

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 27/3/2006

Latest radio news broadcast at 12.00 on March 27, 2006

| RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (12,00 hrs) | BH Radio 1 (12,00 hrs) | RTRS (12,00 hrs) |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| HVIDRA protest in Travnik | BiH HoP passed budget | BiH HOP on BH Election Law |
| HNC teachers' strike frozen | FBiH HoR approved temp. allocation | RS Min. Tomic on veterans |
| Strike of Agrokomerc employees | HVIDRA protests in Mostar | BiH lawsuit v SCG continues today |

TV news broadcast on March 26, 2006

| RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs) | TV PINK (18,00 hrs) | BHT 1 (19,00 hrs) |
|--|---|---|
| Strike of HNC elementary schools | HR on constitutional changes | Strike in HNC schools stooped |
| Pan European Union conference | 14 th anniversary of Sijekovac tragedy | Landslides in Tuzla |
| HR on constitutional changes | Report on SIPA work | HR on OHR and BiH Constitution |
| Tihic on constitutional changes | Conference on trafficking in BiH | 14 th anniv. of Sijekovac massacre |

| NTV Hayat (19,00 hrs) | FTV (19,30 hrs) | RTRS (19,30 hrs) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Adoption of constitutional changes | Mine in Kakanj to be closed | HR on constitutional changes |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| BIH HoP session on Monday | Poem on "Old Pit" in Kakanj | 14 th anniversary of Sijekovac tragedy |
| HR at Circle 99 discussion | HNC ended strike | Vrbas river flooding a house away |
| Feature on visa regime for BIH | HVIDRA to organise protest | Conf. on public services reform |

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Oslobodjenje | Paravac persecuting Bosniaks again (marking of Day of Doboj Municipality without Bosniak representatives) |
| Dnevni Avaz | I would also talk to Pope about constitutional changes [Tihic statement] |
| Dnevni List | HDZ has started to play its last game (Deputy Speaker of FBiH HoR Merdzo against constitutional changes agreement) |
| Vecernji List | Suspicious fire (Fire in a Mostar warehouse, unofficial information say documentation of former Mostar Bosniak Municipalities and confiscated items of Mostar Tax Administration were placed there) |
| Slobodna Dalmacija | Features Croatia related headline |
| Nezavisne Novine | BiH gets a lot [HR at the session of "Krug 99" on const. changes] |
| Glas Srpske | Bistrocaj became overgrown with weeds [citizens of Bistrica near Trnovo claim F BiH authorities do not care about reconstruction of Serb houses in Trnovo municipality] |
| EuroBlic | Bankers think of BiH as of very risky market |
| Vecernje novosti | Features Serbian related titles |

| |
|-----------------------------|
| LATEST NEWS OF TODAY |
|-----------------------------|

| | |
|--|---|
| HDZ's Covic reiterates: Majority will support const. changes | RHB – HDZ President Dragan Covic stated that he was certain that in spite of the campaign run by those who are against the constitutional changes, the changes would get the support of majority in the BiH Parliament. |
| IFIMES opinion poll: 59,8% of citizens do not support const. changes | RHB – According to the IFIMES' (International Institute for Balkans and Middle East Studies) public opinion poll, 59,8% of BiH citizens do not support the constitutional changes agreement. Also, 29,3 % of citizens support the changes, while others do not have a stand on this issue. |
| BiH HoP passes harmonized text of BiH budget for 2006 | BH Radio 1 – <u>By Mustafa Karahmet</u> – During its session, BiH House of Peoples has passed the harmonized text of budget 2006, by which conditions for its publishing and implementation have been created. BiH HoP has also passed amendments to the Law on Public Procurement, which is prolonging the deadline for start of the work of Appeals Office by end of this month. BiH HoP MPs should also declare themselves on amendments to the BiH Election Law in first reading, since BiH House of Representatives has already passed these amendments last week in both readings. |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>FBiH HoP gives approval to FBiH Govt to decide on temporary allocation of public revenues</p> | <p>BH Radio 1 – <u>By Maida Alic</u> – FBiH House of Representatives has given approval to FBiH Government to pass decision on temporary allocation of revenues from the single account. FBiH House of Peoples has given the same approval and the decision would be in force until the Law on Allocation of Public Revenues is passed. FBiH Constitutional Court currently processes this Law, at demand of Croat Caucus in FBiH HoP, which invoked vital national interest. FBiH PM Ahmet Hadzipasic said: <i>“Significance of this move is that finally the money which is on the account would get to the budget users, that we would start financing the users, that we are getting to the phase of more quality work; however the problem is not solved until the Law is passed. We would try to pass it as soon as possible”.</i></p> |
| <p>Croat war veterans protest because of reduction of pensions, failure to ratify agreement with Croatia</p> | <p>RHB – The protest of HVIDRA (Croat war veterans) is taking place today (Monday) in front of the Central Bosnia Canton Government in Travnik due to reduction of their pensions envisaged by a new FBiH law. They are also dissatisfied with the fact that the inter-state agreement on rights of HVO victims and members of their families between BiH and Croatia has not been ratified. RHB says that similar protests have been organized in some other places in BiH. BH Radio – reports from HVIDRA protests in Mostar.</p> |

