

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 20/1/2006

Latest radio news broadcast at 12.00 on 20 January

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (12,00 hrs)	BH Radio 1 (12,00 hrs)
Captain Dragan arrested [Cro. issue]	Captain Dragan arrested [Cro. issue]
Humphreys: SAA talks next week	World news
Tihic optimistic reg. const. chgs talks	World news

TV news broadcast on 19 January

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	TV PINK (18,00 hrs)	BHT 1 (19,00 hrs)
CRO-BiH agreement on war veterans	Searching for Mladic in SCG	Del Ponte, Rehn on Mladic, Karadzic
Strike in ZHC	HR on Avdija Palic	Humphreys meets Bukejlovic, Dodik
Situation with education in SBC	HR on SIPA	18 FBiH SAA negotiators appointed
FBiH Government in session	US Embassy supports Podzic	Dodik on possible new RS Govt.

NTV Hayat (19,00 hrs)	FTV (19,30 hrs)	RTRS (19,30 hrs)
Searching for Mladic in SCG	Attacks on FBiH Tax Administration	Del Ponte on Mladic
Prlica on decertified police officers	State Agency for Medicines	Bosanski Brod refinery

Sport News	Case of decertified police officers	Audit of RS Zeljeznice
Issue of old foreign currency savers	Commission to investigate case Palic	Humphreys meets Dodik

Oslobodjenje	Ashdown announced criminal charges against members of RS Government
Dnevni Avaz	[Zepa action] False information came from Serbia
Dnevni List	Final negotiations on Energopetrol
Vecernji List	BiH should introduce visas for Serbia and Turkey
Slobodna Dalmacija	Bankruptcy commissioner 'ripped off' Li-Trans (alleged illegalities in Livno Bus company)
Nezavisne Novine	BiH Prosecutor's Office is investigating the role of approximately ten high-ranking officials
Glas Srpske	Hague claims – it was a mistake
EuroBlic	[SiCG Defense Minister Stankovic] Either arrest of Mladic or dismissals in the Army
Vecernje novosti	[SiCG Defense Minister Stankovic] Army is chasing after Mladic

LATEST NEWS OF TODAY

<p>Tihic: It is possible to reach agreement on constitutional changes by March 31</p>	<p>RHB– SDA President Sulejman Tihic stated that it is possible to reach an agreement on constitutional changes by March 31. He added that there are realistic chances to achieve this goal. According to Tihic, 80 % of solutions have been agreed upon and efforts should be exerted in order to reach the agreement on 20 % of the issues. He also said that among participants of the constitutional changes talks are those who do not want to reach the agreement on this issue.</p>
<p>M. Relota: HDZ expects continuation of const. changes talks</p>	<p>RHB– HDZ spokesperson Miso Relota stated that HDZ expects that the constitutional changes talks continue as soon as possible. HDZ also expects that stands of all parties involved in the negotiations would be harmonized. Relota reiterated that HDZ insists on passing a new BiH Constitution and that HDZ will not accept cosmetic changes of any kind.</p>

