

OHR BiH Media Round-up: 13/11/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Belgrade's Partizan soccer club mediated in sale of Federation Army's armored carriers to Israel; Indictes in Leutar case acquitted; Ashdown with Srebrenica women – the first phase of the Memorial Center by end of the year

Dnevni Avaz: Professor DR, Berko Zecevic claims – BiH sprayed by 60 kilos of radio-active dust; Indictes for assassination of Leutar acquitted

Dnevni List: Who are the real culprits in Leutar case?

Vecernji List: Indicted Croats free

Slobodna Dalmacija: Six Croats cleared of charges

Glas Srpski: Bulgarian "Terem" under suspicion of illegal trade: They have been selling reducers to Iraq; Brcko: Explosive device thrown at Minister's house

Nezavisne Novine: The verdict of the Sarajevo Cantonal Court: The indicted for Leutar murder acquitted; Population of Hadzici in fear of radiation: Locals claim that 200 people died of cancer; Banja Luka: Dodik requests clear answer from Ivanic on future coalition;

Blic: PDP to propose Prime Minister designate, Dodik and Ivanic in the CoM; Investigation against General Pandzic; Ashdown: To preserve the course of former "trio"

Arms trade

The BiH Federation's financial police have filed a criminal complaint against several officials in the Defence Ministry, who have allegedly embezzled the funds obtained through the sale of armoured personnel carriers to Israeli companies. The finance police officials have recently commented on the role of Defence Minister **Mijo Anic** in the matter and accused him of abusing the budget without examining the circumstances in which the disputed transaction took place. The final destination of the APCs sold by the Defence Ministry to Israeli companies through the Unix-Porex company is Cameroon, Federation's Defence Minister Mijo Anic has said. He added that the financial police officials caused him damage by making statements in the media about the so-called abuse of the funds obtained through the sale of the carriers. *"This is why I think that an impression is being formed about me on the basis of the statement by the financial police director, who said that my deputy and I had embezzled the Federation to the tune of 2.1m dollars. This is a notorious lie,"* Anic told journalists in Sarajevo on Tuesday. Anic explained that the armoured carriers had been written off, and constituted a surplus which had to be either destroyed or sold. There are around 12,000 pieces of weapons and equipment of this kind just in the Croat component of the BiH Federation Army. Anic says that the alleged criminal complaint had been filed for personal reasons, because some time ago he had asked for a dismissal or reappointment of the financial police director. The minister also says that everything is unjustifiably being linked to his trip to Israel, which had nothing to do with the sale of carriers. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 4, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 9)

According to **Oslobodjenje** front-page story (continued on pages 4-5), the Belgrade-based Partizan soccer club was one of the mediators (brokers) in sale of the armored personnel carriers once donated to the BiH Federation Army to the Israeli buyers. Although the role played by the soccer club has still not been fully lightened, it is indicative that the Israeli Soltam System Company Director had through Partizan invited a delegation of the BiH Federation Defense Ministry for talks about the establishment of the business cooperation.

The BiH Federation's Defence Ministry has set up a commission to examine business dealings of the special-purpose (military) companies, and check if the **UN arms embargo** is violated in any way. The commission has

already visited 70 per cent of the special-purpose companies, the BiH Federation Defense Minister, **Mijo Anic**, said at a press conference in Sarajevo on Tuesday. *"The information we have does not indicate that any of these companies had trade links with Iraq,"* he emphasized. The minister also pointed out that the special-purpose companies in the Federation sell arms and military material to Yugoslavia, adding that he did not know if the companies in the neighbouring state misused the weapons and violated the UN arms embargo. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 4, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 9)

Terrorism/war crimes

Due to a lack of reliable evidence, the Sarajevo Canton Court on Tuesday acquitted Ivan Andabak, Dominik Ilijasevic Coma, Zoran Basic Cola, Zeljko Cosic, Jedinko Bajkusa and Mario Milicevic Baja, who had been charged with the assassination of Deputy Federation Minister of Internal Affairs **Jozo Leutar**. At the same time the court also ordered them to be released from prison and withdrew its previous order in connection with an international warrant for the arrest of Ivan Andabak and Mario Milicevic Baja, who had been tried in absentia. (**Oslobodjenje**, front page, p 29, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 26, mentioned on the front page)

