OBN News Review, 31 March 2000

Headlines

- Lease of the Zenica mine land is a robbery of state property
- The Funding Conference in Geneva pledged Euro2,4billion for a quick start of projects for South-East Europe.
- The State Parliament finally adopted the budget for ethnical institutions in this year
- Misunderstandings between Mesic and Racan about the President’s authorities
- 10 000 citizens of the Japanese island of Hokkaido were evacuated because the volcano eruption is expected any minute

Zenica

The Zenica mine land was rented to private owners for a price 10 times lower than usual. Between 1996. and 1998., 30 contracts have been signed over the lease of the land, without bidding. Facilities have been built therewithout any licence. The new General Manager of the Zenica mine, Senad Pojskic, will try to make a revision of the contracts. The report was produced by OBN reporter Amarildo Gutic.

Brussels

The Funding Conference in Geneva pledged Euro2,4billion for a quick start of projects for South-East Europe. The core of investments is for infrastructure and railway rehabilitation in the Federation and the RS. About Euro190 million has been planned for private sector development. The most important message from Brussels is that domestic economic reforms should be accelerated and that regional co-operation should be improved, B&H Foreign Minister, Jadranko Prlic, said for OBN.

From the total amount of Euro 2,4 billion, 70-80% are loans without interest. It has been officially confirmed that one of the projects will start this Friday- the Border Crossing of Blace, which is the main entrance for communication with Kosovo. Some projects are more specific than others. Bodo Hombach confirmed that Solana, Patten and himself would meet once every three weeks, in order to supervise the realisation of the projects. It was also confirmed that no financial help had been allocated for the reconstruction of Serbia. Reported by Zekerijah Smajic from Brussels.

Sarajevo

The B&H Parliament adopted the budget for this year, and therefore the issue of functioning of the joint institutions has been solved. The total budget exceeds DM 265 million. The expenses of the Presidency, the Council of Ministers and the Ministries of Communication and Trade were reduced. The budget was made in co-operation with the IMF. The report was produced by Damir Kaletovic.

Sarajevo

The Vice-President of the Federation, Ivo Andric Luzanski, thinks that the mandate of the Constitutional Court judges has expired, while the judges themselves, do not recognise this. They could be re-elected, but the main problem is their age. Reported by Sanjin Beciragic.

Zagreb

There are some rumours about a misunderstanding between the Croatian President, Stipe Mesic, and his Prime Minister, Ivica Racan, regarding presidential authorities. Mesic feels that Racan and his cabinet undermine his authority. Racan and Mesic had lunch together today, but they were not willing to talk to the press afterwards. Reported by Gordana Simonovic from Zagreb.

World

According to the Cechenian sources, 50 Russian soldiers were killed during an attack on a Russian convoy in eastern Cechenia.

The President of Ingushetia confirmed his mediation in negotiations between the Cechenian forces and Russia. Moscow gave their permission to the International Red Cross to visit prisoners in Cechenia.

The Japanese Government completed the evacuation of 10 000 people from the island of Hokkaido, where a volcano eruption is expected. The previous eruption took place in 1978., and 2 people died.

The announced Municipal Elections in Kosovo will take place even if the Serb refugees in FRY don't get the chance to vote, said the Head of the UN mission for the province, Bernard Kouchner, in Paris.

The Foreign Minister of Portugal said that Slovenia made great progress in negotiation towards joining the 15 EU members. The piece on world events was produced by OBN journalist Zeljka Lekic.

Sarajevo

The Government of the Federation of B&H made contracts on the first three phases of the project for development of the B&H company "Stil". The aim is the opening of a new market outside Ex-Yugoslavia. This project will improve the selling of the products of this company. Its employees asked for the resignation of the company management, accusing even the B&H Union over their difficult situation. The Prime Minister, Edhem Bicakcic, promised them that no one would lose their jobs. The report was produced by OBN reporter Anes Alic.

Sarajevo

The “PTT B&H” company is one of the most successful companies in B&H. Their revenue for the last year was 113.290.000 KM. Although they reduced their prices during the last year, they are still too high. Reported by Slobodan Maksimovic.

Mostar

The LTD “HPT Mostar” signed several contracts with Spanish enterprises about their donation of $2.5 million for reconstruction of public phone boxes, but only in the area covered by “HPT Mostar”. Reported by Blazica Kristo from Mostar.

Sarajevo

The military envoys for B&H visited the joint command of the Federation Army. The most important activity during the last year was the reduction of their military potential by 15%. The Envoys also visited the centre for military simulations in Hadzici. The report was produced by Vanja Elezovic.

Banja Luka

The RS Police Academy received a $3.5 million worth donation. This aid is a part of the UN mission programme for help for the RS police. Reported by Dragan Stanimirovic from Banja Luka.

Banja Luka

Universities from Banja Luka and Stockholm will improve their co-operation. They discussed the possibility of signing bilateral contracts. The Swedish representatives are interested in expanding co-operation and establishing better ethnical cultural relations.

Sport

Reports on the international tennis, international football, and the NBA league were produced.