

# OHR BiH Media Round-up, 19/1/2006

Latest radio news broadcast at 12.00 on 19 January

<b>RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA</b> (12,00 hrs)	<b>BH Radio 1</b> (12,00 hrs)	<b>RTRS</b> (12,00 hrs)
WHC teachers' strike continues	Humphries met Bukejlovic: SAA	Dodik on resumption of talks
Croat parties mtg on January 25	Busek criticize failure of const. Talks	Buseck criticizes failure in talks
US Croats support abolish. of entities	Gas delivery decreased	Europe

TV news broadcast on 18 January

<b>RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA</b> (18,00 hrs)	<b>TV PINK</b> (18,00 hrs)	<b>BHT 1</b> (19,00 hrs)
BiH CoM & BiH Presidency in session	RS MoI after war crime suspect	RS MoI searched for Mladic?
Results of prices monitoring action	Hartman on Mladic	Comment on RS MoI's actions
RS Police action in Zepa area	Serbian media on Mladic	Milosevic to be temporarily released
HR in visit to SIPA	Presidency in session	Explosion in Zenica

<b>NTV Hayat</b> (19,00 hrs)	<b>FTV</b> (19,30 hrs)	<b>RTRS</b> (19,30 hrs)
RS Police action in Zepa area	BiH CoM in session	RS MoI after Mladic
BiH media on BiH-SiCG lawsuit	Explosion in Zenica	Chiarini on Abazovic incident

ICTY on Milosevic's request, update	Ashdown, Colak visit SIPA	Audit report on RS Railways
Custodies to Djuric, Besir extended	Djuric and Besiri case update	BN Municipality's account frozen

<b>Oslobodjenje</b>	Looking for Mladic where he was never supposed to be
<b>Dnevni Avaz</b>	Due to VAT, additional 100.000 unemployed by March
<b>Dnevni List</b>	Failed search after Ratko Mladic
<b>Vecernji List</b>	Hostage crisis because of 3 years old child (about incident in Mostar Welfare Center)
<b>Slobodna Dalmacija</b>	HVO victims to receive 7 times smaller salaries!
<b>Nezavisne Novine</b>	Florence Hartmann: Mladic in Serbia
<b>Glas Srpske</b>	A failure
<b>EuroBlic</b>	Dead ostriches caused panic (fear from bird flue)
<b>Vecernje novosti</b>	Features Serbian related topics

<b>LATEST NEWS OF TODAY</b>
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Humphries:  
Casting no-  
confidence  
vote to RS  
Govt will  
have no  
influence on  
BiH/EU SAA  
talks; Mtg  
with Dodik:  
SNSD will not  
continue with  
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changes talks

**BH Radio 1** by Dragan Stegic – Head of EC Mission to BiH, **Michael Humphreys** underlined in Banja Luka that EU is negotiating with state authorities and not with entities. Because of this, as Humphries stressed following the meeting with the RS Prime Minister **Pero Bukejlovic**, casting of no confidence vote to the RS Government would have no direct influence to beginning and continuance of negotiations on SAA. However, Humphries emphasized the importance of efficient functioning of all levels of the authorities and adoption of BiH Law on Obligations. Humphries also met with SNSD leader **Milorad Dodik** and is expected to meet members of RSNA Commission for European Integrations and regional cooperation later in the day. **RTRS** – Dodik stated after the meeting that talks on constitutional changes cannot resume, giving his view that the current authority has run out of arguments and options, while the situation is becoming more complicated in regard to the RS authority crisis. Dodik also said: *“If those to assume the power after elections were ready to resume talks on constitutional changes, they should do it. Hence, I made it clear to US Ambassador that SNSD would not take part in further talks, bearing in mind elections are approaching in 6-7 months...In this regard, I am of the view this issue about elections additionally burdens talks on constitutional changes. The fact is that the participants of talks are extremely motivated in regard to talks owing to the fact elections are to be held soon.”*

