

Prishtina Insight

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Prishtina University's 4,000Euro "Gold" Award

The rector of the University of Prishtina, Muje Rugova, and his deputy travelled to New York last week to pick up a questionable award, costing 3,900 euro.

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Wesley Clark Seeks Licence For Oil in Kosovo

The US General who led NATO's campaign against Serbia in 1999 has asked Kosovo's government for a licence to transform the country's untapped coal reserves into fuel, a letter obtained by Prishtina Insight reveals.

By Petrit Collaku, Fatmir Aliu

He has roads in many Kosovo cities named after him and even a driving school, but former US General Wesley Clark is now looking to further strengthen his ties with the country that venerates him for his role in the 1999 war.

Now chairman of the Canada-based energy firm Envidity, Clark is returning to Kosovo with a mining application to drill across the Dukagjini region for previously undiscovered coal reserves, which would then be transformed into synthetic fuel.

Using little-known techniques – Underground Coal Gasification and Gas to Liquid processes – the

firm hopes to produce up 100,000 barrels of the fuel per day – or 15 million litres.

This would make the Kosovo operation one of the largest of its kind in the world, and, according to Envidity, bring \$8 billion of investment to Kosovo.

The firm also boasts that it would make Kosovo self-sufficient in diesel and aviation fuel within six to seven years.

The synthetic fuel – diesel and naphtha – can be used to generate electricity, fertilizer and produce plastics. The fuel has also been tested successfully by the US Air Force to power its fighter jets.

Envidity, which has now set up a branch in Kosovo, Envidity Energy Kosova LLC, applied to the

government on April 25 for the licence, which has not yet been granted.

"After granting of the exploration licence, we propose to employ advanced drilling and seismic technologies to determine what new, deep coal resources may exist in the Dukagjini Basin area of Kosovo," Chief Executive Jeff Brook wrote in the application letter, which was copied to the firm's chairman, Wesley Clark, and which Prishtina Insight obtained.

"Our exploration will be conducted outside the area currently identified as suitable for surface coal mining techniques," it continues.

"Furthermore, this exploration may also prove up additional sur-

face minable resources which we will relinquish to the Government."

Drilling in Dukagjini:

The study will look first at the Dukagjini area of western Kosovo and then at the "South Kosovo" basin, near the city of Prizren.

"If, as we suspect, significant deep coal deposits can be proved up in both the Dukagjini and South Kosova basin areas, then Envidity proposes to proceed with a significant expansion and development of this untapped resource, first in the Dukagjini Basin and later in the South Kosova basin area," the firm wrote.

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Serbian and Albanian Contrasting History

Serbian and Albanian children in Kosovo learn different versions of history, both of which are biased and incorrect, says research conducted by the Belgrade University Centre for Peace Studies.

According to the research paper, "Ethnic stereotypes and national myths as an obstacle to..."

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New Countries, New Views on Tito

"Josip Broz Tito. Politician. He was the president of Yugoslavia. A womanizer. He had a lot of women. Everybody lived well during his times. There was a lot of money."

This was the way a high school student from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina ...

feature

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Wesley Clark Seeks Licence For Oil in Kosovo

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The initial phase would see the creation of a "demonstration" plant that will produce 1,500 barrels a day using the "Fischer-Tropsch" process, already in commercial use in China and Canada.

The Fischer-Tropsch process is a chemical reaction that converts a mixture of carbon monoxide and hydrogen into liquid hydrocarbons, such as diesel.

The process produces a synthetic lubrication oil and synthetic fuel, typically from coal, natural gas, or biomass.

It has received intermittent attention as a source of low-sulfur diesel fuel and to address the supply or cost of fuel, but remains relatively unknown.

Envidity has recently launched a programme similar to its Kosovo plans in Mongolia.

The largest-scale implementation of Fischer-Tropsch technology is a series of plants operated by Sasol in South Africa, a country with large coal reserves but little oil.

Confusion over licence

Selveti Grajevci, from the Independent Commission for Mines and Minerals, ICMM said that the commission had met with representatives of Envidity after it applied for the licence.

"For the time being we cannot issue the licence to Envidity because the law on mines and minerals treats energy minerals differently. There should be a government call, opening a tender process for this," Grajevci told Prishtina Insight.

Under Article 18 of the law on mines and minerals, "Licences Subject to Competitive Award Process" and any "Exploration or Mining Licence" related to an energy mineral must be offered as part of an open, transparent and competitive tender process.

Gezim Baxhaku, advisor to the Minister for Economic Development Besim Beqaj, said the ball was in the ICMM's court. He added that the government had planned its own survey of these

underground reserves, which was temporarily on hold because of a dispute over the tender award process.

"All requests will be reviewed and evaluated according to the foreseen procedures by law," Baxhaku said. "In this particular case for any offer we will go through a competitive process."

Baxhaku said it was up to the ICMM to initiate the process. "We haven't got any proposal from the ICMM. They just can't throw the ball to the government," Baxhaku said.

A former member of the ICMM, Zenun Elezaj, now professor at Metallurgical Faculty in Prishtina, welcomed the project, saying it would be a boon for Kosovo.

"The project is very important," he said. "It will use lignite areas to a depth of 250 metres," he explained.

"By applying this method, there is no need to destroy the surface land, because the burning happens underground, with no need to create a huge ash disposal site."

The firm is offering Kosovo approximately 30 per cent of all revenue from the project, which could amount to 300 million euro a year.

"Kindly note, the Government has no financial risk, as Envidity will invest its own private equity capital in this strategic project; a project that has the ability to provide Kosovo with transportation fuel self-sufficiency within six to seven years," the letter from Envidity reads.

Hero to Albanians:

Clark, according to his biography on the Envidity website,



Wesley Clark in his days as a US General

retired from the US Army after 38 years as a "four-star general".

In his last assignment as Supreme Allied Commander Europe he led NATO forces to victory in Operation Allied Force, "saving 1.5 million Albanians from ethnic cleansing", he writes, referring to the 1999 Kosovo conflict.

Clark remains a hero to Kosovo Albanians and has streets named after him in Peja, Prizren, Vushtrri, Ferizaj as well as a driving school in Fushe Kosovo.

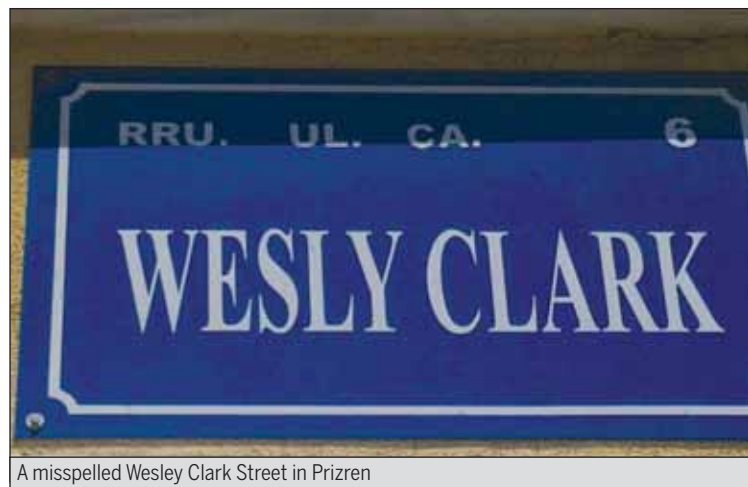
Valdet Drenovci, owner of Auto

Shkolla "Wesley Clark" in Fushe Kosove, said that he had named his school after the general because of his contribution to creating Kosovo.

"We all know what he did for our people. He has provided the biggest contribution to the liberation of Kosovo," Drenovci added.

"We have many clients who visit our school just because of the famous name of Wesley Clark," he said.

"It is good that Mr Clark is investing in Kosovo."



A misspelled Wesley Clark Street in Prizren

Thaci's Brother Linked to Construction of Intelligence HQ

A construction firm employed by Blerim Thaci, the brother of the Kosovo PM, is also working on the country's most sensitive building – the new headquarters of the Kosovo Intelligence Agency.



By Parim Olluri

One of the most sensitive public buildings in Kosovo – the headquarters of the country's intelligence agency – is being built by a firm that has strong links with the governing PDK, and which appears to have subcontracted part of the work to associates of Prime Minister Hashim Thaci's brother, Blerim.

Prishtina Insight photographed the van of Drenas construction firm "Vëllezërit Asllani" at the headquarters of the KIA last week.

Vëllezërit Asllani is the main construction team for Iliria Building, part-owned by Blerim Thaci, which is building a large residential complex on the outskirts of Prishtina.

Ing Engineering – which won the contract to build the HQ in a secret process – confirmed to Prishtina Insight that Vëllezërit Asllani was among the firms that it had brought in to do the work on the HQ.

Ing Engineering itself has strong connection with the governing PDK of Thaci as one of its senior members, and the brother of the owner, is a PDK assembly member in the town of Suhareke.

Qazim Asllani, owner of Vëllezërit Asllani, initially told Prishtina Insight: "I just parked the van there and it's my prob-



Vellezerit Asllani's van parked outside the intelligence agency HQ

lem where I park my car."

He later told the newspaper that the company employees were working at the new facility, although the company had official-

ly been subcontracted.

Bashkim Smakaj, Director of KIA, said that only Ing Engineering were able to enter the premise.



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Prishtina University's 4,000Euro “Gold” Award

The rector of the University of Prishtina, Muje Rugova, and his deputy travelled to New York last week to pick up a questionable award, costing 3,900 euro.



By Bujar Aruqaj, Lawrence Marzouk

The University of Prishtina has paid almost 4,000 euro for a prize of questionable value and spent thousands more sending its rector and is pro-rector to New York for the luxurious trip.

Muje Rugova, rector of the organisation, and Naser Mrasori, vice-rector, travelled to New York last week to accept the prize from Business Initiative Direction, BID, a company based in Madrid, which organises such events regularly in major international capitals.

The University of Prishtina's students' organisation Studim, Kritik, Vepnim, and a number of international online blogs dealing with consumer issues, have questioned the value of this prize.

“Instead of being an intellectual who develops critical thinking in Kosovo, he[Rugova] is becoming a clown, by accepting fake prizes,” said the student organisation, which has led a long campaign against the rector. “Muje Rugova in the end of his unlawful mandate as the rector of the UP is trying with all means to create and accept “prizes”. He lately awarded himself “Profesor Emeritus”, and now he is accepting the “golden medal.

“BID is not an educational institution and as such is not competent to value universities.”

In order to attend the award ceremony, the university was asked to pay 3,900 euro in advance, which included the costs of one hotel room for two nights and the award ceremony, according to documents obtained by Prishtina Insight.

Rugova and Mrasori were lodged at the Marriott Marquis Hotel for two nights, at a maximum cost of around 550 euro, although hotels usually provide significant discounts for group bookings.

Other costs, including the flights, were paid for by the University. Mrasori told a press conference on Monday that he and Rugova spent just under 1,000 euro during their stay in New York.

But the University has declined to reveal the cost of the plane tickets – usually in excess of 1,000 euro per person between Prishtina and New York – and how much the pair spent while in the UK, where they remained for extra days following the ceremony.

Prishtina Insight has secured the letter of invitation to UP from BID, as well as a series of other documents, in which it labels the university a “business” or “company” throughout.

The letter is addressed to the “Universiteti e Prishtines”, even though the document is in English, and to an unnamed “General Manager”, rather than to a specific person.

The documents also outline the basic cost of 3,900 euro for the awards, as well as suggesting that other services, such as organising media interviews are not part of the basic package.

When challenged over why the University of Prishtina had won the “gold” prize, Sandra Balkan, of BID, told Prishtina Insight that the



university had been carefully selected on the basis of “100 points”, even though she admitted that no-one had visited the university before the decision and she would not say whether anyone could speak Albanian in order to evaluate the performance of the education facility.

“This [the prize] is absolutely not something that we give to everyone,” she said, pointing that more than 100 people were awarded prizes in New York.

Online blogs have also called into question the award, one pointing out that a company which had been inactive for many had been given the prize.

A consumer watchdog blog, based in Botswana, wrote: “The reader who “won” this award hadn’t traded since 2003.”

Another blog in the Maldives also asked “why on earth would a plaque be awarded to a firm in Maldives for selling PCs?”. The website went on the point out that the “media sponsor” of the awards are actually run by the same parent company of BID.

Leaders of the UP, at a press conference on Monday, attacked the media for criticising UP’s attendance.

“The latest articles and declarations in the media that have to do with the prize-giving for “quality” for the UP are coming from certain individuals and groups,” said rector Rugova.

“These individuals and groups are dealing with defamation and are stopping the progress of the UP” he continued.

Mrasori argued that the university did not pay 3,900 euro for participating in the conference, but for “membership”. Documents from BID, however, clearly describe the 3,900 euro cost as “participation cost” for the two-day event.

The rector said that legal action would be taken against journalists who slandered him and that they have addressed this issue at the Public Municipal Prosecutors office to investigate his handling of the case, as well as the media.

Business Initiative Direction, in a written statement, said: “BID will not accept any defamatory statements made against its name, image or reputation through any medium whatsoever and will vigorously defend itself and take all legal action available against any party making statements.”

Editor’s Word The Professor’s New Prize



By Lawrence Marzouk

Many years ago lived a professor, who thought so much of how others saw him that he spent all his time worrying of his image; his only ambition was to be lauded by his peers and win prizes. He did not care for his books, and the theatre did not amuse him; the only thing, in fact, he thought anything of was to flaunt his prizes. He had a prize for every hour of the day.

The great city where he resided was very gay; every day many strangers from all parts of the globe arrived. One day two strangers contacted the professor; they recounted how they were great prize-givers, and declared they had a finest golden trophy to offer him. The prize was not only the envy of everyone but such a prize would be invisible to any man who was unfit for his office or unpardonably stupid.

“That must be wonderful prize,” thought the professor. “If I were to receive such a prize I should be able to find out which men in my empire were unfit for their places, and I could distinguish the clever from the stupid. I must have this prize for me without delay.” And he gave a large sum of money to the strangers, in advance, so that they should set to work.

They asked for the finest gold to make this prize; but all they got they did away with.

“I should very much like to know how they are getting on with the gold,” thought the professor. But he felt rather uneasy when he remembered that he who was not fit for his office should he not see it. Personally, he was of opinion that he had nothing to fear, yet he thought it advisable to send somebody else first to see how matters stood. All were anxious to see how bad or stupid their neighbours were.

“I shall send my honest old minister to the weavers,” thought the professor. “He can judge best how the stuff looks, for he is intelligent, and nobody understands his office better than he.”

The good old minister went into the room where the strangers sat before the empty prize. “Heaven preserve us!” he thought, and opened his eyes wide, “I cannot see anything at all,” but he did not say so.

“Now, have you got nothing to say?” said one of the strangers, while he pretended to be busily engraving. “Oh, it is very pretty, exceedingly beautiful,” replied the old minister looking through his glasses.

“We are pleased to hear that,” said strangers.

Now the strangers asked for more money and gold, which they required to finish the prize. They kept everything for themselves.

Soon afterwards the professor sent another honest courtier to the prize givers to see how they were getting on, and if the trophy was nearly finished. Like the old minister, he looked and looked but could see nothing, as there was nothing to be seen.

“Is it not a beautiful prize?” asked the two strangers, showing and explaining the magnificent pattern, which, however, did not exist. “I am not stupid,” said the man. “It is therefore my good appointment for which I am not fit. It is very strange, but I must not let anyone know it,” and he praised the prize,

which he did not see. “It is very excellent,” he said to the professor.

Everybody in the whole town talked about the precious prize. At last the professor wished to see it himself, while it was still on the plinth. With a number of courtiers, including the two who had already been there, he went to the two clever strangers, who now worked as hard as they could.

“Is it not magnificent?” said the two old statesmen who had been there before. “Your Majesty must admire the colours and the pattern.” And then they pointed to the empty plinth, for they imagined the others could see the prize.

“What is this?” thought the professor, “I do not see anything at all. That is terrible! Am I stupid? Am I unfit to be professor? That would indeed be the most dreadful thing that could happen to me.”

“Really,” he said, turning to the weavers, “your prize has our most gracious approval,” and nodding contentedly he looked at the empty plinth, for he did not like to say that he saw nothing. All his attendants, who were with him, looked and looked, and although they could not see anything more than the others they said, like the professor, “It is very beautiful.” And all advised him to carry the new trophy at a great procession which was soon to take place.

The whole night previous to the day on which the procession was to take place, the strangers pretended to work, and burned more than sixteen candles. At last they said: “The professor’s new prize is ready now.”

The professor and all his barons then came to the hall; the strangers held their arms up as if they held something in their hands and said: “This is the prize!”

“It is as light as a cobweb, and one must feel as if one had nothing in one’s hand; but that is just the beauty of it.”

“Indeed!” said all the courtiers; but they could not see anything, for there was nothing to be seen.

“How well its looks!” said all. “What a beautiful pattern! What fine colours! That is a magnificent prize!”

The master of the ceremonies announced that the bearers of the canopy, which was to be carried in the procession, were ready. The chamberlains, who were to carry the long ribbons which dangled from the trophy, stretched their hands to the ground as if they lifted up the material, and pretended to hold something in their hands; they did not like people to know that they could not see anything.