War crimes: In search of Mladic; Palic case; others

<p>SCG Defence Minister: Army searches for Mladic</p>	<p>BHT1 – SCG Army has been carrying out the operation of arresting war crime indictee Ratko Mladic, stated SCG Minister of Defence Zoran Stankovic. Stankovic confirmed that he held a meeting with the members of Mladic's family on the eve of New Year. <i>"The operative action of arresting Ratko Mladic is in progress, and while it is in progress we are not able to give any details of those activities. We hope to fulfil this task, which is in the same time our obligation"</i>, stated Stankovic. PINK, Hayat, FTV, Vecernje novosti cover pg splash and pg 3 'Army is chasing after Mladic' by <u>M. Vuksanovic</u>, EuroBlic cover pg splash and pgs 2-3 'Either arrest of Mladic or dismissals in the Army' by <u>Tanja Nikolic Djakovic</u>, Nezavisne novine pg 2 'Stankovic talked to Mladic's family' by <u>Agencies</u>, Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'Stankovic; Operative action ongoing', Oslobodjenje pg 2 'Stankovic spoke to Mladic's family' – carried the statement.</p>
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<p>Del Ponte meets Rehn: Kovacevic: SCG is expected to extradite Mladic, Karadzic; RS cooperates with ICTY</p>	<p>BHT1 by <u>Elvir Bucalo</u> – After the meeting with chief ICTY Prosecutor Carla del Ponte on Thursday in Brussels, EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn stated they now expect Serbia-Montenegro to locate, arrest and extradite Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic. <i>“We expect that SCG will achieve full cooperation with The Hague, and locate and deliver Karadzic and Mladic. If we don’t see significant progress in that field, it could have extremely negative consequences on negotiations between EU and SCG”</i>, explained Rehn. Del Ponte stressed that the trial against Ratko Mladic must start in July 2006, when the trial against other nine persons indicted for genocide in Srebrenica is due to begin. <i>“I have no need to get in touch with Russian authorities in order to find Mladic, because he is in Serbia. What I want, and what is in the same time an international obligation from Belgrade is to arrest him and to deliver him”</i>, stated Del Ponte asked to comment on speculations that former RS Army Commander is hiding in Russia. BHT1 comments that for the first time, chief ICTY Prosecutor had no remarks on a cooperation of BiH, RS that is, with ICTY. <i>“Particularly, when we speak now about BiH, we think about RS... and RS is cooperating with us. There are some difficulties, but all in all they are cooperating”</i>, added Carla Del Ponte. FTV, RTRS, Nezavisne Novine pg 2, announced on cover ‘Poor cooperation of Belgrade authorities with the Tribunal’ <u>by Agencies</u> – reported on the meeting which focused on SCG .</p>
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<p>DA: Info on Mladic being in Zepa came from Serbian BIA; OSA/SIPA deny they provided info to RS police</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz cover splash 'False information came from Serbia', pg 2 'SIPA and OSA did not provide information on Ratko Mladic' by <u>E. Sarac</u> – SIPA and BiH Intelligence Agency [OSA] confirmed that they have not provided the RS Interior Ministry with information on Ratko Mladic being in Zepa region, where RS police was looking for him. RS MoI didn't say which "<i>very serious intelligence agency</i>" provided the information. Unnamed source told DA that false information was placed from Serbia, probably by BIA [Serbian intelligence agency]. Author concludes stating that the RS Police Director Dragomir Andan didn't check that information, since he wanted to finish the job as soon as possible. Nezavisne Novine pg 2 'OSA without comment, SIPA did not give information' by <u>D. R.</u> – OSA spokesperson Zoran Kuljanin refused to comment on media claims that the Zepa action was launched upon information provided by OBA, while SIPA Spokesperson Admir Katica denied it was SIPA that had forwarded the information on alleged Mladic's whereabouts.</p>
<p>NN: Action in Veliki Zep was carried out to search for Zdravko Tolimir, not Mladic</p>	<p>Vecernje Novosti pg 3 'Trace leading via Tolimir' by <u>V. Mitric</u> – According to a source close to western services, the RS Police action was not carried out to search for Ratko Mladic or Radovan Karadzic but it was carried out to search for General Zdravko Tolimir, former Associate Commander of RS Army for security issues. The article also reads the action was carried out in Veliki Zep, not in Zepa region.</p>

<p>SB: Kostunica, Stankovic, Bulatovic working on Mladic extradition the way Gotovina got arrested</p>	<p>Slobodna Bosna, front pg splash ‘Kostunica hold Mladic under key in Serbia whilst Cavic and Andan are looking for him at Zepa’, pgs 6-9 and pg 18 ‘Questionable RS police’s search after Ratko Mladic’, <u>by Mehmed Pargan and Senad Avdic</u> – carries a hefty article related to recent RS police’s operation in the Zepa area in which the weekly questions the sincerity of the operation and behaviour of the RS Police Director, Dragamir Andan, since the police was not looking for what it turned out to be a search after Ratko Mladic in houses, instead the search was conducted in the hills in the Zepa area. Inset ‘Kostunica plans to do play the same game with Mladic the way Sanader did with Gotovina’ reads that SB got a confirmation from a source in the top of Serbian authorities that Mladic is in Serbia and that he is under complete and effective control of the Serbian civil and military authorities. Allegedly, the Serbian PM, Vojislav Kostunica, Defence Minister, Zoran Stankovic, and Chief of BIA (Serbian Intelligence Agency), Rade Bulatovic, are in panic, seeking an acceptable arrangement how to extradite Mladic. Namely, an ideal scenario would be that Mladic ‘gets shifted’ to a third country, whose police would arrest him in the end. Allegedly, similar scenario was used in the Gotovina case, when the Croatian PM, Ivo Sanader, talked to Ante Gotovina, somewhere in Herzegovina in late August 2005 when he arranged what turned out to be an arrest in Spain.</p>
<p>NN on Zepa action: RS police needed ‘show’</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine op-ed pg 7 ‘Ranger Andan’ <u>by Dragan Risojevic</u> – the author refers to the recent action of RS Police near Zepa, noting that RS Police needed a show of this type because they simply can no longer persuade anyone to surrender.</p>