<p>Busek critical of failure to reach agreement on const. changes</p>	<p><b>RTRS, BH Radio 1</b> – Speaking for Vienna press, Coordinator of Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, <b>Erhard Busek</b> criticized the failure of constitutional reform in BiH. Busek stated that due to insufficient development, BiH could become "<i>black stain</i>" on the map. He stressed that failure of constitutional reform is especially critical for the economy, emphasizing the fact that BiH still depends on international aid.</p>
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<p><b>War crimes</b></p>
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<p>RS MoI raids Zepa searching for PIFWCs at large; Pejic confirms to daily they looked for Mladic, but nobody found; Blic: Military intelligence to continue search?</p>	<p><b>RTRS</b> By <u>Sladjana Jasarevic</u> – RS Ministry of Interior raided several facilities in Zepa after receiving information from a “<i>respectable security agency</i>” that a war crimes suspect from the ICTY’s public list might be in the area. The action ended Wednesday at 4 p.m. without any success. RS MoI Spokesman <b>Radovan Pejic</b> confirmed the media speculation that the search was after one of two most wanted suspects, <b>Radovan Karadzic</b> and <b>Ratko Mladic</b>. RS Police Director <b>Dragomir Andan</b> stated at the occasion, that this was one of the most complex but well-organised RS MoI’s actions. “<i>We haven’t found anyone at the location but we have found traces which will give us information needed for future actions. This shows determination of RS MoI to cooperate with ICTY to find PIFWCs. RS will keep investigation all information received on their whereabouts until they are all extradited or surrendered,</i>” adds Andan. <b>EUFOR Spokesperson Jem Thomas</b> welcomed the action adding its troops only monitored the action entirely carried by the RS MoI. <b>Oslobodjenje</b> cover splash pgs 4-5 ‘Looking for Mladic where he was never supposed to be’ by <u>Avdo Avdic</u> – Pejic confirmed for <b>Oslobodjenje</b> that RS police was looking for Mladic. <b>EuroBlic</b> pg 2 ‘Mladic’s family being tailed’, announced on cover ‘Mladic sought for in Belgrade, then in Zepa’ by <u>N.B.</u> – Daily reports that secret military police will now undertake all measures involving surveillance of Mladic’s family members. Daily learns <b>Zoran Stankovic</b>, SiCG Defence Minister, himself informed Mladic’s family of this. <b>RTRS</b> comments that domestic media and reporters were disabled from approaching the location, while Associated Press journalists were driven to the location by Police Director Andan.</p> <p><b>RHB, PINK, Hayat, FTV, BHT1, Dnevni Avaz</b> ‘Action of capturing Mladic failed in Veliki Zep’ by <u>Aj.Delic</u>, <b>Dnevni List</b> cover pg splash and pg 3 ‘Failed search after Ratko Mladic’ by <u>A. Beus</u>, <b>Vecernji List</b> pg 2 ‘Failed search after Ratko Mladic’ by <u>V. Rupcic, B. Stevandic</u>, <b>Nezavisne Novine</b> cover pg splash ‘Florence Hartmann: Mladic in Serbia’, pg 3 ‘The Hague: Mladic is in Serbia’ by <u>J.Sarac</u>, <b>Vecernje Novosti</b> pg 10 ‘Not a trace of Mladic’ by <u>D.Stojakovic</u>, <b>Glas Srpske</b> pg 2 ‘Neither Ratko or Radovan located’ by <u>V.Janjic</u>– also reported.</p>
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<p>ICTY: Mladic is in Serbia , not BiH!</p>	<p><b>RTRS</b> – ICTY Prosecutor’s Spokesperson <b>Florence Hartman</b> underlined <b>Mladic</b> is hiding in SiCG, not in BiH where RS MoI had carried out the arrest search. Hartman said that ICTY Chief Prosecutor <b>Carla del Ponte</b> would discuss the start of SCG and EU talks on Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU High Representative for International Affairs <b>Javier Solana</b> and NATO representatives on Thursday in Brussels. <b>Oslobodjenje</b> cover splash pgs 4-5 ‘Looking for Mladic where he was never supposed to be’ by <u>Avdo Avdic</u>, inset, ‘Mladic is in Serbia’ – Del Ponte also said Mladic is hiding in Serbia, not in BiH. <b>PINK, Hayat, BHT1, RHB, Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 3- ‘He is in Serbia not in BiH’, <b>Nezavisne Novine</b> cover pg splash ‘Florence Hartmann: Mladic in Serbia’, pg 3 ‘The Hague: Mladic is in Serbia’ by <u>J.Sarac</u>, <b>Glas Srpske</b> pg 2 ‘Mladic in Serbia ’ – all carried the statement.</p>
<p>DA op-ed on Andan’s statements regarding raid in Zepa region</p>	<p><b>Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 3 ‘Policemen or showmen’ op-ed by <u>Edina Sarac</u> – Using a very ironical tone, author refers to the statements of RS Police Director <b>Dragomir Andan</b> given during the raid in Zepa which was supposed to lead to capturing a suspect from the ICTY’s public list. Author deems Andan is very “unserious” police officer, a showman. Reminding he has promised capturing <b>Radovan Karadzic</b> and <b>Ratko Mladic</b> when he was appointed to the position, editorial concludes Mladic can sleep peacefully as long as Andan is going after him.</p>
<p>EUFOR informs BiH Foreign Minister about the Rogatica operation</p>	<p><b>RTRS, Glas Srpske</b> pg 3 ‘Mandate was not breached’, <b>Nezavisne Novine</b> pg 5 ‘Troops did not breach the mandate in Rogatica’ by <u>A.S.</u> – The EUFOR Commander, General <b>Gian Marco Chiarini</b>, Wednesday informed the BiH Foreign Minister, <b>Mladen Ivanic</b>, about the course of the internal investigation EUFOR is conducting in regard to the incident that occurred in Rogatica, on 5 January, when <b>Rada Abazovic</b> was killed in the EUFOR operation there. A press release issued by EUFOR reads that Chiarini “reassured BiH Foreign Minister that the EU troops had acted in line with their mandate” and that “they are in contact with the local Prosecutor who is conducting his investigation”.</p>