The professor marched in the procession under the beautiful canopy, and all who saw him in the street and out of the windows exclaimed: “Indeed, the professor’s new prize is incomparable!” Nobody wished to let others know he saw nothing, for then he would have been unfit for his office or too stupid. Never professor’s prize was more admired.

“But he has nothing at all,” said a little child at last. “Good heavens! listen to the voice of an innocent child,” said the father, and one whispered to the other what the child had said. “But he has nothing at all,” cried at last the whole people. That made a deep impression upon the professor, for it seemed to him that they were right; but he thought to himself, “Now I must bear up to the end.” And the chamberlains walked with still greater dignity, as if they carried the ribbons which did not exist.

All characters appearing in this work are fictional. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, at is purely coincidental.



Kosovo Scientist Claims Einstein Was Wrong

His work attacking Einstein's theory of special relativity may have been dismissed by peers, but Dr Shukri Klinaku, a politician turned physicist, remains square behind his new book.



By Muhamet Hajrullahu

Shukri Klinaku was the vice president of the National Movement for Liberation of Kosovo, NMLK, formed in 1993 by a faction of the dissident Marxist-Leninist organisation People's Movement of Kosovo, the founding base of the Kosovo Liberation Army guerrilla movement.

Now he is a physicist on a mission – to disprove Einstein's Theory of Special Relativity.

Klinaku, 45, born in Mazgit near Obilic, has released his thoughts in a book "Relative Movement, the Correct Explanation and Mistakes of Einstein" a few weeks ago.

"I think that it's not just the theory of Einstein that is a mistake, but there are errors from A to Z," said Klinaku.

"The whole theory of Special Relativity of Einstein is wrong, who is not the creator but an heir of this theory.

"This theory purports to explain relative motion, but relative movement is not as complicated as is presented in the theory of special relativity and not as complicated as the public is told by the physicists," he added.

Klinaku said: "We daily have to deal with relative motion. So

if it was so complicated, we would be confused with every step."

The scholar, mostly known for his political activities, also stated that the theory of Special Relativity is accompanied by other errors which in the end are reflected in mathematical formula.

Klinaku says he has explained in his book Einstein's errors but he admits that this work has not been well received by his colleagues at the University of Prishtina.

"The students were surprised and curious," said Klinaku. "I was more bothered that most of my physicist colleagues have taken an unusual attitude, some sort of incomprehensible rejection. First we need to study then give judgements. But this is also a factor of the abnormal situation that prevails in the scientific education in Kosovo."

The former vice-president of the National Movement for Liberation of Kosovo said that ideas are ridiculed and underestimated, but little analysed in Kosovo society.

"If the education system; col-



"Not a joke" Shukri Klinaku

lege, university, science was better organised, then my idea would have been received much better. The national Science Council, the Ministry nor the Academy of Sciences are giving ideas to develop science further, they are just there for the sad sake of being there." He added that the book had a much better reception in Tirana.

Klinaku wants his book not to be taken as a joke, not even in Kosovo. "I'm not asking for them to applaud me nor to believe me - never. I would be happy if they would read the book and then give their judgements, not first the judgment without reading it or basing their opinions on what others say," he concluded.

Kosovo Petrol Smugglers Detained For Month

Three of six arrested petrol smugglers have been remanded for a month by a EULEX pre-trial judge while the others were put under house arrest.



By Fatmir Aliu

Kosovo businessman Mentor Beqiri, his brother, Albert, and another businessman, Halil Hasani, will spend one month in detention, a EULEX judge decided last Thursday.

Three other suspects, Enver Tahiri, Jahe Osmani and Vesat Imeri, all businessmen, have been put under house arrest for 30 days, after the pre-trial judge decided grounds existed to support prosecutors' claims that the six are part of a large organised crime group.

"The six suspects are charged with organised crime, tax evasion, fraudulent evasion of import duty and excise tax and money laundering. They are all suspected of having taken part in smuggling fuel in Kosovo," the EULEX statement said.

Police from the EU's law and order mission arrested the six suspects as part of a drive against organized crime in the northern, Serb-run fragment of Kosovo.

The six are believed to include partners of the controversial Kosovo Serb businessman Zvonko Veselinovic.

The police operation, according to EULEX, is part of a major investigation into petrol smuggling from the Serb-run north of Kosovo to the country's southern municipalities.

According to EULEX, during the May 29 police operation many luxury cars and other items were seized from the suspects.

Mentor Beqiri, who lives in Vushtrri, is suspected of being the main contact with Veselinovic in the petrol business.

The six men, according to the prosecution, in a joint enterprise with Veselinovic created a chain of gas stations under different names such as "BT Petrol", "Jamo", "Mab", "Oil Kosovo."

Last week, EULEX forces raided Veselinovic's home in the village of Doljane near Zvecan.

Veselinovic and his brother Zarko are wanted on nine charges, including the murder of a Kosovo Albanian police officer and an attack on UN and NATO personnel.

Last October, a New York Times article on smuggling in Kosovo referred to Veselinovic and Mentor Beqiri as figures involved in this trade.

Beqiri was arrested earlier in 2006, 2007 and 2009, but no charges were raised against him.

Serbian and Albanian Contrasting History



By Marija Ristic

Serbian and Albanian children in Kosovo learn different versions of history, both of which are biased and incorrect, says research conducted by the Belgrade University Centre for Peace Studies.

According to the research paper, "Ethnic stereotypes and national myths as an obstacle

to reconciliation: Serbian-Albanian relations", both Serbian and Albanian history textbooks are full of stereotypes, generalisations and black and white views of the past.

Serbian history text books curriculum have been designed by the Ministry of Education of Republic of Serbia, and they are used in all schools across Serbia.

"There is no direct violence and conflict between ethnic Serbs and Albanians [in Kosovo], but we are far from reconciliation. When you look at the history texts you see polar opposite views," says Goran Tepsic, one of the researchers at the Centre for Peace Studies.

Tepsic noted that one of the biggest curiosities of the research was the way that Albanians and Serbs use the same words to describe each other – accusing each other of being violent, robbers, and discriminatory. The Albanians also tend to describe the Serbs as genocidal.

"With this kind of history teaching both sides are just legitimising the violence and the conflict," he adds.

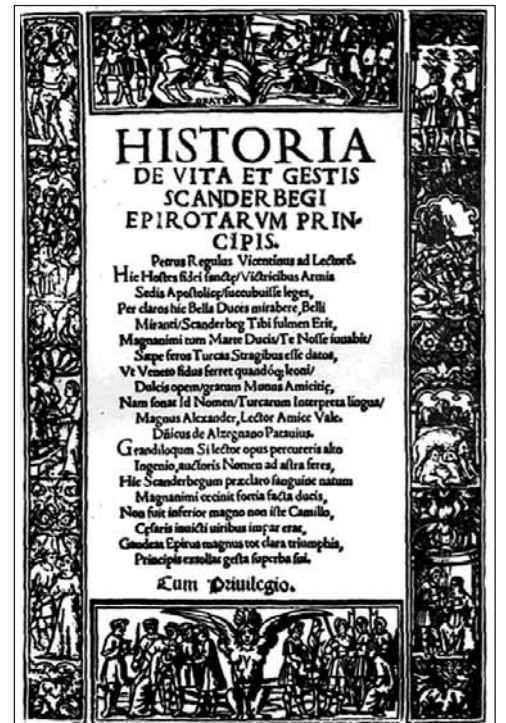
Albanian-language history textbooks in Kosovo say that Kosovo has been Albanian territory since the 4th century BC and that the Albanians are the direct descendants of the ancient Illyrian people, and as such, have always been dominant nation in the area of today's Kosovo.

Serbian books describe Kosovo and Metohija as their holy land, where Serbs were the majority throughout history until they were expelled by the Ottomans and Albanians.

Serbian children are taught that their biggest historical enemies were the Turks and those who converted to Islam following the Ottoman invasion, such as Bosniaks and



Some Serb historians claim Skenderbeg as theirs.



Albanians.

Albanians textbooks say that their biggest enemies are Slavic people or as the textbooks describe it "their united chauvinist neighbours". Serbs are seen as the invaders, dictators and the nation that always terrorised the Albanians.

However, both ethnicities see themselves as the defenders of Europe from the Ottomans, while Serbs are also defenders of Christianity from Islam.

Albanians and Serbians also blame each other for "stealing a hero". Albanians claim the Serbian hero from the Middle Ages, Milos Obilic, as their own, since he has an allegedly Albanian background and in their history is called Milos Kopilic.

Serbs on the other side, claim that one of the biggest Albanian heroes Skenderbeg is actually a Serb.

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Naser Kelmendi: NGO “Donor” and International Drug Kingpin

Controversial Kosovo-born “businessman” Naser Kelmendi has been placed on the US’s blacklist of “significant foreign narcotics traffickers” just days after he attempted to donate money to an anticorruption NGO in Montenegro.



By Lawrence Marzouk

US President Barack Obama has blocked the property and assets of Peja-born Naser Kelmendi under the “Kingpin Act”, which targets major international drug dealers.

Kelmendi has not been convicted for his alleged drug dealing but has been subject to a number of legal actions in Bosnia, where he has taken up citizenship, and Montenegro.

He, and family members, has business and property in Kosovo, mostly in the Peja region.

Last year, he admitted illegal construction of a hotel in Montenegro’s Ulqin. Work started on Casa Grande in 2009 without a building permit. Kelmendi continued building the hotel even after the municipal government ordered him to stop.

After pleading guilty, Kelmendi was ordered to pay 10,000 euro to a kindergarten in the seaside resort.

Anti-corruption donation

His conviction for the illegal construction came about in part because of documents uncovered

by Montenegro’s Network for Affirmation of NGO Sector, MANS.

But in late May, it has emerged, Naser Kelmendi paid 200 euro to the joint account of students, workers and MANS for the organisation of against corruption protests, MANS said.

In a statement, the organisation revealed that they returned the money immediately.

Kelmendi gave an interview to Montenegrin media in which he argued that the donation was “in support of the work of directors and non-governmental organisations.”

The money was paid from the account of Kelmendi’s firm Donat.

“I respect the work of these ladies,” he added, referring to MANS, saying that it had provided evidence to the prosecutor alleging that he was corrupt, and that he had been subsequently cleared. As a result, he argued, the organisation had helped “prove that I am not a criminal”.

In response, MANS said: “The recent statement of Naser Kelmendi is proof that organised crime figures are scared of citizens committed to persevering in the struggle to liberate Montenegro. The leaders of organised crime structures in the country have now begun defending their interests.



Mug shot of Naser Kelmendi

“With his statement Kelmendi confirmed that we succeeded in uncovering their plan, demonstrating once again that those structures have a strong influence and connection with some media.

“We will continue to fight in order to ensure that people like Kelmendi end up behind bars, instead of giving interviews to local papers, unless they do so as prosecution witnesses.”

Kelmendi’s attorney, Mithat Koco, told Prishtina Insight that his client wants the chance to prove his innocence of the accusations of illegal business activities.

“All the media just want sensations and make inflammatory claims about him,” the lawyer said.

Referring to his sanction under the Kingpin Act, Koco said he will ask the US authorities to back up their claims that Kelmendi is a criminal. “I need to... ask them to present evidence for this,” Koco said.

EULEX to Exhume Suspected Mass Grave in Mitrovica

EULEX is waiting for a green light from a court in order to start exhuming a suspected mass grave in northern Kosovo, after local residents found two bodies during construction works.



By Fatmir Aliu

Mortal remains of at least two people were discovered during construction works at a private property in the southern part of Mitrovica, near former Yugoslav Army barracks.

EU rule of law mission to Kosovo, EULEX, experts from the Department of Forensic Medicine, together with investigators of the War Crimes Investigation Unit, visited the site in Mitrovica on Saturday.

Local inhabitants and associations of the families of missing persons, suspect that the two bodies found wrapped up in a blanket at the site, are victims of the Kosovo war.

Blerim Krasniqi, EULEX spokesperson, told Prishtina Insight on Monday that EULEX is waiting for detailed analysis.

“Bone samples were taken in order to determine if they are of forensic interest, meaning if

they belong to people who died between 1 January 1998 – 31 December 2000, as a consequence of the 1998-1999 war in Kosovo,” confirmed Krasniqi.

The period is determined by the Kosovo Law on Missing Persons, based on which the Department of Forensics Medicine operates.

Six months ago, close to the same area in the vicinity of the former Yugoslav Army barracks, 55 bodies were recovered. But the forensic teams found that the remains are from World War II, and not the 1999 Kosovo-Serbia war.

Some 1,400 victims of the Kosovo war are still missing. The associations of families of missing persons and Prishtina authorities have recently called upon Belgrade to reveal what happened to their loved ones who went missing during the 1999 war, who are presumed to have been killed by the Serbian security forces.

The same call has been made to the international community to urge Serbia to reveal the information.

Macedonia Contests Critical Roma Refugee Report

Ministry of Social Affairs takes issue with Amnesty report which says it is failing to provide due care for Roma and Ashkali refugees from Kosovo.



By Sinisa Jakov Marusic

A report by the international human rights watchdog Amnesty International says Macedonia is failing to provide due care for some 1,100 Roma and Ashkali who fled Kosovo during the war in the 1990s and remain in Macedonia.

“The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare failed to provide them with the financial assistance and housing required under the 2010 local integration agreement,” Amnesty’s report claims.

Under the agreement, Macedonia is obliged to help refugees who cannot return to Kosovo to integrate into Macedonian society.

Macedonian authorities contest the findings. Davor Politov, spokesperson for the welfare ministry, says they are doing all in their power to help the refugees rebuild their lives.

“We are providing social welfare, paying health and social insurance contributions and paying [housing] rent for some 780

people from Kosovo who wish to stay here,” Politov says, adding that the country is also trying to find them jobs.

Macedonia gives 2,150 denar, (some 35 euro) a month in welfare to each Kosovan refugee.

Politov says the ministry cannot help some 400 others, mainly Roma, who have been denied asylum status.

“They are going to have to find a way to leave the country,” Politov said, adding that Macedonia is not planning to forcefully expel them.

“Macedonia is not expelling us but is not helping us either, and many of us just want the chance of a clean start in life because we are afraid to go back,” one 24-year-old Roma, who came to Skopje when he was 12, said.

This refugee currently lives in Skopje’s biggest Roma settlement of Shuto Orizari.

During the Kosovo conflict, the Roma were seen by the Albanian majority in Kosovo as allies of the Serbian government.

After the Serbian authorities withdrew from Kosovo, many Roma fled, and they fear reprisals if they return.

The adoption of a Law on Asylum and Temporary



A roma settlement on the outskirts of Skopje, home to refugees from Kosovo.

Protection in 2003 made it possible for Roma, Ashkali and Roma who had obtained temporary protection status in Macedonia to apply for asylum.

But in 2007 the European Roma Rights Center, ERRC, and the UN’s refugee arm, UNHCR, became aware that Macedonia had begun to expel about 400

rejected asylum seekers.

Their final appeals for asylum had by then been rejected by the Macedonian Supreme Court on the grounds that no obstacles prevented their return to their place of origin.

Human Right watchdogs and some European parliamentarians have alleged that some Roma

were denied refugee status for purely arbitrary reasons.

The expulsions stopped under international pressure but human rights activists continue to say that only some of the rejected applicants receive proper treatment in Macedonia, as laid down in the 1951 Geneva Convention.

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Ferizaj Pays Dear For 'Deadly' Ancient Glider

The municipality of Ferizaj has spent a quarter of its sport budget on an 18-year-old motorised hand-glider, which experts claim is too dangerous to fly.



By Petrit Collaku

Ferizaj municipality may face searching questions after buying a hand glider for 11,484 euro which Prishtina Insight can reveal was purchased just months before for only 980 euro, less than 10 per cent of the sum that the town council paid.

The aircraft has been purchased for its local aeronautical club, which has just one licensed pilot.

Experts question whether Ferizaj got a good deal in paying so much for an 18-year-old plane which experts said was clearly out of date. Flying in it would be tantamount to "signing a death warrant", one said.

The firm that won the tender to sell the glider to the local authority, General Machinery International, GMI, also from Ferizaj, submitted photos of the glider as part of the bid.

These were taken with the club's only pilot, Ragip Sokolli, in his garage, raising questions about whether the club, or Sokoli, were using the aircraft even before the tender was awarded.

Highflyers?

Two companies, neither of which had experience in the field, submitted bids to supply the town with a motorised glider and two paragliders.

On April 13, GMI was declared the winner, having offered the lower price of 20,390 euro.

The second company, Allmakes Global Services, AGS, based in Komoran, Glogovc, was more expensive by just 820 euro.

The sum of 11,484 euro then went on the motorised glider and the rest on the paragliders.

Under the law on access to documents, Prishtina Insight obtained documents from Kosovo Customs that reveal that one Fatmir Bunjaku bought the 1994 Pegasus from Delta Club, in Prilep,



A photo of Ferizaj's only qualified pilot with the aeronautical new handglider.

Macedonia, for just 980 euro last year.

Prishtina Insight was unable to track down Bunjaku, who imported the vehicle to Kosovo in August 2011.

According to customs documents, transportation of the glider cost 200 euro and an additional 325 euro was paid in import duty, bringing the total cost of the glider to 1,505 euro.

Experts claim that 12,000 euro should have bought Ferizaj a much better plane.

