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NOVEMBER 2018 EDITION

MAIN NEWS

Lluka: Energy sector in Kosovo remains a challenge for the economy
Economic Development Minister Valdrin Lluka, together with German Ambassador Christian Heldt and Riccardo Serri of the European Union Office in Kosovo, were part of the annual conference on Energy Transition "Challenges and Opportunities in Kosovo and the Region" organized by Balkan Green Foundation. This has been announced by Lluka himself through a post on his Facebook account where he emphasized that the energy sector remains a challenge for the economy of Kosovo. According to him, we have to rely on four objectives in relation to the policies and projects for the energy sector in Kosovo. The four priorities in the energy sector are: security of electricity supply for the needs of Kosovo; affordable energy prices for citizens and businesses; environmental protection and efficient utilization of resources and the increase of private investments and the creation of new jobs. 

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KEDS: We are facing with a significant shortage of electrical energy
KEDS has informed that the company is facing with a significant shortage of electrical energy. ‘The domestic generation secures less than 400 MW, and this does not cover even 50% of the consumption. We are importing all the energy available in the market on a very high price, from 100 to 120 euros per MW’, said Viktor Buzhalia, spokesperson at KEDS. KEDS has also informed that one of the units at KEK had an emergent and an unplanned breakdown. KEDS suggests that the imports will also reflect the energy price increase in the future, as they cost four times more than the domestic generation. 

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KEK produces only about 375 megawatts, supply is covered by import
Lack of domestic electricity production has made it difficult to provide stable supply, an occurrence usually seen during the winter season. In the units of the KEK, only 375 Mw / h of electricity are produced, while the rest is imported. Officials from KEK said they were prepared enough for the winter season but did not tell how much they are generating. ‘KEK, during the nine months of this year has successfully managed to produce the production according to the planning and energy balance.’ The article was previously reported, but was

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Lluka: The Telecom will be privatized, “Kosova e Re” has enormous importance

Minister of Economic Development, Valdrin Lluka, welcomed in a meeting the responsible coordinator of the German Government on Transatlantic Issues and Relations and also member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Peter Beyer, with whom he discussed about public enterprises, with special emphasis being put on Kosovo Telecom and the "Kosova e Re" power plant. Minister Lluka talked about the construction of the new power plant "Kosova e Re", and its vital importance for local businesses and the work being done in renewable energy projects. According to Lluka, by 2020 Kosovo is expected to reach the renewable energy target with 25% renewables in the energy mix while Kosova e Re power plant is of enormous importance for the future of the state.
Kosovo Should Get the Coal Plant It Needs  
by Katie Tubb, policy analyst for the Thomas A. Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation.

Consider the World Bank’s allegedly nuanced ban on coal absolute now. World Bank President Jim Yong Kim stated last week the organization has “made a very firm decision” to not extend partial risk guarantees for the construction of a new 500-megawatt coal power plant in Kosovo. This new coal plant is to replace the older of Kosovo’s two coal plants, considered by the World Bank to be Europe’s “worst single-point source of pollution.” The World Bank’s stated policy is to help finance coal power projects “only in rare circumstances ... such as meeting basic energy needs in countries with no feasible alternatives to coal and a lack of financing for coal power.” If Kosovo doesn’t meet that criteria, it’s hard to imagine what would. Affordable, reliable energy is essential to unlock economic growth and opportunity for people and for improving environmental health. Accordingly, coal is being used to supply 39 percent of the world’s heat and electricity. A new, clean burning coal plant in Kosovo could do likewise to support growing industry with abundant domestic supply and provide reliable backup power. In the U.S., North Dakota, which is one of the few states that meet the Environmental Protection Agency’s National Ambient Air Quality Standards, relies on seven power plants that run on lignite coal for much of its power. Also, Germany, which has made itself out to be a global warming warrior with its costly Energiewende national strategy to phase out coal and nuclear plants, operates 47 coal plants compared to Kosovo’s two and contributes 2 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions, compared to Kosovo’s less a 10th of 1 percent. But it is Kosovo that gets a lecture from the World Bank on global warming. To meet Kosovo’s immediate and long-term energy needs, practical solutions must be implemented.  

Kosovo Business community supports “Kosova e Re”  

Presidents of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce, and the American Chamber of Kosovo have expressed their support towards the construction of “Kosova e Re” power plant. Both of them have stressed the fact that unstable energy supply is the main barrier of doing business in Kosovo, thus they believe that “Kosova e Re” will be a solution to this problem. According to the American Chamber of Commerce, lignite represents the main source of natural resources for the Republic of Kosovo and as such, it needs to be used in order to promote economic development in the country, taking into account the new technology which it will use, this will significantly reduce the negative impact on the environment.