Constitutional Changes

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>HR CSS: Proposed constitutional changes are necessary for strengthening of state institutions</p> | <p>PINK – High Representative Christian Schwarz-Schilling once again welcomed the decision of BiH Presidency to send the amendments to BiH Constitution to parliamentary procedure. Schwarz-Schilling stated that the proposed changes were necessary for strengthening of state institutions and that they needed to be adopted. He stresses that if the amendments do not become effective on time before the October elections, their full implementation would have to wait until 2010, and this would slow down BiH process of integration with the EU. <i>“I know that there were pretty sharp critics against the agreement on constitutional changes... but we must see what is possible at this moment and what can be done”</i>, said Schwarz-Schilling. He stressed that the changes must be made step by step, also announcing that the OHR is going to be closed by spring 2007. By then, the duties of HR will be taken over by EU Special Representative. Unlike HR, EUSR won't have the Bonn powers. RHB, RTRS – HR said that this reform represents the first step towards a functional state, stressing that it is now time for a true democratic process to happen in the parliament and for parliament members to decide on amendments, which would strengthen the Council of Ministers and Parliament Assembly, and to simplify the work of Presidency. (Nezavisne Novine cover pg splash and pg 3 'BiH gets a lot' by <u>D. Muminovic</u> Inset 'Schwarz-Schilling welcomed the decision of the Presidency', EuroBlic pg RS2 'Race against time' by <u>Nedeljka Breberina and Srna</u>, Oslobodjenje pg 2 'It is time for democracy in Parliament', Dnevni List pg 4 'BiH Presidency's decision welcomed' <u>not signed</u>)</p> |
|--|---|

Intellectuals stress the need for OHR for at least next 2 years; HR CSS: 2006 is key year for BiH

BHT – Commenting the statement of the HR, **Christian Schwarz-Schilling**, that OHR should be closed by spring in 2007, Association of independent intellectuals ‘Circle 99’ pointed out the need for OHR to stay in BiH for at least next two years by saying that *“BIH institutions do not see the interest of the state but the interest of all three constituent peoples, political parties and political lobbies respectively”*. **Jakob Finci**, member of “Circle 99”, described BiH as a little baby that still needs the guidance of OHR *“before it starts the elementary school i.e. enters the EU”*. Head of ‘Circle 99’ **Hidajet Repovac** noted that *“the adoption of new constitution as basis of BIH transformation toward EU”* is expected. HR stressed that it was time when BiH citizens should decide upon their future emphasizing the important role of the BiH intellectuals. *“The improvement of civil society is of great importance for development of BiH, where the leading role belongs to the intellectuals”* stated Schwarz-Schilling. **Hayat** – HR stressed that 2006 is a key year for BIH especially due to October elections, which should strengthen the voice of BIH people rather than being cheap political game of its politicians. As far as constitutional changes are concerned HR stated that he is not completely satisfied, however he added that the changes were made in areas where that was possible, reminding that time is running out for adoption of constitutional changes. **FTV** – HR stressed: *“And thus intellectuals and their influence on media create the atmosphere for organising the elections. What is the level of discussions is the question for politicians. All of them should sit down together and start the dialogue in order to see what they have been really saying. The transparency as a part of democracy must be included in the forthcoming elections.”* (also reported by also reported by **Nezavisne Novine** cover pg splash and pg 3 ‘BiH gets a lot’ by **D. Muminovic**, **Glas Srpske** pg 3 ‘Crucial year’ by **N. Z.**, **Dnevni List** pg 2 ‘Parliamentarians bear huge responsibility’ by **E. Mackic**)

