Dell.

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# Financial Crisis and Stalled Reforms Delay Kosovo Donations

Back in 2008, international donors pledged 1.2 billion euros for Kosovo but the financial crisis and lack of economic reform have held up a significant slice of the cash.



By Besiana Xharra

Kosovo's government has said it expects to receive the full 1.2 billion euro, pledged by international donors in July 2008. But economic experts warn that 150 million euro promised by the European Union, as well as other funds, could be at risk because of the government's failure to implement economic reform.

At the international conference in Brussels, the EU pledged 508 million euro for Kosovo between 2009 and 2011. This included 358 million euro as part of the yearly Instrument for Pre-Accession pot and 150 million in Macro-Financial Assistance. EU member states promised another 285 million euro and the United States agreed to 250 million euro.

Almost two years on, Prishtina Insight has established that donations have been delayed because of the global economic crisis and Kosovo's failure to implement economic reform.

Pleurat Sejdiu, head of coordination and strategy at the Ministry of European Integration, said: "We must accept that there is stagnation [with donations] and factors behind this may be the global financial crisis and delays to the preparation of several projects by several ministries and municipalities."

The largest sum at risk is the 150 million earmarked for Kosovo by the EU as "Macro-Financial Assistance". Delivery of this money is conditioned on Kosovo government's "commitment to the sound and efficient management of donated funds and the implementation of agreed policy reforms", according to a statement issued after the conference, as well as agreement on reforms with the IMF. These include reforms to public administration and improving macroeconomic policies.

Despite a number of visits by IMF officials to Prishtina no deal has yet been signed and the European Commission Liaison Office, ECLO, in Kosovo has warned that the cash may be at risk.

The ECLO spokeswoman, Maja Pavlovic, said the sum of 150 million euro would be divided in two parts. "The first part, 50 million euro, will not be disbursed this year if an agreement is not reached [with the IMF] and the money will be sent back to the EU budget," she cautioned. The remaining 100 million will also not be handed over unless the deal is signed, she added.

Kosovo's Deputy Minister of Economy and Finance, Bedri Hamza, said the requisite reforms were in progress and the government was in negotiations with the IMF. "Through these conversations, a more suitable programme for Kosovo will be reached," Hamza said.

Government spokesman Memli Krasniqi added there was no risk of Kosovo losing



Olli Rehn, the then EC Commissioner for Enlargement, in 2008

donations. "The government is working on the recommendations of the IMF and will soon be signing the agreement with the IMF," he said.

But economic experts are concerned that Kosovo not only risks losing the 150 million euro, but also other donations from the 1.2 billion euro pool if faster progress is not made.

"If we don't put these reforms in place, countries that have promised donations for Kosovo will withdraw, as no country wants to give money if Kosovo has not reformed its financial management," said Lumir Abdixhiku, from Riinvest Institute.

According to him, the government is responsible for the delays partly because it has entered into infrastructure projects without first planning the finance. The 700-million-euro highway from Vermice to Merdare is one example of a major project for which funds were not found before the contract was inked.

Berat Rukiqi, of Kosovo's

Chamber of Commerce, called the reforms "necessary to prevent an economic crisis" and said the government should implement the desired changes quickly.

According to Pleurat Sejdiu, the integration ministry has received only 56 million euros from individual countries in donations in 2009. If that sum was repeated over the three years, Kosovo would have received just 168 of the 285 million promised in bilateral contributions from EU states alone. The figures for 2010 are not known yet, according to Sejdiu.

"The money that the EU allocated for Kosovo at the donor's conference is being spent on projects," Pavlovic said.

Sejdiu said the creation of a committee to coordinate donations earlier this month, bringing together the international community and government actors, was playing an important role in "aligning and harmonizing" donors' requirements with the development priorities of the government.

Business news in brief

## Kosovo Attends World Islamic Economic Forum

Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu was among the leaders and representatives to attend the sixth World Islamic Economic Forum.

During a speech to the forum he said Kosovo represented excellent investment opportunities.

He said: "Kosovo, as well as our entire region presents an attractive area for your investment in various fields of economy."

Trade between Muslim countries will account for nearly 17 per cent of global trade this year, according to the conference organisers.

The sixth annual WIEF meeting, which took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 19 and 20 May.

Issues tackled included climate change and the impact of the global financial crisis on already scarce water resources.

## Macedonia Govt Denies Eurobond Postponement

The Macedonian Finance Ministry has said that media outlets misunderstood remarks made by Finance Minister Zoran Ztavreski, and noted that the government does not plan to postpone the issuance of Eurobonds.

According to the Ministry, in Stavreski's interview for Reuters, which was covered heavily by the media this week, the finance minister meant to say that the country will closely monitor the situation in the market and choose the most favorable moment for the planned move.

But the Ministry insists this will happen within the previously determined dates, that is by the end of next month.

"We will be patient because there is no urgent need for these funds, so whenever the market is ready we will be there," Stavreski said in the interview for Reuters at the EBRD's annual meeting in Zagreb.

Almost all Macedonian media outlets interpreted the statement as a confirmation that Skopje is planning to postpone the issuance of Eurobonds, which is one of the means by which the government has chosen to inject money into the struggling economy.

## IKEA to Break Ground in Bulgaria in June

Construction works on the first IKEA hypermarket in Sofia, Bulgaria, will officially be launched on June 3.

Vassilis Furlis, chairman of the Board of Directors of Furlis Group, IKEA's franchise holder for the region, announced the news and invited media to the groundbreaking event, which is scheduled to be attended by Prime Minister Boyko Borisov, Novinite reports.

The project is expected to create 800 new jobs.

During his visit to Greece at the end of last year, Bulgaria's Regional Development and Public Works Minister Rosen Plevneliev announced that IKEA would have its first Bulgarian store in 2011. The company has announced plans to build two more stores in the country - in Varna and Plovdiv.

The Swedish company IKEA, known for its cheap range of home furnishings, has 301 stores in 37 countries.

# Rising Crime Forces Kosovo Firms to Hire Security



By Lavdim Hamidi

Crime, theft, and disorder pose a significant challenge to Kosovo firms according to a report released last week by the World Bank. The study, Unlocking Growth Potential: Strategies, Policies, Actions, also reveals that the proportion of companies using private security firms in Kosovo is much higher than the average for Southeast Europe and Central Asia.

Some nine out of 10 firms in Kosovo pay for security, compared to six out of 10 firms in the region. The report reads: "The payment for security services is a widespread practice that emerged gradually after the conflict."

"Now, even though the Kosovo police has over 9,000 employees, 60 per cent more than in the late 1980s, crime seems to be on the rise.

"This could be partially attributed to the very high unemployment and widespread poverty, especially among the youth. Perceived weaknesses and corruption in the

court system could also be contributing to the prevalence of crime."

According to the same report, the average amount spent on security in Kosovo, 10 per cent of companies' annual turnover, is also well above the regional average of 4 per cent.

In 2006, only six out of 10 firms indicated corruption as a problem for doing business in Kosovo. But by 2009 this number had increased by 46 per cent. Between 2005 and 2008, the number of convictions for theft more than tripled.

The World Bank report adds: "Although some of the increase in convictions could be a result of the improved efficiency of the court system, the massive increase in property-related crimes should be of great concern."

Kosovo Police admits robberies are on the rise in Kosovo this year, but argues that the number of arrests is also up. Arber Beka, police spokesperson, added: "With the arrival of the new director at Kosovo Police, Behar Selimi, our approach will change and police will be nearer to citizens, doing more on foot patrols."

Lumir Abdixhiku, executive director of the Riinvest Institute, which specialises in



Rising crime has forced firms to hire private security

economic issues, said the World Bank data highlighted the grave economic environment in which Kosovo businesses operate.

According to him, high levels of crime and lack of security in carrying out business activities have increased business costs, diminishing businesses' chances to invest in other areas. It would be far better if this money were invested in boosting production rather than in "such banal activities" such as security, he said.

He added that the perceived lack of security projects a negative image on Kosovo and discourages foreign investment.

