

BiH Media Round-up, 6/6/2002

Headlines in print media

Oslobodjenje

- SDP expects NHI to remove Nikola Grabovac

Dnevni Avaz

- Silajdzic to run for the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency

Jutarnje Novine

- The BiH Election Commission: 55 political parties eligible to participate in the upcoming elections

Dnevni List

- Face to Face with Mijat Tuka, the BiH Federation Deputy Minister of Social Welfare

Vecernji List

- An action by the Department for Fight against Corruption and Money Laundering: Criminal charges filled against former Capljina municipal leadership

Nezavisne Novine

- A fresh suicide-bomber attack in northern Israel: 18 people killed, 40 injured
- Faruk Balijagic, the lawyer of an indictee for secret storing of the grenades in Mostar: the state leadership stands behind hidden grenades

Glas Srpski

- Unassigned RS Tax Administration employees warn: only the politically suitable ones remain in the offices
- Sarajevo: Saleh Nidal, accused of links with the Islamic terrorism, escaped from home custody

SDP expects NHI to remove Nikola Grabovac
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By removing Director of the BiH Federation Customs Administration Director Slavko Sikiric, the SDP BiH has sent a clear request to the New Croat Initiative (NHI) to do the same and remove its nominee Nikola Grabovac from the office of the BiH Federation Finance Minister, a high-ranking SDP's official told Oslobodjenje (front-page story). The same source say that the NHI leader, Kresimir Zubak, had a consultative meeting in OHR on Tuesday, at which Grabovac's responsibility for the AM Sped case was also discussed. Oslobodjenje learns that, at its session in Sarajevo on Thursday, the BiH Federation Government will announce Sikiric's removal and the appointment of another SDP nominee, Zelimir

Rebac, at the post.

"SDP will ask its members who are allegedly involved the AM-SPED affair to immediately resign. If they fail to do so, the SDP will remove all its members who were mentioned in connection with this affair," said **Dzevad Haznadar**, member of the SDP Presidency said at a press conference on Wednesday in Sarajevo (**Oslobodjenje**, page 6). He added that this also refers to Slavko Sikiric, the director of the Federation Customs Administration. *"Our position on AM-SPED is clear and we insist that the responsible institutions put an end to this case, as naturally, we do not want to support any illegal activities conducted by anyone, including our party members,"* said Haznadar.

However, Jutarnje Novine (page 4) says that Sikiric is likely not to resign as requested. *"If the SDP BiH Presidency requests me to resign, I will do it but only under condition that the move is not linked with the AM Sped case,"* Sikiric said in a statement with the newspaper.

Head of the BiH Islamic Community wonders: Who minds delivery for the humanitarian assistance to Muslims?

The Head of the BiH Islamic Community, Mustafa Cerić, accused the country's authorities Wednesday of discriminating against Muslim humanitarian organizations following the anti-terror campaign launched after the September 11 attacks in the United States. *"An atmosphere has been created here in which people stand accused of terrorism even though not a single claim has been confirmed through appropriate legal procedures,"* he told a press conference in Sarajevo. *"Muslims have the right to ask who is against humanitarian aid from Islamic countries, which helped the citizens of Sarajevo during four years of siege to survive starvation, thirst,"* he emphasized. (**AFP**, **Oslobodjenje** (page 7), **Dnevni Avaz** (page 4), **Jutarnje Novine** (page 6), and **Slobodna Dalmacija** as well as electronic media report on the press conference)

Lagumdžija meets with OIC Ambassadors: control of the humanitarian organizations is not an anti-Islamic campaign

Dnevni Avaz (page 2) reports that the BiH Foreign Minister, Zlatko Lagumdžija, met in Sarajevo on Wednesday with the Organization of the Islamic Countries (OIC) Ambassadors to BiH to inform them about the current political situation in the country. *"The control of the humanitarian organizations' financial operations has not been directed exclusively towards the Arab-Islamic humanitarian organizations, but, in general, towards those ones which are suspected for violating BiH laws and regulations,"* Lagumdžija told the Ambassadors according to a press release issued by the BiH Foreign Ministry.

