

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 19/6/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Top Secret seal taken of the Lijanovic case – Dragan Covic, Filip Andric and Ivica Galic to be held responsible for the evasion; NHI nominates Franjo Franjic to succeed Nikola Grabovac; Dep Ponte meets with BiH Presidency – transfer of the war crime trials to BiH/!; Kadic resigns from the office of a member of the BiH Coordination Team for Fight against Terrorism

Dnevni Avaz: Interpol investigates into the Tuzla-based Polihem enterprise's operations; Izetbegovic meets with Mesic in Sarajevo; NHI nominates Franjo Franjic for the BiH Federation Finance Minister; Kadic resigns from the office of a member of the BiH Coordination Team for Fight against Terrorism – I do not want to cover anyone

Jutarnje Novine: Carla Del Ponte and Claude Jorda meet with the BiH Presidency members – Domestic courts still not ready to take over the Hague cases; Ashdown meets with Mesic – Fight against terrorism is a regional issue; Following Del Ponte's statement that RS authorities protect Karadzic – Rasim Kadic resigns from the office of a member of the BiH Coordination Team for Fight against Terrorism

Dnevni List: Interview with Stefo Masatovic, the President of the Association of the BiH Croat refugees and Displaced Persons; Paddy Ashdown to visit Siroki Brijeg today

Vecernji List: Carla Del Ponte visits Sarajevo – investigation into 35 war crimes to result in 108 new indictments; Protests of policemen in Travnik – Hungry policeman cannot respect laws; Case of Mostar Ero Hotel sale – Ivan Bender has been accused

Nezavisne Novine: The first post-war train leaves from BiH to FRY; Goran Popovic resigns

Glas Srpski: Following population census in Croatia – Confirmation of the persecution of Serbs; Popovic resigns

Nacional: Minister of Power Industry left the Government unexpectedly: Novakovic resigned after a quarrel with Djindjic; Drnovsek in Belgrade after 11 years

Blic: A train from Srpska arrived to Serbia through Croatia; Doboj Mayor Gavric resigned; The Tribunal is asking for telephone numbers of suspects

Vecernje Novosti: Bozidar Djelic made public the documents on former officials' bank accounts in Switzerland: Private accounts, public money; Train Banja Luka- Belgrade: To Serbia through Croatia

Dragan Covic, Filip Andric and Ivica Galic to be held responsible for the Lijanovic case

Oslobodjenje (front page, continued on pages 4-5) reports that, for sure, the former BiH Federation Finance Minister, Dragan Covic, former Customs Administration Director Filip Andric and the removed Head of the Customs Office in Mostar, Ivica Galic, will be held responsible for illegal liberating the Siroki Brijeg-based Lijanovic company from paying custom duties on the import of meat products.

Carla Del Ponte meets with the BiH Presidency members

According to **Oslobodjenje** (p 3, mentioned on the front page), the ICTY Chief Prosecutor **Carla Del Ponte** said following her meeting with the BiH Presidency members in Sarajevo on Tuesday that, at the moment, BiH was not capable of taking over some of The Hague Tribunal's cases. *"However, we*

are working on that and we hope that this will be possible soon," Del Ponte said. "Our weaknesses primarily refers to a still non-functional judiciary system at the state level," the Chairman of the BiH Presidency, **Beriz Belkic**, told journalist following the meeting. In the course of the day, Del Ponte also met with the BiH Council of Ministers Chairman, Dragan Mikerevic, and Ministers Svetozar Mihajlovic and Kresimir Zubak. (**Dnevni Avaz** – p 2, **Jutarnje Novine** – p 4, mentioned on the front page, **Glas srpski** (p 3), **Nezavisne novine** (p 4), **Guardian (Nick Thorpe)** also reported on the meeting)

Vecernji List (front and page 3) carries a report on the visit of **Carla del Ponte and Claude Jorda**, the ICTY Chief Prosecutor and President of ICTY, to Sarajevo during which del Ponte revealed that the ICTY is conducting investigations against 108 persons which should be completed soon. Speaking about a possibility that BiH has its own court that would deal with war crimes, Jorda said that such court would have to have an international composition, including international judges and prosecutors, and that such court would have to abide by international standards and norms. A separate article in the same papers, also on page 3, reads that the "mini-Hague" would employ at least 300 people, including domestic and international judges, dozens of prosecutors, investigators, legal experts, translators etc. The daily quotes a former president of BiH Constitutional Court and dean of Sarajevo Law School, professor **Ismet Dautbasic**, as saying that this court, which would be located in Sarajevo, would process more than 30.000 cases.

