

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 2/2/2004

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Protest of farmers	240 pilgrims stampeded	Troubles in Bratunac	SNSD on work of RS MoI
European Congress	Highway negotiations	Eid holidays	Meeting Kalinic-Kostunica
HR on reforms	Eid holidays	ICTY new indictments	War crimes
HDZ Presidency Session	New Law on Refuges	Farmers' protests	RS Law on High Education

Oslobodjenje	244 pilgrims died in stampede; Following the shooting in Sarajevo: Nermin Zulcic announced he would surrender after the holidays; BiH Election Commission: As of now, elections on Sunday
Dnevni Avaz	Eid joy in entire BiH; Ashdown skied in Bjelasnica; Branko Dokic for DA: We are not late with the Concession Commission
Dnevni List	Colak: We will not insist that Croat becomes BiH Defence Minister; Grahovac: OHR wants to take decisions in culture too
Vecernji List	Changes to BiH Council of Ministers: State authority getting three more ministries; Today at Vinjani Donji border crossing: Blockade of border crossing
Slobodna Dalmacija	The Hague Tribunal to set Gotovina free?
Glas Srpske	Srebrenica: Cornerstone, then prison

Nezavisne Novine	Tragedy during pilgrimage to Mecca: 244 pilgrims died; Mato Tadic: It is possible that BiH Court would end its work owing to lack of resources; Investigation regarding synthetic drugs affair: Prosecutors will interview Kvaternik and Djeric; Bosnia and Herzegovina: Kurban Bairam celebrated
Blic	Trial to Krajisnik commences: he has already served four years; Deadlines for all taxpayers; Kalinic and Kostunica: worried because of pressures against RS

Political issues

**Kostunica
meets Kalinic,
both object
changing
Dayton**

RTRS, Oslobođenje pg 3 'Kostunica and Kalinic demand BiH restructuring' [NOTE: Mistake in the title; instead of 'demand', it should be 'oppose'], Dnevni Avaz pg 8 'Kostunica objects to changing Dayton', Nezavisne Novine pg 4 'Kalinic and Kostunica concerned over pressures against Republika Srpska', Glas Srpske pg 2 'Dayton in danger', Blic front pg 14 'Kalinic and Kostunica worried over pressures against RS' – The president of Serbian Democratic Party [DSS] Vojislav Kostunica on Sunday met with the SDS president Dragan Kalinic, and discussed the post-election situation in Serbia and the initiatives to change BiH structure outside of the Dayton Peace Agreement framework. At the occasion, Kostunica expressed concern over the pressure on RS and its leadership to reorganize, which is contrary to their interest and DPA. They also talked about the position of BH Defence Minister for which Kalinic stated should be given to a Serb, as RS made the biggest number of compromises during the reform of Defence Ministry. RS contribution played a big role into bringing BiH closer to the Partnership for Peace. "I could not talk about individual candidates as currently, the negotiations to save that position for RS are ongoing. You know that Bosniaks insist on their candidate. Croats would love to have their men on that position". said Kalinic. Both Kalinic and Kostunica estimated that establishment of legal and executive authorities would politically stabilise Serbia, which would as such develop good neighbouring relations with BiH. Dragan Kalinic and Vojislav Kostunica announced continuation of their discussions during the upcoming visit of DSS delegation to RS.

**Ivanic opposes
abolishment of
FBiH**

Vecernji List pg 2 'Abolishment of Federation leads to abolishment of RS', Dnevni List pg 10 'PDP against FBiH abolishment' – BiH Foreign Minister, Mladen Ivanic, stated for the Bijeljina-based BN TV that he does not support certain political circle's idea of abolishment of the Federation of BiH. He reminds the State Constitution stipulates existence of 2 entities in BiH and underlines that accepting Federation of BiH's self-abolishment means accepting changing the Dayton Accords and, indirectly, abolishment of the RS.