<p>DA: Ashdown to establish a commission for Palic case</p>	<p><b>Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 8 'Ashdown to establish a commission for Palic case' by <u>S. N.</u> – According to DA, HR <b>Paddy Ashdown</b> will soon establish a commission that would clarify the fate of Zepa wartime commander <b>Avdo Palic</b>. According to a source, the commission will have a deadline no longer than ten days to investigate what had happened with Palic. It is still unclear whether HR would remove anyone from RS Government over failure to resolve this case. <b>Oslobodjenje</b> pg 2 'Ashdown on failure of RS Government in "case Palic"' – announces the press conference the HR Ashdown is to hold on the case today.</p>
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## Political issues

<p>BiH CoM to raise issue of decertified police officers before UN Security Council</p>	<p><b>Hayat</b> – BiH Council of Ministers held an extraordinary session on Wednesday discussing the issue of decertified policemen who held protests and demanded the revision of the process carried out by the UN IPFT. They had commenced with the hunger strike and ceased it after meeting BiH Minister of refugees and human rights <b>Mirsad Kebo</b> who promised help. Consequently, the BiH CoM at the session decided to launch activities in order to solve the issue before the UN Security Council in line with recommendations of the Venice Commission (which advised revision of the process). <i>“The CoM has decided to insist on including the Venice Commission’s report at the UN SC agenda and to ensure revision of the certification process”</i>, said Kebo. <i>“We are not satisfied since this presents only a partial solution which offers no guaranties that the UN SC will accept and carry out revision process”</i>, said the Chair of BiH Decertified Policemen Association <b>Ramiz Sulic</b>. <b>Dnevni List</b> pg 2 ‘State Commission will not be formed’ by <u>R.D.</u> carries Sulic as saying that it is bad for decertified policemen that the BiH CoM will not form the Commission at BiH level if UNSC refuses to carry out audit of decertified policemen. <b>BHT1, RHB, PINK, FTV, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 4 by <u>S. T.</u>– ‘It is going to ask UN Security Council to review the stance of Venice Commission’, <b>Oslobodjenje</b> pg 8 by <u>Az. Kalamujic</u>– ‘Revision of process could be conducted only by the UN’, <b>Nezavisne Novine</b> pg 2 ‘They will demand from UN to discuss the issue of de-certified policemen’ by <u>M.C.</u>, <b>Glas Srpske</b> pg 2 ‘Diplomacy on test’ by <u>N.Zelenovic</u> – all reported on the issue.</p>
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<p>Presidency “cannot do anything” on issue of decertified police</p>	<p><b>BHT1</b> – Following the session on Wednesday, the BiH Presidency member <b>Borislav Paravac</b> said that the Presidency couldn’t do anything regarding the issue of decertified police officers and their demands as the UN Security Council must approve the revision process. BHT 1 says that some sources claim the issue of decertified policemen would not be solved soon, as the issue may also open discussions on legality of decisions dismissing politicians which were imposed by the OHR.</p>
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HR: I expect CoM to pass decision on SIPA permanent HQ on Thursday

**BHT1**– High Representative **Paddy Ashdown** and BiH Minister for Security **Barisa Colak** visited the temporary office of SIPA. Ashdown called on the BiH Council of Ministers to make urgent decision on the permanent location of the SIPA HQ at its session on Thursday. Currently, there are two possible locations – in Lukavica and Nedzarici. BHT1 claims the possession of report prepared for CoM by independent agency “Ekoplan”, which clearly indicates the location in Lukavica is most cost-effective solution. Head of SIPA **Sredoje Novic** said that it is now up to BiH CoM to decide on permanent location of SIPA headquarter, being that it is obviously a political decision. Reporter commented that Chair of BiH CoM **Adnan Terzic** is refusing to accept the location in Lukavica, but Ashdown is going to insist on solution for this issue during his mandate. **Hayat**– *“SIPA’s future work is being obstructed since the decision on its permanent seat has not been passed yet. The decision should be passed as soon as possible if the BiH authorities do not want to lose means already foresaw in the budget for new SIPA’s seat. I expect the final decision to be brought on Thursday, at the BiH CoM’s session”*, said Ashdown. Colak said that temporary location for SIPA’s seat was not a solution, since enormous amounts of money were being spent on its rent. Colak pointed out that he expected the solution to be reached on Thursday. **RHB, PINK, FTV, RTRS, Oslobodjenje** pg 7- ‘Who obstructs work of SIPA?’ **Dnevni Avaz** pg 8 by E. Sarac– ‘Ashdown: I expect CoM to pas decision on permanent HQ’, **Dnevni List** pg 7 ‘Politics brought SIPA in danger’, **Vecernji List** pg 5 ‘SIPA’s work questionable’ by eme, **Nezavisne Novine** pg 5 ‘SIPA is a subject of political games’ by A.Sisic, **Glas Srpske** pg 2 ‘The hostages of political games’ by Z.D.– all reported on HR’s visit to SIPA.

