

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 26/11/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
Terrorist trained in BiH	Reis Ceric on Eid	National Day of BiH	No water in BL
National Day marked		First day of Eid	November 25 in BiH
		Abuse of women	Muslims celebrate Eid

Oslobodjenje	The first day of Ramadan Eid celebrated: Bosniaks suffer due to injustice; SFOR examines Covic's decisions
Dnevni Avaz	Eid message by Mustafa effendi Ceric: 'Justice is the best protector of the peace in world'; Veterans Law in procedure: Croat associations demand two different funds ; BiH Syndicate, Edhem Biber: The revision of Markovic's privatisation must be carried out
Dnevni List	Expulsions in HDZ BiH to follow; Continued pressure on Minister Brankovic
Vecernji List	HDZ returns compensations to women in childbed and defenders; Lagumdzija insults Ashdown; HDZ BiH did not turn back on Sanader
Slobodna Dalmacija	SFOR to be reduced by 5 thousand; Dragan Covic: I did not vote because I was out of country
Glas Srpske	American intelligence sources claim: Omar Alvadi in BiH? Official greetings at schools: Good afternoon is mandatory

Nezavisne Novine	Oil poured out of truck reservoir: No water supply in Banjaluka owing to oil blot; Banjaluka Clinical Centre: Republika Srpska President hospitalised for pancreatitis; Sulejman Tihic: Situation in Mostar is a product of HDZ policy
Blic	Milan Bogicevic: 'Electricity should be cheaper'; Banja Luka without water; Taxes: four more days to submit income statements

Political issues

<p>Celebration of 25 November, BiH Statehood Day</p>	<p>FTV, BHTV 1, RTRS, Slobodna Dalmacija front, pg 16 'Croats worked – Bosniaks celebrated', back pg 'Schools have lectures', Dnevni List pg 4 'Notice on non-working day could not have been withdrawn', Vecernji List pgs 4&5 'Croats did 'celebrate' ZAVNOBiH after all' – BiH Statehood l Day has been partly marked in FBiH, but in RS it was ordinary working day. Central ceremony of the celebration was organised in Mrkonjic Grad by representatives of WWII war veterans association SUBNOR. No representative of the authorities was present at the ceremony. Institutions in the Croat majority cantons also had an ordinary working day.</p> <p>Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Covic" BiH living formula desired by modern Europe', Oslobodjenje pg 6 'This country inherits its statehood through centuries', Dnevni List pg 3 'Covic: Our belonging to Europe is unquestionable' – BiH Presidency Chairman Dragan Covic has organized on Tuesday a reception on the occasion of November 25, the BiH National Day. The reception was attended by numerous representatives of political, social, religious and cultural life in BiH, as well as the representatives of diplomatic corps and international organisations in BiH. Instead of BiH Presidency member Borislav Paravac, the reception was attended by the chief of his cabinet, Sino Bozalo. 'This country inherits its statehood through centuries and this jubilee is yet another confirmation of sovereignty and independence... With its... diversities, this country represents a life formula to which modern Europe inclines more and more. However, today we are in a difficult economic situation, which is among other things a consequence of developments in this region in the past ten years... It is often said that the National Day is not a holiday that is celebrated in the entire territory of BiH. There are still some areas that do not experience this date as their date, and especially as their holiday. I also wish to say that in an administrative way nobody can order appreciation and celebration. Let us make progress, and implement the results than I mentioned earlier and then we will easily agree and come to an understanding about the National Day, and other State Holidays as well. It is a way for all people to appreciate the National Day, and be happy about it.' – stated Covic at the occasion.</p>
---	--

