

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 26/5/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18:00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19:00 hrs)	FED TV (19:30 hrs)	RT RS (19:30)
Ashdown's warning	HR's 1 st anniversary in BiH	Football riots	Federation pensioners
Football riots	Riots at a football game	HR Ashdown's warning	Ashdown sets priorities
NATO conf. in Prague	Israeli government	Israeli PM Sharon	RS railway

Oslobodjenje	First reforms and then Europe's help; Commemoration gathering in Visegrad - thousands of roses for the dead; Admitting the crime - justice for victims, justice for executors
Dnevni Avaz	Ashdown's open letter - I'm an optimist when it comes to BiH; Roses for 3,000 killed Bosniaks; Delic - stop labelling Bosniaks as criminals and terrorists; After the BiH flag was set on fire - perpetrators will have to answer;
Dnevni List	HR's open letter to BiH citizens - BiH should not count any longer on the EU gifts; Goran Hrstic, brother of the killed HSP BiH President; Agreement with the US can be canceled one-sidedly
Vecernji List	Destructive march of maniacs; Paddy Ashdown - assistance remains, however there will be no gifts any longer
Slobodna Dalmacija	State flats should be given to Serb returnees; Bulldozers are pushing tourists away
Glas Srpske	Following a disastrous drought in the Republika Srpska - a loss of hundreds of millions
Nezavisne Novine	Former guard of Ljubisa Borovcanin admitted he was extorting money upon request of Director of Nova Banjalucka Bank - Dragan Vasiljevic extorting for Milenko Vracar; Criminal report filed against Milica Bisic, former Director of the Republika Srpska Tax Administration - 1,5 million KM evaded
Vecernje Novosti	Steaming price of organization of the visit of Pope John Paul II to Banja Luka - budget on its feet
Blic	Paddy Ashdown - to conduct reforms or BiH will be left without a gift; Bombs at Petricevac; 200 families under oil lamps
LJILJAN	Mladen Ivanic - Balijagic cannot live without circus; Lord Russell Johnston - we will not leave BiH as we did during the war

Political Affairs

HR Ashdown's open letter	<p>Avaz pg. 1 and 2 – in the light of HR Ashdown's first anniversary in BiH he wrote an open letter to BiH citizens. He said that in the past year a lot has been achieved, but there is yet more to be done. He emphasized that in the past year many mechanisms have been established to combat crime, the BiH Court is soon to start processing its first trial, order is being introduced at the BiH political scene. He however added that politics, corruption and crime were still tightly connected and the trend has to be stopped. As for the EU, Ashdown wrote that European leaders would not open the door out of mercy unless the reforms were implemented and European standards reached. "The message from Brussels is clear. No presents in the future." He recalled that when he first arrived to BiH he said his priorities were justice and jobs. "Those are still my priorities because I know they are most important to you and everything I heard and saw in the past year goes to confirm that." Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 6 – HR sent a message that the process of economic reform and privatisation had to be accelerated. Glas Srpske pg. 3 'Accelerated admission into the EU', Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 'Link between crime and politics must break' – "I had the honour and privilege of taking up the position of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. We've achieved a lot in the last year, but there's a great deal more to do." Vecernji list pg. 1, Dnevni list pg. 1 and 7, Jutarnji list pg. 4 'Ashdown: no more EU charity for BiH' and Vjesnik pg. 11 'Days of charity for BiH are gone, Ashdown claims' – carry the open letter by HR. "Though changes may be hard," Ashdown writes, "we are slowly but surely making progress". The ambitious goal of BiH joining the EU by 2009 can be realized should we all jointly implement reforms, wrote the HR. The papers also note the quote saying BiH citizens can rely on the HR's measures that would be taken in case elected BiH officials did not respect European standards and fail citizens' expectations. Blic pg. 5 'BiH should no longer expect gifts from Europe' – HR, among other things, points out the necessity to fight crime and implement reforms in BiH. The paper carried the entire letter.</p>
Prlic on Solun summit	<p>Avaz pg. 4 'At the Solun summit the limiting of the OHR's role will be discussed' – President of the ProENS, Jadranko Prlic, was in Oslo where one of the preparation gatherings was held before the coming summit in Solun. Prlic stated that he prepared an elaborate where the core idea was the EU had to made it clear for western Balkan countries that they would be joining the EU. He added the date was not the issue, just the confirmation that they would be accepted. According to Prlic, some of the biggest issue at the coming summit would be increasing the European character of the Kosovo protectorate and limiting OHR's role in BiH.</p>
Interview with Hadzipasic	<p>Avaz pg. 5 'We have the same final goal, even though we do not think always the same' – a short interview with Federation PM Ahmet Hadzipasic. The main issue of the interview was the first 100 days of the FBiH government and Hadzipasic said they devoted it to the establishment of necessary tools for more aggressive acting, achieving conditions for de-blocking the privatisation process. As well as control of business making of companies, institutions, managements and directories under our jurisdiction.</p>
Oslobodjenje commentary	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'The order of moves' by Ibrahim Prohic – the author thinks the lack of power by the current government is obvious, and that its incompetence is well-covered for by the OHR that has the power and makes all important decisions. As for the opposition, Prohic criticises them as well as their most recent imitative for the holding of extraordinary elections. "The opposition mixed up the order of moves. Instead of preparing the climate for the extraordinary elections, and then request them, they hurried with the request without prior preparations. The change of government must not be the goal in itself."</p>
SDU requesting Hamamdžić's resignation	<p>Avaz pg. 8 'The SDU called on Hamamdžić to resign' – the SDU Stari Grad municipality Board called on the Sarajevo Mayor, Muhidin Hamamdžić, to do the only dignified thing and resign from the current post. The request was triggered by Hamamdžić's recent statement on TV that 'Sarajevo was not a capital of the BiH state and no longer a multiethnic city'. The daily contacted Hamamdžić who stated that Sarajevo could not be the capital since it's located in one entity and in one Canton.</p>

