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BiH state-related Issues

PIC Steering Board in session

Nezavisne Novine reports that at the PIC Steering Board session, which is taking place in Brussels today, a BiH delegation will present the state program of stabilisation and accession to European integration in an attempt to get the support for it. BiH Minister for European integration Dragan Mikerevic says that one of the topics will be EU Card program, which foresees 105 million KM for BiH. According to BiH Minister of Treasury Ante Domazet, BiH wants to present itself as a serious partner with people who are ready to take the responsibility. Domazet also says that the BiH delegation will try to convince international community representatives in Brussels that the new BiH authorities are capable to develop a vision of BiH economic progress.

Lagumdzija says establishment of partnership relations to be in focus of Brussels discussions

BiH Council of Ministers Chairman Zlatko Lagumdzija told journalist in Brussels on Tuesday that the establishment of partnership relations between the international community and BiH would be in focus of all upcoming Brussels discussions, since a completely new situation had been created following the election victory of the Alliance for Changes. “We want to repeat to the representatives of the international community that BiH cannot any more play role of a workshop in which only

used cars are being repaired. The new BiH authorities want to take a role of constructor, static expert and the one who performs the work as well, which is essentially different situation comparing to the previous period when the international community was facing only obedient performers of the very often poorly projected works," Lagumdzija emphasized. Lagumdzija said that such efforts of the BiH central government are compatible with ideas of influenced western political circles to accelerate process of unification of the international community's political functions in BiH. The BiH Council of Ministers Chairman said he would request Patten to urge more concrete and accelerated support of the official Brussels to the projects of BiH economic development. Lagumdzija added that the BiH delegation at the upcoming session of the Peace Implementation Council would also bring in the issue of the establishment of visa regime between BiH and its neighbors on the basis of the reciprocity.

Lagumdzija meets with EU's Patten

Dnevni Avaz reports that BiH Council of Ministers Chairman and Foreign Minister Zlatko Lagumdzija on Tuesday met in Brussels with European Union Foreign Policy Commissioner Chris Patten to discuss economic and political situation in BiH. The two officials agreed that preparations should start for fulfilling pre-conditions for reaching the stabilization and accession agreement between BiH and European Union.

Petritsch and BiH delegation to meet with PIC Steering Board political directors on Wednesday in Brussels

A BiH delegation and High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch are expected to meet with Peace Implementation Council's Steering Board political directors on Wednesday in Brussels. The discussion will focus on economic reforms and Road Map requirements fulfillment.

Federation

BiH Federation Privatization Agency says it is necessary to conduct financial audit of Mostar Aluminium

According to Dnevni Avaz, the BiH Federation Privatization Agency Director, Resad Zutic, sent a letter to the BiH Federation Government in which he said that the financial audit of the Mostar Aluminum Company was necessary. Zutic assessed the report on the legal audit of the company, conducted by an international team of experts, as controversial both in logical and legal sense.

Payment of the first backlog pension to start on Wednesday

Orders for payment of the first out of five backlog pensions signed by BiH Federation Finance Minister Nikola Grabvac and his Deputy Sefika Hafizovic were sent on Tuesday to the Sarajevo-based BiH Pension-Disability Insurance Fund. Hafizovic said that, since BiH Federation Government had ensured 42 million KM, the pension would be paid in full amount.

***Slobodna Dalmacija:* BiH Federation Finance Minister presents vision of the entity macro-economic development** (provided by OHR Mostar)

Federation Minister for Finance on Monday presented the businesspersons in the Central Bosnia Canton with the proposal of "Macro-economic Vision of Development in the Federation of BiH – Strategic Goals and Global Activities."

"The basic concept of the whole vision of the macro-economic development is an increase of the employment and production rate. If we were to realize what we have planned, in five years we would reach 60% of the development that we had in 1991," said Grabovac.

He stressed it is important that all citizens of the BiH

Federation get this information so that they can finally 'sober up' from the promises that they will be eating "milk and honey with a golden spoon."

He added: "However, we should turn to work, life, making capacities operational and launching of the investment programs, and politics and political disputes should be left aside, at least to some reasonable extent, although this life segment is still the focus of our interest."

He stressed that in the realization of the macro-economic vision of the BiH Federation development he sees possible obstacles, and one of them are attacks on the Croat personnel that have become more frequent and synchronized. Grabovac stated that together with Anic, Lukac and Zubak he has been attacked as well:

"I want to stress that by this I do not mean to say that we have to be untouchable and protected from public criticism and responsibility. No, absolutely not! What is important in all this is the program that we have to realize and setups, obstructions or stalling of the process that has started will not be a failure of an individual, but will be a fall into a more difficult and more critical economic situation," said Grabovac, as quoted in Slobodna Dalmacija.

