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BiH State-related Issues

Jadranko Prlic to form a new party: Pro-European Peoples Party

Dnevni Avaz reports that the deputy BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Jadranko Prlic, will, in the coming weeks, form a new political party – Pro-European Peoples Party. According to the daily, the party will be multiethnic, based in Sarajevo and potentially a part of the

larger family of the European association of Pro-European Peoples Parties. Avaz also claims that the deputy Mostar mayor, Neven Tomic, and former governor of Tuzla Canton, Hazim Vikalo, will join the party.

Constitutional Reform

RS National Assembly to discuss constitutional amendments

All media report that at today's session, the RS National Assembly will discuss the proposed amendments to the RS Constitution, which were adopted on Wednesday by the RS Constitutional Commission. RS National Assembly speaker, Dragan Kalinic, said that deputies in the RSNA will also be presented with a summary of the debate on constitutional changes and possibly, additional amendments not included in the proposal adopted yesterday.

Free Serb Republic movement calls for protest against constitutional changes

BIH media report about the posters which appeared in Banja Luka yesterday, calling on citizens to turn up at a "Protest for Preservation of the RS" outside the RS National Assembly on Thursday (today), ahead of a session which should discuss amendments to the RS constitution. The posters, which say "Don't let us lose in peace what we had defended in war", call on citizens to "stop the enemies of the RS and domestic deputies" and "prevent the undemocratic changes in the RS constitution and its disappearance".

RS Constitutional Commission adopts constitutional changes, Serb members say they had been outvoted

by Bosniaks, Croats

The RS Constitutional Commission adopted on Wednesday a proposal on amendments to the RS constitution and forwarded it into parliamentary procedure. A member of the committee, Krstan Simic, said after the session that the Serb side was outvoted on almost all issues. “The Serb side in the Commission was also outvoted on the issue of mechanisms for protection of vital national interests and equal representation in the government,” Simic said.

Media in Federation and RS report that the proposal on amendments was supported by the SDA and that Simic expressed dissatisfaction with the principle of decision-making, where Bosniaks and Croats in the committee always have a majority. “By outvoting the committee adopted those decisions which were proposed by the High Representative in the agreement on constitutional changes, were signed by the Social Democratic Party, and today they were supported by the SDA,” Simic said.

Dragan Kalinic: Decision on constitutional changes shows what is to come

RS National Assembly Speaker Dragan Kalinic has concluded that Wednesday’s outvoting of the Serb side in the constitutional commission should serve as a warning of what may happen in the future in other bodies of the legislative and executive power in the RS. “This should serve as a warning to the Serb side, which has been outvoted in the constitutional commission for the second time around,” Kalinic said after a session of the constitutional commission which drafted amendments to the RS Constitution. Kalinic added that with the outvoting, the constitutional commission had in practice accepted solutions stemming from the agreement on constitutional changes, which were proposed by High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch and signed by the members of the Alliance for Change. “Now it is more than certain that SDA endorses the agreement drafted by

the OHR, that is to say, that it agrees with all the amendments proposed by SDP and that it has thus handed the role of the leader of the Bosniak people to Zlatko Lagumdzija," he added.

Constitutional commission chairman Miroslav Mikes stressed that the parliamentary procedure in the National Assembly was just starting, that the constitutional commission proposal was just a proposal, and that the RSNA would have the final say in the matter. (Kalinic was quoted by most media in the RS and news agencies in the Federation)

Kalinic also told media that that Serb members of the Commission will ask the OHR to assess the procedural correctness of voting (i.e., the outvoting).

OHR on Voting by the Constitutional Commissions

"The High Representative's decision on the establishment of constitutional commissions in the entities, dated January 11 last year, does not outline the manner of voting by the commissions. Therefore, it is assumed that all decisions are made by the votes of over a half of those who are present or those who voted," said OHR's spokesperson, Oleg Milisic in a statement for RTRS last night.

Milisic said that the OHR had not received a request by the Serb members of the Commission to clarify the voting on constitutional amendments, announced earlier by the RS Parliament Speaker, Dragan Kalinic. In his statement, Milisic explained that if a decision had been reached by the majority of votes, it would not be influenced by the fact that it had not been supported by even one representative of a constituent people.