Vecernji List (front and pages 2 and 3, *"Indicted Croats free"*), **Dnevni List** (front and pages 2, 3 and 4, *"Who are real culprits in Leutar case"*), **Slobodna Dalmacija** (front and page 13 and last page, *"Six Croats cleared of charges"*), **Jutarnji List** (front and page 6, *"Andabak and other six Croats acquitted for Leutar's murder"*) and **Vjesnik** (page 2, *"Six Croats indicted for Leutar's murder acquitted"*) report that six Croats charged with murder of the late Federation Deputy Minister of Interior, **Jozo Leutar**, have been acquitted by the Sarajevo Cantonal Court yesterday. According to Milo Jukic of Vecernji List, Judge **Salem Miso** who was in charge of the case, during the explanation of the verdict, listed a number of contradictory statements by protected witness number 30 and stressed that 47 witnesses did not provide a single evidence that would confirm that the indictees are the real culprits. The author says that the legal councillors announced that they would try to settle with the judiciary in order to get a financial compensation for the time their clients spent in custody adding that they would take it competent institutions if a settlement is not reached.

Reactions:

Vecernji List's Jozo Pavkovic's, in the aftermath of the verdict, says that the High Representative for BiH, **Paddy Ashdown**, should remove **Haris Silajdzic** and **Jacques Paul Klein** in order to repair the damage done to the Croats, Silajdzic for stating that Croats planted a bomb against themselves back in Mostar in 1997 (it was in fact some militant islamists) and Klein for stating that it was Croat extremists who killed Leutar. According to Pavkovic, Ashdown would then show that there are no untouchables and that the Croats are not the only one who could be indicted and removed.

Robert Bubalo signs an editorial in VL on page 2, *"To be continued"*, in which he notes that it would be interesting to hear opinions of **Faik Lusija**, *"a man who framed the indictment"*, Salem Miso, **Zvonko Mijan**, Federation Justice Minister *"who stood silent throughout the process"*, and Jacques Paul Klein *"who bought the whole story"* following the yesterday's outcome. *"Does anyone ask who are the real murderers? Is anyone looking for them?"*, says Bubalo.

HDZ BiH welcomes the verdict and says that the Sarajevo Cantonal Court that it was a judiciary and not a political institution. *"Trials against the indictees for Leutar's murder had an aim to discredit HDZ and hide culprits for Jozo Leutar's death"*, reads the HDZ's PR.

Josip Muselimovic, one of the defence lawyers, says that Jacques Paul Klein should at least apologise to the Croat people because he was being misinformed when he was talking about the guilt of the indictees. Muselimovic says that it is Klein's moral responsibility.

Ivica Glibusic signs an editorial in **Dnevni List**, *"Mister Klein, who killed Jozo Leutar"*, in which he criticises the role of the IC in the whole process claiming the IC pushed for the indictees to be found guilty. Glibusic criticises Klein for going public thus influencing the course of the investigation asking for Klein's opinion now the case has been closed.

The verdict was also welcomed by 2 Associations of Volunteers and Veterans of Homeland war of HVO of Herzeg-Bosnia (UDVDR). Dnevni List carries two PRs signed by two different Presidents of the UDVDR, **Miro Grabovac Titan and Marko Radic Maka**.

Following a request from the Office of the Prosecutor, Judge Orić on 8 November issued an "Order Granting Leave to File an Amended Indictment and Confirming the Amended Indictment", against **Ratko Mladic**, ICTY [International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia] said on Tuesday. On October 11, the prosecutor requested leave to amend the two outstanding indictments against Mladic and sought confirmation of the amended indictment. These submissions were assigned to Judge Orić for consideration. The first indictment against Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladic was originally filed on 24 July 1995 and was confirmed by Judge Jorda on 25 July 1995. The sixteen-count indictment charged the accused with: one count of genocide; three counts of crimes against humanity, including persecution on political, racial and religious grounds and the sniping campaign against the civilian population of Sarajevo; five counts of grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, including the unlawful confinement of civilians in detention facilities, the extensive destruction of property, the appropriation and plunder of property and the unlawful taking of United Nations peacekeepers as hostages and using them as human shields; and seven counts of violations of the laws and customs of war, including the unlawful confinement of civilians, shelling civilian gatherings, destruction of sacred sites, appropriation and plunder of property, sniping at civilians in Sarajevo and the unlawful taking of United Nations peacekeepers as hostages and using them as human shields. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, mentioned on the front page, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 12, **Nacional** p 3, **Blic** p 6, **Vecernje Novosti** p 10)

