

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 2/12/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Defence law passed	HoR passes Defence Law	HoR passed Defence Law	NATO on SFOR
Mostar Aluminium	SFOR reduces troops	CoM session	HoR passes Defence Law
	AIDS Day	NATO on SFOR mission	
	New clashes in Iraq	Mostar Aluminium	

Oslobodjenje	Tihic asking for assistance to the Hague volunteers
Dnevni Avaz	Who will be fired from the FBiH Army?
Dnevni List	"Sanader's visit to Herzegovina announced"; "Possible audit of funds invested in Old Bridge"
Vecernji List	"HVO pensioners will paralyse BiH"; "To organize Mostar like Bugojno"
Slobodna Dalmacija	" 'Aluminij' starts process of shutting down"; "130 witnesses charges BiH Army officers with crimes"
Glas Srpske	How do Republika Srpska citizens take loans: To Zagreb for a loan
Nezavisne Novine	BiH HoR adopted Defence Law: BiH Army established; NATO session in Brussels: Only 7000 SFOR soldiers to remain in BiH
Blic	RS Defense: No money for professionals; Electricity to refugees after snow; Gas station near Modrica robbed for the sixth time

Defence	
BiH HoR adopted draft defence law	Croat Radio Herceg Bosna, BHTV, FTV, RTRS, Oslobodjenje pg. 6, mentioned on the front page 'Defence Law adopted', Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 'State defence law passed', FENA - The BiH House of Representatives adopted the BiH Law on Defence at its session in Sarajevo on Monday. The law was passed in the same text by the BiH House of Peoples on Saturday. Twenty nine parliamentarians vote for while six of them from the RS were against the draft. Dnevni List (page 3, "Speaker Spiric against Law", by <u>Renata Radic</u>), Slobodna Dalmacija (last page, "First step towards Partnership for Peace", by <u>Zdenko Rerig</u>), Vecernji list (page 2, "Law on Defence adopted yesterday", by <u>Eldina Medunjanin</u>), Vjesnik (p 2, "BiH: House of Representatives accepted Law on Defence", by <u>Hina</u>), Nezavisne Novine, cover and pg. 3, 'BiH Army established'; Glas Srpske, pg. 3, 'Before the door of PpP', Vecernje Novosti, p 6, 'Obligatory conscription' also reported on the session.
Ashdown on passage of Defence Law	Croat Radio Herceg Bosna, BHTV, RTRS, Oslobodjenje pg. 6 'Historic event for BiH', Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 'A concrete evidence of BiH seriousness given to NATO Ministers', Dnevni List, Nezavisne Novine - "The word historic is often over-used. But BiH made history today when it passed the state law on defence. This law puts in place the state level defence structures that are essential if BiH is to become a credible candidate for NATO's Partnership for Peace. Despite the petty party politics on display when Lord Robertson was in Sarajevo last week, NATO's defence ministers will now have concrete evidence when they meet later this week that BiH is serious about joining PpP and NATO. This matters to every person in this country: membership of PpP and one day NATO offers the citizens of this country the best chance of long-term peace and security," said High Representative Paddy Ashdown commenting on the passage of the BiH Defence Law on Monday.