"As to the manner in which the RS Constitutional Commission reaches decisions, I would like to point back at the decision on the establishment of these commissions by the High

Representative. The High Representative's decision does not give any instructions that a quorum should be made, that is, that decisions should be reached by a simple majority by those who attend a session and those who vote. The decision reached today is in line with that," Milisic said.

SDA's Sulejman Tihic confirms he voted in favor of proposed constitutional amendments

SDA's president and a Bosniak member of the RS Constitutional Commission, Sulejman Tihic, confirmed that he had voted for the text of the proposed amendments during a session on Wednesday, but stressed that they differ from those in the agreement reached in Sarajevo among Alliance parties. "The SDA did not support the agreement signed in Sarajevo. Today we discussed and voted for the amendments proposed by all members of the Commission, not only by the SDP, NHI or the Party for BiH. I voted for the text of amendments, and not for the agreement." Tihic also said that his party will vote in favor of the said amendments during today's session of the RS National Assembly.

Federation media, however, note that the text of the Sarajevo agreement and the RS Constitutional Court amendments are identical.

RS Officials with representatives of families of killed and missing soldiers: The will of people should be respected

The RS President, Mirko Sarovic, RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic and Deputy Speaker of the RS National Assembly, Zoran Djeric met yesterday in Banja Luka with the delegation of the Republic's Organization of families of killed and missing soldiers and civilians and discussed constitutional changes. The delegation requested the RS leadership to respect the will of the people in the process of adoption of the Constitutional

amendments. Glas srpski also reports that the representatives of the Organization called upon the members of the RS NA not to accept the "imposed amendments as they are leading towards abolishment of the RS". At a press conference held yesterday in Banja Luka, the President of the Organization, Radojka Boric assessed that 1992 was happening again, when two nations over voted the third one. "All this leads to unitary BiH and that is something that we would never accept. A referendum should be organized, at which the RS citizens would say in which RS they want to live." – said Boric.

High Representative: Ethnic division from Dayton to be abolished

Nezavisne novine carry excerpts from High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch's interview with Vienna weekly Standard. Petritsch said that the fact that nationalist parties from both entities were reluctant to accept constitutional changes, was a good sign as it showed that ethnic division foreseen by the Dayton was abolished. "Nationalists are not interested in a common state and joint life. Also, as soon as we establish multi ethnic structures, parties that are organized on multi ethnic principle would have an advantage. Hence, now we have the constitutional ground for normalization of the state," said Petritsch.

OHR: RS could face isolation and sanctions unless it reforms

In a statement for Dnevni Avaz, OHR spokesperson Alexandra Stiglmayer said that the readiness to implement the Agreement on constitutional changes reached in Sarajevo on 27 March is one of the tests for the readiness of the RS to reform, alongside genuine co-operation with ICTY, and active support of the returns process and State-level institutions. "The High Representative has been saying for a while now that the behavior of RS leaders could be very detrimental for the RS. Unless they implement the reforms, the isolation would be the

inevitable result," said Stiglmayer, adding that even sanctions are not excluded.

US Ambassador Hopes RS and Federation Assemblies Will Support the Agreement on Constitutional Changes

During his visit to Banja Luka on Wednesday, the US Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond, told SRNA news agency that the agreement on the implementation of the BIH Constitutional Court's decision on constituent peoples in BiH does not mean that the RS will be abolished, but that BiH should integrate into Europe. He expressed hope that the RS National Assembly and the Federation Assembly would support this agreement. (RTRS also carries this short statement by the US Ambassador)

In a separate interview to FENA news agency, Bond also stressed that the proposed constitutional changes delineated in the Sarajevo agreement from last week are not directed at the abolishment of the entities in BiH. "I would rather view this as a process of improving rights of all peoples

based on a consensus and democratic principles. Viewed from that perspective, the Agreement is positive step forward and should be adopted," said Bond to FENA.

