

THE KOSOVO@ POST

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FEATURE



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KPS admits erasing journalist's photographs

The spokesman for the Kosova Police Service (KPS) in Mitrovica admitted to the Kosov@ Post that one of his officers confiscated a camera from a journalist and erased photographs during a protest on July 22.

"It is true that that an officer took a camera and erased pictures," said Betim Hoti. But Hoti was quick to add, "But the camera was returned." Hoti said was unsure why the camera was confiscated and erased and that the incident is now out of his hands, "I do not know why the photographs were erased but the information has been turned over to the police inspectorate for investigation."

The journalist in question is Bajram Hajdari, from the Kosova Press. Hajdari said the police were beating a young man and he was taking photos, "The police took him 100 metres away from the protest, brought him behind a van, handcuffed him and hit him until he fell to the ground."

Hajdari and Musa Mustafa, the head of the Mitrovica association of journalists were arrested and brought to the police station despite the fact that both men had shown KPS officers the accreditations. "When their commander heard about this he immediately came and set as free because he knew they were making a mistake," said Hajdari

Hoti said the reporters were interfering with police officers during the protest, "We were told that journalists were in the area where police officers were doing their jobs. The journalists were interrupting officers who were doing their job."

The protest was organized by a number of organizations including the Vetevendosje self-determination movement, the Miners' Union of Trepca (the large and famous resource extraction complex that dominates Mitrovica), the Ecologist Party, the local Islamic Community, student unions and a few more supporting groups.

Vetevendosje explained that, "the blockade was a continuation of the daily protests being held to oblige the government to remove from the town of Mitrovica three trucks carrying disulfuric oil. The trucks have been stored in a customs depot until a company is found to destroy the chemical safely." CONT. PAGE 3



The first

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THE BIG PICTURE

Uh oh! i know i shouldn't have taken that left turn at Albuquerque.

VIENNA, EURO 08 JETMIR IDRIZI

GOING SOFT

When I got married, my wife
made a big effort to change me.

I used to let my pitbull sleep on the bed.
She banned hi to the kitchen pantry.

I used to keep my fighting cocks around
the pool. She exiled them to the farm.

I used to drink champagne in bars,
now we drank only at home, away from trouble.

She even made me soak my hands,
so they'd be soft when I held our sons

I didn't mind going soft, in a caring sort of way,
Until she ignored me for our children.

Then I retuned to my dogs, my fighting cocks,
My drinking buddies, thinking

we both had what we wanted,
until she said our kids needed private schools

Then they all left me,
to get a better accent

**Paul Polansky is a poet, author, journalist
and human rights activist. This poem was
taken from his book STRAY DOG: Poems of a
Fighting Freak.**

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Procession: Friday 13:00

PROTESTANT CHURCH

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044-118-088 Procession: Sunday 11:00

PROTESTANT CHURCH

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044-201-207

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Erratum

The Kosovo@ Post has, in
several issues of the paper,
reported that 77 Gypsies
have died of lead poisoning
in UNMIK camps built on
toxically contaminated
ground outside of Mitrovica.
While the camps were
established and under the
control of UNMIK since 1999
they were turned over to the
Kosovar government in May
of this year.

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Brave Little Elephant

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 - Protestors decided to block the main road connecting Mitrovica to Pristina on July 22. Stephen Schwartz, an American journalist and the Kosov@ Post's new page 4 columnist was at the protest and reported, "The police moved on the small group of protestors in the roadway and arrested three of them immediately. The arrests were brutal; the detained were knocked down with kicks, hit with clubs, their arms pulled behind them and rushed into military trucks parked on the northeast side of the road. The first three were the only people, among the 17 seized by police, who could be seen as obstructing the roadway."

"First of all, blocking the road is against the law," said Hoti. "The protestors did not announce their intention to block the

road to police."

Hoti denied that his officers were out of control, "No, we do not consider this an excessive use of force. The circumstances by which protestors were injured are not clear. However, one KPS officer was also injured."

The August 4 issue of the Vetevendosje newsletter states, "The police beat protestors in the road, in the vehicles whilst transporting them and inside the police station."

Proper crowd control is a complicated exercise and Hoti admits that his frontline officers lacked training in the techniques, "The first line of KPS officers were not specially trained in riot or crowd control." Schwartz scoffed at the notion that the

peaceful protest justified a crowd or riot control response from police, saying what he witnessed was a matter of, "police action in response to free speech."

The toxic cargo, which originated in Iran, entered Kosovo via Macedonia. By the time Kosovar authorities realized just how toxic the cargo was it was too late to send it back to Iran because no neighbouring county would permit the trucks to cross their borders.

The July 24 issue of Vetevendosje's newsletter states, "There are considerable doubts that the material is being stored properly. Workers at the Trepca complex have reported that in the extreme heat, the containers were opened to ensure that the substance did not overheat and expand. The fumes can be smelt in the

town centre. Hundreds of people in the local areas have reported sick at hospital with breathing difficulties, vomiting and skin discoloration. While the trucks were being held at the Kosovo-Macedonian border, before being brought to Mitrovica, newspapers report that Macedonian police sought medical aid. The Kosova Government continues to claim that this substance is harmless."

Two high ranking public officials were fired on July 28 for allowing the toxic cargo to enter the country. Customs Director was dismissed by Economy Minister Ahmet Shala for "legal irresponsibility shown when letting the dangerous material" into the country. Kosovo's Environment Minister Mahir Jagcilar sacked Aliu for the same reason.

MINORITY REPORT Paul Polansky



Torbesh minority fleeing Kosovo en masse

Although more than 200,000 Serbs and at least 100,000 Gypsies have fled Kosovo since 1999, the first minority that will probably totally disappear from the newly independent country of Kosovo is the Torbesh.

No Kosovo government institution or international organization has tried to help the Torbesh remain, despite claims that they have been in Kosovo for more than 700 years.

During the past nine years I have visited on many occasions their communities southeast of Prizren. The Torbesh live in the green, forested foothills on the north side of the Shar mountain range in an area called Zupa. The Torbesh villages are Gornje Ljabinje, Donje Ljabinje, Nebregoshe, Manastirica, Pousko, Jablanica, Recane, Planjelje, Mushnikovica, and Gornje Selo.

Before the 1999 war, there were about 15,000 Torbesh. Today most of their grey stone villages are half empty. Only women, children and old men remain. About 80% of the men work in Montenegro, Switzerland and Germany. They only come home for the month of August.

The Torbesh derive their name from the Serbian word, "torba" which means "bag." One of the oldest sayings among the Torbesh is, "Put a bag over your shoulder and go look for work." Hence, among all Slav-speaking people the Torbesh are the "bag carriers."

"Our ancestors came to Kosovo more than 700 years ago looking for work," said one of the few young men left in the village of Donje Ljabinje, half an hour's drive from Prizren. "My ancestors said we came from Albania and Montenegro." Like all the Torbesh I interviewed, he asked me not to use his name in any article I wrote, fearing retribution if someone in power didn't like what he said. For this report, I will call him Peca.

For historians, the origins of the Torbesh are still clouded in mystery. Many Muslims in Macedonia call themselves Torbesh but scholars are divided about their origins. Some say the present-day Torbesh in southern Kosovo are the descendants of the Pomaks from Greece and Bulgaria, while others mention bloodlines with Macedonians, Croats, Serbs, Bosniaks or Gorani.

Although the Torbesh came to Kosovo as a Slav-speaking people, they were forcibly converted from their Orthodox religion by the Ottomans about 500 years ago to the Muslim religion like their close neighbors the Gorani, who live further up the mountains in the area of Dragash. "Many old-timers

say we are a clan of the Gorani," Peca said, "but I don't believe it. Our traditions and customs are different. We seldom intermarry."

It didn't take long on my last visit for my driver and my interpreter (young Serb-speaking men) to receive offers of marriage. With hardly any men left in the Torbesh villages, most young women have never had a date, let alone a chance to get married. "Most women here are desperate," an old man told us. "Before the war, a young woman would be expected to have been married by the age of 20. Now most of them know they will never get married unless they flee abroad."

Almost all Torbesh young men from Zupa are in Montenegro. A construction boom along the Dalmatian coast, mainly foreigners building holiday homes, has given employment to thousands of Torbesh.

Before the 1999 war, most Torbesh worked in state-owned factories in the region. "After the war, the local Albanians told us we had collaborated with the Serbs by working in those factories," Peca said. "So after the war, many Torbesh were attacked if they tried to leave their village looking for work in Kosovo. Going abroad was much safer. Now, almost all the men are abroad."

Peca is one of the few young men who has remained. He has his own coffee bar but few customers. Only three or four old-age pensioners come to his cafe to play cards and reminisce about the past when everyone had a job and there was at least one marriage party every weekend.

In several of the original Torbesh villages dotted around the surrounding hills, Albanians are buying vacant or abandoned homes and converting them into weekend retreats.

"Within five to ten years there will not be one Torbesh family left in these villages," Peca told me. "Once a local man has a semi-permanent job abroad, he sends a smuggler for his family. Today most Torbesh families here only survive because the men abroad send back part of their wages. Otherwise, everyone would starve."

Although UNMIK and the Kosovo government continue to vigorously promote their failed returns policy, perhaps now is the time to concentrate on keeping the people they still have here.

Ironically, there are probably more Albanians leaving Kosovo today than all the minorities put together. And for the same reason. No jobs. But to lose an entire minority that has been in Kosovo for more than 700 years is not going to help the new country's image.

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Thorns and Thistles

by Stephen Schwartz

Reflections of a Balkan Sojourner (1)

I am of mixed religious heritage, although brought up without a faith affiliation. My father was Jewish, born in America; my paternal grandfather, with his wife and child, were alone in their family in escaping to America in the first decade of the 20th century, and therefore evading the Nazis in the Holocaust. My grandfather was born in a Ukrainian town called Ternovo, which means "thorny place," and as anybody who looks at a map knows, there are many such names in Slavic countries, where thorny fields abound.

My mother was Christian, the daughter of a noted Protestant minister of Scots-Irish heritage. For her, I choose the symbolic thistle.

But in 1997, at 49, I became a Muslim. I did not "convert" to Islam because conversion means change from one religion to another, and I previously had no religion. Islam is my first religion. I had long studied religion, and especially its mystical aspects (Sufism in Islam, the Jewish Kabbalah and Catholic spirituality, as well as Buddhism and the indigenous religions of Africa and the Americas). But I was never what we call in California, where I lived most of my life, a "shopper for God."

Sadly, today many intellectuals consider religion a diet of thorns and thistles – principles they refuse to swallow. That provides another justification for the title of this column, in which I will frequently comment on religious affairs.