FBiH HoR adopted defence-related amendments to the Entity Constitution	Croat Radio Herceg Bosna, BHTV, FTV, Oslobođenje pg. 6 'Amendments to the FBiH Constitution adopted', Dnevni Avaz pg. 8, Dnevni List page 4, "6 amendments to Constitution adopted", by Fena. FENA – At its session in Sarajevo on Monday, the FBiH House of Representatives adopted six amendments to the FBiH Constitution, which refer to reforms in the defence sector in BiH. The amendments are aimed at transferring defence authorities from the entity to the state level. In order to become valid, the amendments should be confirmed in the same text by the FBiH House of Peoples at its session scheduled for Wednesday.
NN editorial on defence by Tarik Sadovic	Nezavisne Novine, editorial pg. 7 by Tarik Sadovic, 'For whom the bell tolls' – In the op-ed, Sadovic writes about the defence reform. He stresses that the issue on possible demilitarisation marked this reform more than any other debate on issues like hymn, coat-of-arms and insignia did. However, he is of the view that demilitarisation would not resolve anything nor would it be smart to carry out, bearing in mind surrounding we are living in. he thinks that only political idealists see demilitarisation as a solution. He concludes the article by saying that if BiH becomes a serious candidate for admission into NATO by 2007, local officials may consider the possibility of complete professionalisation of BiH armed troops without drafted composition.
Dodik on defence law	Nezavisne Novine, pg. 4, 'Dodik: Republika Srpska Army no longer exists' – In a programme of NES Radio in Banjaluka yesterday, Milorad Dodik, SNSD President, stated that the adoption of the BiH Defence Law yesterday by HOR marks the end of Republika Srpska Army. He claims he would persist in his campaign against conscription.
Blic on defence reform, recruitment	Blic, p 13, 'No money for professionals' – Amendments to the RS Constitution have been adopted, yet nobody knows for sure whether the conscription would be preserved in the new defense system. As in accordance with the amendments, the Army will be composed out of a professional and reserve task force, yet the BiH Law on Defense, which was adopted yesterday, foresees the conscription and serving of military service. Changes and amendments to the RS Law on Defense and RS Law on Army will follow and these, should they foresee the conscription, would be contradictory to the RS Constitution. On the other hand, should these abolish the conscription, it would negate the BiH Constitution and the state law on Defense. The Spokesperson of the RS Ministry of Defense, Branko Trkulja, has stated that there are no conditions in the RS to transfer to a professional defense system, since this is exclusively a characteristic of countries with a good standard. Blic, p 13, 'OHR will not interfere' – OHR Spokesperson Sonja Pastuovic claims that OHR does not intend to get involved in the issue of the conscription to the RS Army, since this does not affect BiH's application to PfP. "There is no need for OHR to intervene, because the High Representative believes that the authority will succeed in making an agreement", Pastuovic said. Blic, p 13, 'Barasin: Scandalous' – Military-political analyst and DNS Spokesperson Ostoja Barasin assessed the amendments to the RS Constitution in field of defense and army as scandalous. 'The representatives have adopted the amendments, yet nobody knows for sure what was adopted. Some claim there will be no conscription, while others claim that serving of military service in the RS will continue', he stated yesterday at a press conference. At the same time, the DNS party President, Marko Pavic, said that no country has accepted the admission to NATO without a referendum, i.e. without consulting the citizens. He also assessed that by not doing this, the ruling coalition had 'violated freedoms and human rights'.

NATO reducing SFOR troops number	BHTV, FTV, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 '5,000 SFOR soldiers to leave BiH by next March,' FENA - On Monday NATO defence ministers reached an agreement on reducing the number of members of the Stabilisation Forces (SFOR) in BiH from 12.000 to 7.000 till March 2004, it was announced by an official source. "This is a good decision. It was reached because the situation in BiH has significantly changed", said a NATO official, who wished to remain anonymous, AFP reported. "Seven thousand soldiers are adequate forces for reaction if necessary", he added, stressing that the security problems in BiH are more of police, than military nature, for instance the problematic of organised crime. Dnevni List (page 3, "NATO decreases SFOR forces in BiH", by <u>Fena</u>), Vecernji List (page 3, "BiH in windswept area between Europe and the U.S.", by <u>f</u>), Jutarnji List (page 10, "NATO cuts forces in BiH by half", by <u>A. Palokaj</u>), Nezavisne Novine, cover and pg. 2, 'Only 7000 SFOR soldiers to remain in BiH'; Glas Srpske, pg. 2, 'Less soldiers in spring', Blic, p 13 also covered the issue.
Dnevni Avaz: Who will be fired from the FBiH Army?	Dnevni Avaz front page, pg. 3 'Who will be fired from the FBiH Army?' - The newspaper learns from the sources close to the FBiH Government that a working group appointed by the Entity Defence Ministry has made criteria for the upcoming firing of surplus of soldiers from the Army. The criteria have been submitted to the Federation Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic.

