

BiH CONSTITUTIONAL COURT

Public Discussion Held on Request to Assess Constitutionality of Republika Srpska Day

A public discussion was held in the state-level Constitutional Court on a request of the Bosniak member of the BiH Presidency to assess constitutionality of Republika Srpska's law on holidays

Legal representatives of Bakir Izetbegovic and the institution that passed the law, the RS Assembly, presented their positions and arguments concerning the dispute. The decision on whether the request will be approved will be rendered in one of the upcoming sessions of the Constitutional Court.

Izetbegovic claims that the provisions in RS law on holidays are not in accordance with the BiH Constitution as they deny the fundamental values of a democratic constitutional order. According to him, January 9, the RS Day, is important only to the Serbs. He said the Declaration on the Republic of Serb People in BiH was adopted on 9 January, 1992 and that the date is associated with the military of that entity, which according to rulings of the International Court of Justice in Hague and the ICTY is responsible for grave crimes, including genocide.

The RS Assembly representatives said that the request was a subjective perception of Izetbegovic, which is not enough to investigate possible violation of any

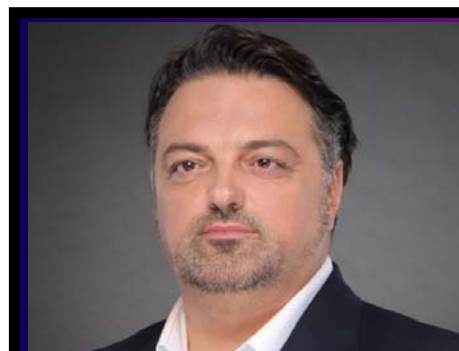


constitutional right.

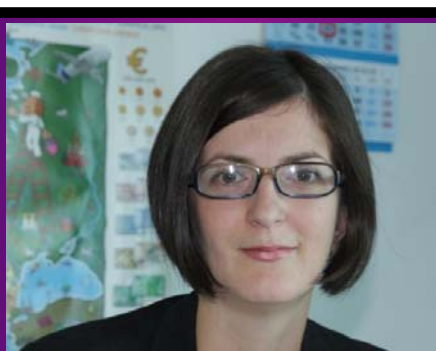
The Venice Commission said in its reply to the BiH Constitutional Court that choosing January 9 as the RS Day is closely connected to the developments from early nineties and that observing a holiday on that date can lead to discrimination.

President of the Constitutional Court

Mirsad Ceman said that some of the relevant issues for discussion are if the holiday preferred one ethnic group over other, and if the holiday reflected cultural, religious and ethnic heritage of all constitutive peoples, citizens and others. The public discussion was also attended by representatives of international organizations in BiH.



Aleksandar Trifunovic, journalist: The law (on free access to information) is good, but its implementation is bad. That proves the thesis that there is democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but there is no user manual



Marina Kavaz-Sirucic, BiH DEI: Free access (to information) is usually requested by those for whom the law was least intended - journalists, who should seek information and get it in timely fashion, without procedures and formalities



Nermina Voloder, center for social research Analitika: The government institutions shouldn't wait for a formal request from citizens; they should be proactive and open towards the public, and publish important information by themselves

Constitutional Committee Supports Amendments to the Law on Salaries in State Institutions

The Constitutional Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina said that the draft law on amendments to the law on salaries in the state institutions is in line with the Constitution and the legal system of BiH

The House of Representatives supported the bill with 34 votes, and it was considered as a proposal by a representative of the Alliance for a Better Future BiH Damir Arnaut who repeated that the amendments further regulate the salaries, and set the conditions under which compensation for work in commissions and working bodies may be paid. The proposed law provides that employees in BiH institutions are not entitled to compensation for their work in steering boards, supervisory boards and other bodies for the work they carry out during their working hours.

The Committee has identified the compliance with the Constitution and the legal system of Bosnia and Herzegovina when it comes to the bill on conversion of loans in Swiss francs (CHF) into convertible

marks (KM), proposed by deputy Mario Karamatic (HSS). The bill establishes the obligation of commercial banks to carry out the conversion of loans in CHF into BAM. The bill refers to all the loans by the commercial banks issued to BiH citizens in CHF. Karamatic earlier at the session of the House of Peoples said that such a law must be adopted as soon as possible because BiH has 9,802 users of loans in CHF, who find it almost impossible to repay the debt.

The House also supported the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Offences and the Draft Law on foreigners and the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Police Officials proposed by deputies of the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) in the House of Peoples Ognjen Tadic and Darko Babalj.

BiH Council of Ministers Okays Draft Law on Non-Working Days for Religious Holidays

BiH Council of Ministers adopted the draft law on non-working days during religious holidays in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which determines an equal number of non-working days during the year for the observance of religious holidays for Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Catholics, Jews and members of other faiths in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The CoM accepted the suggestion of Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations that the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Brcko District adjust their laws on holidays with the state law. According to their needs, the lower governments can determine additional dates as non-working days and define the rights related to absence from work on those days.

Employees in institutions, bodies, organizations, businesses and other

forms of organization in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to the law, would have five paid non-working days for the religious holidays. For Catholics, non-working days would be Epiphany, Corpus Christi, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Feast of All Saints and Christmas. For Orthodox Christians, non-working days would be Christmas, St Stephen Protomartyr, Pentecost, Good Friday and Easter.

For Muslims, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha would last two days each, and the remaining one day would be left to the choice of the faithful, the Muslim New Year or the birthday of Prophet Mohammed.

