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BiH State-related Issues

Haris Silajdzic initiated dialogue about the restructuring of the state

Dnevni Avaz reports that highest political circles in BiH have been, in the past few months, engaged in a dialogue about the restructuring of the state, and which has been initiated by Haris Silajdzic, the president of the Party for BiH. An anonymous source taking part in those discussions told Avaz that all proposals for internal structure of BiH are being treated equally, but stressed that participants will make a final decision. The same source also said that

politicians and intellectuals from both entities are taking part in these discussions and their goal is to achieve a consensus on the future structure of BiH state.

Standing Committee on Military Matters holds session in Sarajevo

Standing Committee on Military Matters (SCMM) held a session yesterday in Sarajevo and adopted the report on the work of BiH military-diplomatic representatives abroad. At yesterday's session, the Committee also discussed the reduction of military potential in both RS and the Federation as well as reconstruction of BiH armed forces.

BiH Council of Ministers discussed the BiH accession to the Council of Europe

The BiH Council of Ministers adopted on Thursday a report on the accession of BiH to the Council of Europe and concluded that the activities pertaining to the accession should be accelerated. In a statement for the press, the Council said it is expected that the BiH admission to the Council of Europe will be discussed already in December. "We are working through diplomatic channels to have this issue included in the CoE Assembly Agenda which is scheduled for the next month in Georgia," said Svetozar Mihajlovic, the Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications.

Delegate to BiH Parliament killed in a car accident

Three persons, including a delegate in the BiH Parliament's House of Representatives, Nedžad Sasivarevic, were killed on Thursday night in a car crash in the Korovi village on the highway Srbac – Derventa, investigating judge of the Srbac's Basic Court Miodrag Bajic told ONASA. Sasivarevic, Mustafa Abdurahmanovic and Fadil Arnautovic from Sarajevo, were killed when their vehicle collided head-on with a truck.

Representatives Of State Border Services of BiH and FRY Met

Glas srpski and Nezavisne novine report on the meeting between BiH and FRY Border Services held in Bijeljina yesterday.

Tomislav Mihalj, President of BiH SBS said that a high level of harmonization on managing of border crossing was reached during this meeting. "In cooperation with SFOR and the international Police, SBS got information that between BiH and neighboring countries, FRY and Republic of Croatia, there were 442 potential border crossings", said Mihalj and added that the highest priority was closing down of illegal crossings as well as to provide qualitative traffic of people and goods.

Federation

Ante Jelavic expects the legal process against him to be terminated

In an interview with the Oscar C Television in Mostar, the dismissed HDZ president Ante Jelavic said he expected the legal proceeding against him and six of his party colleagues to be terminated. He reiterated that the proceedings in question are flawed and added that the Cantonal Prosecutor had given up arresting him because he "was well aware of the consequences." He stressed that his appearance before the Court was a clear indication that he respects and recognizes BiH institutions. "However, I do not recognize this protectorate," said Jelavic.

HNS officials waited to see the outcome of the hearing of Ante Jelavic - Political showdown with legal Croat representatives in BiH to be stopped

Almost all of the HDZ and HNS (Croat National Assembly) leadership members were waiting for the end of the hearing of Ante Jelavic in front of the Cantonal Court building in Sarajevo to see what the outcome would be. They all think that the process against Jelavic and the other HNS leaders is a result of a political showdown with the legal representatives of the Croat people in BiH, reads Slobodna Dalmacija.

Marko Tokic, the dismissed HDZ Vice President and the HNS President, said: "In the wake of this sort of political and economic violence against Croats in BiH, what I think is ahead of us is a long struggle for truth and justice."

HDZ Vice President Martin Raguz stated: "Not a single HNS document questions the integrity of BiH. Therefore, if the Court works independently, the case will be solved very quickly and easily."

Petar Milic, the founder of the Croat Christian Democrats, blamed the High Representative for the process and said he is the last communist dictator in Europe.

Josip Muselimovic, the attorney of Ante Jelavic, after the hearing at the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo – Jelavic demands the Court not to be in the function of political showdown

In an interview for Slobodna Dalmacija, Josip Muselimovic, the attorney of Ante Jelavic, stated that he informed the Bar Associations of Herzeg-Bosnia and the Republic of Croatia, as well as the International Union of Lawyers to pay attention to the course of the Jelavic hearing to make sure the defense develops in accordance with the law. He also informed of the hearing the BiH and Federation Ombudspersons, the Helsinki Committees in Sarajevo and Zagreb and the British Helsinki Committee in London.