<p>Paravac presents BiH delegation for SAA negotiations</p>	<p><b>PINK</b> by <u>Zeljko Mandic</u> – At the session on Wednesday, BiH Presidency adopted the platform for negotiations on Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU. Member of Presidency, <b>Borislav Paravac</b>, also confirmed the Presidency issued the Decision on provisional appliance of the regulations of this agreement, with regard to the movement of goods and transport between BiH and the EU. He explained that the essence of the SAA negotiations would be of economic nature, and this is why in signing the SAA, EU and BiH should immediately sign the provisional agreement on free movement of goods, which should not have to be ratified in the parliaments. Paravac presented the BiH delegation consisting of CoM Chair <b>Adnan Terzic</b>, BiH Foreign Minister <b>Mladen Ivanic</b>, BiH Security Minister <b>Barisa Colak</b>, BiH Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations <b>Dragan Doko</b>, BiH Minister of Civil Affairs <b>Safet Halilovic</b>, BiH Justice Minister <b>Slobodan Kovac</b>, Director of BiH Directorate for European Integration, <b>Osman Topcagic</b>, BiH Ambassador to EU <b>Lidija Topic</b> and Chief negotiator <b>Igor Davidovic</b>. <i>“The negotiations may last from 8 to 12 months and definitely will not be finished before the elections, so we chosen the state officials that are not linked to their positions [by elections]”</i> added Paravac. <b>BHT1, PINK, Hayat, RTRS, FTV, Oslobodjenje</b> pg 5 ‘Negotiations would be based on economics’- <i>“This is priority of all priorities in our foreign policy and future of BiH for association with the EU”</i>– stated Paravac. <b>Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 2- ‘Accepted proposal of decision on launching of negotiations with the EU’, <b>Dnevni List</b> pg 2 ‘Platform and Agreement on Stabilization secret for citizens’ by <u>D. P. Mandic</u>, <b>Vecernji List</b> pg 2 ‘Platform for EU adopted’ by <u>dja</u>, <b>Nezavisne Novine</b> pg 6 ‘Platform for talks with EU set’ by <u>A.Sisic</u> – also reported.</p>
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<p>DA: BiH team demands SAA to include clause guaranteeing EU admission</p>	<p><b>Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 11 'Agreement has to have clause that would guarantee EU admission' <u>by T.Lazovic</u> – BiH Negotiating Team on Stabilisation and Association Agreement [ SAA] will demand from EU to include clause which would state that BiH European perspective is guaranteed. DA learns this is one of key issues of the BiH Negotiations Platform adopted by BiH Presidency on Wednesday.</p> <p>Most of the platform, still treated as the confidential document but obtained by DA, refers to trade issues. BiH would demand costumes free regime for export of goods from BiH to EU. BiH Team would also pay attention to issues of iron and steel trade, and for meat, vine and fish they would demand liberalization of export regime towards EU. BiH Team would also try to arrange opening of labor market for BiH citizens and members of their families, as well as to define necessary steps for mutual acknowledgement of professional diplomas.</p>
<p>Covic: HDZ in BiH is not branch office of HDZ Croatia</p>	<p><b>Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 4 'Covic: HDZ BiH is not a branch office of HDZ Croatia', mentioned on cover, <u>by F.Vele</u> – In light of recent decision by the European People's Party to freeze HDZ status and following a clash with the HDZ Croatia, HDZ BiH leader <b>Dragan Covic</b> stated that HDZ in this country is not a branch of HDZ Croatian or its string puppet. Covic added that BiH and HDZ Croatian have to regain "lost" confidence.</p>
<p>Elec. Comm.: Luzanski cannot be member of HDZ Central Board</p>	<p><b>Vecernji List</b> pg 4 'Ban for Luzanski after all' <u>by zk</u> – The Election Commission had recently ordered expelling of <b>Ivo Andric Luzanski</b> from the Central Board of BiH HDZ. The Election Commission stated that Luzanski can only be a member of the party.</p>

