

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 5/5/2003

CROAT RADIO HERCEG-BOSNA (18,00 hrs)	BH TV 1 (19,00 hrs)	FED TV (19,30 hrs)	RT RS (19,30)
RS Government announced transformation of maintenance facilities in Bijeljina, Bratunac and Banja Luka into basic governmental companies	PDHR talked today with RS Prime Minister and leadership of RS Elektroprivreda about situation in the company	Workers of Vitkovici Nitrogen Factory are victims of international crime	Commemoration for victims from WWII in Donja Gradina
Pope proclaimed 5 Spanish priests as saints	World news	BH Steel Factory is facing bankruptcy due to customs policy	Hays, Mikerevic on reforms in power sector
Schools in China closed for next two weeks over SARS	Orthodox religious ceremony took place in Kozarska Dubica to commemorate suffering of Serbs and Roma in WWII	Anniversary of Josip Broz Tito's death marked today	Refugee settlement near Nevesinje without utilities

Germany and France careful towards American plan on Iraq	World news		Interior, Health Ministries should prepare draft Law on drug use in RS
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Oslobodjenje	Two years following a nationalists' attack in Banja Luka – Bus owners request compensation of a million KM from RS Government
Dnevni Avaz	Request by SDA's Seada Palavric – Investigation necessary into the Lagumdzija's affairs
Dnevni List	SFOR in action of creation of joint BiH army!?!; Federation Prime Minister offered resignation
Vecernji List	Who divides Livno and Duvno; BiH has two capitol cities
Slobodna Dalmacija	Features Croatia-related headlines
Glas Srpski	Predrag Radic, Director of Banjaluka brewery, warns: Import lathers in fraud!; Austrian "Reconciliation Fund"; Deadline extended
Nezavisne Novine	RS Vice President on espionage affair: Cavic knew I was tapped; Partisans paid respect to Josip Broz Tito; Hambarine near Prijedor: A school ten metres from mine field
Blic	The most profitable fraud is sales tax laundering; Sinisa Kistic: Entities divide economy

Affairs/investigations

<p>Bus owners request compensation for damage made during the nationalistic violence two years ago in Banja Luka</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje front page, pg. 6 'Bus owners request compensation of a million KM from RS Government' – A group of bus owners from the BiH Federation who suffered a direct material damage during a nationalistic violence two years ago in Banja Luka (a ceremony to lay out Ferhadija Mosque cornerstone) are requesting a compensation of a total of 967,577 KM from the RS Government. They have officially launched a legal proceeding before the Banja Luka District Court.</p>
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**RS PM Mikerevic
and PDHR Hays
on
Elektroprivreda
of RS**

Dnevni List (page 3, unsigned, "End to crime in Elektroprivreda of Republika Srpska") carries a report from a meeting in Doboj that rendered the situation in the Elektroprivreda of Republika Srpska after which the RS Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic, said that those who are proven to have participated in illegal activities would be removed from their jobs whilst the judiciary would handle the cases. He also announced the RS Government would at today's session come up with a series of proposals and measures to overcome the difficult situation in the Elektroprivreda of RS. PDHR Donald Hays, who also attended the meeting, stressed determination in shedding light on all illegalities in the Elektroprivreda of RS announcing a close co-operation with the RS Government until new Steering and Supervisory Boards and new management of the company have been appointed.

Nezavisne Novine, page 3, 'Acimovic removed from RS EP'; Glas Srpski, page 3, 'Power shakes chairs' also reported on the meeting. The meeting in Doboj was also attended by Milan Bogicevic, RS Minister of Economy and Energy, Zoran Djeric, RS Minister of Internal Affairs, and the leadership of the RS EP, led by its Acting Director General, Dakic.

