

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 17/3/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18:00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19:00 hrs)	FED TV (19:30 hrs)	RT RS (19:30)
Covic with Croats in US	US/Spanish/UK summit	New Serbian PM	Ashdown to meet Busek
New Serbian PM	New Serbian PM	BiH war veterans	Djindjic's assassination
Djindjic's murder	'New Caledonia' in BiH	Israel – Pakistan	British EFT
Iraqi crisis			SDS reps attacked

Oslobodjenje	Ashdown replying to SDA accusations: make up your mind – you either steal or go to Europe; Alibabic – I saved Izetbegovic's life and know he turns against me; Vasic case – defenders were not informed
Dnevni Avaz	Brkovic on Serbia – I am afraid that Djindjic is not the last; Sulong – private business holders from Malaysia want to build a highway through BiH; Union's request – BH Post should be reviewed y the OHR Anti-corruption Team; Kreso – some of the measures that Zigic is requesting we have already realised; Agreement with the WB – the government will employ 740 demobilised soldiers

Dnevni List	EP BiH plunders miners and citizens; M. Bisic blackmailed my daughter and forced her to sexual intercourse; Will Beslic get confidence today?; Konjic municipality will implement all property claims during this year
Vecernji List	Arson in Hutovo Blato – everything that did not fly away was burnt down; Barisa Colak – reinforced security measures will last a long period of time; The HDZ BiH without electricity
Slobodna Dalmacija	Iraq proclaimed the state of war; Mandate for composition of the Serbian government to Zoran Zivkovic; Djindjic got killed in vain
Glas Srpski	American analyst Martin Shletzinger – Serbia in The Hague loop; Unknown disease spreads from Asia – fatal virus
Nezavisne Novine	The RS Interior Ministry arrested seven persons – police in Doboj routs net of counterfeiters; Belgrade – Zoran Zivkovic is the candidate for Serbian Prime Minister
FRY Nacional	State of emergency until May; Zivkovic new PM designate
Blic	Zivkovic – PM designate; Nikola Kragulj – VAT to ruin smuggling and crime; Srpska's charges against Bosniaks and Croats in The Hague's drawers; Discovered 1.5 million of counterfeit marks
Vecernje Novosti	State of emergency until the end of April; Over 200 people arrested
LJILJAN	Interview of the week – Paddy Ashdown admits that once he was criticized over a statement: 'problem are not nationalists, but criminals'

Political Affairs

<p>Tihic</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 5 'The SDA thinking about going to opposition' – an interview with SDA President Sulejman Tihic. Asked how serious was an SDA threat that they would withdraw from the authority, Tihic replied that the threat was serious if the situation remained the same. Added that the OHR stopped the process of the implementation of election results since they prevented the removal of incapable individuals who were only appointed on the basis of their party affiliations. "We can not take the responsibility for the situation in the state if we have 10% authorities. Even in spheres where we have the authority, like economic and social issues, there is a lot of interference, not only by the OHR, but also by other international institutions. Lately, the OHR and many embassies are interfering with the personnel policy, they even suggest their own favourites." According to Tihic, Jakob Finci has bigger authorities than the CoM. As for HR Paddy Ashdown, Tihic said that the SDA and him personally were in support of the hR politics. The problem is however that that Ashdown has a little saying in everything and decisions are prepared for him by IC officials who have certain prejudice towards Bosniaks, Muslim Bosnia and especially the SDA. Added that such prejudice were based on false information provided by Alibabic and snitches from political parties who lost the trust of people. An insert 'No authorities in internal and intelligence jobs' – Tihic said he could not allow, as the Presidency member, not to know why his candidate was not approved by the OHR, while IC officials know it. "This is my country. I love it more than they do." As for the OHR's decision to remove Bicakcic, Tihic said it was not enough for someone from the OHR to say Edhem was a thief and that it was generally accepted without any proof.</p>
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<p>HR Ashdown</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 3 – a reaction by HR Paddy Ashdown following accusation voiced against the OHR and the IC by the SDA Main Board and the party President Sulejman Tihic. “BiH has a clear choice – to go back to the old ways pf wprk where politicians or political officials were allowed to steal from the people, or join the Europe. The IC’s program is very clear, and it concerns the implementation of the DPA and the establishment of the European standards.” The daily also carries a statement by OHR Spokesperson Kevin Sullivan who said that Tihic had a right to his own opinion. Added that the IC was in partnership with the new authorities ever since they had been established. As for the request to abolish the decision on Bicakcic’s removal, Sullivan said that the same standards were implemented to all parties in BiH.</p>
<p>Alibabic</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 1 and 3 – a statement by Munir Alibabic Munja. He accused SDA President Sulejman Tihic that he lied about him submitting misinformation about candidates from the SDA to the OHR. Alibabic recalled that he was actually removed by the OHR. Further added that Tihic is mistaken if he thought Ashdown would support all his candidates, amongst whom are criminals, sponsors of war criminals, as well as of local and international terrorists. His message to Tihic is to remember what he (Tihic) did during the war and things he was saying. “Were those business dealings always in the best interest of Bosniaks that he is now defending from me,” asks Alibabic.</p>

