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BiH State-related Issue

BiH Council of Ministers adopts draft law on civil service

The BiH Council of Ministers adopted at its session held on Monday in Sarajevo a draft law on civil services in the BiH state institutions. The law is one of pre-conditions for the BiH accession to the Council of Europe. BiH Minister of Civil Affairs and Communications Svetozar Mihajlovic told journalists following the session that all civil servants who had been engaged contrary to the valid law on the state administration would be fired immediately after passage of the new law. They will be assigned to temporary duties until a procedure in accordance to the new law is completed. According to Oslobodjenje, the Council of Ministers is expected to continue its session on Tuesday and is likely to discuss the draft election law.

Spiric says BiH Presidency works on establishment of unitary state

According to Oslobodjenje, Cochairman of the BiH House of Peoples Nikola Spiric assessed that the BiH Presidency was working on the establishment of unitary state through proposing adoption of certain laws such as the constitutional law or the law on sports. Spiric on Monday told a press conference in Banja Luka that this was additionally complicating the political situation in the country, because some were trying to change the BiH Constitution defining the functions of the state and the entities in an unconstitutional way. Both Banja Luka dailies quote Spiric as saying that it would be very good if the Republika Srpska politicians start

talking about reshuffling of the entity Government.

Slobodna Dalmacija: the BiH Presidency documents for The Hague still being collected

Anto Grbic, the General Secretary of the BiH Presidency, stated that the BiH Presidency documents from the period from 1990 to 1993, that The Hague Tribunal had demanded, were still being collected and nothing was sent to The Hague yet. The Tribunal is looking for the minutes, which were verified at the Presidency sessions, as well as transcripts. Although it is about a comprehensive work, Grbic hopes that this job will be finished soon. Grbic said he did not posses any information concerning some other Hague requests, or the minutes from a particular Presidency session that were missing.

Federation

BiH LDS says non-apprehension of Karadzic and Mladic brings the existence of the Hague Tribunal into question

The BiH Liberal Democratic Party (LDS) maintains that a fact the most wanted war crime suspects Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic are still at large is bringing into question the existence of the Hague Tribunal itself. The party president, Rasim Kadic, told journalists on Monday in Sarajevo that it was unacceptable to equalize the guiltiness for war crimes just on a basis of hand over of three Bosniak wartime military officers to the Hague.

MIO Mostar in difficult financial position

The Steering Board of the Mostar Pension-Disability Insurance Fund (MIO Mostar) held a meeting last Friday to discuss difficult financial position of the institution. According to a press release issued on Monday, the Board will undertake all necessary measures to ensure better collection of contributions.

Vecernji List: Results of the Hercegovacka Bank audit to be announced soon

(provided by OHR Mostar)

Toby Robinson, the Provisional Administrator of Hercegovacka Bank, might come out with the first results of the Hercegovacka Bank audit, which lasted many months. According to the first information, that we succeeded to receive from the domestic personnel who is working on the audit, they will publish some compromising details regarding the signing of suspicious contracts, transferring of money to deposit accounts, granting of loans. It was mentioned that the Provisional Administrator might publish individual information on the behavior of some persons and Managers of the Companies, who were taking money for the loans, which were deposited with the Bank accounts, under suspicious circumstances and without sufficient funds of any kind. The OHR and OSCE, which organized the whole action, are already informed about the details of the audit.

The most controversial information that the Provisional Administration has at its disposal refers to the work of the Bank in the period two or three months before the raid of the Bank. There is the information that some leaders of the political and economic life, close to the former Administration, took large amounts of money since they knew about the raid. These amounts of money were later on deposited into their own pockets, and the most of evidence, that might discredit these individuals, has been destroyed. Allegedly, for this reason it took some time to the auditors of the Provisional Administration to reveal the way that deposited money vanished from the Bank's account.

In order to solve financial mysteries, the Provisional Administrator has employed experts from abroad. The HR also talked about the Hercegovacka Bank issue with Cardinal Puljic recently. According to well-informed sources, he explained the

Cardinal the whole political background of the Bank's blockade.