Dnevni List: Daily Commentary: From dusk till dawn

The editorial written by **Miso Relota** carries that under a masque of humanitarian acting most Islamic Humanitarian Organizations chose BiH in order to prepare terrorist actions directed against countries belonging to NATO. The author says that this is not surprise because the Sarajevo authority at that time enabled them to act in the heart of Europe. The author states examples of the recent police action in Travnik directed against Islamic humanitarian organization Al-Haramin Islamic Foundation, Pogorelica case, yesterday's break-out of terrorist Salih Nidal from a house arrest in Bugojno etc. Relota says that it is clear to everyone that BiH will not enter European-Atlantic Integration as long as the issue of terrorist groups, which have found a shelter in BiH, is not resolved. According to the editorial, the statement of the Head of Islamic Community in BiH given yesterday, which says that all

these searches are ill-intentioned and immoral and that all this influence the attitude of the Islamic countries towards BiH, is confusing. Relota concludes that terrorism is evil, which has to be rooted out and it cannot be justified by any purpose.

US Blacklists 19 Countries for Human Trafficking, Bosnia among them

The United States on Wednesday accused 19 countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, of making no real effort to stop the trade in human being that forces hundreds of thousands to work in brothels and sweatshops. *"The overwhelming majority of victims are women and children. Traffickers often force them into pornography and prostitution, subjecting them to terrible mental and physical abuse and putting them at risk from devastating diseases, such as HIV,"* US Secretary of State, **Colin Powell**, said as he unveiled the second annual report on human trafficking mandated by Congress. **Reuters** reports that BiH found its place in this worst group for a second time, together with Bahrain, Belarus, Greece, Indonesia, Lebanon and others. (The same report was published in today's **The New York Times**).

Silajdzic to run for the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency

Haris Silajdzic, the founder of the Party for BiH, confirmed in a statement for Dnevni Avaz (front-page) that he would run for the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency in the upcoming elections.

The High Representative meets with the Croatian Deputy Foreign Minister Vesna Cvjetkovic-Kurelec; other news related to the HR's activities

High Representative Paddy Ashdown told journalists after the meeting with **Croatian Deputy Foreign Minister Vesna Cvjetkovic-Kurelec** that the crucial cooperation is the cross-border cooperation, because in BiH there is no a single economic market but only a single market for criminal activities. *"A job that has already been finished to get the governments of Croatia and BiH closer to each other is crucial for the beginning and we would like to see relations between these two countries improving"*, said Ashdown and added that the BiH/Cro Inter-State Council will discuss this at its session, which is to take place on 17 June. (Nezavisne Novine – page 5, and Dnevni Avaz – page 12 plus photo, reported on the issue)

Ashdown fully informed about the affairs shaking BiH

"The High Representative Paddy Ashdown has been in detail informed about the affairs currently shaking BiH authorities, including the AM Sped and office abuses within the RS Customs Administration and he wants particularly to emphasize one thing: No one can tolerate corruption," Chief OHR Spokesman Julian Braithwaite told Dnevni Avaz (page 2).

Ashdown to attend inaugural session of the BiH Court on Thursday

Dnevni Avaz (page 10) announced the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, would on Thursday attend the inaugural session of the Court of BiH. *"For him, this is a key institution in fight against the organized and inter-entity crime,"* Braithwaite told the newspaper.

Kostunica against Ashdown "tutorship"

Oslobodjenje (page 7) reports that, on Wednesday, the FRY President Vojislav Kostunica supported an idea on holding a BiH/Croati/FRY summit in Sarajevo dedicated to the problems of refugees. However,

he assessed as inappropriate that the idea had been presented as the initiative launched by the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown. *"Ashdown has authorities only as the High Representative for BiH, and they cannot be applied in FRY and Croatia,"* Kostunica said.

Mesic says Kostunica should also confirm FRY does not have territorial pretensions towards BiH

"I am prepared to come to Sarajevo for a meeting of three Presidents, in order to once gain confirm that the Republic of Croatia respects the internationally-recognized BiH borders, and that it has no pretensions on any part of BiH's territory," Croatian President Stipe Mesic, said in an interview with Dnevni Avaz (page 5). He added that the purpose of the meeting would be fulfilled if the FRY President makes such the statement as well.