"An Apollo glider with two seats, a 912 engine, brand new, would not cost more than 20,000 euro," said Xhelal Uka, an authorised dealer for Hungarian aircraft firm Apollo. Fadil Gerguri, head of the Prishtina aeronautical club, and Ardall Celina, from the Prizren club, said the most worrying aspect of the story is the glider's age.

"A 1994 aircraft has done its time," Gerguri said. "Flying this machine is like signing your own death warrant." Celina also said that flying an 18-year-old aircraft was dangerous.

"With exposure of the wing to

the sun it should not be used after six years," said Celina, an authorised dealer in Kosovo of the Franco-British company, Ozone, which sells paragliders.

Ragip Sokoli, the only licensed pilot for the Ferizaj club, said that the winning company brought the equipment to his garage to be photographed? because the club had no space to accommodate it.

He denied that the aircraft was dangerous. "I wouldn't risk my life if that were true," Sokoli said.

He added that the age is less important than the number of hours an aircraft has spent in flight. "Some 460 hours of flight for a handglider should not expose you to any risk," he said.

GMI's owner, Faton Bajraktari, told Prishtina Insight that they did not send any documentation regarding the origin of the aircraft to the procurement office of Ferizaj municipality because they had not been asked to.

Bajraktari said the price of glider had increased because it needed new wings and an engine propeller.

According to documents seen by Prishtina Insight, GMI bought the aircraft from the importer for 7,800 euro.

The contract with Bunjaku was agreed on the same day that GMI was declared the winner of the bid by Ferizaj municipality.

"The contract was done that day because I wanted first to know whether I had won the tender. Why buy something when I may not win the tender?" Bajraktari asked.

Ideal Shala, owner of the company Allmakes Global Services, AGS, at first said he had no knowledge that his company had even participated in the tender.

"We do not deal with these bids," he said. "We are representatives in Kosovo for KIA automobile and I had no knowledge of this tender,"

Shala told Prishtina Insight.

But he later checked with the procurement department of the company and rang back to confirm that they had in fact made a bid.

Uruci said.

He added that no contract had yet been signed, although the winner had been announced and the goods inspected.



Nazim Hoxha, an official at the club

Missing documents:

The procurement office at Ferizaj municipality was unable to show the documents of the losing company.

Procurement had only a document from GMI referring to prices and providing pictures of the goods, taken at Sokoli's garage.

The department also had no documents indicating the origin of the glider, insurance, maintenance book and customs records.

"I hadn't thought that they would import the hand-glider into Kosovo and for that reason we have not mentioned it in the tender dossier as a requirement," Abdurrahman Uruci, head of procurement, said.

Uruci added that the evaluation commission was composed of Skender Baftiu, the procurement officer, Agon Zhinipotoku, official at the municipal's department of sports, and Nazim Hoxha, official from the aeronautical club, who signed the papers that all the equipment were as requested by the tender.

"The latter is an expert on these issues and the commission has estimated that everything was OK,"

For 2012, the Directorate of Culture, Youth and Sports at Ferizaj municipality was provided with more than 480,000 euro from the central budget including 100,000 euro for sports.

As part of the 2012 budget, the department allocated 24,000 for sports equipment dedicated to the aeronautical club.

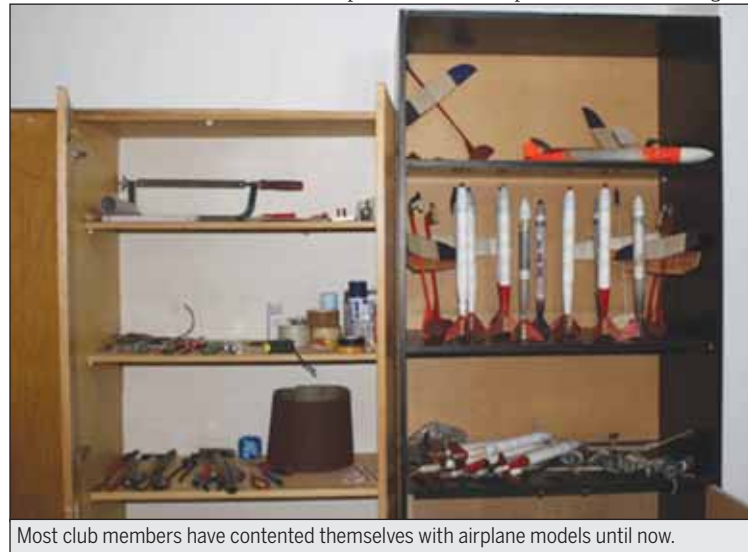
This year, the town's football club received 12,000 euro and the handball team received 7,000 euro.

Aeronautical club chairman Ilazi Xhemajl said that following the purchase of the glider, club members will finally be able to begin to practice with the club's only licensed instructor, Sokoli.

Ilazi said that a group of 15 persons, mostly high school students, were committed to aircrafts and had finished the theoretical part of their course.

"We are pleased and grateful to the municipal authorities for this help. Ferizaj club is well known for aeronautics," Ilazi said.

The club moved to new premises in 2007 and has a workshop where junior members of the club work on airplane models.



Most club members have contented themselves with airplane models until now.

Convicted Drug Lord Opens Betting Shops in Kosovo

Princ Dobrosi, sentenced to 14 years in prison in Norway for heroin trafficking, has received a licence to open betting shops in Kosovo, despite his criminal past.



By Parim Olluri

Princ Dobrosi may be prohibited from entering European Union countries following his past a major player in the drug underworld, but that hasn't stopped him from being licensed to open betting stores in

his native Kosovo.

On March 28 this year at the Business Registration Agency he opened a business called "StarLotoSport" which main activity was listed as "betting".

After 14 days, he requested for a change of business name by registering it as "Eurolive-24", now registered for gambling, betting and as a cafe.

The Kosovo Tax Administration

on May 2, 2012, licensed him to operate "Eurolive-24" as a sports betting company, days before a new law was introduced which prohibits those with foreign convictions from running such businesses.

A Murky Past

In 1994, Princ Dobrosi, originally from Peja, was sentenced to 14 years prison for heroin trafficking in Norway. He was portrayed as a major player in the Albanian drug-smuggling world.

In a well coordinated operation, he escaped from the high-security prison at Ullersmo three years later.

He moved to the Czech Republic, and is alleged to have had a face transplant to avoid detection before again establishing himself as a major underworld figure. In February 1999 he was arrested in Prague.

Later that year he was extradited to Norway to complete his sentence. In January 2005 he was released for good behaviour and returned to Kosovo under armed

guard.

Decision under Review?

The Tax Administration told Prishtina Insight that it plans to cancel Dobrosi's licence at the next opportunity.

This is expected to happen in May 2013, when the current licence runs out.

The current law for Games of Chance, according to officials of TAK, is too weak – a field traditional associated with money laundering.

"The fact is that current law is flawed and weak", said Bekim Fusha, manager for gambling at the Tax Administration of Kosovo.

"We are bound by this law which does not require us to verify people's background.

"The law only requires the applicant to pay for a licence."

Princ Dobrosi's company, according to him, is licensed based on the current law that was adopted in 2004.

"In 2004 the law was passed in order to have a document that governed this area. At that time, these



businesses had begun to develop and there was no law regulating the business activity. This is a flawed law," said Fusha.

"Since 2009 we have wanted to bring in a new law which will be stricter."

A new law entered into effect on June 1 which requires that TAK verifies the backgrounds of applicants.

With the new law, the applicant is required to fill in a form explaining whether he or any family members have been convicted of a criminal offence. "He [Princ Dobrosi] has the licence for a year and in May of 2013 it will not continue," said Jupa.

Dobrosi obtained a licence on May 2 this year a few days before the adoption of the new law on Games of Chance, which prohibits dealing.

Dobrosi told Prishtina Insight that he had done no wrong. "I have sent to TAK documents showing that have not ever been convicted in Kosovo," he said.



Adverts of Princ Dobrosi's new betting shops, Eurolive24

Macedonian Opposition Queries Government Debt Figures

Opposition accuses government of hiding the real size of the country's public debt and of leading the country towards a Greek-style debt crisis.



By Sinisa Jakov Marusic

As Macedonia's Finance Minister, Zoran Stavreski, defended government plans to cut the budget by 5 per cent, opposition Social Democrats on Wednesday contested his estimates about the size of the national debt.

Stavreski, who on Monday survived a no-confidence vote in parliament, insisted that public debt rose to an historic high in 2005, when the Social Democrats were in power.

"The debt was then equivalent to 38.4 per cent of the GDP whereas today it is 26.8 per cent," Stavreski said.

But Igor Ivanovski, a Social Democrat legislator, said this figure was a "manipulation", and then presented a document in which Stavreski allegedly calculated the size of the public debt based on unrealistically high economic growth predictions of 5.8 per cent for this year.

"That is how he reached his favourite figure of 26.8 per cent," Ivanovski said, adding that the real size of the debt was equivalent to at least 30 per cent of GDP.

The government initially came out with an optimistic forecast of a 4.5 per cent growth this year. Amid shrinking exports caused largely by the European crisis, it recently lowered the forecast to 2 per cent.

However, this still looks optimistic as the IMF and the World Bank do not expect more than 1 per cent growth in Macedonia this year.

Opposition parties and some experts say they

are worried by the recent rise in borrowing. In the last six months alone the country has borrowed or agreed to borrow some 460 million euro.

In April the World Bank said it planned to give Macedonia 100 million USD (about 79 million euro) to pursue economic reforms and address health, education and social welfare issues at a time of crisis.

Earlier that month Macedonia took out a loan of 250 million euro from Deutsche Bank to fill the gap in the readjusted budget and refinance euro loan stock. The interest on the bank loan is 6.83 per cent and Macedonia has to return the money in five years.

In November 2011, Macedonia borrowed 130 million euro from the Deutsche Bank and Citibank with a guarantee from the World Bank.

"In the last three years annual economic growth has not exceeded 1 per cent while the [national] debt had risen 6 per cent each year," Social Democrat legislator Marjanco Nikolov claimed.

The opposition argues that since 2006, when the centre-right VMRO DPMNE party of Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski took power, Macedonia has doubled its debt.

"This is surely a Greek scenario," Nikolov said, predicting bankruptcy.

At a session that is still ongoing, the government proposes shaving 5 per cent off the 2.7 billion euro budget, projecting gross savings of some 120 million euro.

"We have made cuts in all ministries and budget beneficiaries without exception," Stavreski said, explaining that they were aiming to even out the impact.



A trader looks on in New York as the market is battered by the faltering Euro

Balkans Face Slowdown, World Bank Warns

Balkan Countries face reduced growth in 2012 amid continuing uncertainties in the Eurozone, a World Bank report published on Tuesday says.



By Besar Likmeta

"After 2.2 per cent growth in 2011, early indications are that Southeast Europe's ... countries are experiencing a significant slowdown to 1.1 per cent growth in 2012," said Zeljko Bogetic, lead economist for the Western Balkans at the World Bank

While the drop to 1 per cent growth would mark a sharp slowdown, Bogetic emphasized that the figure could be even worse, depending on how the Greek economic crisis develops.

In the short term, the report says that several countries must implement sustained fiscal consolidation to reverse adverse debt dynamics and establish a

basis for more dynamic, long-term growth.

At the same time, the countries are facing a considerable structural reform agenda to improve productivity and competitiveness and reform their labour markets and public sectors.

According to the bank, with high levels of public debt and financing pressures, most countries in the region need to adopt significant fiscal consolidation programmes.

"This is the key short-term policy challenge for countries whose public debt-to-GDP ratio has been increasing rapidly," said Bogetic, while underlining that "economic policy must strike a balance between the need to improve public finances and reduce macroeconomic vulnerabilities, on the one hand, and strengthen the economic policy environment for investment, growth, and jobs, on the other".

Income Tax Reform May Revive Serbia's Shaky Finances

Root and branch reform of the way Serbia assesses and collects income tax could inject valuable new funds into the depleted budget, analysts say.



By Olivera Bojic

A Belgrader from Savski Venac municipality with an annual income of 1.6 million euro is the person with the highest registered income in the country, according to the Tax Administration, which says he owes 15 per cent of this amount, about 277,000 euro, a year in personal income tax.

He is one of a few who pay such high taxes in Serbia, where income tax as a percentage of national revenue is far below the European average.

While in most OECD countries individual income tax provides a quarter of total tax revenue, in Serbia it provides only about 10 per cent.

As the Serbian government's arrangement with the IMF was put on hold after the national debt exceeded the agreed ceiling of 45 per cent of GDP, and is currently is at 50 per cent, Serbia must find new ways both to cut spending and increase tax collection in order to pump more money into the budget.

The IMF agreement was frozen in February after the IMF deemed the 2012 budget inconsistent with the agreed fiscal programme. While it was agreed that the fiscal deficit - the gap between state revenues and expenditure - would not exceed 4.25 per cent of GDP [1.3 billion euro], the IMF mission to Belgrade said Serbia had projected a fiscal deficit reaching at least 5.25 per cent of GDP.

Since then the government has not cut public spending. In fact, although the government is obliged not to increase the budget deficit by more than 224 million euro in first three months of 2012, it spent almost double that amount, 413 million euro, in that period.

Christine Lagarde, head of the IMF, recently told the UK's Guardian newspaper that one of the causes of the Greek crisis was Athens' poor rate of tax collection.

"I think they should also help themselves collectively. By all paying their tax," Lagarde told the Guardian.

Analysts say that Serbia also needs to reform its income tax laws and rate of collection in order to bring in more money.

They say this could be achieved through the introduction of progressive taxation - charging more to those who earn more - and introducing an income tax system that would mean taxpayers paying taxes on all their incomes together, not divided into income from wages, real estate or copyright.

Taxable income in Serbia includes

salaries, revenue from agriculture and forestry, revenue from copyright and self-employment and revenue from real estate.

Personal income tax is fixed at 12 per cent on salaries and 20 per cent on other personal income.

In addition, taxpayers whose annual personal income on all revenues exceeds 16,200 pay another 10 to 15 per cent of their annual income.

Those earning between 16,200 euro and 33,000 euro pay 10 per cent extra, while those whose annual incomes exceed 33,000 euro a year pay 15 per cent extra.

In the collection of individual income tax, the largest amount comes from taxes on salaries.

Only about 22,000 people in Serbia earn more than 16,200 euro and pay annual personal income tax. The amount that the state gets from them is about 17 million euro.

Most of the money collected from personal income taxes goes to local government, not the state budget. Under the Law on Financing Local Government, which came into force last October, 80 per cent of the revenue from personal income tax goes to local authorities and 20 per cent to the state budget.

Nothing certain but death and taxes?

Although many people quote the saying that nothing is certain but death and taxes, in fact many Serbs pay no personal income tax.

While the official unemployment rate is 24 per cent, about 700,000 people in Serbia work in the so-called grey economy, working unofficially and thus paying no taxes on their salaries.

As contributions on wages that include personal income tax are equivalent to about 62 per cent of a salary, employers are not keen to register their employees, even if they work full time.

With weak controls in place, many landlords also rent out real estate for years at a time to clients without declaring it or paying any tax on the earnings.

Analysts say that the rate of collection of personal income tax would be much higher if employers' contributions to wages were lower, as employers then would have more incentive to officially employ people.

Sasa Randjelovic, from the Faculty of Economics, says the authorities should also introduce tougher controls on employers to ensure they pay taxes and contributions for their workers.

"The total tax base would then be broader and salary taxes could be collected from more employees," Randjelovic told

Photo story



Record Number of Tourists Visit Dubrovnik, Croatia

There were a record number of tourists visiting the Adriatic resort of Dubrovnik during the first five months of 2012.

According to the Dubrovnik Tourist Board, the Adriatic city received more visitors than last year, which was also a record year.

Between January and June, Dubrovnik had 157,214 arrivals, which was a 12 per cent increase on last year.

The Tourist Board noted 493,167 overnight stays, a 17 per cent increase from the previous year. More than half the overnight stays were in May.

Prishtina Insight.

Also, with average salaries of only 350 euro a month, Serbian employees are not adding much to the state budget.

As the personal income tax rate on salaries is 12 per cent, the average monthly revenue that the state gets from each employee is about 42 euro.

In order to pay less taxes and contributions in general, many employers report that they and their employees earn only minimal wages, while they get far more money in cash.

Randjelovic explains that the state could more efficiently monitor whether people are reporting lower incomes in order to avoid tax and contributions.

By comparing whether someone's property is in line with their declared income, the Tax Administration could get some idea about whether a taxpayer has paid tax on their real income.

"Such a mechanism would especially affect people with high incomes, which would additionally help reduce disparities and motivate other taxpayers to regularly settle their obligations," Randjelovic said.

Thorough reform needed:

Most analysts agree that the whole income tax system needs to reform in order to increase revenues, cut administrative costs of collecting tax and introduce an equitable tax system.

Milan Knezevic, from the Association of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, says the existing system of double taxation - one paid monthly and another paid annually by

those earning above 16,200 euro - creates more work for state officials and thus costs more.

Knezevic believes that Serbia should go for a system that would mean taxpayers paying tax on all their income together, not divided into incomes from wages or real estate.

This system also means that all income could then be taxed at progressive rates and that taxable incomes would include capital income, such as stock dividends.