# Where the Streets Have Many Names

The debate over EULEX's raids on the Ministry of Transport spilled over in a fight over road names last week



By Lawrence Marzouk

Pristina's multiple street name changes are already a postman's nightmare.

But last week the situation became even more confused with the arrival of a new brand of guerilla street naming in the capital.

Pristina's main pedestrianised thoroughfare, Mother Teresa Street, was 'renamed' last Wednesday after EULEX prosecutor Johannes Van Vreeswijk, who is leading the investigation into corruption at Kosovo's Ministry of Transport.

The unofficial signs appeared along the main road on Wednesday and form part of a citizens' campaign to support the Dutch prosecutor, who revealed details of the EU mission's fight against corruption in the daily newspaper Koha Ditore.

The next day things took a slightly more sinister turn when signs appeared nearby Rexhep Luci under the name "UDBA Street - Vetton and Flaka Surroi", in reference to the former Serbian secret police, known as the UDBA, and the current and former editors of Koha Ditore, who are siblings.

The second sign has been condemned by Kosovo's government, the US Ambassador to the country and Reporters without Borders.

Ambassador Christopher Dell called the stunt a 'cowardly act'. He said: "The Surrois are long-standing friends of the United States, and more importantly, true patriots of Kosovo."

"Threatening language that aims to intimidate or incite violence against an individual or political opponent is unacceptable."

The 'Johannes Van Vreeswijk Street' on the other hand was given a more positive reception, especially among the 4000 members of the Facebook group 'We



The joke road sign which appeared on Mother Teresa Street last Wednesday

support the prosecutor Johannes Van Vreeswijk'.

According to the text accompanying the photos of the signs, posted on the webpage, 'citizens of Pristina, symbolically (illegally) have honoured Van Vreeswijk with the new road name'.

In a frank interview with Prishtina daily Koha Ditore, Mr van Vreeswijk revealed that the Minister of Transport Fatmir Limaj and the ministry's head of procurement face charges of money laundering, organised crime, fraud in office and soliciting bribes.

He also revealed that six other government ministers are also under investigation for corruption.

The comments follow a series of EULEX raids on Wednesday, April 28, on the Ministry of Transport and properties connected to Limaj. The action is in connection with a corruption probe linked to road tenders issued between 2007 and 2009. Fatmir Limaj has denied all wrongdoing.

No one has claimed responsibility for the signs and both have now been removed.

Pristina through the Eyes of:

## Gwyneth Letherbarrow

Field Presence Coordinator for ICO/EUSR in Prishtina



**What surprised you most about Prishtina?**

Every day brings new surprises but if I had to choose the greatest it would be my landlord's green lawn (grass) and garden, it is immaculate; followed closely by the number of times our road is dug up/repared throughout the year.

**What's your favorite hangout?**

It's not easy to have one favourite hangout when there are so many, but I have two specials: Odyssea Bistro for lunch on a Friday and Cosmopolitan cocktails any night of the week, and the Green Villa (close to Hajvali) for a relaxed dinner with friends in beautiful surroundings.

**Do you do anything cultural?**

I used to sing in a choir if that counts, trying out new wines now and again perhaps? Hmm, how do you define cultural?

**What is the most annoying thing about Prishtina?**

The roundabouts!

**If you were mayor of Prishtina for the day what would you change?**

Not so much change, but I would run a public information campaign on what the traffic rules are for roundabouts.

**How many macchiatos do you drink a day?**

Er, I'm a tea drinker. Give me Twinings English Breakfast or Lapsang Souchong any day.

**What's the tastiest Kosovar food?**

Dukagjini peppers - at least I think that's what they're called - the hot peppers in cream (Pinocchio's are the best)

**What landmark do you use to tell taxi drivers where you live?**

Anita in Arberia/Dragodan

# World Gathers in Mitrovica for Cities Conference



By Petrit Collaku

Representatives from ten cities from across the world, each grappling with divisions, will gather in the Mitrovica next week for the inaugural conference of the Forum for Cities in Transition.

Mayors, councillors, police chiefs, business representatives, media and civil society from the cities will focus on how to improve the lives of citizens while putting political differences to one side.

The conference will bring together Mitrovica, Beirut, Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Haifa, Jerusalem, Kaduna, Kirkuk, Mostar and Nicosia between May 24 and 28.

Delegates will be discussing challenges and successes of municipal administration in cities in transition from conflict. A panel of experts will join specialists from the cities to discuss housing, business development, citizens' engagement and policing.

Representatives will stay in, eat at, visit and learn from both the areas north and south of the River Ibar, the line which

divides Kosovo Serb and Albanian communities.

The Forum for Cities in Transition was established in Boston in April 2009 by representatives from Kirkuk, Nicosia, Derry/Londonderry and Mitrovicë/Kosovska Mitrovica.

It is an initiative of University Massachusetts, Boston. The University and Northern Ireland Foundation, Belfast, are the Secretariat.

Professor Padraig O'Malley, director of the forum, said the conference will be an historic event for the city.

He said: "When the Forum for Cities in Transition was created, few cities really believed that Mitrovicë/Kosovska Mitrovica could rise to the occasion."

"Mitrovicë/Kosovska Mitrovica has not only risen to the occasion, it has surpassed all expectations."

"This will truly put this global Forum on the map - but it will put Mitrovicë/Kosovska Mitrovica on the map as well."

The Mitrovica Forum, comprising nine members from both south and north Mitrovicë/Kosovska Mitrovica, is hosting the conference, with the support of the University of Massachusetts and the Northern Ireland Foundation.



A clean-up of Mitrovica trailed the conference in Mitrovica

Two NGOs from the city, the Centre for Civil Society Development, CCSD, and Community-Building Mitrovica, CBM, are providing technical co-ordination for the Mitrovica Forum.

Momcilo Arlov, from CCSD, said: "Opportunities are too few for representatives of cities burdened with post-conflict sensitivities to share experiences of improving the quality of everyday life of citizens. The Forum of Cities in Transition provides us with this exact opportunity."

"We need vision rather than gutless political statements, and courage to initiate genuine change to address urgent community priorities - not artificial initiatives serving the needs of

donors and political stakeholders alone.

"This Forum is not burdened with high-politics, but instead encourages technical dialogue and inter-community cooperation. Our citizens need this Forum."

Valdete Idrizi, of CBM, said: "As a citizen of Mitrovicë/Kosovska Mitrovica, I am very excited to be part of such a special, important event."

"With so many people coming from different parts of the world, our city has a real opportunity to exchange experiences and opinions on how we can make citizens' daily lives better."

"This is also a great chance to begin inter-city co-operation with cities from four different continents."

# Kosovo School Textbooks Fail Accuracy Test

As the Education Ministry orders textbooks for around 300,000 pupils, a nine-month investigation by Balkan Investigative Reporting Network has uncovered a worrying number of mistakes.



By Shengjyl Osmani

One 6th-grade history book says inaccurately that “to participate in fighting the infidel” is one of the five Pillars of Islam, the most important rules given to Muslims in the Koran, instead of the testimony of faith, or ‘Shahadah’

An analysis conducted by BIRN of 16 school textbooks in Kosovo has uncovered numerous mistakes, from old maps that do not include Kosovo to the wrong dates for Napoleon's birth.

The number of mistakes, and the fact that the textbooks are overloaded with data, could have a negative impact on Kosovo's struggling school system, the author of the investigation, Jusuf Thaci, concludes.

The analysis showed that two years after the declaration of independence, many schools still rely on geography books containing maps that depict Serbia and Montenegro as one country with Kosovo as a component.

Inaccuracies in books aimed at 12 to 16-year-olds were also found in biology, history and civic education textbooks. Some pupils learn that there are six continents, not

seven, for example.

Pupils in 8th grade are taught that America is one continent, the second largest, while later in the book Latin America is described as the world's “third largest territory” after Asia and Africa.

