

OHR BiH Media Round-up, 6/8/2002

Headlines in Print Media

Oslobodjenje: With regard to the High Representative's decision on usage of collective centers – Support to the return or to the continuation of peoples migration?

Dnevni Avaz: Vinko Krizan on the measures being taken by the Federation Tax Administration – It is about strike on smugglers and not prices increase

Jutarnje Novine: Start of the pre-election campaign officially announced

Dnevni List: Interview with Tibor Prajo, a demobilized veteran from Kiseljak

Vecernji List: Pre-election campaign started

Glas Srpski: Banja Luka – Pensions under choice

Nezavisne Novine: Pre-election campaign officially started in BiH – SDP, SDS and SDA lead the race for the state parliament

FRY Nacional: Petar Panic, former head of Serbian Radical Party's security: the authority asked me to fabricate charges against Seselj

Euro Blic: Suzic: Ivanic wants to put Dodik in jail; Croats blocked road Tuzla–Orasje due to the expropriation of 'Arizona'; Ivanic: Investments needed in Srpska

**With regard to the High Representative's decision
on the usage of collective centers – Support to
the return or to the further migration of
peoples**

In Oslobodjenje's front page article on the High Representative's decision on the usage of collective centers (the article continued on pages 4-5), Edina Kamenica wrote that, four day following the announcement of the decision, it

was obvious from a poll conducted by the newspaper on Monday that the officials authorized for the process of return either did not know what is the decision about or they had been misinformed about its contents. *"I do not believe that it is about something which might be catastrophic for us,"* BiH Federation Prime Minister Alija Behmen told the newspaper, adding that its was actually about a short-term measure, which would support the real return and help in making a real picture of the problem. *"In a way, this is a guarantee that the people will be brought closer to their pre-war homes,"* Kamenica quoted Mirhunisa Zukic, the President of the BiH Association of Refugees, as saying, but commenting that Zukic was unrealistically optimistic.

Pre-election campaign officially started on Monday

The BiH Election Commission announced on Monday the official start of the pre-election campaign for the October general elections (**Oslobodjenje**, p 3, announced on the front page, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 9, **Jutarnje Novine**, p 4, announced on the front page, **Glas Srpski**, p 3, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 2, **Vecernji List**, front and page 3, **Slobodna Dalmacija** page 14, **Vjesnik** page 8, **Jutarnji List** page 2)

"The BiH Election Commission has guarantees from the Hungarian Allami Company that it will complete printing of the ballots on time and we do not have intention to change our decision," the Commission's President, Lidija Korac, told journalists in Sarajevo on Monday. *"We have done all from our side to give the job to a domestic company, but none of the, met the requirements. We eliminated the Croatian Zrinjski Company because it tried to blackmail us, and not because of any pressures,"* Korac added. (**Oslobodjenje**, p 7, announced on the front page, **Dnevni Avaz**, p 8). Both dailies on the same pages report on a reiterated demand by the BiH Graphic Workers Trade Union that the BiH Election Commission resign over irregularities related to the ballots printing tender procedure)

In a letter sent on Monday to the BiH Election Commission,

Vladimir Halic, the Zrinski Company Manager, stated the BiH public had been misinformed about the reasons for increase of the ballots printing price. He emphasized that a requested change of the format had been the real reason for raising the price. (Dnevni Avaz, p 8)

Nezavisne Novine (p 5) carries the excerpts from an opinion poll carried out by National Democratic Institute (**NDI**) in the period between 15th and 28th May. 3 700 people participated in the poll (3000 contacted directly and 700 by telephone). Results for BiH Presidency: SDS candidate: 40%; PDP candidate: 16 % and SNSD candidate: 15 %. Results for RS President: SDS candidate: 41 %; PDP candidate: 16 %; SNSD candidate: 23%. Results for RS National Assembly: SDS: 39 %; PDP: 19 %; SNSD: 21%; SRS and SPRS: 4 %.

The Serb Radical Party (SRS) is against the establishment of the BiH police, i.e., special police unit comprised of 50 best policemen from both entities and is of the opinion that it would not help to the crime reduction in BiH (**Nezavisne Novine**, p 6, **Blic** p 3, **FRY Nacional** p 11).

All members of the Serb National Alliance (SNS) municipal board Lopare have decided to leave the party due to their dissatisfaction with personal ambitions of some high SNS officials (**Glas Srpski**, p 2, **Nezavisne Novine**, p 6, **FRY Nacional**, p 11). The SNS President, **Branislav Lolic**, stated that Lopare municipal board did not work as it should have and that their abandoning of the party will not be damaging at all.

