BiH Media Round-up, 3/6/2002

Headlines in Monday newspapers

Oslobodjenje

- Belkic askes for a budgetary assistance for BiH children in Italy

Dnevni Avaz

- Lord Paddy Ashdown for Dnevni Avaz: We do not have our election favorites

Jutarnje Novine

- Ashdown in his Sarajevo walk
- New hope for patients suffering leukemia

Glas Srpski

- Al Qaeda: Terrorists threaten America

Nezavisne Novine

- The Federation policemen were selling drugs

Dnevni List

- Romany: forgotten people

Vecernji List

- Travnik: Policemen head drug dealers

Ashdown addresses journalists at his first press conference; reactions to the High Representative's activities

The newly-appointed High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, held his first press conference in Sarajevo on Friday emphasizing he would insist that OHR is not anymore doing things, which should be done by the local people and institutions. He said

that it was important for the BiH citizens to take part in the upcoming elections. (BiH electronic media on Friday, and Sarajevo dailies, Banja Luka Nezavisne Novine, Vecernji List and Slobodna Dalmacija on Saturday reported on the press conference)

Ashdown removes iron gate before the OHR building in Sarajevo

All Sarajevo dailies published on Saturday photo news (Avaz published a photo and the headline on the front page as Jutarnje Novine published just the headline on the front page) saying that Paddy Ashdown was fulfilling his promise by starting to remove the iron gate in front of the OHR building in Sarajevo.

Ashdown for Monday's Dnevni Avaz: We do not have our election favorites

"I want to emphasize that my stand now and in the future is to support achievements and programs, and not individuals and particular political paries. The important is what people here will do, and not what they are saying," said the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, in an exclusive interview for Monday's Dnevni Avaz.

"Financing of such a large army, as is the current army in BiH, represents a big burden for the budge," said Ashdown in his first address to the BiH Council of Ministers members, according to Sunday's Vecernji List.

The Deputy British Foreign Minister, Dennis MacShane: Ashdown brings to BiH a strength for progress

"The arrival of Paddy Ashdown as the new High representative for BiH offers to all of us – Bosnians and friends of BiH – a significant opportunity to refocus our energy on reforms, which are urgently needed in order that BiH moves faster towards a stable and prosperous future within Europe." (MacShane's article was published in the Satruday's Nezavisne

Novine, Dnevni Avaz and Dnevni List)

Mirza Hajric in Saturday's Oslobodjenje: Paddy is the best which could happen to us

"The inauguration itself and first moves of the new High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, showed that, as long as he is in the office, nothing will be the same, including the OHR, and the entire international community, as well as the approach of some of the international representatives towards BiH. He has assumed the duties with sovereignty and in an organized and powerful way, touring several places during a day and meeting with businessmen, young people, refugees and returnees. On the occasions, he expressed his naturalness with absence of any arrogance although he is the first lord among the High Representatives. Finally a High Representative has arrived in BiH, who, as of the first day, knows what he wants, and who seems to know how to achieve that…"

US Ambassador Bond: The United States will strongly support Ashdown

"In the coming period, the United States will strongly support activities of the new High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, and the priorities of that cooperation include the activities to establish the Rule of Law, as a key pre-condition for creation of a suitable ambient for the development of economy," said US Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond, in an interview with ONASA news agency carried by Saturday's Dnevni Avaz.

SDA: Ashdown advocates for Bosnian nation

"The SDA welcomes a statement made by the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, in which he advocated for (establishment of) the Bosnian nation as a state-legal category and for the development of the Bosnian patriotism," said Seada Palavric, the SDA Vice-president, at a press conference in Sarajevo on Friday. (Nezavisne Novine carried the SRNA news agency report on the conference)

Mariofil Ljubic, Chair of the HoR BiH expects from Ashdown to use his mandate for economic progress

Chair of The House of Representatives of BiH Parliament **Mariofil Ljubic** commented in **Slobodna Dalmacija** work of previous and current High Representative. About **Wolfgang Petritsch**, Ljubic said that that his decisions were mostly in accordance with decisions of Peace Implementation Council. Ljubic said that he expects from **Paddy Ashdown** as a practical politician and diplomat, to try to bring BiH into normal condition, respecting BiH as a complex state consisted of three peoples and citizens who live here. Ljubic added that he expects from new High Representative to use his mandate towards economic progress including minimum of political consensus on crucial issues in BiH.