US Ambassador: I support agreement on constitutional changes reached in Sarajevo

Following today's meeting with the RS Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic, the US Ambassador to BiH, Clifford Bond, said that he supports the agreement on constitutional changes because it represents a reasonable basis for the implementation of the BIH Constitutional Court ruling on constituent status of all peoples in BiH. Addressing journalists in Banja Luka, Bond said that the package of agreements could serve as a broadening of the Dayton agreement in sense that it will protect the rights and intersects of all constituent peoples

in BiH. According to him, the interpretations of this agreement as something that will lead to the abolishment of the entities are incorrect. “For this reason, I strongly support the adoption of this package of agreements, not only as a recognition on the part of the International Community, but also on the part of all political parties active in this region,” Bond said, reports ONASA.

OHR support the view of US Ambassador: Constitutional changes are indeed a path to Europe

On the eve of the RSNA’s deliberation on the constitutional agreement, the OHR concurs with the view expressed in Banja Luka on Wednesday by US Ambassador Clifford Bond – that this agreement does not mean the end of the RS and that it will facilitate BiH’s further integration in Europe. In a statement for the RTRS late last night, OHR’s Oleg Milisic said that the OHR notes that by fully implementing the constitutional principles agreed at Dayton and thus securing the constituent rights of all BiH citizens – Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks and Others – the agreement reached last week upholds modern European standards. “It is by upholding these very standards that the stability of BiH and its Entities will be secured. Failure to respect these standards in the past has placed the future of the RS in doubt,” said Milisic.

SDP welcome constitutional changes agreement

SDP deputy in the Federation Parliament’s House of Representatives, Sabrija Pojskic, assessed on Wednesday that the agreement on implementing the BiH Constitutional Court ruling on constituent status of all three peoples throughout BiH “puts an end to Dayton uncertainty as to what road BiH would take: integration or reintegration”. Pojskic told a news conference, reports SRNA, that the agreement “changes the nature of the entities, because they are multiethnic now”, and the RS has ceased to be, as he put it, only a state of the

Serb people. “The agreement cuts off the branch on which national parties were sitting, the parties which benefited from festering national tensions,” he said. Pojskic added that the SDP “does not regard the agreement as ideal, but as good”. “The SDP stance is that the agreement must be implemented fully and that the view that is should serve only as a basis for drafting amendments to the entity constitutions are unacceptable,” Pojskic said.

Reuters: Bosnian official says ethnic rights deal on track

Bosnia, where civil war broke out 10 years ago, voiced confidence on Thursday that constitutional reforms aimed at giving equal rights to the country’s three ethnic groups would soon be completed. Milovan Blagojevic, deputy foreign minister, also told the United Nations Commission on Human Rights that Bosnian authorities were cooperating fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

But Bosnia’s Serb and Muslim-Croat entities remain deeply divided, and analysts said a partial deal on equal ethnic rights agreed reluctantly by Bosnian leaders last week was unlikely to become law unless Western administrators imposed it on them.

Blagojevic, addressing the 53-member rights forum in Geneva, said the government believed the constitutional reforms would soon be “finalised”.

“This would represent a cornerstone guarantee for equality of its three constituent peoples and confirmation of the rights of all its citizens. This is a significant impetus for the further democratisation of the country,” he said.

“In this regard I would like to express gratitude to the representatives of the international community whose efforts

were very important in this process," Blagojevic added.

Jose Cutileiro, the Commission's special investigator on Bosnia and Yugoslavia, said last week that on many important matters in Bosnia, where war raged from 1992-95, "the ultimate decisions have to be taken by the High Representative, which nurtures impunity and irresponsibility."

"There can be no real progress as long as the country depends on foreign civilian executives and foreign military to hold together," the independent expert said in a speech.

"The political changes needed to be able to live without this tutelage can only be brought about by genuine inter-ethnic reconciliation, led from within. We have not seen that yet."

About 20 publicly indicted war criminals, including Bosnian Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadzic, are believed to be hiding in the RS, which forms post-war Bosnia together with a Federation.

Blagojevic said: "Full cooperation with the ICTY and prosecution of indicted war criminals continues to be an important element for…reconciliation and drawing the line between the past and the future.