<p>DL says former HR Petritsch promised third GSM licence to “Eronet”</p>	<p>Dnevni List (front and page 3, by <u>S. Kuzman</u>, “High Representative on behalf of OHR promised Eronet GSM licence”) claims to be in possession of a letter that a former High Representative for BiH, Wolfgang Petritsch, sent to former President of HDZ BiH and former member of BiH Presidency, Ante Jelavic, and a senior HDZ official, Martin Raguz, in which Petritsch allegedly promised that “Eronet” Company would get the third GSM licence in BiH. According to DL, the letter contains Petritsch interpretation of Document on policy of telecommunications. The letter reads: “Pursuant to paragraph 4., Eronet will, as an operator that is in partial private and partial public ownership, continue working and offer services like the other two public operators and will not be subjected to the tender process.” In light of this, the daily says the OHR ought to keep the promise otherwise the credibility of the High Representative and his Office will be put into question.</p>
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**PBS and FTV to
go on warning
strike**

Vecernji List (front and page 2, by Ivica Pjanic, "Fight for rights or supremacy") reports that the Union of workers of PBS and FTV announced they would go on warning strike on May 8 when instead of normal programme during the main news show, they shall be reading a press release on reasons behind the protest. Apparently, the workers are unhappy with low salaries and unpaid contributions for social and pension insurance and with lack of development strategy and extravagance of some departments within the house. The Director of FTV, Jasmin Durakovic, denies claims related to alleged corruption and alleged high costs of the "Viza za buducnost" (a BiH soap opera). According to the papers, many believe the real reasons behind the strike have not gone public and they are about the conflicts among different groups within the house.

Tomljenovic on tapping affair

Nezavisne Novine, pages 1 & 5, 'Cavic knew I was tapped' – In an interview to NN, Ivan Tomljenovic, RS Vice President, reveals that he was wire-tapped and that RS President, Dragan Cavic, was aware of that. As for police, he claims it is corrupted, blackmailed and connected with Mafia. Accordingly, he finds the police incapable of confronting the organised crime and corruption in a more serious manner.

Although he assumes the position of the RS President, Tomljenovic admits that he gets majority of information from the media, because he has almost zero access to reports of official bodies and institutions. He claims that many

indications made him aware that 410th Intelligence Centre of RS Army tapped him.

"I have never told Cavic of my speculations, but the fact he knew many pieces of information I used to say to other people made me conclude that the Centre provided him with info. However, I have never burdened myself with this, because everything I had to say I said it in the face... However, I do not think that Cavic ordered I should be tapped."

As on the issue of BiH joint army, Tomljenovic is of the view that BiH needs a unified army, that will be professional and should have a joint command at the BiH level with three separate components.

**Banja Luka
brewery
problems**

Glas Srpski, cover page story, 'Import lathers in fraud! – Predrag Radic, Director of the Banja Luka Brewery "Pivara", claims that five breweries in BiH asked the BiH Council of Ministers to ensure their equal treatment at the market with the Slovenian brewery "Pivovarna Lasko". He further claims that "Pivovarna Lasko" from Slovenia is exempted from paying any customs to all imported raw materials. On the other hand, BiH breweries must pay all custom fees to all imported raw materials.

Radic further claims that there is a firm in Gornji Vakuf, which pays the amount of 33 thousand KM in cash for the beer of KM 100 thousand worth in Slovenia. In an exchange, Slovenian customs writes in an invoice that the real value of the goods is KM 67 thousand. On basis of this fact, BiH customs clears the goods with deduction of 33% in real price. On the other hand, Banja Luka Brewery cannot import its beer for testing in Slovenia at reduced customs fees. According to Radic, Slovenians are doing all they can to protect their products, while not so much things are being done in BiH to protect beer producers.

<p>SDA's Palavric says investigation into the Lagumdzijas' business operations necessary</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz front page, pg. 3 'Investigation into the Lagumdzijas' business affairs necessary' – The SDA Deputy President, Seada Palavric, told the newspaper it was unbelievable that SDP leader Zlatko Lagumdzija was giving political and moral lectures about the honesty as media are publishing financial documents about the involvement of Lagumdzija and his wife Amila into a large-scale corruption.</p>
<p>A man wanted by Interpol arrested in Bihac</p>	<p>Dnevni Avaz pg. 2, mentioned on the front page 'Ignac Vukelic had links with the Zemun Klan' – The newspaper learns that a few days ago, Ignac Vukelic, a man wanted by Interpol, was arrested in Bihac. Vukelic is suspected for involvement in organised crime in BiH. He was also wanted by the Interpol Office in Zagreb.</p>