Economist Jadranka Djurovic-Todorovic said this system would significantly increase budget revenues.

"This system is on one hand fairer, because currently a person who earns 200 euro and one who earns 1,000 pay the same tax of 12 per cent on wages.

"On the other hand, it would bring more money into the budget, because those who earn more would pay more [than 12 per cent]," Djurovic-Todorovic told Prishtina Insight.

Economist Sasa Radulovic believes that tax rates on those working for minimum wages should be zero, the rate should be 20 per cent for those working for any amount above the minimum and 30 per cent and higher for those earning significantly more than the average.

Such tax rates, with lowered or cancelled contributions on wages, such as those for health and pension insurance, would revive the economy.

"In a year or two this would put an end to the grey economy and significantly increase state income and overall economic growth," he maintains.

Montenegro Court Jails Former Mayor of Budva



By Milena Milosevic

A court has handed out jail terms to former mayor of Montenegrin resort, his deputy and nine others in the so-called Zavala case.

Podgorica's Superior Court on Tuesday delivered a first-instance verdict against 11 indictees in the case of illegal construction work at Zavala hill in Budva in 2007 and 2008.

Rajko Kuljaca, former mayor of the coastal resort, and Dragan Marovic, his deputy, were found guilty of abuse of office to the benefit the private

company, Zavala Invest, and to the detriment of the municipal budget.

Kuljaca was jailed for five years, while Marovic, brother of Svetozar Marovic, the former president of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, was jailed for four years.

Nine others, mostly indicted for helping Kuljaca and Marovic,

received a total of 21 years in jail.

One of them, Djordje Pinjatic, is an MP for Montenegro's ruling Democratic Party of Socialists.

Following the verdict, Marovic emphasized his surprise about the length of his jail sentence.

Borivoje Borovic, Kuljaca's lawyer, said the verdicts had

been reached under the pressure of certain foreign embassies.

The EU has made a more effective fight against organized crime and corruption one of Montenegro's seven key priorities, if it wants to advance towards EU membership. The country has been frequently urged to prosecute more high-profile corruption cases.

PHOTO NEWS



Albania Fails to Elect President in Second Round

Monday's parliamentary session for the election of a new president lasted only one minute, after earlier talks between the ruling majority of Sali Berisha and the opposition of Edi Rama on a consensual candidate yielded no results.

The Democrats, led by Prime Minister Berisha, continue to push for the election of Xhezair Zaganjori, a former constitutional court judge and diplomat, as the next head of state.

However, the opposition Socialists rejected Zaganjori's candidature as one-sided and called for talks between the parties to select a candidate who would also receive the blessing of the opposition.

Dispute Over Visegrad's War Victims Memorial

A Bosniak victims' association from Visegrad claims that the town is run by war criminals following a protest by Serbs over the use of the word genocide on a memorial to Bosniak war victims.



By Elvira Jukic

A group of Serb citizens of Visegrad gathered in the center of the town and protested on Saturday against the use of the word "genocide" written on the monument to Bosniaks killed during the war.

The Women - Victims of War group, a Bosniak victims' association, claims in a press release on Wednesday that the protest indicates that the town of Visegrad is still run by Serbs who committed war crimes during the 1992-95 war.

"Graves, mass graves and rapes are the truth", the association said, pointing out that survivors from the war are still searching for the remains of some 1,500 Bosniaks who were killed in Visegrad 1992.

"Yes, it was a genocide, because almost no Bosniaks have returned to their pre-war homes," said Bakira Hasecic on behalf of the victims' organisation.

But the Serbs in Visegrad do not agree. "The Hague Tribunal did not state that genocide was committed in Visegrad," one of the Serb citizens told local media on Saturday during the gathering.

The monument in Visegrad was erected on May 26 at the Muslim graveyard of Straziste where 60 Bosniak victims of the Bosnian war were buried.

The protestors objected to the part of the inscription which reads "to killed and missing Bosniaks, victims of the Visegrad genocide".

The Ministry of Labour and Veterans of Republika Srpska, the Serb dominated entity in Bosnia, called for all officials and NGOs to refrain from making false and unsubstan-

tiated claims about the killings that took place in Visegrad.

"Inaccurate statements and unfounded claims about the armed conflict in the 1990s, from which inappropriate conclusions may be drawn concerning the victims of one ethnic group, leads to the suspicion that individuals are putting out such statements for malicious reasons," the Ministry said.

"Such acts can have unwanted consequences for all the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina."

Victims deserve a monument and respect, the Ministry said, but added that the political misuse of them does not foster tolerance and respect.

The monument was built at the Muslim graveyard of Straziste in Visegrad and is dedicated to Bosniak victims of the Visegrad genocide.

Before the war Visegrad was mainly Muslim. According to the 1991 census, the municipality was home to some 21,000 people of whom around 13,500 were Bosniaks [Muslims] and around 7,000 were Serbs.

Since the ethnic cleansing campaigns of the 1990s, those figures have changed radically and about 95 per cent of the inhabitants of the town today are Serbs. The new census will report the exact figures in 2013.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, ICTY, has sentenced the high ranking Bosnian Serb politicians Biljana Plavsic and Momcilo Krajisnik for the expulsion and murder of non Serb civilians in Visegrad in 1992.

Two men who were directly involved in the war crimes committed in Visegrad, Boban Simsic and Mitar Vasiljevic, were sentenced by the Bosnian Court and the ICTY, respectively, to 14 and 15 years in prison for crimes committed in the town.

Macedonia Launches Paedophile Register

On Sunday Macedonia launched an online register of convicted paedophiles who have been released, containing their pictures, names and addresses.



By Sinisa Jakov Marusic

Macedonia is the first country in the region to publish the online paedophile register and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs insists this will boost children's safety.

"If this measure protects or saves at least one child's life, than it would have served its purpose," Spiro Ristovski, Social Affairs Minister, told media.

The latest government data shows 231 people were convicted of paedophilia between 2004 and 2009. Figures indicate that the number of such cases in the Balkan countries is on the rise.

The move, announced in October last year, is considered problematic by some human rights watchdogs. The Macedonian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights expressed caution noting that the register may encourage individuals to take the law into their own hands.

For sexual offences against minors, the Macedonian law envisages sentences ranging from eight years to life in prison. For other sexual crimes the law stipulates terms ranging from three to ten years in jail.

The law, adopted earlier this year, which



paved the way for the public paedophile register, also empowers the police to observe more closely the ex sex offenders.

They will be tasked with closely monitoring their whereabouts, especially their movements near schools, playgrounds and other areas where children gather.

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Coalition Change Propels Bosnia Towards Fresh Crisis

Change of government, after the Social Democrats expelled the strongest Bosniak party from the coalition, is likely to result in tectonic shifts in politics and new instability.



By Eldin Hadzovic

When two sworn enemies, Zlatko Lagumdžija, leader of Bosnia's Social Democratic Party, SDP, and Fahrudin Radončić, leader of the Union for a Better Future of Bosnia, SBBBiH – as well as owner of Bosnia's most widely read newspaper, Dnevni Avaz – signed a coalition agreement last Friday, many rubbed their eyes in disbelief.

The move gives Lagumdžija's party one more position in the state's Council of Ministers, while one other goes to Radončić's party.

This is because the party that Lagumdžija expelled from the ruling coalition, the Party of Democratic Action, SDA had two seats on the Council.

The changes at the top in the state government also have an impact on the lower levels of government, in the cantons of the larger of Bosnia's two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Previously the SDP and SDA ruled in coalition agreement in the state, the Federation and at cantonal level, except in those cantons that have a Bosnian Croat majority.

What especially raised eyebrows is the idea of Lagumdžija's Bosniak-dominated Social Democrats abandoning a centre-right Bosniak party for Radončić's SBB, which is seen as being on the far-right.

Radončić's newspaper, Dnevni Avaz, is well known for its crude Bosniak nationalism and for its sometimes chauvinistic and homophobic viewpoints.

The change has also brought Radončić's past into the spotlight, with some questioning his fitness to become Bosnia's new Minister of Security, as was announced on Monday.

Troubles in the SDP and SDA coalition have been evident ever since the general election in 2010, as the two parties expressed opposing views over numerous issues related to Bosniak national identity.

The dispute appeared out of control when the SDA refused to vote for the 2012 state budget, refusing to accept a reduction to the budget. The SDA was then outvoted last Thursday, which led that evening to the break-up of the coalition.

Bosnia's current Security Minister Sadik Ahmetović, from the SDA, who will be replaced by Radončić, argues that the SDP's argument about the budget was only a smoke screen.

"The personal interests of both Lagumdžija and Radončić are behind all this turmoil," Ahmetović told Prishtina Insight.

Lagumdžija and some other senior SDP members have been investigated for racketeering in past while Radončić has been named in connection with a suspected drug dealer, Nasser Kelmendi.

Radončić's new post as Ministry of Security, in control of the state's Security, Investigation and Protection Agency, SIPA, will give him control of future investigation processes and resources.

"Radončić is connected to persons blacklisted by the US and the State Prosecution is investigating the case, which has already gone far, while Lagumdžija's SDP is trying to pass a law giving it full control of the police," Ahmetović told Prishtina Insight.

Radončić and Lagumdžija have denied any wrongdoing or involvement with criminal groups.

Analysts are also concerned about the prospect of a media mogul becoming Security Minister.

Nezuk Curak, professor of Political Science at the University of Sarajevo, described the

possibility of a media magnate sitting on sealed sources of information from the intelligence services as "frightening".

Radončić is also often portrayed in the rest of Bosnia's media as a member of the criminal milieu, correlating him with Kelmendi, a Kosovar named by the US as a drug trafficker, as was announced on last Friday.

The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Network, OCCRP, reported that President Barack Obama notified Congress on Friday of having sanctioned Kelmendi under the Kingpin Act, implemented by the US Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).

Kelmendi has also been described by Interpol as the leader of a dangerous international criminal group, trading in narcotics, cigarettes, money-laundering and people-trafficking, as well as being suspected of murder.

Azhar Kalamujic, a journalist from Bosnia's Investigative Journalism Centre, CIN, who investigated the Radončić-Kelmendi connection three years ago, told Prishtina Insight that they based their claims on reports released by SIPA.

"We proved that Radončić had business dealings with Kelmendi through Avaz, while Kelmendi exchanged valuable real estate in Sarajevo and Zenica with Avaz in 2004," Kalamujic told Prishtina Insight.

Radončić on Tuesday rubbished insinuations regarding his relationship with Kelmendi.

Whatever the reasons behind the new friendship between Lagumdžija and Radončić, it follows a long-lasting period of animosity.

The historic rivalry between Lagumdžija and Radončić is full of mutual accusations and defamations.

In an interview with Dani magazine in 2006, Lagumdžija called Radončić "a moral and human pygmy".

"His abnormal need to create a government according to his own taste is fuelled by only one intention – to protect his assets, suspiciously acquired during the [1992-5] war, at all costs," Lagumdžija said of Radončić in the interview.

On the other hand, Radončić's newspaper for years described Lagumdžija as a "servant acting on behalf of Serbian and Croatian interests", and also published unauthorised pictures of Lagumdžija's family members.

"While the head of the SDP is a budget thief and known supporter of the police state, Social Democrat claims that they care about citizens and democracy are false", one of Dnevni avaz's descriptions of Lagumdžija from 2009 reads.

"Lagumdžija must have an incredible desire for power in order to form a coalition with the owner of Dnevni avaz, a newspaper which launched such fierce attacks on Lagumdžija's own privacy," Professor Curak told Prishtina Insight.

Currently, all levels of political structures in Bosnia are bracing for a tectonic shift in power.

At state level there is a perception that radical nationalists are in the ascendancy, as Radončić's party has close ties with the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats, the ruling party in the Bosnian Serb entity, Republika Srpska, led by Milorad Dodik.

Radončić has also an agreement of cooperation with Dragan Covic, leader of the Croatian Democratic Union in Bosnia, HDZ BiH, which advocates the establishment of a third entity in Bosnia for Croats.

The biggest change will occur on Federation



Fahrudin Radončić, leader of SBBBiH, is Bosnia's new Minister for Security.

level where the ruling parties until now, beside SDP and SDA, were two small Croat parties, the People's Party for Work and Betterment, NSRB, and Croatian Party of Rights, HSP.

These will probably be forced out and replaced by Covic's larger Bosnian Croat party and by its sister party, HDZ.

Nermin Niksic, Prime Minister of the Federation entity and a member of the SDP, has already said that the government of the Federation "can't be excluded from the process of change in [the state] government jointly launched by the SDP and the SBBBiH."

Meanwhile Radončić said on June 5 that if the Federation government is reconstructed, "it should reflect the electoral will of Bosnia's Croats", who mainly voted for Covic's HDZ and HDZ 1990.

Due to long procedures and possible blockades by the SDA, which will not give up its positions easily, Bosnia may be heading into a

prolonged political crisis stretching up until local elections, expected in October.

"These changes could cause tectonic shifts and Bosnia is certainly sliding into another crisis," Professor Curak said.

The procedure to form a new parliamentary majority in the Federation is complex and until decisions are made, Curak predicts that at one point all the above named parties will be in power.

"I call that 'the end of politics', because having all parties in government makes no sense and turns democracy into a joke," Curak told Prishtina Insight.

Changes at cantonal level have already taken place. Immediately after the agreement was hatched between the two parties, members of Radončić's party replaced the SDA ministers in all cantonal governments where it was possible.

Dismissals of the SDA ministers have already taken place in the Sarajevo, Zenica-Doboj, Tuzla and Una-Sana Cantons.

Miodrag Zivanovic, Professor of Philosophy in Banja Luka, in Republika Srpska, said that both Lagumdžija and Dodik, leader of the SNSD, "have betrayed the very idea of social democracy."

"We should not speak about Dodik and Lagumdžija seriously any longer, especially after Radončić's party has been included in power," he said.

"It is known that Radončić himself is a man of doubtful reputation, as it is his party," Zivanovic added.

marketing



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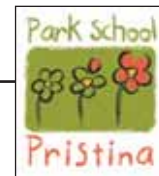
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Serbia's New Team Faces Same Old Challenges

Whichever parties form the new administration, they face the same old inherited headaches - from soaring debt and unemployment to endemic corruption and the unresolved issue of Kosovo.



By Gordana Andric

Serbia awaits a new government, but the tasks the new cabinet faces are quite old.

The new administration must deal first with soaring debt, inflation and unemployment, as well as focusing on EU integration, dialogue with Kosovo and corruption, analysts say.

Once it assumes its duties, the new government will confront the problem of Serbia's out-of-control national debt.

This is now five per cent above the agreed limit of 45 per cent of GDP. As a result of this, the IMF has postponed a fresh arrangement with Serbia.

The agreement was frozen in February after the IMF said Serbia had projected a fiscal deficit reaching at least 5.25 per cent of GDP, having agreed that the deficit would not exceed 4.25 per cent of GDP [1.3 billion].

Unemployment, meanwhile, stands officially at 24 per cent. Inflation is another worry, as is the falling value of the national currency. The dinar hit a new low at the end of May, when it was worth 116 on the euro.

Analysts agree that dealing with economic issues and unfreezing the IMF agreement must be the first tasks of the new government in order to attract foreign investments.

"An agreement with the IMF would bring macroeconomic stability, but I fear the new government will have no plan or strategy when it comes to introducing the measures we need, or the determination and courage to implement them," says economist Sasa Djogovic.

"However, as they have to work with the IMF.... I expect the IMF to push them to do what they have to do. They might try to stall, but they will have to do it," he added.

In order to avoid a Greek-style meltdown, Serbia will have to embrace unpopular measures.

Djogovic told Prishtina Insight that the government will probably

have to increase VAT, currently AT 18 per cent, and reform the complex tax system.

Public sector salaries will have to be frozen, the number of public employees reduced, subsidies to public companies cut and the pension age increased.

Serbian civil servants currently retire at 65 for men and 60 for women.

He suggested that the government will have to sell the state-owned Telekom company to fill the budget gap.

"This government will have to deal with all the mistakes made in the last four years. Unfortunately, I expect they will sell Telekom just to cover the deficit [rather than invest]," Djogovic continued.

Pavle Petrović, from the Fiscal Council, an independent body, said the government must implement tough measures to control inflation.

"The exchange rate is like a high fever and behind that fever is a serious illness," Petrovic said.

In an analysis that the Fiscal Council has prepared for the new government, the body warned that if reforms are not carried out as soon as possible Serbia could face the same problems seen further south in Greece.

No change on EU and Kosovo:

As almost all parties that have entered parliament agree that Serbia should continue EU accession talks and maintain dialogue with Kosovo, which declared independence in 2008 [which Serbia does not recognise], analysts believe that the new government will follow the course set by the previous government in these fields.

Serbia obtained EU candidacy status in March after reaching a deal on Kosovo's right to participate in regional forums.

Further progress in talks with Kosovo is one of the key conditions that Brussels has set for Serbia to take the next step - setting a date for accession negotiations.

The European Commission can recommend a start to accession

talks at any time and will not have to wait for the next progress report on Serbia, due in October.

Although Serbia has said it will never recognise Kosovo's independence, Belgrade and Pristina started EU-mediated talks in Brussels last March to solve practical issues such as freedom of movement, recognition of university diplomas, electricity and communications.