Non-working days for Jews would be Sukkot, Shavuot, Passover, Rosh Hashanah (New Year) and Yom Kippur. Members of other faiths in Bosnia and Herzegovina would choose their five non-working days.

DAILY MARKERS

By Vlastimir Mijovic
Senior Editor

Superficial Calculation

The so-called "social map" is the main precondition for effective social policy in a country. Though mentioned for years, that project was never implemented in BiH; it never even started!

In such a situation, it is difficult to place any funds to socially vulnerable groups. Many people in Bosnia have a regular, but low income (pensions and salaries), which are far below the amount required to meet the basic necessities of life. On the other hand, families that don't have any legal income live well. They are not criminals, but an army of people who make income in the "gray economic zone". All of them, and it is estimated that about 150,000 citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina have this type of "employment", have formal income - zero!

Most of those people and families would surely apply for electricity bill subsidy, if the idea announced by the Prime Minister Novalic yesterday was implemented. His government initiated a proposal that the electricity consumed by the socially vulnerable is indirectly paid by citizens who have a monthly income of over 320 KM.

"Our idea is that the electricity price for 700,000 better off households is increased by, say, two or three per cent, in order to subsidize the 100,000 most vulnerable families," said Novalic.

Thus, the monthly electricity bill for "better off families" would go up by 3 KM, while the poor would pay only 5 KM instead of 20.

Lacking real ideas, Novalic "charms" us with an extremely superficial project. First, it is inconceivable without a precise "social map". Second, in addition to helping those who are only formally poor, this would be an additional burden on many of the 700,000 "better off" families. And they are, according to all criteria, actually - poor!

Referendum Question: Do You Want Dodik to Be the RS President for Life?

The decision was made. The Constitutional Court rendered and published it in the Official Gazette

A referendum will be organized in Republika Srpska in November, and the referendum question is very short and concise: "Do you support the unconstitutional and unauthorized imposition of law by high representatives of the international community in BiH, in particular the imposed laws on BiH Court and Prosecution, and the implementation of their decisions in Republika Srpska?" If somebody thinks that the question is suggestive, they are absolutely wrong. The question correctly says that the laws passed by high representatives so far are unconstitutional and unauthorized. It is general knowledge that the international community appointed the high representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war to merely oversee the "construction works", not to meddle in local policy making and the country's integration in the European currents. An Irish, Swedish, Austrian or Slovak has no business meddling in our matters.

Where did the high representatives find audacity to impose anything: they were sent here to be extras, not to make decisions. Do our responsible politicians even need somebody like high representative to make decisions for them? That is nonsense.

Local analysts - of course, those responsible to the ruling parties in the RS and those who publish their analyses in the regime media for small money and smaller media popularity - have been commenting for years that the high representatives violate the Dayton agreement by using all sorts of powers, the Bonn powers in particular, rolling back the country to the prewar situation and violating the people's rights. But, in fact, the high representatives' sole job after the war was to order "ambitious" politicians, people's leaders and political party heads in which direction to pull the country - like a coachman who steers a coach with whip and stirrup.

High representatives were appointed to make the Dayton agreement implementation faster, fiercer and more drastic, and to sanction politicians who work against the peace agreement. Of course the high representatives acted like government and of course the politicians in government didn't like it. But, simply, local politicians don't have the political will to stabilize the country and they didn't have it 20 years ago. The question is

whether Bosnia and Herzegovina would exist without the international community and its representatives. Another question is who is fine with Bosnia and Herzegovina and who isn't, and whom it helped to live like a king and who barely makes ends meet. Milorad Dodik certainly isn't the latter.

There was the time when Milorad Dodik was fine with the high representative banning its political opponents from office. People who hold the power firmly today used to be in deep opposition, and the international community and its HRs helped them seize the power. In 1999, Milorad Dodik overthrew today's opposition SDS - which created his RS - with the help of the international community's tanks. Back then, Dodik wasn't bothered by the HRs; even more so, he had meet-

ings with them and discussed future policies. He didn't mind foreigners and all sorts of

laws passed. But, in the meantime, little Milorad became big Dodik who has a say in everything in the country, and he wants a say in laws that are passed.

Of course, the referendum is yet another political game, same as Dodik's fake arguments with the Bosniak and Croat leaders, who support him on the political throne in Bosnia's "better part". Now, when he failed politically and doesn't have the people's support like he used to, Dodik is trying to prove just how big patriot he is and how he has more powers than Valentin Inzko, who doesn't even use his powers anymore, because his colleagues passed all the laws supposed to be passed before him.

When Dodik was taking over the government, he wasn't much of an advocate of the RS. That is why he allowed a number of laws that favored the state over entities. But, that was 17 years ago, when Dodik didn't even dream about the political power he has today, and his share in every business in the RS. Who would be that crazy to let somebody else have that?

Of course, his concerns about the RS are just a facade for his concerns for the position. If he could somehow meddle in the court and make his private judiciary, that would help him keep the power for at least one more term, in which he would wrap up the "privatization" of the state, cover up the scams and embezzlements, and retire. Unless his private court declared him the RS president for life.