<p>DL op-ed on Zepa operation: RS authorities still looking for ghosts</p>	<p>Dnevni List, pg 2 'Search for ghosts', by <u>Anja Vrebac</u> – comments on the police operation of the RS MoI from Wednesday when it was looking for a person from the ICTY's public list of indictees and which gave no result. <u>Vrebac</u> criticizes the RS officials' statement given after the operation, saying the operation was destined for failure. The author also wonders how it is possible that two most wanted war crimes suspects (Karadzic and Mladic) cannot be caught, as if they were ghosts, as the author also does not spare the IC for not using its state of the art technology to capture the two.</p>
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<p>Ashdown instructs RS Govt to gather all inform on disappearance of Avdo Palic from Zepa</p>	<p>BHT 1 by <u>Zoran Sarenac</u> – The HR Paddy Ashdown tasked the RS Government to establish a Commission that would have three months to gather all the information about the disappearance of BiH Army Colonel Avdo Palic. Palic disappeared in 1995, after the fall of Zepa. According to HR's decision, RS Prime Minister Pero Bukejlovic, Minister of Interior Darko Matijasevic and RS Chief Prosecutor Amor Bukic would all have to appoint their representatives in this commission. This time, RS Authorities would have to fully respect the decisions of the Human Rights Chamber and the Human Rights Commission (which ordered delivering of all information on this case), stated Ashdown. Hayat – Palic's wife now has the right to file a lawsuit, since, despite the detailed investigation the RS Government has not made several last steps and prosecuted several identified suspects. <i>"According to the latest RS Government's report, sent to the Human Rights Chamber on September 30th, 2005, we now have statements covering every single event till September 5th, 1995 when Colonel Palic was taken from military prison in Bijeljina"</i>, said SDHR Martin Ney. The HR has also sent a letter to the FBiH Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic, in which he warned him about the difficult situation he was faced with due to the fact that information on missing Serbs in Sarajevo have not been published. Oslobodjenje cover splash pgs 4-5 'Ashdown announced criminal charges against members of RS Government' by <u>E.Kamenica</u> – HR stressed that he already spoke to his successor Christian Schwarz-Schilling about this case. PINK, FTV, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'RS Government have three months to determine on Avdo Palic's destiny', Nezavisne Novine pg 3 'Ensure information on disappearance of Palic' by <u>M. Cubro</u>, Glas Srpske pg 3 'Commission is writing a reply' by <u>N. Zelenovic</u>, EuroBlic pg RS3 'Clarify Palic case' by <u>S. D.</u>, Dnevni List pg 3 'Criminal charges threaten members of RS Government' by <u>D. Polovina-Mandic</u>, Slobodna Dalmacija pg 9 Ashdown ordered investigation on destiny of Zepa Commander' by <u>H</u> – also reported.</p>
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RS Govt will establish Commission on Palic case	Nezavisne Novine pg 3 'The Government will establish the commission' by D. R. , Glas Srpske pg 3 'A step forward' by G. D. – The Head of RS Government's Bureau for Public Relations Cvijeta Kovacevic on Thursday stated RS Government will establish a commission to investigate Avdo Palic case, as HR Paddy Ashdown requested. She emphasized the Commission will fulfill its task timely.
Paravac: Presidency demand info on Rogatica action	Hayat, Glas Srpske pg 3 'Uncertainties remained' by Srna – The BiH Presidency member Borislav Paravac confirmed that the BiH Presidency decided to ask from the BiH Justice Ministry information on EUFOR's action in Rogatica, carried on January 5 th , in which Rada Abazovic died from injuries, inflicted during the action, while Dragomir Abazovic and their son was seriously injured.
GS: ICTY claims it had not received documents on Sijekovac crimes	Glas Srpske cover pg splash 'Hague claims – it was a mistake' by V. J. – GS had addressed the Hague Tribunal to find out if any progress was made with regard to the case on Sijekovac crimes, which was delivered to Hague investigators on May 22, 2002. ICTY Spokesperson Florence Hartmann replied the Hague Tribunal is not aware of this case and added: ' <i>This must be a mistake</i> '. Lawyer Predrag Radulovic was present when the documents on this case were delivered to the investigators and he has stated that parts of the documents were used in defense of some Hague indictees and he noted even Jadranko Prlic's lawyer showed interest in these documents.

Political issues

<p>Humphreys announces beginning of SAA talks on 25 January</p>	<p>BHT1 by Tanja Alavuk – Head of the EC delegation to BiH Michael Humphreys stated in Banjaluka on Thursday that since BiH negotiations with the EC will officially start on Wednesday, January 25, it is very important to have stable institutions on all levels of authority in BiH. Following the separate meetings with the RS Prime Minister Pero Bukejlovic and SNSD leader Milorad Dodik, Humphreys stressed that EU is carrying out negotiations with state authorities, and not with entities. Representatives of the European Integration and Regional Cooperation Board within the RSNA stated that they are ready for the process of harmonizing the laws with European regulations and principles. <i>“We have the obligation to establish a communication with the Government, in order to check all our missions currently functioning abroad, and to establish communication and cooperation with all international institutions and offices which are existing in BiH and RS”</i>, explained Vitomir Tomic from this board which. PINK, RHB, FTV, RTRS, Hayat, Nezavisne Novine pg 4 ‘Negotiations with EU will start on January 25’ by V. P., EuroBlic pg RS2, announced on cover ‘Dodik is convinced he has the majority’ by <u>Nedeljka Breberina</u> inset ‘Negotiations with EU will start on January 25’, Oslobodjenje pg 4-5 by <u>O. Vukovic</u>– ‘Negotiations on SAA on January 25’, Dnevni List pg 2 ‘EC expects dedication from Governments’ <u>not signed</u>, Vecernji List pg 2 ‘Negotiations with EU officially begin on January 25’ by <u>B.S.</u> – also reported.</p>
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Humphreys meets Dodik, Bukejlovic; SNSD will not continue with talks on const. changes before elections, certain RS Govt will loose support