Milan Nikolic, from the Centre for Policy Studies, believes the dialogue will resume as soon as the new government is formed.

"They will continue solving some practical issues... the talks may go back and forth, but they will go forward," he predicted.

Nikolic also believes that Serbia will gain a date for the start of accession talks and enter formal negotiations with the EU.

"After we start accession negotiations we'll have to start changing our laws and continue reforms and their implementation," he added.

But political analyst Jovo Bakic said Tomislav Nikolic's election could be a complicating factor.

"The prejudice that Western Europeans have towards Nikolic, whom they regard as a nationalist, may be used as an excuse to slow down or postpone Serbia's accession," he said.

"On the other hand, regardless of the shortcomings that might be found in Nikolic's past, I'm confident that he wants to move Serbia closer to the EU," Bakic added.

Tackling corruption at last?

Both Nikolic and Tadic have agreed that one of the main goals for Serbia is a more effective fight against corruption.

Petrus van Dijk, professor at Tilburg University in The Netherlands, said many people now believe corruption runs at the same levels in Serbia as it did during the rule of Serbia's late strongman, Slobodan Milosevic.

"The number of people sentenced for corruption is lower than it was in the time of Milosevic and the number of cases entering court procedures is lower now than it was in 2000," Van Dijk said, presenting a report on corruption in Serbia on May 30th.



Serbia's has a new president, but the problems remain the same.

Although experts believe the fight against corruption should be a key priority, they have little faith that the government will be seriously committed to tackling this issue.

Dragana Boljevic, president of the Serbian Association of Judges, said there was little political will to deal with corruption and the judiciary continued to face political pressure.

"Political will means that all cases must be prosecuted, even if they are at the highest levels of government," Boljevic said.

Nemanja Nenadic, from Transparency Serbia, says that a firmer stance against corruption looks doubtful if the new government is formed by the same parties that led the country last time.

"If the composition of the new government is similar to the old one, there is no reason to think they will act differently," he said.

"But, you never know, maybe the new government will be more thorough," Nenadic told Prishtina Insight.

It's the economy, stupid:

Serbia's newly elected President, Tomislav Nikolic, sworn into office on May 31, has now officially become the head of state. His inauguration ceremony will take place on June 11.

The same day parliament holds a sessions to verify the mandates of the new deputies.

As both parliament and the President officially assume their duties, the legal grounds for the formation of a new government have been met.

Under the constitution, Nikolic, as President-elect, is expected to offer a mandate to whichever party won most votes to form a new government.

Parliament must then approve

the Prime Minister and her or his cabinet.

Nikolic's own Serbian Progressive Party won the largest number of seats, 73 of the 250 seats, and thus is first in line to receive a mandate.

But as the Progressives are short of potential coalition partners to form a government, the task may go to the Democrats, who came second with 67 seats.

The Socialist Party of Serbia, SPS, together with its election campaign partners, won 44 seats, and has already agreed to form a new government with the Democrats.

A third coalition partner is yet to be found but it is likely to be the Liberal Democratic Party or the United Regions of Serbia.

Ivica Dacic, leader of the Socialists, has said he would like Boris Tadic, Serbia's outgoing president and leader of the Democrats, to be the next Prime Minister.

After days of mulling over whether to accept the post after losing the presidential elections, Tadic has said yes.

Nikolic meanwhile has announced that he will wait for the parties to end their coalition negotiations and inform him of whether they can form a government by June 4.

If the parties fail to reach agreement by this deadline, he will initiate talks with parties according to the number of seats that each won on May 6, meaning that he will first talk with the Progressives.

Although the parties have until September to form a government, all the key players have agreed that a government should be formed as soon as possible.

Slavica Djukic Dejanovic, for the Socialists, has said that a government might be formed in June.

EU: Serb President 'Rewriting History' on Srebrenica



By Besar Likmeta

Disputing Serbian President's controversial statement, that the mass slaughter in Srebrenica in 1995 was not an act of genocide, EU spokesperson says it is wrong to try to rewrite history.

Serbia's new head of state, Tomislav Nikolic has crossed swords with the European Union by reviving the dispute over whether the Srebrenica massacre constituted an act of genocide.

Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen, spokesperson of the President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso, said both genocide and crimes against humanity were committed in Srebrenica

in 1995, when Bosnian Serbs killed an estimated 8,000 Bosniaks [Muslims] after capturing the town in eastern Bosnia.

Two international institutions, the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia, ICTY, and the International Court of Justice, ICJ, have qualified Srebrenica as genocide, Hansen noted.

"The European Union has a

clear stance and firmly rejects all attempts at rewriting history," Hansen added.

She said the remarks would be one of the topics at the upcoming meeting of President Barosso and President Tomislav Nikolic on June 14.

Nikolic stirred the controversy when he said that genocide could not be said to have occurred in Srebrenica because no one had proved it.

Speaking to Montenegrin state television on May 31, he said: "There was no genocide in Srebrenica... No one has proved it so far. One officer has been convicted and now all that were in cooperation with him will be convicted as well. But it is hard to tell that there was an intention [of genocide]."

"There was a grave crime in Srebrenica and some Serbs committed it," Nikolic added.

New Countries, New Views

Thirty two years after his death, the cult of personality built around Josip Broz Tito in history teaching across the old Yugoslavia has been replaced with narrower, nationalistic interpretations.



By Boris Pavelic

“Josip Broz Tito. Politician. He was the president of Yugoslavia. A womanizer. He had a lot of women. Everybody lived well during his times. There was a lot of money.”

This was the way a high school student from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina recently described a photo of Josip Broz Tito. It illustrates, a bit grotesquely, how Tito is perceived within the educational systems of the successor states to the old Yugoslavia.

Another high school student's description of Tito was cited in a 2011 edition of “Skolegijum”, a Sarajevo based education journal: “I think this is Josip Broz Tito. He was at the top of the former Yugoslavia. He was a machinist and a locksmith”, the student wrote after being asked to describe the man in the photo.

Such distorted descriptions of Josip Broz Tito are the result of “de-titoization”, a process which was “one of the main characteristics of the changes in history teaching after the dissolution of Yugoslavia”, as the Zagreb historian Magdalena Najbar-Agicic puts it in the book “The myth of Tito”.

“The impact of that change on the collective consciousness still hasn't been sufficiently explored,” Najbar-Agicic stresses.

Together with “de-titoization”, which has affected the teaching of Tito in all the countries established after the dissolution of



Tito in 1971 during a visit to the Nixon whitehouse, with former president Nixon, and former first lady Pat Nixon

Yugoslavia, the “nationalization” of Tito's legacy has also been pursued.

Twenty two years after his death, the communist personality cult of the founder and life long president of socialist Yugoslavia has been replaced with narrower, nationalistic interpretations of Broz as a person and his historical

importance in school history teaching.

Before the nineties, Josip Broz Tito's historical image, as in Yugoslav society as a whole, was in line with the communist idea of their leaders as perfect and unquestionable heroes.

Najbar-Agicic stresses that Tito's personality cult was one of the “basic cohesive factors for creating a feeling of unity among the citizens of Yugoslavia”.

“Tito was not only an unquestioned authority in all domains, but also a symbol of a common history, stemming from the people's liberation struggles during WWII”, writes Najbar-Agicic.

After 1990, that interpretation changed rapidly and radically in Croatia.

But the process was to some extent similar in all the countries which emerged from the former republics of the socialist Yugoslavia.

The Serbian historian Dubravka Stojanovic has analysed the way

interpretations of Tito changed in Serbia in several of her works, and has identified two main phases of change after 1990.

Until 2000, wrote Stojanovic in the book “The Culture of Remembrance – 1941-?”, the Second World War was interpreted “in an ideologically confused way, a way which generally fits the period of Slobodan Milosevic's rule”.

“The partisan and Chetnik movements were interpreted through a deliberately ambivalent ideological amalgam of communist and nationalist ideology, which meant that the formerly unquestioned image of Josip Broz Tito and his partisan movement was mechanically merged with an idealised image of Draza Mihailovic and his Chetniks”, Stojanovic explained.

After 2000, the process advanced towards an ongoing idealisation of Mihailovic's Chetniks and a minimisation of the role of Tito and the partisans.

“A new version of the major events of WWII was written into the schoolbooks in Serbia, a process which could be described as ‘revising the revision’”, Stojanovic wrote.

According to her, the roles of the main actors in the war were switched round from communist times “Chetniks became the ‘good guys’, and partisans the ‘bad guys’”.

“This was a very dangerous intervention which added to the destabilisation of an already highly disrupted Serbian society”, Stojanovic claimed.

A similar, if not so radical transformation occurred in Croatia.

The Croatian historian Snjezana Koren explained to Prishtina Insight how Tito's image had changed in Croatia, saying that “the interpretation of Tito changed in the first schoolbooks after 1990”.

“Data about Tito became very basic. His role in the war and his resistance to Stalin were still



Nostalgia for Yugoslavia is increasingly prevalent.

Bllaca: Thaci Should be Asked About SHIK



By Fatmir Aliu

The self-professed former Kosovo Secret Service, SHIK, agent, Nazim Bllaca, says that Kosovo's Prime Minister should be asked about the now defunct organisation.

Bllaca testified that he could not describe how was the secret serv-

ice organised, and claimed that he was just a hit man, during the latest hearing at Prishtina's District Court at the trial concerning the activities of the former intelligence service.

“I was an assassin. Who were the directors or how they were organised within SHIK I could not tell you...I'm too small fish to be able to answer such questions. But you should go and ask Hashim [Thaci],” Bllaca said.

“I can only tell you about our

group. We woke up in the morning, and followed someone, until we killed him. That is what I can tell you about SHIK, that it killed people,” he added.

In 2009 Kosovo was shaken by the revelations of the alleged former SHIK agent Bllaca who also admitted having murdered an Albanian who had collaborated with the Serbian authorities back in 1999.

One former Kosovo Liberation Army, KLA, soldier Fahredin

Gashi was sentenced to 18 years, following Bllaca's testimony.

A second process was opened, known as “Bllaca 2”, where six suspects Sadik Abazi, Shaban Sylja, Bekim Sylja, Driton Hajdari, Fahredin Uka and Fahredin Gashi were charged – based on Bllaca's testimony - with killing Salih Gashi, and with two counts of attempted murder.

Gashi was shot dead on June 15, 1999, apparently because he was a Democratic League of Kosovo,

LDK, activist. The LDK, then led by Kosovo's first president, Ibrahim Rugova, was the main political opposition to the Democratic Party of Kosovo, PDK.

The SHIK emerged from the ranks of the Kosovo Liberation Army, KLA, following the end of the war with Serbia in 1999, and then became the intelligence arm of the now ruling Democratic Party of Kosovo, PDK.

SHIK claimed in June 2008 that it had officially disbanded.

on Tito



A Tito fan marks the death of his hero at an official event

recognised, but negative characteristics began to come to the fore: Tito started to be interpreted as a dictator, and his responsibility for mass murders after the war and the political liquidation of his comrades started to be mentioned", Koren said.

However, the Zagreb based historian also emphasised that "the main thrust of Croatian schoolbooks after 1990 was that "Tito was to blame, not so much for the fact that he was a communist, but primarily because he was not Croat enough".

"Tito was shown as an enemy of Croatian statehood", Koren said.

Unlike Serbia, Tito's image in today's Croatia schoolbooks "is somewhat more positive than during the nineties", Koren says.

His role in resisting Stalin's dictates has been positively evaluated, but his alleged responsibility for the death of his war time comrade Andrija Hebrang and the torture that took place in the Lubyanka-style prison of Goli Otok is always emphasised.

Two schoolbooks currently in use in Croatia, interpret Tito's death as "the beginning of the dissolution of Yugoslavia", Koren noted.

In today's Bosnia and Herzegovina three "official" his-

tories exist, and therefore three "official" interpretations of Tito: Serbian, Croatian and Bosniak.

The Serbian version has been dictated by the institutions of Republika Srpska and implemented by the Ministry of education, which controls the production of history textbooks.

Zeljko Vujadinovic, an historian from Banja Luka, explained to Prishtina Insight that in Republika Srpska textbooks that "basic data about Josip Broz is given", although "many biographical details are omitted".

The WWII period is explained in more detail, with an emphasis on the role of Tito's communist party in leading the partisan movement.

"The spontaneous resistance of the Serbian people, in answer to the crimes of the independent state of Croatia, NDH, is mentioned", Vujadinovic said.

The other two "official" interpretations of Tito exist side by side in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Despite the fact that history teaching is theoretically the responsibility of the educational ministries for each of the ten cantons of the Federation, in practice two "national" approaches exists: Bosniak and Croatian.

The Bosniak version was analysed in a 2011 issue of Skolegijum by Enes Kurtovic, using an example textbook for the 8th grade of primary school, "History 8", published by the Sarajevo publishing house, Bosanska Knjiga.

Tito was mentioned in the chapter about the "people's liberation movement in Bosnia", but "there was nothing specific written about him as an historical person, as Elvis Presley was written about for instance".

Kurtovic ironically concludes that the "textbook's authors used the tried and tested method of holding their tongue about problematic matters".

As in Croatia, the Sarajevo textbook considers Tito's death as the beginning of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, but with the additional slant that "Serbian political and intellectual circles then openly started to ask for the 1974 Constitution of Yugoslavia to be terminated".

History textbooks for Croats in Bosnia, as Kurtovic showed in his article, are in many ways similar to those in Croatia.

"History 8", a textbook for the 8th grade pupils in Croat primary schools in Bosnia, published in Mostar, cited a Croatian ency-

clopaedia in giving Tito credit for the return to Croatia of the regions of Istria, Rijeka and the islands.

Even so, "Tito was responsible for acts of revenge and repression at the end of WWII", and he also "ruled Yugoslavia for 35 years, trying to reconcile national equality with communist rule".

"Although he was the absolute ruler for more than three decades, Tito left the state in complete disorder", states Mostar textbook.

In Montenegro schoolbooks, the overall image of Tito is a positive one, Radovan Popovic from the Montenegrin state education bureau told Prishtina Insight.

"In line with our guiding principles, Tito is presented as a positive historical figure", said Popovic. "Unlike previous eras, his image is shown to scale, plainly and without being idolised. Tito is described as he was, as a man who marked an epoch in his own way", said Popovic.

In Macedonia, "the overweening importance" that was attributed to Tito's role in old Yugoslavia, was replaced by "world and Balkan history instead of a purely Yugoslav history" after 1991, the history teacher Igor Jurukov states in his analysis "History teaching in the Republic of Macedonia", published on the web.

"History teaching has undergone a great deal of change over the last 15 years, incorporating new trends, but also focusing on the needs of Macedonian citizens, the events and historic, well-known personalities that might be seen as 'connectors' leading to a new vision of a common Macedonian history," Jurukov said.

There have also been attempts to teach history in the Balkans in a different, non-nationalistic way.

In 1999, the Center for Democracy in Southeast Europe (CDSEE) launched "The Southeast Europe joint history project", in which four history textbooks were written in English by prominent historians from the region, and then translated into seven regional languages.

The textbooks focused on the Ottoman empire, the birth of the national states, the Balkan wars and WWII.

The editor of the Serbian edi-



Report Corruption

tion,

Dubravka Stojanovic, explained that "the project went much further than the Franco-German joint textbook which deals with the non-confrontational part of their joint history after 1945".

"Our project is an avant-garde one, and can cause dramatic reactions in a closed and lazy society, because it questions the basis for our self-containment and self-isolation", Stojanovic said. The CDSEE textbook, in addition to basic facts about Tito, gave a number of descriptions of Tito by the people who met him and worked with him, including Fitzroy Maclean, a British army liaison officer with Tito's partisans in WWII.

The joint regional schoolbooks were given a great deal of publicity when they were published, but did not take root in everyday school history teaching in the Balkan countries.

So the national emphasis on the interpretation of Tito still remains the main methodological approach. With that in mind, Dubravka Stojanovic's opinions on the Serbian history experience could contain a lesson for other post-Yugoslav countries.

"History science and teaching have more often served as a kind of military training than as a critical thinking discipline. They were often used to adjust history to the needs of the present, to "change" the past and to justify what's happening now, or to incorporate current ideological motives into an acceptable, rather than a real, historical context".

This kind of history teaching, which includes how Josip Broz Tito is taught, seems to be very much alive and well in the Balkans.

Boris Pavelic is a journalist with the Croatian daily newspaper, Novi List.

Montenegro Plan Embassy In Prishtina



By Milena Milosevic

Four years after it recognised Kosovo's independence Montenegro is to open its embassy in Prishtina, in a move that is likely to annoy Serbia.

"With this decision, the government confirms that good neighbourly relations and development of regional cooperation are its



long-term goals," the government in Podgorica said last Thursday.

Montenegro recognised Kosovo's independence in October 2008 and two years later, the two

neighbouring countries established diplomatic relations.

The opening of the embassy in Prishtina will create conditions for further cooperation in all

fields, the government in Podgorica said.

Zoran Stojiljkovic, from the University of Belgrade, said the decision might cause a new cooling of relations between Montenegro and Serbia, which has vowed never to recognise the independence of its former province.

"If you wanted to choose a moment when the other side cannot react, even though they felt damaged by what you did, then this is the right moment," he said

of the decision, referring to the fact that a new government has yet to be formed in Serbia after the recent general election. After Montenegro first recognized Kosovo, relations between Belgrade and Podgorica sank to their lowest level in recent history.