<p>SDS, Spiric urge BiH Law on National Holidays</p>	<p>CRHB, RTRS – Commenting why BiH National Day was not celebrated in the Republika Srpska, spokesperson for SDS Dusan Stojicic stated that BH needed the Law on State Holidays, as without it there was no basis for protocol of certain holidays.</p> <p>Oslobodjenje pg 3 ‘We are not going to accept the order’ – Fena news agency carries that Stojicic also stressed that SDS was ready to be open in the dialogue to negotiate the Law on National Holidays, adding however that they ‘will not accept some or order which in a way tries to impose marking of 25 November in other entity as if we a Law already.’</p> <p>BHTV 1 – Speaker of BiH House of Representatives Nikola Spiric proposes to pass legislation on national holidays. He said: ‘I asked several times for needed legislation to be passed, but the main problem was that Federation BiH proposed November 25 as National Day, while others propose to mark the Day of signing of Dayton Peace Agreement. Council of Ministers is supposed to make decision on celebration of national holidays.’</p>
<p>DA editorial on BiH National Day</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg 3 ‘Celebration of National Day’ <u>editorial by Sead Numanovic</u> – Commenting the statement by SDS Spokesperson on the lack of Law which would regulate national holidays in BiH, author stresses that a number of laws adopted at the entity level were not respected, such as the Law regulating the cooperation with the ICTY. Article further reads: ‘The attitude towards BiH Statehood Day is, before all, the attitude towards BiH, and as much as one tries to minimize it, that cannot be hidden... The day when 60 years ago ZAVNOBiH [Session of the Anti-Fascist Council of WWII in BiH] session was held is neither Muslim nor Bosniak holiday. It is deeply non-nationalistic, but even more – it is antifascist holiday. The relation towards it is not the attitude towards Bosniaks, maybe not even BiH, but towards fascism that entire progressed world stood up to. However, maybe the greatness of the holiday also depends of who doesn’t celebrate it.’</p>

<p>SDS to analyse work of the RS Government</p>	<p>RTRS, Dnevni List pg 12 'It is necessary to review work of Republika Srpska Government', Blic pg 13, 'SDS for the reconstruction of the Government' – SDS is not satisfied with the speed with which the RS Government solves economic and social problems of the citizens. SDS and other parties, with whom they make parliamentary majority, will make an analysis of the work of the government and ministries in mid-December. Following the analysis, they will meet with the RS President and decide on measures to be taken, stated Dusan Stojcic SDS spokesperson. He mentioned that fall down of the government started when the parties presently in the opposition were ruling. At the press conference he also added that SDS is not obstructing reform processes, but they want to improve them with constructive proposals. SDS sees that there is no real alternative to their parliamentary majority and that the government should be moved to act faster in the interest of the citizens.</p> <p>Glas Srpske pg 2 'Crucial fight for Srpska' – Dusan Stojcic, SDS Spokesperson, yesterday said that reforms and political relations are main issues fought about, while the crucial fights are in the fields of customs and taxes and defence. According to him, BiH cannot be admitted into EU without these radical changes. He said that SDS would do all it can to avoid being marked as the obstructionist party. Speaking of the work of the Republika Srpska Government, he said that in the first half of December, Republika Srpska Parliament majority is to make an analysis into so far results, including achievements and omissions of Government.</p>
--	---

<p>VL: 'Lagumdzija insults Ashdown'</p>	<p>Vecernji List front 'Lagumdzija insults Ashdown', pg 3 'Zlatko Lagumdzija gravely insults Paddy Ashdown' by <u>Zdenko Jurilj</u> – VL learns from an anonymous official of the IC that the leader of SDP, Zlatko Lagumdzija, insulted the High Representative for BiH, Paddy Ashdown, during the recent meeting between the HR and representatives of 14 ruling and opposition parties held in Sarajevo the other day. According to VL, Lagumdzija used the presence of a strong political establishment to have a go at the High Representative criticizing the HR for his attitude towards the opposition parties. Lagumdzija also criticized the HR over his attitude towards, as Lagumdzija put it, rigged coup d'etat. "You co-operate with the ruling establishment, you do not even care about the opposition. Why did you react to lesser things than rigging of a coup d'etat. Who are you representing, what are you doing", said Lagumdzija. According to VL, because of Lagumdzija's behaviour, HR Ashdown was both surprised and offended, which resulted in a shorter meeting with representatives of political parties than originally anticipated.</p>
<p>NN: Tihic on Mostar issue</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 8 'Situation in Mostar is a product of mono-national HDZ policy' – In an interview to NN, Sulejman Tihic, SDA President and member of the BiH Presidency, on Mostar issue said that the current situation has resulted from mono-national policy of HDZ, that has never allowed the implementation of the transitional Mostar City Statute.</p>
<p>VL on Law on conflict of interests</p>	<p>Vecernji List pg 5 'Against OHR's law' by <u>G. K.</u> – VL reports that BiH authorities are opposing changes to the Law on conflict of interests, the law which bans state officials to be active in their private companies and bans their close relatives to be employed in public institutions. According to VL, the strongest opposition came from the SDA, whose Hasan Muratovic rejected the High Representative's request that the Law be adopted without amendments.</p>