<p>HDZ was against Kikic</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 3 'The HDZ did not want see Kikic heading the FOSS' – according to the daily's sources from the BiH Presidency, Sead Kikic was not appointed new FSS director due to objections from the HDZ.</p> <p>Apparently, the party leadership was against his assuming the post since he participated in gathering information for the indictments against Dario Kordic and Tihomir Blaskic. The HDZ threatened that they would withdraw SNS personnel from the common intelligence service if Kikic's appointment was green lighted. The party informed of this the OHR and the US embassy in BiH. The source also stated that the above reason was not given by the OHR, but it was said Kikic could not be FOSS director because of his contacts with Hasan Cengic at the time Cengic was Defence Minister, and Bakir Alispahic, former MoI Head.</p>
<p>Ivanic on 'Orao' affair</p>	<p>Avaz pg. 4 'Ivanic: the removal of the state President is not a simple thing' – Mladen Ivanic, BiH Foreign Affairs Minister, last night told the Banja Luka ATV that the 'Orao' affair had to finally be resolved. Commenting the possibility of Sarovic's removal, Ivanic said that the removal of a state president was not a small thing and added that serious arguments had to be presented for such argument.</p>

<p>RS press on 'Orao'</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg. 4 'The report on Orao to be delivered today to SFOR' – the new report with addenda of the RS Supreme Defence Council into the 'Orao' affair, which should clarify the political responsibility of the RS authorities in arm sales to Saddam Huseein, should be delivered to SFOR today. The SFOR Spokesperson, Dale MacEachern, yesterday confirmed this. He denied any comment as to what measures might be undertaken against RS leadership, in case the report did not satisfy SFOR demands. On Friday, Bijeljina Public Prosecutor's Office pressed criminal charges against 17 persons suspected of involvement in the 'Orao' affair. According to an NN inset, Milos Peric, Defence Attorney of the charged directors of 'Orao', stated that he found out about the indictment from the media. "We cannot take any concrete stance on the indictment until we get the original copy of the file."</p>
<p>Bicakcic</p>	<p>Vecernji List pg. 8 'My removal was devised according to Tito's recipe' – an interview with former Federation Prime Minister Edhem Bicakcic. "Reasons of my removal lie in a political domain... I will probably lodge an appeal against the latest decision on my removal to the Human Rights Chamber, the Helsinki Committee, ombudsmen institutions, and to those who protect basic human right on labor through conventions," said Bicakcic when asked about the most recent decision by the HR. "I did not have any other support. The SDA did not build the instruments for the protection of its members and for this reason since 1998 it had been suffering certain consequences," replied Bicakcic asked about the support from the SDA. According to Bicakcic, these consequences are dwindling its members and losing the political influence.</p>