Political developments	
BiH CoM session - ITA, SIPA, Third GSM licence	BHTV, FTV, RTRS, Vecernji List page 3, "Administration still without Director", by <u>dja</u> , Dnevni List page 4, "Position of BiH public attorneys made precise", by <u>M.R.</u> , Slobodna Dalmacija page 8, "Decision on appointment postponed for Wednesday", by <u>B. Kristo and D. Pasic</u> - BiH Council of Ministers interrupted session on Monday since ministers could not agree on ITA director, seat of SIPA and third licence of GSM. Session will be continued on Wednesday. It seems there is no agreement of which nationality will be the first director of Indirect taxation authority. Chairman Adnan Terzic commented: 'Ruling parties need some time to discuss this issue'. The council was also supposed to discuss the seat of SIPA, but the discussion was delayed till next session on Wednesday and Terzic said: 'One location seems perfect for this purpose because it does require not a single KM of investment'. Unofficially it could be heard the location is a building constructed when Bakir Izetbegovic was head of Institute for Construction in Sarajevo. Also Terzic and Colak speak different languages on third GSM licence, so minister Colak said: 'CoM asked for assessment of licence and its price for third operator', but Terzic stated: 'CoM asked for price of whole GSM service in BiH...politics will not decide in this case'. Nezavisne Novine, pg. 4, 'Administration without Director because of arrangement between HDZ and SDA' also reported on the session. It quoted the OHR Spokesperson, Oleg Milisic, as saying yesterday that High Representative expects to see the issue of SIPA seat resolved in the first week of December, in which order SIPA would be able to keep the budget resources allocated to it. Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 'SIPA headquarters definitely to be located in the Zrak building? also reported on the CoM failure to agree on SIPA seat. The newspaper also speculates on possible location of the Agency.