"We welcome the decision of OHR to appoint its auditors for public sector for the both entities, which proves that the international community does not trust to the entities' auditors who were selected in accordance to a party's belonging," **Jezdimir Spasojevic**, an SNS's Main Board member, said at a press conference on Monday in Bijeljina. He said that a new auditor should examine the work of the RS

Elektroprovreda, since there were a lot of irregularities. Spasojevic warned that the Government is giving false hope to pensioners that the pensions will be regularly paid, since that it takes loans from banks, while at the same time the PIO Fund buys 10 new-brand cars and computers. (**Blic** p 16)

The SNSD leader, **Milorad Dodik**, stated at the public rally in Kelenderovci (Derventa region) that after the elections, it will be known whether the RS will go downhill or to a better future (**Glas Srpski**, p 2). Dodik's message to the voters is to judge politicians by the results they achieved not by their promises. Commenting on Ivanic's Government, Dodik said that it was unsuccessful.

Zoran Miljanovic, president of the RS Democratic Party, said on Monday that the RS Government's decision to take a loan from commercial banks in order to pay pensions *"unequivocally says that the RS has bankrupted"*. (**Nacional** p 11)

After the publication of the ICG analyses, **Nezavisne Novine** (p 6) publicize the views of the BiH Federation parties. In a nutshell, parties that are members of the Alliance for change support the ICG analyses and opposition parties claim that it is too mild compared to catastrophic results of the Alliance. SDP Vice President, **Sejfudin Tokic**, emphasized that in spite of all its mistakes, the Alliance achieved very significant progress. Chairman of Party for BiH (SBiH) Presidency, **Safet Halilovic**, stated that ICG analyses is relevant and well grounded. Emphasizing that he is dissatisfied with the results achieved by the Alliance, the Secretary General of BPS, **Sead Gajevic**, stated that the only reason for such failure is the view of SBH and SDP that they can do all on their own.

On the other hand, opposition parties strongly criticize the Alliance. SDA's Secretary General, **Sefik Dzaferovic**, claims that the Alliance failed, both politically and economically. **Niko Lozancic**, Vice President of HDZ claims that the Alliance failed due to the fact that it was comprised of elements that

cannot go together.

Jasminka Putica, the Federation Supreme Court Judge, resigned

Jasminka Putica, a BiH Federation Supreme Court judge, on Monday submitted a letter of resignation to the Federation President and Vice-president. Federation President Safet Halilovic told *Oslobodjenje* (p 3, announced on the front page) that Putica had not specified reasons for the move in the letter, but that she was expected to explain the resignation at a Tuesday's meeting with the Federation leaders. Putica was in charge with the investigation into the so-called Pogorelica case (related to the alleged terrorist training camp) involving former senior AID (Bosniak Intelligence Service) officials Bakir Alispahic, Irfan Ljevakovic and Enver Mujezonovic. (*Dnevni Avaz*, p 2, *Jutarnje Novine*, p 3, announced on the front page).

"Only personal and not any special reasons stand behind the resignation of Jasminka Putica, the Federation Supreme Court Investigative Judge," acting Deputy President of the Federation Supreme Court, Vlado Adamovic, told *Dnevni Avaz* (p 2)

Arizona Market

The New Croat Initiative (NHI) issued a press release on Monday protesting an illegal expropriation of private land for the purpose of the Arizona Market construction in the area of Brcko District. *"NHI requests its members in the Brcko District Assembly to demand stoppage of all activities related to the Arizona Market until the resolution of the disputed issues in a legal way,"* the release read (*Oslobodjenje*, p 6, *Dnevni Avaz*, p 10)

"The members and supporters of the BiH Republican Party are shocked by a decision made by the Brcko District Administration and supported by the International Supervisor, which wants to initiate an illegal expropriation of the private land in a part of the Arizona Market. The decision suspends the indisputable right to the private property," the

Tuzla-based Republican Party Regional Board said in a press release issued on Monday. (Oslobodjenje, p 6)

Italproject, the company, which got a concession to manage the Arizona Market in the next 20 years, issued a press release on Monday in which it said it was not competent to decide on the ownership over the land, but that it only had to fulfill their obligations from the contract signed with the Brcko District Administration. (Dnevni Avaz, p 10)

Federation affairs: Fresh Tax Administration measures, appointment of Finance Minister, Hercegovacka Bank, Eronet, Defense Ministry, HNC Budget

Dnevni Avaz reports on the front-page (continued on the p 4) that the producers and importers of the tobacco products will as of Monday have to pay both special and regular taxes in advance. The newspaper quoted Vinko Krizan, the Federation Tax Administration Deputy Director, as saying that the new measures were aimed to fight smugglers and not to raise the retail prices of the cigarettes.