By Ernest Bucinski
Buka, Banja Luka

❖ Deputy Mayor of Sarajevo, Ranko Covic, hosted a reception for a delegation of German city of Friedrichshafen, which has been a sister city with Sarajevo for 43 years. Covic told FENA that he discussed with the deputy mayor of Friedrichshafen Wolfgang Sigg the continuance of cooperation in the field of culture, as well as the intensification of relations by organizing trade shows in the field of tourism and economy. He said that the two cities have established sister relations in 1972, thanks to a partnership between FAMOS company and the German Zeppelin. After the reception, the Friedrichshafen delegation visited the City Hall, while today it is planned for the delegation to visit the Health Center "Omer Maslic", in whose reconstruction and equipping the city administration of Friedrichshafen and its citizens invested 800,000 Euros.

❖ A temporary memorial Pavilion of Memories will be opened on Wednesday on the plateau in front of the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo as a reminder of the victims of the concentration camp Jasenovac. The Pavilion of Memories, which marked the dismantlement of the camp in Zagreb in the spring of 2013, is authored by Sasa Simpraga, while the concept belongs to David Kabalin and the designer Niko Mihaljevic. After the opening of the Pavilion of Memories, a public debate will be held on "International Cooperation on Developing the Culture of Memory of the Holocaust and the Second World War."

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Establishment of Commercial Courts Is a Priority

Prime Minister of the Federation Fadil Novalic received the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway in Bosnia and Herzegovina Vibeke Lilloe

Ambassador informed Prime Minister Novalic about the activities that Norway has taken since the war to support the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly emphasizing the period since 2000 and the programs on building democracy and strengthening the rule of law, in particular the projects in the segment of justice, which were funded with around 28 million Euros, said the Public Relations Office of the Government of the FBiH. Ambassador Lilloe pointed out that the Kingdom of Norway was among the first to respond to the projects of recovery from the devastating floods in the country, having invested 10.25 million KM so far in the recovery and reconstruction. She extended congratulations on what has been done so far on the implementation of the Reform Agenda and the



Vibeke Lilloe and Fadil Novalic

progress on the path towards the European Union. Novalic requested assistance from the Kingdom of Norway with the program to establish commercial courts in the country and Ambassador Lilloe expressed willingness to cooperate and provide support. Ambassador of Norway wanted to know more about the implementation of the

Reform Agenda and the coordination with the Council of Ministers and the Government of RS.

Prime Minister Novalic stressed that Bosnia and Herzegovina is one economic space, the Federation of BiH and the RS have the same or similar problems, and this area requires harmonization of activities.

Eighteen GPS Devices Donated to BHM MAC Center

The official handover of 18 GPS devices donated via the Government and Embassy of the United States through the ITF Enhancing Human Security took place at the Center for Mine Action in BiH (BHM MAC). The donation is worth 81,530 US dollars and it will contribute to everyday tasks performed by BHM MAC. BHM MAC global positioning system is used for more than 13 years, but the successful establishment of permanent GPS network in BiH created preconditions for a better, more efficient and accurate use of



the GPS system, in which the 18 donated devices will be of great help.

"With this we will be able to double our

capacity in terms of existing GPS devices, as it will allow us to connect with the existing network of permanent GPS stations in BiH," it is said.

In a statement, it is emphasized that the precise operation and measurement in the field is relevant to the work of BH MAC. The current size of mine suspected area in BiH is 1,165 km², or 2.3 percent of total land area. 1,417 communities are affected by landmines / UXO, which directly affect the safety of about 538,500 people, or about 15 percent of total BiH population.

Parliament's Military Commissioner Receives German Defense Attache

Parliamentary Military Commissioner of BiH Bosko Siljegovic received Defense Attache of the Federal Republic of Germany to BiH Colonel Martin L. Herrmann in an inaugural visit. Siljegovic informed Colonel Herrmann about the laws which regulate the system of protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of members of BiH Armed Forces. He emphasized that

the Law on Parliamentary Military Commissioner is a mirror of model of protection of human rights of soldiers and cadets which has been successfully implemented in Germany for several decades.

Handing the report on activities of the Parliamentary Military Commissioner of BiH for 2014 to Colonel Herrmann, which was adopted at sessions of both

Houses of BiH PA, Siljegovic informed the Defense Attache about the most important elements from this report. Defense Attache of Germany was interested in learning about activities of the parliamentary military commissioner on the ground and his visits to units and commands of BiH Armed Forces with the aim of determining violation of human rights of soldiers and cadets.

Court Eases Oric's Travel Restrictions

The state court has prolonged measures limiting the movements of Naser Oric but has allowed him free movement in the Federation, reports BIRN

The Bosnian state court has accepted the request of the prosecution for measures restricting Naser Oric's movement to remain in place.

However, it has allowed the former Bosnian Army commander of the Srebrenica enclave free movement on the territory of the Federation entity. Prosecutor Miroslav Janjic on Monday asked Bosnia's state court to prolong measures limiting Oric's movements to the Sarajevo and Zenica cantons. Oric's lawyer, Lejla Covic, had asked for all the measures to be reduced, so that her client could move freely in Bosnia's Federation entity.

"All the witnesses live in Republika Srpska," Covic explained, noting that as they lived in the other entity in Bosnia, Oric was unlikely to influence them.

The court on September 10 confirmed an indictment charging Oric with killing three Bosnian Serb prisoners of war in the villages of Zalazje, Lolic and Kunjerac in 1992. Another Bosnian army fighter

Sabahudin Muhic is charged with the same crimes.