<p>SNSD accuses RS MoI of working against opposition</p>	<p>RTRS, Oslobođenje pg 7 'RS suffocating in affairs', Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Radojicic accused Djeric of choking opposition in RS', Nezavisne Novine pg 3 'Parliament conclusions too mild and non-binding', Glas Srpske pg 2 'Affairs without conclusions' – SNSD Secretary General Igor Radojicic stated on Sunday that the RS was 'suffocating' due to all affairs, latest being the import of the anhydrite acids has not produced good picture of RS and its legal system, adding that all those prove that BiH and RS were far from the European Union. At the press conference Radojicic stressed that SNSD has not been satisfied with information, presented by the Interior Ministry and Health Ministry to public regarding to this affair. SNSD also think that RS National Assembly has not showed enough decisiveness to resolve this affair. Radojicic stated that recent public statement by Zoran Djeric, RS Interior Minister, were politicised.</p> <p>"We have information from the field that RS Interior Ministry is being used in the elections year in order to suppress the oppositions in RS," said by Radojicic, adding that High Representative's warning on slow pace of the reforms also proved that the ruling authorities were not working for the benefit of the citizens. Blic pg 13 'Radojicic: RS suffocating in affairs' – 'The RS is up to its ears in affairs – the old ones have not been processed yet, while new affairs are appearing on daily basis', stated Igor Radojicic. According to Radojicic, behavior of Interior Minister Zoran Djeric, regarding the 'yellow file case' and threats with new charges, could be assessed as highly politicized and inappropriate to his function. He claims that the PDP officials in some Municipalities have been announcing that the Ministry of Interior would destroy the opposition by the elections.</p>
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<p>Ashdown urges speeding up the implementation of reforms</p>	<p>RHB – In an interview with Southeast European Times, the High Representative Paddy Ashdown calls on authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to move forward with reforms that will open the door to Europe and NATO. He also says he was occupied with the support to the implementation of several reforms of a crucial importance for the democratic future of the country. When asked whether he was satisfied with the speed of 16 obligations as laid down in the Feasibility Study, Ashdown said: “I won’t be satisfied until all 16 requirements have been met – it’s impossible to overestimate the importance of this. In the coming months, the BiH authorities have to move forward with reforms that will open the door to Europe and, equally importantly, will make life easier for citizens. I have one message: don’t bungle it. Progress so far has been ominously slow.”</p>
<p>CoE supports Ashdown’s decision on Mostar</p>	<p>RHB, Oslobođenje pg 3 ‘Support to unification of Mostar – “[The Council of Europe] Congress welcomes the creation of a statute for a united City of Mostar, which is a step towards normalising Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the spirit of the European Charter of Local Self-Government” said Herwig van Staa, President of the Congress, following a decision by Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. “This decision will put an end to the territorial division of the city and should allow citizens to live in a reunited city after the local elections, which are to be held in October. The Congress will support the efforts of the local authorities and the international community to this effect. The possible opening of a Local Democracy Agency in Mostar, in partnership with European cities and regions, will also contribute to the development of local democracy and civil society,” said Mr van Staa.</p>

<p>HDZ Presidency to hold session today on Mostar, FBiH Govt reshuffle</p>	<p>RHB – The HDZ Presidency will hold the session on today in Sarajevo in order to discuss the decision by the High Representative Paddy Ashdown on Mostar and SDA’s initiative for dismissal of the FBiH Government. Regarding new Mostar Statute, Barisa Colak, HDZ President, stated that HDZ position is well known, adding that he does not expect new decisions. “We have to work now with the members of all peoples in Mostar with the purpose to change decisions that are not suitable. We have to find immediate resolution that would be more fair and possible to implement in other areas. I am not sure that such a decision [as imposed by HR] could be implemented in other areas.”- said Colak.</p> <p>Dnevni List front splash, pg 5 ‘Colak: We will not insist that Croat becomes BiH Defence Minister’ – Barisa Colak added: “We are aware of the fact what the High Representative’s decision means. The decision was not good, and the members of the HDZ Presidency will discuss it in an argumented manner. The thing that hurts us the most is the fact that six national electoral units remained. If the maximum and minimum quotas have been introduced, then we do not see reasons for six electoral units. Now there needs to be work with members of all peoples in Mostar to change the solutions that are not good.”</p>
<p>Nikolic on his possible removal from FBiH MoD</p>	<p>Slobodna Dalmacija pg 17 ‘SDA encourages my removal’ – The daily carries a comment by the FBiH Defence Minister, Miroslav Nikolic, regarding the SDA’s frequent requests aimed at changes to the FBiH Government, which also mention his name. Nikolic notes that the Coalition HDZ-HNZ-CCD is supporting his work and that, to his knowledge, the Presidency and Main Board of HDZ BiH, never discussed the issue. “I believe the media campaign, aimed at changes to the Federation (of BiH) top, was started under pressure of the SDA”, says Minister Nikolic.</p>

