

The Cijevna River - A Punch for a Sucker

Let us take a look at this whole Cijevna river situation, that Albania is trying to make the Cijevna River a little mountain stream by building several hydroelectric power plants, from an opposite, counter-flow, perspective. I believe that there were be many faces in the Montenegrin government radiating with joy when they heard that Albania is planning or already building such hydroelectric power plants. It would serve as a perfect ready-made alibi and sufficient motivation for Montenegrin government for all its future endeavours related to such hydroelectric power plants, which will most definitely find their place on Morača, Bukovica and probably many more Montenegrin rivers.

Because what does the word “biodiversity” mean to Montenegrin ministers, deputy ministers, cultural workers and everyone else? Absolutely nothing. In fact, they do not give a damn about the Cijevna River. For them, it is a mere auxiliary river, which does not affect their projects. Their weekend houses were not built on the banks of the Cijevna River. They swim on the beaches of Prčanj and Miločer, enjoy the Queen’s beach, bask in the sun in front of the Splendid Hotel, or on the beaches of Sveti Stefan. Simply said, the Cijevna River is not so posh and not even up to their knees in its worth. As it seems, it will not be up to their knees even when it comes to its water level.

Montenegrin citizens themselves have other things to worry about. Some care about putting the food on the table for their families. Others seem to care only about how to suck up to those who are in power. From quite recently, the third group emerged — those who are in charge of snitching on their neighbours and who feel important because of this task. I am, in particular, referring to those who will denounce those who refuse to rise for the national anthem. Our level of consciousness is still at the level of the *Pirzio-Birolli* type of snitching, while ecology, biodiversity, waters and the Canyon are simply not the topics of interest for a common Montenegrin citizen. Not even for those who call themselves urban Montenegrins.

We should take a close look at the effect of the banner, which was put up by the sports fans saying that they would not give this river to anyone and how they would do so. Will they go to the Parliament building to empty a bucket of water on the responsible politician or will they remain the toothless fans running on batteries. The Cijevna River has been and will be the artery of Podgorica. It bears not only emotional connotation. It is essential to the ecology of this city, its citizens and those who manage the Plantations company who aspire to be our love brand number one along with the popular Čiča Gliša cookie and Nikšičko beer.

Will the citizens of the newly established Municipality of Tuzi, raise their voice? Some of them will, but the majority will be taken up with the petty grievances usually related to local burial sites and one’s right to be buried there.

So, Cijevna will be no more. It will be the beginning of a domino effect because all our efforts to keep our rivers intact will be doomed. Judging from the reactions of the citizens of Montenegro, especially those from the places in which mini-hydroelectric power plants are planned, the voices of the opponents went silent. Even the voices of those who claimed that they would protect the rivers with their lives. Probably they struck some kind of deal resembling the one which is often struck before the elections.

Montenegrin Prime Minister Duško said that he would discuss the issue with the representatives of the Albanian government as soon as they meet. Those who expect any results out of it are the same people from the old folk saying that one should not be fooled by empty promises.

The people will have to try to keep the memory of all the Captain plays all the cliff jumps, all the caves and rocks and try to dig up many photos they made while resting on the river banks because they need to be put on Facebook and Instagram. It is an ideal time for a digital lament and reaping the likes on social media because it seems that no one will do more than that. No one is able to do more than that.

For this particular reason, we bid you farewell, dear Cijevna. You will be remembered by your kindness and goodness.