Joseph Brandt discusses “Kosova e Re”: The energy production starts late 2022 or early 2023, the project makes a positive impact to environment and ends problems of unstable electricity supply  

Joseph Brandt, Chief Executive Officer at Contour Global has been a guest at a local TV Debate show where he discussed the “Kosova e Re” project. Brandt has addressed different issues regarding pollution and the ways the project will eliminate them. Moreover, he also discussed contractual issues regarding the project. Brandt also has been talking about the World Bank and their refusal to fund the project, he has said that the World Bank has never been an option for them but their inclusion from the start of the project suggested otherwise. Mr.
Brandt has also been talking about the time when construction will start, suggesting that the start will be during 2019. He also faced different questions and comments from the debate show, also during the open discussion with RIT Kosovo students.

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Citizens, business community and politicians react on energy shortages
The energy shortages throughout Kosovo have got the attention of a number of MPs, public figures, representatives of the business community and the general public. The current Mayor of Podujeva claims to be very stressed with the recent energy shortages as they hinder the life of the many citizens and businesses. The mayor of Malisheva has also reacted similarly while Berat Rukiqi, the president of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce has made a public threat, claiming that businesses will become more radical in case problems with energy shortages continue.

Haradinaj: Everything is going according to the plan regarding “Kosova e Re”
Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, has met with the CEO of "Contour Global", Joseph Brandt, during the meeting he emphasized that the “Kosova e Re” Power Plant is a powerful instrument that provides a new development perspective for the country's economy. Haradinaj once again expressed his support towards the project considering the positive effects it will have on the Kosovo Economy and the Environment. Haradinaj has labeled the project as “powerful instrument that provides a new development perspective for the country’s economy”.

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Deputy Assistant Secretary Matthew Palmer: US supports Kosova e Re
The United States strongly supports the efforts to put in place the Kosovo e Re power plant. It would provide the base load energy generating capacity that Kosovo needs. It would significantly improve the environmental circumstances in Kosovo, reducing the particulate matter that plant emits by some 95%, if I remember the numbers right. We are pleased that there is an American company that is lined up to lead this project. We are disappointed with the statements that came out of the World Bank out of Doctor Kim. But we think that it is entirely possible for Contour Global and the Government of Kosovo to line up the financing that is necessary for this project to move forward.

Click here to read full article in English.

Haradinaj criticizes World Bank: They had delayed investments in Kosova e Re, causing business losses of 300 Million Euros annually
Prime Minister, Ramush Haradinaj, has been a guest in T7 television channel where he talked about economic development in Kosovo, with special emphasis put on “Kosova e Re”. According to him, Kosova e Re has not been constructed yet due to delays imposed by the World Bank. Furthermore, Haradinaj talked about the economic side of the project, by stating that the project would end 300 Million Euros of losses cause by the unstable energy supply.

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Minister of Environment, Matoshi: We will give licenses to “Kosova e Re” only if they use the latest filter technology
'We are committed to have the latest 'emissions-filter' technology, and if the request is not met then we will not issue construction and environmental permits for the "Kosova e Re" power plant', said the Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning, Fatmir Matoshi, during his visit to an illegal waste dump in the municipality of Obiliq, together with the mayor Xhafer Gashi. “We are cooperating with KEK and the Ministry of Economic Development with regard

There will be no coal gifted towards KEK workers
The Ministry of Economic Development has decided to ban the free distribution of coal to employees of KEK. KEK, an institution with over 5,000 workers, has so far provided 10 tons of coal annually for every employee, in a form of a gift. The coal was used by the employees of KEK for their household heating or was resold in the market. ‘KEK has over 5000 workers and has so far given 10 tons for each of them, or more than 50,000,000 kg, which adversely affects the air we breathe daily, since the given coal is not properly treated and users do not use any filters during the heat’, said Lluka.