"Full compliance with this obligation will prove individual responsibility for committed crimes, it will remove false feelings of collective responsibility," he added.

The Commission last year dropped its scrutiny of Croatia, citing progress in the former Yugoslav republic.

Federation

Hercegovacka Banka case unravelling ?

Provisional Administrator in Hercegovacka Banka, Toby Robinson, held a meeting with the BiH Minister of Foreign Affairs, Zlatko Lagumdzija, Federation Prime Minister, Alija Behmen, and his deputy and the Minister of Finance, Nikola Grabovac. The aim of the meeting was to inform the BiH leaders about the ongoing investigation in Hercegovacka Banka, and the future development.

“Miss Robinson informed us that the relevant prosecutor’s offices were forwarded 20 criminal charges against those responsible for the case of Heregovacka Banka. We were not told the names and I really cannot comment on the substance of our meeting,” Prime Minister Behmen briefly stated for our newspaper.

Avaz’s sources directly involved in this lengthy investigation also refused to provide any names, adding that the investigation in not yet over. Financial exports from Great Britain will arrive in BiH these days in order to assist the already complicated investigation.

“The puzzle is coming together. We have discovered that a series of irregularities in the work of the bank had one hidden political goal. In other words, if the so-called Croat self-rule came alive in any way, the role of Hercegovacka Banka would have been changed. Instead of remaining a commercial bank, HDZ hard-liners sought to transform it into a third entity central bank of sorts, or, in the more benign case, its developmental or investment bank” – a participant of the talks who asked not to be named confirmed for our daily.

As the analysis of the documentation, including its later discovered parts, is progressing, investigators will most likely expand their activities to the territory outside of BIH.

“To be honest with you, Ante Jelavic alone is not capable to

conduct such financial constructions and mutual connection of transactions, or their cover up. One should only remember where from Hercegovacka Banka received the money for its initial founding capital, and the well-known affair with Dubrovacka Banka in the Republic of Croatia. I have no doubts that an advisor of the late Croatian president Franjo Tudjman, Ivic Pasalic, is involved into this case, so the investigation in this direction is also possible," concludes Avaz's source.

One year after the SFOR raid on Hercegovacka Banka: Seven criminal charges in Hercegovacka Banka case

(provided by OHR Mostar)

Dnevni List reports that the Provisional Administrator (PA) for the Hercegovacka Banka (HB) Toby Robinson has filed criminal charges against two persons in the HB case to the competent Prosecution and that five additional charges are expected for the next week. DL did not manage to reveal identities of those persons claiming that it is clear that Ivica Karlovic, a former CEO of the HB, is one of them. DL says that the number of charges is not final and that other companies and persons linked to the HB will not be spared. Rest of the article reiterates stories already published.

Vecernji List carries today an article on the Hercegovacka Bank case written by Dejan Jazvic saying that almost a year passed after the Provisional Administration was introduced in Hercegovacka Bank and the investigation for which the High Representative claimed that would reveal a criminal structure of Herzegovinian Croats, has not given concrete results yet. The article also carries that Johan Verheyden, a Provisional Administration Spokesperson, stated: 'There will be no other choice apart from the liquidation of the bank if the current dispute regarding the Eronet ownership structure ends up unfavorably for the bank.'

The article says that Verheyden stated that even before the introduction of the Provisional Administration, the bank was in a very bad condition and it was practically insolvent, in order to prove that that the introduction of the Provisional Administration is not the main reason of the problems that appeared in the BiH economy 'by a fall' of Hercegovacka Bank. The article also says that the irregularities revealed in Hercegovacka Bank were committed in the most of the banks in the Federation, however, the HR introduced the Provisional Administration in Hercegovacka Bank only. Mario Brkic, OHR Spokesperson stated: 'The HR was deeply concerned because of business operations of Hercegovacka Bank. Serious questions and indications with regard to non-transparent business operations of this bank, through various private companies, were arising. The measures, which were taken at that time, were the crucial steps taken in order to help the stabilization of the bank.' The author of the article concludes that it is more than obvious that the true cause of the HR's action was an attempt to break down the Croat autonomy and adds that the HR told journalists recently that the bank was the very essence of the Croat self-rule.