Hayat by ATV – SNSD leader **Milorad Dodik** told EC Chief in BiH **Michael Humphreys** that his party has decided not to continue with discussions on const. changes in BiH before elections in October. Two of them discussed crisis in the RS Government and it was emphasised, during the meeting, that SNSD supports the initiative on dismissal of the Government. During the meeting with RS PM **Pero Bukejlovic**, Humphreys was told that the truth is that the Government has no majority in RSNA, but neither opposition meets the terms necessary for establishing the stabile one. Bukejlovic tried to convince Humphreys that his Government contributed to the economic development, while Dodik promised that SNSD would fight the organized crime, in case of winning the authority. Humphreys explained that the EC was not supporting either of two Governments; still the EC expects each of them to be dedicated to reforms in terms of BiH's integration in the EU. Humphreys added that a problem would occur if the executive authority in the RS would be blocked. **EuroBlic** pg RS2, announced on cover 'Dodik is convinced he has the majority' by Nedeljka Breberina – Dodik added that he is certain that the vote of no-confidence to the RS Government will be supported at the RSNA session and that majority of the representatives support this initiative. **PINK, RHB, BHT1, FTV, RTRS, Oslobodjenje** pg 2 'Continuance of talks is impossible with these politicians', **Nezavisne Novine** pg 3, announced on cover 'We have the majority for removal of the Government and establishing of a new one' by V. Popovic, **Glas Srpske** pg 5 'There will be no continuation' by Z. Markovic – reported on meeting with Dodik. **Glas Srpske** pg 5 'Bad message to Europe' by Z. M. – Humphreys with Bukejlovic.

RS Govt issue:
BHT 1 says
fight for
votes to get
majority in
RSNA continues

BHT 1 by Boris Gagic – Admitting that taking over the authority in RS could be a bit risky in the year of elections, SNSD leader **Milorad Dodik** is convinced that the new Government would fulfil its promises. But, according to BHT reporter, it is completely uncertain whether anyone would be able to receive the vote of confidence in the RS National Assembly, and whether RS would have stabile executive authority until the general elections in October 2006 or not. However, SNSD representatives are convinced that they would have the necessary majority in the Parliament; Dodik reiterated that their priorities are fight against crime, review of the privatisation and cooperation with The Hague. *"We think that people will recognize it, and therefore support the SNSD on the forthcoming elections. Of course that it is a risk, and that nobody could guarantee something like that... It all depends on how would people react on what we have done, and what we have not"*, stated Dodik. The main argument of those who support **Pero Bukejlovic**'s Government is that it would be very hard to elect new Government after the current one receive a vote of no confidence; they also have doubts about real SNSD's intentions. *"I must remind that SNSD was the leading party, and that many problems in RS in fact remain from that period"*, stressed SRS' **Milanko Mihajlica**. SNSD and SDS are currently fighting over 42 representatives' votes in the RS National Assembly; BHT reporter concluded that this fight might not be decided until the day of RSNA session.

<p>US expects const. changes talks to continue</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg 3 'USA expect negotiations to continue' <u>by S.N.-F.V.</u> – USA expect eight party leaders to continue talks on constitutional changes, learns DA from USA Embassy press office, adding that date of continuation of talks has not been set yet. SBiH leader Safet Halilovic doesn't think that talks would soon continue, but also stating that there will be amendments to laws on human rights and on BiH Council of Ministers.</p>
<p>Tihic: SDA will not give up on its demands in const. changes talks</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 8 <u>by A.T.</u> 'BiH would become NATO member by 2008'- Sulejman Tihic stated at the seminar in Sarajevo said that SDA would never support solutions that would legalize ethnic cleansing and that would lead toward destabilization of the state. <i>'We are for talks and agreements, but not at any cost. There is a minimum that we can't and won't go under, so we would not support any solution that would present lower authorities of the state...Best solution would be decentralized BiH with five multiethnic regions and these are the solutions that SDA would prefer'</i> stated Tihic.</p>