The confusion continues in history textbooks. When dealing with the Battle of Kosovo of 1389, the death of the Ottoman Sultan is variously blamed on Milosh Kopili or Milosh Kopiliqi, depending on what textbook you study, while another claims the Sultan's killer was from “the village of Kopiliq from Drenice”. This is just one of many examples of a lack of consistency in textbooks between different school years.

One 6th-grade history book says inaccurately that “to participate in fighting the infidel” is one of the five Pillars of Islam, the most important rules given to Muslims in the Koran, instead of the testimony of faith, or ‘Shahadah’.

Jusuf Thaci, the report's author, said: “It can be easily noted that this promotes hatred, which is not in accordance with the law in Kosovo.”

Separately, Thaci's report questions the sheer amount of data included in Kosovo textbooks, noting that students have to learn 60 to 70 dates or facts in each lecture.

“Overloading textbooks continues to be another concern, with huge consequences for students, lecturers, and the overall educational system,” Thaci writes.

“The textbooks used in the educational system in Kosovo encourage no critical thinking, have scientific inaccuracies and between grades textbooks present contradictory data,” he

complains.

Arif Demolli, from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, defended the amount of material included in textbooks, saying they were drafted to match the curriculum, “therefore, they are as overloaded as the study plan”.

Thaci said he began his research after coming across numerous complaints from students, parents, and teachers. The main problem in the textbooks is inaccuracies, he asserted.

“The date given for the birth of Napoleon Bonaparte is incorrect, and so are the dates for Alexander the Great, in the history textbooks,” he noted.

Frasher Demaj, author of history textbooks, said it was normal for textbooks to contain some inaccuracies. “I'm one of the persons who drafted the curriculum and I've been told by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology that it is appropriate for students,” he added.

Resmije Kryeziu, from the Albanological Institute of Prishtina, who has been involved in monitoring such studies since 2008, called for the textbooks to be revised.

She said the number of errors suggested they were not just “technical mistakes”. She added that history textbooks presented a particular problem as certain events were often covered disproportionately.

“Many of the enemies of the Albanian nation are described at length,” she said, “whereas other important events, battles and movements, are just noted briefly, without giving the background information about what led towards that event.”

Nehat Mustafa, an advisor in pre-university studies at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, thanked BIRN for its analysis. He said the ministry would use the report when it came to revising the textbooks.

“We've been missing such an analysis, which is needed ... to monitor the textbooks used in our educational system and overcome the inaccuracies of the authors,” he said.

Mustafa admitted that matters might have gone better had the ministry contacted a specialised company “which would have had spotted the inaccuracies found in your analysis”.

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# Demolition Threat to Prishtina's Ottoman Heritage

from page 1

The family first asked permission to make changes to their home in 2004. The municipality asked the Institute for Monuments and Regional Museum of Prishtina, IMRM, which works under the Ministry of Culture, to advise them on whether the site was protected. They also sought advice on the house's structural soundness.

"We noted the deficiencies of the house [in the report] but there is not a single line from us that said the house could be taken off the list of protected monuments," Haxhi Mehmetaj, director of IMRM, said.

Mehmetaj showed Prishtina Insight their report, dated 2005. It recommended urgent intervention because of the poor condition of the building but also confirmed its protected status. "No one can pull a protected building from the list," Mehmetaj added.

However, the then culture minister Astrit Haraqija, issued an order removing the house from the list in 2007, citing a fresh IMRM assessment from that year that described the building as being in

a dangerous condition.

Following that decision, the family requested permission from the municipality to redevelop the site. After their request was again denied, the family turned to the next minister of culture, Valton Beqiri, who reissued the order supporting the removal of house from the list of protected monuments.

The department of Cultural Heritage, DCH, in the Ministry of Culture confirmed that the Ministry had violated the law by permitting the removal of the house from the list.

"The ministry has ignored our authority and they have violated the law because such decision is not lawful," Burbuqe Bakija-Deva, head of the department told Prishtina Insight.

"I don't blame the family for this. I blame the institution that I also belong to," Deva said. She first heard of the case from the municipality after the family sought permission to rebuild on the site.

"The urban directorate of the municipality wanted to check with our office whether the particular house was under protection or



Before

A protected house on UCK Street demolished without permission

not," Deva added.

She said certain rules have to be followed before a protected monument can be removed from the list. "There is a cultural heritage council, formed by parliament, that can give recommendations to the minister about whether a monument can be removed from the list," she explained.

Deva added that despite the decisions of two former culture minis-

ters, she would try to halt the demolition of the house. "If the family destroys the house, we may take them to court," she warned.

She said that because of the ministry's small budget, it had been unable to invest funds in the conservation of historic family homes and had concentrated on religious buildings.

It is not clear whether the family still has permission from the

municipality to redevelop the site. They have told Prishtina Insight they expect the building to be knocked down by the end of May.

Prishtina's record in protecting its historic heritage is poor. Of 21 listed buildings and monuments in city, four that were private homes have already been demolished for redevelopment.

Deva noted that Post and Telecoms of Kosovo, a government



Vladimir Vukcevic, Serbian War Crimes Prosecutor

## Serbia: Probe of Raska Mass Grave Site to Begin



By Petrit Collaku

The Serbian War Crimes Prosecutor's Office has called for an investigation to begin at a mass grave site in the southwestern Serbian town of Raska.

Ten days ago Serbia announced that with the help of the EU rule of law mission in Kosovo, EULEX, it had uncovered a mass grave believed to contain the bodies of 250 ethnic Albanian victims from the 1998-99 conflict.

According to a prosecution statement issued on Tuesday, if the existence of a mass grave is confirmed by the investigative judge, exhumations of the remains should begin and autopsies should be conducted in order to identify the victims. It has been suggested that the judge perform the investigation in

the presence of EULEX officials.

It has not been determined who killed the people buried at the site in Raska but the bodies are believed to have been unearthed and then re-buried in order to hide evidence of war crimes committed during the rule of Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic.

Referring to previously collected data, daily Danas reported that members of the Yugoslav Army participated in the transfer of bodies from primary graves around Drenica in May or early June 1999 to a mass grave near Raska.

Meanwhile, the Association of Families of Missing Serbs from Kosovo has announced that it will try to block the exhumation of the grave unless certain conditions are met.

In an interview with Tanjug news agency on Monday, the coordinator of the association, Milos Trifunovic, said that the group will attempt to block the excavation of the grave near Raska if authorities don't simultaneously exhume mass graves in Kosovo where the group believes Serbs have been buried.



After

Post and Telecoms of Kosovo, PTK, took up residence in the office block built on the site

agency, moved into offices on the site of one protected building.

According to the law on cultural heritage, penalties for making unauthorised changes to protected buildings range from 1,000 euro to 500,000 euro. But developers rarely face such penalties. "We accused one family of destroying a protected monument and they were fined just 50 euro," Deva recalled.

The organisation Cultural

Heritage without Borders in Kosovo said that they were surprised to hear that the Hyniler house had been removed from the protection list.

CHWB said it had launched a project this year to purchase protected buildings that owners want to sell, but the Hynilers wanted too much money. "The Hyniler family suggested 230,000 euro, which is too a high price for us," Sali Shoshi

of CHWB said.

A CHWB project in 2007, entitled "Surviving Heritage of Prishtina" researched the fate of the city's old buildings. Of 102 buildings identified in 2004 as important to the city's heritage, "In 2007, our statistics showed that around 44 per cent had been destroyed", Shoshi said.

According to CHWB, Prishtina had undergone several drastic urban and architectural transfor-

mations. After the Second World War, what was a small town was transformed under Communism.

In the early part of the Communist era, historic sites were deliberately targeted. A major development campaign was launched under the slogan "destroy the old, build the new."

The covered bazaar, one of the largest in the region, as well as several religious buildings in the town

centre, including a mosque, a Catholic church and a synagogue, were destroyed. Later, attitudes began to change. A 1977 law on cultural heritage protected 426 monuments by law. A second round of major changes occurred after the end of the Kosovo conflict in 1999.

"[Old] private houses are disappearing. After 100 years we will have only religious buildings left," Shoshi said.