Oric was arrested in June on the French-Swiss border at the request of the Serbian prosecution, which wanted to charge him with war crimes. But he was later extradited to Bosnia and Herzegovina, not Serbia. The Hague Tribunal has already acquitted him of committing war crimes against Serbs in the Srebrenica area. The UN-backed court ruled that he did not have control over the Bosnian Army that committed the crimes.

Oric's lawyer said on Monday that the entire prosecution case rests on the testimony of a single witness, whose statements in the investigation phase, according to Covic, were "contradictory".

Covic said that in May and June 1992 Srebrenica was separated from the Lolic and Zalazje villages, so the witness could not have possibly been in those locations.

"A bird could not have even flown from one area to another," Covic said, and added: "There is no chance Oric could run or influ-

ence witnesses. He was extradited from Switzerland after he went there to a commemoration of the [1995 Srebrenica] genocide. He only has Bosnian citizenship and even if he ran, he would be extradited again". However, Prosecutor Janjic said that the indictment was not based on the testimony of one witness, but 31 witnesses, five of whom are direct eye witnesses.

Oric is expected to give his plea to the charges in the next couple of weeks.

Council of Ministers Supports Draft Agreement between State and Islamic Community



Semiha Borovac

BiH Council of Ministers of BiH confirmed Draft Basic Agreement between BiH and Islamic Community in BiH, proposed by Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees. Minister of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH Semiha Borovac told FENA that certain misunderstandings from the agreement have been removed and that certain provisions have been defined.

"Obscurities have been removed because it is already regulated by the Federation law that each worker, according to the Law on Labor which is also being prepared in Republika Srpska, has the right to a half-hour break a day and how they are going to use it depends on agreement which the employer and worker reach," she explained.

She added that when it comes to Hajj, those are all non-working days, that is, it is absence without pay, whereas one hour for Friday Prayer will be used in agreement with employer, as stated in the Federation law.

Federation Close To Finalizing Cadastre Digitization

Project whose crucial aim is harmonizing cadastre records in all 79 municipalities to have a single data base on real estate in the Federation of BiH was presented at a press conference by Ministry of Justice of FBiH and the Federation Administration for Geodetic and Property-Legal Affairs. Project of registration of real estate in FBiH, its official title, is continuation of a project of registration of land registry books and activities implemented so far are in accordance with plan and expected results, it was stated.

"Ninety-nine percent of the land registry books has already been digitized in FBiH," stated the Federation Minister of Justice Mato Jozic.

Out of all natural persons registered in land registry offices, women are owners of 31 percent. All cadastre data is in a single data base, of which 79 percent of parcels are in digital form. Manager of the project implementation unit Nedžad Pasalic emphasized that the World Bank has supported the project and stated it is

pleased with the implementation so far. He emphasized three components of the project, of which the first and crucial one is harmonizing data of cadastre and second improving infrastructure in cadastre offices with computer and geodetic equipment. Third component is project management policy, said Pasalic and announced a study on satisfaction of clients with services of the cadastre.

Director of the Federation Administration for Geodetic and Property-Legal Affairs Zeljko Obradovic said that all parcels in FBiH will be available on geoport and the aim is to provide information on ownership. During the implementation of the project special attention was paid to vulnerable groups, that is, displaced persons, members of national minorities, socially endangered persons and persons with disabilities.

All entries in land registry books for cadastre municipalities, which are subject of establishment or replacement of a land registry book within this project, will be done without charging the court fees.

Trial Digital Broadcasting in Two Months

BiH Minister of Communications and Transport Slavko Matanovic said that trial broadcast of digital signal in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar should begin in about two months

Informing the Committee on Transport and Communications of the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH on implementation of digitization process, Matanovic said that after the first year of broadcasting 80 percent of the territory should be covered by digital signal, and it takes up to three years to cover the entire territory. He explained that as of 17 June 2015, BiH citizens who

use the analogue system, and there are between 40 and 50 percent of them, will have a problem with receiving the signal. Test broadcasting of the digital signal will additionally complicate the situation but the problem can be solved by the Communications Regulatory Agency by awarding other frequencies to broadcasters. Matanovic said that Ministry of Communication and Transport of BiH

will appoint a Commission for procurement of equipment for the second stage of digitization, announcement of the international tender for second stage of digitization, consider possibility of moving from DVB-T standard to DVB-T2 standard, and define modalities, sources and amount of funds for subvention for population for procurement of devices for digital signal reception - ST box.

University Fair to Be Held at UWC Mostar

The 7th Fair of Universities will be held on October 1 in the building of the United World Colleges (UWC) in Mostar. The organizer of the Fair that is intended for college graduates who wish to continue their education abroad is the UWC Mostar, in cooperation with a group of universities.

The Fair will begin with introductory presentations about studying in the United States and Canada, after which individual presentations of the universities will follow. Higher education institutions that will be presented at this year's Fair are Bennington College, Colorado College, Earlham

College, Gettysburg College, Methodist University, Quest University, Ringling College of Art & Design, St. John's College, St. Olaf College, University of Oklahoma, University of Rochester, the University of Saskatchewan, Wartburg College, Whitman College and Westminster College.

School Supplies and Scholarships Handed to Roma Students in Jablanica

Within the project "City of Equal Opportunities", distribution of school supplies and scholarships for Roma children took place in Jablanica. Roma school children received bags, books, and other supplies necessary for their

education. Among other things, they were also awarded one-time scholarships, besides the regular scholarships that are given to all pupils of the Roma population, which have been provided by the municipality of Jablanica. The

project "City of Equal Opportunity" is financed by the Council of Europe, and implemented with the help of the project coordinator of Jablanica municipality and the partner - the Youth Club "Under the Same Sun".



