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BiH State-related Issues

UN to initiate a probe into BiH passports issued during the war in BiH

In the wake of terrorist attacks in the US, a UN/IPTF spokesman for Banja Luka and Bihac region, Alun Roberts, said on Friday that the UN mission to BiH could initiate a probe into BiH passports issued to foreign citizens during the war in BiH. Roberts could not confirm the allegations that the world's most (in)famous terrorist probably responsible for the Tuesday attack on New York and Washington D.C., Osama bin Laden, or some of his followers held BiH passports. He also added that the UN mission in BiH cannot order the investigation, however, local officials from the Ministry of Civil Affairs and Communications conceded that the CIA, the FBI or the INTERPOL could do so.

The chairman of the commission in charge of revision of BiH citizenship, Bakir Dautbasic, told Dnevni Avaz that the commission has already analyzed the status of all Arabs with BiH passports. "We have concluded that none of them have ever been criminally charged or prosecuted," said Dautbasic, and added that most of those individuals were highly educated citizens. He strongly rejected the allegations that Bin Laden or any of his followers had BiH passport.

Zagreb's Vjesnik on Saturday carried an editorial on dodgy passports issued to suspected terrorists. Mehrez Audouni, one of closest associates of Osama bin Laden, was arrested in Istanbul in 1999 and at the time he held a BiH passport. The daily notes, reminding about the stories published in Sarajevo-based weekly "Dani" that ruffled plenty of feathers back then, that Osama bin Laden was issued a BiH passport by the BiH Embassy in Vienna in 1993 and says that all the traces of the issuance were destroyed.

BiH Islamic Community warns of anti-Muslim hysteria

The Head of the Islamic Community in BiH, Mustafa ef. Ceric, said on Sunday he is concerned about "the broadening anti-Islamic hysteria in the West after the terrorist attacks in the US." "I want to believe that this is a difficult test which Muslims must overcome. At the same time, this is even more important test for Christians and Jews," Ceric told the Independent Television, Studio 99.

Vladimir Bilic: International Community has not done enough on the transformation of electronic media in BiH

Speaking at the round table discussion organized by the Association of Intellectuals, Circle 99, former director of the RTV BiH, Vladimir Bilic, said that the International Community has done little or nothing to reconstruct the electronic media in BiH, despite the tremendous funds which were spent on this process. "How that (the new public service) what was envisioned two years ago (by the decision of the High Representative about transformation of public service) will function is not known, nor anyone has offered any concept," said Bilic, and added that the laws on PBS and the Federation TV need to be urgently adopted. Bilic's view was not widely shared among the participant of the circle, notes Oslobodjenje.

Deputy Speaker of the House of Peoples visits Mostar

Deputy Speaker in the House of Peoples in the BiH Parliament, Sejfudin Tokic, visited Mostar's Municipality Southwest where he met Head of the Municipality, Ivan Mandic. Councilors of the City Council and representatives of the Serb people also attended the meeting. Mandic informed Tokic on PLIP statistics in Mostar and told him that there were still parallel authorities in Mostar which reflects on the implementation of property laws. Mandic said that the return of minorities to the Croat Municipalities is better than the return to the Bosniak dominated Municipalities, reads Slobodna Dalmacija.

BiH Presidency to deliver transcripts of its war session to the ICTY

At a session on Friday, the BiH Presidency agreed, among other things, to hand over the transcripts of its war time sessions to The Hague. The sessions include all those held in the period 1990-1993 as well as those held by the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of BiH.

Oslobodjenje: Creation of the Joint Army would contribute to the stabilization of political situation in BiH

In a longer commentary in the Pogled section, Oslobođenje notes that biggest obstacles to the creation of the Joint BiH Army are certain provisions in the BiH Constitution. That is why, the daily notes, it is necessary that the BiH Parliamentary Assembly, in agreement with relevant international factors, makes needed corrections and revision of the Constitution. Such changes, the argument goes further, would help create necessary legal and political preconditions for the creation of the Joint Army. Oslobođenje commentator at the end notes that a joint army including young men of all three nationalities would just strengthen the concept of BiH as a civic and democratic state of three equal peoples peacefully co-existing.

