

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 26/9/2005

Latest radio news broadcast at 12.00 on 26 September

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (12,00 hrs)	BH Radio 1 (12,00 hrs)	RTRS (12,00 hrs)
Croatia to help BiH in tax issues	RS pensioners protest in BL	Pensioners protest in B. Luka
RS pensioners protesting Monday	FBiH HoR in session tomorrow	SDS in session
Typhoon in China	World news	Humphreys on police reform (NN)

TV news broadcast on 25 September

RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	TV PINK (18,00 hrs)	BHT 1 (19,00 hrs)
Day of public media	RS Police's action in Banja Luka	EUFOR and RS police action in BL
Day of Trebinje parish	Regional News	Closing arguments in Jelavic case
Search action in Banja Luka	Terzic and Cenic on VAT	Canadian sentenced for crime in BiH
SDS Board receive HR's letter	BiH to export fish to EU states	Bouchar extradited to Spain

NTV Hayat (19,00 hrs)	FTV (19,30 hrs)	RTRS (19,30 hrs)
EUFOR and RS police action in BL	Regional News	IMF write offs 55 million \$ debt
Canadian sentenced for crime in BiH	RS Police's action in Banja Luka	Search action in Banja Luka

Ceric re-elected as the Head of IC	Nikolas Ribic sentenced to 3 yrs	Ceko & Divjak on crime
"Circle 99" criticised unique VAT rate	Cenic on police reform in BiH	SDS Board receive HR's letter

Oslobodjenje	Those sanctioned include premiers, delegates, directors...
Dnevni Avaz	Mustafa Ceric to remain Head of BiH Islamic Community in for seven more years
Dnevni List	Cardinal Puljic: Property of Catholic Church being taken away even today
Vecernji List	People from Varazdic buying Hercegovacka bank
Slobodna Dalmacija	Features Croatia related headlines
Glas Srpske	Empty-handed
Nezavisne Novine	RS police and EUFOR searched for Ljuban Ecim
Blic	News versus news; Search at the houses of Ljuban Ecim and "Sherwood" Hotel
Vecernje Novosti	Features Serbia related headlines
Srpski Nacional	Features Serbia related headlines

LATEST NEWS OF TODAY

RS pensioners protest in BL	<p>BH Radio 1 <u>Radmila Grubisa</u> – Several thousands of the pensioners from all around RS are on streets of Banja Luka protesting after the failure of the negotiations with the RS Government. The key demand of the pensioners is for the Government to annul its decision on writing off the debts towards the pensioners made in 2000.</p> <p>RHB, RS Radio also covered the issue.</p>
Croatia to help BiH drafting tax related legislation	<p>RHB – Chairman of BiH Council of Ministers, Adnan Terzic, met with the Croatian Finance Minister, Ivan Suker, in New York . According to a statement by the Croatian delegation, Terzic and Suker agreed that the Croatian Finance Ministry provides BiH help in preparing tax legislation and regulations, foremost about the VAT. Suker should be visiting Sarajevo in October.</p>
Update to renewed trial for “Orao” affair	<p>RS Radio – The beginning of renewed trial against 18 persons charged with illegal export in arms and ammunition to Iraq has been re-scheduled for the third time today, owing to the fact that the officials of the Orao Institute and members of the RS Army General Staff did not appear at the Court. Only 6-member group of custom officers responded to court summons. The trial is to resume on 24 October.</p>
EUFOR still checking traffic near Zvornik	<p>RS Radio – EUFOR members are also today engaged in checking traffic at Karakaj border crossing near Zvornik.</p>