"While Europe's two most wanted men, the Bosnian Serb leaders Radovan Karadžić and General Ratko Mladic, remain at large seven years after the Bosnian war, the on-off trial of their boss, Slobodan Milošević, is looking increasingly precarious. Senior officials at the Hague admit that it would be an unmitigated disaster for the tribunal if Mr Milošević died while in custody. Franjo Tuđman, the former president of Croatia and another prize suspect, is dead. Mr Karadžić and Gen Mladic, indicted for genocide in Bosnia, are fugitives. And Mr Milošević is ill," Ian Traynor wrote in today's **Guardian** ("Losing its only big fish could wreck court").

OHR/international community's activities

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, on Tuesday visited **Tuzla** where he met with the representatives of the Srebrenica victims' families associations. He also visited the ICMP/MPI Center for Forensic Identifications. *"I am sure we will complete the first phase of the Potocari Memorial Center project by end of the year, so that we can organize first burials (of the remains of the Srebrenica massacre victims) as soon as the weather conditions make it possible,"* Ashdown said following the meetings. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, mentioned on the front page: "First phase of the memorial center by end of the year", **Dnevni Avaz**, p 3: "Potocari will be speaking to everyone that the Srebrenica tragedy must not happen again", **Dnevni List**, p 2)

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, is launching a new initiative to help clear away the complex and contradictory laws and regulations that make investment and job creation in this country so difficult, says a press release issued by OHR on Tuesday. At a meeting of the principal international financial institutions (organisations), held at the OHR recently, the High Representative proposed the establishment of what he has called the "bulldozer committee". This committee will identify the worst job-destroying bureaucratic obstacles at State, Entity, Canton and Municipality level and will propose actions that should be taken. The intention is to remove job-destroying legislation and regulations from the statute books, and simplify the whole process of setting up private businesses. This committee will begin meeting in two weeks' time and it will consist of representatives from the World Bank, the IMF, USAID, the European Commission and the OHR. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 2, **Oslobodjenje**, p 10, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 3, **Dnevni list**, p 8, **Vecernji List**, p 4, **Slobodna Dalmacija**, p 15, **Blic**, p 3)

*"The bulldozer committee the establishment of which has been initiated by the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, should finally bring some light in every day darker image of the BiH economy,"* Armin Zeba wrote in the **Dnevni Avaz** Commentary of the Day.

In a letter to the **BiH Joint Presidency** sent on Tuesday, the High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, warned that

changes proposed at the first session of the new BiH Presidency would undo the progress made under the Presidency's last mandate towards creating an effective and united Presidency. The proposals, which suggest a willingness to return to separate secretariats, do not represent the focus on reform highlighted at the BiH Presidency's inaugural ceremony held only two weeks ago. In his letter the High Representative highlights that any attempt to undermine the coherence and clear lines of responsibility in the organisational structure of the joint Secretariat would seriously undermine its efficiency and would hinder co-ordination. It would also violate the spirit of reform that the citizens of BiH expect from the new authorities. The Secretariat of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina has developed into an effective, professional and policy-delivering administrative organisation, which is seen as a role model by many other governmental institutions. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 5, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 10, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 5, **Glas Srpski**, p 3, **Dnevni List**, front and p 8, **Slobodna Dalmacija**, back page, **Blic**, p 3)

"Balkan countries, devastated in the war, divisions and collapse, see a possibility to join Europe completely and that gives them a hope. Every dollar that we give to them as help, is at the same time the help to our efforts in creating more stabile and more prosperous Europe", stated **Tony Blair**, British Prime Minister, carries **Slobodna Dalmacija** (page 7).

