OHR BiH Media Round-up, 26/1/2004

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA(18,00 hrs)	**BH TV 1** (19,00 hrs)	**FED TV** (19,30 hrs)	**RT RS** (19,30)
Referendum in Mostar	Referendum in Mostar	Referendum in Mostar	Files against RS politicians
SDA on FBiH Government	Cultural Politics in BiH	Cultural Politics in BiH	SNSD on Mostar
BiH Prosecutor on arrest	RS Privatisation Law	FBiH Govt's reshuffle	Referendum in Mostar
Banja Luka/Gradiska road	New Georgian President	Constit. of Livno Canton	BiH Prosecutor on arrest

Oslobodjenje	Mostar Croats came out on referendum
Dnevni Avaz	ICTY's Graham Blewit: I believe that the West does not want to arrest Karadzic
Dnevni List	"Jelavic, Rupcic and Prce remain in custody until surrender or arrest of Ivan Azinovic"; "Will referendums decide on future of Mostar?"
Vecernji List	"Croats for unified Mostar"; "They are looking for fourth suspect Ivan Azinovic"
Slobodna Dalmacija	Features Croatia related headlines
Glas Srpske	Employment via cooperatives in Brcko: The will of small gods
Nezavisne Novine	Referendum: Croats voted for their vision of Mostar; Republika Srpska capital collects 35% of public incomes in entity: Banjaluka collects more money that 34 municipalities from East Republika Srpska together; Zlatko Lagumdzija: SDA admitted defeat of its policy in BiH; Himzo Selimovic: Sarajevo is not the city dangerous to live in

Blic	Police officer took a wallet he had found; Changes in BiH: The Dayton has already changed

Organised crime	
BiH Prosecutor's Office supports decision on detention for Jelavic, Prce, Rupcic	Herceg Bosna Radio, FTV, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 'Prosecutor says the operation was in compliance with the law', Nezavisne Novine, pg. 5, 'Prosecutor's Office was working according to the Law', ONASA – All allegations that the arrest of Ante Jelavic, Miroslav Prce and Miroslav Rupcic was conducted with excessive usage of force are unfounded, read a press release from the Special Department for Organized Crime, Economic Crime and Corruption of the BiH Prosecutor's Office. According to the release, prosecutor John McNair examined closely video records of the arrest conducted by policemen of the BiH Federation Ministry of Interior (MUP), and concluded that the police respected persons and property, in accordance with domestic and international legal norms. The prosecutor welcomed Saturday's decision of the BiH Court on the detention for former president of the Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) Ante Jelavic, ex FBiH defense minister Miroslav Prce and former director of Hercegovina Osiguranje Miroslav Rupcic.
Oslobodjenje's Prohic on Mostar arrests	Oslobodjenje pg. 2 'Questions' In Focus column by Ibrahim Prohic – Prohic wonders why was Ante Jelavic arrested right now and why in such a way, and whether the arrest was necessary ate all? He claims that the operation will anyway raise political tensions, which is a development suitable for nationalists and right-wingers. "Is it possible that the international officials do not know this, and what is their role in this game? Whether they have just assisted or approved the operation?," wonders Prohic at the end of the article.