<p>Ivanic: next round of negotiations on const. changes would certainly be not organized in this year</p>	<p>BN TV 'Puls' current affairs program by <u>Suzana Radjen-Todoric</u> – In an interview to BN TV, BiH Foreign Minister Mladen Ivanic addressed the issue of constitutional changes in BiH welcoming the talks and stressing that three separate stances could have been noticed among BiH politicians. Ivanic stressed the differences among the participants of the talks, but despite the lack of an agreement he comments: <i>"What I consider as very important is that we have talked on this issue without strong political pressure coming form the International Community."</i> Ivanic stated that when the negotiations were finished RS parties suggested that all agreed issues should be included in the amendments leavening the unsettled issues for some other negotiations. <i>"FBIH parties refused that, we have agreed on BIH House of Peoples and protection of Vital National Interest but they did not want to include that in amendments since we haven't agreed upon everything related to HoP. Now they have changed their mind, they accept it, so I think now we should refuse it and leave it for next negotiations that certainly will not be organized in this year"</i> stressed Ivanic.</p>
<p>HDZ expects bilateral talks on the constitution btw HDZ, SDA, SDS and SNSD</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg 3 'USA expect negotiations to continue' by <u>S.N.-F.V.</u> Inset, 'HDZ suggests bilateral talks' – HDZ BiH says they expect US to launch bilateral talks with SDA, SDS and SNSD. US Undersecretary for Political Issues Nicholas Burns already talked with representatives of SDA, SDS and SNSD in order to make closer stances before the continuation of talks with all other party leaders.</p>

<p>Croat Coalition for Changes: HDZ cannot represent all Croats</p>	<p>Slobodna Dalmacija, pg 19 'Croats are becoming minority', by <u>E</u> – The Croat Coalition for changes (gathering HSS, HKDU, HDU, Christian Democrats) held a session in Mostar on Thursday at which it adopted the Declaration, which will be the basis for the Coalition's future activities. It, among other issues, endorses organization of BiH at three levels: state, middle and local. The Coalition also insists that the HDZ does not have the legitimacy to represent all the Croats in the constitutional reforms talks, since the HDZ is neglecting the agreement the Croat parties reached in Mostar last year.</p>
<p>Feral Tribune: Covic in full control of HDZ, HDZ does not care about Croats one bit</p>	<p>Feral Tribune, pgs 28-29 'Mess at table', by <u>Ivan Lovrenovic</u> – carries a comment on recent events within the HDZ BiH and its implications on the constitutional reforms talks. With regards to alleged physical removal of Martin Raguz, Bozo Ljubic and Josip Merdzo from the session of HDZ Main Board, <u>Lovrenovic</u> says it was the only possible scenario since Dragan Covic is firmly in command of the party, using all the tricks possible to preserve such situation. As for the latter, <u>Lovrenovic</u> argues the HDZ does not care about the talks one bit, which is evident in statements given by the negotiators. The author explains that a TV viewer can definitively see that the Serb and Bosniak negotiators have some kind of a platform, whilst Covic has a role of a mere observer, who does not have a clear concept or agenda. All this, concludes Lovrenovic, could lead to sidelining of the Croats in political life of BiH.</p>

<p>Kosovo status and possible reflection on BiH sovereignty</p>	<p>BHT1 current affair program 'Javna Tajna' by <u>Marina Boskovic</u>– In light of upcoming negotiations on Kosovo final status and ongoing negotiations on constitutional changes in BiH, reporter presented different opinions regarding possible reflections of one issue on another and possible impact on RS status and BiH sovereignty. On one side politicians like Vuk Draskovic, SCG Foreign Affair Minister and Boris Tadic, Serbian President, believe that independency of Kosovo would trigger a 'chain reaction' which would have negative impact to BiH. <i>"The purpose is to form state within state that could be in future subject of some other political trade,"</i> said Safet Halilovic, BiH Civil Affairs Minister. Sahbaz Dzihanovic, FBiH Vice President believes that situation in BiH is connected with situation in region. As BHT1 broadcasted, SNSD leader Milorad Dodik told press in Novi Sad and stated that solutions for Kosovo and RS could be similar: emphasizing that RS cannot be compensated for Kosovo. IC officials in BiH, alike US Ambassador Douglas McElhaney believe that BiH status was determined in Dayton and can't be violated, while EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security, Javier Solana stressed that EU relays on stability and believes that Kosovo negotiations will not cause problems in region.</p>
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<p>Daily op-ed on const. changes: Great effort needed</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje op-ed, pg 9 by <u>Zija Dizdarevic</u> 'Small Dayton'- Referring to recent talks on constitutional changes, author comments that main culprit for resistance towards the constitutional changes is Dayton itself. Author comments that 'unhealthy' BiH legal and political "circle' can't be solved by '<i>small, but only by 'huge' Dayton</i>'" which would be a strategic pact of leading states in the EU and of USA and which would decisively advocate for European BiH and fight against obstructers without any compromise.</p>
<p>BiH told to introduce visa regime for Turkey and SiCG if it wants liberalization of visa regime with EU countries; EC denies</p>	<p>Vecernji List, front pg splash and pg s 4-5 'BiH should introduce visas for Serbia and Turkey', by <u>Dejan Jazvic</u> – BiH Assistant Foreign Minister for International Legal and Consular Issues, Zoran Perkovic, presented on Thursday a Road Map, which was apparently prepared by the EC, which addresses the issue of possible liberalization of visa regime for BiH citizens when going to the EU countries. It was stated, among other issues, that if BiH wanted to have a more liberal visa regime, it should be introducing visa regime for citizens of Serbia and Turkey. Dnevni Avaz pg 8 'No request for changing visa regime for citizens of SCG and Turkey' – In respond to Perkovic's statement, EC Delegation to BiH Spokesperson Frane Maroevic stated that there are no new request for changing visa regime for citizens of SCG and Turkey. Nezavisne Novine pg 6 'There were no demands with regard to changes to visa regime' by <u>Srna</u> – BiH Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Nebojsa Regoje also confirmed this.</p>