Sarajevo Uni Gets Slovenian Language Department

With a ceremony at the Rectorate of the Sarajevo University (UNSA), the opening of the Slovenian language department took place. The department will start working in October at the Faculty of Philosophy. The department will be headed by Pavel Ocepek and admission will begin in the second half of September.

It started working on the initiative and in cooperation between the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Centre for Slovenian language at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana and the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo.

Shell Will Not Seek to Extend MoU with Federation

Shell Exploration Company will not seek an extension of the memorandum of understanding it signed in 2011 with the government of Bosnia's Federation, Oslobodjenje newspaper reported on Tuesday, citing a company letter as saying

Following an internal portfolio review and in the light of the current oil and gas environment, Shell will not seek to extend the MoU further, the company said in a letter sent to the government of the Federation and published by Oslobodjenje. The company said that the

MoU was extended in 2013 and 2014 to enable the parties to potentially negotiate a petroleum license, but such negotiation have not started and the MoU is set to expire on November 4. "Shell has not conducted any additional technical evaluation since 2013, as previously stated

our decision is primarily based on our worldwide portfolio review and not on the potential prospectively of the area," the Shell letter said. Earlier this month, the government of the Federation instructed the entity's energy ministry to initiate activities with regard to extending the MoU. The government was hoping to reach a deal with Shell in 2015 and sign an oil exploration contract for a period of 30 to 50 years.

Passenger Traffic at BiH Airports Rises 19.2% in First Half

The combined passenger traffic at BiH international airports rose 19.2% to 490,877 in the first six months of 2015, the statistics agency of BiH said on Tuesday. Freight traffic in the six-month period increased to 4,331 tons through June from 1,084, the agency said. In the second quarter alone, air passenger traffic rose 16.5% on the year to 309,810, while freight traffic surged from 743 tons to 3,183 tons. BiH has four international

airports - in Sarajevo, Mostar, Tuzla and Banja Luka. In terms of rail transport, 261,000 passengers were transported in the first six months of the year, up 2% on the year, while freight traffic increased 5.4% on the year to 6.9 million tons. In the second quarter alone, the number of passengers transported by rail increased 16% on the year to 145,000, while the number of tons transported rose 14.8% to 3.5 million.

FBiH Government Plans to Sell Stakes in Five Companies

The government of Bosnia's Federation intends to sell stakes in at least five companies where it is a minority shareholder over the next three months. The companies in question are drug maker Bosnalijek, fuel retailer Energopetrol, aluminium smelter Aluminij, tobacco factory Fabrika duhana Sarajevo and insurer Sarajevo Osiguranje, Avaz newspaper reported on Tuesday. The government's capital in these companies is valued at some 190 million KM, Avaz

added. According to an adopted action plan, the privatization of the mentioned companies is envisaged to take place between October and December this year, while the funds from the sale will go towards rehabilitating the entity's pension and disability insurance institute. The Federation government owns a 19.25% stake in Bosnalijek, 22.1% in Energopetrol, 39.9% in FDS, 44% in Aluminij and 45.5% in Sarajevo Osiguranje.

Mostar Comes Second as Best Value Destinations in 2016

Travel search engine Trivago listed the best value places to stay in 2016 - which offer quality hotels at reasonable prices. The ranking is part of the Best Value Index, which the site creates using hotel price data and aggregated user reviews and ratings, "resulting in a list of 100 destinations where the hotels are both affordable and highly rated". Coming

out on top, in first place, is Fenghuang in China. The city scored 98.01 out of 100. In second place was Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina with a score of 97.22. Other high value destinations included Sibiu in Romania, Novi Sad in Serbia and Wayanad in India. China featured prominently in the top ten, claiming three spots on the list.

Foresta Wood Industry Opens New Plant

Republika Srpska President Milorad Dodik opened in Kostajnica on Tuesday a new production plant of Foresta wood processing company, worth two million KM. Part of the money has been secured by a loan of the Investment and Development Bank of Republika Srpska (IRB RS). "I am pleased that Foresta made a lot of efforts after last year's floods to continue with production and that it managed to open a new plant as well," Dodik said while addressing the opening ceremony. He added this company is an undoubted resource for the RS, because it is the only of its kind on a wider area. "IRB RS provided support and new jobs were opened. Now Foresta needs support in raw material and we must work on that," Dodik noted. He went on to say that he has met with representatives of the RS forest company Sume Srpske over the matter, because additional raw base would mean the creation of new jobs. Foresta director Svetozar Stanisavljevic said the new plant, first and the only in this part of Europe, manufactures sliced veneer by the state-of-the-art Austrian technology. "The new plant manufactures high quality sliced veneer from two to six millimeters thick that is used in parquet industry for making two-layer and three-layer parquet," Stanisavljevic stressed. He said that majority of the production is exported to Portugal, Spain, China and Japan.

