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BiH State-related Issues

Human Rights chamber rules against arresting Zepce Croats indicted for war crimes?

Dnevni Avaz reports, quoting anonymous sources, that the BiH Human Rights Chamber made a ruling on October 29 prohibiting Zenica-Doboj Canton authorities from arresting 15 Zepce Croats charged with committing war crimes against Bosniaks in this area. The daily writes that this way, the Chamber met the request of the so-called Zepce Group who objected being detained by the Court in Zenica.

BiH Council of Ministers proposes that a bulk of succession funds be used for business loans

Onasa news agency reported that the BiH Council of Ministers proposed that the bulk of 153 million KM, the sum obtained through the succession deal with other successor states of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, should be used for loans to companies across BiH, and a part for the payment of debts towards the pensioners and disabled persons, BiH treasury Minister Ante Domazet announced on Wednesday. He told reporters that the BiH Council of Ministers at its session on Wednesday evening in Sarajevo defined a Bill of the purpose and use of the funds that BiH obtained under the Agreement on the succession of the assets of the former Yugoslavia and currently deposited in the Bank for International Settlements in Basel, Switzerland.

Croat caucuses in state, Federation House of Peoples push for bicameral parliament in both entities

The Croat caucuses in the BiH and the Federation Parliament's Houses of Peoples reasserted at a second joint meeting their stance on the need to establish bicameral parliaments in both BiH Entities in order to protect the vital national interests of all three constituent ethnic communities throughout BiH. According to a joint statement, which was carried by ONASA news agency, the Croat caucuses welcomed the positions of the Constitutional Commission of the BiH Federation Parliamentary House of Peoples and the efforts of the international community aiming at the establishment of a bicameral parliamentary set-up.

The participants of the meeting also voiced their dissatisfaction with the strengthening of the two parallel intelligence services of the BiH Federation, stressing that a Law on single Federation Intelligence Service needs to be passed in an urgent procedure.

RS official says Croatian proposal on border unacceptable

The deputy Speaker of the RS National Assembly, Zoran Djeric, said last night that the RS could not accept a Croatian proposal that the border crossing between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia in the Kostajnica area be located between the bridge across the Una River and the Unica River. In a statement to Banja-Luka based Alternative TV Djeric said that the Croatian proposal was not a compromise.

Secret Meeting of SDS and HDZ - Offensive from Pale Against Petritsch!?

Today's edition of Nezavisne Novine quotes anonymous source as saying that HDZ BiH and SDS top leaders, led by, unrecognised president of HDZ BiH, Ante Jelavic and the SDS top official and RS NA Speaker, Dragan Kalinic, held a "secret" meeting in Pale. The source could not provide more details about the meeting except that the leaderships of these two parties discussed joint engagement towards the international community, how are they going to act in the BiH Parliament and "freezing" of the current situation in the country, which suits both parties. The source told the daily that the meeting should come as a surprise because these two parties used to meet and cooperate in the past.

Federation

Bosniak, Croat intelligence agencies get new presidents, parties criticize appointment

All media in the Federation report that the BiH Presidency appointed Munir Alibabic as the new head of the Bosniak intelligence agency AID, while Ivica Vuksic was named the president of its Croat counterpart -SNS. Thus, two national intelligence services in the Federation were secured further existence despite the recent vigorous activity aimed at passing the Law on Single Intelligence Agency in the Federation. Sarajevo media note with resignation that the present authorities have done nothing to abolish parallel structures in certain segments of politics and society, including this one. Bosniak member of the Presidency conceded that this appointment was not necessary, however, he stressed that it was none the less done in order to foster a faster integration of the two existing services in the Federation.

Commenting on the appointments, vice president of the SDP, Ivo Komsic, said that the Presidency named two directors without any prior consultations with the Alliance. He stressed that this act of the Presidency further strengthens the parallel institutions in the entity and demanded that the appointments be annulled. Komsic said that this matter could cause a series rift in the Alliance.

Republika Srpska

Kotorsko residents protest in front of the OHR in Sarajevo

Oslobodjenje reported on its front page that dissatisfied returnees to Kotorsko near Doboj held on Wednesday a peaceful protest in front of the OHR building in Sarajevo objecting to the failure of RS authorities to comply with OHR decision to prohibit construction on socially-owned property. The daily reports that no agreement was reached yesterday between representatives of Kotorko returnees, local authorities and the OHR.

IS the RS Going to Get a New Parliamentary Majority - Ivanic Evicts SDS?!

Today's edition of Nezavisne Novine quotes an anonymous source close to the RS Government, as saying that at the last session of the RS Government, RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic told ministers that the latest developments in the RS National Assembly showed that he can no longer count on parliamentary majority. According to the source, Ivanic also said that, after 4-day trip to London, he would decide on personnel changes in some RS ministries. The paper stressed that SDS deputies did not adopt the Prime Minister's report on the implementation of the RS NA conclusions. During discussion in the RS NA many deputies criticised the work of the RS Government, the SDS deputies were in the forefront of this criticism. After the report had not been adopted, Prime Minister Ivanic said that he is not going to give in to the personal desires of SDS deputies even if this provokes a deeper crisis in the Government. The paper claims that political friction between SDS and PDP have reached its peak because of the Prime Minister's decisive stand not to remove general manager of the Modrica Oil Refinery, Milan Jelcic, which is something that the SDS, led by Dragan Kalinic, is insisting on. The source also says that this Prime Minister's decision caused a "state of emergency" in the SDS. The party leadership plans to set up a parallel power structure in the RS and the SDS is going to do it through SDS deputy ministers in some RS ministries. The source claims that Ivanic is considering the formation of a new government without SDS in it and he already discussed it with president of SNSD, Milorad Dodik.

