

OHR Local News Issues, 09 February 1997

The central event in BiH today was the celebration of Ramazan Bajram. BiH TV devoted 15 minutes of its program to the various Bajram celebrations beginning with the religious events in the mosques of Sarajevo and other larger BiH towns, and ending at the reception for the diplomatic representatives and the high BiH political, diplomatic and cultural officials and organizations.

Addressing believers who attended sermons in mosques as well as the wider audience, the religious officials, besides delivering religious wishes, prayed for the refugees return to their homes and for a life in peace and freedom in general.

The ordinary people visited graves of their late relatives today, and according to custom, paid visits to their neighbors and friends.

The Bajram celebration will be continued tomorrow and Tuesday. The second day of Bajram is being devoted to the memories of soldiers fallen in the war.

A delegation of the Rijaset's Islamic Community is paying a visit to the Moslems in Banja Luka and their mufti Ibrahim effendi Halilovic.

Reis - ul Ulema Dr. Cerić received a large number of congratulations, which were sent both to him and the people of BiH. (A list of congratulations were read).

A high Rijaset delegation headed by Reis - ul Ulema will visit the graveyard at Kovaci tomorrow - the day of fallen soldiers - and pray for their shehids' souls. A reception for the shehid's families will follow at Rijaset.

A home for old and helpless has been opened in the Eastern part of Mostar. Some 60 people have found their home there.

Summary SRT News

Banja Luka - RS spent a lot of time and energy to persuade international factors that Brcko should stay within the RS state borders. The RS state delegation headed by Vice-president Mirjanic came back from Washington today. Prior to the evening news, Mirjanic expressed his hope that Arbitration Tribunal would not make decision which would cause chaos and destabilisation, but which would be in accordance with the DPA. Mr. Owen, the international arbiter for the Brcko issue, will meet local arbiters next week, whereas the final decision on Brcko will be given on next Saturday.

Drakulic (village near Banja Luka) - every year, on Feb. 9, Serbs from Banja Luka region mourn for the victims of the most horrible ustashi massacre of Serb population in the World War II. During the communist regime, Serbs were not allowed to hold masses in remembrance of this crime, but now in the new Serb state Serbs and their leadership pray every year on this occasion. Anto Pavelic's criminals slaughter 2370 civilians (550 children) on this day 55 years ago. They gathered them on one spot and killed them with axes and picks, motivated by the alleged disloyalty of Serbs to the NDH state. The genocide was not carried out by unruly gangs, but systematically. Plavsic's letter, read out by professor Teodor Brkovic, before the gathering, said: 'Have we learned anything from the history, or we shall allow them again to 'Catholicised us' and make us 'Godless.'

4:00

The Greek paper Elefteros Tipos reports that former Spanish prime minister Felipe Gonsales will replace HR Bildt this spring. Gonsales will take over Bildt's position in most critical post-war period for Bosnia (referring to the Brcko arbitration decision and forthcoming local elections).

World News: Mostar - Project of the Muslim-Croat Federation has again reached its critical point. Therefore, the urgent meeting of the two leading HDZ and SDA parties should be convened. HDZ considers the Federation to be

a 'beast of the national territories' while Muslims consider it to be the Federation of cantons. The SFOR increased its patrols, after several explosions happened in the west Mostar. SFOR thinks that it was a Muslim revenge for those expelled from west Mostar by Croats, whereas Mostar mayor Ivan Prskalo said that if SFOR doesn't stop the uncontrolled acts of Muslims, the Croats would. The world peace keepers remain silent on the terror in Mostar. That science presents support and approval of Muslim terrorism, Croat radio reports, quoting Mostar mayor. 2:00 HAM Radio repeater has been installed in Kozara mountain. The Radio will help broadcasting the truth about the RS. The HAM radio broadcast was temporarily stopped during the NATO bombing, when large part of the RS emission equipment was destroyed.

1:00