The BiH Coordination Body for Fight against Terrorism: Kadic resigns

Oslobodjenje (p 3, announced on the front page) reports that Rasim Kadic, the BiH LDS leader and the BiH Deputy Minister for the European Integration, decided to resign from the office of a member of the BiH Coordination Team for Fight against Terrorism following a statement made by Carla Del Ponte on Monday, according to which the RS authorities were protecting the most wanted war crime suspect Radovan Karadzic. *"I simply do not want to participate in the work of the body, which deals with marginal issues,"* said Kadic in a letter of resignation. (**Dnevni Avaz** – p 14, announced on the front page, **Jutarnje Novine** – p 7, mentioned on the front page)

Director of the RS Customs Administration Goran Popovic resigns

Glas srpski (front page) reports that the RS Customs Administration Director, Goran Popovic, handed in his resignation yesterday. The paper carries excerpts from the letter, which Popovic yesterday sent to the RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic. As the main reasons for his resignation, Popovic mentions his personal dignity, dignity of the RS Customs Administration and dignity of the SDS.

Nezavisne novine (front, page 3) also carried the letter, which Goran Popovic sent yesterday to the Prime Minister Ivanic. **Nezavisne** reports that the SDS Presidency will discuss at today's session the resignation of Goran Popovic and relationship between the SDS and PDP. (**Oslobodjenje** – p 8, **Dnevni Avaz** – p 4)

Today's edition of **Nezavisne novine** carries an editorial, by **Goran Mihajlovic**, in which he writes Popovic resigned, but nothing really changed. *"It has been proven one more time that some political groups in the RS are above the law. Had it been otherwise, some of those involved in the RS Customs Administration case would have ended up in jail,"* concludes Mihajlovic.

Population Census in Croatia proves that ethnic cleansing was conducted in the country

Glas srpski (front page) quotes the **President of the Association of Serb refugees from Croatia, Petar Djodan**, as saying that the results of the population census in Croatia clearly

demonstrate that ethnic cleansing has been conducted in Croatia, which along with plundering of Serb property was one of the goals of the war in Croatia. Commenting on the statement, made by Croatian Prime Minister Ivica Racan who said that a fact that 380,000 Serbs do not live in Croatia any more or a 'deficit' of 380,000 Serbs as Racan put it is a normal consequence over which one should not weep because those who started the war should have counted on the exodus, Djodan said it was cynical. Glas srpski quotes the **Chairman of the Croatian Helsinki Human Rights Committee, Zarko Puhovski**, as saying that a public discussion on reasons for ethnic cleansing in Croatia has to be started. **President of the Serb National Council (SNV) Milorad Pupovac** said that the SNV would not recognize the results of the population census and announced its revision. Pupovac said that national minorities make only 10% of the entire population in Croatia, which makes Croatia one of the most ethnically cleaned states in Europe. **Nezavisne novine** carried a similar report (**page 12**).

First post-war train leaves Banja Luka for Belgrade

Glas srpski (page 2) and **Nezavisne novine (front, page 2)** report that after a decade-long pause, the first passenger train left Banja Luka railway station for Belgrade, via the Republic of Croatia, yesterday morning. The vice president of the RS, Dragan Cavic, and Transport Minister Branko Dokic attended a ceremony at the railway station, which ended when dispatcher Goran Plavsic signalled the departure of the first Belgrade-bound train. "This is a sign that relations in the region are slowly but surely being re-established," Dokic said, and announced that, following the introduction of the Sarajevo-Banja Luka-Zagreb and Banja Luka-Belgrade lines, trains will link Banja Luka and Budapest soon. (**All Sarajevo dailies** and **CRO press** also reported on the event)