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Chair of BiH Presidency Tihic: Constitutional changes are much better than current situation, especially in area of state authorities</p> | <p>Dnevni Avaz cover splash and pg 5 'I would also talk to Pope about constitutional changes' by <u>Admir Malagic</u>– In interview for DA, Chairman of BiH Presidency Sulejman Tihic says he believes that amendments to BiH Constitution would get the support of MPs in BiH Parliament "<i>regardless to certain problems and criticism</i>". Tihic denied all assessments that these changes are leading toward dysfunctional (state) and dissolution of the state, stressing that these changes are "<i>the dam to any attempts that could endanger territorial integrity and sovereignty of BiH</i>". Tihic emphasized that these changes are much better than the current situation, adding that in his opinion changes that refer to authorities of the state are the largest success in all this, since defense and security have been transferred onto state level. Tihic stressed that neither Croats nor any other people in BiH has lost anything by these changes, adding that he is soon traveling to Italy to discuss constitutional changes and European path of BiH. Tihic says that he plans to meet Italian President Carlo Azeglio Chiampi as well as Pope Benedict XVI, whom he would inform about situation in BiH. Inset 'It doesn't mean that Neimarlija is against'- Asked about how SDA MPs in BiH Parliament would vote on constitutional changes, Tihic says that all SDA MPs in BiH HoP and HoR have stated that they would vote in favor of changes, while when it comes to MP [Hilmo Neimarlija], who said that he still hasn't decided how he would vote, Tihic says this doesn't mean that he would vote against.</p> |
|--|--|