KEDS revitalizes electric network in the outskirts of Prishtina
A new modern distribution network is installed at the Tutin neighborhood in the outskirts of Prishtina. 65 consumers have benefitted from the investment by KEDS and now experience a better quality electricity and the necessary voltage in their households. The old power grid in this part of town had been very outdated and in a seriously bad condition. KEDS installed a new substation and a 1.5 kilometer long high voltage network. Additionally, wooden polls have been replaced with concrete ones. KEDS Spokesperson, Viktor Buzhala, says this investment is important both for the quality of electricity and for the security of the surrounding residents.
Draft law on RTK does not pass, citizens would be forced to pay through KEDS bills

The Kosovo Assembly did not pass the Draft Law on Public Broadcaster of Kosovo, RTK. The draft law foresaw a financing option of 2.5 euro for the public television through energy tariffs and electricity invoices delivered by the supply operator. The draft did not find the support of the Kosovo Parliament, whereas the initiative was opposed by the Vetevendosje Movement for its start.

KEDS completes 2 major projects in Rahovec

New distribution network is installed at a number of locations in the city of Rahovec. KEDS claims to have undertaken the measures to provide safer services to the citizens and decrease technical losses simultaneously. 209 citizens of Rahovec have benefited from the investment project.

KEK Director: It is not true that our power plants are the main polluters in Kosovo

Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Rural Development, Environment and Spatial Planning, Muharrem Nitaj, Deputy Chairwoman Besa Gaxherri and members of the commission, Salih Zyba, Salih Salihu and Andin Hoti have visited Obiliq in order to investigate the current state of power plants, a topic which is now the biggest concern of citizens, considering the pollution of the environment. Mayor of Obiliq Municipality, Xhafer Gashi, accompanied the

European Environment Agency: Around 3700 Kosovo citizens die each year due to air pollution

According to the European Environment Agency report ‘Air Quality in Europe 2018’, Kosovo had 3,700 deaths from polluted air, given that its population effects only 1.8 million people, Kosovo ranked first in Europe, where polluted air has killed approximately 0.2% of the population. In Serbia, this indicator is 0.18% (about 13 thousand deaths) and in Macedonia 0.14% of the population (3,000 deaths), ranking respectively in second and third most polluted countries in Europe. Albania, unlike the other Balkan states, has a relatively low level of deaths caused by polluted air, estimated at 1400 people per year, or 0.05% of the population, ranking 29th in Europe, from 37 countries in total. The information on the report refers to 2015.

Kosovo’s biggest polluters ‘revealed’

Fatmir Matoshi, Environmental Minister, has voiced against the Amendment that allows import of older cars in Kosovo. According to him, based on the studies, 30% of the air pollution in Kosovo comes from old cars. In addition, Matoshi lists the fuel quality, lack of local car technical control competence and the power plants as main air polluters in Kosovo. Before the new Amendment to the Law on Vehicles, in Kosovo the citizens where not allowed to import cars older than 10 years. The new Amendment has extended the age of allowed car imports to 15, opening Kosovo’s borders to additional old / outdated cars.

Prishtina is once again one of the top 10 polluted cities in the world

Just like last year, Pristina seems to have problems with air pollution. As it approaches midnight, Pristina is in the top 10 countries with highest air pollution in the world. According to air pollution controllers, set by the US embassy in the capital of Kosovo, at midnight pollution marks a level of 122 PM, which is rated as unhealthy for certain groups of people. The air pollution in Pristina has been taken into account by the National Institute of Public Health. A press release says that the causes of such a thing are the power plants and the use of coal for heating. "Short-term effects of air pollution leads to the increase of the number of patients with bronchial asthma, chronic bronchitis, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease at different ages’, says National Institute of Public Health.

“Kosova e Re” will improve the economic competitiveness of Kosovo

Joseph Brandt, Chief Executive Officer in ContourGlobal, Berat Rukiqi, President of Kosovo Chamber of Commerce and Valon Syla, journalist, highlighted Kosovo’s urgent need for new energy generation capacities in the country. "In recent measurements of doing business in Kosovo, electricity is one of the main barriers towards investors," said Berat Rukiqi, chairman of Kosovo Chamber of Commerce. "The project has great effects on boosting the competitiveness of the country's economy," said Rukiqi. According to USAID reports, businesses in Kosovo lose about $ 415 million a year due to the improper power supply. This was confirmed by the newly appointed US Ambassador in Kosovo, Philip Kosnett. Kosovo has more than 10 billion lbs of lignite and as such is the fifth largest reserve in the world. The coal that burns at the power plants "Kosova A" and "Kosova B" serves as the main source of electricity production for the whole country.