<p>HR in farewell visits: mufti Cerić and HJPC Chair Perić thank Ashdown for helping BiH to follow the right path, reforms</p>	<p><b>Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 2, announced on cover 'Effendi Cerić: He helped BiH to follow the right path' By <u>MINA</u>, <b>Oslobodjenje</b> pg 7 'BiH will remember Ashdown' by <u>MINA</u> – Reiss <b>Mustafa Cerić</b> met HR <b>Paddy Ashdown</b> on Wednesday on the occasion of his departure from the position of HR. Reiss thanked HR for everything he had done for BiH and he expressed regret over the fact Ashdown was not the last HR to BiH as well as over the fact strong principles of civic society have not been established. HR Ashdown thanked Reiss Cerić and wished to BiH Islamic Community and everyone in BiH to achieve progress on the path to Euro-Atlantic integrations. <b>Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 2, announced on cover 'Effendi Cerić: He helped BiH to follow the right path' By <u>MINA</u>, inset 'Perić: he had fulfilled the promise on judiciary reform' by <u>S. T.</u> – HJPC Chairman <b>Branko Perić</b> thanked HR Ashdown for transfer of competences for appointment of judges and prosecutors onto HJPC and he noted Ashdown's role was crucial in establishment of HJPC.</p>
<p>Cavoski says he will not convene session of E.Sarajevo Law Faculty Council over Lukic case</p>	<p><b>Nezavisne Novine</b> pg 9 'Kosta Cavoski will not convene session' by <u>G.Maunaga</u> – Daily reports that <b>Kosta Cavoski</b>, President of the East Sarajevo Law Faculty Council, Wednesday stated he finds the problem related to removal of <b>Radomir Lukic</b>, professor and dean of this Faculty, concluded at the session of Council on 15 October, when it was unanimously decided Lukic should remain at position. He said he has no reason to convene new session.</p>

<p>NN op-ed: Dodik to examine “pockets” of Cavic, Bukejlovic and Stojicic</p>	<p><b>Nezavisne Novine</b> op-ed pg 7 ‘Searching the pockets’ by <u>Pero Simic</u> – The author harshly criticizes the RS Government led by <b>Pero Bukejlovic</b>, as well as <b>Dragan Cavic</b> fro failing to undertake any action in regard to resolving the crisis in RS. <u>Simic</u> underlines crime and corruption are basic philosophy of their reign. He is supportive of <b>Milorad Dodik</b> taking over authority from Bukejlovic, expressing eagerness to see if Dodik would raise the issue of (illicit) accumulation of wealth amongst some politicians, including Bukejlovic, Cavic and <b>Dusan Stojicic</b>.</p>
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## Economic issues

<p>Price Monitoring Teams file criminal charges in case of large VAT irregularities</p>	<p><b>Hayat</b> – Preliminary results of price monitoring process following the VAT introduction was presented on Wednesday. BiH Indirect Taxation Administration stated their inspectors carried out 415 partial controls in from 1 January and certain irregularities have been registered. In case of some smaller irregularities, preventing actions were carried out, and in case of greater wrongdoings criminal reports have been filed. After the FBiH Prices Monitoring Team carried out 738 controls, 142 criminal reports have been filed. <i>“Prices of bread started to increase immediately after the New Year’s Eve and in certain Cantons we had to bring the prices back to the level before the VAT introduction”</i>, said the FBiH Monitoring Team official <b>Ibrahim Tirak</b>.</p> <p><b>RHB</b>– Tirak adds that in addition to filing charges against some, have been carried out. He adds that a number of criminal reports have been filed as well as that certain shops were closed.</p> <p><b>RTRS</b>– According to the information provided by BiH CoM and ITA the life cost in RS has increased for 3.34 KM while in FBiH for 2.42 KM per capita. They both claim that price increase in the countries of the region after VAT introduction was much higher. Economy Advisor to the BiH CoM <b>Zlatko Hurtic</b> stated that the stabilisation of prices is expected by the end of the month.</p> <p><b>Oslobodjenje</b> pg 4 ‘Average increase of prices up to four percent’ by <u>M.K.S.</u>, <b>Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 10 ‘142 criminal report filed in FBiH, four objects closed’ by <u>Z.Perisic</u>, <b>Dnevni List</b> pg 16 ‘Prices of products keep falling’ by <u>M. Zorlak</u>, <b>Vecernji List</b> pg 5 ‘Life more expensive by 3 % to poor ones’ by <u>E. Medunjanin</u>, <b>Nezavisne Novine</b> pg 8 ‘Prices of basic groceries dropping’ by <u>N.Krsman</u>, <b>EuroBlic</b> RSpG 2 ‘VAT introduced minor price increase’ by <u>D.S.-N.B.</u>, <b>Glas Srpske</b> pg 3 ‘Medicine is – too expensive’ by <u>N.Zelenovic</u>– also reported.</p>
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<p>Hurtic urges entity governments to pass budgets for 2006; CoM to analyse situation in 6 months</p>	<p><b>RTRS</b> late news by Aleksandar Vranjes – Economy advisor of Chairman of CoM <b>Zlatko Hurtic</b> said that more than 10.000 products had their price decreased after the VAT implementation. He also stressed the price of medicaments from the list of essential drugs were not increased. Hurtic explained the Price Monitoring Teams were more concerned with socially vulnerable groups therefore focused their activities at basic groceries. <i>“Because of [these groups]... I would like to call on the entity governments to adopt the budget for 2006 and to forget about political games and start thinking about people”</i> said Hurtic. He reiterated that CoM would analyse the VAT effect in 6 months and discuss the possible decrease of the VAT rate or introduction of multiple VAT rates. <b>EuroBlic</b> RSpg 2 ‘VAT introduced minor price increases’ by D.S.-N.B. – <u>also reported.</u></p>
<p>Toskic: additional 100.000 unemployed by March due to VAT</p>	<p><b>Dnevni Avaz</b> cover splash pg 5 ‘Due to VAT, additional 100.000 unemployed by March’ <u>F.C.</u> – Graphic Workers Trade Union President <b>Amer Toskic</b> stated that damaging effects of VAT are already present, especially in graphic industry, adding that due to the VAT BiH will have additional 100.000 unemployed by March. Tokic added that situation was difficult even prior to the VAT introduction due to damaging interstate agreements with Croatia and SCG , and now only worsened.</p>