RS superimpose RS insignia on the new BiH Passports

In a short article, **START** reports that RS authorities found a way to "superimpose" the symbol of the Serb(ian) eagle on the new BiH passports without the entity insignia. *"The modern and new BiH passport indeed does not contain the entity insignia on its cover, however the travel documents issued in the RS do - on their third page...The trick is very simple: authorities issuing passports in the RS place a large stamp with the Serbian eagle on the third page. In addition, the page also displays the name of the RS Ministry of Interior and the regional post issuing the document."*

Interpol to investigate into the operations of Tuzla-based Polihem Compan

According to Dnevni Avaz front-page story (continued on p 9), Interpol has been requested from Tuzla to investigate into the Polihem Company's operations related to western European market.

BiH Federation Customs Administration: Disciplinary procedure to be launched against 71 officers

Dnevni Avaz (p 8) reports that the BiH Federation Customs Administration Director, Zelimir Rebac, has been proposed by an internal commission to launch disciplinary procedure against 71 customs officers involved in the illegal import of more than 1,000 vehicles.

Charges filled against Ivan Bender over Mostar Ero Hotel sale

Vecernji List (front and page 2, by Ilko Barbaric) reports that the Cantonal Prosecution of Mostar has pressed charges with Cantonal Court in Mostar against **Ivan Bender**, former director of Pension and Disability Fund in Mostar (MIO), **Mario Boras**, owner of Tuh-Invest Company of Mostar and

Nikola Antunovic, a former Federation Government official, over their role in the illegal sale of Mostar's Hotel "Ero" to Zagreb-based companies HUP Zagreb, Hotel Intercontinental and HBI d.o.o. Zagreb. According to the charges, Tuh-Invest Company, which was set up by the aforementioned companies, loaned 3,4 million KMs to MIO Mostar on October 17, 1999 which MIO was supposed to pay back within 60 days (together with 1,7 interest rate). The money was allegedly to be used for payment of pensions and MIO mortgaged Hotel Ero which was valued, according to the books, at 7,9 Million KMs. On December 19, Bender informs Tuh-Invest Company that MIO cannot return the loan after which the creditor starts distraint process (forced sale) with the Mostar Municipal Court I which results in an Agreement on sale of Hotel "Ero" for 5,4 million KMs in other words for the sum that is 2,5 million KMs less than its book value. Both Bender and Boras refute the charges, with Bender saying that the sale of Hotel "Ero" would have never happened had the MIO Mostar could have de-blocked its funds in Hercegovacka Banka.

Ashdown meets with Mesic

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, met in Sarajevo on Tuesday with the Croatian President Stipe Mesic. At a press conference following the meeting, Ashdown said he had always believed in Mesic as a statesman. *"We discussed the developments in the region, the situation in BiH and Croatia, and fight against terrorism. We agreed that all disputed issues can be solved if the Rule of Law is established in both countries,"* Mesic told journalists (Oslobodjenje - p 3, Dnevni Avaz - p 4 with photo of Ashdown and Mesic, Jutarnje Novine - p 4 with photo of Ashdown and Mesic, mentioned on the front page, Glas Srpski - p3, Nezavisne Novine - p 4, Jutarnji List(page 3),Vecernji List(page 14)andVjesnik(page 2)

On the same pages, all three Sarajevo dailies also report on Mesic's meeting with the SDA founder and Honorary President, Alija Izetbegovic, in Sarajevo on Tuesday.

Ashdown to visit Herzegovina on Wednesday, Thursday

The High Representative, **Paddy Ashdown**, will pay visit to Herzegovina on Wednesday and Thursday, the OHR spokesman, Kevin Sullivan, said at a press conference held in Sarajevo on Tuesday. The visit is a continuation of the Ashdown's visit to BiH citizens. *"Politicians in this country very often speak on behalf of the citizens, but the High Representative only wants to see for himself what common people think. Herzegovina is one of the most important regions and the High Representative is eager to hear opinions of the common people",* Sullivan said. (**Oslobodjenje** - p 4, **Dnevni Avaz** - p 8, **Jutarnje Novine** - p 4 announced the visit)

Dnevni Avaz (Sead Numanovic - p 3) published two articles in the first one explaining Ashdown's initiative for the establishment of special chambers within the BiH state judicial bodies to deal with organized crime, economic crime and corruption, and in the second one presenting Ashdown's deputies: Donald Hays (USA), who is already acting as the PDHR, and Gerhard Enver Shroembgens (Germany) and Bernard Fazier (France), who are expected to assume their duties in mid July this year.