Lagumdžija	Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 'BiH must be an equal participant in the EU integration' – at the closing ceremony of the World Economic Forum for the southeast Europe in Athens, Zlatko Lagumdžija, SDP President, stated that BiH wanted, could and must be an equal partner in the process of integration of the entire region into the European Union. He stressed that any lagging behind by BiH, as unified, sovereign and equal state in this process, might have unconceivable consequences for the entire region.
SDS-PDP relations	Nezavisne Novine pg. 6 'The SDS is analyzing its coalition with the PDP and the work of Republika Srpska institutions' – a session of the SDS Chair Board, which is to take place at the end of this month, will discuss two issues: its partnership with the PDP and the work of the Republika Srpska institutions. Milenko Stanic, a member of the SDS Chair Board, also announced the re-composition of the political scene unless the relations between coalition partners changed. According to an NN inset, Branko Dokic, a member of the PDP Presidency, confirmed that the PDP Chair Board wanted to maintain coalition with the SDS, stressing that the relations between these two parties must be defined and regulated through party agreements.
Agreement with the US	With regard to the Agreement on the exemption of the US citizens from the International Criminal Court (ICC), Dnevni List on pg. 1 and 4 carries BiH Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lidija Topic, as saying that the US side did not accept the BiH proposal that only American soldiers be exempted from the ICC jurisdiction and thus all American citizens, including those who were working for them and who did not have the American citizenship, would be protected in BiH. Topic added that an important thing was that that the Agreement with the US could be one-sidedly canceled at any moment if BiH decided that this document did not serve its interests.
Mostar roundtable	Dnevni List pg. 13 'Autonomy in deciding on internal organization of city' – the round table discussion entitled 'Position and organization of cities in the FBiH, with a special stress on the development of the local self-rule in Mostar' was held in Mostar during the weekend. In the working conclusions it was marked that all participants of this round table discussion stressed a need that the Federation Constitution, cantonal constitutions and legal regulative in the FBiH adjust to the European Charter on the local self-rule, its principles and standards. Also, it was concluded that the role and influence of the IC, in the attempts to find the best solution, could not be avoided, as well as the participation of citizens in public discussion on these issues.
Interview with Ivanic	Ljiljan pgs. 18-22 'Ivanic: problems inside Serbia cannot be linked with BiH' – an interview with BiH Foreign Minister, Mladen Ivanic. "Internal problems of Serbia cannot be linked with BiH, since BiH is an internationally recognized state that has its own borders. We, from that point of view, believe that any linking of BiH with the internal affairs of Serbia is not acceptable and it cannot contribute to the development of good relations. And, we have really moved on to build good mutual relations," said Ivanic. He further assessed as pure speculations recent rumours on the possible abolishment of the Republika Srpska if BiH withdrew the lawsuit against Serbia and Montenegro filed before the ICTY. (This part of the interview was also carried by today's Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'There will be no deals at the cost of BiH')
Interview with Lord Johnston	Ljiljan pgs. 26-27 'The international community must not leave BiH as was the case during the war' – an interview with Lord Russell Johnston former Chairman of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly. "Maybe the time has not come yet, but I believe the current BiH Constitution will be revised in order to make the state more coherent. This means that, in the future, I expect people in BiH to feel more as Bosnia and Herzegovina nationals just as I feel as a citizen of Scotland, and think less about the disastrous things that led them to hatred," Johnston said.

