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European Heritage Days 2006 in Kosovo - Kosovo cultural Heritage

31 September



This year's "EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS 2006" in Kosovo were held under the patronage of Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, with CHWB (Cultural Heritage without Borders) Kosovo office as its implementing partner. As part of EHD 2006, activities were planned to be held in four locations throughout Kosovo:

First week: 1 - 9 September 2006 in Çagllavicë (Prishtinë).

Second week: 2 - 16 and 17 September 2006 in Hoçë e Madhe (Rahovec) and Mitrovicë.

Third week: 23 September 2006 in Isniq and Dranoc (Deçan).

Fourth week: 4 - 30 September 2006 in Prizren.

With this year's EHD activities, CHWB aimed at achieving cooperation with different local partners, respectively with local NGO's, which were in charge of organizing events in specified locations. Another aim of this year's event was to transfer responsibility for traditionally organizing the European Heritage Days to the structures of Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

Main characteristic of this year's event was the EHD Bus, which was free of charge and open to all people interested to participate in activities of EHD 2006.

First week: Çagllavica (Pristina)

9 September

The European Heritage Days 2006 in Kosovo were officially opened on Saturday, in the private atelier of the late Kosovar sculptor, Agim Çavdarbasha, in Çagllavicë/Caglavica (Pristina). Culture Minister, Astrit Haraçija, opened the ceremony in the presence of Kosovo Parliament Speaker, Kolë Berisha, Head of Academy of Arts and Sciences of Kosovo, Rexhep Ismajli, representatives from many international liaison offices, different international and local organisation and many guests.

With its official opening taking place in the atelier of sculptor Çavdarbasha, celebration of "European Heritage Days" in Kosovo aims at widening its vision by promoting, amongst others, the artistic heritage, which is the best way to bring together people, communities and cultures in Kosovo.

The work of sculptor Agim Çavdarbasha lies upon the foundation of modern expression in contemporary Albanian sculpture. With his distinctive originality, he has marked the most productive period of development and progress in visual arts in Kosovo and the whole of Albanian cultural circles by contributing with an extraordinary opus in sculpture, the absence of which was perceived especially in Kosovo, an art whose dignity rose with the arrival of Çavdarbasha as an artist and pedagogue, who in time would educate entire generations of young sculptors.



Second week: Hoça e Madhe / Velika Hoca (Rahovec) and Mitrovica

17 September

The scheduled visit to the Crystal Museum of Trepça Complex in Stanterg, Mitrovica, took place on Sunday on 16th of September. After the visit to the Museum, the participants also visited the Saint Peter Basilica, which is supposed to have been either a Latin, or Sasse church, and the Trepça Mosque, as some of the best examples of the cultural heritage in Mitrovica. The foreseen lectures and debate were not held due to power shortage.

Meanwhile, the visit to Hoca e Madhe / Velika Hoca, which was planned for Saturday, was cancelled.



Youth Camp for Cultural Heritage in Mazrekaj Kulla - Dranoc, Decan

17 September

As a part of its efforts to include cultural heritage in the curricula of primary and high schools, CHwB and local NGO "Emancipimi Civil (EC) mandryshe" organized an informal youth camp from 12th to 17th of September, in Kulla e Mazrekajve, Dranoc. The aim of this camp, which was initiated as a pilot-project, was to provide basic and accurate information about cultural heritage, to raise awareness and give the clear message that cultural heritage in Kosovo is a common European heritage that requires overcoming of all racial, religious, national and other differences.

Even though, initially, this project was implemented with only 10 youngsters from Prizren, it aims to expand to other municipalities of Kosovo soon.

Campers had the opportunity to be part of the lectures of Prof. Dr. Edi Shukriu (archaeologist) and Mr.Sc.Shqipe Nixha (architect). They also visited some of the most important heritage buildings in Deçan, Peja, Gjakova, Prizren and Mitrovica.

A detailed presentation of the camp activities, as well as an exhibition of drawings of campers was presented on Saturday, 30th of September, as a part of the EHD 2006 activities in Prizren.



Third week: Isniq and Dranoc (Deçan)

24 September

Compared to the second week, there was a lot of interest from the public on EHD activities of this week. This was a good sign that EHD activities are on the way of becoming a traditional activity in Decan Municipality.

Following the gathering of participants in centre of Isniq, Mehmet Bojku, mayor of the village, and Rexhep Maksutaj, Head of NGO "Agimi", gave welcome speeches. In general, this year's activities were similar to last year's activities, including a handicraft market, traditional food market, traditional dances, songs and site visits to kullas of Isniq.

Celebration of EHD 2006 reached its peak in Kulla e Mazrekajve in Dranoc village. The activities in Kulla e Mazrekajve were opened with a welcome speech by Halil Dukaj, who was responsible for Dranoc part of organization, and a short speech and public invitation for "Bed and Breakfast" tourism by Serge Doucette.

This was the first time that joint activities, such as traditional food market, traditional Oda games (Men's Room of Kulla), songs and dances were performed in the yard of Kulla e Mazrekajve, in Dranoc.