<p>RS Government increases salaries to its staff</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg 5 'Republika Srpska Government increased salaries to its staff' – The RS Government has increased in budget for 2004 the provision, according to which the salaries for Government employees would be increased for 35%, while the most vulnerable categories of population are still fighting for their incomes/pensions. Goran Radivojac, Spokesperson of Republika Srpska Prime Minister, explained that this salary increase resulted from the fact that there will be reduction of 4000 staff at public administration. Radojka Boric, President of Republika Srpska Association of the families of the fallen and imprisoned soldiers and civilians, stressed that the Republika Srpska Government made unfair move. Dusan Prica, President of Pensioners' Democratic Alliance, is of the view that the Republika Srpska Government is actually conducting discrimination over pensioners of Republika Srpska.</p>
<p>HDZ of central Bosnia complain of Bosniak domination</p>	<p>Slobodna Dalmacija pg 15 'Travnik – 'den' of extremists' – The HDZ of central Bosnia complains of Bosniak domination in Central Bosnia Canton, requesting the High Representative for BiH to prevent any sort of domination by any one people everywhere in BiH, thus ensuring equality to the Croats. The press release issued by the party reads: "The latest reforms of the High Representative and the Statute that disables the Croat domination over the Bosniaks in Mostar, which in the same time does not disable the Bosniak domination over the Croats in the FBiH and Central Bosnia Canton, especially in Fojnica, Bugojno and Travnik, shows the attitude towards the Croats in BiH".</p>

<p>Oslobodjenje editorial on Mostar</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 2 'Political conformism' op-ed by <u>Ibrahim Prohic</u> – Author writes on the mentality of BiH citizens, arguing that “Mostar case discloses the terrifying power of politics, i.e. manipulation, but also worrying weakness of the citizens,... [who] blindly follow turns of political parties. When HDZ was against the unification of the city [separatists goals], Croats there... supported that. Now, HDZ wants to politically capitalize forcedly changed demographic structure and suddenly it underlines its 'integration' oriented attitude: single administration – one man – one vote. Formula for political domination and privileges. Against, new attitude is followed by Croats... SDA for years has been allegedly fighting for a single and democratic BiH, and single Mostar...Now, they are for existing condition with six municipalities... To keep small crooks, they used big words... Key evidence – referendum. People follow them... Democracy? Hypocrisy and manipulation... They have to be defended from themselves by Paddy Ashdown, imposed statute and chance for normalisation and economic recovery. But how to recover mentally and how to make a difference between the interests of the citizens from and the interests of the politics?”</p>
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<p>Culture</p>

<p>Grahovac denies OHR allegations re culture budget</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 3 'Used of tested methods', Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Grahovac claims that he understood OHR document well', Dnevni List front pg 7 'Grahovac: OHR wants to take decisions in culture too', Vecernji List pg 4 'Grahovac denies Sullivan' – FBiH Government Vice President and the Federation Minister of Culture and Sport, Gavriilo Grahovac issued a press release denying the statement by the OHR Spokesperson Kevin Sullivan who accused him of misleading the public. "Mr Sullivan claims that 'did not have any grounds for the statement that the High Representative Paddy Ashdown considers subventions for the culture a luxury.' Let the public decide on this based on facts: the claim that the document refers to 2003 budget year was true only formally, because the article 3 of the General Principles clearly states: decreased spending would, wherever possible, should be kept during the 2004 and later. As one of the possible decreases, culture and sport has been specifically stressed out." Grahovac also warned OHR if they "keep claiming that [he] interpreted the document without grounds, [he] would recommend the continuing the discussion at the independent FBiH or BiH Court."</p>
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Economic and social issues

<p>BH Farmers hold protests today</p>	<p>RHB, FTV, Vecernji List front pg 'Border blockade', pg 2 'Farmers block border', Dnevni List pg 3 'Help domestic agriculture by specific examples'– BH farmers will hold new demonstrations on Monday on the border crossing Vinjani Donji with Croatia. The Association of Farmers in BiH has announced the blockade of Vinjani Donji border crossing in Canton 8, unhappy with the fact that three lorries transporting food products made in BiH were denied entering Croatia the other day. According to the President of the said Association, Ranko Bakic, the problems arise from the fact that the BiH authorities did not sign agreements on veterinary and sanitary protection, which resulted in the BiH goods not allowed to get across the border. Bakic notes this is not Croatia's but the CoM's fault because they did not sign the relevant agreements on time. The blockade starts on Monday at 0800 hrs, and ends at 1600. Dnevni List carried the announcement on Sunday.</p>
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**BiH –
Croatia
talks on
economic
issues**

BHTV 1 – BiH Council of Ministers is expected to commence negotiations with the Croatian Government in the next few days, which should confirm official Croatian position regarding the merge of Banja Luka-Gradiska with Zagreb-Belgrade highways. Building of this highway should start in the spring and it should be primarily financed with the means earned from the GSM licences. The BiH Minister of Transport and Communications, Branko Dokic, said that building plans for highway were being developed by the RS Road Directorate and authorized Ministry. Dokic added that he did not expect any difficulties, as the former Croatian Government has already accepted those plans. In addition, Minister Dokic expects BiH and Croatian delegations to also start negotiating on the Croatian involvement in the building of Vc corridor.