## Kosovo Assesses FM's Appearance at UNSC



By Lawrence Marzouk

While Kosovo's government applauded Foreign Minister Skender Hyseni's appearance at the UN Security Council meeting on Kosovo, opposition parties have claimed that Hyseni was not in an ideal position because of the current situation in Kosovo.

Kosovo's Prime Minister Hashim Thaci said that Kosovo's progress was well presented by Foreign Minister Hyseni at the UN Security Council session.

"This is progress regarding our commitment at the central and local level to Euro-Atlantic orientation and integration towards NATO and EU membership," Thaci said during a government session.

Deputy Prime Minister Hajredin Kuci noted that the minister's report was realistic but added that there were also positive evaluations from

Kosovo's friends in the session. "Certainly there are countries that still have dilemmas but you can see that they understand the reality in Kosovo," Kuci said.

But opposition parties claimed that Hyseni was in a less than ideal position at the UNSC session due to recent developments in Kosovo.

Ardian Gjini from the opposition party Alliance for the Future of Kosovo, AAK, said that when a country is faced with organised crime and corruption, then the representation of that country in the international arena is accompanied by stress and unease.

"When a foreign minister is faced with such an internal situation, then it's very difficult for him to make a presentation that would impress anyone," Gjini said.

In the UN Security Council session for Kosovo, FM Hyseni reiterated that Kosovo is ready to talk with Serbia on technical matters.

Ibrahim Gashi, vice president of the opposition New Kosovo Alliance, AKR, said that Kosovo should be careful when talks start, arguing that Serbia and its allies will try to steer the talks towards political issues.



Skender Hyseni at the UN Security Council

## Green Villa: Lush Surroundings, Rushed Food



By Maneater

I've decided to continue my round of suburban restaurant reviews, with the hope that a new venture is on its way in the city.

This edition, we journeyed past Rron, Puro, and Hani i 2 Roberteve, to Green Villa, located just before Hotel Madrid in Veternik.

The restaurant is situated in what looks like a swanky residential home, fully equipped with a luscious front garden, back patio, and private swimming pool. Large cement walls surround the premises, keeping possible onlookers away.

Inside, the restaurant is sectioned off into two areas - a ground-floor dining level, and an exposed upper level for either private parties or more intimate feasting.

The overall look can be described as upscale, with white tables and leather-upholstered chairs, white-beamed ceilings, terracotta-coloured flooring, and a display of numerous tropical plants: elegant, yet restful.

My dining partner and I headed over to the villa at around 6pm on a Saturday, just as the staff were preparing for dinner arrivals. From that moment on, only a few tables were occupied, with mix of local and international diners.

Green's menu is easy enough to comprehend, with its unfortunate replica of exceedingly passé dishes, mimicking a time when Kosovo's restaurants were short on basic produce and culinary necessities.

What I am referring to is carbonara, Napoli, Bolognese, and arrabiata pastas, and prosciutto, margarita and tuna pizzas - wholly tiresome options.

Leaving all preconceptions aside, we decided to go with Italian

anti-pasta as a starter, and rump steak with Sharri cheese and pepper sauce beef steak for our mains. Considering the poor effort at developing the menu, we decided that beef options were our best bet to secure fresh ingredients.

I'll note that our server undeniably had a difficult time clarifying menu options, with the classic "it's beef" or "it's chicken" description. He also brought us the wrong starter, which was later compensated with our original order and a basket of bread and pickled peppers in cream cheese.

The Italian anti-pasta comprised local dried-beef prosciutto, roquette salad, tomato wedges and slices of soft mozzarella cheese, dressed in a light yogurt sauce. The dish fared well compared to the mistaken house anti-pasta, which included processed salami, and a sad Russian salad, but still missed any sort of weight.

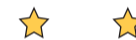
After realising our waiter had forgotten to take our steak-prefer-



ences, we awaited similar outcomes with our main entrees. Although both the rump steak and beef steak were of good quality, seasoning was absent and much needed.

Nevertheless, the small bits of Sharri cheese, and boring caper-infused pepper sauce were excep-

tional compared to our side of tasteless frozen carrots and peas. If it wasn't for the roasted potato turnout, we might have been forced to book a table at another venue promptly.



Off the Prishtina-Gjilan Highway  
044 286 733

★★★★★	★★★★☆	★★★☆☆	★★★☆☆	★★☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
Roman Villa	French Villa	Where's There a Villa	Village People	Aston Villa	Villain



## Janjevo - A Town That's Difficult to Forget



By Lawrence Marzouk

The pretty, if a little rundown, town of Janjevo and the surrounding hills offer a perfect short daytrip from Prishtina.

Nestled in a river valley, and surrounded by green hills, the former mining town conjures up signs of its bygone prosperity all around.

Here you'll find a series of grand, dilapidated Ottoman houses, waiting to be renovated, a large, well kept and rather grand cemetery perched on top of the hill, and a pretty, modern church.

Park by the small mosque, which is worth a few minutes' visit if only to see the strange juxtaposition of a large digital clock next to aging wooden beams, and climb the hill towards the Catholic church.

Janjevo was once a Croatian heartland in Kosovo. But while most of its Croat inhabitants have now left, their religion lives on in the modern but tasteful place of worship.

The church is often closed, so ask at the kiosk for the keys.

Given the number of hits on Flickr and videos of Janjevo on Youtube, it seems that many of the former Croatian

inhabitants still hold the place close to their hearts. And a glorious summer day, it is easy to see why.

A NGO is in the process of renovating one of the town's fine Ottoman houses, and has been for a while. It will become a museum if it is ever finished.

Further up the hill is the Catholic graveyard where the rich of Janjevo are buried below marble gravestones. It's a pleasant spot to take in the view across the river valley.

If you want to get a good panorama of the town, however, it best to climb the opposite hill.

A good side trip to this day out is to the village of Tekke, which gets its name for the Dervish place of worship.

Located in this small hamlet is the grave of Saint Baba Isak, a Dervish soldier of the Ottoman army believed to have died during the Battle of Veletin in the 14th Century.

To find Tekek, follow the road through town up the hill, on the opposite side to the church, for 2km and take the first right up a dirt track.

You'll probably find a friendly, if rowdy, bunch of kids in the village who will be slightly bemused by your visit. The tomb really only receives visitors on May 5.



Janjevo is renowned for its Suxhuk, although I must admit that I have so far failed to try it.

The town does offer a couple of cafes, but if you want to combine the trip with a meal out, Ciao in Caglavica is a fine place to stop for hearty Serbian fare served up in a pretty garden.

*Getting There:* To get to Janjevo, drive along the main Skopje road past the dual carriageway section. You'll reach a junction with Janjevo signposted to the left and Lipjan to the right. Otherwise, you can take a more picturesque route through Gracanica. Take the first right after passing the church. After ten minutes you'll reach a t-junction where you should take a left.



By Shega A'Mula  
in Prishtina

# Inside Prishtina

## Building Review:

# Building Review: Institute of Albanology

Taking into consideration its immense social responsibility, the Institute of Albanology in Prishtina has a rather unimpressive home. The independent research institute maintains that its duty is to study the "spiritual and material culture of the Albanian nation".

Specifically, the institute focuses on the following areas of Albanology - linguistics, literature, folklore and ethnology. This translates into organising conferences, meetings, symposiums and other academic platforms to present research material and new discoveries concerning Albanian society and history.

Formed in 1953 by a small group of researchers and scientists, the Institute of Albanology first called a former military barracks its home after it was recognised as a formal institution in 1966 - the same year the University of Prishtina was granted bilingual status, with study options in not only Serbian, but also Albanian.

As further autonomy was transferred from Belgrade to Kosovo during the late sixties and seventies, the institute moved into the building that it currently occu-



The Institute of Albanology in Prishtina is home to more than 100,000 scientific artefacts

pies, which at that time was dubbed a very contemporary structure.