Economic Affairs

Avaz commentary	Avaz pg. 3 'Single market' by <u>Edin Plecic</u> – opening paragraph tells of a Saturday meeting organized by the US Chamber of Commerce in Siroki Brijeg where all present businessmen kept repeating that BiH will not survive without a single market. The author basically wants to point out that businessmen have to do something for the single market idea to be realized. "Just like politicians, they (meaning businessmen) have been forming the Association of BiH Businessmen for the past seven and a half years. For a start, it would be enough if they jointly raised their voice and requested from MPs a single market."
Reactions to SDA initiative	Avaz pg. 8 'Rapa: the independence of the Fund from the executive authorities' – several reactions to the SDA initiative on increasing the employment. Avdo Rapa, President of the Federation Chamber of Commerce, thinks the idea is interesting, but adds that the Fund establishment will have to be led by trade and competition principles, and also that the Fund has to be clearly separated from the executive authority. Husein Musemic, Director of the federation institute for Employment, also thinks the proposition is useful. He however notes that similar actions were attempted before the war and that gave poor results while investments were high. Jonuz Ilic, owner of the Ilidza 'Dijamant' company, said that the best stimulation for opening new vacancies was removing the contributions for the newly employed.
Hanson on economic reforms	Dnevni List pg. 3 'BiH needs faster reforms for getting closer to the EU' – Head for Commercial and Economic Issues with the Embassy of Great Britain in BiH, Tim Hanson, stated that slowness in the privatization processes, economic reforms and creation of unique, economic area in BiH represents the basic obstacle for faster entering EU.
Patriot on Hays	Patriot pg. 10 'Don Hays in knowingly destroying the RS Elektroprivreda' by <u>Slobodan Vaskovic</u> – excerpts from the article. "It would be wrong to say that Bosnia and Herzegovina and its entities were under the international protectorate. It would be more accurate to say that, unfortunately, BiH and its entities were under the protectorate of a couple of international officials, who perceive this unfortunate and tragic region as 'Eldorado' where they would strongly materialise 'the American dream' by means of dollars. What makes the story more disgusting is the fact that they have been claiming, all of the time that they are working for the benefit of the constitutive nations, 'in the interests of hospitals, schools, pensioners, invalids'. And this ascertains how endless their contempt towards the local population is. One of such international officials is Donald Don Hays, Principle Deputy High Representative, who has been intensively working on the destruction of the BiH economy, with a special regard to the Republika Srpska economy and power utility of this entity. For his personal interests, Hays is destroying the RS Power Utility (Republika Srpska Elektroprivreda) in an unscrupulous manner, in order to reduce its price and deliver such national resources on the plate to his mentors of the worst neo-colonial mental structure. "Hays is aware that his behaviour is totally illegal and that it can be accepted only in BiH and not in any other state in the world. It is clear to him that investors in the project would win in any arbitration process at any court outside BiH. Owing to his exact orders, his orders are never in written but in verbal form, so to avoid any attempt to link his direct involvement in the destruction and robbery of the RS Elektroprivreda. However, his behaviour does not surprise – in the worst way possible he used his powers as an American. Absence of any reaction by the High Representative to BiH, Paddy Ashdown, surprises most because his mouth are always brimming with the best wishes to all the nations in BiH. Unfortunately, his deeds do not comply with his stories. Ashdown, whose favourite sport is decapitating the local politicians (only because he does not like them), could have at least told his deputy that it is not recommendable to destroy in such an unscrupulous manner what he/Ashdown should be developing." (for full translation pls contact Banja Luka Press Office)