***Vecernji List:* More dismissals in the Federation Army**
(provided by OHR Mostar)

The Central Association for Protection of Croat National Interests condemned in strongest terms the Federation authorities for their "non-selective and politically-motivates dismissals" of soldiers from the Federation Army. The Central Association blames the authorities and the ministries for failing to pay out the full salary amount to "active soldiers who are on a secret list of 'disloyal' individuals," reads Vecernji List.

"The loyal ones have received the full salary amount and the

disloyal ones are being blackmailed with payment of 50% of their salaries. Besides, they are constantly exposed to various sorts of pressure, threats and blackmails," says the Central Association.

They claim that lists have been made to serve as the basis for forcing certain people, under various pressures and the threat of false indictment bills from The Hague, to cease their active service in the Federation Army. Vecernji List tried to find out how grounded these allegations are. Antun Mrkonjic, the Spokesperson for the Defense Ministry, claimed they had nothing to do with dismissals of active soldiers. All decisions are made within the framework of the plan of the reduction of the number soldiers and that is at the State level, i.e. the level of BiH Presidency. The BiH Presidency Office is the only institution authorized to make decisions on the reduction of the number of soldiers, said Mrkonjic. Vecernji List says they could not check the information with the Presidency Office because the Head of Office Ivan Nagulov was absent for an official appointment yesterday.

P align="justify">***Vecernji List:*** **Western Herzegovina Canton Government did not discuss the attempt of de-empowering the Canton** (provided by OHR Mostar)

The Western Herzegovina Canton Government, in their session, did not discuss the attempt of the authorities in Sarajevo to de-empower the canton by means of the announced takeover of the taxes that are currently under the cantonal competency. This might be discussed on Friday when they expect the arrival of the Federation Minister for Finance, Mijo Grabovac, the Croat who has been speaking harshly to the representatives of the Croat-majority cantons ever since his first day in office, says Vecernji List. Minister Grabovac will not have a meeting at the offices of the Canton, but will talk to the Cantonal Government and Chamber of Commerce representatives at the Hotel Royal.

The Cantonal Government concluded they still had problems with the International Community, which has declined two times already to appoint the police commissioner nominated by the Cantonal Government. In both cases, it was a person who, in their opinion, did not meet democratic, ethic and political principles required, reads Vecernji List.

Finally, the Government appointed a Commission to produce a study on the establishment and startup of a radio and television station of the Western Herzegovina Canton. Although their financial basis for creating a television is unclear, it is evident that the Cantonal officials want to realize their long promised investment.

Republika Srpska

RS political and military officials discuss possible BiH's accession to the NATO Partnership for Peace program

The top Republika Srpska political and military representatives including RS President Mirko Sarovic, RS National Assembly Speaker Dragan Kalinic, RS Defense Minister Slobodan Bilic and RS Deputy Prime Minister Petar Kunic met on Tuesday in Banja Luka to discuss issue of the BiH's possible accession to the NATO Partnership for peace program. RS Assistant Defense Minister for International Relations Bosko Gvozden said following the meeting that all positive and negative aspects of the accession to the program had been considered. According to the Banja Luka dailies, the conclusion of the meeting was that the RS supports the BiH accession to the Partnership for Peace program but does not support the change of the BiH constitutional order, which means that the present solutions providing for two armies and two defence ministries in BiH must be upheld. Oslobodjenje reported that Gvozden had excluded possibility that joint BiH Army and Defense Ministry are established. The representatives of the FRY Army and Defense Ministry also attended the

meeting.

Nezavisne Novine: a brief interview with Mladen Ivanic on RS Government's reshuffle

In a brief interview with Nezavisne Novine, the RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, explains his views on the RS Government reshuffle and problems that PDP is having in its relations with the SDS. Ivanic says that the Government reshuffle is not one of his priorities but it is going to happen in the next four weeks. Ivanic did not specified which ministers will be removed. Commenting on PDP-SDS relations, Ivanic says that the PDP has certain problems with the SDS given that every parliamentary majority, which comprises of more than 2 political parties always have some problems. "SDS criticises the RS Government because of the poor implementation of the election results. They think that their people are not appointed to positions the SDS considers suitable. Unlike the SDS, the PDP representatives are more concerned over the moves that have to be made in the future", says Ivanic.