Nearly three decades later, the three storeys of the building were occupied by a rapidly growing staff, and a library, scientific archive, and exhibition hall were created. These areas of the build-

ing were filled with material from Kosovo, but also Albania, as the institute regularly coordinated with cultural institutions present just south west of the border.

However, on March 8, 1994, the whole staff was ousted from the building by the Yugoslav military, as ethnic Albanian workers were

throughout different institutions across Kosovo. The Albanologists retreated into a private home to continue their studies.

It was only after the end of the 1999 conflict that the institute moved back into the building, which was allegedly used as shelter for Serbian forces during the

NATO bombardments of 1999.

The Institute of Albanology credits the assistance of international donors for the rehabilitation of the building, which they say was badly damaged during the conflict. Many important pieces of work were either destroyed or stolen during that time.

Today, the institute has an eerie feel due its Communist past with décor that has not been changed since that period. This can be noticed from the exterior façade to an interior swathed in slabs of dark marble, dozens of small, stuffy offices and acres of frayed carpet.

But while the décor is very much in the past, the institute's library continues to press ahead, with a growing and diverse collection of publications concerning Albanian culture and tradition. Additionally, there are more than 100,000 pieces stored in the scientific archive.

Renovation efforts have been started by the Ministry of Education and Science and are expected to be completed later this year.

Rr: Eqrem Cabej,  
038 220 822

## Bar Review:

# Amelie

Odyssey Bistro has obviously struck gold with its Amelie outlet, and has now opened a second location in its former bakery in the neighbourhood of Pejton and a third near the unfinished Orthodox church

just off Agim Ramadani.

Now, original Bakery favourites are available at Amelie, which has ushered in a fresh cafe concept previously nonexistent in the capital city.

The second location follows the same interior-designed look of the original, located on Fehmi Agani street in the centre, with white-washed walls hit with colourful murals of lady Amelie, her city, and her mantra - smell the coffee.

Self-service remains the norm during the day, and easier to comply with since the new location is smaller, with less seating area. Evenings, as in the original Amelie, include a waiting staff who bring orders directly to your table.

Day or night, Amelie's staff is splendidly friendly and attentive, open to conversation and ready to give recommendations.

The menu also remains the same, with a series of delicious sandwiches, salads and pastas, easily identifiable as Odyssey creations. Recent additions include options such as pancakes and multi-fruit smoothies.

Meal options and drinks continue to be displayed behind a glass counter, to efficiently induce cravings.

The large windows and open space give a more than satisfactory view of the street, and all the people that walk down it. Large sidewalk trees also add a touch of scenic charm to the new location.

The crowd continues to be the same - professional twenty to thirty somethings looking for a trendy place to unravel.

Located: Justinan Perandori, Pejton, and Agim Ramadani, near the unfinished Orthodox church



## Shop Review:

# Billabong - Putting the Urban in Prishtina



Billabong has a wide selection of trainers on offer

Surf, Skate, Snow and Wake is the motto of the Australian apparel and accessory brand Billabong, which has become a staple in alternative sportswear.

Now, the once hard-to-find youthful brand has landed in Prishtina, with a licensed shop full of trendy yet rugged clothing options.

The store is located across from the Kosovo Energy Corporation, KEK, on Bill Clinton Boulevard. A large metal staircase leads passing consumers up to the glass doors of the shop.

Other alternative brands join Billabong, all of which are licensed from local importers HB Fashion, within the well-designed store.

These include Oakley, Vans, DC, Ecko Unltd, Burton, Elements and more, all fulfilling the surf, skate, snow and wake lifestyle.

All the same, these brands also work for a

non-sporty urban lifestyle, with a selection of classic denim, hoodies, t-shirts, and sneakers - for both men and women.

Accessories, apart from skateboard gear, are also multifaceted, from wallets to key chains, sunglasses, belts, and hats, all made from performance tested materials built to last, yet give off a good look at the same time.

It's hard to concentrate on one piece of clothing or accessory when in the store, as loud graphic t-shirts and eye-catching footwear offer constant distractions.

The summer collection has just arrived, with a series of bikinis, swimming shorts and beach-side apparel and accessories.

Prices are quite inflated, with t-shirts ranging around 25 euro, to footwear and glasses reaching well above 100 euro.

Bill Clinton Boulevard  
038 552 422

# Bulgaria Stubbs Out Strict Smoking Ban

Much to the disappointment of tobacco haters, Sofia has backed down on plans to outlaw smoking in cafes and restaurants, saying it will inflict too much damage on the hospitality industry.



By Boryana Dzhambazova

“Parks are the only smoke-free places here,” said Marina Kostova, 29, pushing a stroller with her seven-month-old son round a park in Sofia. “It’s impossible to find a non-smoking place to eat with a child.”

“This is not normal for a European country,” she added. “When I was pregnant and still working, it was even harder for me, because there was almost nowhere to go to and have lunch, as the dining spaces were filled with thick smoke.”

Kostova is one of many Bulgarians strongly opposed to smoking. But to her disappointment, Bulgaria looks set to loosen a planned total ban on use of tobacco in enclosed public places.

The anti-smoking law, voted in by the previous government, was supposed to take effect on June 1. But the ruling center-right Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria, GERB, party, which took office last July, has initiated changes to the law, making the restrictions more flexible for bars, restaurants and cafes. At the end of April, parliament approved the amendments in the first reading.

Under the amendments, owners of facilities of up to 100 square metres will be allowed to choose whether their cafes, restaurants or bars should be designated as non-smoking or smoking areas. All establishments over 100 square metres will have to provide separate areas for both smokers and non-smokers.

The government fears a strict ban on smoking would wreak havoc with the hospitality industry by driving away a large proportion of customers, thereby worsening the impact of the economic recession.

According to a 2009 survey, sponsored by the European Commission, Bulgaria is the third most tobacco-addicted nation in the EU, after the Greeks and the Italians. The average Bulgarian adult puffs a pack of cigarettes every day.

Many smokers loudly opposed the planned ban, saying it violated their freedom. “I don’t know what’s more harmful – smoking, or the air in Sofia. Following that logic, we should ban cars from Sofia,” said Kiril Gumnerov, a deputy from the far-right Ataka party, before the vote in the parliament.

Vladimir Boev, 27, a heavy smoker for over ten years, is one of those who says he would quit going to pubs and bars altogether if tobacco was prohibited. “I can’t indulge in a good meal or drink



Bulgaria has dropped strict anti-smoking laws

with friends without smoking,” he said, puffing his 11th cigarette of the day.

The government’s concessions have angered many non-smokers and some non-governmental organizations, which last month staged a series of protests and initiatives against the changes.

Orlin Mirchev from “Bulgaria without smoke” coalition, which keenly supported a full ban on tobacco use in public, is disappointed. “There is no logic behind the changes. All around the world, the tobacco producers are the only ones who lose customers when smoking is prohibited,” he said.

Bulgaria is not the only country in the Balkans where recent moves to curb smoking have run into fierce resistance. In March, neighbouring Macedonia also eased a strict ban on public smoking, which included even the outdoor areas of bars and restaurants.

The draconian anti-smoking law introduced on January 1 drew complaints from a coalition of smokers and owners of hospitality establishments. Now puffing is allowed in the gardens and on the terraces of local restaurants and bars.

Recently, Croatia also introduced a harsh anti-smoking law that prohibited smoking in all bars, coffee shops and restaurants.

Serbia is gradually introducing stricter anti-smoking laws, too. According to proposed changes, smoking is prohibited in workplaces and on public transport. In hospitality establishments, tobacco would be allowed, depending on the size of the premises.

Meanwhile, Greece has failed to curb smoking in public. Despite harsh penalties, many people blatantly disregard the law and continue to smoke in bars and restaurants.

Tirana shares the same problem. Four years ago Albania prohibited use of tobacco in public places such as hospitals, schools and institutions. However, Albanians still smoke away in restaurants and bars.

Blagoi Ragin, chairman of the Bulgarian Hotel and Restaurant Association, completely supports the Sofia government’s partial climb-down.