Refugee Affairs

Kebo	Avaz pg. 2 'The Fond for Return soon to be introduced' – BiH Minister for Human Rights and Refugees, Mirsad Kebo, said the Ministry was preparing detailed changes and amendments to the Law on Refugees and DPs, which would define procedures and protection mechanisms for ensuring higher transparency in the donation awarding processes. He added that the first draft of such changes and amendments already exists and they were currently negotiating with IC reps who have participated significantly in the entire process. Kebo said that long-awaited Fond for Return is also to be introduced. The fond should ensure the money for the return is concentrated in a single place and is spent in a transparent manner. Oslobodjenje pg. 6 'The possibility of filing appeals to the distribution of help in future' – "Maybe the biggest success in this year is that we persuaded the IC during a session of the PIC in Brussels that the implementation of the Annex 7 was not completed, that we were only half way through and that we would need four more year and 900 million KM to realize it."
Samardzic	Glas Srpske pg. 2 'The budget stopped the construction' – in a short interview to GS, Jasmin Samardzic, Republika Srpska Minister of Refugees and DP's, confirmed that refugees were socially one of the most violated categories, which was proved by the conditions in which they had been living for the past eight years. He said that the ban on further construction of apartments for refugees would be on until the end of this year. On the census of refugees and DP's, Samardzic said that the registration should have been conducted at the regional level of BiH, Serbia and Montenegro and Croatia. The RS authorities intend to run the census in the RS during the course of this year if such was not run at the regional level before.
OHR's decision on Rovine settlement	Blic pg. 6 'Waiting for OHR decision under light of oil lamps' – after two years of waiting, the local authority of Gradiska announced that the OHR would finally legalize land allocation for refugee families at the Rovine settlement. This would significantly speed up the process of the property laws implementation because families who are currently occupying someone else's property, in this case property of Bosniaks, will be able to move out and to start constructing their own houses, said President of the Gradiska Municipal Assembly, Jovan Todorovic. The construction of 196 lots had been allocated to refugees at the Rovine settlement, but the OHR requested the allocation to be revised. Nevertheless, this had not slowed down the evictions, so many people still built temporary housing facilities at these lots, although they did not have basic living conditions such as the water supply, electricity or roads.
Cavarkapa on the return of serbs to Sarajevo	Vecernje Novosti pg. 15 'Only Serb houses are waiting' – President of the 'Povratak' Association of Sarajevo Serbs, Milivoje Cavarkapa, warned that the international humanitarian organizations are avoiding the Sarajevo Canton when it came to the reconstruction of Serb houses. "The only goal of the international organizations, cantonal and Federation authorities in BiH is to have as many Muslims as possible returning to the Republika Srpska, but not to have Serbs returning to the Sarajevo Canton as well," Cavarkapa stated.

Police Affairs

Vasiljevic questioned	Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 & 3 'Dragan Vasiljevic was extorting money upon order by Vracar' - Dragan Vasiljevic Vaske, former security guard of Ljubomir Borovcanin, admitted to police that he was extorting money following the orders of Milenko Vracar, Director of the Nova Banjalucka Bank and former Republika Srpska Minister of Finance. As NN learnt at the Republika Srpska Interior Ministry, the police memo (which NN is in possession of) reads that Vracar himself gave a list of debtors to Vasiljevic. The agreement was that Vaske should mediate in the money collection, meaning he was to extort the money from the clients who were taking loans at the Bank. In an exchange, Vracar promised him a large loan. NN source further claims that the list was found during the inspection of Vasiljevic's house in Bijeljina on 8 May. Milenko Vracar yesterday did not want to make any comment into these allegations. "I do not know that Vasiljevic after all." Republika Srpska Interior Ministry ordered the Banjaluka PSC (since 39 firms listed fall under its jurisdiction) to investigate into these claims and to speak with the directors of the listed firms. One of the owners that NN yesterday approached was Ratko Stamenic, owner of the Medicinska Elektronika in Banjaluka. He just said that it is a truth that some people, including Vasiljevic, came to him without explaining the reasons and motive of such visits.
Charges against Bisic	Nezavisne Novine pg. 1 & 2 'The Republika Srpska Tax Administration caused Republika Srpska budget loss of 1.5 million KM' - NN learnt at the Republika Srpska Tax Administration that the Republika Srpska Tax Administration has caused the budget loss of 1.5 million KM by annulling orders on the payment of public incomes, which Veljko Djukic, Tax Inspector, ordered to be applied against the 'Veki trade' and 'Guard export import' company. Conclusively, at the end of March in Banja Luka, Djukic has filed criminal reports against Milica Bisic, former Republika Srpska Tax Administration Director, and a couple of her associates and tax administration officials at the Banja Luka District Prosecutor's Office. The reports were filed owing to their misuse of official position and irresponsible conduct.
Threats against FBiH Customs officials	With regard to the threats that employees of the FBiH Customs Administration were exposed to, Dnevni List on pg. 1 and 5 reported that Head of the FBiH Customs Administration, Zelimir Rebac, stated that high-ranked officials of the former FBiH government were involved in these threats. Rebac did not want to give their names, however, DL says that it was not hard to conclude who they were if we remembered the articles that had been published recently. DL says that the source close to the OHR confirmed that HR Paddy Ashdown was embittered over the threats in general and, in particular, over those that were addressed against persons fighting against crime and frauds. "If the frauds and criminal activities continue in BiH, no one, including the IC, will not be able to help this country. It is unbelievable that tax evasions amounting to millions continue regardless of the projects such as the Bulldozer," the source stated. Further added that the situation was even worse because the state top itself was involved in affairs and frauds and that people would be surprised when they learnt the names of some of them because they would not believe that they elected wrong people again. The source confirmed Rebac's claims that it was about 18 high-ranked officials.
Equal police salaries in BiH	Dnevni List pg. 2 'Increase and equalize police salaries' - the Federation Police Administration sent an official letter to the EUPM saying the state bodies did not respond to demands of the FBiH Police Administration with regard to improving of the material status of the police and equalizing of their salaries. Head of the FBiH Police, Zlatko Miletic, stated in the letter that the ignoring attitude of the state institutions was concerning and after all they believed that the only hope was that the OHR would impose the solution for overcoming the difficult material situation of policemen.