Anka Vojvodic, the then Montenegrin ambassador to Serbia, was declared an "undesirable person". A new ambassador, Igor Jovovic, was not appointed for almost a year.

Sun-Kissed Bay of Legends and Prayers

Walled towns, an ancient cathedral, pilgrimage chapels in the sea and days and days of summer sunshine are just some of the attractions of Kotor Bay.



By Nemanja Cabric

Boka Bay's necklace of towns and cities, carved in the steep rocks that surround the 28-kilometre-long bay, tell the history of this bewitchingly beautiful part of the Mediterranean.

In the turquoise waters there still lie ancient shipwrecks, some of which have been constructed into artificial islands. The mysterious landscape makes it fertile soil for myths and legends.

Fine examples of church architecture, both Catholic and Orthodox, some dating back to the 12th century, make it a popular pilgrimage site.

The series of bays starts with the Bay of Herceg Novi. This narrows into the Kumborski Tesnac Gorge. From there it continues into Tivat Bay and then through Verige it ends up in Risan and Kotor Bay, on the opposite sides of the old town of Perast.

At the entrance to Boka from the sea, between Cape Prevlaka and Lestica, is a small circular islet, only 200 metres in diameter, named after Lazar Mamula, the Austro-Hungarian general from the mid-19th century who built a fort here. It was used as a prison in both world wars.

The 13-kilometre-long peninsula on the right, called Lustica, is rarely crowded and has only dozen villages because most the



A view from above the town of Kotor across the bay.

land was long under the ownership of the army.

Now it is discovering its true tourist potential, thanks to its

untouched natural landscape, as well as archaeological remains and shipwrecks that attract divers and researchers.

The most famous village, Rose, is a typical Mediterranean settlement with stone houses tightly packed around the shoreline.

This small hamlet at the very entrance to Boka is home to a resident population of only 10 people outside the tourist season.

Further down are Topla Bay on the left and Herceg Novi Bay on the right.

Igalo, Herceg Novi and Tivat:

The town of Igalo in Topla Bay became a tourist spot in the former Yugoslavia largely thanks to the medicinal qualities of the local mud.

Since then it has continued to attract crowds each summer, which lasts for a long time here and normally counts some 260 sunny days a year.

Neighbouring Herceg Novi was founded in the 14th century by Tvrtko I Kotromanic, the ruler of Bosnia, as a harbour independent of Dubrovnik.

In the late 15th century it was conquered by the Ottoman Turks, and then from the late 17th century onwards it was ruled by Venetians and then by the Austrians.

The town is known for its old churches and forts built in various styles and its charming centre.

Several religious sites lie here, among the oldest of which are the Savina monastery, dating from the 15th century, the Church of the Archangel Michael, dating from the late 19th century and the Church of Saint Anthony, which dates from the 16th century.

The oldest fort in the centre is the Espanola, so called by the Spaniards who seized Herceg Novi from the Turks for a year in 1538, when the fort was built. The Kanli, Sahat, and Jeronima towers date from mid-17th century.

Risan, Perast and Kotor

The earliest mention of Risan dates back to the 4th Century BC. In 229 BC it was the main fortress in the Illyrian state, where Queen Teuta took refuge during the Illyrian Wars.

It submitted to Rome in 168 BC. The most prosperous time for Roman Rhizinium came during the 1st and 2nd centuries, when large villas were built in the area and the city housed some 10,000 inhabitants.

Five mosaics are the most valuable extant remains of that period. The best preserved of them depicts Hypnos, the Greek deity of dreams.

In Risan on February 25th 1851 the Gorski Venac play was performed for the first and only time during the lifetime of its author, Petar Petrovic Njegos, despite orders by the Austrian authorities forbidding the performance.

Perast is an ancient town that has had many rulers. Venice governed it between 1420 and 1797 as part of Venetian Albania. The town's 16 Baroque palaces were mostly built in this period, as were its 17 Catholic churches and two Orthodox churches.

Near Perast are two small islands, St George's island and "Gospa od Skrpjela", or, "Our Lady of the Rock", each of which has a picturesque chapel.

Gospa od Skrpjela was built on a rock after two Venetian sailors from Perast found an image of the Virgin Mary there in 1452 and decided to found a church in her honour.

Every year in a celebration called the Fasinada, locals take to their boats and throw rocks into the sea, widening the surface of the island.

St George's Island is home to a Benedictine monastery from the 12th century and a graveyard for the old nobility from Perast and Kotor Bay.

Nearby Kotor, one of the best-preserved medieval old towns in the Adriatic, is a UNESCO world heritage site. It hosts several summer events, such as the Summer Carnival, or Bokeljska Noc.

It is home to numerous sights, such as the Cathedral of Saint Tryphon, built in 1166, and the ancient walls that stretch for 4.5km directly above and around the city. The cathedral is one of two Catholic cathedrals in Montenegro and is the seat of a Bishopric.



One of the many beautiful churches in Herceg Novi, on the Bay of Kotor.



Albania Activists Lament Demolition of Hoxha Pyramid

Plans to demolish one of Tirana's best-known landmarks, a former museum dedicated to Enver Hoxha, have drawn the ire of architects, activists and even some former Hoxha-era political prisoners.



By Fatmira Nikolli

Government plans to demolish the pyramid-like structure erected in honour of Albania's late Communist dictator have sown discord among urban activists who see the monument as part of Albania's history, rather than as a symbol of the former regime.

The mausoleum of Enver Hoxha, who ruled the country with an iron fist for nearly half-a-century, is located in one of the few parks that have survived the chaotic urban development that Albania's capital has experienced in the past two decades.

After the Communist regime collapsed in 1991, the building was first transformed into a cultural centre, hosting fine art exhibitions, concerts, beauty pageants, book fairs and other events.

The structure now hosts the National Children's Cultural Centre and an International Cultural Centre, apart from the offices of the popular commercial TV station, Top-Channel.

Erected in 1988, three years after Hoxha's death, the former museum is a concrete and glass building clad with slabs of marble that some liken to a cross between an Aztec pyramid and a spaceship.

Because its architectural value, three years ago it was declared a cultural monument.

But after years of neglect and a mishandled attempts to transform the building into a theatre and a library, the structure, built at an exorbitant cost for the then cash-strapped Communist regime, lies in ruin.

Stripped of its Carrara marble slabs, with a leaking roof that allows the water to drip in and half demolished by the attempts to restore it that were never com-



Children play on the pyramid in central Tirana, which has been left to decay and is now due to be demolished.

pleted, it awaits demolition.

Despite its poor state, a group of architects and activists have risen in its defence, arguing that the plan to demolish the building to make space for the new parliament is based on purely ideological arguments.

Some 6,000 people have signed an online petition opposing the pyramid's demolition, while several rallies have been held in support of its preservation.

Artan Shkreli, former director of the Institute of Monuments, says that the ideological arguments for the demolition of the building are absurd.

"The [architectural] values of the pyramid cannot be wiped out," he said, adding that Albania's rulers "were ignoring the calls of public opinion".

Maks Velo, an architect and former political prisoner agreed, underlining that there was no need to demolish the pyramid in

order to erase painful memories of the Hoxha regime.

"The pyramid is not property of the Hoxha family and he cannot be used as an argument for its demolition," Velo said.

"It was built with the people's money and our elected government should do all it can to protect it as part of the country's cultural heritage," he concluded.

The pyramid was constructed from 1985 to 1988 at a cost of 3 million euro.

According to Klement Kolaneci, Hoxha's son-in law and the chief architect of the museum, the same structure today would cost about 60 million euro.

In the past five years the centre-right government of Prime Minister Sali Berisha, has drawn and re-draw plans to change the building's fate, spending millions in the process.

After being elected in 2005 Berisha first proposed to trans-

form the pyramid into the national library, because the building housing the latter was in poor shape.

A year later the pyramid was transformed into the International Cultural Centre Pjeter Arbunori, named after the late parliamentary speaker and political prisoner who died that year. The plan to transform it into a library was wiped from the drawing board.

"The government then allocated a fund for its reconstruction and one year later declared it a protected cultural monument," Artan Lame, director of the Forum for the Protection of the Historic Heritage of Albania, recalls.

However, in 2008 Berisha changed his mind and asked the Ministry of Culture to transform the building into a pantheon that would host a theatre, a music auditorium, an art gallery, an

underground library and a youth centre.

New projects were drawn up for the centre and tenders for the architectural firm were held, but later that year the Prime Minister changed his mind once more and asked the ministry to transform the building into a national theatre.

In January 2009 the authorities mulled an idea to construct an obelisk in remembrance of the victims of the Communist regime in front of the pyramid but this never realized.

In November 2010, in another twist, Berisha decided "that in order to exorcise the ghost of the dictator, it had to be demolished from the ground up," and a new parliament built on the site.

For the premier, the Hoxha pyramid was now only millions of euro wasted on "Hoxha nostalgia," and its fate was sealed.

Although Albania's assembly is better known for unseemly brawls rather than for adoption of top-quality laws, speaker Jozefina Topalli has insisted that the existing parliament is not good enough for MPs.

The complex, sited close to the palace of former King Zog I, and built in 1952, "does not match the standards of parliaments in EU countries, or those in the region," she declared, although the building had received a million-euro facelift just one year before.

Although the pyramid's fate now seems sealed, Aldo Merkoci, an activist from Mjaft, a local NGO, says that even if it is flattened, its architectural and social legacy will remain.

"The pyramid is a historical and cultural monument of Tirana, is part of the historic memory of every citizen of Tirana and will remain part of that memory for long time in future," he said.

This article is funded under the BICCED project, supported by the Swiss Cultural Programme.

Where to pick up Prishtina Insight?

Prishtina Insight has teamed up with these excellent venues to offer a limited number of complimentary copies of Kosovo's only English-language newspaper. Grab a copy of the publication and settle down with a drink or a meal to read it.

A taste of Napoli in Prishtina.

After ten years of making pizza in Napoli, and only with love to blame, Fatmir the chef returned to Prishtina. His pizzas, made in a woodburn stove, are definitely genuine napolitanas. For those who consider pizza to be boring, Fatmir has several pastas on offer, also a true joy for the taste buds. Napoli has an excellent selection of red and white wines or, for the more ambitious, one of the region's best quince raki. Napoli makes for delicious lunch, dinner or even after-theatre time out in the centre of Prishtina.



Pizzeria Napoli
off Luan Haradinaj, opposite Newborn
044/409-402402

Hotel Prishtina

Hotel Prishtina's 43 charming guest rooms and suites are reminiscent of a small hotel in the European tradition. You'll immediately feel at home in our living room, sipping a glass of wine in our fine restaurant surrounded by a gallery of paintings by local artists.

The hotel offers free, fast wifi internet, complimentary breakfast, conference room, swimming pool, sauna and laundry service.

Hotel Prishtina,
St. Vaso Pasha nr. 20
+381 38 / 22 32 84



Hotel AFA

Located in a quiet neighbourhood just outside the city centre, Hotel Afa can guarantee guests a peaceful night while being within walking distance of all the action. The venue has won a host of awards for its excellent service to customers and offers a good range of facilities, from an exclusive restaurant and VIP bar to pretty, tranquil gardens. Rooms start at 45 euro for a single, and luxury rooms and apartments are available. The hotel's rooms are well appointed and comfortable.

15, Rr Ali Kelmendi,
Sunny Hill, Prishtina
+381 38/225 226
www.hotelafa.com



Te Komiteti

Te Komiteti's large trees and a beautifully garden, which surround the small outdoor terrace, give you an impression of an exclusive place for ordinary people. And this is exactly what it is. From brunch to lunch-time snacks and special evening meals, this restaurant offers dishes comprising quality, varied ingredients, combined to perfection. Alongside one of Prishtina's best 'modern European' style menus, you'll also find a good selection of wine, and great sangria and cocktails.

Te Komiteti
Qamil Hoxha Street
Prishtina
+381 38 24 96 63



Restorant Brasserie Lura

At 450-metres squared Restaurant Lura is as spacious as you get in Prishtina. It's also surrounded by the towering trees of Germia and offers a pleasant garden where, in the summer, this eatery prepares food al fresco. It's large meeting room is also ideal for that private lunch or dinner.

The combined style of classical and modern interior leaves you with an impression of refined taste.

The newly opened restaurant is already famous for its Mediterranean specialties, exquisite seafood and fine selections of Italian, French and local wines. But that's not all, for music lovers, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday night dinners are accompanied by jazz, whereas on Saturdays local patriots can enjoy live traditional Albanian music.

Lura Restaurant
Str. Nazmi Gaffuri • 10 000 Prishtina • +381 (0)38 763 763 ;
+386 (0)49 763 763 • www.lurarestaurant.com
info@lurarestaurant.com



Paddy O'Brien's

The staff at Paddy O'Brien's have a saying: "It's easy to walk in, but very hard to leave."

And with its warm atmosphere, fantastic range of drinks and excellent food, it is easy to see why.

There have been many attempts to establish a proper Irish pub in Prishtina, but this is the only one to hit the spot.

From classic coffees to cocktails, via, of course, Guinness, you really won't find it difficult to select the perfect drink.

A mouth-watering menu of Irish specialties is also on offer, spanning from all-day breakfasts to Irish stews at night.

Options include shepherd's pie, bangers and mash, fish 'n chips, and whopping great burgers.

Thursday is pub quiz night, but there is always something going on at the pub, whether it is sport screenings or just a good shindig.



Paddy O'Brien's
Tringe Smajli Street, by the Illyria Hotel
Prishtina: 045-420900

Papillon Bistro Bar

Newly reopened bar in Prishtina, Papillon, offers more than 60 types of wines from France, Italy, Spain, and Kosovo with ideal prices and delicious dishes.

They serve pasta, sandwiches, salads and different appetizers.

You can also try different types of local or international beers.

The bar, with its stunning, new design, is located in the centre of Prishtina, near ProCredit Bank headquarter, RTK radio centre, and the Mother Teresa cathedral.

Papillon
Mother Teresa Str. Nr. 51 A
info@caffepapillon.com
044 103 310





In The Land Of Blood and Honey
Every day at 6 pm

Kino ABC is continuing screening the movie “In the land of blood and honey” by the director Angelina Jolie. During the Bosnian War, Danijel, a soldier fighting for the Serbs, re-encounters Ajla, a Bosnian who's now a captive in his camp he oversees. Their once promising connection has become ambiguous as their motives have changed.



Men in Black 3
Every day at 8 pm and 10 pm

From May 24 ABC Cinema has started screening the movie “Men in Black 3”, directed by Barry Sonnenfeld. This comedy is about agents J and K who go back in time. J had seen many strange things, but nothing irritates him more than his partner. But, when K's life and the planet are in danger, J must go back in time, and put everything back in its own place.



From June 16 the cinema will be screening the movie Prometheus.

Prometheus is a 2012 science fiction film directed by Ridley Scott and written by Jon Spaihts and Damon Lindelof. The film stars Noomi Rapace, Michael Fassbender, Guy Pearce, Idris Elba, Logan Marshall-Green and Charlize Theron. Set in the late 21st century, the story centres on the crew of the spaceship Prometheus as they follow a star map discovered among the remnants of several ancient Earth civilizations. Led to a distant world and an advanced civilization, the crew seeks the origins of humanity, but instead discovers a threat that could cause the extinction of the human race.

For any further questions or reservations call at 038 243 238 or visit them at www.kinoabc.com

Oda Theatre

Every Tuesday at 8 pm
Tre Gjermanët e Trashë II
(Three Fat Germans II)



Thanks to this play you will understand “What did Brigel say when he asked for a drink?”; “Why Hans didn't let him drink Mojito?”; “How did Gani experience his 21st snow?”; “Is Vukashin really Ukshin?”; “Does KFOR-ja still work for KFOR or she just loves him?”

Author: Lirak Celaj; **Producer:** Florent Mehmeti; **Roles:** Naser Rafuna, Adrian Morina, Kushtrim Sheremeti, Lirak Celaj, Fisnik Ademi, Ard Islami, Arta Selimi, Florent Mehmeti.

If It Was a Play - Every Thursday 8pm

Based on the drama by Almir Imshireviq. Director: Agon Myftari. On bus number 4, during wartime in Prishtina, a 26 years old, wearing jeans, is near Hotel Union, when a sniper bullet breaks the glass and shoots the youngster in the neck. A lady wearing white, who was next to him starts to scream. When she sees the blood in her shirt she faints. Starring: Rebeka Qena, Adrian Morina, Armend Ismajli, Besnik Krapic.

For more information call +381 (0)38 246 555 or write oda@teatrioda.com.

National Theatre



Tuesday, June 12, 2012

“Nora” by Henrik Ibsen, directed by Jeton Budima. The play will be staged on Wednesday, June 13, and Thursday, June 14, 2012.

Friday, June 15, 2012

Ballet “Love that kills” [Dashuria që vret], by Ilir Kerni.

Saturday, June 16, 2012

A German Musical Play.

Saturday, June 16, 2012

Picasso's women by Brian McAvera, dramatised by Getoarbe H. Mulliqi, directed by Arbresha Grabovci – Nixha & Hazir Sh. Haziri (Theatre's small scene).