<p>Interview with Colak</p>	<p>Vecernji List pg. 1 and 7 – an interview with Barisa Colak BiH Minister of Security. He said that due to the murder of Zoran Djindjic, there would be reinforced police control for quite a long time, particularly in the cooperation with the police of Serbia and Montenegro. As for speculations of his meeting with US Ambassador to BiH Bond and the US request that the HDZ nominates a genuine professional to the position of FOSS deputy director, Colak said that he had not yet talked about this with either Ambassador Bond or anybody else from the IC. Yet, he says the process of improving professional standards was in process in FOSS and some other state agencies. Speaking of a series of bomb explosions in Mostar, Colak thinks it is clear this is not about the inter-ethnic issue. “Also, I would not say it is about showdowns of clans that some call Mafia,” Colak said expressing his belief it was about the conflict of interests and expressed a hope the police investigations would soon yield results.</p>
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<p>Prosecutor Bisic accused of rape</p>	<p>Dnevni list pg. 1 and 5 – Vesna Vojkic, who claims to be the mother of A. P., brought to Dnevni List's office in Sarajevo documents showing that A. P. from Sarajevo had pressed charges against the current Sarajevo cantonal Prosecutor Mustafa Bisic. A. P. claims that back in 1990, Bisic forced her into having a sexual intercourse. Mrs. Vojkic claims her daughter was underage at the time, adding that Bisic threatened her daughter to make her life miserable and to kill her brother if she should tell anyone about it. Mrs. Vojkic also showed DL documents showing that A.P.'s brother, who had been accused of a robbery and against whom an investigation was conducted by Mustafa Bisic, the then investigative judge of Sarajevo Municipal Court I, was acquitted in March 1993 by Mustafa Bisic. DL adds that the paper has found out from its sources in the Independent Judicial Commission (IJC) that Mrs. Vojkic had lodged a petition with this body against Bisic.</p>
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<p>Covic with US based Croats</p>	<p>Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 2 'Annual banquet of the Croat(ia)n-American Association in Chicago', Dnevni list pg. 4 'Annual banquet of the Croat(ia)n- American Association in Chicago: support of Croatian Americans to ensuring the equal status of Croat in BiH' and Vecernji list pg. 2 'The banquet of the US Croat(ian)s' – 13th annual banquet, held last Saturday in Chicago, was attended by Dragan Covic, a BiH Presidency member, and Ivan Grdesic, Croatian Ambassador to the US. The banquet was also attended by Deny Davis, a congressman, and by representatives of the local Chicago authorities. George Rudman, CAA President, is quoted as saying that the Association now has two goals: to help BiH become self- sustainable and to keep Croatia from possible attempts of placing it into Balkans associations. This coming May, the Association is to visit the US Congress where it will lobby for the interests of Croat(ian)s. VL and SD quote Covic as saying that the Croatian authorities at the time of the late president Tudjman had stronger bonds with BiH Croats than nowadays. He is reported as explaining that the two biggest problems in BiH are its complex organization, which makes the country's normal functioning difficult and unemployment. Grdesic reiterated the official position of the current coalition Croatian government that BiH Croats should solve their problems in Sarajevo and not in Zagreb, adding that Croatia would not abandon them.</p>
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LJILJAN interview with HR	<p>Ljiljan pg. 18-22 'Tales that audits of the Elektroprivreda companies have been conducted for the purpose of their privatisation are simply ridiculous' – an interview with HR Paddy Ashdown. "The RS exists because of the agreement signed by Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks and the international community. If the entity was created by war criminals it would not be hard to abolish it. The entity however exists on the basis of the existence of the official international agreements signed by representatives of the three peoples in BiH and the most powerful states in the world. Maybe we do not like the entities, maybe I do not like them either, but they are the basis that we have to work on," said Ashdown.</p>
Silajdzic writes to Ashdown	<p>Ljiljan pg. 31-32 'BiH state capital in the hands of Croatia' – a letter sent by Haris Silajdzic, the founder of the Party for BiH, to HR Paddy Ashdown with regard to the situation in the BiH telecommunications sector. "BiH is the only country in transition and the only country in the region with three state-owned GSM operators and three licenses, and this seriously complicates the relations, makes the privatisation process more difficult and significantly reduces the value of the state capital. The entire situation is being additionally complicated with the fact the state capital of the Republic of Croatia has been installed in the (BiH telecommunications) sector (Eronet and HPT Mostar)," read the letter.</p>

Economic Affairs

BH Post Union	<p>Avaz pg. 1 and 3 – on Friday an extraordinary session of the BH Post Main Board, which was attended by members of the BH Post Union. President of the BH Post Main Board, Mufid Lojo, informed all present that a tender had been issued for selecting an independent auditor to examine the business dealings of the company in the course of the last year. Union reps suggested and the Main Board accepted that the OHR Anti-corruption Team was also involved. Lojo was tasked to publicly invite the OHR Anti-corruption Team to check the regularity of the company business dealings.</p>
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BiH EP	<p>Avaz pg. 1 and 2 – Enver Kreso, BiH EP general Director, said that they were already half way through with the implementation of measures recommended in the special audit. He said that immediately after the preliminary report, a team of an internal control was established in the BiH EP and the realisation of the measures commenced. As for Meho Obradovic, Kreso said he paid back the loan and, upon his (Obradovic) request, received confirmation of the contract termination.</p>
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WB warning

Avaz pg. 8 'Unless fast reforms were implemented, BiH could be facing the bankruptcy' – the World Bank (WB) from Washington, that BiH owes \$1,5 billion, warned that BiH could be facing great difficulties even bankruptcy unless economic and political reforms were implemented. If the economic reforms were fully implemented, the WB thinks BiH would pay off the debts painlessly. If however, partial reforms were to be implemented, the debt could amount to \$7 billion. This would definitely keep BiH away from joining the European integration.