European Environment Agency: Around 3700 Kosovo citizens die each year due to air pollution

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Lluka explains the Community Development Fund of Kosova e Re
Valdrin Lluka has provided further information with regard to the Community Development Fund through a Facebook post. Minister Lluka claims that the Fund will have a total budget of 10 million euros, despite of previous misleading information provided by a local analyst that the fund only has a budget of 8.5 million euros. According to Lluka, the fund will tackle economic development, environment and social status, informal education and economic empowerment and it aims to build capacities and provide better living for the Kosova e Re power plant surrounding community. Lluka made these comments on his Facebook account.

EBRD: Kosovo’s economic development may also depend on the new power plant
The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has published a new report on regional economic prospects, according to which Kosovo has continued strong growth in 2018, with a total increase of 4.2 percent. According to the EBRD report, Kosovo will continue its growth in the coming period, and this will depend on the implementation of the new planned power plant. “The country’s development may also depend on the implementation of the new 500 MW power plant, which would simultaneously represent the largest investment project in the country,” the EBRD report published in November 2018 states. Click here to read full article in English.

EBRD re-states its decision to not support ‘Kosova e Re’, announces the end to direct financing for coal
Following the World Bank’s recent statement that it will not provide support for the 500 MW New Kosovo coal power plant, the EBRD has now followed suit by confirming that it is not considering support for the project. In an e-mailed statement responding to an enquiry from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA), an EBRD spokesperson said “the EBRD indeed is not considering this project”, ending years of uncertainty as to whether the bank would make an exception to its overall energy policy restricting coal financing. The news comes as the EBRD prepares to approve a new Energy Strategy for the next five years, in which it looks set to completely exclude direct financing for coal, but has so far made insufficient commitments to avoid financing oil and gas. The power purchase contract signed between the Kosovar government and ContourGlobal, in which electricity would be bought at a guaranteed “target price” of EUR 80/MWh and ContourGlobal would be paid an “availability fee” even if it doesn’t produce electricity, confirms what KOSID and other civil society groups have argued for years: that the plant is harmful to Kosovo not only for climate and and environmental reasons, but that its economic impacts will also be devastating. ‘Our efforts to get the remaining financiers to withdraw from the project will therefore continue unabated.’ Click here to read full article in English.

The American Chamber of Commerce supports the construction of “Kosova e Re”
During an open discussion with students and business community representatives, Arian Zeka, chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce, stressed that the Chamber he represents supports the idea of constructing “Kosova e Re”. “The project is more than necessary in order to provide energy security towards manufacturing businesses,” said Zeka during the discussion. The American Chamber of Commerce in Kosovo has confirmed businesses in the energy field will have that a significant part of the challenges reduced thorough the construction of the “Kosova e Re” power plant. ‘Unstable power supply over the years has caused multi-million-dollar damages to the domestic industry and has

KEDS establishes training facility
KEDS has officially established a training facility that aims to increase the professional capacities of its employees, contractors and other parties involved in the distribution network. It also provides great training possibilities and certification for students in the field of electrical engineering. KEDS believes that the trainings will result in achieving the company’s target to have zero accidents at work. The facility is equipped with all the different types of polls, transformers and other electrical equipment that KEDS uses within the borders of Kosovo. The facility is located at the Business Park of the municipality of Drenas.

Media Analysis: Kosovo’s failure on renewable energy
The article represents an analysis of a news portal in Kosovo with regard to Kosovo’s RES development. The Kosovo government had devised plans for
hampered the development of the manufacturing sector in the country,’ Zeka concluded.

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Joseph Brandt: Price ceiling is 80 Euros, however I believe it will never reach it

A megawatt of electricity which is produced by the Kosovo Energy Corporation is currently sold for 28 euros. The same amount of energy produced by "Kosova e Re" will cost up to 80 euros. The new power plant owned by the American company "Contour Global" will produce 450 megawatts of electricity, and the Government of Kosovo is obliged to purchase the electricity for the next 20 years. Chief Executive and founder of "Contour Global", Joseph Brandt, has shown that they agreed with the Government of Kosovo for the price ceiling to be 80 euros. "80 euros is the price ceiling, this is something that we have agreed on since the start”. When we started discussing the price, we agreed that we should have a price ceiling, one which we could reduce during the process" Brandt said. “We strongly believe that the price of 80 euros per hour, or the price ceiling will not be achieved. This is an attractive price and the Government has opened up the road for us to proceed with the project.