<p>DL op-ed: VAT – joint deal between merchants and state?!</p>	<p><b>Dnevni List</b> pg 2 ‘Joint ‘deal’ of merchants and state?!’ by <u>I. Rozic</u> says that merchants and the state budget profit the most from the VAT introduction and that some analysts warn that the VAT is a classical example of ‘a deal’ that the merchants and the state benefit from. The author says that if view the situation from this aspect we should not be surprised at all that the current authority in some Cantons does not do anything to prevent irregularities related to the VAT introduction but it even covers up relevant data from the public.</p>
<p>SD: HVO victims are not aware that according to new Law their incomes have been considerably reduced</p>	<p><b>Slobodna Dalmacija</b> cover pg splash and pgs 16 and 17 ‘HVO victims to receive 7 times smaller salaries!’ by <u>E. Felic</u> carries that after January 1, 2006 HVO victims are going to receive disability pays that are considerably less since amounts of disability pays for both BiH Army and HVO victims have been made equal according to the new Law. The SD source, who is well familiar with this issue, says that HVIDRA representatives kept silent while the procedure for drafting of this law was taking place and that many HVO victims are not aware that their disability pays have been considerably reduced.</p>

## Constitutional changes

Blic: const.  
changes talks  
to continue in  
five days?

**EuroBlic** RSpq 2 'Continuation next week?'  
by N.Breberina – As daily learns from  
sources close to negotiators, the leaders  
of the eight leading parties in BiH will  
most likely resume talks (on  
constitutional changes in BiH) in the  
coming five days. Daily's collocutor notes  
*"There is an agreement in principle that  
we should try to de-block the process of  
talks. If we failed, it would be evident  
the upcoming general elections would be  
held in the same environment as in 2002."*  
**Dragan Covic**, HDZ President, confirmed to  
daily that the negotiators have agreed  
during the last round of talks not to  
abuse the issue of constitutional changes  
during pre-election campaign. **Beriz  
Belkic**, S BiH Presidency member, is not an  
optimist talks would resume, adding a  
progress in talks has been achieved.