CRO press on Jelavic and co. arrest	Vecernji List (front page “Ivan Azinovic, the fourth suspect, searched for” and p 4-5 “Ivan Azinovic suspected too”, by Zoran Kresic) and Dnevni List (front & p 5, “Jelavic, Rupcic and Prce stay in detention until Ivan Azinovic surrenders or gets arrested”, by De. L.) carry that, judging from the details of the decision on 3-day detention in the case of arrest of Ante Jelavic, Miroslav Prce and Miroslav Rupcic, Ivan Azinovic is the fourth suspect who was to be arrested together with the mentioned persons. Azinovic, a former Assistant in the Ministry of Defense, is also accused of abuse of office and authority in the Hercegovacka bank case. VL unofficially learns that an operation was carried out in Konjic, Azinovic’s home town, but it failed. VL adds it is believed that Azinovic owns flats in Mostar and Zagreb. The papers say that the decision for the 30-day detention of all the mentioned persons was made due to existence of circumstances that indicate to possibility of their escape (as all of them reside outside BiH), of destroying evidence or intimidating witnesses, adding the Court judged that mutual cooperation of the suspects could lead to a conspiracy as it was noticed during the arrest that Jelavic gave Prce a sign to be silent during interrogation. VL comments these insinuations are found to be silly by experienced lawyers as 3 years elapsed from the Hercegovacka bank operation adding that the entire case, which is becoming a farce, was staged by the IC without the knowledge of the leading people from the BiH judicial institutions, i.e. Martin Raguz (president of BiH Court) and Marinko Jurcevic (state Prosecutor). Jelavic’s and Prce’s defense lawyers, Josip Muselimovic and Marko Martinovic are to lodge appeals today to the decision on detention. VL learns that well-known religious figures and Croat public officials will be called to testify in the case and there is a possibility that they also be kept in detention, which will additionally raise temperature in Herzegovina. Commenting that the arrest is just a part of a systematic repression against Croat politicians and Croat people and interpreting it as a sign of the good will trying to bring the Muslim side at table to negotiate, Slobodna Dalmacija editorial (p 9, “Herzegovinian river Jordan”, by Josip Jovic) doubts High Representative’s denial the IC had nothing to do with it since SFOR was indeed involved in the operation. Jovic adds that experience shows that following the visits such was the HR’s visit to Zagreb and the meeting with Croatian PM Sanader, a wave of terror follows. “IC representatives always went to Zagreb exclusively in order to ask for help in pacifying the natives in Herzegovina and have always asked for Croat(ian) leadership’s loyalty for dishonourable intentions against Croats”, Jovic says concluding that there are too many absurdities for a country small like BiH and the people smallest in number in such a country.

Dnevni Avaz: Prosecution Office to hear more suspects	Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 'Investigators claim way of spending 260 million KM disputable' – The Prosecutor at the Special Department for Organised Crime, Economic Crime and Corruption, John McNair, had at his disposal several kilos of documentation on Herecegovacka Bank operations before he had requested apprehension of Jelavic and co. and their detention. Dnevni Avaz pg. 2 'Prosecution Office widens the list of suspects' – Following spectacular apprehension of Jelavic, Prce and Rupcic, the BiH Prosecution Office's Special Department for Organised Crime should in coming days hear yet six persons linked to the case.
Police Commissioner says Sarajevo is safe	Nezavisne Novine, cover and pg. 6, 'Sarajevo is not the city dangerous to live in' – In a brief interview to NN, Himzo Selimovic, Sarajevo Canton Police Commissioner, says that: "I believe that Sarajevo is not more insecure or dangerous city to live in that any other capital of regional states." The reason for interview were some explosions which took place in Sarajevo, and have not been resolved as yet, as well as the recent murder of Taib Torlakovic in Sarajevo, which caused major concern amongst citizens of this city.