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Reuters: Kosovo opts for coal plant despite criticism

After decades of relying on lignite, Kosovo has been told it needs to phase the energy source out, despite having 14 billion tonnes of reserves, the fifth largest in the world. “The World Bank has recommended to us to have a 400 MW solar park, a 170 MW wind park and a 350 MW battery storage park,” Valdrin Lluka, Kosovo’s Minister for Economic Development, said. “We don’t have that luxury to do such experiments in a poor country such as Kosovo. It is a major risk. It is in our national security interest to secure base energy inside our territory,” he told Reuters. London-listed power generator ContourGlobal, which won the tender to build Kosovo’s new plant and operate it for two decades, is now trying to secure funds elsewhere. The government committed to buying the total output of the plant at a price yet to be determined. The two old power plants Kosova A and Kosova B are among Europe’s worst polluters. The government said the new plant, to replace Kosova A, would burn 40 percent less coal and release 20 times less emissions. But power prices in Kosovo, among the cheapest in Europe, would rise 25-35 percent once the plant goes online, mostly due to investment for environmental protection, Lluka said. The country of 1.8 million people has installed only 50 MW of renewable capacities. It hopes to double them by the end of this or early next year.

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Kosovo was not accepted in ENTSO- these countries voted against

Kosovo’s request for energy border recognition at the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity-ENTSO was declined due to the lack of enough votes. During the voting process, which lasted until Friday, Kosovo received 65 out of 72 votes it was supposed to receive. Serbia, Serbia, Bosnia, Romania, Bulgaria, Spain and Hungary voted against, whereas Macedonia and Montenegro have abstained. Minister of Economic Development, Valdrin Lluka has said that Kosovo has not yet applied for membership but only to get the status of energy border control. However, he has said that the ENTSO Assembly will once again review Kosovo’s request as the same request will go again through the ENTSO Board. According to KOSTT’s data Kosovo loses 10 million euros each year, due to the lack of energy border control.

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Is Carbon Capture The Only Option We Have?

In the wake of the recent UN report that unambiguously warned to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to avert catastrophic climate effects, the debate on how to decouple GDP growth from CO2 emissions has only intensified. Currently, coal supplies a third of total global energy demand, roughly 76 percent of which comes from China, and developing countries keen to augment their coal-fired power capacity. A total of 70 gigawatts of new coal capacity was added globally in 2016. In India alone, roughly 50 gigawatts of new coal-fired power generation capacity is under construction. Countries as varied as Indonesia, Kosovo, South Africa and Kenya are following suit. For them, abandoning fossil fuels could slow the development of essential energy capacity and result in the re-prioritization of funds earmarked for infrastructure development.

Lluka satisfied with the approval of the Law on Energy Efficiency

Minister of Economic Development, Valdrin Lluka has expressed his satisfaction with
Ymeri has requested from Kosovo’s Government to seek official response from Macedonia and Montenegro that abstained for Kosovo in ENTSO
After the denial of Kosovo’s request for energy border recognition at the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity-ENTSO, during the voting process of which among other countries, Macedonia and Montenegro abstained, the Vice President of PSD Visar Ymeri said that the government of Kosovo should seek an official response from both of these countries regarding their abstention. 

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Lake Gazivode, troubled waters between Kosovo and Serbia
Controlled by Serbs but a key resource for Kosovo, the cool blue waters of Lake Gazivode reflect the chilly relationship between the former war foes over their contested border. Kosovo and Serbia are under pressure to normalise relations in order to move forward in EU accession talks. Resolving the border issue is key to any agreement. The proposal of a “land swap” as a way to break the deadlock gained traction in August after officials on both sides gave a nod to the possibility. Local media speculated that an ethnic-Albanian slice of Serbia could be traded for a Serb-dominated region of northern Kosovo, home to Lake Gazivode. Gazivode and its 370 million cubic metres (13 billion cubic feet) of water offer another reminder of why altering the borders would be anything but simple. Three-quarters of the lake lie in Kosovo’s ethnic Serb-dominated north — a region where Belgrade has maintained a strong influence and would naturally demand if a land swap was on the table. But for Kosovo to give up Gazivode, a man-made lake created by a dam on the Ibar river, would threaten the drinking water supply of more than a third of its 1.8 million population. The lake also supplies crucial cooling water for the two coal plants — Kosovo A and Kosovo B—that produce around 95% of Kosovo’s electricity. “Without Gazivode, Kosovo would be without electricity,” said Srdjan Vulovic, head of the Belgrade-founded company Ibar which manages the lake. Yet he maintains that “the right to manage Gazivode belongs to Serbia”, saying it was Belgrade who repaid the $90 million (78 million-euro) loan to build the dam under the former Yugoslavia in the 1970s. 