<p>BHT1: constitutional changes will be endorsed after elections</p>	<p><b>BHT1</b> by <u>Mirela Cosic</u> –BHT1 sources say that the negotiations on constitutional changes failed because of politicians' fear that they might lose votes at the elections. Therefore, the changes are allegedly going to be endorsed after the elections. However, sources close to the US State Department claim that in case the constitutional changes are not passed by April, BiH might lose the support of the USA. FBiH Vice President <b>Shabaz Džihanovic</b> said that the negotiation partners obviously don't want any changes, and they are doing everything to preserve the status quo. SDU's <b>Sejfudin Tokic</b> stated that the constitutional changes should be adopted before the elections. <b>Safet Halilovic</b> from Party for BiH said that the failure of talks might be of use for some politicians. PDP's <b>Mladen Ivanic</b> said that the talks might continue after the elections with new people.</p>
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<p>Tihic: Commission to legally frame const. amendments started working</p>	<p><b>Nezavisne Novine</b> pg 4 'Attorneys to create amendments from the issues agreed' by <u>D.Muminovic</u> – <b>Sulejman Tihic</b>, SDA President, Wednesday stated that the Commission composed of legal experts, that should legally frame issues on changes of BH Constitution on which BH politicians agreed and convert them into constitutional amendments, has started with its work. Tihic also said: <i>"The agreement has also been reached that the non-rotating president of BiH, who will have two vice presidents, would freely decide on issues, bar issues related to defence, where Vice presidents have a right to veto."</i> <b>Vinko Radovanovic</b>, PDP Presidency member, stressed the work of Commission is formal and there will be no problems most likely, adding that the Commission will not process issues on which stances were harmonized, i.e. future organization of BH Presidency and BH Parliament.</p>
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<p>Dodik: As far as SNSD is concerning, “we are done with” const. changes talks</p>	<p><b>RHB</b>– In a statement to RHB, the SNSD leader <b>Milorad Dodik</b> said that the talks on constitutional changes in BiH gave no concrete solutions, and as far as he is concerned, “<i>we are through with them</i>”. Dodik holds FBiH politicians responsible for the failure in talks, since they rejected entity voting in the BiH House of Representatives. Dodik says that the International Community has not chosen the best time for holding the talks, but instead this should have been done after the elections in October. Dodik said that no discussion whatsoever had been led in terms of the Venice Commission’s recommendation to improve poor functioning of the Federation of BiH.</p>
<p>Komsic: Talks should continue in one month</p>	<p><b>Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 8 ‘Party leaders should continue talks in one month’, <b>Dnevni List</b> pg 6 ‘Negotiations failed because of parties from RS’ by <u>R.D.</u> – SDP Vice President <b>Zeljko Komsic</b> told press conference in Sarajevo that eight political party leaders should continue talks on the constitutional changes next month.</p>

<p>HDZ and HNZ are willing to continue const. changes negotiations</p>	<p><b>Slobodna Dalmacija</b> pg 4 'If Washington decides so, Croats support continuation of negotiations' <u>by H</u> – HDZ and HNZ expressed readiness to participate in continuation of the constitutional changes talks if the US embassy in BiH decides so. HDZ spokesperson <b>Miso Relota</b> stated that HDZ is willing to continue the negotiations since it serves interests of the Croats to get the Constitution that would guarantee equality with other two peoples. HNZ Vice President <b>Mato Bandur</b> believes that the constitutional changes talks should continue and that HNZ is willing to participate in continuation of the negotiations.</p>
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<p>Associations of US Croats launched petition for abolishment of BiH entities</p>	<p><b>Vecernji List</b> pg 4 'Dayton unified Croats' by <u>Z. Kresic</u> – Leaders of few respectable associations of US Croats originally from BiH called on Croat and Bosniak politicians in BiH to demand abolishment of two BiH entities. They also criticized <i>'proposals for cosmetic changes coming from the State Department'</i>. These associations also launched signing of the petition for this initiative and commenting on this initiative HDZ President <b>Dragan Covic</b> stated that he is satisfied since Croats from BiH and Diaspora recognize that current constitutional solutions negate equality of Croats. NHI President <b>Kresimir Zubak</b> supports stands of US Croats. Zubak stressed that the discussion on constitutional changes should be led through the BiH Constitutional Court in order to avoid unnecessary politicisation. HSS President <b>Mato Tadic</b> stated that their stands are identical with the stands of the associations of US Croats.</p>
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<p>Vukicevic: There is no plan for exchange of Kosovo and RS</p>	<p><b>Oslobodjenje</b> pg 3 'There is no exchange of RS for Kosovo' by <u>Fena</u> – Commenting recent statement of American Professor <b>Francis Boyle</b>, SiCG Ambassador to BiH <b>Stanimir Vukicevic</b> said there is no compensation deal or any connection whatsoever between RS and Kosovo. Vukicevic said he was surprised with the statement in which Boyle claims that the reforms of the former principal deputy high representative, <b>Donald Hays</b> , lay out the road for joining of RS to Serbia as a compensation for Kosovo. SCG Ambassador said it seems that Boyle did not read the statements of senior SiCG officials that there is no connection between RS and Kosovo whatsoever.</p>
<p>GS on const. changes: Bosniaks failed to accomplish their intentions</p>	<p><b>Glas Srpske</b>cover pg splash 'A failure' by <u>Z.Markovic</u> – Commenting on constitutional changes talks in BiH, the author stresses that the Bosniak politicians, led by <b>Sulejman Tihic</b>, have failed in their intention to convert the Dayton Agreement and the BiH Constitution into the past and centralize the BiH in line with the pre-war pattern.</p>