War Crimes/Organised Crime/Legal Proceedings

RS police,
EUFOR failed
to arrest
Ljuban Ecim

RHB, Pink, BHT, Hayat, FTV, RTRS, Oslobodjenje pg 2 'Whom a man from black list phone to', **Dnevni Avaz** pg 3 'House of a close Karadzic's associate raided', **Nezavisne Novine** cover pg splash 'RS police and EUFOR searched for Ljuban Ecim', pg 3 'They searched for Ljuban Ecim' by S.Karic, A.Sekulic, Z.Saric, **Glas Srpske** cover pg splash 'Empty-handed' by E.G.S., **EuroBlic** RSpG 3 'Ecim was not at home' and RSpG 3 'Sherwood Hotel searched', announced on cover 'Search at the houses of Ljuban Ecim and "Sherwood" Hotel' by Mirna Soja – Members of RS police supported by EUFOR carried out 2 search actions in Banja Luka area on Sunday. EUFOR spokesperson Lt. **Chris Evans** stated that the goal of the action was arrest of former chief of state security in Banja Luka **Ljuban Ecim**. Ecim is suspected of involvement in organised crime, corruption and supporting war crime indictees but RS police and EUFOR failed to arrest him. RS Police spokesman **Radovan Pejic** stated that certain documents have been confiscated in the action and added that those documents might help RS police in cooperation with ICTY.

Dnevni List, pg 2, mentioned on front 'Attempt to arrest ICTY fugitives from RS failed', by Marko Karacic – DL learns from an unofficial source that the aim of the operation was also the arrest of **Stojan Zupljanin**, a former official of the RS MoI, who is wanted by the ICTY. **Vecernji List**, pg 3 'Failed attempt to arrest Karadzic's close associate', by Branka Stevandic – reports on RS police/EUFOR operation.

<p>A Serb from Canada sentenced to three years in prison for hostage taking in Pale in 1995</p>	<p>BHT, Hayat, FTV, RTRS – The first trial for keeping the UNPROFOR soldiers as hostages in BiH in 1995 ended in Canada. Nikolas Ribic, Serb from Canada, has been sentenced in Ottawa to three years in prison for participating in keeping the UN military observers as hostages in BiH. He was indicted for kidnapping two UN observers on Pale, who were abducted in order to stop bombing Serb military positions in BiH. Sarajevo dailies also covered the issue.</p>
<p>VL: Genocide was committed against BiH Croats too</p>	<p>Dnevni List, pg 5 ‘Genocide against Croats: Lack of entity is – new genocide’, by <u>Miroslav Vasilj</u> – Carries an ‘analysis’ of suffering of the Croat people in BiH during the war in which the author argues that just like in the case of Bosniaks, a genocide was carried out against the BiH Croats. The author argues that the Croat political leadership and intellectuals should be tackling the issue more, saying that <i>“denying the genocide would be a crime equal to the genocide committed against the Croats during the aggression on BiH”</i>. (NB: the article does not mention anything about the (Croat) entity in BiH despite the headline of the article)</p>

Economic/Social Affairs/Audits

SDP leader
Lagumdzija
on VAT: BiH
to face
economic
crisis

RHB, Hayat, FTV, Oslobodjenje pg 6,
mentioned on cover 'BiH to face economic
crisis next year', **Nezavisne Novine** pg 2
'Adnan Terzic should be removed over false
presentation before UN' by D.Muminovic –
Participants at the regular Circle 99
session in Sarajevo on Sunday disagreed
with allegations that a single VAT rate
was the best solution for BiH. They
believe that VAT will make the year of
2006 much harder than anyone can imagine.
Professor at the Sarajevo University's
School of Economics and SDP BiH leader
Zlatko Lagumdzija criticized the work of
the BiH Council of Ministers, which,
according to him, three years after it was
elected was still not functioning
properly. The unique VAT rate is not the
best solution, but members of BiH CoM are
not capable of even thinking about a
better but more complicated solution,
stated Lagumdzija. *"I believe that all the
illusions should be dispelled during next
year. A man who came to this country four
years ago (referring to **HR Ashdown**) said
that it is not important who carries out
the reforms, it is important that reforms
are carried out. Well, nationalist parties
and reforms – it is just a wrong concept",
concluded Lagumdzija.*

