

Foreign Press Office - Mostar

MEDIA REPORTS

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BiH Croat party to appeal to European court over violation of rights

SRNA

July 29, 2005

The HDZ BiH [Croatian Democratic Union in Bosnia-Herzegovina] will appeal to the [European] Court of Human Rights in order to establish equality within the framework of the Bosnia-Herzegovina public radio-television [RTV] system, the party said today.

The statement points out that the HDZ BiH was forced into making such a move due to the impossibility of protecting the fundamental rights of Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"The Croat people have a constitutional right to their own radio-TV channel in the Croatian language, which would protect the vital interests of Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina, ensuring the equal treatment of programmes in the Croatian language in the Bosnia-Herzegovina media," the statement says.

HDZ BiH believes that through the reform of the public RTV system "consideration should be given to those who today are a national minority in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as the right to information is one of the foundations of democracy".

The Bosnia-Herzegovina Constitutional Court decided that the draft law on the public RTV system was not harmful to the vital interests of Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina when it came to the matter of the Croatian language.

IMF and EC against Islamic banking

Vecernji list

By Zoran Kresic

July 29, 2005

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), the delegation of the European Commission (EC) and the Federation Banking Agency all have expressed their "reservations" toward a proposed amendment to the Law on Banking regarding "Islamic banking," stating that at this point it is not appropriate to institute such banking in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The amendment is scheduled for a vote today in the Federation House of Peoples.

In case the amendment is adopted, BiH would, along with Britain – which is already contemplating revoking the privileges, be the only country in Europe to apply the Organization of Islamic Countries' banking regulations.

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Instituting Islamic banking implies forbidding interest, while encouraging joint investments, sales and dividing profits.

The IMF and EC thus pointed to the fact that this would place other banks, mainly European, in an extremely underprivileged position in BiH.

Letters possessed by Vecernji list indicating such were sent to Federation Prime Minister Hadzipasic by the IMF and EC, suggesting to him that such an amendment should be revoked even though it passed with a “majority of votes” in the Federation House of Representatives at the beginning of the month.

Due to this position of the international community on the one side and that of the Islamic Community on the other, Hadzipasic has found himself in a difficult position.

Following a meeting of the House of Representatives, the head of the Islamic Community in BiH reis-ul-ulema Dr. Mustafa Ceric indirectly “reprimanded” the House of Peoples for noting voting on the amendment last Friday.

Ceric’s letter, which was distributed to representatives in parliament last week, mentions that Islamic banking would contribute to economic growth in BiH and attract investments from “both the East and the West” (which is difficult to believe).

Croat representatives in the House of Peoples more directly than the IMF and EC called upon Prime Minister Hadzipasic to drop the controversial amendment, claiming it was improperly submitted. They claim Hadzipasic cannot submit an amendment to a previous amendment.

EUFOR: Inspections in security companies not linked with war criminals

FENA

July 29, 2005

BANJA LUKA – The inspection that members of EUFOR carried out on Thursday in several security companies was not linked with the activities on apprehending the persons indicted for war crimes, but was carried out due to suspicion that those companies are engaged in activities in contravention with the Dayton Accords, said the spokesperson of EUFOR’s Multinational Operational Group “North-West” (MNOG N-W), Chris Evans.

During the search on premises of “Sector security” in Banja Luka, EUFOR seized certain documentation and computers”, explained Evans, who was unable to comment on the content of seized items given that the investigation is still in progress.

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“These inspections are part of the EUFOR operations programme in BiH, and all proof on criminal activities will be forwarded to the local law enforcement agencies, which will take further action”, said Evans.

International Conference on BiH in Geneva this fall

HINA

July 29, 2005

Geneva will host an international conference titled “Bosnia and Herzegovina ten years after Dayton” October 21 and 22. The conference organizer is “Association BiH 2005” whose president is former high representative in BiH Wolfgang Petritsch. (Excerpt)

Bakir Izetbegovic new prime minister?

Slobodna Dalmacija

By Zlatko Tulic

July 29, 2005

After a series of recent meetings held by ruling parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which were unsuccessful in resolving the inactivity of the Council of Ministers, there is more frequent talk in Bosniak political circles that Adnan Terzic, the current head of the state government, is leaving and that the Council of Ministers will undergo significant changes.

According to sources close to the largest Bosniak party, SDA, Terzic would leave his post as Chairman of the Council of Ministers, with Ashdown’s praise, after police reforms, which are scheduled to conclude in September.

Namely, individuals in the SDA leadership are not satisfied with Terzic’s work thus far, especially in the last six months since the beginning of the ministerial crisis. Furthermore, conflict between Terzic and BiH Presidency Member and SDA President Sulejman Tihic is evident for some time now. It is no secret that the head of SDA, with support from several important people at the top of SDA, hopes for a complete reorganization of the Council of Ministers and Terzic’s definite departure as prime minister.

There is information coming from sources close to SDA, and even certain international circles state, that Terzic’s replacement could be none other than Bakir Izetbegovic, son of the late Alija Izetbegovic. Currently unimposing, Izetbegovic junior enjoys the support of the SDA leadership, and recent accomplishments in promoting Bosniak culture have placed him as the most likely candidate for chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers. (Excerpt)