Mostar restructuring

Mostar Croats on referendum	Herceg Bosna Radio, BHTV, FTV, Oslobodjenje front page, pgs 4-5 'Mostar Croats came out on referendum', Dnevni Avaz pg. 5 'Ustasha sign on the billboard', Nezavisne Novine, cover and pg. 3, 'Croats voted for their vision of Mostar' – After HDZ representatives didn't accept the proposal for the new Mostar Statute made by Norbert Winterstain, which predicts one Municipality and six election units they have organised a referendum. Referendum was held on Sunday in three Municipalities with Croat majority. All election posts were open on Sunday morning and until late afternoon more that 60% of registered voters have voted. The referendum question was "Are you in favour of City Mostar organized like one Municipality and one election unit and election procedure, for the City Council like in others units of Local Government in BiH"? Dnevni List (front and page 13, "Will referendums decide on future of Mostar?", by S. Bjelica) also carries that the referendum in the Mostar Municipalities with the Croat majority took place yesterday. DL says that by 16:00 hrs 45 % of voters turned out at the referendum in the Municipality Southwest, 60 % of voters in Municipality South and 42 % voters in Municipality West. DL (page 13, "Hadziomerovic: Negotiations on new organization of BiH have been lasting for months", not signed) carries that Head of the Mostar Municipality Stari Grad Zijo Hadziomerovic stated that the referendum that took place yesterday is a scenario, that has been prepared for months, behind which apart from HDZ stand the other, smaller parties with a Croat prefix, as well as, Catholic Church whose goal is that Mostar becomes one Municipality. According to Hadziomerovic, SDS and PDP, that sent a message that Mostar will be arranged as one Municipality, became a part of the whole story. Hadziomerovic believes that this confirmed their information that it has been negotiated on a new organization of BiH for months and that the Catholic and Orthodox Churches share the same opinion. DL (page 13, "Omerovic: Continuation of acting of forces that do not want unification of Mostar", not signed) carries that President of the Party for BiH Cantonal Board Safet Omerovic believes that the referendum is just continuation of acting of the forces that fight against the unification of Mostar. He added: "I believe that none will be interested in these referendums and that they will not be committing for anyone and especially not for the International Community." DL (page 13, "Peric: One-party and mono-ethnic referendums", not signed) carries President of SDP Mostar Zoran Peric who says that all referendums organized in Mostar were organized by one party only and the questions were mono-ethnic. He believes that in case that SDA and HDZ wanted to achieve something normal for citizens of Mostar then the questions went in totally wrong direction. VL (page 2, "To respect will of citizens", by V. Rupcic) carries an editorial on the yesterday's referendum. The author says that High Representative Paddy Ashdown stated that he the opinion of citizens is very important to him and that the citizens can secure good future to Mostar. The author wonders whether these statements mean that the opinion of the citizens will be accepted. DL (page 13, "Big turnout of Serbs at referendum", by M.R.) carries that a big number of Serbs and Bosniaks turned out at the referendum yesterday and according to the author this is a clear indicator that the referendum was not exclusively a Croat one as some ill-intentioned persons were stressing. DL believes that the reason because of which a big number of Serbs turned out at the referendum is the Saturday's visit of representatives of SDS, PDP and Orthodox Church paid to Mostar. Vecernji List (front and page 3, "Croats for unified Mostar", by I. Barbaric), Jutarnji List (page 8, "By 12 hrs 25 % of Croats turned out at referendum on Mostar as one Municipality", by G. Knezovic), Vjesnik (page 2, "Croats at referendum on unification of Mostar", by A. Zornija) and Slobodna Dalmacija (page 5, "Referendum on organization of Mostar", by Z. Zekic) also covered the referendum in Mostar. The articles say that Croats from Mostar showed that they want to live in a unified city organized as one Municipality, with one election unit and the election procedure as in all other self-government units. VL says that during yesterday's mass in the Mostar's Cathedral Bishop Ratko Peric called on believers to turn out at the referendum.

SNSD's Simic on Mostar	Herceg Bosna Radio, Oslobodjenje pg. 5 'Mostar should be one election unit', Dnevni List page 10, "Mostar unified election unit" – Krstan Simic, Vice-President of SNSD stated that offer for 7 Election Units was not justified and that his party agreed with solution foreseeing one unified election unit in Mostar so that Serbs could equally participate in protection of their interests. He announced that senior SNSD officials would visit Mostar next week and discuss with representatives of SNSD Mostar Municipal Board activities to realise this goal. RTRS, Nezavisne Novine, pg. 4, 'Visit of Kalinic and Ivanic to Mostar was politically hypocritical'; Glas Srpske, pg. 2, 'Another recipe for Mostar' – Simic said that Saturday's visit of SDS and PDP officials to Mostar was cynical. "They are representing, especially SDS, the wartime policy that is responsible for departure of Serbs from Mostar", said by Simic. He said that SNSD would fight through Municipal Board in Mostar for rights that belong to every citizen in BiH and to Serbs as well.
Mesic says consensus on Mostar should be reached	Dnevni Avaz pg. 5, mentioned on the front page 'Policy of Croats in BiH cannot be anymore carried put in Zagreb' – Interview with Croatian President Stipe Mesic. Mesic said he had presented his personal views on restructuring of Mostar to HR Paddy Ashdown during their recent meeting in Zagreb. Mesic believes that consensus should be reached on the issue amongst the political parties involved in the process and that Mostar should be established as a single city with each of its citizens feeling free in each part of the town.
VL: "Threats to RTV Mostar editor Alija Behram (over non-broadcast of open letter to Ashdown)"	Vecernji List (p 6, by R. S.) carries that on Friday afternoon, around 16:00 hrs, Alija Behram, RTV Mostar editor, reported to Mostar Police Administration receiving of a written threat by Mostar-based branch of the Association of fallen Bosniak soldiers. Some time before that, Mr. Behram had received this organisation's letter sent to Paddy Ashdown and an instruction to the TV station to broadcast the letter in full or "appropriate measures would be taken". In the letter, which the Steering Board of RTV Mostar refused to broadcast, IC guilt for killing of dozens of thousands of Muslims in BiH and "ethnic cleansing in the western part of Mostar" are mentioned and the HR is put in a very negative context. VL adds that, since the HR attended a public forum in Mostar the same night, police soon reinforced security of the building where it was held.