"It is tragic that the High Representative has claimed the right to intervene and decide which of the courts has jurisdiction for respective cases. It was by this very principle that this case ended up at the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo. Indeed, he passed a special decision, under which all the cases related to the Croat self-rule, Hercegovacka Banka and some terrorist acts are transferred to the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo. Since the Supreme Court of BiH and the Constitutional Court of the Federation made different decisions, we invoked Article 22 of the Law on Criminal Proceedings and requested that the Court in Sarajevo be declared locally unauthorised for this case," said Muselimovic. He expects the other suspects to follow the example.

In answer to the question who exactly insisted on prosecuting Jelavic, Muselimovic said that representatives of the International Community and some judicial officials did not want the criminal proceedings against Jelavic to be instituted because they were aware that there were no implications of criminal act in the case. According to Muselimovic, the Prosecutor's Office "gave in," following persistent pressures from certain persons of the Ministry of Interior, and filed criminal charges with the Federation Prosecutor's Office and the latter then referred it to the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo. Muselimovic does not want to reveal the names of the persons who insisted on the prosecution against Jelavic.

Mariofil Ljubic: Equality for Croats is a prerequisite for a prosperous BiH

Commenting on the meeting of all Croat parties at Scit, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliament, Mariofil Ljubic, said that it was agreed to continue talks with other parties with the Croat prefix, as well as with the institutions that care about the interests and equality of the Croats. "It is a prerequisite for progress. There are a few chapters we are not happy with. It is the first amendment that changes the essence of BiH, they want to turn it into a civil entity. If that is to be accepted, it will change the essence of the Dayton Agreement", says Ljubic.

He also expects that all the Croat politicians from the Coordination and the ruling coalition will show up at future meetings. "I am happy to see that the Catholic Church is interested in the problem. They hope that the political leaders will realize how serious the situation is, rise above their political interests and finally comprehend what this is all about", said Ljubic, reads Vecernji List.

Vladimir Soljic on the meeting at the Rama's House of Peace: Croat Coordination did not condition their arrival by abolishment of Herzeg-Bosnia

The objective of the meeting at Rama's House of Peace was to reach an all-Croat consensus of the political parties in BiH. But it did not happen. The member parties of the Croat Coordination conditioned their arrival by the HDZ returning to institutions of authority, reads Vecernji List.

The man who organized the meeting, President of the Croat Community of Herzeg-Bosnia (CCHB), Vladimir Soljic, deems the request as legitimate. Soljic denied the allegations that the Coordination conditioned their arrival by abolishment of the CCHB. "It is not true. Besides that, Zubak and Prlic are in the CCHB leadership. The only thing that is true is that we discussed that it would be good to change the name of CCHB," said Soljic. He hopes to see members of the Croat Coordination at the next meeting, says Vecernji List.

Mayor Tomic ousted from the party

Vecernji List learned from unofficial sources that the Court of Honour of the HDZ City Board of Mostar has ousted Neven Tomic, the Mayor of Mostar, from the party. According to the Statute of the HDZ BiH, Tomic has the right to file an appeal. Outside of the formal reasons stated, the party reproaches Tomic for his close liaison with Jadranko Prlic and the International Community. Because of that, the City Board made decisions to oust Tomic many times before, but this time it seems to be definitive. It is clear that the HDZ will request Tomic to vacate the Mayor's office, so that they can nominate another person in his place, but representatives of other parties will have the final say on that issue. Judging by the previous experience, the HDZ's motion will not go through much too easy.

Party for BiH: Aluminij report shows numerous irregularities, but stresses that nothing should rectify them

In a shorter interview with Dnevni Avaz, Safet Halilovic, secretary of the Party for BiH, said that recommendations in the audit report on Aluminij Factory in Mostar are work of only one person – the team leader Wim Timmermans. Halilovic also said OHR supervisory board has taken part in the actual legal audit, and asked the OHR to finally say whether it stand behind the results of the report or not.

Mijo Brajkovic: There has been no robbery in Aluminij

The General Manager of Aluminij Factory in Mostar, Mijo Brajkovic, rejected the allegations of media and political parties from Sarajevo that a robbery took place during privatization of his company. Brajkovic also told Dnevni Avaz that he received a copy of the audit report and added that its results are positive for him and Aluminij. Brajkovic said he would oppose any financial audit of the company and announced that Aluminij will most likely employ 1,000 additional workers in the near future.