Dnevni Avaz cover 'We are not late with Concession Commission', pg 5 'We are not late with establishing the Concession Commission' – Branko Dokic confirmed to DA that this week his Ministry would pass the names of the several candidates which would be appointed in the Concession Commission. He also added that the final list of the candidates that would make up the commission concession regarding the Vc corridor will be sent for the state parliamentary procedure and for final OHR approval.

NN editorial on investing in BiH	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg 7 'A positive message' editorial by <u>Josip Blazevic</u> – The author is writing about the most recent statement Dragan Covic, Chairperson of BiH Presidency, regarding the forthcoming Mostar Investment Conference. He agrees with Covic in assessment that BiH is sending a positive message to the world by holding this Investment Conference in Mostar. However, the author disagrees with Covic that "BiH is a good state for making investments in". He disagrees on the basis of following facts: existence of fictitious firms in BiH, failure of BiH authorities to liberalise power and telecommunication sectors, difficulties in implementation of Free Trade Agreement with Croatia.</p>
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Defence issue	
Colak on BiH defence minister	<p>Dnevni List front splash, pg 5 'Colak: We will not insist that Croat becomes BiH Defence Minister' by <u>Miso Relota</u> – Carries an interview with the President of HDZ BiH, Barisa Colak, in which he, responding to a question whether his party would insist that the future BiH Defence Minister comes from the line of the Croat people says the party sticks to its request, but not at any cost. "If every side sticks to its request, then we will never solve the problem. It is unacceptable that we 'entrench' ourselves and reject compromise (...) The new BiH Defence Minister must be an acceptable person who will work on getting BiH closer to the Partnership for Peace".</p>

**VL claims
new Ministry
to be
establish in
order to
solve the
BiH Defence
Minister
issue**

Vecernji List front splash, pg 3 'State authority getting three more ministries' by Zoran Kresic – The author learns from participants of last week's talks between the ruling HDZ, SDA, SDS and PDP that since the national balance among the three peoples will be disrupted with establishment of the state Ministry of Defence, the parties reached a compromise to increase the number of state ministries in order to get the equal number of ministers from lines of all three constituent peoples. Reportedly, it is envisaged that all the peoples have four Ministers, with a remark that the Bosniaks would hold three Ministries plus the office of the Chairman of BiH CoM. According to VL, the Serbs hint they are not keen that much to get the post of the BiH Defence Minister, just like the Croats, but in the same time, just like the Croats, they will not agree to disruption of the national balance. In addition, the remedy is in establishment of the state Ministry of Agriculture, which would be run most likely by a Serb.

Furthermore, VL says that because of the complex work the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations is tackling, the Ministry will be split in two. Apparently, the current Minister Dragan Doko will remain at the helm of the Foreign Trade Ministry, whilst the newly established Ministry of Economic Relations would be run by a Croat too. Apparently, the Bosniak side does not fully agree with this proposal believing that in that case, the Croats would control the financial structure of BiH.

Refugee return

BHTV 1 feature on new BiH Refugees Law

BHTV 1 – The draft Law on the changes and annexes to the Law on Refugees has become the subject to the serious discussion before the BiH Parliament. The law envisages all people claiming their property to previously prove that they have left someone else's; however the main issue is that the law do not define to whom returnees would prove that. Bosniak Caucus of the BiH House of Peoples consider this Law to be confusing, and thus complicating the return processes. "We are in situation when this could and has to be done by the Courts and not by some Offices for return, Canton's or some other Ministries for Refuges and so on"- said delegate Hasan Cengic. Serb Caucus said they were content with the right of refuges to claim their property which they exchanged forcedly. "High Representative said that all exchanges, which were done during the war were forced, so... anyone who exchanged the property in the period from April 2, 1992 to December 13, 1995 has a right to reconsider that exchange"- explained Zoran Spasojevic, HoP delegate.