On the same issue **Vjesnik** reports that, almost one year after SFOR's raid in the Bank, Petritsch has still not revealed documents on which he had based the decision on Provisional Administration. The spokesman of the Provisional Administration Johan Verheyden for Vjesnik claims that "there will be no other solution but liquidation, if the actual dispute about the ownership in the bank turns with bad outcome for the bank".

Dnevni List: Velimir Lovric's letter to late Croatian President Dr. Franjo Tudjman

DL carries a letter that Velimir Lovric, former Chair of Hercegovacka Banka Steering Board (HB SB), sent to the late Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, in which Lovric asks to have an audience with President Tudjman during which Lovric

would brief the late President about “the project ‘Hercegovacka Banka'” which is, according to the letter, initiated because of financial-economic rights and interests of Croats in BiH. Lovric asks that a delegation of the Bank be received in order to inform the President and hear his views and opinions in the matter. Former Chair of HB SB’s letter says that the bank has been established in order to gain profit through economic revival of Herzegovina and other Croat areas adding that the analysis show that one of reasons behind slow economic revival of Croat areas in BiH is lack of capital which would support small and medium sized businesses. The letter reads that there are 21 founders of the bank from both BiH and Croatia and that the aim is to ensure that Croats have institutions and organizations the western economies have. It goes on to say that the bank already established “Hercegovina Osiguranje” Insurance Company and that it is planned to establish “Herceginvest” Company that would manage investment funds and “Hercegovacka burza” (NB: burza in English is stock market).

Finally the letter says that the Hercegovacka Banka points out to the damaging intrusion of Bosniaks into the BiH payment system which occurred when the Bosniaks-controlled Central Bank of BiH converted the worthless BiH Dinars into the newly introduced BiH KM amounting to some 128 million KMs

OHR: You should have waited with the article until Thursday!

Dnevni List carries a response of an OHR spokesperson Mario Brkic to an article published in yesterday’s Dnevni List titled “Key evidence of criminal is Lovric’s letter to Dr. Tudjman”. First of all, says Brkic, although the article reads “press conference of Toby Robinson, Provisional Administration for Hercegovacka Banka”, Toby Robinson did not participate in the press conference. Secondly, says the spokesman, you (DL) broke the agreement that this should not be published before Thursday because of other papers’ deadlines and thirdly, Brkic

points out that it was not a case of a press conference but an informal briefing at the OHR canteen. Brkic goes on to say that the daily wrote that the Velimir Lovric's letter to the late (Croatian) President Tudjman was presented as "key evidence" refuting the DL's claims about the letter being the "crown evidence" but rather one of materials which show what was one of reasons behind opening of the bank.

Dnevni List responded to Mario Brkic's letter saying that he and the organization he represents could not influence the daily by requesting them what and when to publish certain things. The daily justifies it by a strong competition among the printed media. DL goes on to say that the journalist reporting from the meeting with a OHR spokesperson and Johan Verheyden and did not break any rules or conducts and with regards to the part in the article that says that Toby Robinson attended the press conference, DL says that it was a mistake due to lack of time in preparation of the article, DL apologizes for it. The oversight, as DL puts it, can be justified with a fact that Johan Verheyden, Toby Robinson's spokesman, attended the meeting with journalists. Dnevni List then reiterates the usual story about the raid into the bank with an aim to crush Ante Jelavic, HDZ and the policy the party is advocating for.

Finally, the daily reads that it has requested an interview with Toby Robinson on numerous occasions but all their efforts were in vain again asking for an interview with Ms. Robinson.

International Community

High Representative issues two decision on Zepce municipality

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, issued on Wednesday a Decision enabling municipal elections in Zepce to

be held on the same day as this year's general elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The municipal elections will be held under the Election Law of BiH and are to be organised by the BiH Election Commission.