<p>Ambassador Almhofer presents Paravac program</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 7 'Austria would advocate for carrying out of EU's obligations', Dnevni List, pg 2 'Almhofer presents Paravac program', <u>not signed</u> – Member of BiH Presidency Borislav Paravac met with Austrian Ambassador to BiH Werner Almhofer, discussing the Austrian intentions and plans for the year of their Presidency over the EU. Speaking about relations between Austria and BiH, it was stressed that Austria is well familiar with BiH and therefore would advocate for carrying out of all obligations of the EU, which refer to this region.</p>
<p>UNDP research: Mood of citizens re VAT, political situation not good</p>	<p>Dnevni List, pg 8 'Pessimism with Bosniaks growing', by <u>Ivana Rozic</u> – According to a research conducted by the UNDP, mood of the citizenry is not positive in relation to the political situation in BiH and introduction of VAT. Apparently, only 19,2 Bosniaks and 18,8 Serbs (interviewees) expect that the situation will improve in the next 12 months. On the other hand, number of pessimists is growing, especially among the Bosniaks. Apparently, the pessimism among the Bosniaks has grown from 11,5% (first quarter of 2005) to 25,6% (last quarter of 2005). The figures among the Serbs are 22,7% – first quarter, 27,6% – last quarter. (NB: there are no figures for Croats) When it comes to the VAT introduction, more than 60% of citizens from both BiH entities expect that the living standard will worsen in some way. Only 20% believe VAT will bring progress.</p>

Judiciary, police, investigations

<p>Ashdown: I will not leave before issue of SIPA is solved</p>	<p>PINK – Session of BiH Council of Ministers was postponed, due to illness of the Chairman Adnan Terzic. The issue of SIPA permanent HQ was supposed to be solved at the session. The HR Paddy Ashdown stated that he would not leave before resolving the issue regarding permanent premises for SIPA. Ashdown stated that he would consider other solutions if CoM fails to reach a decision on SIPA HQ premises soon.</p> <p>RHB, Hayat, Dnevni Avaz pg 4 ‘Ashdown: Issue of SIPA HQ has to be solved before I leave’ by <u>E.Sarac</u>, Oslobodjenje pg 3 by <u>E.K.</u>– ‘Big, black spot’, Nezavisne novine pg 2 ‘BiH to establish task force for fight against terrorism’ by <u>M. Cubro inset</u> ‘Ashdown: I do not intend to leave SIPA issue to my successor’, EuroBlic pg RS3 ‘Clarify Palic case’ by <u>S. D.</u> inset ‘He will not leave SIPA for his successor’ – also carried the statement. Oslobodjenje pg 2, Dnevni Avaz pg 2 and mentioned on cover – both carries CoM session cancelled because of Terzic’s health situation.</p>
<p>DL on BiH CoM postponing session on SIPA: It is no fluke Terzic suddenly became ill</p>	<p>Dnevni List, pg 3 ‘Terzic ill with SIPA’, by <u>D. P. Mandic</u> – the daily comments it is no fluke that the Chairman of BiH CoM, Adnan Terzic, suddenly became ill when the BiH CoM was supposed to discuss the issue of seat of SIPA. DL notes the BiH authorities have not been able to resolve the issue before, therefore Terzic, by claiming to be sick, is giving the ruling coalition more time to try and reach a consensus. Article also carries HR Ashdown’s statement on SIPA seat.</p>