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KOSTT: The ENTSO-E proposition for Ujmani (Gazivoda) Lake to supply power to the northern municipalities has not passed
The Transmission System and Electricity Market Operator of Kosovo (KOSTT) says that the ENTSO-E proposal which said that Ujmani Lake will supply electricity to the northern municipalities has not passed. According to KOSTT, on 25 October 2018, ENTSO-E (Continental Regional Group, RGCE) has drafted a proposal for temporary technical solutions aimed at ending unintended deviations on the energy grid. In this context, ENTSO-E has proposed that KOSTT de facto be recognized as an independent regulatory zone / block in the continental Europe operational hierarchy, but that electricity production from HPP Ujmani be used for supplying northern Kosovo. Media have reported that Kosovo runs the risk of an energy collapse if, within the framework of the final dialogue with Serbia, Ujmani Lake (Gazivoda) is decided to remain outside the territory of Kosovo.
Kosovo Government: Kosovo cannot rely on Alternative Energy sources
The Kosovo Government estimates that Kosovo cannot depend on renewable energy production resources, such as wind, sun and water, but will continue with plans for the construction of the “Kosova e Re” Power Plant. The debate about the potential of alternative sources from civil society and government officials of Kosovo has emerged after the withdrawal of the World Bank to support the construction of the “Kosova e Re” Power Plant. The World Bank has said it will not support the construction of “Kosova e Re” to produce electricity from coal and that priority for the bank remains the electricity produced by other alternative options. Meanwhile, the Government of Kosovo and the contract awarded company "ContourGlobal" have said that despite the withdrawal of the World Bank, the project "Kosova e Re" will be implemented. Economic Development Minister Valdrin Lluka, in a talk with Radio Free Europe, has said that Kosovo has no capacity to replace energy generation from coal to alternative sources. Lluka says that the only option to ensure stable and sustainable supply to citizens with electricity is coal, but with modern technology that does not mean pollution to the environment. However, the contrary is said by civil society representatives who have lobbied against the construction of the “Kosova e Re” Power Plant. Dajana Berisha from Kosovo Civil Society Consortium for Sustainable Development (KOSID), for Radio Free Europe states that Kosovo has sufficient capacities for alternative energy. But, according to her, Kosovo does not have a reliable wind chart and the potential for using wind power remains uncharted. The lack of such a map, according to Berisha, has created a situation that provides room for such claims that Kosovo has few renewable energy capacities. Click here to read full article in Albanian.

KEK explains whether there will be energy throughout the winter
The citizen’s dilemma like every other year is whether there will be enough energy during the winter season. The Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEK) is assuring the citizens that it will take care to have sufficient energy reserves. Director of Public Relations Office at KEK, Skender Bucolli in response to "Indeksonline" said that all necessary preparations for winter have been made. "Let us inform you that KEK, during the nine months of this year has successfully managed to generate energy in accordance with prior planning and energy balance. Furthermore, it has made all the necessary preparations for the winter season and there is no doubt that the generation will continue with the same swing," he said in his response. Click here to read full article in Albanian.

KEK needs more than 800 workers, the New Syndicate warns of electricity crisis
KEK’s New Trade Union announces that there is a huge shortage of workers in KEK. The Trade Union estimates the situation in the Kosovo Energy Corporation as very serious and disturbing because of the shortage of workers in all three divisions, despite the increasing unemployment in the country. The Union claims that a number of employees have officially retired and in return, KEK did not accept any new ones. Only during 2018 and 2019, additional 387 employees of KEK will retire. The Union complains that there are a number of employees doing two different jobs and that working on weekend hours and after time has become a standard practice. Click here to read full article in Albanian.

Minister satisfied with the progress of Kosova e Re project, the opposition remains suspicious
Minister of Economic Development, Valdrin Lluka has reported to the Parliamentary Committee on Economic Development on the progress of the "Kosova e Re" power plant project. The Minister has informed the Committee that four EPC bidders have been qualified, while until the end of the year the
government will know the exact finances required for the construction of the plant. Lluka explains that a previous World Bank feasibility report has stated that the current project is the best solution to energy issues in Kosovo. He also explained that the best latest power plant technology will be used, ensuring the fulfillment of European standards. On remarks on energy prices increase, Lluka explains that the energy prices will not be the highest in the region. Dardan Sejdiu from PSD claims that according to ERO, only to households the energy price will increase for up to 56%. Sejdiu also raised suspicions on whether Kosovo is in breach of the Stabilization Association Agreement, due to having a favoring approach to one single company.