<p>Mostar restructuring</p>	<p>With regard to the Mostar re-structuring issue, Dnevni List (page 4, "Unprincipled discussion of HDZ and SDA on Mostar", by <u>Z. Jukic</u>) carries SDP President Zlatko Lagumdžija as saying that the SDA and HDZ discussion on Mostar is unprincipled. Explaining the SDP proposal on the Mostar organization, Lagumdžija says: "I claim under full responsibility that HDZ and SDA have made an agreement in advance and we want to force the fatal HDZ and SDA policy in Mostar into the open...The proposal that we offered is not our final solution. However, we are afraid that in case that we offer our view on the future organization of Mostar, SDA and HDZ would turn it into something that is contrary to what we wanted and then SDP should be responsible for the realization of something that we cannot influence."</p> <p>On the same issue DL (page 8, "OHR: Abolishment of Municipalities in Mostar would not be contrary to Dayton Agreement", by <u>Fena</u>) carries that commenting on the statement given by President of SDA Mostar Board Fatima Leho who sent a message to High Representative Paddy Ashdown that he must not ignore provisions of the Dayton Peace Agreement and that he takes measures within his powers while passing the final decision on the Mostar organization, OHR South spokesperson Avis Benes stated: "The abolishment of the Municipalities in Mostar would not be contrary to the Dayton Peace Agreement if the Mostar Commission decides so within its mandate for the establishment of the unified city. These issues are a matter for the Mostar Commission, as are all issues relating to the unification of the City of Mostar, and the OHR will not prejudge the outcome of the Commission."</p> <p>Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'Abolition of municipalities in Mostar would not be contrary to the Dayton Agreement', Dnevni Avaz pg. 8, FENA also carried the statement.</p> <p>Vecernji List (front page, "To organize Mostar like Bugojno" and page 5, "We are expecting that Mostar be organized as Travnik", by <u>Z. Kresic</u>) carries an interview with HDZ member of the Mostar Commission Josip Merdzo. In an introduction to this interview the article says that most probably the Mostar Commission will hold its last session on Wednesday and according to many announcements the High Representative will impose the joint proposal of the Statute. Merdzo says that he is convinced that Mostar will be one unit of the local self-government and that, so far, two crucial issue, that is, the way of election and composition of the Mostar City Council have not been harmonized. Asked whether he believes that the HR will pass the decision on this issue Merdzo says: "According to the present situation it is not very likely that the consensus on these important issues will be reached. All parties agreed that Mostar becomes one unit of the local self-government apart from SDA and SDP, that offers a new territorial organization of the city with 4 Municipalities." Talking about the stand of Party for BiH (SBiH) on this issue, Merdzo says that this party accepted the organization of Mostar as one unit of the local self-government, however, in his opinion SBiH chose other models of protection in order to remain close to SDA and the Bosniak option. Merdzo also says that they would not like Mostar to be an exception and he expects that the International Community will not apply different principles. He added: "In case it happens, special principles should be applied in Travnik, Bugojno, Sarajevo etc."</p> <p>Dnevni List (page 2, "Lucky SDS, HDZ and SDA because they have Sejo Djulic in SDP", by <u>Z. Jukic</u>) carries an editorial criticizing the statements given by Sead Djulic from SDP Mostar during the session of the Council of Congress of Bosniak Intellectuals who were discussing the issue of Mostar re-organization last weekend. The author says that Djulic was using vocabulary that can only be described as nationalistic and that Djulic's appearance at the aforementioned session together with Damir Sadovic from SDA has clearly shown that stories about the SDA coalition with a part of SDP Mostar are grounded.</p> <p>Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'One administration, one budget', Dnevni Avaz pg. 8 'City administration must serve citizens', FENA - The Social-Democratic Union (SDU) will initiate the adoption of a common position by the SDU, Party for BiH, representatives of refugees and other parties participating in the work of the Commission for the Statute of Mostar based on which the city should have "one administration and one budget", SDU Vice President Sejfudin Tokic stated Monday. In a statement issued following comments in the media by SDA and other parties concerning the reorganisation of Mostar Tokic said that one of the principles would also be the removal, i.e. transformation of existing municipal administrations into rational branch offices of the city administration that would serve the citizens.</p> <p>Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'SDA's double standards' In Focus column by <u>Mirko Sagolj</u> - Sagolj claims that the SDA is definitely advocating for the division of Mostar on the ethnic basis and on two parts, the Bosniak and the Croat one.</p>
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'Statement of Day': Former Mostar Mayor Safet Orucevic	Dnevni List (page 2) carries in 'Statement of Day' a former Mostar Mayor Safet Orucevic as saying: "The statement saying that Bosniaks must have local self-government is HDZ's policy from 1996."
HNC Government session	Dnevni List (page 17, "Coric; Government's debts for last three years amount to 53 million KM", by <u>S. Bjelica</u>) carries that 4 Bosniak Ministers did not attend again the session of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton Government that took place yesterday. For this reason many items were removed from the agenda. Also, the Government could not decide on some items because they were not prepared in an adequate way. During the session the Government defined basic grounds for drafting of the budget for 2004 and it appointed the Commission that will be in charge of this issue. HNC Prime Minister Miroslav Coric stated that the current work of the Government without the Bosniak Ministers cannot be qualified as normal and that the Ministries from which these 4 Ministers come from suffer the biggest consequences of this situation. Coric explained: "I cannot wait for anyone whose work was frozen by politics because the Government has quorum and it can work according to the law." DL says that according to the OHR and USIAD instruction an item on systematization of places of work in the Ministry of Finances was placed on the agenda consequently however since HNC Minister of Finances Semin Boric did not attend the session this item was removed from the agenda. Slobodna Dalmacija (page 16, "Salaries remain as they were last year", by <u>Z. Zekic</u>), Vecernji List (page 4, "Bosniak Ministers did not attend Government's session", by <u>Fena</u>), Oslobodjenje pg. 5, Dnevni Avaz pg. 4 also covered this session.
Vrhbosna Cardinal Vinko Puljic on position of Croats in BiH	Dnevni List (front & page 6, "We will not accept building of the Berlin wall between Sarajevo and Zagreb", by <u>Hina</u>), Slobodna Dalmacija (page 16, "Unify all Croat forces", by <u>Marijan Sivric</u>) and Jutarnji List (page 4, "Cardinal Puljic: We are not intruders but a people in its homeland BiH", by <u>Hina</u>) report that Vrhbosna Cardinal Vinko Puljic has, in an interview for Medjugorje-based Radio Mir, warned of pressures by certain international representatives who advocate neither the interest of Europe nor interests of BiH but their own interests and they seem to wish Croats disappear from these areas. Puljic has stated that "we will not allow Croat and Catholic being get torn apart in order to break us up along regional or party affiliation". The Cardinal advocated establishment of a kind of a Croats' Forum for national issues. "BiH is our homeland and we want a good cooperation with our brothers in Croatia and we will not accept building of the Berlin wall between Sarajevo and Zagreb", he said.
HDZ Croatia President Ivo Sanader received Head of Ljubuski Municipality	Dnevni List (front and page 3, "Sanader's visit to Herzegovina announced", by <u>M. R.</u>) carries that President of HDZ Croatia Ivo Sanader received yesterday the Head of the Ljubuski Municipality Markan Zelic and his assistant. Zelic invited Sanader to an official visit to Herzegovina and Ljubuski and Sander accepted the invitation. Sanader also said that he will exert maximal efforts in order to protect interests of the Croats in BiH and added that this should be exclusively achieved through institutions of BiH as a law-abiding state. Zelic reminded that an agreement on the establishment of the Regional Developing Agency on the economic co-operation of 27 Herzegovinian Heads of Municipalities from both BiH entities was signed in Mostar on Friday and soon it might result in signing of a similar agreement with regions in Croatia.