“The economic situation is already tough for the industry; it’s not a good time to ban smoking. We support every measure that helps our business to survive,” he said.

“500,000 people work in the hospitality industry. Even if 10 per cent of us lose their businesses that would be crucial and could push the sector to the brink,” Ragin added.

Ivan Ivanov, a member of the parliament from GERB, has promised that non-smokers’ rights will still be respected. “Smoking areas will be isolated [from the rest of public premises] with a wall from floor to ceiling, so non-smokers will be separated from smokers,” he said.

But many doubt the new rules will work. Hospitality establishments are already obliged to provide customers with separate smoking and non-smoking areas but most owners disregard the regulations. The ventilation systems in many restaurants and coffee houses are very poor, so smokers and non-smokers end up sitting just a few steps away each other.

“Smoking is unabated in most hospitality facilities because the regulations are rarely enforced due to the lack of proper control,” Mirchev noted.

He is sure a full ban will be imposed sooner or later. “Even Amsterdam, which is seen as one of the most liberal cities in the world, has prohibited indoor smoking [in public]. Why does Bulgaria always have to be the last to follow the good practices?” he asked.

However, until Sofia adopts stricter tobacco policies, many non-smokers like Marina Kostova will have to stick to the park if they want to get some fresh air. Enjoying a meal or a cup of coffee in a smoke-free restaurant remains a distant ambition.

## News in Brief

### EU Official: ICTY Report Crucial for Serbia

The head of the EU Delegation to Serbia, Vincent Degert, said it is clear that the crucial element necessary to move Serbia forward on its EU path will be the upcoming report on the country’s cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, ICTY.

In an interview with daily Danas, Degert said that the report from chief UN War Crimes Prosecutor Serge Brammertz must be at least as good as the previous one.

“I don’t think that Serbia’s European integration process is being delayed because of the Hague Tribunal, but I could also ask why the arrest of the Hague indictees is so difficult to achieve,” the daily quoted him as saying.

A positive report from Brammertz is considered necessary for EU countries to begin the process of ratifying Serbia’s Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU. Dutch Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen earlier said that Netherlands will make a final decision on whether to unfreeze Serbia’s SAA with the EU in June, as the decision will be based on Brammertz’s report.

Serbia’s path to candidacy was smoothed slightly last December when EU foreign ministers agreed to unblock Serbia’s interim trade agreement, which is part of the SAA.



### Heavy Floods Hit Macedonia’s Northeast

Four campers were rescued by police helicopter on Sunday near the northeastern town of Kumanovo after spending the night surrounded by the raging waters of the river Pcinja, which flooded the surrounding area on Saturday.

Heavy rains caused Pcinja River to run over its banks and caused flooding in several nearby villages. 4,000 hectares of arable land have been flooded, the State Protection and Rescue Directorate estimates.

“The directorate’s rapid response units at first tried to rescue the campers with a boat, but were unable to come close enough due to fallen trees obstructing the path. As a result, a helicopter from the Interior Ministry was used to pull out three people,” the directorate said in a press release.

The directorate reported that at least five other people were rescued from the water, which pulled down trees and crushed bridges.

Minister of Defense Zoran Konjanovski visited the area and promised immediate support for the affected residents.

Less severe flood damage was also registered in the region of Kriva Palanka and Kratovo. The northwestern parts of the country, near the town of Tetovo, also suffered due to flooding from the river Vardar.

### Albania Opposition Ends Hunger Strike

Albania Opposition Ends Hunger Strike. Socialist Party MPs and their supporters ended a 19-day hunger strike on Wednesday after the country’s ruling and opposition leaders agreed to hold EU-sponsored talks to end the nearly yearlong political crisis.

Socialist Party leader Edi Rama and Prime Minister Sali Berisha are expected to travel to Strasbourg on Thursday, where they will hold talks with EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fuele aimed at finding a compromise.

“On Thursday in Strasburg the highest representatives of the European left and right will host both parties in a roundtable to find a solution,” Rama told his supporters as he announced the end of the strike.

Rama, who is also Tirana’s mayor, and Berisha have been locked in a stalemate over the results of the June 28, 2009 parliamentary elections, which Berisha’s party narrowly won.

On May 1, two dozen Socialist MPs and 180 of their supporters went on hunger strike in a tent in front of the prime minister’s office, pushing for a recount of the parliamentary election ballots.

The Socialists have boycotted parliament since the new session began in September, claiming that the government’s alleged fraud was to blame for their electoral loss.

# Consolidating Kosovo's Democracy Through Business Development



By David L. Phillips

Kosovo faces many of the same problems that have confronted other post-Communist and post-conflict transition countries such as ineffective governance, a weak judiciary, and widespread corruption. For sure, Kosovo has come a long way since 1999; Kosovars deserve huge credit for liberating and rebuilding the country.

But now Kosovo is entering a new phase. At this critical juncture, the Government of Kosovo (GoK) should focus on state-building through transparent and accountable governance, and a more pro-active approach to combating corruption and crime.

Kosovo is the poorest country in Europe, with an average annual per capita income of \$2,500. More than 40% of Kosovars are unemployed. Despite large public expenditures, growth fell to 4.4% in 2009 from 5.8% the previous year. Last year saw a steady decline in remittances, private credit, and Foreign Direct Investment, and an increase in external debt. Kosovo ranked 113th overall by the World Bank in its 2009 Report on Doing Business.

While these figures are bleak, they should be considered in context. They are partly the result of factors outside of the government's control, such as the global economic crisis and Europe's declining euro and credit crunch.

Strengthening the rule of law is, however, very much within the GoK's control. When it comes to cracking-down on corruption, responsibility starts at the top. The GoK can show it is serious by dismissing or arresting ministers involved with corrupt practices and holding other high-level violators accountable.

Family members of government officials cannot be exempt. Qualified professionals should be appointed to anti-corruption prosecutorial and judicial posts. Enhancing the Anti-Corruption Agency

and implementing the Strategy and National Plan would further institutionalise efforts.

The optimum time for privatisation was 2003-2005 when international interest was higher and more capital was available. While proceeding, the GoK should guard against a cheap sell-off by refurbishing assets to maximize their value and, in the case of KEK, strengthening its balance sheet through improved billing and collection rates.

Civil society watchdog groups need more political and financial support. So does independent media, which has been threatened for criticizing local and GoK officials. The GoK can more effectively fight organised crime by filling legislative gaps. Kosovo needs an "Anti-Mafia Law", a law on the confiscation of criminal assets, and witness protection provisions. Like Albania, the GoK should make prevention and prosecution of human trafficking a priority.

Special assistance is needed for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). As the engine of market-led economic growth, SMEs are critical to job creation and broadening the tax base. "One-stop shops" for business registration and licensing, including online registration and tax payments, would further streamline the bureaucracy of doing business, depoliticise the registration process, and help counter corruption.

At the municipal level, measures are needed for standardised registration procedures, uniform rules for construction permits and contract enforcement.

Despite its problems, the international community can do more to help. When the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development makes Kosovo a member, it should work with private banks to increase financing for SMEs through a loan guarantee programme mitigating the exposure of Kosovo's nascent banking sector. The GoK can also infuse capital into the credit system by dedicating a portion of the privatisation trust fund to set up an SME loan program offering low-interest financing and other concessional terms.

A European perspective is essential to

consolidating progress and galvanising additional reforms. To this end, the EC should provide a roadmap in its 2010 Progress Report and upgrade its "tracking mechanism" by offering a Stability and Association Agreement. The EC should also accelerate its visa liberalisation dialogue with Kosovo.

Despite its strong mandate to strengthen the administration of justice and help fight corruption, not a single high-profile corruption case has been brought by EULEX prosecutors, although recent raids on the Ministry of Transport indicate that this may change. The GoK should take the lead arresting and prosecuting violators. If it does not, EULEX should step-in and set the standard.