Serb army will not be abolished - defence watchdog official

The chairman of the RS National Assembly commission in charge of monitoring the work of Defense and Interior Affairs institutions, Petar Djokic, said in Bijeljina on Sunday that the document entitled Defense Policy of Bosnia-Herzegovina did not envisage that the RS would abolish its own army. "On the contrary, the RS Army will continue to exist, along with its rights and competencies defined by the constitution," Djokic said. He announced that this document would be superseded by a new, wider and more comprehensive one, which will focus on "security policy", with the defence policy being just one aspect of the security policy.

Federation

SDP: Petritsch's final decision on Zepce is not wise or a good move

The Zenica-Doboj Cantonal board of the SDP said on Sunday that the intention of the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, to announce his final decision on Zepce is not wise or a good move. "There is a fear that the decision will usurp the human rights of one ethnic group at the expense of the other..." said the SDP in a statement. The party also asked the High Representative and the Zepce Supervisor Richard Williams to reconsider their decision and allow responsible institutions, i.e., the Federation Parliament to make a final ruling on this issue.

Meanwhile, the working group of the Federation Parliament's House of Representatives has completed its work related to the implementation and clauses of the decision and is to present its finding to the House on September 25th. Oslobođenje speculates that the group will ask for the postponement of the final decision and the eventual transfer of this discussion into the Federation Parliament. The daily also notes that deputies in the Fed Parliament's House of Representatives supported all parts of Petritsch's decision except for the one suggesting changes of municipal boundaries.

Party for BiH to reconsider its participation in the Alliance

The Secretary-General of the Party for BiH, Safet Halilovic, told Denvi Avaz that this party will reconsider its participation in the Alliance for change if the Federation government fails to order a financial audit in the Aluminij Mostar. He stressed that it is a high time that the Prime Minister Alija Behmen and the Federation government meet their obligations and adequately respond to the controversial audit report on this company.

Slobodna Dalmacija: The Stolac case will be solved soon (translation provided by OHR Mostar)

The conclusions, that the OHR, UNESCO, competent Cantonal Ministries and the RS Ministry of Education passed at the education and text books seminar which took place in February, 2000 in Sarajevo have been met. In short, the conclusions say that the Swiss model of parallel curricula will be applied in BiH. It should be mentioned that in all new textbooks, in the so-called Serb and Croat school systems, the contents that the OHR judged as possibly insulting for other peoples have been excluded. So far, we do not know in which way this problem has been solved in the so-called Bosniak school system, because the OHR Commission found many directly or indirectly insulting contents, although according to the latest information from the field these textbooks have not been withdrawn yet.

Also it is not possible to hold classes and use textbooks in Croatian language in the areas where Serbs or Bosniaks are a majority (except in the Catholic School Centers) as well as in BiH and the BiH Federation capital, while in the areas where the Croats are the majority the Serb and Bosniak children attend classes and use textbooks in their mother tongue, to a certain extent, and very often they share the same building with the Croat children.

There are indications that 'the Stolac case' will be solved successfully these days. It is not understandable as to why the competent ones within the IC and 'domestic' Cantonal and entity Ministries have been avoiding for a while to engage in a complete solving of this issue.

Republika Srpska

RS Prime Minister Ivanic visits Biljana Plavsic in Belgrade

Republika Srpska Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic visited on Sunday in Belgrade former RS president Biljana Plavsic, who was recently granted a permission for a temporary release by The Hague tribunal. A statement from the RS government said that Ivanic and Plavsic discussed the overall situation in the RS and the entity's relations with the tribunal. Plavsic will stay in Belgrade until the beginning of her trial, which is scheduled for early 2002.

RS PM's Advisor for Economic Relations Is Leaving Ivanic?

Weekend edition of "Nezavisne novine" quotes anonymous sources as saying that RS Prime Minister's Advisor for economic relations, Milica Bisic is not going to resign, nor will she continue being actively involved in resolving economic problems in the RS. According to the paper, Bisic will spend more time in Belgrade where she works as a professor at the School of Economics at the Belgrade University. Problems in the RS PM's team came as a surprise to members of Ivanic's Cabinet, sources say this is still not the end of the crisis in the RS government. There are many ministers in the RS Government who want to resign with a clear conscience. The paper learns from well-informed sources that RS Minister of Governance and Local Governance, Petar Kunic and RS Minister of Traffic and Telecommunications, Branko Dokic are also amongst the dissatisfied ministers.