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>HDZ leader Covic: future number of entities would be discussed in autumn</p> | <p>Dnevni Avaz pg 5 'We would discuss entities in autumn' by <u>F.Vele</u>– HDZ leader Dragan Covic said for DA that the agreement reached in first phase of talks on constitutional changes is fully acceptable for all citizens, especially for BiH Croats. <i>"At the state level, Croats will absolutely be able to equally participate in passing of all relevant decisions"</i> said Covic, adding that he doesn't agree that these changes are <i>"cementing the current situation in BiH"</i>. Covic adds that entities were mentioned very carefully during the talks <i>"so that in next step of the constitutional changes the conditions would be created for us to talk about three or more entities or federal units"</i> said Covic, adding that this is the reality of middle organization of the authority in BiH, and it would be discussed in autumn how many would be established in the future.</p> |
| <p>Deputy Speaker of FBiH HoR and former HDZ official Merdzo against const. changes</p> | <p>Dnevni List cover pg splash and pg 3 'HDZ has started to play its last game' by <u>Dn. L.</u> – Commenting the constitutional changes agreement, Deputy Speaker of the FBiH HoR and former senior HDZ official (expelled by decision of current HDZ Presidency) Josip Merdzo stated that HDZ has started to play its last game. Merdzo notes: <i>"HDZ President Dragan Covic had a full, legitimate right to refuse offered changes and insist on better solutions when Croats are in question. Nothing could have been imposed to him."</i> Merdzo concluded that this agreement represents a wasted chance for creating pre-requisites for real equality of all BiH citizens.</p> |
| <p>SBiH reiterates it is against const. changes</p> | <p>Oslobodjenje pg 5 'Our partners are citizens' <u>not signed</u>– Leader of SBiH Safet Halilovic criticized parties that participated in talks on constitutional changes, saying that they are trying to <i>"find ideal of political life in dividing of interest spheres between three monopolistic, mono-ethnical parties"</i>. Halilovic added that one model of constitutional changes, based on principles of Dayton, is being imposed and SBiH is warning that BiH citizens are excluded from this whole process and because of that SBiH is inviting all patriotic citizens and political and social organizations to prevent plans, whose goal is to create base of dissolution of BiH.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Patriotic Block: agreed changes are discriminatory and in favour of separatist forces in RS</p> | <p>Oslobodjenje pg 4 'Constitutional changes are leading toward dissolution' <u>by Fena</u>– Representatives of Patriotic Block [made of BOSS, SDU, SBiH] held a public debate in Brcko where they talked about the reached agreement on constitutional changes, calling them <i>"monstrous, discriminatory and at the same time source of political, economic and every other destabilisation in BiH"</i>. It was also stated that these changes are going in favour of political forces in RS <i>"which lean toward its separation and annexing to Serbia"</i>. (also in Dnevni List pg 5 'Constitutional changes criticised' <u>not signed</u>)</p> |
| <p>Hayat: Adoption of constitutional amendments will depend on independent deputies</p> | <p>Hayat by <u>Elma Kazagic</u> – According to current statements of MPs in BiH Parliament, adoption of constitutional amendments will depend on independent MPs. Reporter says that in order for these changes to be adopted, 28 MPs in BiH House of Representatives must vote for them. So far, 6 SBiH MPs stated that they would not vote for the changes as well as 5 Croat MPs who dissolved the HDZ-DC caucus. Tihomir Gligoric from SP stated that the stance towards constitutional changes would be made at the session of SP Main Board. Sead Avdic, an independent MP from Tuzla, stated that he would not vote for constitutional amendments and his stance is shared by independent MP Muhamed Moranjkić from Srebrenik. Reporter comments that PDP deputy Petar Kunic might vote against the amendments since he feels that leaders of 3 biggest political parties from RS accepted radical changes that will change RS political-legal status. Mirko Blagojevic, an MP from RS also stated that he would vote against the amendments.</p> |
| <p>GS: Adoption of constitutional amendments in BH HoR rests with Croat MPs</p> | <p>Glas Srpske pg 5 'Croats will decide' by <u>D.Momic</u> – With regard to issue of constitutional changes, daily speculates on possible (non) adoption of the amendments to the BiH Constitution. Daily notes that the adoption of amendments lays in the hands of Croat MPs, namely Martin Raguz, Filip Andric, Vinko Zoric, Ruza Sopta and Ivo Lozancic, who announced they would not vote for amendments.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>SRS' Mihajlica: SDS and SNSD acceptance of amendments presents betrayal</p> | <p>Oslobodjenje pg 4 'Parties' signatures- betrayal' by Fena– Leader of SRS (Serb Radical Party) Milanko Mihajlica stated in Kotor Varos that constitutional changes are an issue of crucial importance for the RS, stressing that decision of SDS and SNSD to accept amendments presents betrayal. Mihajlica reminded that negotiators did not ask "<i>that it is written in state constitution that federal units have right to self-determination to separation</i>". Nezavisne Novine pg 4 'Introduction of bankruptcy of RS' by Srna, Glas Srpske pg 5 'Bankruptcy has commenced' by D. Mo. – SRS on Sunday assessed that the changes contain surrendering of police, agriculture, education, judiciary, tax system and other competences of RS and it represents an attempt of putting the RS in bankruptcy, as well as attempts of political elite to hold positions of bankruptcy managers in the process. (also reported by Nezavisne Novine pg 4 'Amendments on the detriment of people' by Srna, EuroBlic pg RS2 'Race against time' by Nedeljka Breberina and Srna Inset 'Radicals: unacceptable constitutional changes', Glas Srpske pg 5 'They violated promises' by S. S., Dnevni List pg 6 'Introducing of bankruptcy of RS' <u>not signed</u>)</p> |
|--|---|

Other Political Developments/Reforms

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Next session of Steering Board of the Police Reform Directorate in Banja Luka next week</p> | <p>RTRS <u>Branka Kusmuk</u> – Chair of BiH Council of Ministers Adnan Terzic announced that the next session of Steering Board of the Police Reform Directorate was going to be held in Banja Luka next week. He said that the Steering Board was going to discuss the objections filed by RS Prime Minister Milorad Dodik. Namely, RS Government demands that the Directorate should make all decisions based on method of consensus and not by method of majority vote. Also, the RS Government demands that the Directorate should report to BiH CoM and entity Governments and not just to BiH CoM. Dodik stated that RS Government's demands are not meant to obstruct the work of Directorate, but to harmonise it with the Agreement on Police Restructuring and assure equal positions for all sides. Terzic claims that all guidelines for work of Directorate are in accordance with the Agreement. He stressed that the decisions of BiH CoM that have already been adopted can't be changed now.</p> |
|--|--|