***Vecerni List:* Posavina Canton Prime Minister says Toby Robinson will not help Posavina region**

Ivo Vincetic stated: 'I am not satisfied because it was clearly stated that Ms. Robinson does not want to treat specially any territory, any client or anyone's account. However, she promised that she would have our requests on mind since the Posavina Canton is in the worst position of all Cantons in the Federation. It has the smallest territory and considerable funds have been blocked in the Bank. She stressed that this problem of de-blocking will be solved soon, but she could not say the precise date.'

Republika Srpska

RS President Sarovic meets with SFOR's Dodson

Glas Srpski reports that the Republika Srpska president, Mirko Sarovic, met with the SFOR commander, General Michael Dodson, in Sarajevo on Monday. According to the paper, Sarovic informed Dodson that the Federation Army had been entering the RS territory during the past few months without having the approval of the RS Government. Sarovic asked Dodson to use his influence and make sure that the procedure which regulates this matter is respected as such or simplified if necessary. Sarovic says that northern parts of the RS territory were being used as a transport route for the Federation Army and that the SFOR was informed about it. He says that, according to the BiH Constitution, the Federation Army should have requested a permit from the RS Army. Sarovic and Dodson agreed that several unclear things had been clarified in regard to the agreement between the FRY and the RS Defense Ministries on the 30th Cadre Center. President Sarovic expressed hope, at the farewell meeting with General Dodson in the Serb Sarajevo,

that the Military Agreement between the RS and the FRY would soon be put in effect again.

Five thousands Serb refugees sign petition to leave BiH

Around 5,000 Serb refugees and displaced persons temporary living in the Bijeljina region have so far signed a petition to seek asylum in Australia, Canada and United States. They made the move due to an impossibility that minimum conditions for a normal life are created in the RS. Once when signed by all those concerned, the petition will be forwarded to the embassies of the aforementioned countries.

All Banja Luka-based collective refugee centers to be dismissed by the end of the year

Banja Luka Mayor Dragoljub Davidovic told journalists on Monday that all collective refugee centers in the town should be dismissed by the end of this year. Following a meeting with representatives of the authorized Republika Srpska ministries, Davidovic said that the continuation of the construction of 45 houses for the refugees from the centers had been agreed.

A total of 210 bodies exhumed in Glogova near Bratunac

Remains of a total of 210 Srebrenica Bosniaks have been exhumed so far at the site of Glogova near Bratunac. Oslobodjenje quoted Murat Hurtic, the head of the Tuzla department of the BiH Federation Commission for Missing Persons, as saying that they all had been killed by the wartime Bosnian Serb armed forces while trying to reach a territory under the BiH Army control in the area of Tuzla.

Situation in Trebinje is calming down

According to Dnevni Avaz, the situation in Trebinje is calming down following the May 5 incidents when the Serb extremists prevented the laying out of cornerstone for rebuilding the central town’s mosque. The new High Representative’s envoy in

the town Istvan Oszi has recently organized a meeting attended by the representatives of the municipal authorities, as well as the Bosniak political and refugee representatives. The officials discussed concrete activities to accelerate implementation of the property laws in Trebinje.

SNS wants persons urging the Hague Suspects to surrender to be named

The member of the SNS (Serb National Alliance) Executive Board, Jezdimir Spasojevic, confirmed that the party would request the RS Government to inform the public about who were the people who had formed a group urging war crime suspects from the Republika Srpska to voluntarily surrender to the Hague Tribunal. "We request that names of the people from the group are publicly announced, we need an explanation about who they are, who is sponsoring them and what are the motives behind their actions," Spasojevic said at a news conference on Monday. He added that the group had contacted to Dragan Jokic from Zvornik, who later decided to voluntarily surrender to The Hague. Asked whether the "group of persuaders" had also spoken to Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, Spasojevic said that he had "no information about that, but that he would not exclude that option". Beta news Agency quotes RS Prime Minister's Advisor for relations with the ICTY, Sinisa Djordjevic, as saying that Spasojevic's statement is not true.