<p>SD interview with Covic</p>	<p>Slobodna Dalmacija front, pg 16 'I did not vote because I was out of country' by <u>Zlatko Tulic</u> – The Chairman of BiH Presidency, Dragan Covic, talking about results of the parliamentary elections in Croatia, says he was positively surprised with the results and victory of HDZ of Croatia.</p> <p>Questioned what the results would mean for future relations between BiH and Croatia, Covic says "the sister party from Croatia" should have a better understanding for the position of BiH Croats and for the sustainability of BiH as a whole, which is necessary for strengthening economic ties between the two countries. In that context, Covic says the President of HDZ of Croatia Ivo Sanader will be able to recognize that. Covic also notes that he did not vote in the elections for the Croatian Parliament since he was out of country.</p>
<p>Slobodna Dalmacija: Silajdzic gathering 'pro-Bosnian forces'</p>	<p>Slobodna Dalmacija pg 16 'Silajdzic gathering 'pro-Bosnian forces'' by <u>Blanka Magas</u>) – The article announces Haris Silajdzic's come-back to the BiH political scene, but this time not through the Party for BiH (SBiH), but in the capacity of a person who will unify all small political parties of civic-social-liberal orientation which are to be joined by all "pro-Bosnian" forces currently in the SDA and SBiH. The unification is to represent a balance to the Agreement recently signed by Lagumdzija, Dodik, Zubak and Djokic. SD comments that Silajdzic's come-back is also undoubtedly motivated by his personal need to be present in the country at the time of the beginning of re-structuring of Bosniak politicians following Izetbegovic's death and the struggle for "the Bosniak No. 1". SD adds that analysts say that majority of SBiH members would leave the current party leader, Safet Halilovic, and side with Silajdzic. The paper concludes that Silajdzic's come-back might, without too much effort by the united "leftists", cause early elections which are also a plan of some circles within the IC which are dissatisfied with the efficiency of the current authorities.</p>

<p>Oslobodjenje on impact of elections in SCG and Croatia on BiH</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg 2 'Bad sign' column 'In the Focus' by Daniel Omeragic – Referring to HDZ's victory in Croatian Parliamentary elections and triumph of the radical Tomislav Nikolic at failed presidential elections in Serbia and Montenegro, author says that both events are 'bad signs for BiH'. Despite the fact that Nikolic did not win presidential seat [due to low turnout of the voters], 'the possible victory [at the 28 November Parliamentary elections] of ultra-nationalistic forces in our Eastern neighbourhood could give wings to radical elements in RS, who are not in a small number. On the other hand, it will be interesting to see how election's winners from Croatia would treat BiH. After Ivo Sanader establishes new government, we could again expect interference in the BiH internal politics... BiH will again find itself divided between two rightist politics. That will result in strengthening of nationalistic forces in our own country. Where that leads to, we already saw in recent past. Therefore, the future rule of the international community is very important, and its presence in the Balkans is a matter of life and death.'</p>
---	---