NHI nominates Franjo Franjic for the new BiH Federation Finance Minister

Oslobodjenje (p 5) reports that the New Croat Initiative (NHI) nominated Franjo Franjic, the head of the party's caucus in the BiH Federation House of Representatives, to succeed removed Nikola Grabovac in the office of the BiH Federation Finance Minister (Dnevni Avaz - p 5, Jutarnje Novine - p 3 also reported on the issue).

In an opening editorial in **Start**, **Ozren Kebo** writes that the removed Federation Finance Minister, Nikola

Grabovac, did not get Paddy Ashdown's message about the ministerial responsibility and the fact that minister is indeed responsible for all shortcomings in his respective ministry. *"The entire time, Grabovac tried to keep his position. The outcome of this conflict between preservation of one's position and the said principle is partial: the position was not preserved, but the responsibility has not been assumed either. Grabovac is no longer a minister, however only because the higher force interfered. His sense of responsibility remained where it has been this whole time – at the ground zero."* Kebo argues that in the past two years, the ruling Alliance has not brought any significant changes in the BiH political life and failed to transform the dominant BiH post-war paradigm of crime and corruption into a new one – one of perspective, development, creativity... *"Forceful removal of Grabovac marked the end of the post-war paradigm. It is sad that one foreigner is doing this job for us – in this case the High Representative – when this issue can also be tackled by Bosnians and Herzegovinians. For, concepts like responsibly, creativity, initiative cannot be imposed. This is not about the decision, this is about the process."*

Deputy Minister of Social Care and Defenders Issues criticises Federation Government

Dnevni List (page 5) carries **Dobrica Jonjic**, Deputy Minister of Social Care and Defenders Issues as commenting decision of Federation Government on co-signatories as cynical because Government decided to give power of authorisation of money transactions to Deputy Minister of Finances **Sefika Hafizovic** but not to Assistant Minister for Treasury **Krunoslav Jelic**. Jonjic said: *"Proposal which asks that Jelic is being appointed as co-signatory for Hafizovic is rejected by Government with explanation that discipline procedure is being conducted against Jelic. However, to the best of my knowledge, against Deputy Minister Hafizovic criminal report has been filed and she can still be appointed as signatory for money transactions. Therefore, I find this session of Government farce and highlight of cynicism."*

Health Ministry of Federation denies allegations on abuse of children

Vecernji List (page 2) carries denial of Federation Ministry of Health on claims of Director of "SOS Telephone" **Jagoda Savic** who accused Minister of Health **Zeljko Misanovic** and BiH Federation Senior Epidemiologist **Zlatko Puvacic** for using children in BiH as guinea-pigs in testing immunological vaccines on hepatitis B. At yesterday's press conference representatives of World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF supported Misanovic and Puvacic. Misanovic said that the vaccinations against hepatitis B have been done in the last 20 years on basis of recommendations from WHO.

Editorial: Are there any honest ones?

Vecernji List (page 2, by **Zdenko Jurilj**) carries an editorial which says that the dirtiest election campaign ever is warming up in BiH and that anyone who even superficially follows papers, television or radio can witness dozens of denials, especially denials that are related to financial affairs stories. The author says that journalists, who are in his opinion under pressure from politicians, and the media in general should play their role by coming out with the truth only so the tired voters could finally recognize their true candidates in the elections.

New evidences in weapons affair

Vecernji List (page 3) reads that an internal investigation in **Federation Ministry of Defence** proved that Federation BiH has bypassed procedure made by OSCE in case of shipping weapons to Israel in April this year. Federation BiH did inform all countries, signatories of the Peace Agreement about the quantity of the weapons shipped to Israel, but without letting them to check it. All the

weapons are used for street fighting and civil unrest. The daily speculates that American diplomacy had their fingers in this affair because they wanted the Bosniaks to soften their relations with Arabic countries.