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>HR CSS: Dodik to be blamed if police reform fails</p> | <p>Dnevni Avaz pg 2, mentioned on cover 'I warned Dodik that he could be blamed for fail of police reform' by <u>T.Lazovic</u> – Commenting police reform at the session of Association of Independent intellectuals 'Circle 99', High Representative Christian Schwarz-Schilling said: <i>"I had serious talks with RS Prime Minister Milorad Dodik, because there were some warnings that he is not willing to continue reforms implementation. I stressed that he will be blamed and that he has to take responsibility if that condition is not fulfilled."</i> Schwarz-Schilling added that Dodik assured him his intention was not to block police reform. Speaking about BiH negotiations with EU on Stabilisation and Association Agreement [SAA], HR said that representatives of European Commission are impressed with readiness of BiH team, which was high above their expectations.</p> |
|--|---|

FBiH pensioners warn there is no money to take care of surplus police officers

Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Problem of surplus of police officers can not be solved over backs of pensioners' by A.Dedajic— Chair of FBiH Pensioners' Association **Sefkija Elezovic** said that Association is embittered with the announcement that over 3.000 police officers, who would be left without jobs after police reform has been implemented, would gain right to early pensions. Elezovic explains the FBiH Pension Fund doesn't have finances for these pensions, stressing that they should be provided by the FBiH Government, even though [as Elezovic puts it] they (Government) are aware that they won't. FBiH Finance Minister **Dragan Vrankic** deems that FBiH Pension Fund is obliged to provide finances, regardless to the way these people are retired. *"It is true that there is no means in the budget for payment of early pensions, but parliamentarians voted for that,"* said Vrankic. Inset "Vignjevic supports Association and the Fund"- FBiH Labour and Social Policy Minister **Radovan Vignjevic** supports the stance of the Association, stressing that this would bring the Fund into critical position.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>DL: New Croat party to be formed this week</p> | <p>Dnevni List pg 5, mentioned on cover 'Ljubic announces establishment of party' by <u>Z. Jukic</u> – Expelled member of HDZ, Bozo Ljubic, and his supporters will officially announce establishment of their party during this week.</p> <p>DL says that dismantling of the HDZ-CD-HNZ Caucus and establishment of a new Caucus that would be called the Croat Caucus was the first sign that establishment of a new party would take place soon. DL also says that the direct cause for establishment of the new party is disagreement of HDZ representatives with the offered package of constitutional changes. DL sources reveal that the final decision on establishment of the party was passed after Ljubic's meeting with HDZ Croatia President Ivo Sanader, which took place last weekend.</p> <p>Slobodna Dalmacija pg 2 'New Croat party in BiH perhaps to be established as early as next week' by <u>H</u> also announces establishment of new party.</p> |
| <p>Day of Municipality of Doboj marked without Bosniak representatives</p> | <p>Oslobodjenje cover splash 'Paravac persecuting Bosniaks again', pg 3 'Paravac wants to celebrate "Serb Doboj" forever' by <u>M.Begic</u>– Day of Doboj Municipality was marked on March 26, without presence of Bosniak representatives of the municipality. Author noted that ceremonial session of Municipality Council had started with national anthem of the RS and minute of silence for fallen soldiers of RS Army. Session was attended by (Serb) member of BiH Presidency Borislav Paravac, who said that this day reminds of difficult times: <i>"When we did not respect each other enough in BiH and when happened what was happening to us"</i>. Author notes that Paravac wished for this day to be celebrated forever, stressing that this day was established as a holiday in 1992, when Doboj Municipality was declared as Serb.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>GS critical of SDA's policy aimed at destroying RS legality</p> | <p>Glas Srpske pg 5 'They are running Alija's war' by <u>Z.Markovic</u> – Writing about last week's RS NA session (which discussed BiH lawsuit against SiCG and adopted Declaration concluding that lawsuit is a political act aimed at destroying legality of RS), GS notes that as much as political representatives of three peoples in BiH have shown their unity on some issues, the irreconcilable consequences are evident to the same extent on other issues, i.e. stances of Serb and Bosniak representatives are as different as chalk and cheese. Daily further makes a reference to statement Sadik Ahmetovic, SDA delegate gave, telling Serb delegates "<i>it is never too late for you to become Muslims</i>". Borislav Bojic, SDS delegate, commented by saying that followers of Alija Izetbegovic have been engaged in a constant "silent war against Republika Srpska" ever since Dayton Agreement was signed.</p> |
|--|---|