For the full text, see OHR's press release. (All news agencies, news papers and electronic media carry thepress release)

Klein and Hays open Bosniak annex to school in Zepce

Principal Deputy High Representative, Donald Hays, and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, Jacques Paul Klein, officially opened the Bosniak Secondary School Annex in Zepce. The school's annex construction project is comprised of a new main and first floor building wing and a main entrance structure common to both buildings, totaling 710 square meters in expanded space. The new school will jointly be attended by Bosniak and Croat children. (All news agencies and electronic media report on opening of the annex to Zepce school) Click here for thePDHR Zepce speech.

High Representative meets EU Committee of Ministers Chairman, discusses constitutional changes

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, emphasized in talks with the chairman of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Antanas Valionis that post-accession requirement for BiH must be respected and met within the anticipated deadline. Petritsch said that BiH politicians must address this issue, because it is not only important for the membership in the Council of Europe, but it represents a step towards the EU, confirmed for SRNA the OHR spokesman Oleg Milisic. In talks was stressed the importance of implementation of the BiH Constitutional court decision on constituent status of people in BiH.

Srebrenica suspect Nikolic pleads not guilty to genocide

A former Bosnian Serb officer, Momir Nikolic, pleaded not guilty to charges of genocide and crimes against humanity which arose from the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, when he appeared before the UN war crimes tribunal on Wednesday. “Your honour, I plead not guilty to this part of the indictment,” Nikolic said when asked by the judge for his plea. Nikolic was arrested by SFOR troops on Monday.

FRY-ICTY relations

(provided by OHR Banja Luka)

Serbian Prime Minister says RS citizens indicted war for crimes will be tried in Belgrade?

Today’s edition of Nezavisne novine quotes Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjic, as saying that the Serbian Government received from the ICTY 10 indictments against Serbs from the RS and that there is a possibility that these people could be tried in Belgrade. He told the paper that these persons acquired FRY citizenship in 1996 and 1997 and that not a single of them is a FRY Army member. “I doubt that the ICTY will request the extradition of these 10 persons. I think the ICTY will insist that the trials for these 10 people take place in Belgrade given that capacities of the ICTY are limited. Most of these indictees could be tried before our courts”, said Djindjic, and added that these names do not mean anything to him given that he does not know who they are nor where they come from. He said that the ICTY will probably request that persons, who are not the ICTY’s priorities, be tried in our country and the ICTY would provide local courts with its documentation.

Head of ICTY office in Belgrade says ICTY expects extraditions

Today's edition of Nezavisne novine quotes Head of the ICTY office in Belgrade, Matthias Helmann, as saying that the ICTY insists on full cooperation with the FRY and that the FRY has not been given any deadline regarding the extradition of persons indicted for war crimes. Helmann told papers that he does not know where Ratko Mladic is and that the ICTY Prosecutor's Office probably does. He reiterated that the FRY authorities have the obligation to extradite all persons indicted for war crimes who currently live in the FRY. "The FRY has to arrest and extradite all persons wanted by the ICTY. This applies to both FRY citizens and RS citizens", said Helmann.

Ojdanic: I will surrender if Parliament passes the law

Former head of the Yugoslav Army (VJ) chief of staff Dragoljub Ojdanic said in a written statement, handed over to Associated Press by his family, that he would surrender to the ICTY, if the FRY Parliament adopts the law on cooperation with this court, electronic media reported on Wednesday. "I don't fear arrest, but I will surrender only if the Yugoslav Parliament adopts the law on cooperation with the Hague Tribunal," said Ojdanic. Ojdanic is included in the so-called Kosovo indictment, along with Slobodan Milosevic, Nikola Sainovic, Vlajko Stojiljkovic and Milan Milutinovic.

Belgrade Press: Kostunica to resign?

Belgrade press has been speculating on the possibility that Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica could resign in the next few days.

The daily *Nacional* reports on Thursday that Kostunica could withdraw from his position if the Serbian Parliament does not adopt the Agreement on the Proceeding Points for the

Restructuring of Relations between Serbia and Montenegro. Citing a source within leadership of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS), the paper reports that there is an idea for a "complete confrontation with Kostunica". The source expects that the Christian Democrat Party of Serbia (DHSS), led by Serbian Justice Minister Vladan Batic would vote against the Agreement, as announce in the past few days. The paper further reports that the deputies from New Serbia (NS), led by the Velimir Ilic, as well as all MPs from the opposition and a few members from the Democratic Party (DS), led by Serbian Premier Zoran Djindjic, could also vote against the Agreement. The paper reminds that Kostunica had previously said he would hand in his irrevocable resignation if one of the parliaments does no verify the Agreement, which he, among others, had signed.