<p>EC's Maroevic: A single rate most efficient way to introduce way</p>	<p>BHT, Oslobodjenje pg 6 'A single rate most efficient', Nezavisne Novine pg 2 'A single VAT rate will decrease tax manipulation' by <u>Agencies</u> – Commenting on the initiative for changing the Law on VAT, Spokesperson of the European Commission Delegation to BiH Frane Maroevic said that EC supports a single VAT rate as the most efficient way to introduce VAT. It would make tax manipulations through the system with more tax rates impossible.</p>
<p>SDU's Tokic requests for basic consumer's goods (food), publishing sector to be exempted from VAT</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg 6 'VAT will cause social unrest' by <u>P.K.</u> – Sejfudin Tokic, President of the SDU of BiH, Sunday stated that the introduction of the VAT will result in drastic increase of prices of goods, which will cause the biggest blow on the social status of hundreds of thousand citizens of BiH.</p> <p>Oslobodjenje pg 6 'Zero rate for publishing sector' also carried Tokic's statement. Dnevni Avaz pg 5 'Basic consumer goods should be exempted from VAT', mentioned on cover 'EU is against VAT on information' carries interview with Tokic, in which he presented his views on VAT.</p>

<p>VL: Update to sale of Hercegovacka Bank</p>	<p>Vecernji List, front pg splash ‘People from Varazdic buying Hercegovacka bank’, and pg 3 ‘People from Varazdin: We are in closing stage of buying Hercegovacka bank’, by <u>Zoran Kresic</u> – The CEO of ‘FIMA’ (Croatian brokerage firm from Varazdin), Milan Horvat, confirmed for VL that a delegation of the firm recently talked to the Provisional Administrator for ‘Hercegovacka bank’ HB), Toby Robinson, in Sarajevo about signing a sales contract, the aim of which is a takeover of the ‘HB’ by ‘FIMA’. Horvat explains that ‘FIMA’ now plans to make an in-depth analysis of the bank and its subsidiaries before taking a decision, which will take at least 2-3 months.</p>
<p>PDHR Butler to visit B. Luka and meet RS Chief Auditor Ceko: Ceko is subject to pressures</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg 4 ‘ERS suit against Bosko Ceko is unacceptable’ by <u>M.Kusmuk</u> – Daily reports referring to a source close to international diplomatic circles that OHR is of the view that the lawsuit ERS (RS Elektroprivreda) filed against Bosko Ceko, RS Chief Auditor, is the least to say unacceptable. This source also said that owing to this exact reason, Lawrence Butler, SDHR, will Tuesday visit Banja Luka to hold urgent consultations with the RS Chief Auditor, to whom he will offer his support and the support of the IC. NN source notes that <i>“Ceko has been subject to intensive political and public pressure, which was obviously organised by individuals involved in corruption at RS public companies.”</i></p>

Political Developments/Reforms

Oslobodjenje publishes list of 102 officials penalized by Election Commission for illegal use of property

Oslobodjenje cover splash, pgs 4-5 'Prime Minister, delegates, directors penalized' by A. Avdic – Daily publishes a list of 102 people penalized by the BiH Temporary Election Commission in 2000 for illegal use of property. In line with the Election Law, they were also banned from performing any duties in executive and legal authorities, and in their parties. Daily is in possession of the original list of those penalized and claims that there are still a number of those still performing public functions such as Prime Ministers of Zenica Doboje and Podrinje Cantons, **Nedžad Polić** and **Salko Obhodžić** respectively, a delegate in FBiH House of Peoples **Enes Duvnjaković**, **Stjepan Ključić** and a number of other delegates in Cantonal Assemblies, FBiH and RS Municipal Councils and companies.