BIH HoP to
discuss Law on
Elections on
Monday

Hayat – At the session scheduled for Monday, BIH House of Peoples will discuss the amendments on the BIH electoral law, adopted by the BIH House of Representatives. Changes to the law introduce passive registration of voters in BIH. One of objections to the changes is related to voting of displaced persons from RS who had their CIPS ID taken in FBIH. Chair of Srebrenica municipality assembly **Sadik Ahmetovic** stated that changes to the law mean that people who voted in 1991 for municipalities they were deported from are now passively transferred to municipalities where they had their ID taken. On the other hand **Vedran Hadzovic** from BIH Election Commission stated that the changes to the law were made under assumption that displaced persons have taken temporary CIPS IDs. He adds that displaced persons will be asked whether they will vote for municipality where they lived in 1991 or their current municipality. Reporter comments that the biggest problem are people who failed to register as displaced persons in the set deadline and have taken their CIPS IDs in FBIH. According to information of BIH Election Commission, there are 20 000 of these persons. These persons will have the option of questionnaire when voting so they can state for which municipality they want to vote. Hadzovic says that persons who want to vote for 1991 municipality will have to have an ID from that municipality.**RHB** – BIH HoP deputies are also scheduled to discuss amendments to Law on BIH ombudsman and amendments to the Law on BIH public procurements. (also reported by **Nezavisne Novine** pg 2 'Introduction of passive registration of voters' by Srna, **EuroBlic** pg RS2 'Election Law is changing' not signed

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Election Comm. member Sehic: Displaced persons have right to choose where would vote</p> | <p>Dnevni Avaz pg 3 'Passive registration of voters does not legalize ethnical cleansing', mentioned on cover "displaced persons are deciding by themselves where would they vote' by <u>A.Hadzic</u>– Member of BiH Election Commission Vehid Sehic said that passive registration of voters, for which it is said it would be devastating for Bosniaks, would not prevent displaced persons to vote in their former residences. Sehic stressed that essence of passive registration is that all BiH citizens would be automatically included into the central voters list, which means that all refugees with IDs would be listed. Sehic stressed that displaced persons have the right to choose where would they vote, in their former residences or in places where they reside now. Member of Working Group for drafting of BiH Election Law Emir Jahic stated that decision on passive registration was passed at proposal of all parties and confirmed by the BiH Parliament.</p> |
| <p>FBIH HoR to discuss Law on allocation of revenues on Monday that is contested by Croats Caucus in F BiH HoP</p> | <p>FTV – At the extraordinary session scheduled for Monday, FBIH House of Representatives will discuss F BiH Government's proposal on temporary allocation of public revenues in F BiH. This proposal has been adopted by the FBIH House of Peoples. The Law on Allocation of Public Revenues in F BiH has been passed, however it has been sent to the F BiH Constitutional Court in order to establish whether it endangers Croats vital national interests since it was contested by the Croat Caucus in the F BiH HoP, which invoked the vital national interest. RHB, Nezavisne Novine pg 4 'Approval to F BiH Government to spend 350 million KM' by <u>R. Cengic</u> also covered.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Pan-European Union conference ends on Sunday, says it will lobby for BiH with EU</p> | <p>RHB– International conference “BiH and European integrations” organised by BiH Pan European Union ended on Sunday with a holy mass held by Bishop Pero Sudar in Sarajevo Cathedral. Sudar welcomed all conference participants and stated that Pan European Union has done a lot for BiH. Organisers of the conference confirmed that it was a great success, which is proven with a large number of participants. Oslobodjenje pg 3 ‘Step towards Europe for ceasing visas’ by Fena – Archduke Otto von Habsburg and High Representative Christian Schwarz-Schilling were present at the holy mass. Pan-European Union stated that it would lobby in the EU Parliament for BiH to enter EU as soon as possible. Dnevni List pg 4 ‘They demand abolishment of visa regime with EU countries’ <u>not signed</u> says that participants of the conference supported the Declaration on the ground of which they demand from all European institutions to help BiH to join the EU as soon as possible and as the first step in this direction they demand abolishment of the visa regime for BiH citizens with EU countries. (also in Dnevni Avaz pg 2 ‘Europe is not complete without BiH’, in Nezavisne Novine pg 3 ‘Declaration for asking for help for BiH was adopted’ <u>by Agencies</u>)</p> |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>RSNA to discuss new RS Govt's proposal of law of audit of privatization process as promised by new RS PM Dodik</p> | <p>Dnevni Avaz pg 4 'Opposing audit could result in five years imprisonment' by <u>Srna</u>– According to the proposal of law on audit of privatization process, which would be discussed on March 30 by the RS NA at a special session, audit process would be conducted by special Commission appointed by the RS Government. RS Government prepared the proposal and it foresees that Commission would have obligation to audit decisions and activities of RS Government, Privatization Agency, Finance Ministry and Section for Privatization of Banks. Law foresees that all institutions, organizations and persons could face three months to five years in prison if they fail to submit all necessary information to the Commission. Also reported by Nezavisne Novine pg 2 'Five years imprisonment for keeping silent about frauds during privatisation' by <u>D.R.</u> (NB: the issue of audit of privatization process was labelled by the RS PM Dodik as one of his priorities)</p> |
|---|--|