<p>Security issues</p>

<p>Press claims terrorists trained and fought in BiH</p>	<p>Glas Srpske cover page story 'Omar Alvadi in BiH?' – The US intelligence circles are convinced that the first operative of Al Q'Aeda for Balkans, Omar Alvadi, has arrived to BiH. The information on possible arrival of Alvadi to BiH has coincided with the introduction of state of alert by Interior Ministries of Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as EUPM and SFOR. The press circles have been talking for two days about strict security measures, which were carried out at the Office of the High Representative and other IC offices. The OHR Spokesperson, Vedran Persic, briefly told the press that OHR does not comment on possible security measures, and denied and Office in Sarajevo was not open on Monday.</p> <p>CRHB – According to Vecernji List [25 November issue], terrorists who carried out recent terrorist attacks in Turkey, which killed 30, were trained in BH. Based on reports by some world news agencies, but unable to confirm it with BH Security Ministry, the newspapers claim that the perpetrators are members of the terrorist group from Cairo hiding in Zenica – Doboj Canton: in Maglaj, Zavidovici and Bocinje. VL further says that they co-operate with Al-Quaida planning new attacks. This was also confirmed by unnamed police source, who added that they are real threat not only to the security of BH but to Europe as well. They have been allegedly given the shelter by radicals within Bosniak authority, enabling them to register in book of birth.</p> <p>Vecernji List pg 2 'Member of Al Gama Islamiyya in possession of land in Mostar' by <u>Dalibor Ravic</u> – VL reports that one of 9 members of the radical Islamic organization Al-Gama Islamiyya suspected of organizing last week's bomb attack in Turkey, an Egyptian national Amgad Youssef, is wanted by the Egyptian Government and that the BiH Council of Ministers rejected an extradition request put in by the Egyptian Government last month because Youssef is apparently a BiH citizen. VL further explains that Youssef has been living in Mostar since November 30, 1999, and that the Mostar's Municipality Southeast gave him a construction plot on March 20, 2001 in the Kosor settlement. The decision was signed by the President of Municipal Council, Saudin Guja.</p> <p>Nezavisne Novine pg 3 'Istanbul bomber fought in BiH' – The British daily Daily Telegraph reports that one of two Islamic terrorists, who took part in terrorist attack at British Consulate and British Bank in Istanbul, fought during the war in BiH</p> <p>Blic pg 13, 'Fear from terrorism' – RS police ministry spokesman Zoran Glusac told SRNA that in the light of recent terrorist attacks throughout Europe and the world, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has heightened security in RS. He said that security has been tightened at government buildings and at many of the buildings housing international organizations active in RS.</p>
---	--

<p>NATO to reduce number of troops in BiH</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg 8 'NATO reduces number of troops in BiH', Oslobodjenje pg 8 'Smaller SFOR contingent in BiH', Slobodna Dalmacija front, pg 16 'SFOR to be reduced by 5,000 people' – According to news agencies [Onasa, Fena and AFP] diplomats in Brussels announced that NATO would agree next week to slash its peacekeeping force in Bosnia by at least one-third and may take the first steps for a European Union takeover of the mission at the end of 2004. Defense ministers of the member states will approve recommendations for force levels in the Balkans for the next six months at a meeting in Brussels on December 1. 'SFOR is at about 12,000 troops now and by mid-2004 we would expect it to be somewhere between 7,000 and 8,000 troops.' a NATO diplomat was quoted as saying. Allies agree much has been accomplished in stabilizing Bosnia and a force to deter hostilities is now the key requirement. Diplomats said Washington had come around to the idea of handing the reins to the EU for a combined military and policing operation at the end of 2004, on condition that NATO maintains a presence. But it put a brake on the EU's Bosnia plans in June, arguing it was too early to start discussing them.</p>
<p>Oslobodjenje: SFOR examines Covic's decision about 6 Croat officers</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje cover, pg 7 'SFOR examines Covic's decision' by <u>Antonio Prlenda</u> – According to daily, SFOR currently carries out the investigation into the decision by Chairman of BiH Presidency Dragan Covic to reemploy 6 Croat high ranking FBiH Army officers, which they previously left following 'Croat self-rule' in 2001. Covic's decision was implemented by FBiH Defence Minister Miroslav Nikolic. Spokesperson for SFOR Dave Sullivan stated: 'I know that this issue is currently under our investigation. Following its completion, General Major Virgil Packett will announce its details.' He stressed that no further comments can be made until the end of the investigation. Author writes that former Defence Minister Mijo Anic always stated that all members of the Croat component were, following their illegal disbandment from the Army, were allowed to go back to certain deadline. However, in a statement to Oslobodjenje, Covic's military advisor Slavko Marin said that this could not have been done in all instances: 'The issue of those 6 officers is taken of the context and is tried to be presented as if some [officers] are coming back... Those are not officers coming back,... but this is the implementation of the project in 2001 which was not finished before.'</p> <p>Oslobodjenje pg 2 'Explosive combination' editorial by Antonio Prlenda – Author refers to the decision to return 6 Croat officers to FBiH Army, outlining background of 2001 events lead by Ante Jelavic and HD, 'Croat self-rule' project in which majority of Croat officers and soldiers left FBiH Army. Welcoming SFOR's investigation into the decision by Dragan Covic, author writes: 'Politics and army have always presented explosive combination. If soldiers become dependent of their loyalty to a political party, citizens will never be sure whether they have their army. As much as structures and organized it is. The experience of former JNA [Yugoslav People's Army] is a dangerous reminder that such thing must not happen.'</p>