SDS' Botic says
HR measures
might prevent
party from
participating
in next
elections; SDS
Presidency to
hold session
today

RHB, FTV, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz pg 3 'Blocking of accounts creates conditions for banning SDS from participating in elections', **Vecernji List**, pg 3 'SDS will not be able to participate in elections', not signed – Deputy SDS Chair **Mladen Botic** confirmed that the High Representative's decision to ban SDS from any kind of financial transactions had been submitted to the SDS Main Board, and municipal/city SDS' boards. He added that this decision was not abolishing SDS but it could easily prevent the party from taking part in the next elections since SDS cannot pay its financial obligations for participation in the election process.

Nezavisne Novine pg 5, announced on cover 'SDS possibly to leave authority' by V. Popovic – **Dragan Cavic**, SDS President, has scheduled session of the SDS Presidency for today (Monday), noting that the party has been exposed to "all sorts of pressures" and that the party would discuss possible forms of political fight and "defend itself with all means possible from the international community".

Mladen Botic, SDS Vice President, stated: "The situation is much harder than it seems from the surface and all possibilities are open, including the one that SDS may leave authority. We must discuss whether it is possible to survive in this manner or we will reach for more drastic measures, which are – in my view, very likely." He stressed that latest HR's decision related to SDS do not create pre-requisites for the abolishment of the party, but does create pre-requisites for banning the party from participating at the next elections. **Momcilo Novakovic**, member of the SDS Presidency, stated that following latest HR's decision, "it can be expected that pressures will be exerted against RS Elektroprivreda and RS Telekom to cut off phone and electricity supplies to SDS over debts", since latest HR's decision has disabled payment of any sort of money transaction.

EuroBlic RSpg 2 'They expect power cut' by SRNA – carries statements of Novakovic and Botic

Glas Srpske pg 5 'Silence and dark' – carries statement of Novakovic

Vecernje Novosti pg 2 'Concessions in Governments' proposal?' by Sl. Pesevic – Apart from carrying Botic's statement, daily questions whether the RS citizens will be the last to find out that police reform in BiH has already been agreed within the narrow circle of political officials in BiH.

Kunic on police reform	<p>Glas Srpske pg 5 'A struggle for survival' by <u>Sv.Pecic</u> – Petar Kunic, President of the Democratic Forum and delegate at the BiH HoR, has stated in Derventa that strong pressures against RS over police reform have forced us to deal with the issue of its survival instead of focusing on economic development. He stated it would be very hard to preserve RS in the manner done at the moment., stressing: <i>"If we preserve police, for which we should all pledge, we will be able to preserve RS."</i></p>
Vecernje Novosti on HR's measures	<p>Vecernje Novosti pg 6 'He still does not use execution by a firing squad', announced on cover 'About to execute them before firing squad' by <u>Radoje Andric</u> – Writing about HR's, Paddy Ashdown, measures, the author notes that the only measure HR has not reached for (regarding removal of 59 officials in RS last year) is an execution by a firing squad, moving onto extracts from Venice Commission's Report that are actually not supportive of HR's measures. It carries statement of Radomir Lukic, Dean at East Sarajevo Law Faculty, reiterates he will not act upon HR's decision on his removal, stressing: <i>"Besides abusing rights entrusted to him... Ashdown is demanding from RS to violate Law and undermine rights of Faculties."</i></p>

