

OHR BiH Media Round-up: 17/6/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: Fresh disputes in Bocinja – Serbs protest return of mujahedeens

Dnevni Avaz: Late Sunday night talks on pre-election coalitions – the Alliance leaders fail to reach the agreement

Jutarnje Novine: Lidija Korac – Deadline for the voters registration will not be extended; NHI requests Sefika Hafizovic's resignation

Dnevni List: Interview with Miro Grabovac Titan – Any isolation nowadays is a luxury; Nezim Halilovic Muderris, an Islamic Priest with bloodied hands – and a “businessman”???

Vecernji List: Five hours in prison with Fikret Abdic

Nezavisne Novine: World Soccer Championship – The entire Africa celebrates Senegal's victory; Milan Ninkovic, a senior SDS official, on the customs affair – RS Government should remove Popovic

Glas Srpski: School enrolment in RS – Straight-A pupils have advantage; America: Another person suspected of having terrorist links arrested in Florida;

Blic: Fikret Abdic: I'm coming from the prison to the BiH Presidency; Only a quarter of Serbs returned to the Federation; Dragan Kalinic" The Customs' director does not obstruct the investigation; Mujahedeens return to Bocinja?

Serbs protest return of mujahedeens to Bocinja

ONASA, Oslobodjenje (front page) and Dnevni Avaz (p 8) report that the Serb returnees to the villages of Gornja and Donja Bocinja, Bakotic and Krasno Polje organized a peaceful demonstration on Sunday against, as they said, the return of mujahedeens to the area. Glas Srpski(page 2, Sl. Puhalo), Nezavisne Novine(page 2)andEuroBlic (page 10)also reported on the issue.

The Alliance leaders fail to reach the agreement on pre-election coalition; other pre-election related news

Dnevni Avaz (Indira Catic – p 4, announced on front page) reports that an extraordinary session of the Alliance for Change Coordination held in Sarajevo late on Sunday did not result in reaching the agreement on joint participation in the October elections. *“Ibrahim Spahic, the GDS President, elaborated all the advantages of the joint participation in the elections, but the agreement on the issue was not reached in the continuation of the discussion. The SDP representatives presented their earlier position, according to which the party will participate in the elections independently,”* the Coordination Chairman and the BiH Republican Party leader, Stjepan Kljucic, told the newspaper following the session.

Oslobodjenje (p 7) reports that the political parties belonging to the Croat National Assembly (HNS), whose representatives met during the weekend at an HDZ initiative, have also failed to reach the agreement on their joint participation in the October elections.

Dnevni List (front and page 2) and Vecernji List (page 4) carry interviews with the President of HSS (Croat Peasants' Party), **Ilija Simic**, in which he talks about the current situation on BiH political stage. **Dnevni List** notes that the Alliance for changes held a session of its Co-ordination last night in Sarajevo which was to render the issue

of joint activities of the member parties for the forthcoming elections. Due to late start of the session, the papers have no coverage of the session but Simic told the daily before the session started that there was no chance that the Alliance would go as one in the October elections because the strongest parties within the Alliance have already nominated their candidates for the BiH Presidency. Questioned whether that means that the Alliance would collapse, Simic says that the Alliance would survive in the current set up until the October elections. In an interview for **Vecernji List** Simic says that the High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** made a mistake when he removed **Nikola Grabovac** saying that Ashdown should have left it to the regular procedure to do the job. Simic says that the move has provoked the wrath of the majority of Croats who believe that Ashdown is making moves that are detrimental to the Croats. *"Some parties with the Croat prefix will try to capitalize on the move and unite the Croat electorate before the elections"*.

In an interview given to **Dnevni List (page 5)**, **Miro Grabovca Titan**, the President of HDU, says that the reasons because of which they decided to form a Coalition with **People's Party Working for Prosperity** are unifying of Croat votes in the best possible way and a joint vision regarding resolving of some issues, that are important for the interest of the Croat people. Titan says that the Croat people in BiH are in a very difficult political and economic situation and each sort of isolation is a luxury.