VL on defence reforms	Vecernji List pg 2 'RS do not want Presidency for commander-in-chief' by <u>Branka Stevandic</u> – VL claims that many people, the Republika Srpska defenders' organization and military experts in the RS are opposing changes to the defence structure in BiH and amendments to the RS Constitution as determined by the RS National Assembly on November 6, especially the amendment 112 which says that the RS Army is commanded, in both peace and war, collectively by the BiH Presidency, on basis of Constitution of BiH and law. Professor of the Banja Luka Law School, Vitomir Popovic, believes this could cause "legal trouble". "What happens if Croatia one day decides to attack the Republika Srpska or if Serbia and Montenegro (decides to attack) Federation of BiH. We can never be that sure, that's why we have to legally protect ourselves", says Popovic.
NN: Tihic on coup d'état	Nezavisne Novine cover, pg 8 'Situation in Mostar is a product of mono-national HDZ policy' – In an interview to NN, Sulejman Tihic, SDA President and member of the BiH Presidency, said that nobody, including FOSS, has ever said that anybody in BiH is preparing coup d'état. He further claims that Federal Parliament will have a final word on this issue, noting that difference should be made between 'coup d'état' and 'fall of authority'.

Economic and social issues

Ivanic to withdraw from power, unless internal debt solved	Oslobodjenje pg 3 'Ivanic withdraws from power?', Dnevni Avaz pg 8 'I seriously consider withdrawal from power' – Fena reports that BH Foreign Minister and the president of PDP Mladen Ivanic stated that he was seriously considering withdrawal from the authorities unless a consensus was reached regarding the solution to RS internal debt. 'Unless there is a political consensus, I seriously think of withdrawing from the authorities and in that way to make responsible all those who left the debt as inheritance.' – stated Ivanic to Glas Srpski newspapers. He added that in the case internal debt is not solved, IMF and the World Bank will withdrawn from BiH, which would bring the state into extremely difficult economic situation.
---	--

<p>VL: BiH Elektroprivreda fails to obey Minister</p>	<p>Vecernji List front ‘Cancellation of electricity to Aluminij’ by <u>Zoran Kresic</u> – According to minutes of a meeting held between the Debis International, which buys electricity for Aluminij, and the BiH Elektroprivreda, at the beginning of November (5 and 6), the Elektroprivreda of BiH rejected to act upon orders of the FBiH Ministry of Energy and Industry Izet Zigic and cancel the invitation of a tender on sale of surplus electricity. VL further explains that the Elektroprivreda got the memo from the Ministry too late, because the tender had been completed and invited on November 3 already.</p>
<p>FBiH HoR to vote on Law on revision of privatisation</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz cover ‘The revision of Markovic’s privatisation must be carried out’, pg 9 ‘We expect representatives to support Syndicate’s proposal’ – On 1 December, FBiH House of Representatives is expected to adopt the draft Law on Revision of privatisation carried out. Whoever, while BiH Association of Independent Syndicates request for full revision of the privatisation, including all such activities carried out at the time of Ante Markovic, while the FBiH Government stipulates the revision of contracts of so-called ‘small privatisation’. President of BiH Syndicates Edhem Biber said he was disappointed with such draft, and stressed that if Government was willing only to conduct such revision than there is no need for adoption of the new Law, as the existing regulations allow it.</p>

<p>FBiH Veterans Law in parliamentary procedure</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz cover ‘Croatian associations demand two different funds’, ‘Representatives of Croat Associations insist on two different funds’ – Following a number of difficulties in voting procedure, FBiH Ministry for Veterans Issues finalized the draft Law on Veterans. Authorized minister Ibrahim Nadarevic confirmed that the law is currently in the parliamentary procedure. He also said that members of former BH Army were mostly satisfied with the Draft Law, which requires 310 million KM for its beneficiaries, while former authorities negotiated with IMF only 275 milion KM. ‘We have spent the entire summer looking for other means, trying to a convince IMF that we need more money. The problem is partly that representatives of the Croat Associations are demanding two different funds.’</p>
--	--