<p>Oslobodjenje: Only removals produce results</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pgs 4-5 'Too mild OHR's punishments did not stop obstructions' by <u>A. Omeragic</u> – Daily comments that the HR Paddy Ashdown has let down public expectations last week when instead of sanctions he only gave warning to the SDS and RS for obstructing the police reform. Examining the influence of different sorts of pressures, author notes that the IC believes that the RS, and BiH along with it, will be punished if it stays outside of the Europe. <i>"The practice demonstrates that this sort of the pressure on BiH officials, especially SDS gives no results,"</i> comments the author. She further examines the removals, especially in 2003 when a main reason was an illegal use of property. Next were removals of officials related to Radovan Karadzic, and than those obstructing deference reform. On the latter, in 2004 the HR removed Mirko Sarovic from a position in the BiH Presidency. Sarovic comments that since his removal defence reform has marked a progress, but underlines the question is what is to happen when IC leaves and there is no one to push and threat for solutions. Daily comments that the similar situation is with police reform today, and Sarovic comments that he believes the sanctions will not change much. On the other hand, daily believes that "mild decisions" would not help, giving an example of unsuccessful fines against HDZ for obstructions in education. <i>"Based on all this, it seems that fines did not give results. Neither did warnings. It seems politicians can only be influenced by what they fear the most – losing chair and privileges,"</i> concludes the article.</p>
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<p>Oslobodjenje op-ed concludes only hope in police reform are Americans</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje 'Anti-climax' op-ed by <u>Ibrahim Prohic</u> – <i>"Paddy Ashdown is on his knees. The collapse of negotiations on police reform confirms the mistakes of the HR's strategy,"</i> comments the author noting that HR is now making the mistakes such as lack of consistency, applies double standards, etc. <i>"He warns RS authorities it is not '92, but he acts as it is. The worst, he calls on Belgrade to active its patronage and make pressure on RS leadership. It derogates BiH's autonomy and confirms its dependency on outside factions, and protects RS authorities from responsibility... It seems that even Ashdown is aware of is lack of power,"</i> says the author commenting the press conference held last week to warn RS authorities to actions to follow in case of continuous obstruction of police reform. The only hopes, reckons the author, is the interest of the Americans who want to make sure that Dayton Peace Agreement is marked as successful at its 10th anniversary.</p>
<p>VL interview: British ambassador Rycroft on police reform</p>	<p>Vecernji List, pg 4 'Brussels threatening authorities in Banja Luka over police', mentioned on front 'Brussels threatening with sanctions against RS', by <u>Dejan Jazvic</u> – In an interview for VL, the UK Ambassador to BiH, Matthew Rycroft, whilst speaking about the police reform in BiH, notes that Europe will not give up its principles and requests. Asked as to what measures the UK, as the country presiding the EU at the moment, proposes in order to solve the situation, whether to punish political leaders or parties in RS or to apply some sort of isolation, Ambassador Rycroft says: <i>"The solution to the situation is meeting of all conditions set by the EC in order to start with the SAA talks. As we know, the police reform is the only obstacle standing in the path. Reaching an agreement on police reform, abiding by the all three EC's principles, is the solution"</i>. Dnevni List, pg 7 'Encouragement to British investors in BiH', <u>not signed</u> – Ambassador Rycroft visited Gorazde (article does not say when) where he was informed about political and economic situation in the canton. On isolation measures against the RS, he said: <i>"(...) Some of them have already started, and they will continue unless in case the RS changes its position regarding the police reform"</i>.</p>

<p>EC's Humphreys: Agreement on police reform to be reached in few weeks</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg 8, announced on cover 'Agreement on police reform in few weeks' by <u>N.Krsman</u> – In an interview to daily, Michael Humphreys, Head of EC delegation to BiH, expresses expectation that agreement on police reform in BiH will be reached in few weeks, claiming that EU will not give up on its demands based on three EC principles for police reform. On this he notes: <i>"These three principles have been devised to establish a police force once and for all – force that will be professional, freed of political interference and force to respect the needs of population."</i> He expresses expectation that if agreement on police reform is reached in coming weeks, BiH would be able to launch talks on SAA at the beginning of next year. He stresses everything now rests in the hands of politicians from RS, who should either reach decision or be prepare to face with sanctions.</p>
<p>Filipovic (HDZ): Croat MPs will vote against PBS law</p>	<p>Dnevni List, pg 4 'Croat will appeal to Strasbourg court', by <u>Anja Vrebac</u> – According to an MP in BiH House of Peoples, Ilija Filipovic (HDZ), the Croat MPs in the BiH HoP will vote against the proposed Law on PBS, as instructed by the HDZ's Main Board and National Council. Filipovic announces other measures too: <i>"After the law gets published in the Official gazette, it will be subjected to assessment regarding its constitutionality. If we are happy with declaration of the Constitutional Court, our job is finished, otherwise the next instance is the European Court for Human Rights"</i>.</p>
<p>SD on PBS law: Constitutional Court 's judges were wrong</p>	<p>Slobodna Dalmacija, pg 13 'Stop Constitutional Court's judges', by <u>Petar Milos</u>– The author argues that the BiH Constitutional Court's judges were wrong in deciding that the Law on PBS is not endangering the Croats' vital national interests. <u>Milos</u> argues that the judges should know that BiH is also a multi-ethnic country, made of three constituent peoples, in which the Croats want what the other two peoples have in the area of public information. On top of it, <u>Milos</u> claims majority of Croats and their officials are supporting the idea of having a Croat channel.</p>