In an article on who will be candidates for the BiH Presidency in the October elections, Dnevni Avaz (p 3) writes that Haris Silajdzic (Party for BiH), Sulejman Tihic (SDA) and Ibrahim Spahic (GDS) have already been nominated for a Bosniak member of the body. The SDP has still not nominated its candidate and it is uncertain whether the party leader, Zlatko Lagumdžija, will run for the Presidency. There are also speculations that Rasim Kadic (LDS), Sefer Halilovic (BPS) and Fikret Abdic (DNZ) might run for a Bosniak member of the Presidency. Concerning a Croat member of the Presidency, for now, only Mladen Ivankovic has been nominated for the post by the Economic Block – HDU for Prosperity. There are speculations that Barisa Colak (on behalf of the HDZ) and Friar Petar Andjelovic (expected to be nominated by several smaller BiH Croat political parties) will also run for the body. In the Republika Srpska, Dragan Kalinic (SDS) and Mladen Ivanic (PDP) have been so far mentioned as more serious candidates for a Serb member of the BiH Presidency.

Vecernji List (page 5) exclusively carries an article about a visit of journalist **Esad Sabanagic** to **Fikret Abdic "Babo"**, who has been held in custody in Karlovac (Croatia). Abdic says that he is not guilty for the crimes that have been set against him and he expects acquitting verdict from the court. Abdic announces that he will take part in the upcoming elections: *"President of Election Commission (of BiH) will personally come here to the Regional Court in Karlovac, and I expect someone from OHR and OSCE. As soon as they see the files they will be able to see that I can take part in the elections. There is no guilt at all and everything comes down to political showdown."*

In an editorial on the upcoming elections, Faruk Cardzic writes in Dnevni Avaz (p 3) that the October elections could be the most uncertain and the most interesting elections held so far in BiH.

In today's editorial in **Vecernji List (page 2)** **Stjepan Kovac** writes about possible coalitions in BiH. Saying that **'Alliance for Democratic Changes'** is dying out four months before elections, the author says that only efficient coalition previously in BiH was the informal one, formed of **SDA-SDS-HDZ**. Saying that BiH by its complex structure requires coalitions, formal or informal, Kovac adds that the parties within such coalitions should legitimately represent all peoples and citizens. *"One can hope that new High Representative Paddy Ashdown will not follow his predecessor who preferred some, allegedly non-national parties and coalitions, but he will ensure fair election match. Most likely, we will see post-election informal coalition of national parties"*, the author finishes his editorial.

Ashdown to address entity's parliaments

Dnevni Avaz (p 2 with photo of Ashdown) learns that the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, intends to address deputies to the both Entity's Parliaments in the next two weeks and present them his plan of action related to strengthening the Rule of Law and fight against corruption. *"Following the addresses, he will be available for deputies' questions,"* Chief OHR Spokesman, Julian Braithwaite, told the newspaper.

BiH politicians support Ashdown's idea on recruiting finance ministers from Diaspora

According to Dnevni Avaz (p 2), the BiH politicians support an idea of the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, that the successful people from Diaspora can also be considered as candidates for the ministerial posts at the state and entity levels.

Sulejman Tihic (SDA leader): *"I could support such the idea. Those people must be patriots, they must love BiH."*

Ilija Simic (HSS president): *"It would be excellent if such the idea could be realized in an efficient way. But, I believe that there are no too many successful businessmen inBiH Diaspora."*

Sejfudin Tokic (Vice-president of the SDP Main Board): *"I fully support the standpoint that credible people are appointed to the ministerial posts regardless of whether they are living in BiH or abroad."*

NHI requests Sefika Hafizovic's resignation

Jutarnje Novine (p 7) reports that, at a session in Banja Luka on Sunday, the Central Board of the NHI (New Croat Initiative) concluded that it would select a nominee for the BiH Federation Finance Minister from its internal list with three-four names. It also concluded that the NHI representatives would at the next session of the BiH Federation Government request the Deputy Federation Finance Minister Sefika Hafizovic to resign over her involvement in the AM Sped case. If she fails to do so, the party will request the High Representative to remove her from the office.