**CRO press on
audits of
elektroprivreda
companies**

Dnevni List pg. 1 and 3 – details of the Elektroprivreda BiH audit report. DL says that according to the audit report, the profit that the Energy Financing Team from London made for reselling of electricity from EP BiH in 2002 is about 6 million Euros or 24%. This is about five times more than the ordinary profit made on the grounds of similar contracts at the international market. Vecernji List pg. 2 ‘Money on accounts of parties’ power-wielders’ – according to Head of Trasparenca Intrenationala Department, Boris Divjak, the most of embezzled money from three BiH Elektroprivredas was directed to accounts of the ruling parties, that is, their influential individuals. Divjak also says that nothing will be achieved through the current removals of corrupted officials from public companies because the Law on Conflict of Interests has not been enforced yet. “Whoever comes to the position of the removed ones will find oneself in the same situation as his predecessor, and will not be able to oppose the profiting of a small group of privileged ones.”

HB EP

Vecernji List pg. 1 and 3 – with regard to the audit report of the Elektroprivreda of Croat Community of Herceg Bosna (EP CC HB) one of the first tasks that the new HB EP Steering Board will have to carry out is the removal of EP CC HB leadership. VL says that the internal decision of the Federation government does not say precisely whether this implies the removal of 50 persons, who perform certain functions in the EP CC HB. The article says that after the audit report confirmed ‘irregularities’, the payment of electricity further reduced. Also, the Federation government recommendation to cut off the power supply to great debtors will be adopted at a session on Monday. VL says that electricity could be cut off to the HDZ as well since it owes over 14,000 KM. The article says that the power cut off without a valid court decisions might cause new problems for the EP CC HB and their beneficiaries.

RS EP

Nezavisne Novine pg. 4
'Elektroprivreda is not the property of parties, but the RS' – a short interview with Pantelija Dakic, Acting Director General at RS EP, who stated that no political party but the RS should be in possession of the RS Elektroprivreda. Although he assumed the position only seven days ago, he stressed that he and his team managed to achieve almost 90% of the tasks given to them by the RS government. The only thing still left to be done was to perform the control and review of all contracts and tenders that were suspended. In regard to the privatisation of the RS EP, Dakic said that it will have to be implemented, regardless of whether somebody likes it or not. He is of the view that each unit within the EP should be enabled to function properly. However, he did not want to comment on the possible majority privatisation of the RS EP capital.

Kragulj on VAT	<p>Blic pg. 6 headline 'VAT to ruin smuggling and crime' – Nikola Kragulj, Deputy in the BiH Parliament and former RS Minister of Trade, says that the introduction of VAT will secure a better system of economic relations and will help BiH to build principles that will bring the country closer to the EU. "The state will have more money for solving vital issues such as new jobs," Kragulj says.</p>
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Djindjic's assassination