| Economy | |
|---|---|
| <p>Professor Tomas and SE Europe Development Bank's Barasin: Bankers think of BiH as of very risky market, hence unfavourable loans</p> | <p>EuroBlic cover pg splash and pg RS5 'Bankers think of BiH as of very risky market' by <u>Mirna Soja</u> – Professor at Banja Luka Faculty of Economics Rajko Tomas and Marketing Director of south-eastern Europe Development Bank Ostoja Barasin explained in a statement to <i>EuroBlic</i> that the unstable political situation, poverty among citizens and insolvent economy were the main reasons why managements of banks in BiH are offering loans with higher interest rates and more unfavourable terms than in neighbouring countries.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>EP HZ HB: DERK and FERK's discriminatory provisions make sure Croats pay more expensive electricity</p> | <p>Vecernji List pg 2 '20 millions KM from Herzegovina goes to RS', mentioned on cover 'Herzegovina finances RS' by <u>Z. Kresic</u> – Elektroprivreda of Croat Community of Herceg Bosna (EP HZ HB) will sue the FBiH and BiH Regulatory Commissions for Electricity (FERK and DERK) because of discriminatory provisions on the ground of which consumers in Herzegovina and areas with the Croat majority pay more expensive electricity. VL explains that DERK imposed to EP HZ HB to pay compensation for transfer of electricity amounting to 6 Euros per MW, while at the same time EP BiH and EP RS have been '<i>stimulated</i>' by compensation of 2,5 Euro for export of energy. VL concludes that due to this discriminatory tariff of DERK, 20 million KMs goes every year from EP HZ HB to the account of company 'Elektroprijenos' based in Banja Luka. VL concludes that it turns out that Herzegovina finances the RS.</p> |
| <p>DL op-ed: Increase of electricity price to cause strikes and social unrests</p> | <p>Dnevni List pg 2 'Hard times are ahead of us' by <u>I. Glibusic</u> says that if announced increase of electricity prices and other goods really take place it is clear that strikes and even social unrests would follow, while according to the current situation, BiH authorities do not do anything to avoid it.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| Central Bank Governor Kozaric: Interest rates in BiH are dropping | <p>Dnevni Avaz pg 8 'Interest rates in BiH will decrease' by <u>N.Jamakovic</u> – BiH Central Bank Governor Kemal Kozaric said that interest rates in BiH had decreased by 3% in last three years, adding that this trend would surely continue. Kozaric says interest rates do not only depend on supply and demand, but also on the legal framework that would enable banks to provide more favourable treatment to clients. He underlined that one of positive factors in change of banking system in BiH would be establishment of supervision at the state level. Kozaric reminded that one of conditions for European Monetary Union membership is that interest rates must not be higher than 7%. At the moment, BiH has an average interest rate of 9,04%.</p> |
|--|--|