But more significantly, I have written on and traveled in the Balkans since the late 1980s, when I first published a prediction of the approaching wars, in the San Francisco Chronicle, a paper where I was employed for ten years. During the war in Kosovo I retired from the Chronicle and moved to the region, expecting to work for the international community in the reconstruction of society and rehabilitation of victims.

I became, however, a thorn in the side of the IC because of my undiluted criticism of their policies, especially regarding media freedom, education, economic reform, and the role of religious communities. My thistly views on these matters will naturally become better known to Post readers as these columns appear.

Although now independent, the Kosovo Republic remains subject to United Nations jurisdiction, regarding, among other issues, protection of the Serbian

minority in the territory. UN policies on the Serb minority have become inseparable from the political metastasis of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Serbian Orthodox religious leaders promoted violent ultranationalism during the recent Balkan wars, and in Kosovo they now anticipate that the church will become the sole foundation of local Serbian communal identity. In the constellation of Serbian enclaves designated by the UN or demanded by the Serbs in Kosovo, many are structured around church properties. In some cases UN schemes provide for state and other public assets to be annexed to ownership by the Serbian church for inclusion in the new protected zones.

The historic and beautiful city of Prizren offers disturbing indicators of how this policy may go wrong. Prizren is the official center for the Serbian Orthodox church in Kosovo, but is also the Kosovo seat of the Albanian Catholic church, headed by Archbishop Dodë Gjergji. Further, Prizren includes the headquarters of the Sunni Muslim Sufi orders in Kosovo, and the city's chief imam, Ali Vezaj, is an outspoken Muslim moderate.

Several Serbian Orthodox churches in Prizren have been designated as special protected zones, with the intention of annexing their surroundings. This will

likely result in the removal of Albanian shops and houses near the churches, as well as the possible closure of the city's main square. Additionally, the present plan for special Orthodox church-centered areas in Prizren would involve usurpation of paleo-Christian sites. One major complex includes the Monastery of the Archangels, which was built by the 14th century Serbian ruler Tsar Dushan on the foundations of a paleo-Christian church. On the hill above it stands the "Castle of the Maiden," which includes the foundations of another paleo-Christian church, dedicated to St. Nicholas.

In a recent visit, I was informed that foreigners supervising the rehabilitation of Serbian Orthodox churches in Prizren (some of which were damaged in inter-ethnic fighting in 2004) have ordered that the pre-Orthodox archeological remnants discovered during reconstruction should be covered with concrete. Albanian Catholic representatives in Kosovo believe they, like their Sufi and other Muslim colleagues in Prizren, will be allowed no voice in determining the future of the city's multifaith heritage, marked for sacrifice to ethnic separation in the name of peace.

New judges and public prosecutors sworn in

Fifteen judges and nine public prosecutors took the oath of office for Kosovo's Supreme, District and Municipal courts in Pristina last week. President Fatmir Sejdiu presided over the swearing in ceremony add told media that the 24 will have the support of Kosovar citizens and demonstrate to the world that the country is dedicated to the rule of law.

The President said that he was personally involved in the decision to appoint the two dozen and made it clear that he liked what he saw "I have been thoroughly studying each of the resumes you have presented and I have decided to decree all of them, considering your judicial experience."

The Chairman of the Judicial Council of Kosovo, Rexhep Haxhimusa, said that with the swearing in of the judges and prosecutors, the council has finalized a long and very important nomination process for the heads of Kosovo's judicial system.

"It is the first time in the history of independent Kosovo that the appointed judges and prosecutors have sworn the oath before the President and this is a significant judicial development for the Republic," said Haxhimusa.

Passport printer pumps out Mugabe's money

The German firm contracted to print 600,000 Kosovar passports has recently been the subject of criticism which led officials at the US State Department to consider sanctions against it, according to the LA Times.

Giesecke & Devrient, which the Times describes as, "a Munich-based firm with revenue of about \$2 billion a year (and) the world's second-largest printer of bank notes, with offices in 53 countries," is the official printer of currency for the embattled regime of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe.

While inflation in Zimbabwe is running at approximately 2,000,000% Giesecke & Devrient continues to churn out virtually worthless money for Mugabe in a manner reminiscent of the economic folly that was the Weimer Republic.

On June 19 the Times quoted an anonymous diplomat as having said, "The issue has been raised within the State Department and other agencies but there was a decision not to do anything. This company is important to the U.S. government."

The Times article states that Giesecke & Devrient holds a contract worth \$381,200 with the US government.



•Prime Minister Hashim Thaci presents passports to two young Kosovars

The Crimson Fund opens for business in Kosovo

The highly successful Crimson Finance Fund, a non-bank financial institution specializing in short term operational loans for small to medium size businesses, officially began operations in Kosovo last week.

The fund operating in Kosovo will follow the same business model as the Crimson Fund currently operating in Macedonia. The innovative financial institution has a proven record of helping people, who may not be considered credit-worthy by more traditional banking institutions, obtain financial assistance for their business.

Michael Gold, the Managing Director of Crimson Finance, explained the mandate of the fund in very simple terms. “The purpose of the Crimson Financial Fund is to help improve (entrepreneurs’) access to finance in Kosovo.”

The fund will provide loans to private entrepreneurs with the goals of increasing their profitability and production, while encouraging local employment. The fund would also like to help make their customers more credit-worthy, in order to make them a bankable risk for traditional institutions.



• Michael Gold Managing Director of Crimson Finance

The fund, however, does a great deal more than simply grant loans. Once a customer is approved for financial assistance they have the option of consulting the fund’s financial experts on how to handle their cash flow, their resources and any other financial issue that they may require assistance with.

“The key is keeping in mind what the customer needs, not our intellectualization of that, but what the customer really

needs,” explained the fund’s General Manager H.Peers Brewer.

Further, the Crimson Fund are planning to hold financial workshops that will be open to the public as well as fund customers on various financial issues that local business people may face.

The Crimson Finance Fund was founded by Crimson Capital Corporation and is supported by Norfund, USAID and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway.

Last week, the staff of the Crimson Fund welcomed founders, partners, guests and media to their offices to celebrate the fund’s official launch. Short speeches were made by Gold, Jon Hanssen (Special Advisor to the Balkans for Norfund), Dr. Michael Farbman (USAID/Kosovo Director) and representatives from the Kosovar government and the Central Bank.

Tax cuts will come into force in new year

Personal and corporate income taxes in Kosovo will be reduced starting January 1, 2009. The government will slash personal income tax for citizens earning more than 450 euros per month to 10% from the current 20%. Kosovars earning between 250 and 450 euros per month will cede 8% of their income to the central government, while those earning between 80 and 250 euros per month will be taxed at a rate of 4%. Anyone reporting earnings of less than 80 euros per month will not feel the long arm of the taxman reaching into their wallets or purses.

Corporations will all pay a flat tax of 10%. The government hopes to make up for the anticipated drop in revenue by increasing the Value Added Tax (VAT) from 15% to 16%.

Finance Minister Ahmet Shala told reporters following the announcement on July 28 that the measures are being taken in the hopes that they will spur economic growth. “Kosovo is a developing country and the government has drafted a policy in favor of economic growth with the intention of supporting the private sector through taxation policies as well as citizens.”

The general theory of tax cuts is that they will allow consumers to spend more and the tax coffers will be replenished through increased VAT revenue. Also, businesses will have more money to invest in goods and services, which creates more jobs, which creates more income

tax, personal and corporate. Just as importantly, perhaps more so, low corporate tax rates attract foreign investment in an increasingly competitive world.

The NGO Economic Initiative for Kosova (EIKS) praised the cuts in a report on its website, “It is expected that these tax-cuts, in particular the reducing of corporate tax, will further improve investment climate in Kosovo.”

Kosovo faces a major problem as it starts to embrace the concept and reality of free trade. Currently, the government generates more than 70% of it’s revenue from customs and excise taxes on imported products and VAT. Those revenues will begin to disappear as the country enters into free trade accords which eschew cross border tariffs.

According to Shala, the taxation changes must always occur by taking into account the ability to retain the fiscal stability of the Kosovo state budget. “The review of the taxation system must guarantee that the taxation reforms do not deteriorate the ability to generate the necessary income for the government - in contrary, this enhances the taxation base and disciplines the taxpayers.”

Critics of the tax cut proposal do not necessarily disagree with the rationale behind the moves but doubt that the government had the precise data needed to devise a detailed plan.