Privatisation of the Zenica Steel Company develops in the shadow of the Aluminium Factory in Mostar – State officials are not interested too much in the situation in the Steelworks Company

Written by Ivica Milesic

Slobodna Dalmacija reads that the co-capitalisation and privatisation process in the Steel Company in Zenica is developing unnoticed, without any pomp and away from the eyes of the public, as opposed to the Aluminijum case.

The impression is that very few people are interested in the privatisation of the company or the destiny of its 2,000 employees who could end up in the street, says the daily.

"A thing of particular concern is the meager engagement of the Federation officials and the absence of partisan interest in the process of privatisation and co-capitalisation in the Zenica Company, which is not the case with the Aluminijum Mostar," reads the article.

The author further explains that the Kuwaiti Investment Agency (KIA) invested 50 million \$ in the process of co-capitalisation of the Steel Company and promised to provide around a 100 million \$ more for the start-up of the so called integral production that would provide for full-time employment of around 6,000 people, but eventually, nothing came out of it.

The article reads that the privatisation process in the Steel Company is developing in secrecy, but still, some details have leaked, such as that the first co-capitalisation stage will leave a thousand employees jobless. Because of that, the Company management received a green light to secure a fresh capital in the new round of the so called small-scale privatisation process, which implies a sale of the property that is not essential for the Company's basic activities. The capital acquired in this way would be used for taking care of the employees who are facing dismissal.

Interview with Miroslav Tudjman, President of HIP (Croatian True Revival) – The interview is finished!

To the question of whether he is afraid of the ICTY following the publishing of a media article alleging that his name is on the list of people that the Tribunal is interested in, and in the context of the establishment of prison camps for Bosniaks in Herzegovina, Miroslav Tudjman, the President of Croatian True Revival (HIP) asked the Slobodna Dalmacija interviewer to turn off the tape recorder so that they could discuss what sort of interview it would be.

Miroslav Tudjman, a son of the late Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, claims to have only taken his father's personal documents from the presidential office, and that he took no transcripts or intelligence service reports that

would incriminate the late President.

Since Miroslav Tadjman was the Chief of the HIS (Croatian Intelligence Service) at the time in question, the interviewer asked him who is responsible for the prison camps in Herzeg-Bosnia and if the Croatian State leadership initiated the whole project. Tadjman replied that the HIS never dealt with the prison camps in Herzegovina and that the conflict between Croats and Muslims was not initiated from Croatia. Instead, he said, Croatia did its best to end the conflict, which resulted in the signing of the Washington Agreement.

Since the interviewer insisted on the question of prison camps, Tadjman suggested that the interview be stopped because he was under the impression that the journalist was provoking him. At length, he said: "If you speak about prison camps and victims, you have to speak about all victims so as to show the real truth. You are not interested in that, it is evident from your questions and the articles published in your paper. This interview is finished!"

Vecernji List: Federation and Cantonal Ministers can expect criminal charges after an audit of the expenditure of budget funds of the Federation, Republic of Srpska and Cantons (provided by OHR Mostar)

Written by Zdenko Jurilj

Because of 74 registered cases of serious corruption that have been committed at the Federation level in Cantons 7, 8 and 10, the Federation Prosecution Office will, together with the OHR and the Federation Ministry of Interior, take the matters to court, reads Vecernji List. This was agreed two days ago at a meeting between an auditing team of the OHR and Federation authorities.

The audit of the expenditure of the Federation, Cantonal and the RS budget funds that covered a three-month period was conducted by auditors of the OHR together with expert teams of the OSCE Mission to BiH.

The final report, which will probably be unpleasant for some politicians, registers serious violations of the law on expenditure of taxpayers' money. The audit, containing 120 pages, mentions specific names of companies that got funds unlawfully, as well as Ministries at Federation and Canton level that have remitted the money (...)

Just to illustrate how the money from budget reserves was spent, we will mention a datum that an unnamed private tennis club illegally received 100,000 DEM, says Vecernji List. The same amount was given to "Merhamet" of Tuzla, and the audit reads that "Soko" company of Mostar received two payments worth 700,000 DEM. The audit also mentions Elektroprivreda BiH, Air Bosnia from the Bicakcic-Covic times, as well as "Sokol bus" and "Lijanovici" (...)

Cantons 7, 8 and 10 are criticized for illegal purchase of "Hercegovacka Banka" shares. The auditing team of the OHR has allegedly detected some negative findings related to the financing of the Croat Community of Herzeg-Bosnia, subventions of the University of Mostar, Pension Fund and the Centre for Legal Aid (...)