The weekly *Nedeljni Telegraf* reported in its latest edition on Wednesday, citing unidentified sources that Kostuncia has already decided to hand in his resignation, and that he had allegedly not informed his party colleagues from the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), while members of his cabinet, who know of this decision, are strongly against it.

Citing an unnamed associate of Kostunica's, the paper claims that the FRY President could have a number of reasons for making this move. The first is that he has already announced that he has no desire to be the president of Serbia and Montenegro, which is a position with little power. The paper also claims that the pressure to declare himself on the issue of cooperation with the Hague Tribunal is "too great" for Kostunica, and that he wishes to preserve "the image of a fighter for the national thing", but at the same time does not with to break off relations with the West. By withdrawing from his position, Kostunica would be free to criticize Djindjic and preserve the "martyr's aureole" in the Serbian public of the man who was driven out of the highest office in the state by a US ultimatum.

Editorials

Dnevni Avaz: CIPS and Freedom of Movement

By Faruk Cardzic

The Citizens Identity Protection System, better known to our public as CIPS, has become the last formal obstacle on the path towards the abolishment of visa requirements for BiH citizens traveling abroad to the countries-signatories of the Schengen Agreement.

However, the implementation of this, 33 million KM worth project, is now completely dependent on the adoption of the state budget for 2002. As it is known, the adoption of the BiH budget has been stalled over one genuinely important, but maximally politicized issue, which should not put a strain on the discussion on the budget, nor on the implementation of the projects such as the CIPS.

To remind our readers once again, the CIPS should definitely restructure the field of identity documents in a unique manner on the entire territory of BiH and for all BiH citizens. Europe expects this from us, for a great number of BiH citizens could have, up until now, obtain multiple identity documents, including ID cards and passports, and other documents.

This fact, and not the illusion that other countries fear Bosnians and Herzegovinians, have kept the doors of European and other countries closed for BiH citizens for already ten years.

Although we are at the time of an intensive discussion on harmonization of the entity constitutions with the Constitutional Court ruling, one significantly important project such as the CIPS could affect the BiH citizens regardless of their location. The issue of freedom of movement across Europe – in which all of us have felt unwanted – could

easily re-unite us…despite the politics and its protagonists, for whom the borders present no problem at all.

Oslobodjenje: The will of the people

By Gojko Beric

In a lengthy editorial, Gojko Beric criticizes the ambivalence of an average BiH citizen about the ongoing constitutional reform in BiH. Beric argues that this lack of political interests among BiH population is the result of its thorough depolitization following the end of the communism. This depolitization has made citizens in BiH incapable of engaging in politics in a modern meaning of this word. "These peoples have been accustomed to the fact their leaders make all decision for them thereby freeing them of all responsibility for the wrongdoing," writes Beric, adding that masses in this manner become hostages of political elite trying to sell all its policies as the "will of the people".

"Wolfgang Petritsch came to BiH as a representative of the European civil society with a presupposition that we are all political imbeciles, incapable of making our own decisions. I do not say that the reality gave him an inspiration, however, this is the case because one small but democratically emancipated minority has been for over a decade a hostage of such 'will of the people'…That is why I have no answer to all those who ask me what will happen with BiH? To all those, I say: Ask Petritsch. Or, better even, wait for his successor, Paddy Ashdown, to arrive."

Nezavisne Novine: Outvoting

By Branko Morait

National issue in BiH and the issue of constitutionality of BiH peoples cannot be resolved by outvoting. Anyone who proscribes or supports constitutional solutions according to which one people can be outvoted by other two peoples is the

worst enemy of BiH and its peoples, no matter what that person's name is and how that person presents him/herself.