Interview with a SDS senior official Milan Ninkovic: RS Government should dismiss Goran Popovic

In an interview with **Nezavisne novine (page 3, V. Popovic)** a **top SDS official, Milan Ninkovic** comments on the RS Customs Administration (RS CA) affair. Ninkovic said that if Popovic was responsible for the RS Customs Administration case then his deputy from the Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) is responsible too. A question that crops up is whether this is a same kind of scenario like in the case when criminal charges were pressed against Dodik (Note: He asks himself whether this is a witch-hunt that the PDP launched against the SNSD.) Ninkovic said that Ivanic is a man who plays a double game. *"He formed coalition with the SDS in the RS, but when it comes to BiH level he is strictly against the SDS, claiming he does not want to form coalition with nationalist parties. What PDP is doing right now is nothing but an electioneering. However, coalitions break up and coalitions are formed before elections. I expect that the Alliance for Change will break up, but I also hope that, for the benefit of our people, few more sessions of the RS National Assembly will take place before the elections. Everything else is an electioneering, even this RS CA case"*, said Ninkovic. When asked whether it is true that the SDS top leadership is ready to give up on Popovic but that Dragan Cavic is against it, Ninkovic said that the SDS candidate for RS CA general manager was Rodoljub Djukanovic, who was dismissed by the RS Government and no one asked the SDS for that. *"A government which has majority can do the same with Popovic. I think it is not fair of the PDP to do what it does. Ivanic has a right to bring the Popovic case before the Government, but he should not blame the SDS ministers for failure to dismiss Popovic. Popovic does not bear criminal but a moral responsibility"*, said Ninkovic.

EuroBlic quotes the **Chairman of the Alliance of National Renewal, Mirko Banjac (page 11)**, as saying that in this country anyone can take power and do whatever he-she wants to and then, of course, things like the RS CA affair happen. *"On one side, the RS leadership is playing with millions and on the other people are starving. The saddest thing is that people think that if someone decided to rob them then it is better that they are one of us. If people take side with thieves, then let them starving"*, said Banjac.

BBC: ICTY considers BiH war crimes trials

The president and chief prosecutor of the International War Crimes Tribunal, Claude Jorda and Carla del Ponte, visit Bosnia and Herzegovina on Monday to discuss prosecution of war crime cases by local courts. The legal process in the Hague is proving slow and expensive and the tribunal says it wants to turn more cases over to courts in BiH itself. Each hour of the Hague court's time costs approximately \$30,000, and it's estimated only a few hundred cases can be dealt with. But at least 7,000 people stand accused of serious war crimes in BiH .

A BBC correspondent in Sarajevo says some lower-level trials have already been held in BiH itself, but with uneven and sometimes legally dubious results. Our correspondent says Republika Srpska police chiefs and politicians are obstructing the trial of Serb policemen who were arrested by their own forces last month for the murder of a Roman Catholic priest in 1995.

Paddy Ashdown sees Swiss model as a path BiH should follow

Nezavisne Novine carries a High Representative's statement given for BBC (**page 5**) in which he said that the Dayton Peace Agreement is very unpleasant and that he wishes some of its elements were not included in it but that without them the peace would not have been possible. "There would not be peace without separate entities, but I do not see anything in the DPA which would prevent us from building a multi-ethnic state. My idea is a state like Switzerland and it seems to me that there are many people in BiH who think in the same way", said Ashdown, and added that it would be a state whose state institutions have minimal authority and local institutions have maximal authority.

Hansjoerg Kretschmer says BiH is too late with its integration into Europe

"BiH is much more late in the process of the accession to the European institutions than we expected. If there is a political will, I do not see any reason for further lateness, and I believe that your country will in such way come closer to the admission in the European Union," Hansjoerg Kretschmer, the Head of the EC Mission to BiH, said in an interview with Dnevni Avaz (p 5)

There were financial irregularities in the Federation Defense Ministry operations

Vecernji List (front and page 3) reads that a Joint International Advisory Commission has ascertained that there had been financial irregularities in both components of the Federation Army during the year 2000. The document which has been submitted to members of the Federation Parliament reads that there had been suspicious transactions in the Croat part of the ministry alone (run by the then Federation Minister of Defence **Miroslav Prce**) amassing to some 12 million KMs. According to the report there are no data on 5,7 million KMs that the Federation MoD paid out to contractors which are related and create a closed circle with the Hercegovacka Banka.

