



WEEKLY NEWS

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Western Balkans", organized by the Assembly of Albania in the framework of the Adriatic Charter.



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Economy and Finance, Lutfi Zhargu, Minister of Trade and Industry, who were accompanied by ambassador of Kosova to Tirana, Gazmend Pula. The ministers presented to Premier Berisha the decision of Kosova government for opening of talks on Shengjin port.

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Statement of Majlinda Bregu, spokeswoman of government

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Premier Berisha: NATO integration, safe freedom and certain future

Prime Minister Sali Berisha attended the proceedings of the conference under topic “Euro-Atlantic integration and the security challenges in Western Balkans”,



organized by the Assembly of Albania in the framework of the Adriatic Charter. Attending the conference were Mr. David Hobbs, Secretary General of NATO General Assembly, MPs from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, guests from the Parliament of Kosova, representatives of the Diplomatic Corps accredited in Tirana, lawmakers etc. In his greeting speech delivered on this occasion, Premier Berisha expressed gratitude to the U.S. then-president and administration for establishing the Adriatic Charter in Tirana as well as to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly for its constant support, thus paving the way to Albania receiving the NATO membership invitation and becoming a full member of the Alliance by April of the current year. “I take the opportunity to express deep gratitude to the U.S. then-president and administration for establishing the Adriatic Charter in Tirana which is currently assuming a new dimension with two other friendly countries joining and I hope it will soon be enlarged even with Kosova and other countries”, said Premier Berisha. Further on, the premier underlined that, “The parliaments of the member states testified their support through ratifying within a 6 month period Albania NATO Accession Protocol, but the members of the Parliamentary delegations of the NATO member countries have also played an important role for the ratification process.” Speaking about the trust that the NATO member countries have put in Albania, the premier assured the participants that it will be turned into a great responsibility for the government so that the common values in the core of the Alliance and that our nations share will constantly increase in Albania. Further on, Premier Berisha mentioned the cooperation with the political forces in the country and considered it an extremely important factor which has paved the way to Albania NATO membership process. “Together with the opposition we have undertaken major reforms in the judiciary, constitutional and electoral reforms which are really promising of the highest level of democracy in Albania”, said the premier. In regard to the Parliamentary elections to be held in June, the premier told to the participants that, “The government is willing to have the best free and fair elections”. The premier invited them to bring monitors to Albania elections.

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Speaker of the Assembly Jozefina Topalli was also attending the ceremony of last respects to the late Zef Simoni. The premier expressed condolences even on behalf of the government of Albania to the Simonis family and to the entire region and appreciated that Zef Simoni’s death marked a great loss for all citizens of Shkodra and of the whole Albania. The premier said that the late Simoni used to be a real martyr of freedom and the church, a distinguished intellectual of our nation who belongs to that generation of Albanian church leaders who like Christ got crucified for the divine values and got resurrected because they deserved to.

Albania offers Kosova the port of Shengjin

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Finance, Lutfi Zhargu, Minister of Trade and Industry, who were accompanied by ambassador of Kosova to Tirana, Gazmend Pula. The ministers presented to Premier Berisha the decision of Kosova government for opening of talks on Shengjin port. Both parts widely discussed on the need of a study on possible enlargement of Shengjin Port, which could meet the needs of Kosova state. Likewise, during the meeting was stressed that new road Durres Kukës will considerably shorten the distance between Kosova and wide European market.

The Premier said that he and Albanian government are attentively and with admiration following the positive development in Kosova, which are taking Kosova toward a secure enforcement of independence of rule of law, consolidating her role as a factor of stability in the region

Premier Berisha receives Romanian ambassador to Albania, George Micu, on occasion of end of diplomatic mission

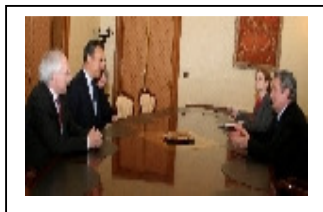
Premier Berisha received Ambassador of Romania to Albania, George Micu, on occasion of end of his diplomatic mission. During the meeting, Ambassador



Micu expressed his estimation for the excellent level of bilateral relations, as well as expressed his pleasure over the important achievements of Albania, which would be coroneted with Albania's membership into NATO. The Romanian Ambassador thanked PM Berisha for the support of Albanian government during his mission and expressed the belief that this support will be offered also to his successor. Premier Berisha stressed that relations between two countries are based on deep historic traditions, emphasizing the opportunities for new spaces and opportunities of bringing them to higher levels. Premier Berisha highly appreciated the support of Romania to Albania in its integration processes in different fields of development, such as in economy, culture, education, etc.