Përkrahje e Bujqësisë në Kosovë

Podrška Poljoprivredi Kosova

Supporting Agriculture in Kosovo

Wholesale and Retail prices for vegetables,fruits,consumer products,livestock and animals products in all regions in Kosovo																	
Product		Retail								Wholesale							
		Prishtina	Prizren	Peja	Gjakova	Gjilan	Mitrovica	Ferizaj	(+/-)	Prishtina	Prizren	Peja	Gjakova	Gjilan	Mitrovica	Ferizaj	(+/-)
Vegetables																	
Cabbage	Avg	0.12	0.19	0.25	0.11	0.25	0.35	0.09	v	0.07	0.04	0.13	0.05	0.15	0.22	0.05	^
	Max	0.13	0.20	0.30	0.15	0.30	0.50	0.10	v	0.09	0.05	0.18	0.05	0.20	0.30	0.05	^
Carrots	Avg	0.77	0.78	0.60	1.00	0.70	0.85	0.63	v	0.44	0.38	0.40	0.70	0.55	0.60	0.45	v
	Max	1.00	0.80	0.70	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.80	v	0.60	0.40	0.50	0.70	0.80	0.70	0.50	v
Cucumber	Avg	0.30	0.33	0.25	0.23	0.35	0.35	0.30	^	0.18	0.11	0.15	0.15	0.20	0.20	0.20	^
	Max	0.40	0.35	0.30	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.40	^	0.30	0.12	0.20	0.15	0.30	0.25	0.30	^
Garlic	Avg	2.07	1.90	1.80	2.00	1.90	2.00	1.75	^	1.23	0.83	1.60	1.20	1.70	1.50	1.30	^
	Max	2.30	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	^	1.30	1.20	1.80	1.20	1.80	1.50	1.40	^
Leeks	Avg	0.97	-	0.90	1.00	0.85	1.00	0.98	v	0.45	-	0.60	0.70	0.65	0.80	-	v
	Max	1.00	-	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	v	0.50	-	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.80	-	v
Onions	Avg	0.46	0.45	0.35	0.50	0.45	0.32	0.30	^	0.27	0.23	0.20	0.30	0.30	0.20	0.17	^
	Max	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.30	^	0.35	0.25	0.25	0.30	0.35	0.25	0.18	^
Peppers	Avg	0.82	0.78	0.50	1.00	0.90	0.70	0.63	^	0.60	0.60	0.30	0.70	0.72	0.40	0.40	^
	Max	0.90	0.80	0.60	1.00	1.00	0.70	0.65	^	0.65	0.70	0.40	0.70	0.80	0.40	0.50	^
Potato	Avg	0.42	0.29	0.30	0.33	0.35	0.40	0.28	^	0.24	0.19	0.10	0.20	0.25	0.20	0.19	v
	Max	0.50	0.30	0.40	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.30	v	0.30	0.20	0.15	0.20	0.30	0.20	0.20	v
Tomato	Avg	0.50	0.45	0.40	0.55	0.45	0.50	0.45	v	0.27	0.28	0.20	0.25	0.35	0.25	0.31	v
	Max	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.60	0.50	0.50	0.50	v	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.40	0.25	0.35	v
White beans	Avg	2.20	2.50	2.30	2.50	2.25	2.00	2.18	^	1.75	1.75	1.80	1.80	2.05	1.60	1.65	^
	Max	2.50	3.00	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.00	2.50	^	1.85	1.80	2.00	1.80	2.30	1.60	1.70	^
Spinach	Avg	1.10	0.75	0.40	0.48	0.92	1.00	-	v	0.89	0.65	0.20	0.30	0.70	0.70	-	v
	Max	1.20	1.00	0.50	0.55	1.00	1.00	-	v	1.00	1.00	0.30	0.30	0.80	0.70	-	v
Green Salad	Avg	0.38	0.25	0.25	0.48	0.37	0.50	0.30	^	0.15	0.23	0.10	0.40	0.22	0.25	0.23	^
	Max	0.50	0.30	0.30	0.55	0.50	0.50	0.35	^	0.20	0.25	0.15	0.40	0.30	0.25	0.25	^
Fruits																	
Apple	Avg	1.62	1.33	0.80	2.00	1.60	1.70	1.70	v	1.35	1.13	0.60	1.60	1.37	1.30	1.35	v
	Max	1.80	1.80	1.00	2.00	1.70	1.70	2.00	v	1.55	1.40	0.70	1.60	1.45	1.30	1.50	v
Mandarin	Avg	1.40	1.25	1.00	1.07	1.50	1.50	0.87	v	1.01	1.05	0.70	0.80	1.30	1.10	0.53	v
	Max	1.50	1.50	1.10	1.20	1.50	1.50	0.95	v	1.10	1.10	0.90	0.80	1.30	1.10	0.70	v
Banana	Avg	0.90	0.90	0.70	1.00	0.90	1.00	0.79	^	0.85	0.68	0.50	0.65	0.72	0.70	0.58	^
	Max	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.80	^	0.85	0.70	0.60	0.65	0.80	0.70	0.60	^
Grape	Avg	2.30	2.43	1.50	2.00	1.50	2.00	2.25	v	1.48	1.23	1.00	1.20	1.27	1.50	1.65	v
	Max	2.50	3.00	1.60	2.00	1.50	2.00	2.50	v	1.75	1.60	1.20	1.20	1.30	1.50	2.00	v
Lemon	Avg	1.95	1.95	1.80	2.07	1.90	2.00	1.95	v	1.42	1.45	1.50	1.63	1.65	1.50	1.45	v
	Max	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.20	2.00	2.00	2.00	v	1.55	1.50	1.70	1.70	1.80	1.50	1.60	v
Melons	Avg	0.66	0.67	0.40	0.50	0.85	0.80	0.48	v	0.39	0.33	0.25	0.30	0.65	0.50	0.35	v
	Max	0.80	0.80	0.50	0.50	1.00	0.80	0.50	v	0.42	0.35	0.35	0.30	0.80	0.50	0.40	v
Pears	Avg	1.50	1.40	1.00	1.82	1.60	1.50	1.55	v	1.25	1.10	0.70	1.27	1.40	1.00	1.15	v
	Max	1.60	1.50	1.10	1.90	1.70	1.50	1.60	v	1.30	1.20	0.90	1.30	1.50	1.00	1.30	v
Watermelon	Avg	0.20	-	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.25	0.17	v	0.14	-	0.10	0.14	0.16	0.15	0.14	v
	Max	0.25	-	0.30	0.20	0.20	0.25	0.18	v	0.17	-	0.15	0.14	0.17	0.15	0.15	v
Apricot	Avg	1.23	1.10	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.30	1.15	v	0.92	0.87	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.85	v
	Max	1.30	1.20	1.10	1.10	1.00	1.30	1.30	v	1.00	1.00	0.90	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.90	v
Plum	Avg	1.00	-	0.60	1.00	0.90	1.00	0.85	v	0.71	1.60	0.40	0.50	0.70	0.60	0.55	^
	Max	1.00	2.00	0.70	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.90	^	0.80	1.70	0.50	0.50	0.80	0.60	0.70	^
Peach	Avg	0.90	0.90	0.70	0.97	1.00	1.00	0.73	^	0.75	0.57	0.50	0.50	0.80	0.60	0.53	^
	Max	1.00	1.00	0.80	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.80	^	0.80	0.65	0.60	0.50	0.85	0.60	0.55	^
Nectarine	Avg	1.25	-	0.70	1.27	1.10	1.20	1.25	v	0.95	0.12	0.50	0.80	0.92	0.90	0.95	v
	Max	1.30	0.25	0.80	1.30	1.20	1.20	1.30	v	1.00	0.14	0.60	0.80	1.00	0.90	1.00	v
Consumer Product																	
Milk	Avg	0.84	0.85	0.60	0.82	0.82	0.87	0.89	^	0.68	0.79	0.50	0.70	-	-	0.77	^
	Max	0.90	0.99	1.00	0.90	0.85	0.90	0.93	^	0.75	0.91	0.70	0.70	-	-	0.80	^
Cheese	Avg	3.33	3.00	2.00	2.80	3.77	2.75	3.05	v	2.58	2.75	1.80	2.00	2.50	1.50	2.25	^
	Max	4.50	3.50	3.50	3.00	3.90	3.00	3.50	v	3.20	3.00	2.00	2.30	2.50	1.50	2.50	^
Eggs	Avg	2.68	2.25	2.40	2.77	2.75	2.76	2.63	^	2.47	2.29	1.80	2.35	-	-	2.43	v
	Max	3.00	2.50	2.90	2.80	3.00	3.00	2.65	^	2.65	2.33	2.20	2.35	-	-	2.45	^
Yogurt	Avg	0.95	0.79	0.90	0.82	0.94	0.70	1.03	v	0.67	-	0.60	0.70	-	-	0.87	v
	Max	1.10	0.90	1.20	0.85	0.98	0.70	1.05	v	0.75	-	0.70	0.70	-	-	0.95	v
Beef	Avg	4.86	5.77	4.30	6.17	4.09	5.33	5.88	^	-	5.25	3.50	5.50	-	-	5.25	^
	Max	5.50	6.00	4.80	6.50	4.80	6.00	6.00	v	-	5.50	4.00	5.50	-	-	5.50	v
Sausage	Avg	3.28	3.23	3.40	5.17	2.50	2.50	2.82	^	-	-	2.80	5.00	-	-	1.90	v
	Max	4.20	4.50	4.00	5.30	2.80	2.50	4.50	v	-	-	3.20	5.00	-	-	2.00	v
Bread	Avg	0.39	-	0.40	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.43	v	-	-	0.25	0.30	-	-	0.36	^
	Max	0.45	0.40	0.55	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.45	^	-	-	0.35	0.30	-	-	0.37	^
White Wine	Avg	2.68	2.44	1.70	2.48	1.21	1.50	2.15	^	-	2.16	1.00	2.20	-	-	2.07	^
	Max	3.00	3.20	2.90	2.80	1.21	1.50	3.10	^	-	2.92	1.50	2.50	-	-	3.00	^
Honey	Avg	5.60	6.62	5.00	5.00	5.00	6.50	7.00	v	-	-	3.50	4.50	-	-	6.25	^
	Max	6.00	8.00	7.00	5.00	5.00	7.00	9.00	v	-	-	4.50	4.50	-	-	8.00	^
Chicken	Avg	2.86	1.53	1.50	2.63	1.97	1.30	2.90	v	2.15	-	1.20	2.00	-	-	2.50	^
	Max	3.00	1.76	2.00	2.80	2.55	1.30	2.90	v	2.50	-	1.50	2.00	-	-	2.50	^

OPINION

My Body, My Capital?

by Donna Dickenson

LONDON -- In the 1960's, feminists coined the slogan, "Our bodies, our selves." But that liberating sentiment has recently undergone an ironic twist. As an anonymous American woman, justifying her decision to undergo cosmetic surgery, put it, "All we have in life is ourselves, and what we can put out there every day for the world to see... Me is all I got."

The French commentator Hervé Juvin extolled this new attitude towards the body in his 2005 surprise bestseller, *L'avènement du corps* (The Coming of the Body). Plastic surgery, the implantation of biochips, piercings – all emblazon the belief that our bodies are our unique property. At the same time, Juvin asserts, because everyone has a body, property has suddenly become democratized.

We appear to live in a time that has witnessed the absolute failure of the grand Enlightenment dreams of linear progress, universal peace, and equality between rich and poor. Together with widespread hostility to organized religion, manifested in such hugely popular books as Richard Dawkins's *The God Delusion*, disappointment with social ideals means that we turn inward. In the absence of a belief in eternal life, everything becomes invested in this life, this body.

Long life is our desire, eternal youth our supposed right, and the myth of the body without origin or limits our new religion. That might be why governments are so widely seen to have a positive duty to promote stem cell research and other forms of medical progress. Biotechnology industries flourish, with state sanction and support, because they add extra value to the body, the object of supreme worth to us.

Indeed, the infinite renewal of the body isn't confined to superficial repairs through cosmetic surgery. External substitutes for organic structures can be surgically implanted, breaking down the barrier between the body and the outside world. At the same time, tissue removed from the body enters into commerce and trade as a commodity like any other, in the form of stem cell lines, human eggs, and other "products."

The American law professor James Boyle believes that we can grasp the way in which the body has become an object of trade by likening it to the historical process of enclosure. In eighteenth-century Britain, land, which was previously a public resource, was "enclosed" by private owners. Freed of feudal-style legal restrictions on transfer of ownership and of traditional rights held by commoners who used communal land to pasture their animals, landholdings could now be sold to raise capital, which helped to finance the industrial revolution.

In modern biotechnology, Boyle thinks, things previously outside the market-once thought to be impossible to commodify—are becoming routinely privatized. One in five human genes is now patented, even though the human genome might be thought to be our common heritage. And although Boyle doesn't mention this latest development, umbilical cord blood, taken

in the final stage of labor, is now banked by profit-making firms as a potential – though unlikely – source of stem cells for the baby.

In biomedicine, a series of legal cases have generated powerful momentum toward the transfer of rights over the body and its component parts from the individual "owner" to corporations and research institutions. So the body has entered the market, becoming capital, just as land did, though not everyone benefits, any more than the dispossessed commoners grew wealthy during the agricultural enclosures.