War Crimes

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>14 anniversary of massacre of Serbs in Sijekovac marked on Sunday</p> | <p>RTRS <u>Stela Jungic</u> – 14 anniversary since the death of 60 Serb civilians from village of Sijekovac near Bosanski Brod was marked on Sunday in a commemoration ceremony. Reporter said that these people were killed by units of regular Croatian army and Croat-Muslim paramilitary units from BiH, adding that so far, no indictments for this crime were raised. Association of Missing Veterans from Bosanski Brod claims that it filed a large number of evidence on this case to ICTY, however the representatives of the Tribunal allegedly told them that the material has been lost. RS Minister of Labour and Veterans Bosko Tomic stated at the memorial ceremony that the Government is going to insist on investigation of all war crimes committed against Serbs in Sijekovac, as well as in all other places like Sarajevo and Bratunac. A round table on this tragedy was held in Bosanski Brod. Participants urged Serb Orthodox Church, RS senior officials and Serb Arts and Science Academy to protect the vital national interests of Serbs in BiH. Savo Cvjetanovic from RS Association of Veterans announced that this organisation is going to demand information about status of investigation on this crime. PINK, BHT1, Nezavisne novine pg 4 'Commemoration for 60 Serb civilians' by <u>R. Segrt</u>, Glas Srpske pg 3 'Criminals must be punished' by <u>B. Teofilovic</u>, Dnevni List pg 4 'To reveal crime committed over Serbs' <u>not signed</u> also covered. Nezavisne novine pg 4 'Commemoration for 60 Serb civilians' by <u>R. Segrt</u> Inset 'Invitation for protection of RS', Glas Srpske pg 3 'Shed light on truth' <u>not signed</u> – report on the round table discussion held on the occasion of the commemoration in Sijekovac</p> |
|--|--|

| | |
|---|--|
| FBiH Govt. to form Commission for missing persons in Sarajevo | Euro Blic RSpg 3 'Families of missing persons threaten they would go out on the streets in April' by <u>Nedeljka Breberina</u> – FBiH Government confirmed to <i>EuroBlic</i> that it should establish a Commission in charge of search after missing persons in ten Sarajevo municipalities by the end of March. On the other hand, the RS Associations of families of the missing persons have announced they would hold protests on 10 April unless FBiH bodies formed the Commission. |
|---|--|

| Miscellaneous | |
|---|--|
| HNC: Classes in elementary schools (Croat curriculum) start on Monday | FTV – Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNC) Union of elementary schools (that work according to Croat curriculum) decided to freeze the strike due to pressure of parents. HNC Union of secondary schools (that work according to Croatian curriculum) has continued the strike, while HNC Union of secondary schools (that work according to FBiH curriculum) announced new protests since HNC Government failed to meet the reached agreement. RHB, BHT1, Oslobodjenje pg 2 'Protests before Government building on Tuesday', Dnevni List pg 11, mentioned on cover 'Primary school students to start attending classes as of today' by <u>S. Bjelica</u> , Vecernji List pg 4 'Primary school students again at classes as of today' by <u>I. Brkic-Cubela</u> also covered. |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>RS Education Minister Kasipovic: Higher education in RS needs to be reformed urgently</p> | <p>Nezavisne Novine pg 5, announced on cover ‘Professors are being checked up too’ by <u>S. Gojkovic</u> – In an interview to <i>MN</i>, RS Minister of Education and Culture, Antun Kasipovic, stated RS higher education urgently needs to be reformed. According to Kasipovic, before they are reformed, faculties will need to undergo an extensive audit of their work and justify their existence. He announced some faculties would have to be closed – regardless of the fact whether it is a public faculty with long tradition or a private-owned faculty established just recently – should it be proven they do not meet personnel or technical pre-requisites.</p> |
| <p>BH Justice Minister announces donors conference for BiH in Brussels on 31 March</p> | <p>Nezavisne Novine pg 5 ‘Collecting of money for reform of judiciary in BiH’ by <u>Agencies</u> – Slobodan Kovac, BH Justice Minister, has announced that the donors conference, which should raise resources intended for completion of judiciary reform in BiH, would be held on March 31 in Brussels, adding: <i>“The reform of a closed system is an important segment of judiciary reform and we have observed a large interest to build a state prison, which would demand approximately EURO 15 million.”</i> (also in Dnevni Avaz pg 8 ‘Invitations sent to about fifty states’ by <u>Fena</u>)</p> |