RS Interior Ministry Submitted 448 Criminal Reports for Crimes Committed Against Serbs

Both Banja Luka dailies quotes Chief of the RS Ministry of Interior Criminal Department, Milorad Jelisavac as saying that this Ministry submitted 448 criminal reports for crimes committed against Serbs to the RS Public Prosecutor's Office. He says that the reports include 2,954 persons in total and there are no Serbs amongst them. According to Jelisavac the criminal reports are also forwarded to the ICTY investigators.

Banja Luka Mufti Has a Suspicious Past

Both Banja Luka dailies report that Banja Luka Association of Missing Persons' Families formed a commission to be in charge of investigating responsibility for crimes committed against Serbs. President of the Commission, Svetozar Nikodinovic says that the Commission will also investigate responsibility of the RS political and military leadership for making irresponsible decisions and assessments. "RS authorities are not interested in proving crimes committed against Serbs, which can be demonstrated with the fact that there are no Bosniaks and Croats in Scheveningen. All culprits must be punished regardless of their ethnic background", says Nikodinovic. He also said that the information was submitted about Banja Luka Mufti Camdzic's presence in Ozren and Tesanj war zones and added that "such a person does not deserve to be a citizen of Banja Luka."

Federation Army Officer Voluntarily Reported to RS Interior Ministry - Mehovic Says He Has Evidence For Crimes Committed Against Serbs

Both Banja Luka dailies report that the officer of the BiH Federation Army, Ibro Mehovic from Gorazde voluntarily reported to the RS Interior Ministry and said that he has evidence for crimes committed against Serbs in the eastern RS. "Mehovic voluntarily reported to the Police station in Rogatica and said that he does not want to return to the BiH Federation. Mehovic said that he has evidence for crimes committed against Serbs", says Jelisavac. Jelisavac also says that the ICTY investigators are interrogating Mehovic and that he is under their jurisdiction. Jelisavac denied reports from the Federation press that the RS Police illegally arrested Mehic.

Four students and teacher from BiH drown in Montenegro

Four students and a teacher from BiH drowned and one child is missing following a boating accident in southwestern Montenegro, Podgorica television reported on Sunday.

The accident happened when the party from Banja Luka's school "Petar Petrovic Njegos"

were enjoying a tourist boat ride not far from Budva. No details of how the tragedy occurred have been released, the television station said.

International Community

Montenegrin President Djukanovic denies Radovan Karadzic is hiding in Montenegro

In an interview with Dnevni Avaz, Montenegrin president Milo Djukanovic said that the former Bosnian Serb leader and the most high profile war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic is not in hiding in Montenegro. "I am familiar with this speculation, but it is just a lie. The security forces in Montenegro are capable enough to prevent people less known than Karadzic from entering the country without being noticed." Djukanovic added that the police were prepared to arrest everyone sought by the ICTY. "Montenegro will not be a sanctuary for such individuals," he said.

Council of Europe Secretary-General: Election Law brought BiH close to Europe

In a letter addressed to BiH public, the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Walter Schwimer, said the adoption of the Election Law brought BiH closer to Europe. "I, as a Secretary-General of the CoE, warmly welcome the adoption this law, as it gave a new impetus to the procedure of adoption of BiH into our organization," said Schwimer in the letter.

Dnevni Avaz: "BiH needs urgent reforms" Article by Wolfgang Petritsch

Deputy Assistant to the US Secretary of State visits BiH capital, discusses fight against terrorism

The chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, Zlatko Lagumdžija, met on Friday Deputy Assistant to the US Secretary of State Janet Bough. They discussed the future of BiH and its relations with the USA. After the talks, Lagumdžija said that the two discussed everything that could influence the relations between the two countries in the wake of the recent terrorist attacks in the USA. "All our activities are coordinated first and foremost with the common goal and desire in mind, as well as with specific actions of some state bodies of BiH with representatives of the international community and the US administration," said Lagumdžija.

Officials to visit to site of the UN Helicopter crash in memory of the killed

A memorial ceremony will be held on Monday near Fojnica to mark the fourth anniversary of the accident involving a UN helicopter during which 12 members of the international peace mission were killed. The ceremony will be attended by the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General Jacques Paul Klein, as well as diplomatic representatives of Germany, Poland, Great Britain and USA.