Picasso's Women is a thought-provoking piece of theatre, which, in its entirety, is a series of eight monologues telling the stories of Pablo Picasso's eight wives and lovers from their point of view. Two monologues have been selected for this production: Act One is the story from his first wife Olga; Act Two is the story from Marie-Therese (17 years old and hence illegal under French law) whom he lived with in a flat across the street from his marital home.

Monday, June 18, 2012

A Turkish play.

Tuesday, June 19, 2012

“Lisistrata” by Aristofane, directed by Elmaze Nura.

Thursday, June 21, 2012

“Diploma Ball” by Johann Strauss, choreography Ilir Kerni.

All plays are in Albanian language, and tickets cost 3 euro; for students and pensioners tickets are only 1 euro.

For any further questions or reservations call them at 044 430 693 visit them at www.teatrikombetareu

Dodona Theatre



Every Thursday 7.30pm

Çifti i Hapur is being staged with the text of Italian authors Dario Fo and Franca Rame, directed by Kushtrim Koliqi

A man proposes to his wife of eliminating the concept of martial loyalty and creating an “open relationship” in their lives. The woman rejects this and after several attempts of suicide, she decides to accept her husband's offer because in fact it's the only way to remain married. The man is happy. He, no longer needs to hide his girlfriends and is released from feelings of guilt. Cast: Edona Reshitaj and Besart Sllamniku.

For more details email; teatridodona@yahoo.com; besart.sll@gmail.com

Prishtina Diary

Friday, June 8, 2012

Duplex, Prishtina with NRG band.

Friday, June 8, 2012

Filikaqa is back with Karaoke nights.

Saturday, June 9, 2012

Duplex live with DJ Dalool.

Monday, June 11, 2012

Duplex with GENA, from 11.30 pm.

Stacion - Center for Contemporary Art Prishtina

THIS IS (AN) A FRONT: Henry

Programme from June 8 to June 13, 2012

Friday, June 8, 2012: 19:00 – 21:00

YTSSP w/ Katie Hargrave

Artist and essayist, Hargrave has constructed a YTSSP essay on space as a place of resistance and reflection.

The YouTube School for Social Politics utilizes surplus knowledge as its driving force, an ephemeral energy source powering sustainable discourse. Scattered throughout YouTube lie countless points of view, disparate moments of histories, both personal and collective.

Saturday, June 9, 2012: 19:00 – 21:00

Movie Night: Instrument: 10 Years With the Band Fugazi and the First rehearsal of the production of ‘Houseboat Summit’ performance

Sunday, June 10, 2012: 19:00 – 21:00

Occupy Yr. Home

Occupy Yr. Home gathers friends at kitchen tables to discuss these ideas over food and drink, meals prepared like any other, mild celebrations of our daily communing. They are not spectacle, ready to burn.

<http://www.red76.com/occupyyrhome.html>

Monday, June 11, 2012: 18:00 – 20:00

Reading group and book production and the Second rehearsal of the production of ‘Houseboat Summit’ performance

These weeks' proposals are: ‘Regarding the Pain Of Others’ by Susan Sontag, ‘On the Poverty Of Student Life’.

Wednesday, June 13, 2012: 19:00

One-Night Only production of Houseboat Summit performance

In late 1969 the San Francisco, California based periodical The SF Oracle brought together Allen Ginsberg, Gary Snyder, Timothy Leary, and Alan Watt for a discussion on Watts houseboat to consider the present psychic and political enclaves of the American Left.

smARTpower is an initiative of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, administered by the Bronx Museum of the Arts, with additional support from the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation; and Lori Schiff Chemla and ALTOUR.

Zija Prishtina Street • Prishtine • Tel.: +381-(0)38-222-576 • Fax: +381-(0)38-544-472 • E-mail: info@stacion.org • www.stacion.org

Into the Park Festival, Peja

INTO THE PARK festival is a cultural festival including music, art, and environment are the main components. The festival is organized by Info Group and is implemented by NGO “Music Man”.



Festival seeks to promote art and music and the importance of the environment and ways of protecting it by holding two day music and art festival in Peja from June 8-9.

The festival aspires to gather the region's youth and engage them in these activities.

Friday, June 8 (Day 1)

- Into Rugova, from 12 noon, cycling tour, from city centre. Train 2 euro;
- Into Hamam, 2.30 pm, an exhibition on cultural heritage,
- Into Mulli, 4 pm, Environmental Education Centre, ERA, documentary film “The Guardian” (Antoneta Kastrati)
- Into Music, 6.30 pm, performing: Offchestra, Genc Salihu, LIR, Milot, Lika Tek;

Saturday, June 9, 2012 (Day 2)

- Into Rugova, 12 noon, start from the city centre, a touristic cycling tour;
- Into Hamam, 2.30, an exhibition on cultural heritage
- N'Mulli, 4 pm, Environmental Education Centre, ERA, documentary film “One Day on Earth”
- Into Music, 6.30 pm, Pinkmetal, Creme de la Creme, The Glasses, Blla Blla Blla, Wiggi, SAAB, Nanikilla.

The Camp: 2 euro;
Into Music: 3 euro;

+



United States Agency for International Development is recruiting to fill the following position in Pristina

SOLICITATION NUMBER: SOL 167-PSC-FY12-06
ISSUED BY: Executive Office, USAID/Kosovo
SUBJECT: Solicitation for Resident Hire: U.S. Personal Services Contractor (USPSC) – Contract Close Out Specialist
MARKET VALUE: \$71,674.00 - \$ 93,175.00 per annum (equivalent to GS-13 pay range). Salary to be paid within this grade will depend on experience, qualifications and salary history.
PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: Two years

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking applications (Optional Form 612) from qualified individuals interested in providing Personal Service Contractor services for the Contract Close Out Specialist position as described below.

BASIC FUNCTION OF POSITION:

This position is located in USAID/Kosovo, Office of Acquisition and Assistance. The position has primary responsibility for managing and processing all administrative actions which will result in the timely closeout of awards. The incumbent will be responsible for all post award administration functions and for all acquisition and assistance awards associated with award closeout. These responsibilities include but are not limited to: audit resolution, coordinating final indirect cost settlements; property disposition; past performance history; and reconciling accruals. The incumbent serves as the Regional Contracting Specialist for contract closeout actions, is responsible for providing advice and assistance on all matters related to award administration and closeout in the USAID/Kosovo Mission and other USAID Missions in the region. The incumbent reports to the Supervisory Contracting Officer.

Full job description is posted at the USAID's webpage <http://www.usaid.gov/kosovo/eng/jobOpportunities.html> and at the USAID's Office in Arbëria (Dragodan), Ismail Qemali Street, House No.1, Pristina.

+ REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

EDUCATION: A Bachelor's degree in contracting and procurement (preferred), business administration or public administration. A Bachelor's degree or ten years of acquisition and assistance experience is required. Relevant majors are business administration, public administration, law, banking, international affairs, procurement and contracting or finance. Experience may be substituted in lieu of educational requirements for applicants who do not meet educational requirements for this position.

PRIOR RELEVANT AND OVERSEAS WORK EXPERIENCE: A minimum of ten years substantive and professional contracting or procurement work is required. Such experience must include the full range of contracting responsibilities, including: acquisition and assistance award execution, administration, termination, cost and price analysis; procurement planning, and analysis and evaluation of proposals; negotiation of changes; execution of options; investigation and resolution of contractor delays; contractor performance appraisal; subcontractor surveillance; and, disposition of claims. Experience should demonstrate knowledge of contracting laws, regulations, policies, and procedures; the ability to lead others; knowledge of cost principles; knowledge of cost plus/award fee and performance based contracting procedures; and, the ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing. Experience that demonstrates post award administration, specifically contract closeout and negotiation skills is required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES: Mastery of procurement regulations and contracting principles including the latest acquisition procedures and techniques is required. An in-depth understanding of USG procurement rules and regulations is imperative. Knowledge of the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) is essential. In addition, knowledge of the following is preferred: USAID Acquisition Regulations (AIDAR); USAID Contract Information Bulletins (CIBS) and Acquisition & Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs); Procurement Executive Bulletins (PEBs); the USAID Automated Directive System (ADS); Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars; and, Title 22, Code of Federal Regulations as applicable to USAID.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: Must have excellent English communication skills, both oral and in written form. Candidate must have the ability to present analysis and recommendations in clear written and oral formats.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

In addition, the incumbent must be:

- A U.S. Citizen; (A person holding a valid Green Card is eligible to apply for this position)
- Able to obtain US Government medical and security clearances;
- Willing to travel to work sites and other offices as/when requested.

APPLYING: Qualified individuals are requested to submit a U.S. Government Optional Form 612. This form is available at the USAID website, http://www.info.usaid.gov/procurement_bus_opp/procurement/forms or <http://fillform.gsa.gov> or USAID/Kosovo website <http://www.usaid.gov/kosovo/eng/jobOpportunities.html>
 Email submissions should be sent to: kosovousaidinfo@usaid.gov.

LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS FOR PSCs

For initial consideration:

1. Optional Form 612. Resume or CV must be attached.
2. Contractor Employee Biographical Data Sheet (AID 1420-17)

Closing date for this position is June 15, 2012 - BY COB (CLOSE OF BUSINESS)

SUBJECT TO FUNDS AVAILABILITY

USAID in Pristina provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Ecosovo

Sacro: The Countryside Comes to the Capital



By Elizabeth Gowing

Where in Prishtina can you buy dried Kamenica mushrooms? Lentils to help with a vegetarian/vegan diet? Marshmallow root?

To be honest, I didn't even know marshmallow had a root, being familiar only with the pink and white fluffy sweets, but Sacro, the newly-opened shop in central Prishtina is an education.

For a start, you feel healthier just walking in there. You breathe in the scent of barley flour, lemonbalm tea, Deçani honey... Already you seem to be a better person. And the herbs, spices, oils, nuts, dried fruits, teas and flours here are, wherever possible, sourced from Kosovo, collecting in one place all the best tastes from Kosovo's countryside. Where possible they are also grown organically. If you buy this stuff - particularly if you then consume this stuff - surely you really are a better person.

Sacro is a beautiful boutique set up by three friends. One is Agata Cetta, a designer whose eye one guesses has guided the presentation in the store. From the traditional 'maxhe' (a piece of furniture historically used in Kosovan homes for storing grains and flour, with a work surface on top for using the flour in breadmaking) which displays the corn, rye and barley flour for sale in burlap sacks, to the teas which are sold either loose-leaf by weight, or in chic brown paper bags with careful candy-coloured lettering describing the properties of each, the store is delicious to the eye as well as to the tastebuds.

Working there on the day I visited was a trained pharmacist who talked me through the range of elderflower, Istog hawthorn leaf tea, and dried local blueberries.



Feeding me spoonfuls of tahini mixed with local honey, the visit was a mixture of a trip to the doctor, going for a long walk along the country's fields and hedgerows, and having a guided tour of a magician's workshop.

As a Kosovan beekeeper, of course I was impressed by the honey - multifloral, chestnut and acacia. But more than that, there was honey mixed with royal jelly and also propolis spray and tincture. Propolis is a sticky substance collected by bees for building and as antiseptic within their hives (beekeepers will tell you stories of what happens if a mouse gets into a hive - once the bees have stung the intruder to death, being unable to move the body, they will cover it thoroughly with propolis to prevent it from the decay that would threaten their own health). The bees collect propolis from the shiny covering on buds, and if you can conceive of so exquisite a lamina being laid down over your sore throat, or dabbed on a mouth ulcer, or on a localised skin infection, you can imagine the soothing effect it has. I use propolis instead of any antiseptic cream at home, and now I have a local supplier.

What did I come away from Sacro with? A packet of nigella seeds, some pine nuts, some ginger oil and a bottle of Kosovan Frutomania strawberry juice... if you're not salivating by now then perhaps Sacro isn't for you.

Since I guess most people will want to have their own Sacro experience, here are the details of the shop (miles from countryside, in a boutique location, snuggled behind the Metro cafe which is opposite the Grand Hotel). It's open 9am-8pm Monday to Friday and 9am-5pm on Saturdays, so it can easily find a place in any mental map, any weekly schedule, and any jaded palate. Ju bëftë mirë!

Elizabeth Gowing is a founder of The Ideas Partnership, a Kosovan NGO working on educational, cultural and environmental projects. She is also the author of the recently-published, Travels in Blood and Honey; becoming a beekeeper in Kosovo. She can be contacted at theideaspartnership@gmail.com





Prishtina Opera House or Frog Chorus?



By Lawrence Marzouk

Three years after work began on Prishtina's Opera House – the site has become a frog-infested swamp with little sign of progress. Kosovo's government planned to remedy the absence of an opera house with a 20-million-euro building named after the country's first

president, Ibrahim Rugova. Work on it began in late 2009 when the Prime Minister Hashim Thaci and the then President Fatmir Sejdiu and other political and cultural figures attended the inaugural ceremony. In an interview with this newspaper in 2010, the Ministry of Culture said that the building would be completed that year. But reader Trendelina Halili says that the site has become an eyesore, which is upsetting neigh-

bours. "This field near the Technical Faculty of the University of Prishtina has been home to a large hole with mud and rubbish for two years. "This location is supposed to be the National Theatre for Opera and Ballet, but it doesn't appear to be a serious project by the Ministry of Culture. "Now this place has become a swamp full of frogs and an eyesore for neighbours who are upset by it."



The location for Prishtina's new opera house looks more like an urban lake currently.

Prishtina through the Eyes of:

Jenny Schokkenbroek

EULEX Civil Judge



What surprised you most about Prishtina?

The view when you come down the hill from Skopje - you suddenly see a really big capital. Magnificent view!

What's your favourite hangout?

Home (in summer), on Police Avenue; Because of the garden; A little green, oasis between all the concrete.

What is the best thing about Prishtina?

The few remaining cobble streets.

What is the most annoying thing about Prishtina?

People making their own environment dirty while throwing away all their rubbish on streets, lawns, parks, along roads etc.

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

Installing many dustbins, launch a campaign and promoting a fine for not using the dustbins.

How many macchiatos do you drink a day?

Three, maximum.

What's your favourite Albanian word and why?

S'ka problem! It's my favourite because it's used for everything (and usually the problem is not solved).

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

Restaurant Liburnia.

Post-independence Blues



By Samir Kajosevic

On the night that Montenegro voted for independence, Anton Camaj held up a flag and joined the crowds celebrating in the streets.

Along with his fellow ethnic Albanians, he had supported the dissolution of the union with Serbia. As a member of a tiny minority within Montenegro, he hoped that his new nation would reject narrow-minded nationalism. He hoped his community would play a bigger part in a smaller country.

Ethnic Albanians make up 5 per cent of Montenegro's population, and their support for independence helped secure the razor-thin referendum victory in 2006. Many are disappointed by what has followed.

"When I voted for independence, I wanted a country that would finally give the Albanians a chance," says Anton. "Today, it seems as if the Montenegrins only needed our votes for the state. They offer us only crumbs."

Anton says Montenegro behaves like a stepmother towards its minorities. His community accuses the authorities of ignoring the promises it had made to secure their support for independence.

The list of grievances is long. The ethnic Albanians say they do not have fair representation in parliament or in the local administration. They say the government does not consult them before making decisions, and increasingly discriminates against them.

As proof, they cite the lack of

investment in areas inhabited by ethnic Albanians in the south of the country. Frustration is building over the government's refusal to recognise the area around the southern town of Tuzi as a separate municipality – a move that would give its inhabitants more control over spending.

By far the biggest complaint is over public sector jobs, which are regarded as the only reliable source of employment. While the constitution guarantees fair representation for minorities in the workplace, only 1.5 per cent of the workers on the state's payroll are ethnic Albanians.

Anton is in his early thirties and unemployed, despite having graduated in law. His family survives on remittances from relatives abroad. He sips coffee to pass the time of day, lingering over each cup.

Although he blames official policy for denying him employment, he does not believe in struggling against the government.

Nevertheless, he warns, some in his community admire the ethnic Albanians of neighbouring Macedonia, who took up arms against their state a decade ago.

"When you hear the same promises for years but don't see any changes, you find yourself thinking – maybe we can change things the hard way," he says.

Samir Kajosevic is journalist from Montenegro and participant in 2012 Balkan Fellowship for Journalistic Excellence programme. His fellowship story is about nationalism among Albanian minorities in Montenegro and neighbouring countries. Follow this fellow and his reporting project on <http://fellowship.birn.eu.com/en/profiles/fellows-samir-kajosevic>

A Plea for Nonchalance

The "us against them" populist blockade dominating Balkan societies needs to be infected with the virus of creativity in order to break open.



By Harald Schenker, Skopje

These days a complex of statues is about to be finished in one of Skopje's parks. One of the figures there depicts a naked young man holding a torch, and rattling his broken chains. It is no one else but the titan Prometheus, who in the rather free interpretation of ancient mythology by his author Tome Adzиеvski "is a god who created humans".

The problem that unnamed "women's organisations" allegedly had with all this is not the lack of basic knowledge by the author, or the deplorable aesthetics of the statue, but rather the fact that Prometheus was depicted naked, making it impossible for them to sit in the park, where the statue is located. The local authorities wasted no time in reacting to citizens' requests and quickly had the artist design a pair of oversized, loosely hanging knickers. The author unsurprisingly complied.