War crimes

ICTY's Blewit: I believe that the West does not want to arrest Karadzic	Dnevni Avaz front page, pg. 4 'I believe that the West does not want to arrest Karadzic' – Interview with Graham Blewit, the Deputy ICTY's Chief Prosecutor. Blewit said he did not believe the Wast was keen to arrest Karadzic, However, he cannot figure out why is that? "SFOR had an opportunity to arrest Karadzic but he did not do so," said Blewit.

Political affairs

Lagumdzija: I did not insult Muslims	Oslobodjenje pg. 3, mentioned on the front page 'I did not insult Muslims', Dnevni Avaz pg. 4, Nezavisne Novine, cover and pg. 4, 'SDA admitted defeat of its policy in BiH', FENA – President of BiH Social Democratic Party (SDP) Zlatko Lagumdzija responded on Sunday to the allegations of SDA officials that he had insulted the Muslim people in talking about the eventual removal of FBiH Prime Minister and comparing him to a sacrificial lamb. "In regard to a cheap and politicising manipulation, I wish to say that I never insulted and never intended to insult Muslims. If somebody is constantly insulted them, than these are the people who are accusing me. I do not intend to convince them about by true motives, because they are not interested in the actual problems and true protection of Muslims, or Bosniaks", said Lagumdzija. Lagumdzija further states that "neither the catastrophic situation in the country, nor the crisis of authorities can be resolved by anybody's sacrifice: ministers or the prime minister, who would symbolise such a victim". "The nationalists in power wish to shift the attention of the public onto me instead of the real problems in this country. A few months ago they had accused me of preparing a coup d'etat, and now once again these people are referring to me as the people's enemy", he added.

BiH MPs on initiatives to reorganize the state	FTV – Several days ago, the caucus of MPs from the HDZ, Croat Christian Democrats, and Croat People's Union coalition in the Federation of BiH Parliament officially submitted for parliamentary procedure their initiative to reduce Federation powers. If this intention is seen through, the larger BiH entity will eventually be completely disempowered. A logical consequence would be its abolition. The views of MPs in the BiH parliament illustrate some of the complexity of this issue: Hasan Muratovic, SDA – "I see the transfer of Federation powers to the state level as a positive step towards a stronger state structure and the possible abolition of surplus levels in the state structure." Petar Kunic, PDP – "The Federation is a constituent element of BiH. Therefore, its status is determined by the constitution of BiH. Therefore, if any changes were to be made to the status of the Federation, this could be done only by the BiH Parliamentary Assembly. The Federation is not competent to discuss its own status." Tihomir Gligoric, SPRS (Socialist Party of RS) – "If someone asks for the entity of the Federation of BiH to be abolished, the question of the other entity, the RS, is bound to arise. This could actually be an agreement between the HDZ and the SDA."

Blic on the initiative to change the Dayton Agreement	Blic, p 4 and 5, mentioned on the cover page ‘The Dayton Agreement has changed already’ – During his visit to Zagreb, High Representative Paddy Ashdown has stated he supported the discussion on changing the BiH Constitution since he believed this was ‘an open issue’. The Head of the EU Delegation to BiH, Michael Humphreys, has rejected the possibility of organizing a new Dayton. ‘We will not initiate changes, yet we could support it should these are initiated at the local level. Nevertheless, I point out – there will be no new Dayton’, Humphreys has stated. The President of the PDP party, Mladen Ivanic, has stated that the initiative of HDZ and SDA for changing the Dayton Agreement ‘reminds him of strapping of flags of these two parties just before the war broke out’. He has also said that nothing in BiH can be changed without consent of all three peoples. The Banja Luka Faculty of Law Professor in pension, Vladimir Lukic, who had been a member of the RS team that had signed the Dayton Agreement, has stated that the Agreement has already went through some changes, especially in field of the police, military, education and tax policy, yet its essence had not changed.