Football riots in Siroki Brijeg	Vecernji List pg. 1, 2 and 3 – after the Siroki Brijeg-Zeljeznicar football match, Zeljeznicar fans started vandalizing the stadium in Siroki Brijeg and the local police had to intervene. VL says that afterwards the Zeljo supporters started to destroy cars and shops in Siroki Brijeg and they were throwing stones at the police and citizens. The Zeljeznicar fans were also shouting nationalistic paroles. The article says that the Management of Siroki Brijeg football club will demand compensation of damage from Zeljeznicar and they will also send a special press release to the BiH Football Association, international organizations etc.
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Military Affairs

Dudakovic on single army	Nezavisne Novine pg. 6 ‘BiH will have a unified army’ – in a short interview to NN, Atif Dudakovic, Commander of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Joint Army Command, stated that one general staff will be in command of the reformed military troops in BiH. He said that this was agreed at the Friday meeting of the Joint Military Commission. He stressed that the agreement reached on the chain of command of the future BiH military troops represented a major step towards the fulfilment of the minimum pre-requisites set for BiH admission into the PfP. “My personal view is that we need to have a single army, a single defence system, a single code. It seems to me that the international community cares more about BiH’s admission to the PfP than we actually do.”
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Media Affairs

FTV vs. Mostar police	Dnevni list pg. 8 ‘Tape taken from the FTV has been returned’ – the FTV program Collegial’s harsh condemnation of behavior of some of Mostar Police Administration members who brutally brought in FTV’s cameraman, Haris Zugor, and took video-tapes with the material he took during the match. Zugor was let go after three hours and his tape disappeared after the police took it and was returned to the FTV around 19:00 hours last night. The Collegial also requests the police administration to respect journalists’ professional standards. DL (pg. 13 ‘The harshest condemnation of the behavior by Mostar police’) also carries the PR by the Mostar Branch of the Union of Independent Professional Journalists of BiH, which finds such the behavior of the police towards the journalist unacceptable. The Union asks if the tape was not taken exactly because of its content, and calls on the cantonal Ministry of Interior (MoI) leaders to declare themselves on the case and the EUPM to investigate the incident. On the same issue VL pg. 3 ‘Hooligans stoned and injured nine policemen’ – nine injured policemen and 12 destroyed police and four personal vehicles are the results of the incident that took place after the aforementioned football match, which was played in the Mostar settlement Vrapcici. The incident started when fans entered the soccer field and tried to attack players and police.
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Education Affairs

Interview with Jovic	<p>Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3 – an interview with a representative in the BiH House of Representatives Ivo Miro Jovic. DL says that the HDZ believes that provisions of the draft Law on Primary and Secondary Education are damaging Croat interests and they demanded that this Law was passed in a regular procedure. They also believe that thorough changes should be made in the contents of the proposal. Asked whether it they would resort to a veto right in the House of Peoples, that is, the protection of national interest, if the HDZ representatives' proposal were not accepted, Jovic said the following. "It is possible. However, the most important thing is that people from the House of Representatives realized and understand our proposals and criticism. We even had one colloquy with the opposition and we clearly stated our position. It was said that our fear should be understood and that understanding will be shown with regard to this issue."</p>
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