DALILA MIROVIC

Women's Representation in the Government Is Insufficient

State parliament's Commission for Gender Equality, in cooperation with the Agency for Gender Equality and the Sarajevo Open Center, organized a thematic debate on gender equality and political participation in BiH. Dalila Mirovic, a program coordinator at Sarajevo Open Center, told soc.ba that women are traditionally under-represented in governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Equal representation of women and men in the executive and legislative bodies is one of the key indicators of the achieved level of gender equality in any society. What is the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Gender equality in political life in BiH, also in any other society, is one of the most important factors for achieving gender equality in general. Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina says that government bodies at all levels, local authorities and political parties must ensure and promote equal gender representation in management, decision-making and representation. However, women's participation in this country, at any level, does not exceed 25%. It is within the European average, but it does not meet the statutory minimum of 40% quota of the less represented gender. Data obtained by the Sarajevo Open Centre, published in 'Where Are Women in Government? Representation and Representativeness of Women and Men in the Executive Branch in BiH', confirmed the assumptions that women are traditionally under-represented in governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. None of the 14 governments in BiH (the Council of Ministers of BiH, entity and cantonal governments, and the Government of the Brcko District of BiH) has been appointed to date in such a way that the goal from Article 20 from the Law on Gender Equality in BiH - consolidated version ("Official Gazette of BiH", No. 32/10) was fulfilled. There are two women in the current Council of Ministers of BiH, four in the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while there is one woman prime minister and three ministers appointed in the Government of Republika Srpska. In the governments of cantons, there are no women prime ministers, while the percentage of women ministers in cantonal governments was around 17.5% (the number of women ministers varies from 0% to 25% depending on the canton). The most drastic



Dalila Mirovic

example is the government of the Zenica-Doboj Canton, not a single woman was appointed.

Entitled to Proportional Representation

Was the presentation of the current situation, in terms of women's participation in political life of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the objective of the thematic debate?

Presentation of the current state of gender representation in the legislative and executive bodies at all levels of government for the representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina is only one of the goals the organizers tried to achieve. The intention of this debate is also to determine whether there was a change in the legislature after the last session on the political participation of women and after the latest amendments to the Election Law BiH, which increased gender quotas on candidate lists, as well as to open discussion of gender representation in the executive bodies.

Why is this issue important and why is it important to increase women's political participation?

There are three key reasons for the increase in women's political participation: democratic right, use of resources and interest representation. Women constitute half of the total population and are entitled to proportional representation in legislative, executive and judicial bodies of their countries. By excluding women from the democratic

political process, we exclude precious values that those women possess - knowledge, skills and abilities. Of course, there is also the assumption that women have special interests, and the exclusion of women would make those interests under-represented in political decision-making.

Amendments to the Law

SOC has recently published numerous recommendations and/or models that aim to increase women's political participation. Can you tell more about that?

Recommendations and solutions that SOC has proposed can be found in two recent publications, published in our Human Rights Papers series. I previously referred to one of them, 'Where Are Women in Governments? Representation of Women and Men in the Executive Branch in BiH', which points out a potential approach to the regulation of this expectation in legal regulations that organize the rules of forming governments, and has proposed a formulation of provisions to introduce the quota for both genders. The second publication, 'How to Achieve 40% of Women in the Legislative Bodies in BiH? An Analysis of the Possible Interventions to the Electoral System of BiH', is an analysis whose goal is to identify different elements of the electoral system of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the type of electoral system, the impact of the existing quotas on the candidate lists and the causes which diminish the impact of the quota, and the possible interventions to remove the existing obstacles. Regarding the specific conclusions drawn from these two analyses, we believe that the amendments to the Election Law should create a system which will, regardless of the structure of vote, result in election of at least 40% of women in parliaments, and also regulate the formation of governments in a manner that the confirmation of a government will not be possible without at least 40% of women in ministerial positions.

Balkans Losing Human Capital, World Bank Warns



Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Bosnia must try to counter the negative economic impact of the steady outflow of emigrants, the World Bank said, reports BIRN

A new World Bank report on the economies of the six Balkan countries, published on Monday, warns that the region is losing a vital part of its young and educated population and urges governments to take action to deal with the consequences.

"The SEE6 countries [Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina] are among the top migrant-sending regions in the world. Today the equivalent of a quarter of the current population of SEE6 lives outside their home countries," the biannual report said.

"Since the early 1990s, there has been a steady flow of migrants from the SEE6 to the EU with roughly 4.9 million people, having left their countries," it added. The report said that unlike in the 1990s when people were fleeing conflict in the Balkans, most of the current emigrants leave for economic reasons.

"Low growth since the global financial crisis, chronically high unemployment, income levels at a third of the average of the EU, and vulnerability to external shocks and natural disasters, have constrained domestic income generation in

the region. As such, people continue to emigrate in search of better economic opportunities," it said.

"The majority of migrants are young, of working age, and generally with higher educational attainment than the respective age group in the home countries," it added.

All the Western Balkan countries have experienced renewed emigration to Western Europe during the past year.

The number of asylum seekers registered in Germany from the region almost tripled to 78,000 during the six months from January to June 2015 compared to the previous year.

"This gives further impetus to SEE6 countries to take policy actions to mitigate the negative impact of ongoing demographic transformations in their countries, in particular the aging and shrinking of its societies," the World Bank Report said.

It urged governments to invest in human capital and create income-generating opportunities at home in order to motivate young people to stay or return from abroad and counteract the problems of ageing societies.

Agreement signed to Build New Drina River Bridge



An agreement was signed on Tuesday to build the Ljubovija-Bratunac bridge across the Drina River. The document was signed by Serbian Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure Zorana Mihajlovic and the representative of a consortium of local companies which will be engaged in the construction.

On behalf of the consortium of four local firms led by the civil engineering company MBA - Ratko Mitrovic Niskogradnja, the agreement was signed by the company director Ilija Djordjevic.