Oslobodjenje's Beric claims nationalism devastates the economy of every country

"I could not fully agree with Paddy Ashdown's thesis that crime and corruption represent bigger danger for BiH than nationalism because it is very well know that nationalism devastates economy of every state, thereby, of course, the particular state itself. It is also very well known that the crime and corruption have firm ties with nationalism. It is their pre-condition and predecessor…," Gojko Beric wrote in his editorial in Saturday's Oslobodjenje.

Esma Palic sends letter to Ashdown

"In the past seven years, I have not stopped trying to learn about the destiny of my husband (Avdo Palic, the former BiH Army Commander in Zepa, who was reported missing after the RS Army members took him away in 1995). What injustice made to my husband, me, and my children makes even bigger is an unacceptably ignorant stand toward the case by the state, entity authorities and the international community. Bearing in mind that, upon your arrival in BiH, you announced you would

*make efforts primarily in fighting the crime and terrorism, I have decided to address you. I know you can help, and it is up to you to decide whether the resolution of this and similar cases is important for BiH and its citizens," s*aid Esma Palic, in her letter sent to the High representative, Paddy Sashdown, according to Saturday's Oslobodjenje.

Mesic and Kostunica to visit Sarajevo at Ashdown's invitation

According to Saturday's Oslobodjenje, the British Deputy Foreign Minister, Dennis MacShane, in an interview for the Zagreb 101 radio-station, expressed his satisfaction the Croatian President, Stipe Mesic, had accepted the invitation by the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, to soon visit Sarajevo. The same invitation has been sent to the FRY President, Vojislav Kostunica. *"Both Presidents are expected to urge representatives of the Croat and Serb peoples in BiH to, in the future, start resolving their problems in Sarajevo not addressing Belgrade and Zagreb, since BiH is a sovereign and independent state, the state of the constituent peoples."*

"The BiH Presidency has not been so far officially informed about any possible joint visit BiH by the FRY and Croatian Presideents, Vojislav Kostunica and Stipe Mesic. The Presidency, however, supports the High Representative Paddy Ashdown's initiative that the President of the neighboring countries jointly visit Sarajevo, which will represent a significant step forward in improving mutual cooperation in the region," the BiH Presidency said in a press release, according to Sunday's Oslobodjenje.

Belkic addresses Central European summit in Slovenia

Saturday's Dnevni Avaz, as well as all BiH media, report that the Chairman of the BiH Presidency, Beriz Belkic, addressed on Friday the Central European summit in Slovenia (Brdo kod Kranja). *"If I say that the case of Bosnia is the most important test for the future of Europe than I must emphasize*

that this is neither thoughtful nor rhetoric construction…"

BiH Budget for 2002 finally adopted

All BiH media reports that, at its session in Sarajevo on Friday, the BiH House of peoples adopted the Budget of the BiH state institutions for this year in the same version as it had been adopted two days earlier by the House of Representatives. This means that a crucial requirement is met for reaching a new stand-by arrangement with the IMF. The adopted Budget does not foresee financing of the lawsuit against FRY before the Hague-based International Court of Justice, which is opposed by the deputies from the RS.

SDA: Non-financing of the lawsuit against FRY jeopardizes BiH's sovereignty before the International Court of Justice

"The SDA deputies were the only against the adoption of the state Budget, since it did not included a provision for financing the lawsuit against Yugoslavia. We cannot support such a budget, because it jeopardizes BiH sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and international subjectivity before the International Court of Justice in The Hague," Saturday's Oslobodjenje quotes the SDA Vice-president, Suada Palavric, as saying at a press conference in Sarajevo on Friday.

RS Army Chief of Staff says establishment of a single BiH Army not pre-condition for accession to the Partnership for Peace program

ONASA andSaturday's Oslobodjenje report that the RS Army Chief of Staff, General Novica Simic, said the establishment of a single BiH Army was not a necessary pre-condition for the country's accession to the NATO's Partnership for Peace Program. *"No one exerts pressure for the establishment of a single army in BiH. It is not disputed that two armies exist in the country (RS Army and the BiH Federation Army), and it is only a question what sort of political and military ties*

will be established between them," said Simic in an interview with the Bijeljina TV-station BN.