<p>US Embassy supports Podzic</p>	<p>BHT1– US Embassy to BiH expressed its support to the Chief of the BiH Joint Staff General Sifet Podzic. US Embassy stated that military must not become the target of party's policy created to undermine its authority and efficiency. This issue refers to the January 9, meaning Day of RS, when Podzic, accompanied by other members of BiH Defence Ministry, attended the ceremony hosted by RS President Dragan Cavic. After this, Podzic was severely attacked by Bosniak politicians. PINK, RTRS, Oslobodjenje pg 3 'Support to commander Podzic', Dnevni Avaz pg 2 'Military must not be target of party's politics', Nezavisne novine pg 4 'US Embassy supported Podzic' by <u>D. Mu</u> – also carried.</p>
<p>Tihic: After reforms, police in BiH would not be tied for entities</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 8 'BiH will become NATO member by 2008' by <u>A.T.</u> – At the the SDA seminar in Vogosca on Thursday, SDA leader Sulejman Tihic stated that BiH would be invited to NATO by 2008, adding that entering NATO is more important than European integrations. Regarding police reform, Tihic said: <i>"After the reform, police in BiH will not be tied for entities, but exclusively for the state from which budget would be financed, and that would be an additional element in strengthening of the institutions, i.e. state of BiH."</i></p>

BiH Ambassador
to UN commences
consultations
with UNSC
member states
on decertified
police

Hayat– BiH Ambassador to the UN **Milos Prica** commenced the consultations with UN Security Council member states on the issue of BiH decertified police officers. Prica said that there were 15 UNSC member state and that it would take time to have the issue discussed through. *“It is still early to speculate on results of the talks”*, said Prica. Police officers in BiH were decertified by the UN IPTF, and have been seeking their rights for last four years, demanding a revision of the process, which was also recommended by the Venice Commission. Several days ago, decertified police officers ceased a hunger strike after CoM promised to help solve their issue. **RHB, FTV, Nezavisne Novine** pg 12 ‘Consultations in UN on dismissed BiH policemen’ by Agencies – also carried the announcement.

<p>Sulic for Dani: BiH, IC institutions prevented revision of decertification in 2004</p>	<p>Dani, pgs 22-24 '800 marked ones and maharaja Paddy', by <u>Belma Becirbasic</u> – carries a recapitulation of the protest of de-certified police officers, which was held in front of the OHR in Sarajevo. Dani insist on claim that the IC has directly meddled into the work of BiH judiciary and ministries of interior by sending the latter a memo telling them that the UN's decisions cannot be changed.</p> <p>Dani also carries the President of Association of decertified police officers from the FBiH, Ramo Sulic, who stated after the meeting with HR, Paddy Ashdown:</p> <p><i>"(...) It is sad that the UN was ready to start the revision (of de-certification), but the attempt was prevented by domestic and international institutions. Although we know that the latter take most blame, we are more angry with domestic marionette-like authorities because the constitutional rights guarantee us the right to work "</i>.</p>
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<p>NN: 'BiH Prosecutor's Office is investigating the role of approximately ten high-ranking officials'</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine cover pg splash and pg 5 'BiH Prosecutor's Office is investigating the role of approximately ten high-ranking officials' <u>by A. Sisic</u> – A source from BiH Prosecutor's Office claims the state Prosecutor's Office had recently launched an investigation and pre-investigation activities in two separate cases of illegal adoption of BiH children in Italy. The Prosecutor's Office is also carrying out pre-investigation activities with regard to role of some ten persons – former and current officials of F BiH and BiH.</p>
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<p>Commission for revision of citizenships was not appointed as yet</p>	<p>EuroBlic pg RS1 'OHR is slowing down the control' by <u>Mirna Soja</u> – The article reads verification of BiH citizenships that were approved in the period of time between 1992 and 1998 had not been launched as yet, despite to the fact changes to BiH Law on Citizenship had foreseen launching of the verification for mid December last year. Associate to BiH Minister for Security Dragan Mektic explained that the process was not launched because certain domestic and international institutions still had not appointed members to the state commission for revision of citizenships. Associate BiH Minister of Civil Affairs Zoran Tesanovic says it was only the international community that failed to appoint its three candidates. OHR, which should have appointed the three candidates, refused to comment on why the Commission had not been established and only noted they are still looking into this matter.</p>
<p>Mektic: CoM will establish Task force for fight against terrorism</p>	<p>Nezavisne novine pg 2 'BiH to establish task force for fight against terrorism' by <u>M. Cubro</u> – Deputy BiH Minister of Security Dragan Mektic on Thursday confirmed BiH CoM would establish a task force for fight against terrorism and this TF would be led by the Chief State Prosecutor.</p>