Most people are shocked when they learn that one-fifth of the human genome has been patented, mostly by private firms. But why be so surprised? After all, female bodies have been subject to various forms of property-holding over many centuries and in many societies.

Women's bodies are used to sell everything from cars to pop music, of course. But female tissue has been objectified and commodified in much more profound ways, in legal systems from Athens onwards. While men were also made into objects of ownership and trade, as slaves, in general women were much more likely to be treated as commodities in non-slave-owning systems. Once a woman had given her initial consent to the marriage "contract," she had no right to retract her consent to sexual relations – ever.

There are clear parallels between that situation and the way in which the common law has offered little redress to patients who have tried to claim property rights in tissue taken from them, or to activists seeking to limit the powers of Big Biotech over human genetic patents. All bodies are assumed to be "open access" now, just as women's have always been.

But the assault on freedom is perceived as such only when it begins to apply to men. It took a long time for people to notice that women's eggs were required in large quantities for stem cell technologies: a phenomenon I call "the lady vanishes." The stem cell debates often seem to be premised on the assumption that only the status of the embryo matters. Many people are still unaware that women's eggs are a crucial part of "therapeutic cloning." By contrast, genetic patenting, which affects both sexes, has (rightly) generated a huge scholarly literature and a very vigorous popular debate. Just a coincidence?

The new enclosures of the genetic commons or of body tissue threaten to extend the objectification and commodification of the body to both sexes. Everyone has a female body now, or, more properly, a feminized body. Rather than holding an investment in our bodies, we're all at risk of becoming capital: my body, but somebody else's capital.

Donna Dickenson, Emeritus Professor of Medical Ethics and Humanities at the University of London, was the 2006 winner of the International Spinoza Lens Award for contribution to public debate on ethics. Her latest book is *Body Shopping: The Economy Fuelled by Flesh and Blood*.

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Violent riots in Belgrade

About 15,000 Serbs protested in response to the Serbian government's extradition of Radovan Karadzic to the UN war crimes tribunal for trial last week.

The atmosphere was calm until several dozen young men with links to football hooligan groups started throwing flares and dustbins at the 3,500 riot police deployed around the main square.

Police used rubber bullets and tear gas after about 100 protesters tried to breach a security cordon.

Some reports estimate that up to 25,000 people, many bussed in from rural nationalist strongholds, gathered in Belgrade's Republic Square for a rally, organized by Serbia's Radical Party, to show their support for a man they still consider a hero.

"I came here to protest against Karadzic's extradition," said 60-year-old Slobodanka Sanojevic. "He is a great man. He created a state for Serbs (in Bosnia) and saved Serbian children from genocide."

Aleksandar Vucic, the Radical Party leader, said the protest was, "against the treacherous and dictatorial regime," of Serbian President, Boris Tadic.

Vucic told the assembled crowd that "thieves and bandits are ruling Serbia," and added that, "We will fight for Serbia and Serbia will be free."

The clashes began as the rally was winding down after two hours of speeches. Reports say that 46 people were injured, 21 of them policemen. Journalists were also targeted by the angry crowds.

It is widely believed that recent death threats against Serbian President Tadic

and the police minister, Ivica Dacic, have come from ultranationalist circles in Serbia. Two other top officials, responsible for cooperation with the UN war crimes tribunal, have also received threats. "I support the right to demonstrate, but order will be kept," Tadic said following the violence.

Karadzic has been indicted for the massacre of 8,000 Bosnian Muslims at Srebrenica and the 43-month siege of the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo, where more than 11,000 people died from shelling, sniper fire, malnutrition and illness.

He made his first appearance at The Hague last Thursday when he refused to enter a plea and was given a 30-day extension. His next hearing is scheduled for August 29.

Karadzic then addressed the court at The Hague and announced that he had been arrested and held illegally.

"I was kidnapped by a group of civilians and kept for three days in a place but I do not know where that was. After that, I was transferred to the custody in Belgrade court and there I was treated in a just manner," said Karadzic. The judge informed him he could file a complaint in a written form to the registry.

Karadzic is charged with genocide, complicity in genocide, crimes against humanity, violation of laws and practices of warfare and a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions.

He is charged also with having "planned, abetted, ordered, committed and supported the destruction of national, ethnic, racial or religious groups of Bosniaks (also known as Bosnian Muslims) and Croats."

Croatia not ready to be EU member by 2010

Croatia will not be able to join the EU before 2011 or 2012, even though the government in Zagreb hopes to finish negotiations by the end of 2009 and become a member in 2010, according to European Parliament reporter for Croatia, Hannes Swoboda.

The announcement did not come as a surprise since Croatia is not wrapping up negotiations as quickly as the EU would like and recent events have called into question whether or not the country is ready for membership.

Prominent journalist Dusan Miljus, who reports on crime and corruption for a daily Zagreb newspaper, suffered a severe beating outside of his home in June. He was attacked by two men with baseball bats and was badly injured during the assault. Miljus' assailants remain at large.

The assault against Miljus was the second attack on a member of the Croatian press in less than two months. In May, Igor Radjenovic, a bold critic of corruption in his home country, was also physically assaulted. Police have arrested two suspects in his case.

The EU has focused on these particular cases as they represent the possible oppression of a free press, as well as weakness in the justice system.

The EU has other concerns about Croatia and its need to restructure its ailing shipbuilding industry.

"Croatian shipyards have to achieve a level of competitiveness and undergo some important structural changes in order to survive in the EU," Swoboda said in Zagreb while he was citing problems that Croatia must resolve as soon as possible.

Croatian Parliament Vice President Neven Mimica, is not optimistic about meeting the proposed deadlines. Though the government remains insistent that 2010 is the country's target date for joining the EU, Mimica says Croatia will be unable to begin all required negotiations in time. "So far we have managed to open and close negotiation chapters one by one. And now we are supposed to open 12 of them by the end of the year. I think the mathematics are not on our side," Mimica said.

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Fax: +381 (0) 38 232 863
E-mail: diplo@fin-kos.org

FRENCH EMBASSY

Address: Ismail Qemali 67 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 224 588
Fax: +381 (0) 38 224 588

FYR-MACEDONIA LIAISON OFFICE

Address: 24 Maji 121 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 247 462
Fax: +381 (0) 38 247 463
E-mail: macedonialiaison@mail.net.mk

GERMAN EMBASSY

Address: Azem Jashanica 17 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 254 500
Fax: +381 (0) 38 254 536
E-mail: info2pris.auswaertiges-amt.de

GREECE LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Ismail Qemali 68 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 243 013, 247 370
Fax: +381 (0) 38 245 533
E-mail: grpristina@hotmail.com, grpristina@mfa.gr

HUNGARY EMBASSY

Address: 24 Maji – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 247 763
Fax: +381 (0) 38 247 764
E-mail: prs.missions@kum.hu

ITALY EMBASSY

Address: Abdullah Shabani 3 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 244 925
Fax: +381 (0) 38 245 434
E-mail: segreteria.pristina@esteri.it

JAPANESE LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Rexhep Mala 43
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 245 433, 249 995
Fax: +381 (0) 38 245 434
E-mail: japankosovo@yahoo.com, jlopr@yahoo.com

LUXEMBOURG LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Metush Krasniqi 14 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 226 787
Fax: +381 (0) 38 226 787
E-mail: lux_kosovo@ipko.net

MALAYSIA LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Bedri Shala 48 – Velania
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 243 467
Fax: +381 (0) 38 243 464
E-mail: mwprishtina@mwprishtina.org

NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

Address: Fidanishtja – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 248 010
Fax: +381 (0) 38 248 202
E-mail: norwegianliaisonoffice@ipko.net

ROMANIAN LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Azem Jashanica 25 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 246 272
Fax: +381 (0) 38 246 273
E-mail: office@romanian-office.ipko.org

RUSSIAN CHANCERY

Address: Eduard Liri 20 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 247 112
Fax: +381 (0) 38 247 113
E-mail: ruschanemb@kujtesa.com

SAUDI ARABIAN LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Hotel Grand, Pristina
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 39 249 203

SLOVAK LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Ismail Qemali 63 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 240 140
Fax: +381 (0) 38 249 499

SLOVENIAN EMBASSY

Address: Anton Ceta 6 – Aktash
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 246 255
Fax: +381 (0) 38 246 256
E-mail: slovenianliaison@yahoo.co.uk, mpi@gov.si

SWEDISH LIAISON OFFICE

Address: Ekrem Rexha 6 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 245 795
Fax: +381 (0) 38 245 791
E-mail: SwedishOffice.Pristina@sida.se

SWISS EMBASSY

Address: Adrian Krasniqi 11
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 248 090
Fax: +381 (0) 38 248 078
E-mail: pri.vertretung@eda.admin.ch

TURKISH EMBASSY

Address: Imzot Nik Prela – Ulpiana
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 548 557
Fax: +381 (0) 38 548 559
E-mail: tco.pristina@yahoo.com

UNITED KINGDOM EMBASSY

Address: Ismail Qemali 5 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 249 559, 249 801
Fax: +381 (0) 38 549 799
E-mail: britishoffice.pristina@fco.gov.uk

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA EMBASSY

Address: Nazim Hikmet 30 – Arberia
Pristina 10000, Kosovo
Phone: +381 (0) 38 59 59 3000, 549 516
Fax: +381 (0) 38 549 890
E-mail: ConsularPristina@state.gov

FEATURE

Kosovo's Acting Ombudsperson Hilmi Jashari is vigilant in protecting Kosovars' human rights

In a country struggling to grasp the fundamental principles of democracy, it can be difficult to gauge the level of sincerity of individuals who are endowed with a certain amount of institutional power and privilege when they talk about seriously wanting to reform a system that has not served their people well.

Absolutely no one is stupid enough to publicly state that they want to turn back on the road to democracy and the promised land of freedom and prosperity at the end of it. No one will say, "Wait! Let's go back the other way and explore one of those forks that we passed. There may be something interesting and better for us there."

Further ahead on the road to democracy the twin sisters of liberty, America and the EU, stand tall and shine a beacon to guide Kosovars through the darkness and they shall not be denied.

But, as they say, old habits die hard and some Kosovars, it seems, are not entirely sure that everything about the old ways is so bad, nor is everything about the new ways, espoused by the West, so good. At least not for them, personally. "What's wrong with a little bit of corruption, after all, so long as me, my family and my friends benefit? And what's all this nonsense about protecting the rights of Gypsies, or Serbs? Why would we want to do that? Do we want to forget what they did to us?"