The New York Times: An Unexpected Censor in Bosnia

In an editorial piece published on June 1, **The New York Times** criticizes the recently imposed **Law on Public Broadcasting Service**. According to the article, this law could result in closing of a number of independent, but smaller radio and television stations across BiH, which will lose commercial advantages to the new PBS. "Mr. Ashdown should act now to change the law, toughen the regulatory body and end the office's highhanded treatment of the media. The international community has spent considerable money and effort to foster diverse, professional and independent media in the Balkans. The high representative should not be allowed to wipe out this progress in Bosnia with one decree," writes The New York Times (author is not identified).

Ivanic: Brcko District is the most problematic point in BiH in the field of economy

RS Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic warned on Friday evening that Brcko District is the most problematic point in BiH in the economic sphere, **Fena** news agency reported. In a statement for the RTRS, Ivanic emphasized that the District needs to implement the harmonized regulations of the entities, and not to "establish itself as the third entity".

He said he agreed that Brcko District could have its own regulations but not in the field of economy.

New dismissals of judges

Weekend edition of Nezavisne novine learns that Anglo-Saxon model of judiciary will be introduced in BiH, which will be an experiment. According to this model, the entire network of courts will be re-organized, many courts will be eliminated whilst the overall number of judges and prosecutors (currently

1,200) will be reduced. The paper reminds of the fact that the former High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, imposed a package of decision thus setting up an institutional framework necessary for the upcoming reform of judiciary in BiH. Nezavisne novine also learns that 4 out of 7 municipal courts in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton will be closed. This means that courts in Neum, Citluk, Stolac, Jablanica and Rama will close their operations, while those in Capljina and Konjic will continue to work. The paper reports that the work of three courts in Mostar, that is, Municipal Court 1, Municipal Court 2, and a court in the Mostar Central Zone, will be re-organized because the two municipal courts will merge into one court and the Central Zone Court will be eliminated. Also, it remains unknown what will happen with the Cantonal Court in the West-Herzegovina Canton given that there is a wide-spread opinion that this court should be eliminated, while, on the other hand, there are some indications that municipal courts in Ljubusko and Siroki Brijeg will merge into one court.

Posavina Canton will loose its Cantonal Court

Vecernji list writes that Orasje [Canton 2] should loose its Municipal Court. According to the daily, that is visible from a document signed by **David Pimentel**, Advisor for judicial reform, and **Stephanie McPhail**, Head of Planning and Strategy Office of Independent Judicial Commission. According to new solutions planned in IJC, out of 95 existing courts in BiH, there should be between 59 and 66 left, including 27 to 29 first degree courts. In accordance to that, Cantonal Court in Odzak should stop existing and merge with Cantonal Court in Tuzla, because Posavina Canton is small. The daily says that someone bad informed from IJC suggested that Municipal Court from Orasje (27,611 inhabitants), with six judges and administration, should cease to work and than merge with Municipal Court in Odzak (16,055 inhabitants).

The BiH Federation Government to discuss AM Speed case on Monday

According to Monday's Dnevni Avaz, the BiH Federation Government will at its extraordinary session today discuss once again the AM Sped case, related to an illegal pay-out of a 1.76 million customs deposit to the Orasje-based company. As the Financial Police has found out, a total damage made to the BiH Federation Budget amounts more than six million KM. During the weekend, all members of the Government received written reports made by the Financial Police and the Interior Ministry and, due to different opinions, a fierce discussion is expected to take place.

In a letter sent to Monday's Oslobodjenje, the AM Sped Director, Mirko Anic, wrote that he himself and his company had been in the past month a subject of various accusations carried by media in the BiH Federation. *"In the interest of providing accurate information to public, I am suggesting to the BiH Federation authorities and all other authorized institutions to prepare a public TV debate (possibly on the Fed TV) where the public would be presented with all relevant data related to the disputed deposit," Anic wrote.*

"I want to make it clear that the BiH Federation Government will continue insisting that the role played by all involved in the pay-out of the deposit to AM Sped, as well as their responsibility is fully investigated," the BiH Federation Prime Minister, Alija Behmen, said in a statement for BH Dani of May 31.