Editorials

***Slobodna Dalmacija*: Implement the Constitutional Court's decision on constituent status of all three peoples** (translation provided by OHR Mostar)

By Stjepan Ključić

Entity Authorities make this process as slow as possible, and the High Representative has not shown enough interest for this issue in spite of numerous public attacks. Amendments were published and opposing opinions appeared, but there are a few of those who want to advocate European democratic principles and their standards. BiH still does not have a Law on Ethnic Minorities. (...) If they make changes of the Entity Constitutions in a proper way and if they coordinate them with the BiH Constitutional Court decision, obviously both BiH entities would become multi-ethnic also in terms of Law. It is more than necessary to make it because they made an omission in

Dayton and due to this omission both entities did not get the House of Peoples, and for this reason their constitutional and legal equality has not been realized. During the process of forming of the Alliance for Changes, which had a great support of the IC, this problem was stressed as a prerequisite, and the HR formed the Entity Constitutional Commissions which have four representatives (of Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs and 'others' respectively). The HR confirmed that this is only an interim phase in the implementation of the BiH Constitutional Court decision. (...) By the implementation of the BiH Constitutional Court decision, BiH, the Federation and especially the RS would be made multi-ethnic. If both entities were made multi-ethnic, in which constitutive peoples would be truly equal, than the rotation-system would be applied in the same way as it is applied in the joint BiH institutions, such as the Presidency, the Council of Ministers, the Constitutional Court and both Parliaments- the House of Representatives and the House of Peoples.

This is the first and basic step when the implementation of the Constitutional Court decision is in question.

Vecernji List: CIA and FBI have the mandate to capture suspects in BiH (provided by OHR Mostar)

Written by Zdenko Jurilj

If the US attacks Afghanistan, the BiH authorities are ready to prevent persons from high-risk Islamic countries of Middle East from entering the country. While the next move of the US Administration in Middle East is being expected with great attention, the BiH Presidency is seriously considering the introduction of the aforementioned restriction. International organisations in BiH have insisted for a number of times already that the BiH authorities pass a similar decision. Croatia and Yugoslavia could as well undertake restrictive border measures for persons from Middle East countries.

According to Jozo Krizanovic, the Chair of the BiH Presidency, the announced security measures will be discussed in detail at a joint meeting which is supposed to be held in Banja Luka some time this week.

Vecernji List found out from well-informed sources in the BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the US Administration and secret services were informed two days after the terrorist attacks on Washington and New York that they should feel free to conduct an investigation in BiH and possibly identify the suspects or perhaps even the perpetrators.

A Vecernji List source said they expressed their sympathies in their letter to President Bush and told him that the FBI and CIA investigators can conduct an investigation in our country should there be any indications that the terrorist act was in any way related to BiH. "Pursuant to this agreement, their investigators will be handed all the related documentation with the names of the persons who have acquired the status of BiH citizen since 1992. Citizenship documentation does exist and on the state level," said the source.

According to this memo, CIA or FBI agents have the mandate to conduct an investigation or instruct the domestic police to have a suspect arrested immediately. A number of agents of the US intelligence and police services have allegedly already arrived in Sarajevo due to some earlier findings about Islamic terrorists with the BiH passport.

The State Border Service, border crossing police and airports have received special instructions for strict security measures to be undertaken. A group of experts from Great Britain arrived in BiH almost simultaneously with the attack on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. They have the mandate to improve security measures in order to prevent illegal immigrants from entering BiH.

Vecernji List: Ante Jelavic before Cantonal Court in Sarajevo again today (provided by OHR Mostar)

Written by Zoran Kresic

Vecernji List reports that the dismissed HDZ president Ante Jelavic is to testify before the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo on Monday. Jelavic's first appearance before the Court reinforced the resistance of Croats in BiH to the authorities in Sarajevo who seek to centralize the power, reads the article.

"Although the possibility of prosecution and arrest is not ruled out, it is believed that common sense will prevail, and common sense certainly does not entail a trial of political ideas and the legitimate leaders of one people. Observers believe the global perspective, especially having in mind the blood and destruction in the USA, could be useful to the HNS leaders. One should not forget that the proceedings against Jelavic are a part of the political process devised by a part of the International Community and the Bosniak authorities. To comprehend the

situation, it is important to say that the latest report of the CIA speaks of BiH as one of the 34 countries where the network of the ever so prospective NATO target, Osama bin Laden, is developed.

Therefore, BiH, or the Bosniak part of it, is seen from an entirely different perspective in public. Under such circumstances, the HNS leaders, strengthened by the Cardinal Puljic and Bishop Peric's US Congress testimonies about 'Croat Catholics being endangered,' could, in a swift turnabout, turn potential defendants or political dissidents into winners and Croats into a political people," reads Vecernji List.