Depleted uranium

The UN experts finding have again actualized potential danger from the **depleted uranium** contamination in BiH. According to Professor Dr. **Berko Zecevic**, the military statistics indicate that BiH had been sprayed by approximately 60 kilos of the depleted uranium dust. (**Dnevni Avaz**, front page, p 4)

After recent publication of the results of UNEP research on traces of radiation in **Hadzici**, the local population claims that some 200 people died of cancer. One of the citizens, **Veljko Cabak**, claims that the names of all that died are known. The RS Health Ministry announced yesterday that very soon, a meeting will take place, with representatives of all relevant institutions, in order to protect soldiers currently living in the Han Pijesak barracks (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 3).

Slobodna Dalmacija (front and page 15, by Milorad Labus) reads that the vice president of the RS Association for fight against cancer, **Dr. Sasa Jungic**, states that a number of people diagnosed with malignant diseases, foremost with lung and colon cancer, has gone up by 27% when compared to the pre-war period which can be, according to Jungic, linked to the depleted uranium. The daily also reads that the RS Ministry of Defence is reviewing furthering sending of recruits to the Han Pijesak training camp, one of the locations that were targets of NATO attacks.

There are no fresh recruits in the **Han Pijesak** barracks, where – according to preliminary results of the UN environmental team – **depleted uranium** traces were detected, **SRNA** was told by the RS assistant minister of defence in charge of organization, recruitment and training, Momcilo Kovacevic. Kovacevic said that the May generation of recruits had been sent home and that the October generation was still in training centres. According to him, the RS Army will most probably not send new recruits to the Han Pijesak barracks, until final results of depleted uranium analyses are received. He said that depending on the level of radiation the General Staff and the Serb Republic Army's 5th Corps would take steps to move professional soldiers and other people working in the Han Pijesak barracks to another location. The UN is to announce complete results of an environmental research in areas which were shelled by NATO during the BiH war in March next year. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 7, together with other articles about the panic caused by the UN report on depleted uranium contamination in BiH))

Post-election coalitions

The Presidency of the Party of Democratic Progress (**PDP**) says that the RS is under huge pressure from a section of the international community, which expects the authorities to be formed in BiH and the RS without the participation of national parties. In a press release issued late on Monday after a session in Banja Luka, the PDP said it would be the best for the current position of the RS to give the leaders of the PDP and the Alliance of Independent Social-Democrats (**SNSD**), **Mladen Ivanic** and

Milorad Dodik, key posts in the new composition of the BiH Council of Ministers. The PDP presidency said that the new government was not likely to include Serb Democratic Party (SDS) representatives "due to the realistic possibility of the international isolation of the Serb Republic". The release added that the PDP would seek the position of Serb Republic prime minister designate. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 8, **Oslobodjenje**, p 6, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 5, **Glas Srpski**, p 2, **HINA**, **Vjesnik**, back page)

The RS Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) on Tuesday called on the Party of Democratic Progress (**PDP**) and its leader **Mladen Ivanic** to write another letter, since they did not understand the first one. The PDP Presidency held the session on Monday, at which it made several conclusions. SNSD President **Milorad Dodik** called on Ivanic to *"once again make efforts and to accept the SNSD in the right way as a partner, in order that the talks on the possibility for the establishment of new executive authority, without participation of the SDS, can start."* *"Our concept of the Partnership for Changes and Development without the SDS will be accepted or we will be the opposition,"* Dodik said. According to Dodik, this agreement comprises of 26 concrete issues and it has been already accepted by the Socialists Party (SPRS), the Democratic People's Alliance (DNS), the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the Party for BiH, the Serb People's Alliance (SNS), the Alliance of People's Renaissance (SNP) and the Democratic Party (DS). He added the agreement will be probably accepted by the Pensioners' Party, as well as the Democratic Patriot Party (DPS) if it is accepted by the PDP. Commenting allegations of the PDP related to the pressures, Dodik stressed that no one has been pressuring the SNSD, but that the international community has accepted their concept, which has been lasting since the formation of the party. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 8, **Oslobodjenje**, p 6, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 5, **Glas Srpski**, p 2)