HDZ's Mile Lasic on necessity to change BiH state structure	Vecernji List (page 7, "Europe wants cantonized Bosnian state without entities", by R. Bubalo) carries an interview with HDZ BiH representative in the Federation of BiH Parliament Mile Lasic who talks about necessity to change the BiH organisation. VL reminds that Lasic is an author of a proposal of the Constitutional Law on transfer of authorities from the FBiH on BiH and Cantons. Asked to comment on European Stability Initiative (ESI) on a new organisation of BiH, Lasic says: "Now, 9 years after signing of the Dayton Peace Accord, we have a right to interpret the ESI message in a way that Europe and the International Community want cantonized BiH without entities and as such it will join European and European-Atlantic integration. We can and we have to help it in these efforts."

Elmir Jahic, SDA BiH Vice-president, on FBiH Government restructuring	In his interview for Dnevni List (front & p 4, “Current FBiH Government must be replaced”, by Miso Relota), SDABiH Vice-president Elvir Jahic says that the relevant bodies of all the political parties that make parliamentary majority in the FBiH Parliament, i.e. SDA, HDZ and SBiH, have one way or another decided on the need for FBiH Government’s reconstruction. “It is known that Niko Lozancic, FBiH President, and his 2 Deputies, have invited these 3 parties’ leaders for a meeting today at which they are to agree upon further strategy regarding the Government reconstruction”, Jahic says. He adds he understands the position of HDZBiH not to give its candidate for the position of the FBiH Prime Minister at the moment underlining the SDA representative at the FBiH Government top would function more easily, particularly in Bosniak-majority areas. Jahic says he does not believe in the possibility that SBiH conditions its stay in the partner relations with the SDA and HDZ by appointment of its candidate to the position of the Prime Minister.

Economic/social issues

PDHR Hays on economic affairs, privatisation in BiH	Oslobodjenje pg. 6 mentioned on the front page ‘Privatisation need one agency’ – An article on BiH economic issues written by Principal Deputy High Representative Donald Hays. “At the end of last year we brought all of the organizations responsible for privatising BiH companies – ministries, privatisation agencies, international organizations – together in one room. The idea was to find out what has gone wrong with the privatisation programme and seek ways to fix it. We discovered a number of things, some, frankly, outrageous. We discovered, for example, that although the Entity Privatisation Agencies advertise tenders on their respective websites, there is no single website where you can find details of every privatisation opportunity in BiH. You don’t have to have a degree in Business Administration to understand that a consolidated website would be much more effective in attracting international funds for job creation than two competing websites. The fact that until now there has been no consolidated BiH website advertising all of the privatisation opportunities in the country is, not to put too fine a point on it, nuts,” wrote Hays at the beginning of the article.

FBiH Tax Administration Director Arifovic on tax reform in BiH	Dnevni Avaz pg. 9 ‘Arifovic hopes in establishment of the state tax administration’, FENA – With establishment of the BiH Indirect Taxation Administration, which represents a single state-level customs service, the entity tax administrations of Federation BiH and Republika Srpska will continue collecting all direct taxes. Director of FBiH Tax Administration Midhat Arifovic told Fena that he was looking forward to establishment of a single state-level tax administration some day. Arifovic stressed that he does not understand why ITA was given this name considering that it deals only with regular customs affairs. ITA will collect exclusively all customs duties and VAT, once it is introduced in a year or two, said Arifovic.