"If I knew that there was even the smallest doubt in legality of the foundation for paying-out the deposit to AM Sped, I would have not approved the transaction until all circumstances are determined," the BiH Federation Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Nikola Grabovac told magazine BH Dani of May 31.

Dnevni Avaz: a billion KM evaded by 650 non-existing (phantom) firms

Only two years after the BiH Federation Tax Administration has started warning that, due to unclear legislation, the possibilities have been opened for a series of manipulations related to the registration of firms and tax evasion, the first measures were agreed last week to tackle the current alarming situation. *" During a series of investigations, the inspectors found out that there are 650 non-existing (phantom) enterprises in the BiH Federation. They are all correctly registered in the authorized courts, but with false data on their addresses and owners. These companies have in the past years made deals worth up to a billion KM without any control and payment of contributions,"* Director of the BiH Federation Tax Administration Midhat Arifovic told the newspaper.

Dnevni List about possible Croat coalitions

Dnevni List carries an article about the situation on the Croat political scene in light of Sarajevo-based media outlets' reports that the IC is stimulating Croat parties namely the HSS, NHI, HDU and People's Party Working for Prosperity to form a coalition. DL says that the public was interested to find out more about a meeting held two days ago between HNZ's **Milenko Brkic** and **Barisa Colak**, the acting President of the HDZ BiH. Speaking over the phone Brkic told the daily that the meeting was informal when they exchanged views and experiences. Speaking about possible coalitions between Croat parties in BiH, Brkic said that one could not expect a big coalition but two or three of them adding that there is a general agreement to hold a meeting between leaders of all Croat partiesto discuss possible coalitions. Brkic also denied media speculations that he has been appointed a candidate for the Croat member of BiH Presidency on behalf of Croat Democratic Block (HNZ + HKDU BiH) and HDZ BiH. DL also carried the President of Croat Peasant's Party (HSS BiH) **Ilija Simic** as saying that his party was ready to discuss coalitions with all Croat parties except with the HDZ BiH and parties that are members of HNS (Croat People's Assembly).

HSS' Simic: the international community urges leaders of the HSS, NHI, HDU and "Working for Prosperity" to form pre-election alliance

"It is the truth that a part of the international community intensively urges leaders of the HSS, NHI, HDU and the National Party- Working for Prosperity to establish a pre-election alliance. They have arguments for this: the HDZ is a strong movement which can be opposed in the elections only by a movement of the same strength," the HSS President, Ilija Simic, told Saturday's Dnevni Avaz.

The President of the NHI, Kresimir Zubak: *"It is nebulous that the international community is forming some anti-HDZ coalitions. Even if it was willing to make something like that, I would not accept that because I do not want to be an instrument of the international community. However, it is a fact that international community suggested forming of a coalition of the four mentioned parties."*

Mirko Sarovic: RS recognizes BiH, but BiH does not recognize RS

"Problem is not that we do not recognize BiH, but that they do not recognize RS. That frustration caused by the existence of RS, which many in the Federation are not able to release from, is a constant fact, which represents an obstacle for faster establishment of closer ties," RS President **Mirko Sarovic,** said in an interview with weekend edition of **Nezavisne Novine**. In the interview, Sarovic also explains his views on constitutional changes in the RS and BiH, reform of armed forces in BiH, the RS Customs Administration case and relations within the ruling SDS-PDP coalition. Commenting on the package of decisions that the former High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, imposed right before his departure, and particularly the decision that pertains to amendments to the RS Constitution regarding the selection and appointment of judges in the RS Constitutional Court, Sarovic said that the

RS authorities had not received all the decisions. As the most dangerous thing, Sarovic sees the imposition of constitutional amendments which chips away the authority of the RS National Assembly to select judges. Sarovic also said that this move of the former High Representative basically exceeds his authority. Secondly, Sarovic found very dangerous a tendency of the OHR to regularly impose laws using the reform as an excuse. "So far the High Representative has imposed laws only as temporary solutions because the parties in BiH themselves have not been ready to pass laws which are necessary for the implementation of the civil part of the DPA. Thirdly, Sarovic objects that instead of being independent, many institutions in BiH, including the judiciary, are made in a way to be suitable to the IC institutions and some individuals, which in his opinion, is not a good process. Commenting on the RS Customs Administration case, Sarovic said that the investigation would show whether RS Customs Administration Director, Goran Popovic, has been involved in this case or not. *"If he has not been involved I think that he should stay at his current position. If the investigation established that Popovic has been involved, I think that he himself will withdraw. That is fair",* said Sarovic.