Economic issues

<p>Humphreys meets Causevic: exemption of publishing sector from VAT is acceptable</p>	<p>PINK, Glas Srpske pg 4 'Single rate is a bingo' by <u>D. Vrhovac Mihajlovic</u>, EuroBlic pg RS2 'It is not time for multiple rates' by <u>N. B.</u>, Nezavisne novine pg 10 'Trades in good never better in January' by <u>P. Klincov</u> – During his visit to Banja Luka, Head of EC to BiH, Michael Humphreys also metwith ITA Director Kemal Causevic to discuss, among other things, VAT implementation in BiH. Humphreys stressed that entities and state have to adopt a 2006 budget so resources assigned for social care can be used. Causevic also stated that due to VAT implementation BIH already has bigger export than it ever had in January. Humphreys and Causevic also spoke about projects financed by EC, primarily the construction of border crossings. Dnevni Avaz pg 9 by <u>N. Diklic</u>, 'Exemption of publishing sector is acceptable'- Humphreys told DA after the meeting with Causevic that exemption of the publishing sector from VAT is acceptable.</p>
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Zutic announces meeting between FBiH authorities and INA-MOL regarding co-capitalization of Energopetrol

Dnevni List, front pg splash 'Final negotiations on Energopetrol' and pg 7 'Final negotiations on privatization of Energopetrol today', by Arijana Beus – The President of Commission for co-capitalization of 'Energopetrol', **Resad Zutic**, announces a meeting of the Commission with senior representatives of the 'INA-MOL' that is to take place in Sarajevo on Friday at 1100 o'clock and which is to discuss pending issues related to the co-capitalization. The meeting will also be attended by the FBiH PM, **Ahmet Hadzipasic**. Zutic notes that given that the meeting will be attended by most senior officials, today's meeting should clear doubts whether the deal can go through or not. Due to integrity of the tender, Zutic did not want to reveal what the pending issues are.

Dani very critical of opposition for failing to support exemption of publishing from VAT

Dani cover splash, pg 8 'Gravediggers of books and newspapers' pg 8 'Seek comfort from Lagumdzija' by E.S. – E.Ha. – Article harshly comments the fact that BiH House of Representatives has not adopted proposal by the BiH CoM to exempt publishing sector from the VAT. It carries names of those representatives who both voted against or sustained from a vote regarding the amendments. Dani are especially critical of opposition [stating that the *"only worse thing from a position in this country is opposition"*] featuring pictures of **Nijaz Durakovic, Azra Hadziahmetovic, Nikola Spiric, Selim Beslagic, Martin Raguz** and **Zlatko Lagumdzija** on cover splash with the headline *"gravediggers of books and newspapers."* **Dani** pgs 30-32 'VAT is tax on disease' by Eldin Hadzovic – Dani also carries an interview with Leko Pharmacy General Director **Edin Hodzic** who stated that pensioners, diabetics and paraplegics would greatly suffer due to VAT introduction, adding it is an issue of life and death for them.

<p>Editors/ owners of newspapers claim press in 'terrible' situation due to VAT</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg 9 'Press brought to terrible situation' by <u>H. Orahovac</u> – DA carries statements from Nezavisne Novine Director, Zeljko Kopanja, Dnevni List General Manager, Ismet Brkovic, Slobodna Bosna Steering Board President, Asim Metiljevic, A-Roto-Press [publisher of Dnevni Avaz] Director Nedim Lisak and Dani Director, Senad Pecanin, in which they share similar stances, attacking the fact that press has not been exempted from VAT. Lisak said that price of the newspaper has not been increased as the company wanted to avoid damaging its readers, however they were forced to fire some administration workers and technicians.</p>
<p>SB: VAT stimulates smuggling and strengthens grey economy</p>	<p>Slobodna Bosna pgs 20-22 'SB's great market inspection: who profits from VAT', mentioned on cover 'VAT stimulates smuggling and strengthens grey economy' by <u>Asim Metiljevic</u> – SB reports visited several big grocery stores in Sarajevo, Kiseljak and East Sarajevo claiming they have <i>"seen for themselves that VAT did not bring any order in chaotic grey economy in BiH."</i> Instead, says SB, <i>"selective application of the VAT which is dominating in BiH will only strengthen and enrich already powerful import-smuggling mafia!"</i> Main reason for criticism is a lack of specially designed cash registers which memorizes every single transaction, a <i>"reason of great VAT success in Croatia ."</i></p>

<p>Police checking business activities of the Bosanski Brod Oil refinery</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, pg 4, announced on cover 'Police checking the business activities of the Refinery' – Miladin Gligoric, the RS Minister of Economy, confirmed on Thursday that following the Audit Report concerning the Bosanski Brod Oil Refinery, Crime Police inspectors have started checking its business activities.</p> <p>According to him, the RS MoI set up a special team that will work to establish whether there are elements of criminal responsibility in the audit reports. The President of the Refinery's Trade Union, Danilo Norcilo, stated that 14 police officers dressed in civil clothes showed up at the Refinery's gate yesterday while 9 of them were there on Wednesday. He could not confirm however whether the police officers are checking the claims from the recently published Audit Report according to which the real debt of this company in 2003 and 2004 had been incorrectly stated diminishing it by around KM 27 million.</p>
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