When it comes to the Herzeg-Bosnia Canton (C 10), the auditing team has detected suspicious financial transactions in the Elektroprivreda of CR HB (power utility company), subventions to "Lijanovic" company etc. (...)

The daily says yesterday they were told by the OHR Spokesperson Patrik Volf that the goal of the audit was not to detect illegal actions but to improve the control of the system with a special focus on finances, as well as the control of payments. He confirmed that it was now up to the institutions of the Federation Government to take all suspicious actions to court and process them. According to Mr. Volf, other organizations will also be involved in the process, including the Financial Police, Customs Administration, Privatization Administration, the Federation Ministry of Interior and the Federation Prosecutor's Office, reads Vecernji List.

Republika Srpska

RS Government Held Session Yesterday

Both, Glas srpski and Nezavisne novine report on the session of the RS Government which was held in Banja Luka

yesterday.

The government adopted the report on work of Department for Relations with the ICTY in Hague for the last four months and it reached a decision to establish coordination body for investigating crimes against Serbs. In the work report of the Department, the dailies carry, 17 files from the court in Trebinje, against Bosniaks and 1 from the court in Dobo, against a Croat, were forwarder to the Hague.

The government has also decided to open a tender for construction of gas supply system from Zvornik to Novi Grad/Bosanski Novi. The tender, which would begin in 30 days foresees process to gas-supplying system construction to be finished in 30 months.

International Community

OHR suspends waiver concerning construction of house at Kotorsko

The OHR yesterday announced the suspension of the December 2000 waiver concerning construction of houses at Kotorsko. The suspension of this waiver means that all construction work on land affected by this waiver must cease. (All Federation media carry the PR, however not very prominently)

BiH Director of the World Bank urges acceleration of tempo of economic changes in BiH

Country Director of the World Bank for BiH, Christian Poortman, said on Thursday that the continuation of the WB assistance to BiH will be contingent on the progress in the creation of a common economic space, the implementation of economic reforms, and the development of the private sector. Poortman stressed that the results in these spheres in the previous three-year period will determine the level of financial means BiH will receive in the next three years. He added, however, that the level of financial aid to the country will steadily decline, although the WB officials still cannot estimate when BiH could become self-sustainable. Poortman also informed representatives of local authorities that the tempo of economic changes must be accelerated and that the WB will be a partner in this process. "However, our assistance will largely depend on the pace of these changes," Poortman said yesterday in Sarajevo.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Interview with the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch

Today's issue of Slobodna Dalmacija carries an interview with the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, who talks about his role in BiH, Hercegovacka Banka and other burning political issues in BiH.

The ICTY grant a temporary release to Biljana Plavsic

All media in BiH write on Friday about the decision of The Hague Tribunal to grant a temporary release to the former Republika Srpska President Biljana Plavsic and allow her to stay in Belgrade until the beginning of her trial next year.

On the occasion of departure of Plavsic from Scheveningen to Belgrade, an author of the text in the Sarajevo daily Oslobođenje is trying to find the reasons because of which Plavsic's stay in Belgrade has been allowed. The Banja Luka daily Nezavisne Novine published an interview with Serbian Minister of Justice Vladan Batic, who has given guarantees to the Hague Tribunal in replacement for the permission for Plavsic's stay in The Hague. "Biljana Plavsic was always a support to us in Serbia during the difficult period when we were the opposition. It was our turn to react in this way, regarding the fact that she is an elderly woman and that there is no reason for her stay in Scheveningen," Batic told the daily Nezavisne Novine.

Bills of indictment for the crimes in Croatia and BiH on October 1

Carla Del Ponte, the ICTY Chief Prosecutor, will issue two more bills of indictment against the former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic on October 1, 2001, reports Jutarnji List. These indictment bills refer to the crimes committed in Croatia and BiH. The indictment referring to the war crimes committed in BiH charges Milosevic with genocide, stated Florence Hartmann, the Spokesperson of the ICTY Chief Prosecutor.

However, she did not want to say whether the bill of indictment for the crimes committed in Croatia would charge Milosevic with genocide. She said that due to difficult conditions of the investigation during the time of the former Croatian authorities and due to the refusal of the Serbian authorities to cooperate, it was impossible to collect elements and evidence for the bills of indictment for the crimes committed in BiH and Croatia earlier.