Dnevni Avaz Public Opinion Poll: the BiH citizens assess the first Paddy Ashdown's moves and statements as very good

The Avaz Agency conducted a poll on a sample of 100 questioned citizens in Sarajevo, Mostar and Banja Luka with the question: How would you on the one to five scale assess work and the statements of the new High representative, Paddy Ashdown, at the beginning of his mandate? Results (page 3) - Sarajevo: 23% - 5, 48% - 4, 21% - 3, 8% - 2, and 0% - 1; Banja Luka: 13% - 5, 25% - 4, 31% - 3, 21% - 2, and 10% - 1; Mostar: 27% - 5, 47% - 4, 20% - 3, 6% - 2, 0% - 1

The BiH Presidency dissatisfied with the work of the BiH/Croatia Inter-State Cooperation Council

At a session in Sarajevo on Wednesday, the BiH Presidency expressed its dissatisfaction with the work of the BiH/Croatia Inter-state Cooperation Council (Oslobodjenje, page 3). It adopts a platform for the participation of the BiH representatives at the next session of the Council scheduled for June 17 in Sarajevo. *"We requested the BiH Council of Ministers to analyze the relations with Croatia and to undertake measures for the removal of all obstacles,"* the Croat members of the Presidency, Jozo Krizanovic, told journalists following the session.

In an interview with Dnevni Avaz (page 5), Coatian President Stipe Mesic admitted there were certain problems in relations between the two countries. However, he said he was an optimist regarding the resolution of those problems, since, *"there is an undoubted political will in relevant political circles in the both countries not to jeopardize the entirety of good relations between Croatia and BiH."*

A two-day regional investment conference opens in Sarajevo

"Unnecessary obstacles to investment — created as a rule either by political or bureaucratic incompetence — have prevented this potentially wealthy country from becoming wealthy," Deputy High Representative and Head of the OHR Economics Department Patrice Dreiski told a two-day regional investment conference which began in Sarajevo on Wednesday, according to **Dnevni Avaz** (page 8) and **Dnevni List** (page 4). He pledged the International Community's support for steps which the governments of the two Entities and the State have already agreed to take in order to remove barriers to investment. **Oslobodjenje** (page 10) also reported on the conference (not mentioning the OHR official), which has been organized by the BiH Ministry for Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, European Commission, World Bank and a number of local and international agencies.

BiH Election Commission: Candidacies of 54 political parties and 3 independent candidates for the upcoming elections verified

All BiH media, quote **BiH Election Commission Chairwoman Lidija Korac** as saying at a news conference in Sarajevo yesterday that 54 political parties and 3 independent candidates have been verified for the October elections. (**Glas srpski: page 3, Nezavisne novine: page 5, Oslobođenje: page 8, Dnevni Avaz: page 4, Jutarnje Novine: page 4, Vecernji List: page 4**)

Standing Committee on Military Issues urges authorities of RS and BiH Federation to discuss proposed decision on structure of BiH defense institutions

Glas Srpski (page 3) and Oslobođenje (page 4) reports that **the Standing Committee on Military Matters** on Wednesday requested that the RS and BiH Federation authorities discuss Proposed Decision on Organization and Appointment of Defense Institutions at the state level as soon as possible, which the BiH Presidency failed to agree on at its latest session. The **RS Army Chief of Staff, General Novica Simic**, denied that 1,700 officers, mostly from the 30th Cadre Centre, are currently employed with the RS Army HQ. *"Approximately 500 of them continued to work with the FRY Army, 600 are currently employed with the RS Army and 362 officers from the 30th Cadre centre, who have been retired, are contracted by the RS Army"*, said General Simic. (**Page 3**)

Will a BiH court judge vacate somebody else's property? - Between an apartment and a chair

Glas Srpski quotes **OHR Spokeswoman Sonja Pastuovic** as saying that a judge of the BiH Court's Appellate Department, Milos Babic is recommended by the OHR to vacate his property in the next 20 days and there will be no further questions relating to his position in the BiH Court. The paper reports that this basically means that Petritsch appointed to public office a man who is in violation of property laws, which Petritsch imposed. The author of the article raises 4 issues: 1) How come that Babic was appointed to the Provisional Election Commission, which last year removed from lists all candidates who were in violation of property laws? 2) Why did Petritsch appointed Babic twice to the RTRS Board of Governors despite the fact that he was familiar with his case? Currently Babic is the Chairman of the RTRS Board of Governors and member of the PBS Founding Committee. 3) Why did Petritsch appoint Babic to the BiH Court after all that happened? and 4) Given a very simply dilemma that Babic is currently facing - to voluntarily vacate the apartment or to get evicted by those who appointed him- why does the IC trust him? (Page 4)