"The truth is that the NHI-nominated ministers and deputy ministers are not going to participate in the work of the Federation Government, and if the appointment of the new Finance Minister Franjo Franjic is not confirmed at the session of the House of Representatives scheduled for August 29, I will freeze my engagement in the BiH Council of Ministers as well," Kresimir Zubak, the NHI President said in an interview with Dnevni Avaz (p 10, announced on the front page).

Vecernji List (page 2) and **Slobodna Dalmacija** (last page) carry excerpts from an interview that the Provisional Administrator for Hercegovacka Bank, **Toby Robinson**, gave to *Nezavisne Novine* in which she announced that results of the audit of the bank would be revealed in September or October this year. *"It is the most complex case that the Federation*

Banking Agency and any other institution has ever had in", said Robinson adding that she is doing her best to find a strategic partner or a strategic investor to re-open the bank and that "Eronet" Company has the pivotal role in the issue. Questioned why she did not pay out 17 million KMs to the Federation Government that had been requested by the former Finance Minister **Nikola Grabovac**, Robinson said that the (Federation) Government and its agencies invested 55 million KMs into the bank and that she has only 40 million KMs in cash. *"If I pay that, then I cannot pay anyone else (...) that's' why we have to find a solution so everyone is paid",* said Robinson.

Vecernji List (front and page 2, by Zoran Kresic) reads that the **Croatian Telekom of Zagreb (HT)** has filed criminal charges against the Chair of the Steering Board of the HPT Mostar, **Slavo Kukic**, and the General Manager of the HPT Mostar, **Stipe Prlic**, to the Cantonal Prosecution in Mostar because the two did not take legally stipulated measures to regain the ownership share in **Eronet**, the share which was declared by the Federation Privatisation Agency as the HPT Mostar's ownership. VL the Director of Corporative Communications of HT, **Marijan Jurleka**, as saying that although the Steering Board of the HPT Mostar, in which HT has a 35% stake, ordered Kukic and Prlic to take these measures, they have not done it in more than a year. *"By not doing so, Slavo Kukic and manager Stipe Prlic have caused a direct damage to HT and compromised HT's stake in the ownership (structure)",* said Jurleka.

"After an audit of the work of 26 Federation institutions has been completed, the Office for the audit of the Federation budget stated that there were no spectacular irregularities, bad work and breaches of the budget, but several faults that need to be removed were detected", reads **Vecernji List** (front and page 2, by M. Stankovic). VL reads that the faults are related to expenditures by all the Federation ministries and institutions and are related to the use of official cars,

hotel costs, food allowances and foremost for costs of occasional and temporary jobs for which tenders were not invited. Finally the auditors in their report suggest that an internal control be established in order to enhance the control of expenditures.

Jutarnji List (page 6, by Snjezana Pavic) carries short interview with Federation Minister of Defence Mijo Anic, in which he explained the essence of the conflict between him and his deputy **Ferid Buljubasic**, saying that his deputy knew about all his decisions, which was not the case 'vice versa'. *"When I warned about certain misdeeds of my Deputy, like selling guns from Serbia to the USA, or deployment of apartments, which were planned for Croats, to Bosniaks, and also reporting that for ten days the archives were transferred out of the ministry by trucks, now they want to present all that as my fight against Bosniak people"*, Anic said. He stated that he believes that the 'Alliance' has no alternative, and he added: *"I have seen many things in the 'Alliance' that were done against Croats, but I kept silent."* **Slobodna Dalmacija** (page 15) carries article in which it is confirmed that Anic's office reported that information about 50,000 guns that Buljubasic claimed were in BiH for more than 5 years is false. The daily says that the guns are in one American port since last week, but that the company that ordered the guns still did not come to collect them.

Dnevni List (page 2) and **Slobodna Dalmacija** (last page) report that the **Assembly of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton** has adopted, at its session yesterday, the cantonal budget for 2002 but failed to adopt the Draft Law on contribution for education, sport, and culture which would have taxed the net salaries at 5%. Addressing the members of the Cantonal Assembly after they adopted the budget, the Head of OHR South, Deputy High Representative **Jean-Pierre Bercot** said: *"Today's decision was a vote for paid salaries through an improved budget – contrary to the endless political games reflecting in*

social breakdown. It is up to the Government to fully implement this budget now."