DL on Hercegovacka Banka – CRA link	As an illustration that foreign officials also could not resist being involved in intrigues and the possibility of material gain, Dnevni List (p 2, “Who controls James Milne – Toby Robinson duet?”, by M. M.) carries that the case of James Milne reflected on the 3rd GSM licence issue and back-stage games in which Toby Robinson participated. Namely, DL says that the second most powerful figure in CRA was James Milne, the then CRA chief of finance, currently one of the closest associates of Toby Robinson in Hercegovacka bank. DL’s source says Milne’s shift was caused by realisation that, with the change at CRA top, there was nothing more he and Robinson could do in the CRA to protect interests of the Bank and of Eronet. Allegedly, Milnes worked for CRA and the Bank simultaneously, he was the one who controlled the tendering procedure and he was the one who proposed that the estimation of the 3rd licence value be paid by Eronet via CRA.

Collection of public revenues in RS	Nezavisne Novine, cover and pg. 2, 'Banjaluka collects more money than 34 municipalities from East Republika Srpska together' – Petar Milanovic, the Vice President of BiH Foreign Commerce Chamber, said that during the course of last year, Banjaluka collected more public revenues that 34 municipalities from east Republika Srpska together. According to information provided by Republika Srpska Tax Administration, Banjaluka collected around KM 577 million of money from taxes, excise and customs, while other municipalities collected around KM 527 million all together.
Employment in Brcko	Glas Srpske, cover page story, 'The will of small gods' – GS is writing about employment problems in Brcko District, referring to the fact that a large number of Brcko population gets 60 days employment through many Co-operatives existing in this District. There is a Law in Brcko stipulating that persons can be employed via Co-operatives for 60 days, when they get paid for the job done, but no benefits are paid to them.

Draft RS Law on the Rights of Veterans, War Invalids and Families of Killed Soldiers	Blic p 13 'Money spoils the law' – Neither veterans nor families of killed soldiers are satisfied with the draft law on the rights of veterans, war invalids and families of killed soldiers of RS. Veterans' Associations claim the draft law diminishes the rights of this population. RS Veterans' Association President Savo Cvjetinovic says: "Unless the law is adopted by April, we are afraid that we will enter the pre-electoral campaign and be used for daily-political purposes".
Mostar airport	Slobodna Dalmacija (page 18, "Mostar airport is looking for foreign partner", by M. Landeka) carries Director of Mostar Airport Marin Raspudic who says that in order to be competitive they will try to find a foreign partner that will invest money in the Mostar airport. He added that for this reason the delegation of the City of Mostar and Mostar Airport should leave for Germany next week in order to meet representatives of German company DORS. SD says that this meeting should result in signing of a letter of intention to make Master Plan for the Mostar airport that the German company should present at the International Investment Conference that is to take place in Mostar next month.

RS Minister Djeric versus media

NN editorial on Djeric	Nezavisne Novine editorial by Dragan Jerinic, 'Zoran Djeric as Lavrenti Beria' – The author is extremely critical of Zoran Djeric, Republika Srpska Interior Minister, who at Friday's session of Republika Srpska National Assembly threatened to disobedient MP's (showing at yellow case file under his arm and saying new criminal reports would be filed). Djeric also said at the Parliament rostrum that NN should not have been writing about "Terpentin" affair the way it has been doing. The author compares Djeric with Lavrenti Beria, former Inetrior minister of former USSR. Jerinic is saying that Djeric proved on Friday that his mental and political make-up functions according to standard constructed by former USSR interior Minister, who was mainly using the principles of threats, tapping and conspiracies. Jerinic also expresses concern over the fact that no public official has reacted on this.

MP's critical of Djeric action	Glas Srpske, pg. 3, 'Evidence in yellow file case' – GS also writes about Friday statement by Zoran Djeric, and also brings some comments of political officials on his statement. Nevenka Trifkovic, PDP MP's, said that it is senseless to make threats in the manner Minister Djeric did. She stressed that the time of "yellow file cases" has passed. Dusan Stojicic, SDS Spokesperson, said Minister Djeric had not reason to act as he did. Milorad Dodik, SNSD President, said: "You can just imagine in what situation we are when Interior Minister comes to Parliament and threatens to MP's."
BiH Press Association critical of Djeric	Nezavisne Novine, pg. 2, 'Zoran Djeric showed narco-mafia to the press' – The Co-ordination of the Journalist's Associations of BiH condemned the statement by Zoran Djeric, saying that: "By his action at Parliament premise, Minister Djeric actually pointed at the press, bidding with their lives in this manner."