Miljevic's resignation still not explained

Wednesday's edition of Nezavisne Novine reports that the Republika Srpska Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, has still not informed the RS Government about the resignation of the his Advisor for Privatisation. The paper learns from certain ministers that Damir Miljevic is a man with a good reputation who has been following the privatisation process from the very beginning. "Miljevic is one of the people who designed the privatisation programs in the RS. It turns out that everything that has been done so far is in question but not by his fault. Miljevic is not the only one who does not agree with Ivanic's decision to give in the SDS pressures. PDP ministers are divided. PDP leadership is falling apart", says a source close to the paper.

Changes of the RS Law on Privatisation

Wednesday's edition of Glas Srpski reports that Croats and Bosniaks who moved to Croatia during the war will be able to purchase their flats in the RS only when they prove that they returned the property that they exchanged with Serbs from Croatia who currently live in the RS. According to the paper, this is a gist of the instruction that the representatives of the OHR and Ministry of Refugees and Displaced Persons from both entities have been working on. The instruction is based on the High Representative's decision on further changes and amendments to law on privatisation of socially owned flats. According to this decision, the occupancy right holder will be able to file a claim for purchase of apartment only when he/she proves that he/she has vacated the property that he/she has occupied until then, e.g., that the pre-war occupancy holder is reinstated to his/her vacated property. "The Croatian Government agreed with this and there is also a form that people can easily get", it was stated from the OHR. The paper also quotes Spokesman of the RS Ministry of Refugees and Displaced Persons Neven Mijatovic as saying that the Ministry expects the OHR to draft instructions that would right a wrong against Serbs from Croatia. "The OHR is preparing changes and amendments to property laws and the RS Ministry will give suggestions for the changes. The deadline for the property laws changes is end of this year but we think it is going to happen even before," says Mijatovic.

International Community

Two planes crash into towers of World Trade Center in New York

Two planes crashed early on Tuesday into towers of the World Trade Center in New York in which every day work at least 50,000 people. US President George Bush immediately assessed the attack as a terrorist one. Abu Dhabi television reported it had received a call from the Democratic Front for the

Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) abroad claiming responsibility for crashing two planes into the WTC buildings. In regard of the attacks, the BiH Presidency sent its condolences to US President Bush, as the BiH Foreign Ministry fiercely condemned the attacks describing them as cowardly terrorist action against civilians.

***Slobodna Dalmacija:* The Provisional Administration has to save the property of the Hercegovacka Banka** (provided by OHR Mostar)

According to Johan Verhayden, the Spokesperson for the Provisional Administrator of Hercegovacka Banka, the Provisional Administrator is not ready yet to publish the details of the analyses that have made so far. There is still no information about secret accounts but perhaps something more could be revealed if Privredna Banka Zagreb would allow an inspection into the financial transactions between Hercegovacka Bank and Privredna Banka.

The refusal of the Privredna Banka Zagreb to allow an inspection into the documents requested, forced the lawyers of the Provisional Administrator to examine all possibilities as to how to get the information from those documents, reads Slobodna Dalmacija.

OHR launches a public information campaign to promote economic reforms

According to Sarajevo dailies, OHR Spokesman Oleg Milisic told journalists on Tuesday in Sarajevo that the OHR had started a public information campaign devoted to the topic of economic reform, which was one of the OHR's strategic priorities. The campaign will, through an animated story, radio spots, and jumbo posters show how BiH will look like in the future if necessary economic reforms are carried out.

OSCE concerned over non-implementation of property laws in RS

Both Banja Luka dailies report that the Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH, Robert Beecroft, expressed his deep concern at his meeting with the Republika Srpska Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic and the RS Minister for Refugees and Displace Persons, Mico Micic, over the failure of the RS to implement property laws. Beecroft said that he had discussed the need for acceleration of property law implementation in the RS with Minister Micic. He emphasised that the implementation rate 21% was absolutely insufficient. “Currently there are more than 90, 000 reinstatement claims that have to be resolved. Until this task is accomplished, donors and investors will not have the reason to believe that the RS is capable of protecting the fundamental property rights”, says Beecroft.

Serbian Justice Minister says providing guarantees for Krajisnik might be waste of time

Wednesday’s edition of Nezavisne Novine quotes Serbian Justice Minister Vladan Batic as saying that the Serbian Government will consider Momcilo Krajisnik’s request for temporary release only if the ICTY sends a signal that such request could be approved. “The condition is that we get a positive signal from the Hague Tribunal (ICTY), which we have still not received. We have had hints that cannot be described as positive ones, and in spite of our wish to provide guarantees for Krajisnik’s temporary release we have to get a hint from the ICTY because it is pointless to knock on a closed door. If there is a possibility for Krajisnik’s release than we shall try to do something about it but if the such possibility does not exist than providing guarantees for him would be a waste of time”, says Batic.