Building the bridge and a joint border crossing point will speed up the traffic and the flow of goods, and create a better business environment for investments in the areas near the border between Serbia and Bosnia on both sides of the Drina River, Mihajlovic said after signing the agreement at the Serbian government building.

The costs of construction will total around 12 million Euros; Serbia will allocate some 4.5 million and the rest of the funds will be provided by Republika Srpska. According to the agreement, Serbia will provide funds for the planning and technical documentation, and the construction of the bridge and the access road.

Bosnia will fund the construction of border-crossing facilities, while the RS will finance access roads in the Bosnian territory.

How One Man Survived the Srebrenica Massacre - for 78 Days



It takes half an hour driving along a thin, serpentine road through a canopy of beech and oak trees, past herds of cows ambling across the pavement, and another 10 minutes on a gravel path to reach Elvir Hafizovic

A canary yellow structure of solid stone comes into view. This is his house, the only one in Kamenjaca, a hamlet just west of Srebrenica. Hafizovic, 36, has put nearly 10 years of love into his home. He grew up here, but when he returned in 2006 he found doors and windows missing. Little by little, as finances allowed, he patched it up on his own. His mother and little brother are two hours away, his sister lives abroad and his friends are strewn across the country. Kamenjaca - and much of the rest of this region - emptied out in the final months of the Bosnian War, when Bosnian Serbs stormed the area and slaughtered thousands of Muslims. The people who would be Hafizovic's neighbors are either dead or never came home. Breathing life back into his defunct village has been a solitary effort.

A Lonely Life

Hafizovic studied criminology at a local university, but no matter where he searched - even in the capital, Sarajevo - he couldn't find work in his field. When a friend called him about an opening in Srebrenica's postal service, he decided to give it a try until something else came up. That was six years ago; nothing has.

So every weekday, Hafizovic journeys into town to pick up stacks of mail that he deliv-

By Sumi Somaskanda
The Week

ers to the surrounding villages, through the killing fields of a savage war.

Many Bosnian Muslims lived in the region before the war, and they have slowly returned. These days, families from both sides have settled into a peaceful, if tenuous, co-existence. But the wounds of war remain, and ethnic divisions still run deep. During a commemoration this month marking the anniversary of the Srebrenica Massacre, Bosnian Muslims hurled rocks at the prime minister of Serbia.

Hafizovic's postal route passes through majority Muslim and Serb communities. Once, he delivered documents to a retiree in a Serb village who complained to Hafizovic that the government had denied him an army pension.

"When the state asked me to take up arms and slaughter Muslims, I did, and now the state won't give me anything?"

Hafizovic didn't respond.

But such slights are rare. Of the eight employees working in Srebrenica's postal service, Hafizovic is the only Bosnian Muslim. In the beginning, the awkward pleasantries with his new colleagues were strained, but the tension didn't last.

"We got to know each other over

time," he said.

"Now I have a really good relationship with them."

His meager salary isn't enough to make ends meet, so he started stringing together hobbies to fill in the gaps. He taught himself to make honey by watching videos on YouTube. He constructed an apiary below a low, mossy knoll in the front yard and when visitors come, he serves fresh pieces of dripping honeycomb.

With his wide-set jaw and tawny features, Hafizovic is comic-book handsome, a fact that isn't lost on women in town. But he's happiest up here in the mountains. Save for five cats and a lazy hound dog, Bobby, Hafizovic is by himself.

"It's a lonely life. Before the war there were some 50 people in this hamlet. Now I'm the only one," he said.

"That was the genocide."

The Terror Was Constant

In early spring of 1992, Hafizovic stood on the crest of land in front of his house, looking over the unspoiled hills of eastern Bosnia. Just below sloping fields of daisies and thistles, he saw the next Muslim village in flames. That's when he knew the war had begun. For months, his parents had guessed where this was heading. Yugoslavia was

breaking up, Slovenia and Croatia were spiraling into war and tensions were rising. They didn't say anything to their four sons and daughter lest they worry, too. But kids sense things, and 13-year-old Hafizovic knew something was wrong.

Serb tanks perched on a hill to the north, and it wasn't long before shells and bullets rained on their village. The family hid in the cellar for a few days, but the electricity vanished and water also dried up.

They had little way of knowing what was happening beyond Kamenjaca. But families fleeing surrounding villages started arriving in search of shelter. Soon there were 12 people sharing a house that was already snug for a family of seven. With no access to shops and the food supply thinning quickly, the adults planted potatoes and whatever other seeds they could find. Hafizovic's job was to tend the sheep in a valley just outside the enemy line of fire. The animals' wool provided warmth and a cow provided milk. But it wasn't nearly enough. In the beginning, they had thought the fighting would subside after a few days. By the time winter set in, food was scarcer than ever and desperation gnawed at their resolve.

"That's when we started to think this will never end. We'll either die of hunger or they'll shoot us," Hafizovic said.

Snipers were nestled into leafy nooks throughout the hills, and they rarely missed their mark. Hafizovic's brothers were wounded by sniper fire, and he, too, took a bullet just above his right ankle.

Serb troops did try to storm directly into Kamenjaca early on. First they charged with shoddy hunting guns, and the villagers repelled them easily. The next time, they brought tanks and trucks. Hafizovic and the other men and boys drove them back with a stream of Molotov cocktails.

The Serbs stopped trying to break through, but the terror was constant. With time, Hafizovic and his family learned to navigate the cues and signals of war.