"A lot of the international institutions expressed their concerns about the impunity of UNMIK. In 2007 a delegation from Human Rights Watch came here and we met with them and all of a sudden UNMIK agreed to be subject to investigation." - Hilmi Jashari

An astute political observer has to wonder, once in a while, if Kosovars aren't secretly laughing at the whole quest for democracy and a free market economy. Do they look at it all as just an elaborate dog and pony show in which planes rain money down across the land, instead of bombs? Do Kosovars really want freedom? Yes, yes, of course they do. Who does not want freedom? But do they understand the concept of freedom? Do they understand that with freedom comes responsibility? What is it they say is the price of freedom? Yes, yes, eternal vigilance.

There is no arguing that Kosovars have struggled and suffered horribly to gain the level of emancipation they have. But, honestly, given the amount of corruption and abuse of authority that is reported and rumoured on a daily basis in Kosovo,

sometimes you truly have to wonder why they bothered. Until you meet someone like Hilmi Jashari.

When you meet someone like Hilmi Jashari you realize that, although the road is long and treacherous, there are some people out there who are willing to push broken down busses full of freeloaders to a better place.

And even if those freeloaders have their pockets stuffed full of ill gotten wads of cash, even those freeloaders are talking out of both sides of their mouths about fighting corruption and embracing equality for all and even if those freeloaders are secretly laughing at people like Hilmi Jashari for not grabbing fistfuls of money and making off like bandits, it just doesn't matter because Hilmi Jashari and people like him are going to keep doing the right thing because they actually believe in the ideal that democracy is built upon.

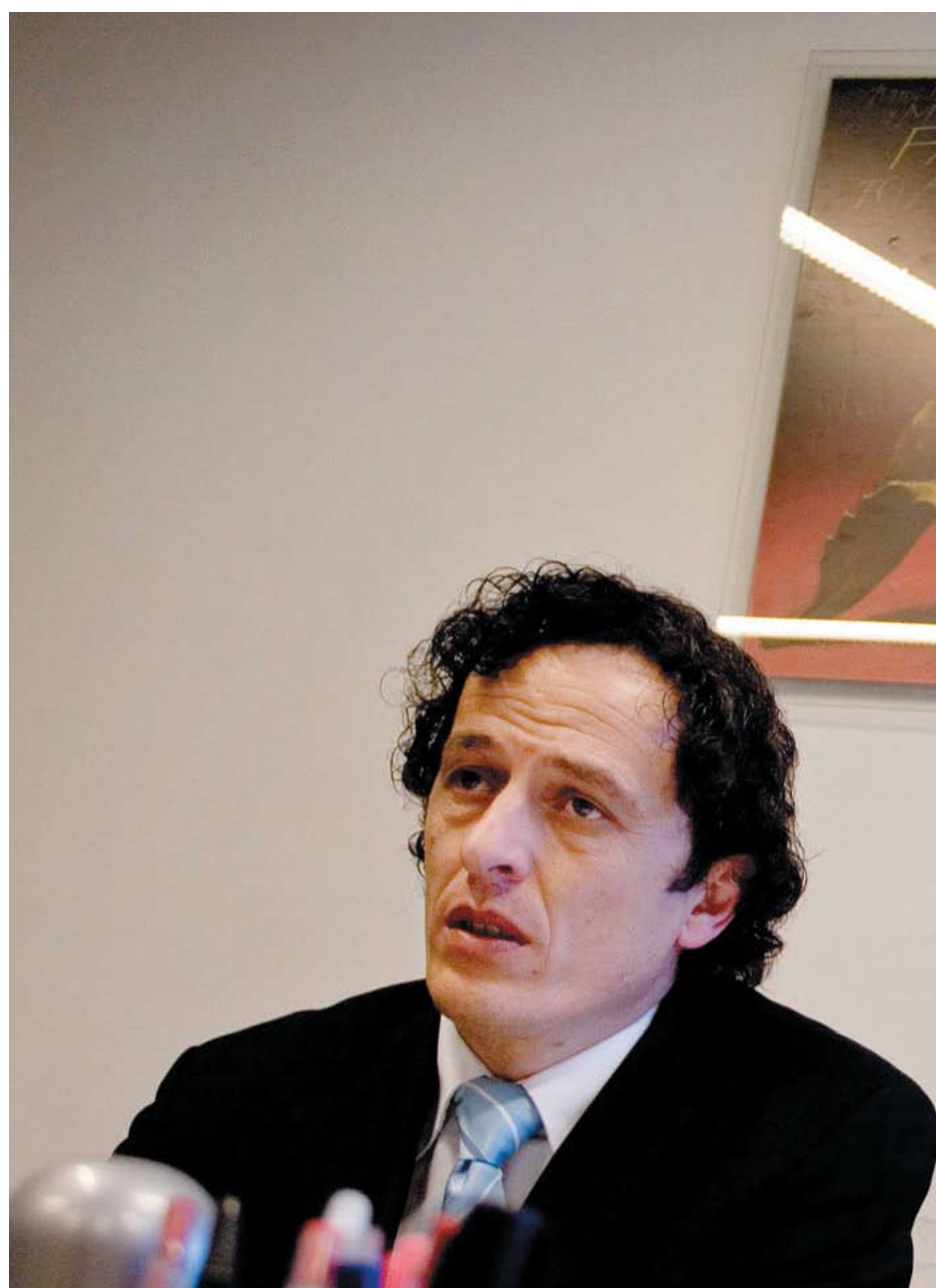
Hilmi Jashari is the Ombudsperson of Kosovo. No. Wait. Hilmi Jashari is the Acting Ombudsperson of Kosovo. The government has not yet managed to appoint an official Ombudsperson.

In an candid interview with the Kosov@ Post, Jashari had a hard time concealing the frustrations he and his staff face in their work to protect the fundamental human rights of Kosovo's citizens

While vastly interested in the myriad challenges Jashari and his staff face, the Kosov@ Post was particularly interested in their efforts to make UNMIK accountable for its actions and policies in the field of human rights. UNMIK has a very high level of immunity from prosecution and that is not something that is relinquished without a struggle.

In 2006 the office of the Ombudsperson was given a new mandate. There was a great deal of confusion as to whether or not the office would have the power to investigate allegations of human rights abuses by UNMIK personnel. Jashari recalls, "After four or five months a decision came back stating that the office was to contain its investigations to the institutions of Kosovo," meaning UNMIK's immunity would continue. That did not sit well with a lot of people, says Jashari, "After making that ruling public, a lot of the international institutions expressed their concerns about the impunity of UNMIK. In 2007 a delegation from Human Rights Watch came here and we met with them and all of a sudden UNMIK agreed to be subject to investigation."

However, the capitulation was still subject to negotiations and Jashari recalls that, despite agreeing in principle, UNMIK officials were hesitant to submit. "I told them 'let's put this all down in writing, so there are no misunderstandings.'" Jashari sent a letter detailing his proposal to UNMIK and waited. When the response finally came, it came from UN headquarters in New York and was addressed solely to UNMIK. Jashari was not even cced.



Jashari objected and eventually the head of UNMIK came to see him personally to apologize for the protracted stalemate and try to sort matters out. Jashari says, "I remember telling him that this was not a problem between him and me. I told him it was a problem for the citizens of Kosovo because for a year and a half after receiving the letter that stated I did not have a mandate to investigate UNMIK, the people of Kosovo had no one to turn to if they believed their rights as human beings had been abused."

The UNMIK chief issued a press release about the meeting but Jashari says it was not completely forthright, so he issued his own press release stating exactly what had transpired. Eventually it was agreed that Jashari's office would be able to execute investigations of UNMIK personnel with the same powers it has to investigate Kosovar institutions.

"The American people will not tolerate their hard earned tax dollars going to countries that do not respect human rights." Joe DioGuardi

Deals, however, are made to be broken and Jashari says that although UNMIK has, for the most part, cooperated with his office there have been times when they have completely ignored his requests for information. "They don't give answers, or reasons. They are just silent. We send a second letter and a third letter and they

i Jashari eternally an rights



are silent. The last ombudsman had the same problem for five years. They just ignored him in most cases. Even after sending the final recommendations for action following an investigation, there was no action taken to implement the recommendations he was giving."

If the reports released by his office fall on deaf ears Jashari says he can always take matters to the highest court in this or any other land – the court of public opinion, which convenes at the will of the media.

Jashari says the biggest problem his office has is money. His budget comes in around a half million euros per year. From that he has to pay a staff of 50 fulltime employees. Bodies being investigated by the office of the Ombudsperson can wage wars of attrition by not cooperating,

knowing full well that Jashari's caseload and small budget do not permit him to expend inordinate time and resources on such cases. Jashari is perfectly frank about that reality. "It is, of course, not in the best interest of the government to increase funding."

Joe DioGuardi, a former two term congressman from New York state during the second Reagan administration (1984 – 1988) and current head of the Albanian American Civic League disagrees with Jashari's statement. "When you use OPM (other people's money) you need to be open to the highest standard of oversight. There's a worldwide recession, so these are hard times. Human rights are important and the American people will not tolerate their hard earned tax dollars going to countries that do not respect human rights."

Hilites from the 8th annual report of the Ombudsperson Institution

Developments in the legal sector

- as underlined in all previous annual reports, the legal system in Kosovo remains confusing and often inconsistent with elementary rule of law principles
- even after the Kosovo Declaration of Independence and the entry into force of the Constitution, which is by definition the highest legal act in a sovereign state, it is still unclear how this Constitution will in practice cohabit with Security Council Resolution 1244 that was taken based on Chapter 7 of the UN Charter and which is still in force
- the domestic legal system of Kosovo continues to be characterized by the lack of legal certainty and transparency. Indeed, even professional, lawyers, judges, prosecutors etc. who deal with the application of the law are very often confused about which law to implement in a given case

The Judiciary

- although some efforts have been made to improve the Kosovan judicial system, little progress has been achieved and the judiciary continues to suffer from important shortcomings that affect concretely the life of the population and the trust in the rule of law in Kosovo
- deeply rooted problems such as the lack of independence and proper functioning of the judicial system, a rampant corruption that still needs to be adequately tackled and a lack of coherence in the administration of justice, coupled with the lack of execution of many decisions issued by these courts, require the urgent establishment and effective functioning of sustainable structures at the investigative and enforcement level

The inadequacy of human rights protection mechanisms in Kosovo and the role of the Ombudsperson

- human rights protection in Kosovo has generally improved with the entry into force of the Constitution, the growing obligation of UNMIK and the Kosovo Government to report on the human rights situation and about the implementation of international human rights instruments in Kosovo on one hand, and also with the set up of the Human Rights Advisory Panel and the creation of human rights units at municipal level. However, it is still questionable whether the protection afforded to human rights is effective.
- indeed, if human rights protection mechanisms exist, but are not effective, or if a large part of the population are not

aware of both what their human rights are and how to protect them, the whole idea of human rights protection loses its pertinence

The situation of displaced Persons and conditions for their voluntary and forced return

- the biggest challenge remains the return of minority communities, above all the Serbian, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, but the forced returns of potentially thousands of people, in majority Albanians, to Kosovo might also start to attract more attention in the coming years
- last year, only 1 453 people returned, which is the smallest number of returnees in one year over the last four years
- displaced persons generally suffer from a real or perceived fear for their safety when considering return and their decision to return remains largely affected by the lack of economic prospect due to Kosovo's difficult economic situation. The recent political developments and the Kosovo Declaration of Independence only add to the general tension and make it very difficult for displaced persons to assess whether or not sustainable return to their homes is possible and whether they can foresee their future in Kosovo

Children's rights

- despite the fact that there is a good legal framework for the protection of children's rights, there is still a lack of effective institutional protection and no adequate implementation of the pertinent legal provisions
- every child has a right to life and development, the best interest of children, every child has the right to free expression of thought and the right to be listened to

Gender equality

- the sophisticated institutional framework has not proven to be sufficient to overcome the numerous gender issues generated by the various traditional and social factors still prevailing in Kosovo that create obstacles to the proper implementation of the laws, action plans and other programs dealing with gender equality
- the Kosovo contemporary woman increasingly realises that her authority in the family, public, political, economic, legislative and executive life has been marginalised as, indeed, decisions are usually taken by men without further consultation.