<p>Investigation in BiH</p>	<p>Nacional pg. 6, Vecernje Novosti pg. 7 – an investigation into the assassination of Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjic, is being conducted at the Sarajevo Canton and also in other parts of the Federation. The Federation Interior Ministry confirmed the information. The investigation activities include checking of information and other operational activities. The investigation stretches across the entire country. The entity interior ministries are exchanging information on possible moves of suspects and other information on this case, informed the Federation Interior Ministry. The investigation was launched on the basis of a request issued by the BiH Interpol, which received information from the Serbian police that one of the suspects was hiding in BiH. The police searched several premises in Pale on Saturday. The police raided the 'RMG' company, the owner of which is controversial Sarajevo businessman Rato Spaic. Spaic was arrested recently on a suspicion of involvement in the murder of head of the Sarajevo Centre for Public Security, Zeljko Markovic. He was later released due to evidence insufficiency.</p>
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<p>Suspects</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg. 3 'Police on Bagzi's trail, Pacov behind bars', Glas Srpski pg. 4 'Pacov in police mousetrap' – Serbian Interior Ministry last night announced that Dejan Milenkovic Bagzi is believed to be hiding in the area of Surcin, Batajnica, Zemun Polje, Batajnica Galenika, Bezanijska Kosa, Zemun and Novi Beograd for the last 72 hours. The announcement further said that police also arrested Mladan 'Pacov' Micic, one of Zemun clan bosses who was hiding at his friends' house in Smoljinac. The Serbian police action resulted in the arrest of members of Bagzi's group. Dusan Mihajlovic, Serbian Interior Minister, on Friday stated that names of those who ordered and organised the assassination were also known. The police forces of the regional and neighbouring states from former Yugoslavia are also involved in the police action.</p>
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<p>New Serbian PM</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg. 2 'Zoran Zivkovic is a candidate for Serbian Prime Minister' – the Steering Board of the Democratic Party yesterday decided that new candidate for the position of the Serbian Prime Minister would be Zoran Zivkovic DS Vice President. Zivkovic stated that the Serbian government would continue to implement the programme set by Premier Zoran Djindjic. According to him, Djindjic made a sacrifice to democracy, not because he wanted, but because of his work.</p>
<p>CRO press on the assassination</p>	<p>Slobodna Dalmacija pg. 1,4, 10 and 11, Dnevni List pg. 20 'Democratic party proposed Zoran Zivkovic for position of Prime Minister', 'Del Ponte not unwelcome in Belgrade', 'One of leaders of Zemun clan Mladjan Micic known as Pacov arrested', 'Shooting of Djindjic's murder without Djindjic?', Jutarnji List pg. 1, 7 and 12, Vecernji List pg. 11 'Legija ran away from Police search on Saturday' and Vjesnik pg. 1 – the Democratic Party proposed Zoran Zivkovic for a new Serbian Prime Minister.</p>

<p>Feral Tribune commentary</p>	<p>Feral Tribune pg. 29-31</p> <p>‘Scandal in BiH: division of electric power supply system companies in BiH in 3 parts along the national key proves to be a mere alibi for plundering the people – we won’t let our generators go!’ by <u>Ivan Lovrenovic</u> – comments that the best illustration of the fact that many BiH-related issues are still characterized by absolute confusion and uncertainty, especially in terms of concepts of international factors who watch over BiH or are just observing it, is diametrically contradictory assessment of the returns process which could be noticed these days. The illustration Lovrenovic recalls HR Paddy Ashdown praising the process and his statement that ‘a new human right has been invented in Bosnia – the right to return’. The author goes on to recalls then the last PIC SB’s session where the returns process was not, contrary to announcements, proclaimed finalized. In this context, Lovrenovic also quotes Aaron Rhodes, Director of the Helsinki Federation for Human Rights International, which, in Lovrenovic’s opinion, should upset Ashdown if he was to pay due attention to it. “Following the elections there has been further deterioration of human rights, since many perpetrators of violence and suffering in BiH from the war have returned to high-ranking political positions, which enables them to continue systematic violations of human rights.” Lovrenovic goes on to say that internal affairs and circumstances are characterized by even deeper and more serious confusion, which manifests itself on the level of events as well as on the intellectual tendency level. He lists a series of spectacular ‘revelations’ and operations, which are carried out by the IC, according to some plan obviously, and which have direct consequences on the domestic political stage.</p> <p>Gives examples of the Hercegovacka Banka, ‘Orao’, Elektroprivredas operations...As for the latter, Lovrenovic comments that the fact that not even the Alliance tackled the issue during its rule shows that this grotesque system was a matter of untouchable political interest and tacit agreement. Adds that there is not a single ‘side’ that did not equally take part in it. Judging by the OHR and Ashdown, it becomes crystal clear that without the initiative and the leading role of the Americans none of this would have happened. Only some days ago, in quite a fatalist manner, Ashdown stated that ‘Karadzic would be apprehended the day he lost support of the people!’</p>
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Association of Croats from Posavina and Banja Luka	<p>Vecernji List pg. 5 'Dayton legalized ethnic cleansing' – the Association of Croats from Posavina and Banja Luka, who still cannot return their homes, (the Association is seated in Zagreb) issued a press release. "Alija Izetbegovic, Haris Silajdzic, Jadranko Prlic and Kresimir Zubak did not have authorities to split the state into entities with divided legislative, judicial and executive authority, and this goes against the Constitution of the Republic of BiH and the will of people expressed at referendum in 1992. For this reason, we demand from the BiH Constitutional Court to put the Dayton Peace Agreement out of force because it legalized ethnic cleansing."</p>
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