Today's edition of Nezavisne novine carries an editorial in which member of the RS NA Constitutional Commission, Branko Morait comments on yesterday's session of the RS National Assembly's Constitutional Commission when the Serb members of the Commission were outvoted. He says that the High Representative, who set up the Commission, did not decided on the mechanisms of decision making process. The Commission consist of 16 members divided in 4 groups: Bosniaks, Serbs, Croats and Others. Well, the Commission has 16 members and 16 is an even number. This means that, given that there are 16 members, the Commission is already doomed to stalemate, because a decision cannot be made if 8 members vote for and the other 8 vote against. However, political mathematics is not an exact science. In politics, 8 does not mean 8. Therefore, the results of the voting of the RS NA Constitutional Commission members tell us that the outvoting of the Serb side is back again. This well known outvoting has started with the so-called referendum on independence of BiH, then we had the BiH Constitutional Court ruling on constituent status of all three peoples in BiH and now we have it in the RS NA Constitutional Commission. As for the voting on constitutional amendments, the Croat-Bosniak delegation and two representatives of Others supported the most important proposals and the Commission adopted it. And if we, by any chance, had 8:8 result (8 members vote for, and 8 vote against) then the re-vote would end up with 8:7 result (8 members vote for, 7 vote against) in favor of non-Serb side. The adopted proposals have been drafted in the SDP BiH and SBiH lab. That is how we have a situation in the RS in which the Alliance for change decides on constitutional changes in the RS. This means that, thanks to this mechanism, the new RS Constitution is being prepared without proposals from the Serb side. After all, the RS National Assembly makes decision on constitutional changes in the RS. The key issue remains

unresolved: the Council for protection of vital national interests, which in its essence represents even more than a house of peoples, would not bring an already tested patent called outvoting of Serb representatives or a Serb representative body by the other two constituent peoples. The goal of the constituency of peoples is not that one people is defeated by the other two or that one people be victorious over the other two. It is also very well known that "might makes right". National issue in BiH and the issue of constitutionality of BiH peoples cannot be solved by outvoting. The appropriate way to resolve national issues in BiH is that each of the three constituent peoples is able to independently decides on its own vital national interests. The others have to tolerate and respect somebody else's vital national interests and not to suppress them. If these things keep going on, then I am afraid of the return to unfortunate 1992. Anyone who proscribes or supports constitutional solutions according to which one people can be outvoted by other two peoples is the worst enemy of BiH and its peoples, no matter what that person's name is and how that person presents him/herself.

Vjesnik: Elections in BiH Between Postponement and Petritsch's Rules

Vjesnik reports that if entity parliaments in BiH don't adopt "new solutions" concerning constitutional and election law amendments, elections in October will take place by the Provisional Procedures from 1998. The daily says that it is not certain how will some parties react on Petritsch's newest decisions that ban not only individual politicians but also political parties to take part in the elections. The estimations are that about 100 persons in BiH, according to Petritsch's rules, will not be able to participate in the elections. However, it says, it is curiosity that all indicted persons, who have voluntarily surrendered to Hague or any domestic Court, can take part in the elections.

Headlines

Glas srpski

- RS Constitutional Commission: Serbs remained in minority
- Were Sainovic and Stojiljkovic detained: officials silent

Nezavisne novine

- Former RS Army Officer before the ICTY: Nikolic pleads not guilty
- What is in the Proposed amendments of RS Constitutional Commission that would be discussed by RS National Assembly today: RS President to be elected by RS National Assembly
- Zoran Djindjic for Nezavisne novine: Indictees from RS will be tried in Belgrade too

Oslobodjenje

- Grabovac (I)legally pays out 1,76 million KM

Dnevni Avaz

- Investigation in Hercegovacka Banka leads to Ivic Pasalic

Jutarnje Novine

- Last deadline for severance pay to Federation soldiers June 30

Vecernji List

- Division among Croats because of celebration of HVO anniversary: Two celebrations of HVO anniversary
- A year after Provisional Administration was introduced: Is Hercegovacka Bnak shutting down?

Dnevni List

- A year after SFOR raid into Hercegovacka Bank: 7 criminal charges because of crime in Hercegovacka Bank
- Crises of HN Canton continues: Alliance deliberately caused crises in HNC