Two and a Half Cheers for the Mediterranean Union

by Chris Patten



• Chris Patten

Maybe it is time to be a bit more generous to French President Nicolas Sarkozy and look at the outcome of what he does rather than the way that he does it.

The original launch of the Mediterranean Union almost sank the whole enterprise. Appearing to speak without giving the issue much thought, Sarkozy initially proposed a club of European and mostly Arab states along the Mediterranean's shore. It would have been in essence a French-run enterprise that the rest of Europe would have paid for. This did not go down well, particularly with the Germans.

There was also a strong suspicion that the French were trying to find a way to buy off Turkey with a relationship falling well short of European Union membership.

So the auguries for an attempt to revitalize Europe's relationship with its Mediterranean partners were not good. But by the time of the grand Paris Summit in July to send the new club on its way, the initial suspicions had largely been overcome. Sarkozy bowed to his European critics and enjoyed a diplomatic triumph. We shall soon see whether there is substance to the initiative, or whether it is just a coat of fresh paint on an old and tired idea.

The original Barcelona Process, launched in 1995, was an excellent scheme. Intended to provide an economic and political backdrop to peace-making through confidence-building in the Middle East, it was an admirable recognition of Europe's historical, commercial, cultural, and political ties with its neighbors to the south of the sea which has brought us all together over the years.

There were aspirations for a free-trade area by 2010. There were pledges of political integration based on shared values. There were people-to-people links. There was a forum where Israelis and their long-term Arab foes could sit together and discuss other matters than the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. There was a development budget. And there were meetings. So many meetings.

The effort was far from worthless. Development projects were funded through grants or cheap loans, and these have probably played at least some part in increasing the attractiveness of the Maghreb and the Mashraq to foreign investors. There was some lowering of agricultural and other tariffs by the EU. Dialogue on political reform, and euros to support it, helped further the process in some countries, notably Morocco and Jordan. There was some co-operation on common problems like drugs and illegal immigration.

But, as a significant component of Europe's policy toward its most crucial neighbors, the successes of the Barcelona Process were modest: a great idea on the launch pad had difficulty getting off the ground. So Sarkozy deserves at least two and a half cheers for trying to revitalize it. But if the Mediterranean Union is to achieve more than was managed in its first manifestation, a number of things will need to happen.

First, Europe is better at talking about free-trade areas than delivering free trade. For example, there are still too many barriers to agricultural trade between the North and the South. And guess which country leads the opposition to any significant opening up of European agriculture. Step forward, France, and take a bow.

Second, however slow we have been in opening up a real Mediterranean market, the barriers to freer trade between Arab League countries are just as great.

Third, it was excellent that in Paris Sarkozy began the process of bringing Syria in out of the diplomatic cold. We must also hope that his attempts to act as a peace-broker between West Bank Palestinians and Israel are blessed with success.

But the truth is that Europe, for all the gallant efforts of Javier Solana, has been absent from serious politics in the Middle East. We have not dared to cross America. A largely non-existent European policy toward the region has been dictated by the absentee monopolists of policy in Washington.

Europe should get more seriously involved, even at the risk of occasionally irritating America, which may be less likely to happen once the Bush



• Mediterranean Union architect, Nikolas Sarkozy

administration is history. For a start, we should recognize that there will be no political settlement in Palestine without including Hamas. What would incredibly have been former British Prime Minister Tony Blair's first visit to Gaza in his first year of peace-making had to be canceled recently because of security concerns. Enough said.

Finally, Europe has to decide how serious it is about all the admirable stuff in the Barcelona Process on pluralism, civil society, the rule of law, and democracy.

Is Europe serious that a shared concept of human rights should be one of the foundations of our Mediterranean

partnership? If so, what are we in Europe proposing to do about it? If this is just blah-blah, better not say it. We discredit ourselves and important principles when we say things that we do not mean.

Lord Patten is a former Governor of Hong Kong and European Commissioner for External Affairs. He is currently Chancellor of Oxford University and Co-Chair of the International Crisis Group.

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RICE ON FOOD

You won't be a stranger for long!

SELECT BISTO BY SHANNON RICE

Restaurant Location & Contacts
Fehmi Agani 1/1
Pristina **044 694 811**

Hidden near Mother Theresa Boulevard is one of the newest Bistros to open in downtown Pristina. Open just one and a half months, Select Bistro is a restaurant well worth exploring before the weather takes a turn for the cold of winter.

I recall the first moments that I stepped inside Select Bistro's garden a week after it opened in June and a vibrant and energetic blond greeted me so warmly that I couldn't help but feel as if we had known each other for years. When you walk into Select Bistro for the first time you will find that you aren't a stranger for long when Gili A'Mula spots a new face and welcomes you to the restaurant. Even with managing the kitchen and selecting the menus, Gili still finds time to come out and greet all those who come to the bistro.

Select Bistro is a family affair and everyone is included from the A'Mula teenage daughters to Gili's husband, Shani, who works behind the bar. Shani and Gili both worked in restaurants in Canada before returning to Kosovo in 2006. Their dream for Select Bistro is to continue working in a job they love employing the old phrase of "find a job that you enjoy and you will never work another day in your life" and create a dining experience that will leave you "wanting to come back." The combination of a love for food and some of the friendliest customer service to ever grace the streets of Kosovo has made Select Bistro one of the most popular lunch destinations in downtown Pristina.

The menu at Select Bistro is simple but rich. You will know what your stomach craves as you read down the menu and your mouth starts watering. By far, the garlic shrimp appetizer has been one of the favourite dishes picked by my panel of guinea pig friends who I drag out to try the restaurants with me. The garlic and parmesan bruschetta has also proved to be a hit among the group for an appetizer. For a main course the men tend to love the generous cut of the New York Strip Steak while the ladies (as do I!) prefer the light but filling Tuscan grilled trout. The garlic mashed potatoes are some of the best that I've had in Kosovo and Gili mentions that the bean salad is also a customer favourite.

In addition to the delicious food Select Bistro has a fully stocked bar with Peja beer



on draft and wines from Kosovo, Albania, Montenegro, and Italy. Everything is quite reasonably priced so you won't pay a fortune for a nice meal. A testament to the even-handed cost is the fact that nearly 60% of Select Bistro's clientele is Kosovar.

I was once told that as an American I can't fairly judge the speed of service since we are stereotyped as liking to "eat & run" but this past Wednesday my friends and I managed to spend a whooping four and half hours dining at Select Bistro without blinking or even looking at my watch. Never fear, the service is not so slow as to require hours waiting for your food but the evening was simply so enjoyable that the hours flew by without us realizing.

It is hard not to predict that as more time passes and more people discover Select Bistro that it will become one of the hot spots in Pristina for dining. With a "welcome to the family" attitude and fantastic food you can't help but enjoy the Select Bistro experience.

GILI'S MENU

Appetizer: Chicken Tenders with Honey Mustard sauce

Lunch: Caribbean Chicken Salad – Grilled chicken, mixed greens, clementines, and pineapple

Main Course: New York Strip Steak with homemade mashed potatoes, peppercorn gravy sauce, and bean salad

Dessert: Homemade Tiramisu

SHANNON'S "CAN'T GO WRONG" SUGGESTIONS

Breakfast: Cinnamon French toast with Strawberry Sauce

Lunch: Hot Italian Veal Sandwich – Breaded Veal cutlet, tomato sauce & melted parmesan cheese on toasted bread

Appetizer: Garlic Shrimp in tomato sauce with capers and black olives

Main Course: Tuscan Grilled Trout with garlic potatoes and grilled vegetables

FOOD & DRINK GUIDE

PRISTINA RESTAURANTS

BISTRO ODYSSEA
Perandori Justinian - Peyton
044-556-444

CANTINA MEXICAN
Qamil Hoxha 7/1
044/ 049/ 038 - 710 710

COUNTRY HOUSE
044-444-710

DE RADA
UCK, No 50
038-222-622

GORENJE RESTAURANT
Veternik
038-557-700

GRESA
Fehmi Agani23
038-245-841

HANI I 2 ROBERTEVE
Luan Haradinaj – Youth
Center of Pristina
044-112 609 / 044- 117 219