Ivanic to receive detailed report on the RS Customs Administration case on Friday

Today's edition of **Nezavisne novine** quotes RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic**, as saying that the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, tried to persuade us that the decisions amending the RS Constitution which Petritsch had imposed before he left BiH are right, but he did not persuade me. *"That is why the RS Government launched an initiative to challenge the Petritsch's decisions before legal institutions of the RS",* said Ivanic. He also said that he was expecting that the team, which is to examine the allegations on corruption in the RS Customs Administration, would submit to him a detailed report on this issue on Friday. Ivanic announced that the public would be

informed of the results of this report. According to Ivanic, the thesis that corruption should be covered in order to sustain the independence of the RS institutions is completely incorrect. Ivanic denied allegations that he himself was involved in the customs affair. Prime Minister Ivanic said that the RS Government and the Pension and Disability Benefits Fund were obliged to take full responsibility in order to ensure the beginning of the payment of April pensions on 10 June. According to him, the RS Government made further efforts by setting aside an additional amount of KM 26 million from the profit made by the "RS Telekom", and by directing this amount to the Fund.

Glas Srpski: Is the nomination of SDA leader for the BiH Presidency member regular?

The Republika Srpska Interior Ministry confirmed to the newspaper that the SDA President and the party nominee for the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency, Sulejman Tihic, is still a resident of Bosanski Samac, Reoublika Srpska. This brings into question his nomination, since the Bosniak member of the Presidency is being elected directly in the territory of the BiH Federation.

Poll: Lagumdzija most popular in the Federation, Ratko Mladic in the RS

According to the results of poll conducted in the Southeastern Europe by the IDEA Swedish Institute, the most popular politician in the BiH Federation is the BiH Foreign Minister and the SDP leader, Zlatko Lagumdzija. He is followed by Alija Behmen, the Federation President, and Beriz Belkic, the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency. In the RS, the most popular is the RS Army wartime commander, Ratko Mladic, who is one of the most wanted war criminals.

Headlines in electronic media

Friday

BHTV (1900)

- World soccer cup starts in Korea
- High Representative Paddy Ashdown addresses journalists at at his first press conference in Sarajevo
- Paddy Ashdown welcomes signing of the free trade agreement between BiH and Yugoslavia.
- The BiH House of Peoples adopted the budget of the BiH's institutions

FTV (1930)

- Expert team of Zenica Cantonal Court and FBIH Commission for missing people have been working for three days on preparations for exhumations from Rautovac pit in the village of Ajdinovic near Olovo.
- High Representative in BiH Paddy Ashdown on Friday in Sarajevo held the first news briefing and welcomed the signing of the free trade agreement between BiH and Yugoslavia.
- Intensive investigation against 46 companies in Canton Tuzla. Charges pressed agaisnt 30.

RTRS (1930)

- The greatest part of RS Parliament session was focused on the report of RS Ministry of refugees and DPs on disbanding of collective centers.
- Republika Srpska Government passed on Thursday evening changes to the Decision on reprogramming company obligations.
- RS Ministry of health bans sales of children food with chicken meat produced by the German Hipp company.

Saturday

BHTV (1900)

- Federation Interior Ministry special units in central Bosnia this morning sealed off certain economic and trade facilities. According to unofficial information, the operation was related to drugs prevention and two police officers were arrested.
- Story on Montenegrin President Milo Djukanovic and his connections to the cigarettes smuggling

- The presidents of the former Yugoslav nations urged the European Union on Saturday to consider them for membership as soon as possible.
- A joint statement of the Croatian and Yugoslav presidents, Stjepan Mesic and Vojislav Kostunica, was announced on Saturday in Bled, Slovenia. In the document, they confirmed that the Dayton Agreement was the foundation for the internationally recognized, stable, and democratic BiH.