The United States is beloved for leading NATO's military action and stewarding its coordinated declaration of independence. In addition to the \$100 million in foreign aid this year, the Obama administration should make Kosovo a beneficiary of the Millennium Challenge Corporation earmarking funds for good governance through its "Threshold Program" and putting Kosovo on the path to becoming a "Compact Country". A Kosovo-American Enterprise Fund could be another useful development tool.

Kosovo's political leaders appreciate the seriousness of Kosovo's challenges. They must not be deterred from tackling them in the near-term. Reforms will have the added benefit of boosting Kosovo's campaign to gain greater global recognition. Transparent and effective governance anchored by the rule of law and a strong private sector will show the world that Kosovo is ready to take its rightful place in the family of nations.

*David L. Phillips has worked on Albanian issues for more than 20 years. He is currently director of the Program on Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding at American University and author of a recent report by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy - "Realizing Kosovo's Independence."*  
[www.ncafp.org/reports\\_2010.htm](http://www.ncafp.org/reports_2010.htm)

## Dear Teta Mia...



Teta Mia solves your problems

Where on earth have you been?

Seeking Teta Mia, Prishtina

aha Seeking Teta Mia, well might you ask. Where, indeed, haven't I been over the past few days? After 2,400km on the road since Thursday, I can now confidently pass judgement on the Western Balkans' disparate border regimes, Turkish coffee vendors and petrol stations.

My itinerary roughly - but oh-so-very-roughly - went thus: Mitrovica to Mostar, Mostar to Belgrade, Belgrade to Medare, Medare to Belgrade, and finally Belgrade to Prishtina. But the twists and turns in between stops were a lesson in Balkan history, geography and culture.

Accompanied by a tame Krajina Serb (we'll call him Dusan) in the honourable position of map reader, we cut an odd sight at the twelve or so border crossings we encountered. "Is the car registered to you?" a puzzled border guard would ask Dusan. "No," he inevitably replied. "It's registered to her husband."

No further comment passed any of our uniformed interlocutors' lips as their facial expressions collapsed in bemusement at the pairing of this Establishment young British woman and her mischievous, tattooed passenger.

Our favourite border crossing has to be in the far north-west corner of Montenegro. Lit only by a thousand sparkling stars in the depth of the night, the residents of this tiny cabin included two border guards and a cleaning lady, with a stove and a computer and not much space to move.

Having handed over our passports, green card insurance and car registration documents, Dusan and I looked up to see a large, "Welcome to Serbia!" sign.

We turned. Faced each other. Blasphemed. And as Dusan ran up to the guard to retrieve our passports, the guard smiled understandingly: "Ah - did you want to go to Bosnia? Ten kilometres back down the mountain, you'll see a sharp hairpin right turn. Follow that for another 20 km and you'll get to Bosnia." At this stage, we tried the GPS on Dusan's BlackBerry. But while helpfully giving us the speed of the car (minutes, if not hours, of fun), it - like us - had no idea where we were or where we were going.

You will be pleased to discover, Seeking Teta Mia, but not nearly as pleased as we were at 11.30pm, that Gorazde now has one - rather fancy - hotel, and soft fresh bread rolls for a 6am breakfast. And while its scars still sear, its pride and raging river - and new hotel - should draw admiring visitors from all over the world.

A truckers' road stop just outside Pale provided by far the best Turkish coffee in all our travels. Mostar, while beautiful, failed to serve up this regional delight in any of the five places we asked, despite all the souvenir shops selling gjezvehs (and earrings, and football t-shirts, and used military hardware).

However, the Krajina Serb and I did enjoy the delicious paradox of drinking respectively Karlovacko and Sarajevsko beer on the East Side. The LukOil petrol stations on the Belgrade-Nis highway are my recommendation for a quick sandwich and coffee - and, on the initiative of an excellent but sadly temporary co-driver (childishly ecstatic at the chance to captain a right-hand-drive vehicle for 300km), ice cream. But the early strawberries we were given by a middle-aged blonde woman on the Mostar-Sarajevo road (cultivated by returnee families in Gacko) won 2010's Sublime Road Victuals award.

After all this adventure, Belgrade was somewhat of an anticlimax, for two key reasons: First, I found our hotel and a handy though expensive car park with no wrong turns, despite the Labyrinthine one-way system; and secondly, because I was too damn tired to sample more than a "dunja" of this uber-cool city's nightlife.

Our border-zipping and slipping certainly undermined my prejudice against all people uniformed: with a couple of exceptions, everybody was polite, efficient and friendly. And our drive was completely stunning, aided by my companion's maxim: "Work out where you are first, and then double check with the peasants."

But you know what, Seeking Teta Mia? I was so pleased to be home, in Kosovo. It might not be as clean, or as ordered, or as dramatic as the three other countries we passed through. But it turns out, I have found Teta Mia: She's at home, in Kosovo.

## Outside In

# The Dutch Sweating Agent



By Kreshnik Hoxha

Some loathe him; others lionise him for his bold statements. I, for one, think that for the first time in 11 years, an international, the so-called Kosovo's Dutch Sweating Agent, Johannes Van Vreeswijk, has finally hit the nail on the head.

It was a momentous fortnight that has just passed across Europe. But, the cliffhanger came from Kosovo, right from the heart of EULEX, leaving everyone in suspense about what will follow next.

In the aftermath of the Limaj drama, a disgruntled and totally snide Hashim Thaci appeared on RTK expressing his disappointment for being kept out of the loop and branding the actions unprofessional. The PM's insinuations had clearly aggrieved Van Vreeswijk, who showed his teeth back at Thaci, telling him where his place is when it

comes to judicial affairs.

The Dutch prosecutor's declarations could shatter the entire political scene in Kosovo. He took us on a guided tour through the fetid swamp of Kosovo corruption, outside and inside government. Van Vreeswijk said that anyone involved in the 'corruption gang' should start sweating.

This is the first time an international has delivered such a strong, cutting and, more importantly, detailed account of what many are keen to sweep under the carpet.

But what does this mean for the political dynamics in Kosovo? The tension between the government and EULEX remains high, even if conciliatory noises have been made in recent days. The opposition have been all too willing to stir things up too, failing to realise that they might end up shooting themselves in the foot.

Van Vreeswijk has stated that piles of evidence are being dusted off from EULEX's shelves, and among these piles there are dossiers about individuals from previous governments in Kosovo

as well as current ministers. This implies that the current political dynamics in Kosovo are likely to change drastically.

The extent of this shake-up is presently unforeseeable; however, the it will be central to the next general election, which could happen a lot earlier than the date pinned in Fatmir Sejdiu's head.

And where does this leave the ordinary citizen? The developments have undoubtedly split the public. Some cynics wonder if there will be any politicians left to vote for, others claim that this was the last thing Kosovo needed prior to the ICJ decisions. But the largest section of public has faith in EULEX to finally eradicate the problems that have been corroding this society for 11 years.

The window of hope has now opened and Van Vreeswijk must ensure it remains that way. I believe the government would be swinging open the windows themselves with all that sweating if they weren't so concerned about open windows - destination defenestration.

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# Ideas Partnership: More than Just a Second Thought



By Belinda Vrapı

“Kosovo is a place of ideas,” said Elizabeth Gowing, one of the founders of the NGO Ideas Partnership. “Over the years, this part of the world has seen some extremely bad ideas. But, swirling around together, the best macchiato and the youngest population in Europe can produce some great ones.”

This small NGO, created by Ms Gowing, her partner Robert Wilton and her friend Ardian Arifaj, attempts to transform good ideas into reality.

“Kosovo is also a place of partnership,” she added.

“And Kosovo understands better than many other countries about the power of partnerships going beyond the streets of Pejton – families connected across Kosovo as well as in the faraway diaspora, and political partnerships which stretch across Europe and the world.”

Ideas Partnership works on Kosovo’s cultural heritage – whether it is the delicate craft of silver filigree, or the solid old wood or stone of cultural heritage sites.

In the last year, the NGO has trained and supported native English-speaking volunteers to run after-school English clubs in Prishtina schools.