<p>Blic on economic crime</p>	<p>Blic pg. 7 'Police does not have inspectors' – Business crime and large amounts of money gain in that way attract the public's attention because great affairs emerged out of these criminal acts. Citizens do not trust the police, because criminal charges are brought usually two-three years after crime was committed, and expression is that the justice always trails after business criminals. Chief of the RS Ministry of Interior's Department for business crime Stjepan Cemazar says that the situation is like that simply because the business crime could only be revealed through revision of business books. "Difference between classical and business crime is enormous, because when someone kills someone that is known immediately, but when it comes to the tax evasion it is revealed after several years, through revision of firm's books", Cemazar says. He further says that business criminals are usually powerful and wealthy people with strong background. The most profitable fraud according to Cemazar is not money laundering but sales tax laundering: goods and papers walk from the Federation to the RS, from the RS to Brcko District and then again to the Federation.</p>
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Political developments

<p>Oslobodjenje editorial: Non-functional coalition</p>	<p>Oslobodjenje pg. 2 In Focus column by <u>Ibrahim Prohic</u> 'Non-functional (coalition)' – Prohic claims that the partnership amongst the governing political parties is just a manoeuvre covering up the real character of relations inside the governing coalition. "SDA, SDS and HDZ (plus the mutants, PDP and Party for BiH) are using the same, unsuccessful formula from the 90s just put in a new packing," wrote Prohic.</p>
<p>DL says there's rift within SDA</p>	<p>According to Dnevni List (front and page 3, by <u>D. L.</u>, "Federation Prime Minister Ahmet Hadzipasic offered resignation") there was a harsh polemics at the last session of SDA Main Board between the Federation Prime Minister, Ahmet Hadzipasic, who is labeled by the daily as a member of liberal fraction of SDA, and the radical fraction of SDA, which was supported by the party President, Sulejman Tihic. Apparently, the reason behind the discussion was Hadzipasic's position to co-operate with the IC at any cost which was contested by the SDA hard-liners and as a result, Hadzipasic offered a resignation from the post of the Federation Prime Minister. DL goes on to say that the current announcements say Tihic will be the next member of the BiH Presidency who will be removed by the High Representative for BiH if he does not change his attitude when it comes to the IC.</p>

**Feral Tribune on HDZ
BiH's 8th Congress**

In its analysis of the HDZ BiH's 8th Congress held on 26 April 2003, Feral Tribune (p 30-32, "Political agony of Croats in BiH continues: The strategy of no exit", by Ivan Lovrenovic) reads that what illustrates that this party has been chronically suffering from the lack of genuine political identity is the Congress' scenery: like in a parody performance, there were odds and ends – from the Croatian rightists, through Mirko Sarovic, the keeper of Karadzic's bright traditions, to a representative of the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee. Yet, according to Lovrenovic, the political hopelessness was in a way confirmed at the Congress of this practically only Croat political party. As there has been a paralysis of civic opposition thanks to Ashdown's policy, HDZ BiH is the only institutionalized place where one politically deliberates the position and the "fate" of BiH Croats. As the party at that Congress explicitly confirmed to be sticking to all its original programme guidelines and political stances and did not see in itself and in the history of its activities the danger of turning the Croat people into political object, it can mean only one thing – that the HDZ BiH is absolutely incompetent of self-reflection and that it slips into ever bigger political incompetence.

RS Government to convene

Nezavisne Novine, page 3, 'Orao before Ministers' – At today's session in Banja Luka, RS Government is expected to discuss the proposal of the RS Defence Ministry, regarding the passing of acts on transformation of the repairs centre Orao from Bijeljina, "Tehnicki remont" from Bratunac and "Kosmos" from Banja Luka. According to proposed agenda, the session is also to discuss the proposed RS Action Plan on civil service for the period from 2003 through 2006. RS MoI is to submit report, regarding the investigation conducted at the RS Elektroprivreda.