Two Graffiti Supporting Bin Laden Appeared On a Serb House - Long Live Bin Laden

Both Banja Luka dailies report that two disturbing graffiti, supporting Osama bin Laden, appeared on the house of Ljubo Savic in Kotorsko where a settlement for Serb refugees is being built. The first graffiti says "Long Live Bin Laden" and the second one says: "Serbs, What are you waiting for?". Glas Srpski quotes Ljubo Savic, as saying that these graffiti have made all Serb refugees, who currently live in Kotorsko, very upset. "We informed Police Forces from Doboj about this and they carried out investigation.", said Savic. Representatives of Kotorsko asked the Police, the IPTF and the OHT to thoroughly investigate this case.

The Unemployed From Drvar Sent an Open Letter to Wolfgang Petritsch - Foreigner Takes Drvar Wealth

Today's edition of "Glas srpski" reports that the Association of unemployed from Drvar sent an open letter to the High Representative for BiH, Wolfgang Petritsch in which they express their discontent with privatization and employment policy in Drvar. The letter states that none of Serb returnees managed to find job in any of public and state-owned enterprises. The association also claims that only one man, a Croatian citizen, Marijan Filipovic, is the owner of 5 enterprises: "Grmec", "Jugoturbina", "Unis", "Progres" and "Jadran". The letter also states that thanks to an unfair privatization process, Filipovic managed to become the owner of these five enterprises.

Nikola Spiric Says Croatia Slows Down Returns

Both Banja Luka dailies quote Deputy Chairman of the House of Peoples, Nikola Spiric, as saying that the question of 35,000 Serbs from Croatia, currently living in the RS, is not only a problem of the RS but also a problem of BiH. He told a press conference in Sarajevo that problem of return in BiH cannot be completely resolved until the return of Serb refugees from Croatia is not resolved, since these people occupy property of Bosniaks and Croats in the RS. "The simplest solution is to enable Serbs from Croatia to repossess their property and to guarantee their human rights. I think that the deadline - 31 December this year, set by the Croatian Government, can be considered as violation of human rights.

Chief of RS Helsinki Human Rights Committee Says Serbs Do Not Have Basic Rights

Today's edition of "Glas srpski" quotes the head of the RS Helsinki Human Rights Committee, Branko Todorovic, as saying that the most flagrant violation of human rights on the territory of former Yugoslavia is happening in Croatia where Croatian citizens of Serb nationality do not have the right to repossess their pre-war flats. He told a news conference that, during the past two months, 90 persons reported they had been discriminated because of their ethnic background. Todorovic also says that approximately 50,000 people have problems with repossession of their property. The Helsinki Committee warns that Croatian judiciary commenced controversial processes against 4,600 returnees which also thwarts the process of refugee return.

International Community

Wolfgang Petritsch: High noon for reforms

In an interview with SENSE news agency, the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, said that September 11 is a date of great importance to BiH. On one side, stressed Petritsch, the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) Steering Board expressed its satisfaction with anti-terrorist measures taken by BiH authorities, but on the other, it stressed that BiH will face a drastic reduction of donation funds as a result of terrorist attacks on the US. "Therefore, the Council warned local authorities that it is high time to grasp the seriousness of the situation and continue implementing reforms," said Petritsch. He also noted that the PIC expects BiH to implement the Election Law in order to secure that the elections scheduled for next year pass smoothly. In addition, the PIC Steering Board members said that they are "quite irritated" by the way in which SDS is blocking reforms in the Republika Srpska. Petritsch stressed at the end that the main focus of this session of the Steering Board were the economic reforms. (This was the top story in Oslobođenje and Jutarnje Novine, while Dnevni Avaz and Nezavisne Novine carried excerpts from the Steering Board Communiqué)

Ted Galen Carpenter Says That BiH War-time Government Participated in Terrorism in BiH

Today's edition of Glas Srpski carries a SRAN interview that the Vice-chairman of the Cato Institute Department for Defiance and international studies, Ted Galen Carpenter, in which he said that BiH is probably a base of support to some terrorist operations and that the BiH war-time leadership in Sarajevo participated in terrorism. Carpenter said that the war-time leadership from Sarajevo periodically made a show of expelling a few suspicious people from the country, but in reality most of them stayed in BiH. "It is very difficult to establish a direct connection between the war-time leadership from Sarajevo and terrorists, but at least it can be said that they did many things that the Government of Saudi Arabia used to do, which practically means that the war-time leadership turned away while extremists were working on achieving their goals", says Carpenter and warns that this can be described as an active complicity in terrorism. Carpenter says that a terrorist threat has entrenched itself in the Balkans fairly well and everything happened NATO umbrella so that NATO allies have to give answers to some questions as well. Commenting on possible withdrawal of the US troops from the Balkans, Carpenter says that the US troops will gradually withdraw, first from BiH and then from Kosovo and that the EU countries, that are already involved in the region, should take over the US role in the Balkans. According to him, the Balkans mission will top the list for elimination and this can happen as soon as next year.

US Ambassador Clifford Bond arrives in Sarajevo

All media reported that the new US Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond, arrived on Wednesday in Sarajevo where he is to officially take up his duty.

OHR Anti-Fraud Department: Entity budgets suffer losses of hundreds of millions DM because of corruption

In a statement for the press, the OHR Anti-Fraud Department said that the entity budgets have suffered severe losses of hundreds of millions DM because of corruption and dubious and illegal handling of funds. (All Sarajevo media and Nezavisne Novine carried the [OHR press release](#) quite prominently)