Criminal charges filled against former Capljina municipal leaders

Vecernji List and **Slobodna Dalmacija** read that the **Federation Ministry of Interior** has filed criminal charges with the **Cantonal Prosecution in Mostar** against seven former Capljina municipal officials over suspicion that they have since 1997 until present days abused office and authority through **"Foundation of King Tomislav" (Zaklada kralja Tomislava)** thus committing a string of illegal acts. According to the criminal report the seven are involved in illegal usurpation of municipality-owned land in Capljina and wrongful claim of money amassing to 1,3 million KM. (**Oslobođenje** also reported on the issue)

Hercegovacka Banka Provisional Administration checking into legal grounds for a loan given to Federation Defence Ministry

Vecernji List reads that the **Provisional Administration of Hercegovacka Banka** is checking with the judiciary whether the **Federation Ministry of Defence**, being a user of the Federation budget, had legal grounds to take a commercial loan amassing to some 5,6 million KM, the loan which was later dispersed to some individuals and companies close to the then Federation Ministry of Defence. VL says that pursuant to current and former laws in the matter no Federation Ministry can take commercial loans without getting consent from the Federation Government and that the Provisional Administration would probably ask for forcible collection of the money. A separate article reads that the new High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** is interested into how far the investigation into the Hercegovacka Banka has gone. According to VL, the HR has asked that data on illegal acts in the bank be revealed by end of this year.

Editorial: Strike on judiciary in Croat cantons

In light of recent announcements that the **IJC** (Independent Judiciary Commission) is planning to carry out a reform of BiH judiciary which includes merging of Cantonal and abolishment of some Municipal Courts in BiH, **Vecernji List** carries an editorial by **Nikola Trogrlic** which criticises the reform saying that the reform is a strike on judiciary in cantons with Croat majority. The author says that the IJC proposal will result in Croats not having their own judiciary and Croats being tried before Tuzla, Zenica (Bosniak dominated) or Mostar (mixed composition) Cantonal Courts. *“Reform of the BiH judiciary should be supported, but only to an extent which would not detriment the Croats”*, says Trogrlic.

Policemen carry the flag of corruption in BiH

Slobodna Dalmacija carries article on corruption in BiH. The author says that well-paid officials of **Paddy Ashdown’s** office are searching through private property and bank accounts of customs officials in the **Republika Srpska**. The daily says that custom officials in the RS have taken five million KM of bribery, and evaded another 40 million KM. Because of custom evasion Banja Luka is loosing 30 million-KM on daily basis. The article says: *“while **Petritsch** in three years of his mandate was dealing mostly with ideological operation of over-all satanisation and political liquidation of nationalists ... Lord’s officials have announced the fight against crime and corruption as their first and most important task.”* In the same article there are results of monitoring the level of corruption in South-East Europe taken by **Initiative for Legal Development of SE Europe - SELDI**. According to those results the most corrupted in BiH are policemen (30%), followed by city administration officials (22,9%) and doctors (22,7%). The custom officials are on fourth (16,2%), businessmen on fifth (12,9%) and ministry officials on sixth place (12,9%). Among first ten are court officials (11,6%), university professors (11,1%), judges (9,1%) and public prosecutors (4,8%).

Banja Luka Public Security Center files criminal charges against former RS Prime Minister and former RS finance minister

Glas srpski reports on its front page that the Banja Luka Public Security Center filed with the Banja Luka Basic Prosecutor’s Office criminal charges against **former RS Prime Minister Milorad Dodik and former RS finance minister Novak Kondic**. The paper learned from the Banja Luka Police that both Dodik and Kondic are suspected of illegally paying off 3,5 million KM (convertible marks) intended for purchase of apartments as well as of approving housing loans for RS Government’s officials at the time. The paper claims that the money was taken from the RS budget during the year of 2000. These are the second criminal charges filed against Dodik and Kondic since the RS Public Security Center also filed criminal charges against Dodik and Kondic in April this year because they

RS vice-president says RS will challenge High Representative's decisions before Council of Europe

RS Vice President Dragan Cavic told in an interview with a Bijeljina-based television "BN TV" that the RS would challenge the latest High Representatives Decisions, **Glas Srpski** and **Nezavisne Novine** reported. *"These decisions question the constitutionality of the RS and if the BiH Constitutional Court decides that these Decisions do not violate the RS Constitution, then we shall challenge the Decisions before the Council of Europe"*, said Cavic. He denied statements made by some opposition parties that the Petritsch's latest decisions are part of the deal that the RS leadership made with Petritsch. *"That is not true. I spoke with Petritsch several times before his departure and nobody could imagine he would impose this package of Decisions"*, said Cavic. He added that this decision of Petritsch's caused some communication problems with the new High Representative Paddy Ashdown from whom one cannot expect to withdraw decisions that his predecessor issued. The papers also quote **OHR Spokeswoman Sonja Pastuovic** as saying at a news conference in Banja Luka that it will be impossible for the RS authorities to raise this issue before the Council of Ministers before the BiH Parliament ratifies BiH's accession to the Council of Europe. (**Glas Srpski: page 3, Nezavisne Novine: page 5**)