After the departure of most of the guests to Prishtina, a special documentary on "European Heritage Days 2005 - Kosovar Wedding" premiered in front of guests, who were selected for Bed and Breakfast in Dranoc.





Fourth week: Prizren

31 September

Closing week of EHD 2006 was evaluated as successful, taking into consideration that Prizren hosted this kind of an event for the first time.

The audience gathered in front of the New Municipality Building (White House) was welcomed by Prizren Chief Executive, Ragip Gajraku. Following this speech, Abib Ahmeti, Director of IPM Prizren gave a short description of Prizren cultural heritage, followed by a speech from Valon Xhabali, local NGO coordinator.

A guided visit tour to some of Prizren traditional architecture houses was given from 11:30 - 14:00 hrs, representing the first professional tourist guides of Prizren. Mr. Parim Kosova, IPM Prizren, was responsible for guiding the guests through some of the landmarks of Prizren architecture.

The second part of activities included presentations and lectures on different Cultural Heritage topics, held in the New Municipality Building, in the following order:

- Presentation of five-day camping on cultural heritage by a participant of Camp, Doruntina Spahiu
- Hand out of the Certificates to the participants of CH Camp
- Lecture on relation between cultural heritage and curricula in high schools and faculties in Kosovo by Luljeta Demjaha
- Ethnology exhibition of Kaltrina Pajaziti (bachelor of ethnology) and painting and photography exhibition of CH Camp followed by cocktail.
- Presentation about Prizren Historic Zone Rehabilitation Programme (Sali Shoshaj, Head of CHwB Kosovo)
- Conservation plan for Historic Zone of Prizren (Engin Eyuboglu, Istanbul Technical University)
- Presentation of the project for Revitalization of the Syndicate Building, (Bujar Prestreshi, architect from CHwB)

Four weeks of this year's EHD activities were concluded with an Iftar (dinner of Ramadan) arranged in restaurant Mullini in Marsh neighborhood for all participants of EHD 2006.



Temporary Heritage Database completed

31 September

CHwB completed expansion of the temporary Cultural Heritage database, developed by CHwB staff on the basis of its "Dukagjini 2005" database. This expanded database was produced on the request of Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, in order to facilitate the pre-inventory process that is currently under way. The database uses user-friendly features, that enable input of and management of data in three categories of Cultural Heritage: Architectural, Archaeological and Movable Heritage. The structure and categories of the expanded database have been defined by a team of selected representatives for MCYS and IPMs, who worked together with CHwB staff in this project.

The expanded database will be distributed to Institutes for Protection of Monuments in beginning of October.



Restoration and revitalisation works in Syndicate Building continues

31 September

Restoration works on the Syndicate Building and revitalisation of the public yard have commenced on 3rd of September 2006. The Project Board, consisted of representatives from Municipality, the Syndicate, Institute for Protection of Monuments of Kosovo and CHwB continue to have regular

meetings in order to oversee the proceedings of the project. The Institute for Protection of Monuments in Prizren is overseeing the construction work on the site.

During September, the façade and interior plaster, as well as window frames have been removed. The upper parts of the walls have been reinforced, while the rotten timbers from roof construction are being replaced with new ones.

The yard design is being reviewed, in order to reach a more complete function in the aspect of public usage.



"Jeta" NGO actively engaged in promoting heritage

31 September

September has marked another month full of activities for "Jeta" NGO. Members of this NGO participated in "Cultural Heritage Days - Balkan Artisans Kosova" Fair, which was held in Prishtina from 16 - 20 September, as well as in the activities of the third week of "European Heritage Days 2006" in villages of Dranoc and Isniq.

On the invitation of Decan Municipality, "Jeta" NGO participated in debates on Cultural Heritage and on "Trafficking of Human Beings", both organized as a part of Youth Month activities.

"Jeta" NGO, in cooperation with the Kuwait Joint Committee in Prishtina, managed to provide food aid for 50 poor families in Decan municipality, which were distributed in the presence of representatives of this office in Decan.



CHwB publishes three reports on its projects and activities

31 September

CHwB Kosovo Office has published three reports on selected projects and activities, carried out in the past years. The published projects are from different fields of activities of CHwB in Kosovo and include a recent "Archaeological Map of the Historic Zone of Prizren", "EHD 2005 - Kosovar Wedding" and "Development of Isniq Village and Preservation of its Urban and Rural Identity". CHwB Kosovo Office will publish another three reports by the end of year 2006.

For more information or to obtain your copy of the reports, please contact CHwB Office in Prishtina.



"Kosovar Wedding" documentary premieres on national TV

31 September

"Kosovar Wedding" documentary, produced by CHwB in cooperation with RTV 21, premiered on this national TV and was also shown in the third week of EHD 2006 in Dranoc.

This documentary illustrates the Kosovar wedding, which was the theme of European Heritage Days 2005. The wedding itself, was performed last year by inhabitants of Isniq and Dranoc villages, in Decan municipality.