**Radicals critical of
Dodik/Counteraccusations**

Glas Srpski, page 2, 'Criminals behind bars'; Nezavisne Novine, page 4, 'Ungrounded accusations' – Milenko Mihajlica, President of one wing of RS Serb Radical Party, yesterday accused SNSD President, Milorad Dodik, of having been connected with Zemun clan. He also accused Dodik of having been engaged in smuggling activities during the war together with Borislav Mikelic.

According to NN addition, Mihajlica did not ground his accusations against SNSD leader with proofs when asked by NN journo to do so.

Mihajlica also said in PR that Dodik must have maintained contacts with Zemun clan through former radicals, Ognjen Tadic and Mirko Blagojevic. On this, Tadic commented by saying that "Mihajlica is the spokesperson of Mafia. By making these latest accusations, he attempts to avert the police investigation from the Mafia heads in RS, who give orders to him."

Blagojevic commented by saying that: "I am convinced that Dragan Kalinic of SDS wrote that press release, while Mihajlica only placed his signature on it."

<p>PDP Main Board session scheduled</p>	<p>Blic pg. 7 – Final stand on the newly-developed situation after Nikola Spiric's election as Co-chairman of the BiH House of Representatives the PDP will take at the Main Board's session scheduled for 17 and 18 May in Teslic. The PDP's press release says that the PDP's Presidency thinks that the opposition's request for holding early elections is unrealistic, and attacks on the PDP and the RS Government are unfounded and without arguments, since that the last statements of the IC 's representatives clearly confirm the support the Interior Ministry and other RS institutions in the fight against organised crime.</p>
<p>Bijeljina's SNS divides party</p>	<p>Blic pg. 7 'They ask to join SNSD' – SNS President Branislav Lolic will ask for dissolution of Bijeljina's SNS at the party's Main Board session on 10 May with explanation that all those who think they should continue acting together with the SNSD should leave the party. Lolic confirms that Bijeljina's SNS has asked to continue political acting with the SNSD, but other boards as well as the Main Board have been against that, due to which president of Bijeljina's SNS Jezdimir Spasojevic and several other members left the party. The party's vice-president Svetozar Mihajlovic says that the aim of Bijeljina's SNS is not to join the SNSD, but to overcome the crisis in which the SNS have been for a quite time now. "Our intention is to restore our reputation and position, and if that is impossible then the solution is to join the SNSD," Mihajlovic says. (Glas Srpski pg. 2 'Conflict inside SNS')</p>

BiH-IC relations

BiH's preparation to join WTO

According to Dnevni List (page 2, unsigned, "BiH in WTO by 2004?!"), the BiH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations expects that a big part of activities pertaining to BiH joining the World Trade Organization will have been completed by end of this year whilst preparation of the final report of the Working group for BiH could be completed by mid 2004.

**DL on role
of IC in BiH**

Dnevni List (front and page 9, by S. Kuzman, "BiH authorities seek space to try and prove themselves") carries a piece on the role of BiH authorities and the IC in processes in BiH. (NB: this report was aired on Federation TV over the weekend and has been retold by the daily)

According to the daily, more than a half of BiH citizenry and political analysts believe the presence of the IC in BiH is still necessary despite objections to the way the IC "rules" in BiH. Moreover, according to the article, around 60% of BiH citizens believe there would be conflicts after the IC leaves the country. Furthermore, DL says a survey conducted by a Tuzla-based "Forum gradjana" (Forum of citizens), Bosnians and Herzegovinians trust the Office of the High Representative more than they trust domestic authorities. On the other hand, BiH politicians say and believe they are capable of enacting laws without impositions from the High Representative.

In this context, DL carries the BiH Minister of Security, Barisa Colak, as saying the presence of the IC in BiH should gradually decrease which should result in strengthening of BiH institutions which would take over the jobs that are in the competence of the institutions. There is also a comment by the BiH Foreign Minister, Mladen Ivanic: "I think it would mean we would be forced to bigger compromises than we are ready to accept now."