RTRS (1930)

- Summit of 16 Central European presidents was held in Slovenia, within the frame-work of the upcoming spreading of EU and NATO.
- BiH Presidency states that it has received no official note on possible visit of Croatian and FRY presidents.
- High Representative to BIH P. Ashdown will gladly welcome FRY and Croatian presidents V. Kostunica and S. Mesic to Sarajevo, especially if they come together.
- RS President M. Sarovic says the most dangerous of all decision imposed by the former High Representative W. Petritsch is the one on constitutional amendments stripping the RS parliament of authority to elect judges.

Sunday

BHTV (1900)

- Following the announced visit of Croatian and FRY presidents Mesic and Kostunica to BiH, chairman of BiH Presidency B. Belkic says: “BiH Presidency was not officially informed of the visit. We do not know if it is an initiative of the High Representative or his invitation on behalf of BiH. The Presidency will discuss the initiative.”
- News from the world
- Republika Srpska President Mirko Sarovic said on Sunday that he expected huge changes in the common BiH institutions after the October general elections in BiH and that he primarily expected a Serb to be elected the minister of foreign affairs. “After the elections, one of our priorities will be the appointment of a Serb official to the post of the minister of foreign affairs. Arguments are on our side, after a Bosniak and a Croat, now it is a Serb’s turn to be at this post,” Sarovic said.

FTV (1930)

- Five people have been arrest in yesterday's action of severing a drug sale route. The action was carried out by members of FBIH Ministry of interior Anti-terrorist unit in cooperation with members of Sarajevo and Travnik Ministries of interior. Two Travnik situated police officers, G.M. and P.N., have been arrested, along with A.R., K.N. and S.M., currently unemployed. They have been arrested on suspicion of G.M. and P.N. obtaining large amounts of marijuana in 2001, and organizing a network of pushers with the other three. During this action, nine objects have been searched to find 3.5kg of marijuna, worth 10,000 KM, an ammo crate, a 6.35 caliber gun, some documentation from the "Palma" company and 15,000 KM, all of which have been confiscated.
- News from the world
- According to findings of FBIH investigators, the recent attack on the Majlis of Islamic Community in Bijeljina was organized by the "Ravna gora chetnik movement." This information has been ignored in RS.
- Following claims of some Banja Luka media, Active Islamic Youth deny planning attacks on UN Mission in Canton Tuzla.

RTRS (1930)

- During his visit to Han Pijesak, RS president M. Sarovic spoke with the governor and officials of the Romanija region about the current political and economic issues.
- Republika Srpska President Mirko Sarovic said on Sunday that he expected huge changes in the common BiH institutions after the October general elections in BiH and that he primarily expected a Serb to be elected the minister of foreign affairs.
- RS prime-minister Ivanic said in Bijeljina that the public will next week be informed of the report by the team investigating the current customs affair.

Weekend headlines in print media

Saturday

Oslobodjenje

- The first press conference of the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown: I am inpatient to see the war criminals arrested

Dnevni Avaz

- Ambassador Clifford Bond: The United States will support Ashdown

Jutarnje Novine (weekend edition)

- The High Representative fulfills his promise: Ashdown removes the OHR gate
- World Soccer Cup opens: Sensation – Senegal defeats France

Glas Srpski (weekend edition)

- Is the nomination of the SDA leader, Sulejman Tihic, for the BiH Presidency regular?

Nezavisne Novine (weekend edition)

- World Soccer Championship starts with a surprise
- RS President Mirko Sarovic for Nezavisne: RS recognizes Bi8H, but BiH does not recognizes RS

Dnevni List

- Illegal construction: Monuments to lawlessness

Vecernji List

- World Soccer Cup starts with a sensation

Sunday

Oslobodjenje

- An European revolution on the BiH borders starts: Across the border for 15 minutes

Dnevni Avaz

- New affair in the Sarajevo Tobacco Factory: Durakovic claims Lojo makes secret plans to do harm

Dnevni List

- In the Mostar Bristol Hotel: the Rotary Club opened

Vecernji List

- Paddy Ashdown: the BiH armed forces spend twice as much money as the Americans