<p>Oslobodjenje op-ed on talks on constitutional changes: USA expects results</p>	<p><b>Oslobodjenje</b> op-ed pg 9 'Dayton II, after all' by <u>Josip Vricko</u> – Following the latest round of talks on constitutional changes, the author notes one gets an impression there would be no reforms by Spring. The author says US Ambassador <b>Douglas McElhaney</b> had certainly informed his bosses in Washington on everything and most probably tried to justify the failure of negotiations by saying it is impossible to agree on anything with people who do not wish to reach an agreement. However, USA do not expect justifications from its person in the Balkans, USA expect results, therefore, as the author concludes, McElhaney is in much greater hurry than, for example, SNSD leader <b>Milorad Dodik</b>.</p>
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<p>Oslobodjenje op-ed on talks on constitutional changes: Bad introduction to 'Brussels era'</p>	<p><b>Oslobodjenje</b> op-ed pg 9 'Poker in the Central Bank' by <u>Gojko Beric</u> – With regard to talks on constitutional changes, the author assesses claims that there is much time left for talks as unserious and he criticizes “international mediators with the American Ambassador” on the head for admitting that talks were only unsuccessful but not a failure. He believes RS is the center of majority of political crisis in BiH since they rely only on official Belgrade. On the other hand, according to the author, SCG Prime Minister <b>Vojislav Kostunica</b> behaves as if RS was the only wartime pray of SiCG that might improve SiCG's position in forthcoming negotiations on Kosovo status. In such a situation, problems of Croats in BiH were left aside and, as a conclusion, author notes that the current outcome of the constitutional reforms represents a bad introduction to the promised “Brussels era”.</p>
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## Judicial issues, crime

<p>New courtroom of BiH Court the safest in the Balkans</p>	<p><b>PINK, BHHT1, Hayat, FTV, RTRS, Oslobodjenje</b> pg 3, announced on cover 'The safest courtroom in the Balkans was put in function' by <u>A. Omeragic</u>, <b>Dnevni Avaz</b> pg 10 'Process for Srebrenica genocide will be carried out in the safest courtroom in the region' by <u>S. Turcalo</u>, <b>Dnevni List</b> pg 3 'It has been made possible to have over 12 trials at the same time' by <u>E. Mackic</u>, <b>Nezavisne Novine</b> pg 2 'The most modern courtroom opened at BH Court' by <u>A. Durmo</u> – BiH court President <b>Meddzida Kreso</b> and Secretary General of Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs <b>Jan Grauls</b> officially put in function the safest courtroom in the Balkans, seated in the building of BiH Court. Numerous local and international officials attended the ceremony.</p>
<p>BHT 1: Weapons found in K. Dubica belonged to RS Army?</p>	<p><b>BHT 1</b> <u>Boris Gagic</u> – Several days ago, a secret warehouse containing 3 tons of weapons was discovered by EUFOR near Kozarska Dubica, but it's still not clear who was hiding it. According to unconfirmed information, the weapons belonged to RS Army. The Mayor of Kozarska Dubica <b>Branko Barac</b> said that many different troops were active in this area, and that illegal weapons were found in past too.</p>

Globus on  
Jelavic's  
whereabouts  
and  
possibility  
that Croatian  
Police  
arrests him

**Globus** pgs 18 -21 'Expensive Jelavic's shelters' by T. Disopra, B. Oresic carries that former HDZ President and Hercegovacka Banka case indictee **Ante Jelavic** appears on few location in Croatia, that is, in the area of Lika, in Zagreb and Split. Globus says that Jelavic is very discreet and allegedly accompanied by bodyguards. Also, according to unofficial information the Croatian police does not try to locate Jelavic and justifies such stand by the fact that he, as a Croatian citizen, cannot be extradited to BiH. In the BiH seat of Interpol it was stressed that that the Croatian Police should arrest him since the most rigorous, so-called 'Interpol's red arrest warrant' was issued against him which implies 'temporary arrest of the person because of extradition'. Globus says that this means that Croatia can arrest Jelavic, however it cannot extradite him to BiH. Magazine notes that according to political circles, Croatian Prime Minister **Ivo Sanader** has not passed yet a firm decision on full cooperation with BiH with regard to the Jelavic case. The weekly also brings list of real estates that Jelavic allegedly possesses in Croatia.

SD on alleged struggle for FBiH Financial Police documentation	<p><b>Slobodna Dalmacija</b> pg 18 ‘Minister Vrankic protects Covic?’ by <u>Z. Tulic</u> – With regard to the disputes between FBiH Minister of Finances <b>Dragan Vrankic</b> and Chief FBiH Financial Police (FBiH FP) Inspector <b>Zufer Dervisevic</b> about shutting down of the FBiH Financial Police, SD carries that the FBiH FP documentation is the most interesting issue in the whole story. According to some information, Vrankic wants to come into possession of the documentation since he actually wants to protect HDZ President <b>Dragan Covic</b> who has been a subject of few FBiH FP investigations. On the other hand, the FBiH FP does not want to give up its documentation since some documents might discredit its work. SD says that this is about the investigations that have been exclusively motivated by political pressures of domestic and international factors. Also, its work might be a cause of inter-ethnic conflicts if it was established that the number of investigations is 6:1 in favor of Croats, which means that Croats are thieves while the other ones are honest.</p>
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