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Dusty cloud comes out from Kosova B power plant
Citizens of Prishtina have warned of a heavy smoke coming out of Kosovo B power plant. A picture made by a Prishtina citizen and spread all over news portals and social networks in Kosovo, shows a dense ‘dirty’ cloud over the sky around Obiliq. KEK did not react towards the news, as air pollution has somehow become a standard during the winter season, due to the outdated power plant technology that KEK possesses.

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Household consumers demand energy price reduction
Representatives of the civil society and consumer rights advocates have demanded that the electricity price be lower for household consumers and not just for commercial ones. The Electricity Regulatory Office (ERO) has decided since November 1 to lower electricity tariffs for industrial and commercial consumers by 5 percent, but not for household customers, with reasoning that households continue to have a low price. ERO officials have said that household consumers have lower electricity prices than other customers. The director for consumer organization, Selatin Kaçaniku, told Telegrafi that the energy price should be reduced for 30 percent.

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Unusual amount of smoke has been released from Kosova A
Many citizens of the Obiliq area have sent pictures and have alerted media of a huge amount of smoke coming out of Kosova A power plant, which is known to have a large number of emission levels. Due to its outdated technology which was implemented during the 60s, Kosova A is described as the worst single-point source of pollution in Europe.

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Lluka: If Kosova e Re fails, Kosovo will lose 19.7 million euros
Minister Lluka has said that if the project of Kosova e Re fails, Kosovo risks to lose 19.7 million euros. According to him, despite of the lack of support by the World Bank, Kosova e Re project is being implemented as per prior planning. According to Lluka, the construction of Kosova e Re will start early 2019 while the selection of EPC contractors will take place soon. Lluka expects that the state guarantee will become available in April next year. Lluka made these claims during a reporting session called by the Parliamentary Committee on Economic Development, Infrastructure, Trade and Regional Development. Questions were asked mostly by Dardan Sejdiu of PSD (Social-democrat Party), and Glauk Konjufca (Vetevendosje Movement), both part of opposition parties. Konjufca from Vetevendosje, also member of the Parliamentary Commission, claims that the agreement will lead to a significant increase of energy prices. Additionally, Konjufca claims that Kosovo has offered a lot of guarantees and has committed itself to paying all the expenses of the investor. Kosova e Re and the current structure was also opposed by Dardan Sejdiu, an MP from PSD and a member of the Parliamentary

in business development, especially

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Minister Lluka: The large municipalities will have 24 hour public central heating
Minister of Economic Development, Valdrin Lluka, attended the conference on Energy Transition, "Challenges and Opportunities in Kosovo and the Region" organized by the Balkan Green Foundation. As a keynote speaker, Minister Lluka presented the policies and decisions that the ministry has made, announcing that through funds from the European Union, large municipalities will have central heating for 24 hours per day. In addition, Lluka stressed that their goal is to reach 25% of the energy mix from renewable technologies by 2020. The head of MED indicated that the construction of the new power plant "Kosova e Re" will have tremendous positive environmental impact to the situation in which the country is today.

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KEDS: Over 400 families now enjoy the new electricity network in Lipjan
Over 400 families / household consumers have benefited from the latest KEDS project targeting the old distribution assets within the Lipjan municipal borders. In Lipjan, the distribution network used to be overloaded and very old while the new one has brought stable electricity supply and voltage, in respect the allowed parameters. KEDS has installed two new substations in Lipjan, one with a capacity of 1000 kVA and another one with a power of 630 kVA.
Committee. Mr. Sejdiu was particularly interested to know more about the project progress. He claims that a report from ERO suggests an energy tariff increase of 56% for households. Memli Krasniqi from PDK explains that if the energy price exceeds 80 Euros, the Government of Kosovo has the right to cancel the contract.

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**Lluka: If energy price for households exceeds 80 euros, we will pull out of the Kosova e Re project**

The possibility of a failure of Kosovo’s biggest project is now being discussed within Kosovo institutions. One of the main concerns of MPS is the increase of energy tariffs for up to 46% in the first 20 years of the power plant. According to this calculation, households will bear costs of 5 – 7 million euros during the first 20 years of operation. Lluka explains that the possibility to the energy tariff increase is being balanced with investments in energy efficiency and cogeneration. According to the contract, Contour Global may sell its assets after the first five years of operation; however, this can only be done with the approval of the Kosovo Government, Lluka claims.