Premier Berisha receives Mr. Anthony Smith, DFID Europe and Donor Relations Division

Prime Minister Sali Berisha received Mr. Anthony Smith, DFID Europe and Donor Relations Division. Accompanying Mr. Smith to this meeting was the British

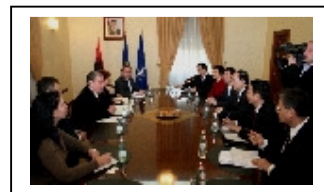


ambassador to Albania H.E. Fraser Wilson. The interlocutors discussed about the DFID end of mission in the context of Albania development and progress. Premier Berisha expressed special thanks to Mr. Smith for the great assistance that the British Department for International Development (DFID) has provided Albania with in the course of these years. The assistance provided amounts to about Euro 20 million. Premier Berisha welcomed the support through this bilateral program focusing on drafting of the National Strategy for Development and Integration, the assistance for upgrading the programs and budgetary policies in the Ministry of Finance, the support for development of the mountainous areas, the statistics etc. On his part, Mr. Smith highlighted the notable

progress and the important steps that Albania has made through the reforms and progress made with the European integration process. Mr. Smith assured Premier Berisha that Albania will still find a partner at the United Kingdom while in the process of integration and it will also enjoy its political and financial support, but actually this assistance will be through the EU assistance programs.

Premier Berisha meets Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Hu Zheng Yue

Prime Minister Sali Berisha held a cordial meeting with the Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Hu Zheng Yue, who visited Albania, in the framework of the 60



anniversary of establishment of the diplomatic relations between Albania and China. Hu Zheng Yue praised the very good relations between the two countries and friendly peoples and highlighted the constant efforts of Premier Berisha to promote mutual cooperation. Premier Berisha thanked Mr. Yue for his Albania visit and conveyed best regards for his Chinese counterpart Wen Jiabao and expressed gratitude for the assistance that China has provided Albania with. In this context, Premier Berisha highlighted the very good bilateral relations and the growing tendency over the recent two years. Premier Berisha said that the Chinese companies are welcomed to invest in Albania in fields of interest for them like in the mining industry, energy, infrastructure, tourism etc and ensured that the government of Albania would facilitate the opportunities for the Chinese companies with success stories in Albania. Both sides agreed that the work of the inter-ministerial groups should immediately begin in the framework of joint projects.

Premier Berisha: Year 2009 to mark basis of Olive Tree National Program

Premier Berisha chaired the Task Force meeting for Olive Tree National Program. During the meeting, Premier Berisha said that for the successful realization of this project are engaged all the institutions included in this program, such as ministry of Agriculture, agricultural regional directorates, Tirana Agriculture University, farmers and producers of saplings, etc. The Premier underlined that all the parties engaged in this process must determine objectives and clear and concrete tasks, in order to consolidate basis of Olive Tree National Program. Likewise, at the Task Force meetings for Olive tree National program was discussed for the progress of study on this project.

Premier Berisha: Government has identified thousands of hectares of public land in tourist coastal areas to compensate owners

Prime Minister Sali Berisha dealt during meeting of the Council of Ministers with the issue of restitution and compensation of properties. The premier informed that an ad hoc group has worked hard for the identification of the public territories in the tourists zones to compensate the Albanian owners and that will become concrete soon with a new package of sub legal acts. While highlighting that these lands can be used in accordance with the principles and the platform of development of tourism, Premier Berisha said that along the tourist coasts of the seas and lakes are identified thousands of hectares and the territories that will be used to serve the purpose are the Adriatic Coastal area, a part of the Ionian coast and two lakes, that of Shkodra and Pogradec. Likewise, the premier said that a study should be conducted even on the zone beyond Dajti National Park and Priska Mount. The premier said that the areas identified have been confirmed with all the proper documentation as public land thus paving the way to defining the procedures of their transfer and distribution. The premier expressed his trust that this initiative would find a broad understanding as the solution of the property issue is essential for the stability and development of the free market economy. Following the government decision for crediting of all the families so that to free about 3 thousand houses belonging to the owners, the premier appreciated this new package of the sub-legal acts that the Council of Ministers is due to approve as the most serious answer that paves the way for the solution of this complicated problem, but rather important and congratulated the Ministry of Justice and the group of experts for the job done to draft it.