The chairman of the Party for BiH, **Safet Halilovic**, confirmed on Tuesday that this party had contacted the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (**SNSD**) in connection with a post-election agreement. In a statement for RS Radio, Halilovic stressed that possible joint efforts in the process of government formation had been agreed in contacts and meetings between representatives of these two parties. He specified that agreements were about the formation of governments of the SNSD and the Party for BiH the levels of entities and state. (**Dnevni Avaz**, p 8, **Oslobodjenje**, p 6)

The **SDS** confirmed on Tuesday that it received calls from the leader of SNSD, **Milorad Dodik**, related to the establishment of future authorities. The press release issued by SDS says that this party welcomes SNSD to the RS Government, even though the party lost at all four levels at the elections, but that Milorad Dodik is not welcomed to that Government, especially not in the seat of the Prime Minister. (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 5, **Glas Srpski**, p 2)

"Just like after the last elections, we have again in a phase of the new authorities establishment that will last for an indefinite period of time. And at the moment when each day is extremely valuable we are starting to lose months. The High representative must therefore properly react to such an organized (pre-mediated) disorder," Amra Kebo wrote in an **Oslobodjenje** editorial.

Slobodna Dalmacija: Interview with Dragan Covic, member of BiH Presidency

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 12, conducted by Ivica Mlivoncic, title "Lijanovici did not evade taxes") carries interview with Dragan Covic, member of BiH Presidency. Talking about affair about "Lijanovici" company, that the company did not pay 47 million of taxes, Covic stated: *"In case 'Lijanovici' I believe that there was no evasion of taxes at all. (...) One should proof, with the group of experts, the allegations of lack of filling the Federation budget, to establish the exact sum, to investigate who was personally responsible for that, and than to address that question to all those who allowed for all that to last for 4-5 years"*. Regarding the SOKO affair, where Covic was accused for profiting from bankruptcy of the company, he answered: *"I left 'SOKO' in December 1998 and was gone to Sarajevo to take position of Minister of Finances and Deputy Prime Minister of Federation Government. At the time, SOKO was one of the most organised companies, and that lasted for next two years. Real problems started with the raid of tanks to 'Hercegovačka banka' and there was the situation in which salary was not paid for workers in one of 20 units of SOKO. (...) Today, 19 units of SOKO have overcome their problems (...) and SOKO AIR, as 20th unit will solve its problem in a month or two"*. Regarding alleged Covic role in affair of privatisation of 'Eronet', he stated: *"Since December 1998*

until spring 2001, I wasn't member of any steering board. That was incompatible with my position in the Government. Therefore, I could not have influenced the event around 'Eronet'".

Different views on single customs

Nezavisne Novine (p 5) report that a round table will take place today in OHR Sarajevo facilities, dedicated to the reform of customs. The representatives of BiH political parties and international organizations will participate in the discussion. Commenting on today's round table, the SNSD leader, **Milorad Dodik**, stated that BiH has inefficient Customs service but that single customs administration is not a guarantee for the efficiency. According to Dodik, BiH does not need single customs in order to resolve problems of functioning and efficiency. Member of the SDS Presidency, **Desanka Radjevic**, said that her party supports the reorganization of the customs system, but does not support establishment of a single customs administration and illegal change of the BiH Constitution. Member of the DNS Presidency, **Mirko Pavic**, said that BiH needs more efficient work of the customs but not a single customs administration. On the other side, a high official of the S BiH, **Beriz Belkic**, disagrees with the views of the RS politicians and says that his party supports establishment of a single customs administration. **Glas Srpski** (p 3) quotes the Director of the RS Customs Administration, **Djuro Bulic**, as saying that it is not necessary to establish single customs administration in BiH.

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Tuesday, 1900)

- Accused in Leotar case acquitted
- Anic: companies from FBiH were not involved in illegal trade of weapons with Iraq
- Iraqi Parliament rejected UN resolution
- Cardio surgeons from Tuzla performed one-thousandth operation on open heart

RTRS (1930)

- Security situation in RS has not been endangered even almost 250 policemen has not been permanently certified by the IPTF
- Draft budget for next year is 979 million KM
- Iraqi Parliament rejects the UN resolution