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**Household appliances destroyed, citizen demands damage claims of 5 thousand Euros from KOSTT and KEK**

Ilaz Rama is seeking damages claim in the amount of about five thousand euros, to the Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEK), and to the Kosovo Transmission System and Electricity Market Operator (KOSTT), due to the burning of his household appliances. On regular basis, household and commercial electricity consumers in Kosovo inform on damages caused by the unstable supply with electricity and improper load shedding. In this particular case, the technical professional findings blame the second respondent for the damages, in this case - KOSTT.

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**REGIONAL PICKS**

**Albania, Kosovo to jointly build 200 MW hydropower plant**

Albania and Kosovo will jointly build a 200 MW hydropower plant (HPP) in the area between Dragash and Prizren, Kosovo* Minister of Economic Development Valdrin Lluka said. He said that the project will receive support from the European Union in the amount of EUR 20 million, Albaniandailynews portal reported. According to the minister, the idea of building the hydropower plant jointly with Albania is very close to receiving final approval. The EU will provide a EUR 20 million grant for the construction of the HPP to be used for electricity balancing in Albania and Kosovo, Lluka noted. According to minister, the plant will affect Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia. This location between Dragash and Prizren has a strong potential for a hydropower plant, Lluka said. The World Bank in October announced that it will not support a 500 MW Kosova e Re coal-fired power plant, but Kosovo’s* government and the US-based ContourGlobal reaffirmed their commitment to completing the project. Kosovo has around 14 billion tonnes of proven lignite reserves, the fifth largest in the world. Economic Development Minister Valdrin Lluka said that ContourGlobal is on the right path to secure financing from various sources such as state export agencies and international financial institutions.

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**KEK workers demand finances to purchase wood for heating**

KEK does not seem to be fazed by the pollution caused by the power plants which affects over 800,000 citizens living around them. KEK Workers’ Union has reacted to the decision of the Minister of Economic Development to ban the free granting of coal as a gift for the employees of KEK. In past years, KEK has traditionally donated 10 tons of coal to 4 thousand and 500 workers. "At first, they have not made any analysis of how many employees get the coal and how it is being used in Pristina, and the whole course of refusal is related to the fact that the environment is being polluted in Pristina. We have the alternative request,’ says a representative of the Union, demanding that free wood is provided to the employees, to be used for heating.

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**The fate of the power plant is in question, MPs will decide**

Minister Lluka warns that if the Kosovo Assembly does not provide the state guarantee for Kosova e Re project, the damages will reach 19.7 million euros. Lluka expects that the voting will take place in the Kosovo Assembly in April next year. According to Lluka, Kosovo is mainly providing guaranteeing the performance of public enterprises. Kosovo needs to secure a maximum of 260 million euros for the project in annual basis, over the next 20 years, according to Lluka. Lluka explained that Kosovo has signed
Electricity prices in Energy Community rise 11% for households, decline 19% for industry in last four years – ACER

In the period between 2013 and 2017, the average electricity price for households in the Energy Community (EnC) Contracting Parties (CPs), without Ukraine, increased by 11%, from 6.8 euro cents/kWh to 7.5 euro cents/kWh, while average industrial prices decreased by 19%, from 6.5 euro cents/kWh to 5.2 euro cents/kWh. The share of the energy component in the final bill for households was the highest in Albania (62%) and the lowest in Serbia (33%), the ACER Annual Report on the Results of Monitoring the Internal Electricity and Natural Gas Markets in 2017 finds. The Market Monitoring Report (MMR), which is in its seventh edition, consists of four volumes, respectively on: Electricity Wholesale Markets, Gas Wholesale Markets, Electricity and Gas Retail Markets, and Consumer Protection and Empowerment. It covers the EU Members States and, for selected topics, also the EnC CPs. The report claims that the highest industrial price is reported in Serbia and that RES charges at 20% in Germany, 1% in BiH and Serbia.

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SEPA report: Excessive air pollution registered in Belgrade, other Serbian cities in 2017

The Serbian capital Belgrade had excessive air pollution throughout the 2010-2017 period, except in 2014, mostly due to particulate matter PM10, but also due to nitrogen dioxide (NO2) emissions, according to the Serbian Environmental Protection Agency’s (SEPA) 2017 Annual Report on the Environment. The overall air quality in 2017 was unsatisfactory in Belgrade and a number of major towns and cities in Serbia, with excessive pollution also registered in Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Valjevo, Subotica, Pancevo, Uzice, and Nis.

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