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 15) carries a report from a round table on agriculture which was organised by Union of employees of agriculture, tobacco and food production industry of BiH at Siroki Brijeg which was attended, among other people, by **Mehmed Avdagic**, President of the Union, and **Mladen Ivankovic**, a minister in the Federation Government. SD reads that minister Ivankovic talked about numerous potentials of Herzegovina that are not properly exploited i.e. production of tobacco, wine and meat and stressed that the problem is that people produce goods which cannot be exported to foreign markets. Ivankovic added that the state must create a balance between the customs and stimulation policy in order to create a healthy competition and protect the domestic protection.

Ivanic satisfied with IMF decision, RS pensioners support payment of pensions through banks

Glas Srpski (p 3) and **Blic** (p 3) reports that the RS Prime Minister, **Mladen Ivanic**, is satisfied with the IMF decision to approve US \$ 89 million credit to BiH, out of which one third shall be allocated to the RS. Ivanic stated at a press conference held yesterday in Banja Luka that this credit will significantly help to the improvement of the general economic situation in RS and BiH. The daily quotes the RS PM: *"In its statement, the IMF underlined significant number of reforms carried out by this Government, with special emphasis on reduction of the inflation. The IMF decision is the best answer to those politicians who were critical on the Government's work. The very fact that the credit is approved two months before the elections, proves that this powerful international institution stands behind this Government and it sends a clear message to the voters."*

Former RS Education Minister Nenad Suzic rejected on Monday as unfounded criminal charges recently brought up against him over suspicion that he abused public office by providing a scholarship for education in England to Marijana Sevo from

Prijedor thus damaging the budget by 16,000 KM. Suzic told a press conference in Banja Luka that the charges were politically motivated, that the indictment served pre-election purposes and that that was an attempt of Prime Minister Mladen Ivanic to put blame for all his failures on the former government lead by Milorad Dodik. He reminded that he is the tenth minister from the former government to face charges and added that Ivanic is only carrying out a task given to him by SDS which is to charge all, or almost all ministers from Dodik's government and to put Dodik in jail before the elections because this is the only way to eliminate the opposition before the elections.

Suzic said that Marijana Sevo signed an agreement that she would complete her education in England on time, that after returning from England she would work for the RS Government on the "Strengthening the Local Self Government" project and that she would return all funds to the RS Government if she fails to complete her studies on time. Suzic added that the funds were transferred through the Ministry of Finance and not the Ministry of Education. (FTV 1 – 1730 News, Vecernje Novosti p13, Blic p17)

The Chairman of the RS Association of Pensioners, **Rade Rakulj**, stated for **Glas Srpski (cover page)** that the pensioners support the announced payment of pensions through banks. However, said Rakulj, those who want their pensions to be delivered to their home address, should receive pensions in that way.

Slobodna Dalmacija on Bond's visit to Stolac

Slobodna Dalmacija (page 13) carries a very critical editorial by Dino Mikulandra about the visit of the US Ambassador to BiH **Clifford Bond** to Stolac. The author says that Bond is "in professional service against HDZ BiH" and asks rhetorically: "After open anti-Croat and anti-democratic performances of representatives of international Alliance ... a dramatic

*question raises – What is the real goal of the World in BiH?”, and than offers an answer in which he says that a threat of unitary fundamentalism is present and that after Tito and communists did not succeed to erase national identities, “that will not be possible for the trio of Western gentlemen **Bond-Ashdown-Klein**.”*

Headlines in Electronic Media

BHTV 1 (Monday, 1900)

- Election commission announced beginning of the campaign
- WB latest report: The Balkans recovering
- FRY president Kostunica knows nothing on Mladic's whereabouts
- New clashes on Middle East

FTV 1 (1930)

- Jasminka Putica, Investigative Judge of the Federation Supreme Court, resigned
- Tuzla – Working class on the court for the public peace and order violation
- Election Commission marked beginning of the pre-election campaign
- Federation Government and Bihac in dispute over building the Izacic Border Crossing

RTRS (1930)

- Six kids, brothers and sisters, burned out in the fire in Louisiana.
- Pre-Elections campaign officially started.
- The question still open – Who transported medications depot in Banja Luka?
- US bombed Iraqi anti-air defense. White House throws away Iraqi call for negotiations.