Premier Berisha: Visa liberalization, first major profit from European Union integration

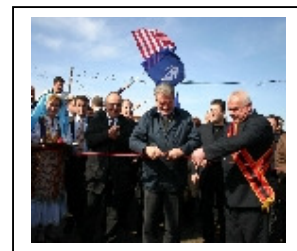
Premier Berisha chaired Inter-ministerial Committee for visa liberalization, aiming at analyzing work in the framework of the European Commission mission, which would come to



verify and discuss the measures to be taken by Albania in order to merit the elimination of visa regime with European Countries. In his address, Premier Berisha said that liberalization of visa regime with European Union, after the NATO membership, consists of the second major objective of this government. Premier Berisha stressed the necessity of a detailed review of the obligations of every ministry and agency, because the teams coming to evaluated the situation will make almost an determining report, because in May gathers the Commission, which would take important decisions.

Premier Berisha goes to Lushnje and Fier in course of his “Albania is changing” tour

In the framework of his “Albania is changing” tour, Prime Minister Sali Berisha went to Lushnja and Fier this current week to inaugurate several public works financed by the state budget. Among other things, in his address to Krusha inhabitants, the premier said that the ruling majority is going to win a second mandate because it has changed Albania a lot and is determined even for a greater change over the coming four years. While addressing to the opposition leader Edi Rama, Premier Berisha said that, “These men and women, these young people need not of becoming Edi Rama or Sali Berisha’s volunteers, but they need to be NATO citizens and we shall make them such.” Further on, the premier stopped off in Fieri town and speaking about investments policy he said that the government has made investments even in other cities as well.



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hectares along the coastal area of Albania. During the coming days, it will become available a new package of sub-legal acts on the basis of which the land for compensation will be distributed. The restitution and compensation of properties is a difficult process, but not impossible for this governance. In June last year were identified 20 thousand hectares of arable land available for compensation. Physical compensation, compensation in cash of the owners and the credit to the 3000 families living in the houses of the owners paved the way to treatment in Albania of the property issue as never before in the course of the recent 18 years. The solution of this problem is not just an absolute obligation for the compensation of the strata of the former owners, not just a constant requirement of the EU, but it is also helping even for the development of economy and absorb of investments in Albania.

Draft Laws and Decisions approved at Council of Ministers meeting

1.1. "On ratification of understanding memorandum between Republic of Albania and European Community for participation of Albania in the program "Europe for citizens", proposed by minister of Foreign Affairs.

1.2. "On indicators of consumption of energy and other resources by household appliances through labeling and standard information of products", as proposed by minister of Economy, Trade and Energy.

2.1. "On approval in principle of the agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the government of the Republic of Cyprus on stimulation and mutual protection of investments", as proposed by the minister for Foreign Affairs.

2.2. "On approval of the regulation on control of the regulation enforcement and working time of persons on the road transport service and the drivers time," as proposed by the minister of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunications.

2.3. "On expropriation in public interest of the owners of immovable property affected by the extension of the public cemetery in Rrogozhina", as proposed by the ministry of Interior.

2.4. "On expropriation in public interest of the owners of immovable property affected by the extension of the stadium in Rrogozhina municipality", as proposed by minister of Interior.

2.5. "On expropriation in public interest of the owners of immovable property affected by building of the

entrance road to the Re-integration Center for the minors in Kavaja," as proposed by Justice Minister.

2.6. "On an amendment to decision No. 1661, dated 29.12.2008, of the Council of Ministers, "On financing of the hospital health services from the obligatory scheme of health care assurances", as proposed by the Minister of Health.

2.7. "On an amendment to decision No. 610, dated 12.9.2008, of the Council of Ministers, "On transfer of properties, land and objects of local interest into the property of Tirana city hall."

and

2.8. "On transfer of several resources, land, into the property of Elbasan municipality", as proposed by the Interior minister.

2.9. "On approval of the preliminary list of public immovable properties to be transferred into property or use in Kurjan commune, Fieri region",

and

2.10. "On approval of the preliminary list of public immovable properties to be transferred into property of Kushovë commune, Elbasani region", as proposed by Interior Minister.

2.11. "On approval of inventory list of state immovable property in Gjerbës commune, Berati region".