

Beat: News

Protected Public Building Partly Demolished in Tirana, Government Remains Silent

Albania's main maternity hospital

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USPA NEWS - A protected building was partly demolished in central Tirana yesterday, raising concerns and anger among culture heritage activists, and amidst silence by the government and municipality.

The Queen Geraldine Maternity Hospital appeared partly demolished in early morning hours on Saturday. The demolition time remains officially unknown, as does the author and motives behind it.

Culture heritage activists posted photos of the demolished building in the early morning on Saturday, calling on the government to explain what had happened during the night and why.

The building is supposed to be under restoration by two companies "" Agikons BE-IS "" funded with €3.8 million in public money. Activists believe it was demolished during the ongoing restoration work.

Construction of the building was completed in the early ""40s, before WWII. It's included in the list of Class II buildings protected by law. For over 80 years it has been Albania's main maternity hospital and a landmark building on the main boulevard of Tirana.

A board outside the construction site provides the only information on the ongoing works: the names of companies, duration of works (36 months) and the funding for the project. It fails to include the basic information required by law: the authorities' decision for reconstruction, date for the start and end of works. The Albanian Union of Architects and Urban Planners, and the Forum for the Protection of Culture Heritage joined the dozens of architects and activists who denounced the demolition on social media, and the government silence. They compared it to the demolition of the National Theater, carried out by surprise during night hours, as well as dozens of old villas in the city, many of them protected by law, in order to open the way for construction of high rise buildings.

They condemned the lack of transparency and exclusion of professionals from the project.

On the second day after the demolition of parts of the building, neither the government nor the municipality have made any statement.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-18417/protected-public-building-partly-demolished-in-tirana-government-remains-silent.html>

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS

contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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