"The longer it went on, the more we knew when they attacked and when it was safe to go out," he said.

"We would hear when they would launch artillery and we knew we had about a minute to take cover."

By 1995, war had been tearing apart Bosnia for three years. Hafizovic had long since stopped waiting for the television to turn back on, or for his childhood to return.

There was no other choice but to survive, he said, and to learn to deal with it. He didn't feel hate or fury as a teenager trapped in the middle of a raging war. Instead, he felt a sense of injustice that still dogs him today.

UN Detention Is Not Designed for "Fragile People in Their Third Age": Karadzic



Former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic has asked the UN to investigate an alleged increase in the number of malignant diseases among defendants in the Hague tribunal, reports BIRN

Radovan Karadzic has told a status conference on his health that he is worried by the number of grave illnesses reported among Hague prisoners.

"I ask you to examine what [it] is... It is unusual for such a number of diseases to occur in such a small space," he said.

Karadzic told the status conference that he had an operation due to gall bladder inflammation last month, just after he complained to the trial chamber about his health condition.

"Thanks to your intervention, I was sent to the ultrasound [scan] the same day, where they saw my gall bladder was in the final stage... I would have gone yellow the next day... The same day, I had urgent surgery," Karadzic said.

Details of the surgery were not made public. He said during the open hearing that his blood sugar level was high, but was now stable. Karadzic believes the cause of his illness lies in the "system", meaning the conditions in the Hague tribunal detention unit in Scheveningen. He argues that he "came into custody in exemplary good health", which he preserved with "Christian tradition and Eastern medicine".

Before his health deteriorated in August, Karadzic said that "eight teeth broke with no reason", which was "an indicator something in the body was disrupted".

He also complained about the food in custody, saying it was frozen and heated in the microwave, was of "bad quality and [had an] unusual taste for the people from the

Balkans".

Given that the custody is "more [like] a retirement home" where there are "intellectuals", "barely anyone gets accustomed to different tastes and barely anyone eats their meal," Karadzic said.

Karadzic's request for the investigation into how detention affects prisoners' health is based on a claim that 11 detainees suffered from malignant diseases since they came into custody in the summer of 2008. The detention system in The Netherlands is not designed for "fragile people in their third age", he said.

Detention staff are "excellent", but "the rules are pointless", Karadzic said.

Asked by the judges whether he was involved in physical activity, Karadzic replied: "I regularly engage physically, I go for a walk, I play tennis and so on..."

Preceding Judge O-Gon Kwon said the trial chamber could conclude "with relief" that Karadzic had recovered from the surgery and that he pays "major significance" to his health. Regarding the detention system, the judge said he noticed it "functions" and told Karadzic that trial chamber is not in charge of it, so that he should refer to the detention administration and court registry.

Karadzic, the former president of Republika Srpska, is charged with genocide in Srebrenica and several other municipalities, the persecution of Bosniaks and Croats across the country, terrorizing the population of Sarajevo and taking UN peacekeepers hostage.

WEATHER OUTLOOK



Sarajevo

Today: Light rain. High 12C.
Tonight: Low 10C.
Thursday: Cloudy. Close to 17C.

Banja Luka

Today: Cloudy. High 15C.
Tonight: Low 11C.
Thursday: Cloudy. Close to 17C.

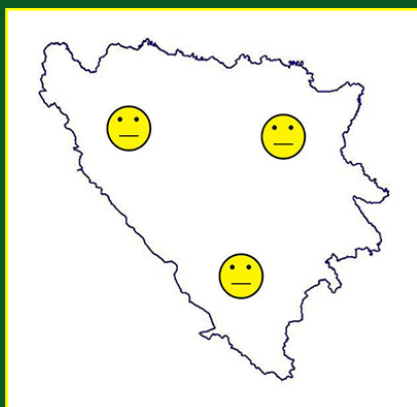
Tuzla

Today: Light rain. High 13C.
Tonight: Low 10C.
Thursday: Partly cloudy. Close to 17C.

Mostar

Today: Partly cloudy. High 20C.
Tonight: Low 11C.
Thursday: Mostly sunny. Close to 24C.

BIO METEO



Air pollution in Sarajevo
MODERATE

UV Index

Low

GLOBE IN PICTURES



Thousands of life jackets from refugees and migrants form a small hill near the village of Molyvos on the Greek island of Lesbos



Afghan special forces arrive for a battle with the Taliban in Kunduz City in northern Afghanistan



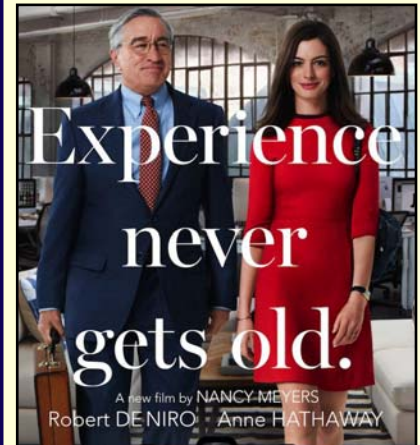
Cambodian Buddhist monks enjoy their lunch during the Day of the Dead (Ancestors' Day), at a pagoda in Phnom Penh



The aftermath of a Sinabung volcano eruption in an abandoned area, Bekerah village Sinabung Volcano Eruption, Karo, Sumatra, Indonesia



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 TRIALS

EVEREST

DRAGON NEST: WARRIOR'S DAWN