Economic/social issues

<p>Will Mostar Aluminum cease its production?</p>	<p>Croat Radio Herceg Bosna, BHTV, FTV, Oslobođenje pg. 6 'Aluminum to shut down its production as of January 1?', Dnevni Avaz pg. 8 'Brajkovic threatens Aluminum will shut down its production as of January 1', FENA - The general manager of the Aluminij d.d. Mostar, Mijo Brajkovic, said that the management of this Company would take a decision on the subsequent shutdown of production, unless within two or three days the Aluminij d.d. Mostar does not receive guarantees, which will insure electricity supply for its operation at the favourable price. The management of the Aluminij will inform its workers that they will stop work as of January 1, 2004 unless a guarantee for the electricity supply has been given. "We must make all preparations for the shutdown; we will have several meetings and inform our clients and bankers that as of next year we will be unable to pay back the credits, and somebody will have to bear the responsibility", said Brajkovic. He added that it was now up to the FBiH Government to declare itself on whether the Aluminij will continue work or whether it will let the biggest exporter shut down, a company on which 30,000 people live.</p> <p>Dnevni list (front page "Mostar-based Aluminij suspends production" & p 3, "Phase-out of Aluminij production announced", by <u>Vera Soldo</u>), Slobodna Dalmacija (front & p 17, "Aluminij starts phase-out process", by <u>Darko Juka</u>) and Vecernji list (front page "Unions for Aluminij and onto streets" and p 5, "Certificate for environment protection", by <u>f</u>) also carry Brajkovic's statement. Dnevni list (p 3, "Federation of Unions announced protests", by <u>De. L.</u>), Slobodna Dalmacija (p 17, "Union threatened with street protests", <u>not signed</u>) and Vecernji list (p 5, "Protests and blockades over Aluminij", by <u>M.S.</u>) carry that the Federation of Independent Trade Unions harshly condemns "self-will of Elektroprivreda BiH and the FBiH Government's passivity" on the issue. "It is regretful that political games around removal of PM Hadzipasic are played over the back of Aluminij workers, i.e. over all budget beneficiaries. We call upon PM Hadzipasic and his Deputy Vrankic to urgently take necessary measures in order to prevent the worst thing that might happen. Otherwise, the Federation of Unions will start daily protests and will block the work and traffic in FBiH", the PR reads.</p> <p>Dnevni Avaz pg. 3 'Whom Mijo Brajkovic blackmails?' Commentary of the Day by <u>Eldar Dizdarevic</u> - Dizdarevic wonders if Brajkovic is in position to ask for the cheapest possible electricity all until the Aluminum workers are receiving three times higher salaries than the miners?</p>
<p>Loans from Austrian banks in Republika Srpska</p>	<p>Glas Srpske, cover page story, 'To Zagreb for a loan' - GS carries a strange story about the guy named Slavko Lalos, one of founders of the association "Ino-credit", which functions as mediator between Republika Srpska citizens interested in getting loans and Austrian banks providing such loans. This association has not been registered in Court. In order to pick up approved loan, citizens need to pay life insurance, which amounts 5% of loan amount. The contracts are signed in Zagreb.</p> <p>Lalos did not want to disclose the names of any bank from Austria engaged in this.</p>