Judicial reform in RS - 6 courts will be closed down; 60 judges stay out of work

Nezavisne Novine reports that the reform of judiciary, which will be conducted in the RS, will result in reduced number of courts and judges. According to the Independent Judicial Commission (IJC) experts, the RS judicial system is too massive, overstaffed and inefficient and that is why the reform has to be implemented as soon as possible. Currently in the RS, there are Supreme Court, 5 district courts and 25 first-instance courts. According to a new IJC plan, the 5 district courts (Bijeljina, Banja Luka, Doboje, Srpsko Sarajevo and Trebinje) and the supreme court will stay, whilst the number of first-instance courts would be decreased from 25 to 19 or 20, while the number of judges would be decreased from 302 to 241. (Page 4)

Batic: Del Ponte promised to issue indictment against Izetbegovic

In interview given to **Slobodna Dalmacija**, Minister of Justice of Serbia **Vladan Batic** stated that Chief Prosecutor of ICTY **Carla del Ponte** promised him in March 2001 that she will issue the indictment against **Alija Izetbegovic**. Batic also said that if **Ratko Mladic** steps on territory of Serbia that he will be arrested, because Serbian Government can not sacrifice future of one nation because of few individuals.

Headlines in electronic media

BHTV (June 5, 1990)

- The BiH Election Commission verified at the session on Wednesday 54 political parties and three out of four independent candidates, who have applied until May 18 for the participation in the general elections scheduled for October 5 this year, President of the BiH Election Commission Lidija Korac told a press conference. (2)
- The Federation Parliament House of Representatives adopted on Wednesday the law on

founding of bodies for implementation of elections in the Federation of BiH. (1.5)

- FRY president V. Kostunica said progress has been made in relations between BiH and FRY, but much more can be done. (.3)

FTV (1930)

- FBiH Ministry of interior has pressed criminal charges against seven persons in Mostar on grounds of them committing several crimes since 1997, including illegal taking of land and finances amounting to 1.3 million KM. (2)
- The Head of Islamic community in BiH, Mustafa Ceric, condemned on Wednesday the raids in Islamic humanitarian organizations that began in the country in the aftermath of September 11 terrorist attacks. (2.5)
- The BiH team for coordination of anti-terrorist activities concluded on Wednesday that it is necessary to conduct a detail investigation about the case of escape of Saleh Nidal, who was deprived of the BiH citizenship last year, and to reexamine the responsibility of employees in the Interior Ministry (MUP) of the Central Bosnia Canton. (1.5)

RTRS (1930)

- The BiH Election Commission verified at the session on Wednesday 54 political parties and three out of four independent candidates, who have applied until May 18 for the participation in the general elections scheduled for October 5 this year, President of the BiH Election Commission Lidija Korac told a press conference. (2.3)
- The BiH Presidency adopted a report on the execution of the budget of the BiH's institution and international obligations for the last year, and it was concluded that 79.3 percent of the budget were executed concerning the financing of the BiH's institution and 87.1 percent concerning the servicing of the BiH foreign debt. (2.3)
- At today's session of SCMM, FBiH and RS ministries of defense supported the training program for air force members in USA. A BiH military unit could travel to a peacekeeping mission in Congo if the BiH Federation and Republika Srpska reach an agreement on the issue. (3)

FTV1, Pogledi at 2250

- Foreign Minister Zlatko Lagumdžija meets with ambassadors-members of the Organization of Islamic Conference accredited in BiH on the actual political events in BiH and fighting terrorism (1.45 min)
- Islamic community condemns raids in humanitarian organizations from Islamic countries (2,35 min)
- Federation Interior Ministry files charges against seven persons from Capljina and Mostar due to suspicion of criminal acts in Kralja Tomislav trust fund (1.25 min)
- BiH Presidency concludes a huge stoppage in cooperation between BiH and Croatia (1.15 min)