HOME
Migjeni 27
044-336-336

MOZAIK
Sulejman Vokshi, H1
038-247-63

MUMTAZ MAHAL
Indian Restaurant
Ahmet Krasniqi - Arberi
044 114 726

PANNE VINO'S
Fehmi Agani, No 10
044- 177 899

PINOCCHIO
24 Maj, No115
044-202 952

PISHAT
Qamil Hoxha 11
038-245-333

PJATA
Gazmend Zajmi, No1
038 220 739

PURO
Veternik
044-658-515

RINGS 2
Luan Haradinaj
038-244-290

RRON
Veternik
044-347-777 / 044 141-215

SELECT BISTRO
Fehmi Agani 1/1
044 694 811

TIFFANY'S
Fehmi Agani
044-350-550

TOKYO BAR
Bekim Berisha, No2 –
Arberia
044 988 578, 044 373 537

VILLA GERMIA
Germia's Park
044-517-741

XIX
Luan Haradinaj, No2
044-300-002

BARS/CAFES

APARTMENT 195
Garibaldi
044-410-021

AVENUE BAR
Fehmi Agani 48
04-610-210

LOUNGE 19
Garibaldi 19
044-208-092

LEGERE
Perandori Justinian 2 -
Peyton
044-221-829

MYC
Garibaldi 21
044-210-325

PHOENIX
Brigada
044 12 45 84

PUBLICO
Garibaldi 7
044 62 69 27

STRIP DEPO
Rexhep Luci
038-222-888

CLUBS

FLIRT
Youth center of Pristina
049 646 464

CUBE
Johan Hahn 2
044-124-584

DEPO
UCK
044-246-707

SPRAY
Veternik
044-118-518

FAST FOOD

MAXIMUM BURGER
Rexhep Luci 20/1

ROUTE 66
Luan Haradinaj
038-227 225

METRO SANDWICH SHOP
Garibaldi 3/1
044-113-000

BOSNA 2
Mother Theresa
044-375-436

BOSNA 4
Perandori Justinian - Peyton
038-245-919

BAKERIES

LUMI
Anton Ceta
044-115 586

SARANDA
Nazim Gafurri

FERIZAJ RESTAURANTS

ROMANTIKA
290 28 28 3

LAUSANE
044 142 397

TOPILLA
044 287 531

NATURAL
Sojeve – Ferizaj
044 205 537, 044 323 378

PEJA RESTAURANTS

ART DESIGN
Center
039-431496 / 039 144-622

CALIFORNIA
Center
044-348-467

PRIZEN RESTAURANTS

SHEHZADE QEBABTORE
Shadervan Square

**TRATTORIA DUE
FRATELLI: GREAT ITALIAN
FOOD**
A. Zurnaxhiu 10
044 198 710

GJAKOVA RESTAURANTS

RESTAURANT TE JUPAT
Old government
044-129-389

**HOTEL & RESTAURANT
ROMA**
044-602-009

More than 130 films at DokuFest

The 7th annual Dokufest will run from August 4 – 10 in Prizren. The international documentary and short film festival is the largest film event in Kosovo. The festival attracts numerous international and regional artists. Films are screened twice a day in two open air cinemas, as well as in two regular cinemas. In addition to the films the festival is known for its lively parties after screenings. Various events happen within the scope of the festival: workshops, DokuPhoto exhibitions, festival camping, concerts, which altogether turn picturesque and historical Prizren into a very charming place to be.

DokuPhoto

The Grand Hammam of Gazi Mehmed Pasha will be once again the site of the DokuPhoto exhibitions. Hungarian born photographer Balazs Gardi and American photographer Teru Kuwayama will have a joint exhibition of their work from Afghanistan.

Balazs Gardi is returning to exhibit at DokuPhoto with a body of work that brought him the most prestigious award in the world of photojournalism, the World Press Photo Award.

Teru Kuwayama will conduct a masterclass with young Kosovar photographers on August 7 and will also exhibit an eclectic selection from his continuous travels to Afghanistan.

The exhibition, made possible thanks to support from ProHelvetia, U.S.Embassy in Pristina and America's Alexia Foundation, will come to Pristina on September 1

Getting there

You can reach Prizren from each main city of Kosovo in a maximum for 2 and half hours.

From Pristina buses go for Prizren every 30 minutes from 7.00 till 18.00 and vice versa (tickets 3-4 euro one direction)

From Gjakova and Peja the buses leave for Prizren every 40 to 60 minutes from 7.00 till 18.00 and vice versa (ticket from Gjakova to Prizren 2 euros one way and from Peja to Prizren 3-4 euros one way).

From Ferizaj you have to travel to Shtime where you can catch buses that travel from Pristina to Prizren (4-5 euros one way).

From Mitrovica you have to travel to Pristina and then to Prizren (5-6 euros one way).

Accommodation

There are about 15 small hotels in Prizren in various parts of the town. Although they might have 3-4 stars all of them would be equivalent to 2 stars hotels. A room can cost from 10 to 70 euros per night.

Some hotels are:

Hotel Tirana (downtown)

+37744216155

Hotel Alvida (10 minute walk)

+37744217167

Hotel Residence (8 minutes walk)

+37744256774

Hotel City (10 minutes walk)

+37744952392

Bujtina (downtown)

+37744113252

Hotel OK (5 minute drive)

+37744131761



Miss GULAG | Cultural House 16:00
Director: Maria Yatskova

TUESDAY

Synopsis

Through the prism of a beauty pageant staged by female inmates of a Siberian prison camp emerges a complex narrative of the lives of the first generation of women to come of age in Post-Soviet Russia. Miss GULAG chronicles the lives of three women: Yulia, Tatiana, and Natasha. Although they endure incredible adversity in and out of prison, they manage to uphold their humanity and humour through the comforts of music, love, and outrageous fashion. For these women, undoubtedly, life is harsh under the constant surveillance of UF-91/9, ...



Football under cover
Lumbardhi open air cinema 20:30
Director: Ayat Najafi, David Assmann
Runtime: 86 min. | Germany, Iran | English, Farsi, German

WEDNESDAY

Synopsis

She shoots, she scores! An exhilarating and historic match between an Iranian and a German women's football team is played out in Tehran in 2006. Giving girl power its due, Football Undercover follows the sporty girls as they struggle against what seems like endless bureaucratic oppression to make the game happen. Marlene, the lead on the Berlin-Kreuzberg team, visits...



LOST PEOPLE
by Hareza Basha
Runtime: 24 min | Kosovo | Albanian

THURSDAY

Synopsis

Lumi – the ill-treat by his family goes in the wrong way like any other child, Laura and Dema two lost persons due to life problems meet through Lumi and their life changes.



Mechanical Love
Runtime: 79 min.
Denmark | Danish, English, German, Japanese
Director: Phie Ambo

FRIDAY

Synopsis

"Mechanical Love" is a documentary on the interrelationship between robots and humans. The film portrays people who have a close relationship with a robot, and it takes us from the high temple of robot technology, Tokyo, Japan, to Braunschweig, Germany, to Italy and back to Copenhagen, Denmark....



How to Save a Fish From Drowning
Runtime: 13 min | Scotland, USA | English
Director: Kelly Neal
Cultural House 16:00

SATURDAY

Synopsis

How to save a Fish From Drowning is about the death of white rural America told through the voices of three old men fishing on a frozen lake. In a landscape cloaked in snow and hovering in a bright nothingness, they escape their wives, chew the fat about neighbours in their town as they wait...



Standing Start
Runtime: 13 min | UK | English
Director: Finlay Pretsell, Adrian McDowall
Lumbardhi Open Air Cinema 20:30

SUNDAY

Synopsis

Just what does it take to be the fastest starter in the world? Standing Start gives a unique insight into Olympic cyclist Craig MacLean's life, his unflinching focus and preparation to battle it out on the world stage - portrayed like a gladiator.



Define democracy and win a trip to HOLLYWOOD

Even for those who come from countries that have been democracies for a long time, the concept of democracy is complex. Obviously, that will be doubly true for citizens of states that are just starting to flirt with the somewhat abstract and largely unknown concept. One of the reasons people struggle to clearly define democracy is that so few of the world's social structures embrace it.

We are not exposed to democracy on a daily basis when we are children - families are not democratic. We are not exposed to democracy on a daily basis as we grow up - schools are not democratic. We are not exposed to democracy on a daily basis

The problem is both daunting and ongoing, as evidenced by declining voting rates in many of the world's developed democracies.

Being the world's oldest continuous democracy, the United States, is endeavoring to help people around the world understand democracy. One particular tool in that effort is a new contest that asks filmmakers and videographers to complete the sentence - Democracy is... - in a three minute video.

Karyn Posner-Mullen, the Director of Public Affairs at the US Embassy in Pristina, believes that the proliferation of Internet

to gain a fundamental understanding of the concept and its complexities," said Posner-Mullen.

American embassies around the world are not obligated to take part in the contest - which is the brainchild of the State Department's Bureau of Democracy and Human Rights - but Posner-Mullen said the Pristina embassy was all over the idea like white on rice when it was announced. "I believe I am correct in saying that we were the first embassy to sign on. If anyone is thinking creatively about democracy right now it would be Kosovars. I'm sure we're going to find many very creative young filmmakers and these days almost anyone with a cell phone can make a video."

While understanding that democracy is a serious issue for serious discussion, the New York City native says there is room for levity in submissions, "There will be submissions that are very serious and there may be some that are very humorous," and that's just fine with her.

The contest is the latest foray into the arts for the Pristina embassy. Posner-Mullen said the State Department has been very generous in its funding for cultural initiatives in Kosovo. "We try, in all sorts of ways, to use the money the State Department grants us. Our embassy, in particular, is very generously funded, of all embassies in Europe, on a proportional basis, to help make Kosovo a viable democracy by reaching out to people in ways that will appeal to them on an emotional level," and that means embracing the arts.

The embassy has and will continue to fund projects across the artistic spectrum, according to Posner-Mullen because, "it's a way you can really reach out to people. Some times you can forget about the politics," because, "people respond on a real visceral level to music, comedy, drama etc. We can go across borders with art."

One of the fundamental principles of democracy is equality and Posner-Mullen made a point of emphasizing that the contest is open to all Kosovars, "We do things with Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian (Gypsies), Kosovar Serbs, Kosovar Albanians - we want to work with everyone."

Having the freedom to oppose your government is at the core of democracy, according to Posner-Mullen. "Democracy, to me, is people being able to feel comfortable and not be afraid to criticize their government, to feel that they can go

out in the street and say that this particular decision by congress, or by my President, was not the right one - 'I don't agree with him, or her' - maybe one day in America we'll have a her. What I appreciate about democracy is that everyone feels they can have their say and not fear going to jail."

Muhammad Ali once said that any man who thinks the same at 40 as he did at 20 has wasted 20 years of his life and Posner-Mullen says that what is true of humans is true of democratic states, "Democracy is open and living and can change. It rolls with the generations. It's a living organism."



KARYN POSNER - MULLEN

Democracy is... contest info

Complete the sentence - Democracy is... - in a three minute video. English language or with English subtitles

- no incitement to violence
- no profanity
- no pornography
- no commercial promotion.

Upload your video at - www.youtube.com/democracyvideochallenge between SEPTEMBER 15 and DECEMBER 15.

Three finalists will be chosen ("fairly and democratically," says Posner-Mullen, with a smile) following a screening of all submissions (likely to be held at ABC Cinema in Pristina).

One winner from each region - Africa, East Asia/Pacific, Europe, Middle East, South Central Asia, Western Hemisphere (Canada, Mexico, Central and South America) - will be selected by online voters and they will be whisked away to Washington, NYC and Hollywood.

For more info:
<http://pristina.usembassy.gov/hollywood.html>



when we become adults - the workplace is not democratic. We are not exposed to democracy on a daily basis when we start or own families - see above. So, when does democracy happen? How do people who have so little exposure to democracy in action come to understand that they, as citizens of a country, are in charge? How do you convince people that they have power and that with that power come responsibilities?

and other communication technology can help nascent and embryonic democracies develop and that is the reason the US State Department is organizing the contest around the world. "Anything that will get people thinking about what democracy is good," Posner-Mullen told the Kosov@Post - and who would dare argue with her? "The idea (of the contest) is to get people to start thinking and talking about what democracy is, especially in countries that are struggling

DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

Trinity Little

If you are different – then you are “crazy”

*A man decides after
seventy years,
That what he goes there
for is to unlock the door
While those around him
criticize and sleep...
And through a fractal on
a breaking wall,
I see you my friend, and
touch your face again.
Miracles will happen as
we trip*

*But we're never gonna
survive, unless...
We get a little crazy
No we're never gonna
survive, unless...
We are a little...*

Seal – Crazy

Do you remember Jack Nicholson in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*? How about Angelina Jolie, in *Girl Interrupted*?