<p>Preparations for signing of bilateral agreement btw. USA and BiH</p>	<p>Glas Srpski, page 3, ‘Americans waiting for response’ – The deadline for the creation of the agreement between BiH and the USA, in regard to exemption from judicial prosecution of the American citizens before the ICC, is 7th May. The agreement is expected to be worked out by the BiH Ministry of Justice and BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in concert with the experts from the US Embassy in BiH. Clifford Bond, US Ambassador to BiH, stated that American Government presented its proposal to the BiH Foreign Minister, on which it is still awaiting the response. The deadline for the signing of the bilateral agreement is 30 June. So far, Romania is the only regional state, which has signed this kind of agreement with the USA.</p>
<p>OHR on Law on Immunity</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, page 4, ‘Claiming on immunity does not release from responsibility’ – Oleg Milisic, OHR Spokesperson, told NN that the BiH Law on Immunity, which was declared by HiRep to BiH, cannot apply to acts committed prior to its enactment. However, he added that the criminal charges do not fall under statute of limitations. He also stressed that the claiming on immunity, on the basis of the law enacted October last year, does not release an individual from responsibility. According to him, the BiH Law on Immunity has significantly reduced the number of persons and number of situations in which somebody would claim on this “protection” possibility.</p>

**Sulejman
Tihic: BiH
will accede
EU together
with Croatia**

Dnevni Avaz pg. 5 'Sulejman Tihic: BiH will accede EU together with Croatia' – Romano Prodi, the Chairman of the European Commission, is host at tomorrow's dinner in Brussels. Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency Sulejman Tihic is among those invited together with Miroljub Labus, the President of the Serbian G-17 Plus political party and Ivo Sanader, the President of the Croatian HDZ. "Honestly I have a feeling that we will join the EU sooner than we expect. Maybe it is a bit too optimistic, but I am convinced that we will accede the EU together with Croatia regardless of a fact they currently have advantage in comparison to us," said Tihic. Explaining why is that, Tihic says that Europe will request for a report on mutual relations amongst the states created following dissolution of the socialist Yugoslavia. "Europe cannot allow that after Croatia and Romania...there is still a territory in which there is no European behavior, where the war criminals live and where there is organized crime. When BiH is in question, I presume I will be asked (at the dinner) why all processes here are so slow. I will tell them that the inside integration processes are slow due to two reasons. Firstly because the Serb political parties in the RS are still obstructing these processes, and secondly because the international community is tolerating such behavior and has not strength to cut these obstructions," said Tihic.

Other issues	
Commemoration to WWII victims in Donja Gradica	<p>Glas Srpski, page 3, 'Prayer for innocent victims'; Nezavisne Novine, page 6, 'Memory of thousands of murdered people' – Both dailies report that in a memory of over 700 thousand Serbs, Jews and Gypsies, who were murdered, requiem was served yesterday at Donja Gradina (near Kozarska Dubica), at the biggest Jasenovac camp place of execution during the World War II. Apart from several hundreds of people, the requiem was also attended by the RS President, Dragan Cavic, RS Prime Minister, Dragan Mikerevic, and the Chairperson of the BiH Presidency, Borislav Paravac.</p>
Compensation to war victims	<p>Glas Srpski, cover page story, 'Deadline extended' – The amount of EURO 100 million will remain at the Fund, which the Austrian Government has founded to pay out compensation to forcible workers at camps during the Third Reich. Accordingly, the deadline for filing applications with the Fund has been extended till end of this year.</p>

<p>School 10 m from mine field in Hambarine</p>	<p>Nezavisne Novine, pages 1 & 2, 'A school ten metres from mine field' – Vahid Imsirevic, Secretary at the Local Community of Hambarine (Prijeedor municipality), told NN that the minefield marks are located only 10 metres from the reconstructed Primary School in Hambarine settlement.</p> <p>He further said that the marks were placed by the Italian SFOR, who told local population SFOR was informed that mines from the past war could still be near the school. He adds that there was no case recorded, in regard to explosion and potential victims of such explosions in this area.</p>
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