Nezim Halilovic Muderris, an Islamic Priest with bloodied hands - and a "businessman"???

Dnevni List (front and page 3) reads that one could hear a lot about corruption, crime and money laundry in BiH lately and that all the stories were more or less related to names from BiH political establishment in the same time telling the DL readers that not much attention was given to organisations with religious prefix, the organisations that have according to the authors of the article **Anes Hindic and Vesna Leto**, received more money than the state institutions. The authors go on to say that the leading men of the BiH Islamic Community including the Reis-ul-ulema **Ceric** have

been involved into transfers of money that Arab countries donated to humanitarian organisations which were, according to the authors, set up to launder the money. The rest of the article is dedicated to **Nezim effendi Halilovic AKA Muderis** which says that Halilovic, "*the khoja with bloodied hands*", as DL calls Halilovic, instead of winding up in The Hague now runs the BiH Islamic Community's *Vakufska Direkcija* (a department of Islamic Community in charge of Islamic Community's property).

Dnevni List on Mostar Airport

Dnevni List (front and page 5) carries a rather critical article about the situation surrounding the Mostar Airport. The author of the article **Vladimir Buic** criticizes both efforts of the Director of BiH Civil Aviation, **Amadeo Mandic**, who is trying to transfer the jurisdiction over the Mostar Airport from three Mostar municipalities with Croat majority to the City Administration of Mostar and Mostar Mayor and Deputy Mayor **Hamdija Jahic and Neven Tomic** respectively saying that the Mostar principals cannot even maintain the streets of Mostar in an orderly condition but are eager to take on "grand" projects such as the Mostar Airport, the airport which, according to Mandic, would be used to the benefit of all "citizens" of Mostar and not to benefit of Croat municipalities only. Buic also calls on Mandic to reveal the whereabouts of 50 million US\$ that were donated to BiH by the Government of Qatar in 1998 for procurement of gear for control of BiH sky.

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Sunday, June 16, 1990)

- Coordination of the Alliance for Changes will tonight hold a session to discuss possible joint participation in the upcoming elections. (1)
- Haris Silajdzic speaks for the BHTV 1: Nijaz Durakovic will have to decide on his own which party he will join. (2.5)
- Serb returnees in the Maglaj's settlements of Gornja Bocinja, Donja Bocinja, Bakotic and Krsno Polje protested on Sunday because, as they said, the return of mujahedins to this area.

FTV 1 (1930)

- Serb returnees in the Maglaj's settlements of Gornja Bocinja, Donja Bocinja, Bakotic and Krsno Polje protested on Sunday because, as they said, the return of mujahedins to this area. (2)
- Four persons with Abu Hamza nicknames visited BiH. The most famous one is the leaders of mujahedeens in Bocinja. He currently lives in Sokolovic Kolonija in Sarajevo. (2)
- At the seventh assembly of the BiH Serb Civic Council-Movement for Equality (SGV-PR) held on Sunday, Mirko Pejanovic was re-elected at the position of the president of this non-governmental organization.

RTRS (1930)

- SDS President Dragan Kalinic told the RTRS that the attack on the SDS is being directed from two groups - those who had people involved in numerous affairs that have not been solved, and PDP which is surprising.
- The SDS will not be an obstacle to the investigation into all affairs. (1.30)
- The PDP has never been involved in any affair, and it is not involved in the customs case either. We want all affairs to be solved, because only that can lead to the strengthening of the RS institutions' authority PDP Spokesman Igor Crnadak said. (1)
- A decision of the High Representative to replace the Federation finance minister will affect the

reorganization at the political scene in BiH, Kresimir Zubak said. He added that the Alliance for Changes is breaking up. (1)

- Finance Minister Nikola Grabovac repeated that Ashdown's decision did not correspond to the results of his work, which is confirmed by the regular payment of pensions and invalid fees. (1)
- High Representative Paddy Ashdown said a good solution was to appoint successful BiH businessmen who live abroad as the new finance ministers in both entities. (1.20)
- Serb returnees in the Maglaj's settlements of Gornja Bocinja, Donja Bocinja, Bakotic and Krsno Polje protested on Sunday because, as they said, the return of mujaheedins to this area.