They are both prisoners in mental hospitals, only because they are different and they exercise personal freedom. McMurphy (Nicholson's character in *Cuckoo's Nest*), tries to escape many times from the hospital, as does Lisa (Jolie's character in *Interrupted*), but both are caught and brought back to their respective loony bins. McMurphy dies in the hospital when his friend puts him out of his misery to set him free. His friend couldn't bear to see him remain in the hospital forever after being stripped of his individuality by sadistic psychiatrists. In *Interrupted* Lisa ends up being locked down in isolation but she is always remembered for her personality by her friend Susanna, played by Winona Ryder.

Well, there are lots of McMurphys and Lisas around us. When someone decides to exercising their personal freedoms, when they decide to display their individuality rather than conforming to the dictates of society, they are labeled crazy. Who are those “crazies” that live in Pristina?

Now everything is supposed to be free. Freedom of thought is supposed to exist, as is freedom of speech. Nevertheless, a lot of things remain taboo in this city where everything appears to be changing, modernizing.

I spend a great deal of time discussing many things with my friends. We often misunderstand each other in our conversations, especially when talking about women. Woman, a creature that is always described as sensitive, soft and delicate. Always embraced by the friendship of boys who don't understand girls I try to protect and support this soft, delicate creatures which so many novels and so much poetry has been written. “Women are always beautiful,” said Ville Valo and who am I to deny his truth?

How many women in Kosova choose their own paths? Women here are divided into two groups. First, the ones who want to achieve their personal goals, even if they have to put themselves in difficult positions, even if they are labeled “craziest”. The others prefer not to break barriers, not to challenge what they are taught about being women. The latter accept the role society has written for them – husband, children, hopefully all healthy and happy. But it's a scripted role that ignores the individuality of women.

How many women are trying to achieve their goals? How should they do so, if, indeed, they decide to write their own roles? Many non-governmental and governmental organizations for women's rights exist in Kosova. These organizations have the financial support needed to help women emancipate themselves from the slavery of social expectations. But are these organizations exploring new ideas about how to help the women of Kosovo liberate themselves? Or are they falling into creative lethargy and thus “losing the plot” as the English say?

The fact that a woman's right to be educated in a field of her choice has been acknowledged is a good start but there is much more involved. And there is nothing wrong with a woman choosing to get married and raise a family if that's what she truly wants to do but she must have other options.

In the evening, while we were waiting for a fresh air to show up, I was having a café with my friends, in a place where lots of bars are concentrated. It is a place that is mostly frequented by young people. While we were having a conversation on the relationships between men and women, one friend of mine, with a bit of nerves said, “Well, more than everything else, I would like to escape from this place. This place is trapping my breath. Everyone sees through prejudiced eyes. Everything you do must be planned.”

Knowing his nature, I was surprised by his words; he has never mentioned the word escape before. Not hesitating, I asked him “Why do you want to escape?”

“I don't know. Everything seems fake to me.”

We were holding a conversation with high tune, which is not to be surprised at. Every Balkaner converses with high tune. It's our temperament. While we were trying to expose our thoughts in high tune, several girls seated at the tables next to us were listening to our conversation. They were nodding and looking at us in a strange way. Perhaps they were thinking, ‘How is it possible that this conversation is taking place in public?’ It is unusual to have meaningful conversations in places where people mostly show up to promenade in their new dresses, show off their new cars and engage in myriad other forms of self promotion. Indeed, our conversation was interrupted several times as provocatively dressed girls strutted and sashayed by our table and my friends could no longer form words with their gaping mouths. I had the feeling that I was part of Fashion TV, the only difference being that if you don't like it what you're watching you change café bars instead of channels.

When I asked my friend why he was thinking that the girls here are false, he replied: “Do you see them? Do you see how they're dressed? They are so ready for a compliment but if you give them a compliment they will reject it by turning their heads away. You get no reply from them. Not a ‘thank you’ nor a smile. All they do is run away. And I don't know how to get to them?!”

Well, this is how girls are taught to behave; this attitude makes them “decent” in boys' eyes. Deep inside all they want is to have a relationship that will end with a marriage. That is how they will be accepted by the society they live in. Following the script written for them by society means that they will not be rejected by society and labeled crazy. But, are there not individuals residing in the bodies and heads of all those girls in their Fashion TV dresses that want to rip up the script, the rule book and break free? Is it fear that stops them from doing so? Fear of being rejected by their families, society, boys? Or, are they feeling too comfortable playing by the rules?

Talking about relationships, I mentioned Oprah Winfrey's quote, “Don't settle for a relationship that won't let you be yourself.” Hear, hear, Oprah. You go, girl. When will boys accept women as they are? When will women accept themselves as individuals, embrace their craziness and pursue their dreams and freedom?

My friend was already looking like McMurphy. He had this free personality

locked in a big hospital called Pristina, trying to break up the barriers and prejudices of being classified crazy only because he can't bear template girls. However, let's not forget that in this same city we can find a lot of girls that live as Lisa, trying to break many walls, facing many prejudices, just to show that they are capable of accomplishing their goals. But are those girls they accepted by society?

It's a small number of crazies that ramble the streets of Pristina, trying to support and protect each other.

And my friend just wants to be understood by people. He wants to feel free with the girls that he loves, without conditions, without barriers and without templates. Don't misjudge him. He is a free person searching for freedom.

MEET THE ARTIST

Gjokë Gojani, born in Peja.

Critics says he wants us to see things that cannot be pictured.

Has participated in many exhibitions all around Europe and Kosova.

Currently studying in Italy at the Academy of Carrara in Bergamo.

To see more of his work, just Google him



ACROSS

6: Spoken
10: Dresses nattily, with 'up'
14: Cut back
15: Gaucho's cattle catcher
16: Jai ____
17: Change for the better
18: They may be wild or rolled
19: Telephony pioneer
20: Primarily nocturnal arthropods
22: Take it easy
23: Artgum, for example
24: Pajamas cover
26: They go into drives
29: Series beginning
33: Reduces in intensity
37: Red or Yellow
38: Got old, as bread
39: Be on standby
40: On-ramp sign
42: Geek's cousin
43: Pastors' assistants
45: Long-nosed fish
46: Applies lightly
47: Hand cream ingredient
48: Cobbler's supply
50: Unused portion
52: Fit snugly one inside another
57: 'No ifs, ____, or buts!'
60: Accordion's relative
63: Machine with a shuttle
64: Fluish feeling
65: Related to the soft palate
66: Sea spot
67: Gates of philanthropy
68: Campaign poster plea
69: Adolescent
70: Unload, as stock
71: Musical symbols

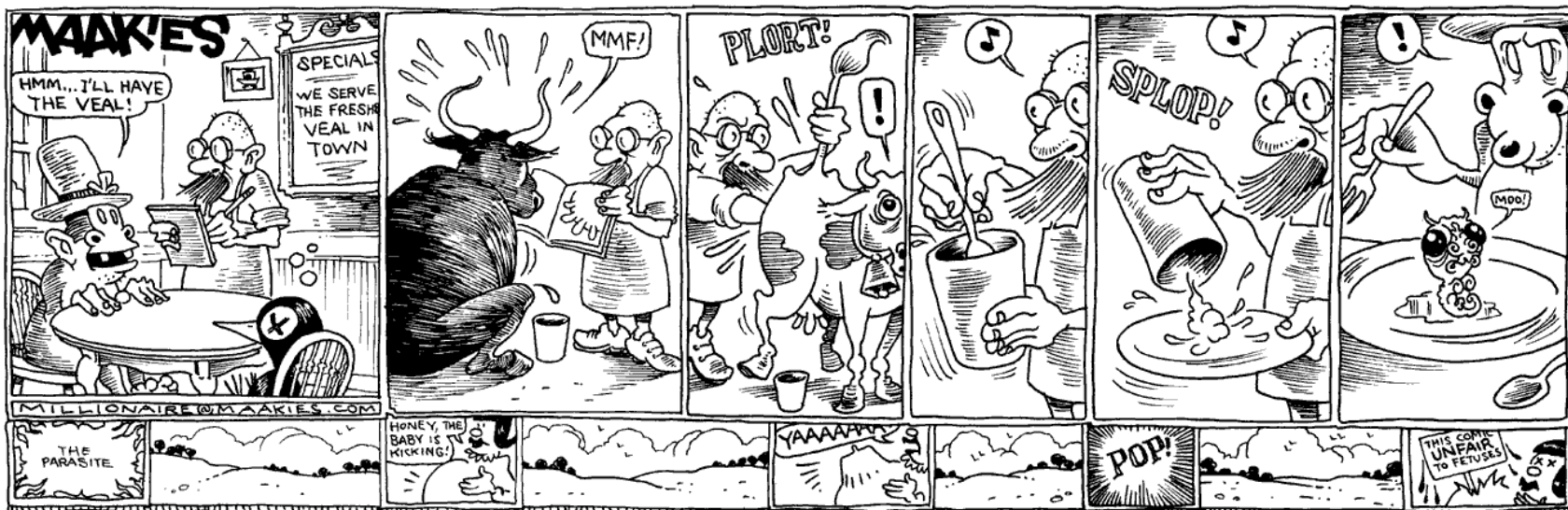
- 1: Spot to park
- 2: Circus employee
- 3: Combat site
- 4: Decent chaps
- 5: Circulated, in a way
- 6: Chamber music instrument
- 7: Word in seven Hope titles
- 8: Doctors
- 9: Catch with a rope
- 10: Mesa
- 11: Table spread
- 12: Vex
- 13: Window part
- 21: Light benders
- 25: Take one's cuts
- 27: Attend
- 28: Stuff in the hold
- 30: "Not guilty," e.g.
- 31: Parsley or sage
- 32: Sums up
- 33: Merino mamas
- 34: Remain in many sports
- 35: Object
- 36: Helm handlers
- 38: Unruffled
- 41: Hoedown honey
- 44: Map abbr.
- 48: Cheap cigar
- 49: Waitron
- 51: Signs of healing
- 53: Inscribed pillar
- 54: Scrabble century
- 55: Represent onstage
- 56: Scoots
- 57: Got grounded?
- 58: Narrow margin of victory
- 59: Loser to Clinton in '96
- 61: Without value
- 62: Bounded area forming part of a whole

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