<p>Comments on upcoming voting on PBS Law in NN: It is possible to adopt the Law, but it will be hard to implement it</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine pg 4 'It is possible to adopt the Law, but it will be hard to implement it' by <u>R.Cengic</u> – Bosko Siljegovic, Serb delegate at the BiH HoP, claims that the Law on PSB will be adopted, in spite of opposition of HDZ delegates, noting that the fact one people opposes to this points out that it will be hard to implement the Law. He adds: <i>"There were examples so far to see Laws passed hastily and against the will of one people, but problems come to the surface later on during implementation of such Laws."</i> Ante Spajic, Head of Croat Caucus at BiH HoP, says that BiH Constitutional Court initially decided to reject the Law on PBS, but later on altered decision under "somebody's pressure". Tomislav Limov, SDP delegate, expresses his opposition to the Amendment to Law on PBS, refusing to say whether he would vote for adoption of the Law or not.</p>
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Miscellaneous

<p>Mustafa Ceric re- elected Head of BiH Islamic Community</p>	<p>RHB, Pink, BHT, Hayat, FTV, RTRS, Dnevni Avaz cover page, pg 2 'Mustafa Ceric to remain Head of BiH Islamic Community in for seven more years', Oslobodjenje pg 3, mentioned on cover 'Mustafa Ceric for seven more years', Dnevni List, pg 3, mentioned on front 'Mustafa Ceric again leading Islamic community', by <u>Mensud Zorlak</u>, Vecernji List, pg 2, mentioned on front 'Mustafa Ceric will be reis in next seven years', by <u>Eldina Medunjanin</u>, Slobodna Dalmacija, back pg 'Ceric again leading Islamic community in BiH', by <u>H – Mustafa effendi Ceric</u> has been re-elected as the Reisu-l-ulema, the Head of the Islamic Community in BiH for the next 7-year term. A total of 180 out of 300 members of the electing body voted for Mustafa Ceric, while the other main candidate dr. Enes Karic got 119 votes. Third candidate Hasan effendi Makic got not a single vote. After he was re-appointed, Mustafa Ceric announced that he will <i>"open all the questions in Islamic Community, from A to Z... All will have to take the responsibility for their actions and for their statements that were untrue"</i>.</p>
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Cardinal
Puljic on
position of
Catholic
Church and
Croats in
BiH

Dnevni List, front pg splash and pgs 8-9
'Cardinal Puljic: Property of Catholic
Church being taken away even today', by
Ivica Glibusic – In an interview for DL,
the Archbishop of Vrhbosnia, Cardinal
Vinko Puljic, complains that the Catholic
Church in BiH is not only having problems
in regaining possession of its property,
it is also having problems to hold on to
what it owns. (**NB:** he is mostly referring
to issue of nationalized property). Asked
to assess the position of the Croats –
Catholics in BiH, Cardinal Puljic argues
that they are not equal in political and
any other sense, complaining that the
Croats cannot achieve their identity
through the schooling system, language
equality and media presence. In that
context, he notes that international
representatives are applying double
standards by acknowledging the strong and
acting aggressively against the weak.