Presentation of HDZ-HD-HNZ coalition

Dnevni List (page 4) reports from press conference of HDZ and other Croat political parties that have formed coalition. Saying that HDZ has recognised similar program and political orientation of the other three parties (HD, HKDU and HNZ), acting president of HDZ BiH **Barisa Colak** added that the opportunity of post-election coalitions is open, primarily for the member parties of Croat National Assembly. **Tomislav Pupic** from Croat Christian Democrats (HD) and **Mate Bandur** from Croat Peoples Community (HNZ) have stated that the fact that HDZ is entering a coalition for the first time is a big step for this party and sign of democratisation of the whole region.

EU Council of Ministers fully supports Ashdown

Oslobodjenje (p 6) reports that the EU Council of Ministers gave full and unquestionable support to the work of the High Representative Paddy Ashdown. *"Ashdown will be strong High Representative, as much as this is possible at all in BiH,"* the EU ministers concluded.

Southeastern European foreign ministers meet in Belgrade

AFP reports that foreign ministers of nine southeastern European countries met on Wednesday in Belgrade to discuss regional cooperation, focusing on the fight against terrorism and organized crime. *"The fight against terrorism and organized crime are priorities for developing cooperation of the South-Eastern European Cooperation Process (SEECP),"* Yugoslav foreign minister **Goran Svilanovic** said, opening the meeting. It is the first meeting of its kind to be held in Yugoslavia since the ending of 12 years of international isolation the Balkan country faced under the rule of Slobodan Milosevic. *"All countries in the region have democratic governments and share same values of democracy, human rights, rule of law and free market. At the same time all of them are attached to the same goal of European integration,"* Svilanovic said. The SEECP members are: Albania, BiH, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Turkey and Yugoslavia. Croatia is taking part as an observer.

US to block extension of BiH force if not exempted from prosecution by ICC

In today's issue of **The New York Times**, **Serge Schmemmann** reports that the US warned on Tuesday that it would not take part in UN peacekeeping missions unless Security Council granted them immunity from prosecution by the International Criminal Court. The warning by **Richard Williamson**, the US representative to the UN for special political affairs was made at a SC session on international forces in BiH, whose mandate comes up for renewal on Friday. *"There should be no misunderstanding that if there is not adequate protection for US peacekeepers, there will be no US peacekeepers."*

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Tuesday, June 18, 1900)

- After ten year, the first train leaves for Belgrade from Banja Luka. (1.25)

- Director of RS Customs Administration G. Popovic resigns. (1.55)
- BiH State Border Service starts an investigation after suspicions of illegal smuggling of alcohol from BiH to FRY. (2)
- War on crime and terrorism is the most important form of cooperation between BiH and Croatia, it was said at today's meeting between Croatian president S. Mesic and High Representative P. Ashdown. (2)

FTV 1 (1930)

- A group of approximately 50 Serb nationalists captured on Monday night several Bosniak returnees and held them locked for several hours in a catering facility in Srebrenica, according to a press release from the regional department of the Ministry of Welfare, Displaced Persons and Refugees. (2)
- Director of RS Customs Administration G. Popovic resigns. (2)
- After ten year, the first train leaves for Belgrade from Banja Luka. (2.25)
- BiH and the World Bank signed on Tuesday a \$30 million development credit on running and safety of roads, approved under the International Development Agency (IDA) terms. (2.25)

RTRS (1930)

- Director of RS Customs Administration Goran Popovic resigns. (2)
- ICTY Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte said the Prosecution is investigating some 100 more cases of war crimes for which 35 new indictments will be raised. (3)
- Carla Del Ponte will not be in the ICTY delegation which will visit Banja Luka tomorrow. (.3)
- Croatian President Stjepan Mesic, who heads a senior Croatian delegation visiting BiH, met on Tuesday with High Representative Paddy Ashdown on the current situation in the region. (1)