This is not an invented fairytale, but part of the day-to-day reality of populist decision making. It is a parable on how decisions are made in the name of "the people" by a self-styled elite with only one clear item on the agenda – profit, be it political, or, even better, pecuniary. After all, the underwear has to be paid for, so there is a bit of something in it for everybody. Politicians look good and citizens don't have to face the titan's private parts. Social peace is restored.

The rise of populism has put players in the Balkan societies in a corner. It seems that persons or groups striving for relevance find it difficult to react to a movement that is determined by revolutionary hysteria and by the almost pathological need to show that it is

right. By its exclusivist arrogance, such a movement strives to put anyone who is not part of it in the stocks. The aim is a closed, controlled and steered society, in which "the people's will" is defined by those pulling the strings.

In the logic of action and reaction, so far the answer to hysteria is rage. The articulation of this rage though is part of the problem. In the post-YU universe, this articulates within a simple logical system: if the populist discourse is national(ist)-religious, then the counter-discourse is leftist-post-communist, feeding on the vocabulary, symbolic heritage and, most important, gestures of the disappeared Yugoslavia. Hence, the system remains hermetically closed, steaming away in its same, old sauce, recycling particles of discourse and conflict, but not producing anything new. What happens in such a hermetically closed situation is decadence, decay, the loss of coordinates, the loss of a reference system – in other words: eternal transition, a prolongation of the agony of the 1990s and 2000s ad infinitum.

Macedonia, being a late-comer in so many aspects of building a society has never had an organised independent cultural scene until now. In an attempt to make themselves noticed, a good dozen organisations recently formed a cooperation platform. So far, so good. But when listening to the speeches and reading the manifesto, I could not help getting this feeling of déjà vu. The same wooden language that has survived from the times of partisan films and that is heard all over the Balkans from self-styled progressives. Nothing but verbal agony.

The reason, why this platform and others like it should succeed is not because they have a right to be noticed by those in power. Those will do their best to ignore them.

The need to succeed derives from the fact that these organisations exist, from the fact that they work, that they engage. Everything else is playing within the closed system.

Action in the context of a closing society needs to create a new discourse, an open debate about this very society. How can it achieve that? Largely by creative hedonist subversion. And by that I don't mean the post-Gramscian type of boring and uninspired political subversion so uncreatively used by groups claiming to be the spearheads of urban insurgency. I am thinking more along the lines of Vaclav Havel. Actions aiming at creating meaning outside the parameters dictated by the dualist discourse of "us against them"; actions ignoring that discourse and treating it with indifference will succeed in the long run, because they do not offer the established dual power structures a platform to act.

The ridiculously overpriced plan for the renovation of a bridge in Skopje sparked some protest recently. The action that followed was to stick the equivalent of the price in makeshift 100 Euro banknotes to the existing bridge. Had it been just that – perfect. But no, the activists had to get in front of the cameras and explain, let themselves be filmed during the action. Why was this wrong, you may feel inclined to ask? The answer is very simple: it made it appear like an action of a small sectarian group; it delivered the arguments for being pushed into a political corner. What if passers-by would have discovered the prepped bridge in the morning alongside with piles of 100 Euro stickers waiting for them? It would have been intriguing, subversive, hedonist and creative. Like this, it was just another media event. The effect? Questionable. It is the act and the following debates that

Poverty in a Land of

The countryside of Slavonia in eastern Croatia feels like a dream during springtime. The flat fields go on forever. The endless shades of green soothe the eyes, even when the sun is high. Looking around, one can't help thinking that Mother Nature is a shameless show-off.



By Ana Benacic

Slavonia and the neighbouring plains of Vojvodina, in Serbia, were famous for their rich, black soil. Among the citizens of the former Yugoslavia, the fertile farmland was even the subject of a popular saying: You can grow coats just by scattering buttons across it!

That was in the past. Today, the people are fleeing a land that their hungry forefathers once

rushed to cultivate. The villagers who remain are mostly elderly. The soil is still rich – but it yields only poverty and desperation.

According to Branislav Gulan, from the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, some 39 percent of the country's villagers live in poverty. Unemployment has soared and land values have plummeted.

"In the last eight years, 69,000 agricultural workers lost their jobs," he says. "In Vojvodina, you can buy a house with a garden for 5,000 euros."

Many of the villagers have debts that they have no hope of

repaying. They struggle to get a fair price for their produce. They are responsible for the food on our tables, yet society increasingly speaks of them as parasites. We only pay attention to their problems when they block motorways in protest.

This farmland once fed a country of 25 million people, and still had enough left over for export. What happened to the hundreds of agricultural companies founded in Yugoslavia? Why are people turning away from the land when global food prices are at a 20-year high?

After all, everybody needs food.



Albanians in Montenegro are unhappy with the country's direction post independence.



This is not an invented fairytale, but part of the day-to-day reality of populist decision making.

induce change, not the media appearances of actors. Especially not in a context, in which media ownership and editorial policies are part of the “us against them” system and will do everything to use any event for their purposes.

What I am pleading for here is a good dose of nonchalance. A society is not dual; it is a complex organism, which needs to be fed from different angles. The more, the better. Injecting doses of liberalism, libertarianism, individualism and hedonism into the closed-circuit machinery will make it first stutter and eventually adapt. But what this approach implies is the long-term vision of self-conscious individuals, who are capable and willing to sever the group ties and bonds that keep Balkan societies hostage to patronage and clientelism.

It takes people with relaxed views, with the serenity of those in the know that the eternal rivalry between two political contenders at the top of the government or state is blatantly irrelevant, that it does not matter which jour-

nalist or medium has decided to drop dignity like a pair of pants, that identity is something personal which cannot be defined nor denied by anyone else but its bearer, that winning the Eurovision contest is a commercial act rather than a national duty, that entire nations cannot be offended, whatever wannabe leaders may claim.

It takes creative minds, both artistic and intellectual, which act for the sakes of themselves, which seek legitimization of their own intentions and ideas, for the sakes of those intentions only, irrelevant of what relevant factors in today's power setup might think.

It also takes courage. The courage to re-claim social space from the mainstream of narrow-mindedness, which has drowned Balkan societies for a while now, the mainstream reeking of periphery, of thuggish half-wits and half-legality, vibrating to the soundtrack of transition scum idolatry – turbo-folk.

But courage without nonchalance is boring. Creativity comes from the ability to take a step back, to question every-

body and everything else, including one self every day. Dull are those who have ready-made answers, for theirs the future will not be. That is my imaginary Yoda's mantra. In brief: I am delighted and excited by Pussy Riot, while Che Guevara puts me to sleep. A bored, dull and dreamless state.

Oh, and speaking of role models, my dear friends, especially in Macedonia: please give up the periphery reflex. Yugoslavia is dead. Belgrade is not the centre of the universe anymore, but an exorbitantly ordinary city with its own cultural dilemmas and economic problems, with its own elites with totalitarian reflexes and with its own mafia, with a civil society seeking its own answers and a media landscape that is less than rosy. Leave it be. It is time to create your own discourses. The power structures have rightly declared the transition as ended by putting their unmistakable mark on Skopje's map. It is time to enrich that landscape.

This article is funded under the BICCED project, supported by the Swiss Cultural Programme.

Plenty

Employment for farmers should be a certainty, no less than it is for undertakers. Why are times so hard? Are the people who work the land lazy? Ignorant? Are their business skills too poor to take advantage of a golden opportunity?

You can ask them what went wrong, but they don't say much. They look to the ground when you question where the profits have gone. The battle has been lost, they say – everyone knows what happened. But has all the truth really come out?

Ana Benacic is journalist from Croatia and participant in 2012 Balkan Fellowship for Journalistic Excellence



Fertile land hides poverty in eastern Croatia

programme. She is writing about how rural communities in Croatia are dealing with agricultural reforms. Follow

this fellow and her reporting project on <http://fellowship.birn.eu.com/en/profiles/fellows-ana-benacic>

Outside In Better the Tadic You Know?



By Kreshnik Hoxha

The victory of Tomislav Nikolic in the presidential elections in Serbia brings back many memories of October 2000 when the Bulldozer Revolution in Belgrade led to the overthrow of the then Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic. It is not the revolution itself which resembles the recent elections in Serbia, but more the desperate need of Serb voters for change. Change, however, sometimes comes at a price.

In the wake of the overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic in 2000, it was Vojislav Kostunica from the Democratic Party of Serbia who gained power. At that point the Serbian public opinion was eager to see a new face taking the lead, because it had become evident that Slobodan Milosevic was going to drag the country further into the darkness.

The election of Mr Kostunica in 2000 demonstrated that the disappointment with Milosevic had reached its peak and anything else but the dictator was favoured.

Twelve years on, Serbia finds itself in a very similar situation. Fed up with the governance of Boris Tadic, the Serbian voters punished the Democratic Party, looking for a change of leadership, no matter who took the lead.

Boris Tadic might have been the favoured politician of Brussels due to his cooperative policies; but during his leadership Serbia witnessed tighter control of media, the country sunk deeper in the realms of corruption and it was faced with an ever growing economic crisis. Many of these internal problems were actively ignored by Brussels for the sake of not losing a pro-EU partner.

This is also logical considering that EU's prime focus in the Balkans is regional stability even if means turning a blind eye to other problems. Mr Tadic was given pretty open support from the EU during the election campaign and it is fair to say that the country's “candidate status” decision was, at least in part, an attempt to boost the President's ailing popularity.

For the EU it was a case of better the devil you know.

To EU's surprise, however, it was the guy who still dreamed of Greater Serbia, the deputy of war-crime indictee Vojislav Seselj, the man who said that he would take out the eyes of all non-Serbs with rusted forks and spoons, and the former undertaker who ended up assuming power and becoming Serbia's new president - albeit this time in his slightly more moderate new brand.

Mr Nikolic's first days have been replete with scandals, including controversial comments on Croatia's Vukovar and his denial of the Srebrenica genocide. The EU was quick to react to his statements, but the ultimate question arising now is which path will Serbia take.

Under the leadership of Mr Tadic, Serbia had started to show conciliatory signs to its neighbours, albeit at a very slow pace. These signs were, however, largely an EU box-ticking exercise to ensure Serbia's progress towards Brussels then a genuine change of heart.

Now, the worry is that with a progressive but former radical president like Mr Nikolic, Serbia is once again about to wallow in nationalism and cool the relationship with the EU. Nationalism in Serbia remains, of course, the elephant in the room, who becomes more restless and more difficult to ignore in times of economic crisis.

“Change” is often a potent political message – just ask Obama – but what type of change Serbia has voted for remains far from clear.

This is a new adventure, a fresh start for the Serbs, but also a gamble for the entire Balkans.

Digging Deeper: INDEP Think Tank



By Shengjyl Osmani

Prishtina's Institute for Development Policy, INDEP, may be less than a year old, but it has already been making headlines with its detailed studies of Kosovo's energy needs and the state of the media in Kosovo. Shengjyl Osmani speaks to its head, Krenar Gashi.

Q: Describe your organization in ten (10) words.

A: INDEP is an independent think tank that focuses on development policies.

Q: Tell us the most pressing issue facing Kosovo today?

A: There are many pressing issues in Kosovo, but the one we often have to deal with is the fact that even after four years of independence, we haven't been able to construct and maintain a policy-making cycle. This means that laws continue to be drafted without follow up on their policies, whereas most of the policies are pushed from top down with little feedback from bottom up. As a consequence, our society was able to draft and adopt laws very quickly, but is failing to implement them.

Q: The most interesting thing your organization has discovered this year?

A: This year we discovered that independence of our work is beyond everything else. Until INDEP was established, most of our team were working for another think tank in Kosovo. We walked out and established a new institute, from scratch. The successful continuation of our work as well as our commitment has proved once again that when there is a will, there is a way.

Q: What's the biggest concrete success, the most important one for you this year?

A: The biggest concrete success was rather a joint one. Together with ten other civil society organisations, in the Consortium for Sustainable Development, we scrutinised the

World Bank Group's involvement in the energy sector in Kosovo and will ensure that the best practices of the World Bank are applied in Kosovo as well. As a direct result, the Bank has committed a fund of roughly 40 million USD to energy efficiency projects in Kosovo.

Q: Who would be your dream president for Kosovo?

A: Someone who can accurately represent and build on Kosovo's competitive advantage due to its youth, both in terms of population and as a fresh democracy.

Q: What jargon is your organization most guilty of overusing?

A: Sustainable. Sustainability. Sustaining.

Q: Tell us what projects you are working on at the moment?

A: Currently, INDEP is working with a number of prominent local and international organizations to ensure that the energy sector in the country is both economically and environmentally sustainable. Through this project we aim to ensure that no decisions are being made without considering all viable options for energy security. We are committed to ensure no monopolies are created in the energy sector and that European Union standards are met in every project in this field, making sure our society won't be going against global developments, which is undoubtedly counterproductive.

The second project is our involvement to support the Assembly of Kosovo by providing research support to the Committee for Economic Development, Infrastructure and Trade. This project aims to develop parliamentary research in Kosovo as well as increase the supervisory role of the Assembly. INDEP's role is to provide independent research-based inputs to draft laws, periodic reports and different strategies that are within the scope of work of this Committee. Furthermore, INDEP is working closely with the Assembly's Secretariat and assisting them in establishing a permanent parliamentary



INDEP chief executive Krenar Gashi with Minister for Economic Development Besim Beqaj

research office, which is part of project's sustainability strategy.

Q: You criticized the state of the media in Kosovo in a recent report - what newspapers do you pick up in the morning, and what do you think is the most reliable source of news, nationally and internationally?

A: We don't like to see our work and the previous report as criticism of the media, but rather an attempt to identify persistent issues in the media sector in Kosovo. A considerable number of these issues cannot be blamed on the media as they are processes that happen outside their control, although they could play a more active role in advocating for the resolution of their problems.

Now, regarding your question, we pick up all national newspapers every morning, largely because a number of views and angles on the same stories have to be taken into consideration while browsing news. We believe that Koha Ditore and Zeri are among the first most reliable newspapers in the country, publishing some news analysis, as well as Kosova Sot, mainly pub-

lishing straightforward news.

Judging the reliability of international media, however, is an entirely different issue as the criteria for discerning reliability vary widely. Nonetheless, INDEP is a committed reader of the Financial Times and the Economist, as well as the BBC, New York Times, Washington Post, Bloomberg, not in order of importance and with the entire list being quite long.

Q: Your main campaign is against the new power plant for Kosovo; why it is such an important issue for Kosovo, and why do you think World Bank and government is so committed in building it? What's behind it?

A: We believe we are entering an important age of sustainable development. In this spirit, we see fossil fuels such as coal to be unsustainable, costly and environmentally unfriendly. However, we are not campaigning against the coal power plant as such. Initially we demanded for no decision to take place without examining the whole picture of the energy potentials in Kosovo. Later we found out that the power plant is not needed, that with

proper efficiency measures and some renewable sources of energy, Kosovo can shut down Kosovo A, repair Kosovo B and have sufficient energy until 2025. Secondly, and most importantly, we found out that the project will create a monopoly in energy generation, and as such goes against EU standards on competition, and not only environmental standards which were the initial concern.

Although it's not really clear what stands behind the government's commitment over this project, it is now clear that whoever wins this project will have a guaranteed dominant position in the market – a de facto monopoly – which is a safeguard for private profit rather than social welfare.

Established in 2011 as an association of policy analysts, researchers and civil society activists, INDEP looks at regional policies, aiming to guide countries of South-East Europe on their path to Euro-Atlantic integration. In Kosovo, where it is based, the institute has a special focus on strengthening democratic governance and plays the role of public policy watchdog. For more information visit INDEP's website at <http://www.indep.info/>



Culture Watch Award

The BICCED project has established the Culture Watch Award with the aim of promoting an investigative and analytical approach to journalism dealing with key issues of culture policy.

After three years of training culture journalists from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia and

Kosovo, the BICCED project has created a network of more than 30 culture journalists. The Culture Watch Award is a further step in strengthening media coverage of culture policy and culture management in the region.

The Culture Watch Award will be granted to three successful candidates

who produce a serious, complex, investigative article on any culture policy issue.

Total prize money is 3,700 Swiss Franks (CHF) less applicable taxes under the law in Bosnia and Herzegovina; this will be divided among the three winners, as follows: first prize: 2,000 CHF; second

prize: 1,200 CHF; third prize: 500 CHF

The jury may decide not to award a first prize and instead allocate more second or third prizes depending on the quality of submitted articles.

The deadline for submission of applications is 30th September 2012 (23:59 hours).

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Classified Ads

Do you have a flat to rent? Position to fill? Students to find for a language course? Why not speak directly to Kosovo's international community through Prishtina Insight' classified ads.

Almost every international organisation, embassy, NGO and many others subscribe to Kosovo's only English language newspaper, which is also on sale at newsstands in seven cities and received in electronic format by scores of paying clients across the world.

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8							
	3		6			7	9
4		9				8	6

Medium							
9	8						
		5	3	8		6	4
			9			2	5
	5					7	
			6		8		
4		3					8
	7	9			6		
	2	4		5	9	8	
						9	7

Hard							
	5						
2		8		9		3	
9			8				4
1				4			9
			6		9		
7				3			8
8	7				6		4
		5		1		6	3
						9	

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