***Reuters:* Srebrenica suspect pleads not guilty to war crimes**

A Republika Srpska Army officer appeared on Tuesday before the Hague Tribunal and denied responsibility for the slaughter of Bosniaks at Srebrenica in 1995, Europe's bloodiest massacre since World War Two. Lieutenant-Colonel Dragan Jokic, who was flown to The Hague for trial after turning himself in to the Tribunal last week, pleaded not guilty to war crimes and crimes against humanity during a brief initial court appearance. Dressed in a dark green suit, shirt and tie, 43-year-old Jokic stood while a judge read out the four counts

against him, including murder and extermination.

Jokic commanded the engineers of the RS Army 1st Zvornik Brigade near Srebrenica, which was under the United Nations protection, when it fell to Serb forces in July 1995, the tribunal said. Almost 8,000 Bosniak men and boys were rounded up and were believed to have been killed, and thousands of bodies have since been found in mass graves. Jokic joined former RS Army general Radislav Krstic in the tribunal's detention center near The Hague, two weeks after Krstic was convicted of genocide for the Srebrenica killings. According to the indictment against Jokic, Bosniak men and boys were shot by firing squad in areas controlled by the Zvornik brigade, part of the Drina Corps, over several months. "Between about July 11, 1995 and November 1, 1995, Dragan Jokic planned, instigated, ordered, committed or otherwise aided and abetted in the planning, preparation or execution of the organized mass execution and burial of thousands of Bosnian Muslim men and boys," the indictment said. The bodies were buried in mass graves but later exhumed and reburied in hidden locations, the indictment alleged.

International Community

Brcko Supervisor warns that new incidents will not be tolerated

The International Supervisor for Brcko, Henry Clarke, warned on Monday that the he and his associates would not tolerate and allow the protests to be repeated, like the ones in the last schooling year when the classes in the Brcko high schools had been interrupted. "Many teachers and students who participated in the protests last year were not punished. This year we shall have a different situation," Clarke said on Monday in his address to the Brcko teachers. He added that he based such of his conviction on the police capability to fight street unrest, new penalty legislation and on the readiness of

the administration and teachers in the District to accept a model of multiethnic education.

Nenad Canak claims Wolfgang Petritsch prevented joint manoeuvres of the RS and FRY Armies from taking place

According to both Banja Luka dailies, Speaker of the Vojvodina National Assembly Nenad Canak said that High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch had prevented joint manoeuvres of the Republika Srpska and FRY Armies initiated by Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica. The manoeuvres were, according to Canak, scheduled for August 20, and Kostunica wanted to use them to overthrow current authorities in Serbia. Nezavisne Novine quoted OHR Spokesman Patrik Volf as saying that the OHR could not confirm any information related to this case. RS Defence Minister Slobodan Bilic denied Canak's statement about the manoeuvres saying that the joint military activities of such kind had never been planed.

Carla Del Ponte to visit BiH soon: Who is afraid of new indictments?

The Hague announced the arrival of the ICTY Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, mentioning 4th and 5th September as possible dates for her visit to BiH. At the same time, according to some sources from Croatian media, Del Ponte has been requesting from the Croatian authority the whole documentation and correspondence belonging to the Croatian civilian and military intelligence services, including transcripts from the Croatian President residence, which concern their activities in BiH. Nezavisne Novine speculates that the ICTY wants to shed more light on the roles that Ante Jelavic, Jadranko Prlic, Ivan Lucic, Bruno Stojic and Valentin Coric played during the period of time when Croatia intervened in BiH. Tuesday edition of Glas Srpski carries an article with the headline: "Witnesses denying Prlic," which says that statements of the first Premier of the Croat Republic of Herceg-Bosna, Jadranko Prlic, that Herceg-Bosna's Government

had never made any decision on the establishment of concentration camps, does not mean that there were no concentration camps in its territory. However, many statements of Serbs and documents issued by the International Committee of Red Cross confirm that there were concentration camps in the Herceg-Bosna's territory, as well as that even 2-year old children were imprisoned there. Sanja and Tomo, children of Pero Milisav were the youngest prisoners in the village of Rascani (concentration camp near Tomislavgrad, established by the HVO). Sanja was only 4 months old, while Tomo was a 21 months old child when they were taken to the camp. The ICRC registered Tomo on 17 October 1992. He was imprisoned in Rascani. Sanja is a 100% invalid, and Tomo is invalid of sixth category. They are both civilian victims of war.