RS internal debts, talks with IMF	<p>Glas Srpske, pg. 5, 'Oil found in Prijedor!' – The article is about ongoing talks regarding increase in payments and salaries in the Republika Srpska. The headline is related to statement given on this issue by PDHR, Donald Hays, who has recently said that Republika Srpska officials may have found oil in Prijedor, which would provide them enough resources to cover these additional expenses.</p> <p>The article brings information related to this issue and elaborates on Framework strategy plan for settlement of Republika Srpska internal debt, which the Republika Srpska Government proposed and OHR and IMF accepted last week. OHR even commended Republika Srpska Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic, for having found such a good solution.</p> <p>Goran Radivojac, Spokesperson of Republika Srpska Premier, said that inflow of resources into budget was registered, whilst industrial production has increased for 6%.</p> <p>Commenting on this, Damir Miljevic, the economist and President of Republika Srpska Association of Employers, said that the entire issue has showed that there is no co-ordination at all between local institutions and international community. He stressed that there are no joint programmes, instead there are only foreign financial programmes and domestic attempted programmes. GS learnt from its sources that the dialogue between the Republika Srpska Government and IMF officials resume in Sarajevo.</p>
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War crimes/security affairs	
Tihic asks for assistance to the Hague volunteers	Oslobodjenje front page, pg. 5 'Tihic asks for assistance to the Hague volunteers' – Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency Sulejman Tihic ahead of his Tuesday's appearance/testimony in trail of Slobodan Milosevic before ICTY, called on BiH Federation authorities to as soon as possible adopt a decision on financing the Hague indictees from the entity who had voluntarily surrendered to the Tribunal and their families.
New case for the Tribunal	Blic, p 14, 'New case for the Tribunal' – The RS Office for the Cooperation with the ICTY and Investigation of War Crimes yesterday forwarded a case against Saban Osmanovic and other suspects to the Banja Luka Office of the Hague Tribunal. Osmanovic and the other persons are suspected of performing armed attack against Donji Magasic, Deronjici, Popovici, Ilici and Bozici on July 20, 1992, on which occasion they had killed eight civilians. Blic, p 14, 'New case for the Tribunal'
TI Divjak on organised crime in BiH	Nezavisne Novine, pg. 2, 'BiH is a centre of organised crime'; Glas Srpske, pg. 2, 'Balkans in the wheel of crime' – Boris Divjak, Director of the NGO "Transparency International" for BiH stated in Banjaluka that along with Kosovo, BiH is a centre of organised crime in the region, noting that this issue can be resolved only at the regional level. The representatives of NGO's from BiH and the entire region, dealing with fight against organised crime and corruption, yesterday concluded at Round Table held in Banjaluka that it is necessary to establish the system of surveillance of government institutions at all authority levels.
Update to Hajducke Vode	Nezavisne Novine, pg. 2, 'Milorad Jelisavac should file resignation as act of personal responsibility' – Nebojsa Lazic, Director of the National Institute for fight against drug addiction, stated that Milorad Jelisavac, Head of the Republika Srpska Mol Criminal Investigation Department, should file resignation, which should mark the personal act of his responsibility for the tragic outcome of Hajducke Vode police action. Lazic claims that Jelisavac should resign owing to the fact that he personally gave a green light for police action at Hajducke Vode.

Human rights

RS Helsinki Committee on citizens' participation in reforms	<p>Nezavisne Novine, pg. 8, 'Politicians do not serve to citizens but to their personal interests' – In a brief interview to NN, Branko Todorovic, President of Republika Srpska Helsinki Board for Human Rights, states that the obligation of each politicians was to openly tell Republika Srpska citizens why changes to Republika Srpska Constitution, defence reform, NATO admission were necessary and to give them a chance to vote on this at referendum or through public debate. He is of the view that BiH citizens should ask respective authorities why they did this. He stresses that current authorities are resolving issue of key importance without any consultation with citizens. Accordingly the alienation of citizens from BiH institutions does not surprise at all.</p>
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