The small team has developed a micro-finance project producing



greetings cards incorporating silver filigree, and toured a photography exhibition showcasing Kosovo’s cultural heritage, including markets, mosques, and monasteries, cityscapes and kullas, weddings and holy days.

And Ideas Partnership is currently organising a campaign to ensure that the laws on cultural heritage protection are being implemented in the case of an old house in Prishtina which is due for demolition.

Their work on the environment has focused on a campaign against plastic bags, see the Facebook group you can join ‘Thuaj JO qeseve të plastikës’, and investigating ways of producing alternative

cloth bags in Kosovo.

A long-standing awareness-raising campaign is also being run about the environmental and economic implications for Kosovo of buying local products.

Ms Gowing added: “We are also working in partnership with the Balkans Peace Park Project and the Kosovan NGO, ERA, to run an environmental summer camp in Rugova this summer.

“Young people will learn about the threats to their environment and be supported to present their ideas for protecting the environment to local and national decision makers.

“To unleash their creativity, international volunteers will also

run English teaching and photography projects on the camp.”

“We are a small NGO, relying heavily on giving our own time for free, and receiving help from volunteers and individual donors.

“So far, that’s been enough to enable us to achieve some things we are really proud of.”

But she added that the NGO is always looking for good ideas, time or financial support. If you can help, please contact Ms Gowing on the details below.

*Elizabeth Gowing is a founding member of The Ideas Partnership NGO registered in Kosovo. She can be contacted on 044 661797 or [theideaspartnership@gmail.com](mailto:theideaspartnership@gmail.com)*

## Easy

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### Turkish

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Phone: +381 (0) 38 226 044

## Prishtina Diary

### Gegë coffee bar

Friday, May 21, 2010,  
"Garage 60's Surf Punk, Afro Funk dhe Cosmic Disco Night," starting from 9 pm

### Filikaqa

Friday, May 21, 2010,  
Karaoke, starting from 9 pm, for reservations call 044 788 748

### Full House

Saturday, May 22, 2010,

DJ KC, One of the biggest DJs in the world of Hip Hop & RnB, starts from 10 pm



DJ KC has become one of the biggest DJs in the world of Hip-Hop and R&B with a back catalogue of around thirty mix tapes, a dozen party breaks (vinyls) and an impressive list of sets in the biggest clubs. Over the years, he has earned his reputation as a result of his varied musical tastes (Hip-Hop, R&B, Crunk, Ragga, Reggaeton, etc.) and for his inspiring technical capabilities.

### Pacha Club

Friday, May 21, 2010,

8 Samba Brazilian Ladies & 2 Drummers, starting from 9 pm



Saturday, May 22, 2010,

Samba Show & Labinot Tahiri - Labi, from 9 pm Resident: DJ Fama (Best of Summer Hits)

### Square 21:

Saturday, May 22, 2010

Inter vs Bayern Followed by an After Party at Spray with DJ Tony Touch NY, from 11.30pm



Tony Touch (born Joseph Anthony Hernandez July 2nd, 1969), also known as Tony Toca, is an American hip hop DJ 2010 the legacy continues. He is an icon in Hip-Hop and in the Urban Hispanic genre plus seasoned player in the game, is a true innovator and has revolutionized the DJ game over and over again.

# Prishtina International Contemporary Music Festival

The Remusica festival is bringing innovation and a rich and attractive programme to the Prishtina audience, says composer Rafet Rudi.

The festival, which started on Tuesday, aims to promote contemporary Albanian/Kosovo music on the international scene.

The first day of the festival was dedicated entirely to Albanian music, brought by the Camerata Tirana.

The audience will also enjoy concert recitals of two world known artists from France and Germany - the cellist Dominique de Williencourt and the young trombonist Frederic Belli, who will also perform with the Kosovo Philharmonic.

Remusica this year marks the 75th birthday of the composer Vincenc Gjini, Feim Brahimi, and 40 years of work by composer Bashkim A.Shehu.

The event began in 2002 and this year features even more performing ensembles.

Besides the ensembles, such as Kosovo Philharmonic and its choir and Camerata Tirana ensemble, the following ensembles will take part: Sonoris ensemble from Skopje and Croation Ensemble of Accordions.

Marking the year of Chopin, Remusica will offer a specific concert during which the works of Chopin will be performed by pianist Yllka Istrefi, from England, which will interact with electronic music works based on Chopin music.

Convinced that electronic music attract more young people, Italian Composer Lucio Garau will present the children's



concert based on the Brothers Grimm tales. The educational component, similar to last year's edition, will be marked by the call for composers to create new works - this year reserved for piano miniature works based on Albanian folk music.

But Remusica will not only offer music nights. In an attempt to initiate an international debate on the general problems of organising music festivals, the festival is organising a two-day international conference, on May 22 and 23, with the participation of prestigious European Festival organisers.

## Programme 2010

Friday, May 21

8pm Concert, Chamber Accordion Orchestra, Croatia  
Venue: Red Hall

Saturday, May 22

12pm Remusica Junior, Acousmatic Tales  
Venue: ASK- American School of Kosova,

8pm Concert, Kosova Philharmonic Orchestra, Frederic Belli, trombone; Venera Mehmetagaj Kajtazi, flaut; Toshio Yanagisawa, conductor;  
Venue: Red Hall

Sunday, May 23

8pm Kosova Philharmonic Choir  
Venue: Catholic Church "St.Anthony"

9.30pm REMUSICA Electroacoustic Night, Carte Blanche Lucio Garou, Italy  
Venue: ASK- America School of Kosova

Monday, May 24

8pm Open Podium, Croatian Artists, Danijel Detoni, piano & Petra Kusan,cello  
Venue: National Library

Tuesday, May 25

12pm Pedagogic Concert, Miniatures for Piano based on Albanian folk music  
Venue: M.S "Prenk Jakova"

8pm "Intorno a Chopin" Concert, Yllka Istrefi, England  
Venue: National Library



## Cinema

ABC Cinema continues to screen the movies Libertas at 5 pm, and the movie Robin Hood at 7.30 pm and 10 pm.

ABC Cinema will start screening the movie "Besa" from May 28, 2010. The movie represents the period of the beginning of the First World War, where a Serb, Filip, needs to go to Belgrade, and leaves alone his Slovenian wife, Lea, in a small city in Serbia, where she is a teacher. The school employee, Azem, an 'uneducated person', promises to Filip that he will look after his wife and the film follows his efforts to keep his word.



## Odyssey Bistro Bar

We invite you for two live performances in Odyssey Bistro Bar. On Friday at 21:30 pm Flaca with our own house band and on Saturday at 21:30 pm Nita with the House Band band so we will make sure that you will have a musical weekend with great atmosphere, see you there

Ju ftojme për dy performanca live në Odyssey Bistro Bar; të premten në ora 21:30 do t'ju argëtojmë Flaca me bendin tonë, si dhe të shtunën në ora 21:30 Nita & House Band. Do të sigurohemi që ju të keni një vikend muzikor me atmosferë të shkëlqyer. Shihemi aty

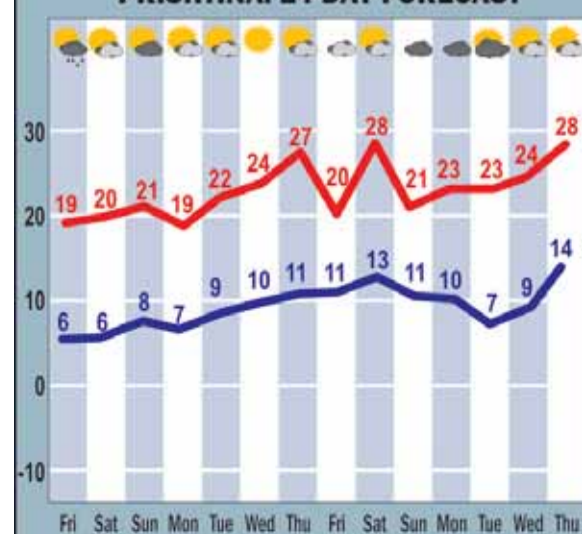
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