

V.I.P. Daily News Report

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Srebrenica Declaration Adopted

The debate on the draft proposal on the condemnation of crimes in Srebrenica, tables under emergency procedure by 114 MPs of the ruling coalition, prompted the utterance of harsh words and insults back into the parliament on Tuesday, amidst a debate that on occasions was reminiscent of the passionate exchanges from the era of fiercest divisions within the Serbian society during the nineties, at the time of president Slobodan Milosević's regime.

The debate lasted until close to twenty minutes after midnight, which is when the assembly plunged into confusion - it seemed for a moment that speaker Slavica Djukic Dejanovic decided to suspend the session and postpone it to Wednesday, only to announce a few minutes later the beginning of the vote on the declaration.

Finally, of the 149 present MPs - since some of them were quick to leave the building - 127 voted in favor of the unchanged version of the declaration wording, 21 MPs were against and one abstained.

Until the beginning of the session, the Declaration on the Srebrenica massacre committed in 1995 on around 8000 Muslim did not have the support of the majority.

Media have been reporting that it remains uncertain whether deputies of United Serbia (JS) would vote for the draft declaration, but their party leader Dragan Markovic confirmed, against of expectations, that his party will support the declaration after he received assurances that consultations will begin in a few days on a document condemning all crimes on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

JS has not been the only member of the ruling coalition who has had second thoughts about supporting the declaration.

The Social Democratic Party of Serbia (SDPS) of Rasim Ljajic said that it will attempt to improve the content of the declaration, and the deputies of the Bosniac List said they will first request the adoption of the resolution of the European Parliament about Srebrenica and urge the government to proclaim July 11 a day of remembrance of Srebrenica victims, news agencies report.

The declaration on the condemnation of the Srebrenica crime was proposed by the deputies of DS-led coalition, G17 Plus, the Party of United Pensioners of Serbia (PUPS) and the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS).

Opposition parties, the Serbian Radical Party (SRS), the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), New Serbia (NS) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) have announced, all for their own reasons, that they will not support

the declaration, in dissatisfaction of the wording of the declaration and/or the way it has been tabled to the parliament for adoption.

Prior to the beginning of the session, the SNS introduced into the procedure its own draft declaration, containing the condemnation of all crimes in the former Yugoslavia, in particular the Srebrenica crime. The SNS has thereby made it clear it will not support the draft advance by the ruling coalition.

The DSS youth organization staged a protest in front of the parliament building before the beginning of the session titled "Srebrenica – Not on My Behalf" displaying their disagreement with the wording of the declaration which condemns only the crime committed in Srebrenica.

DSS remained firm on its stance that a declaration should be adopted condemning all crimes in the former Yugoslavia.

Not even the consultations between representatives of all caucuses, excluding the DSS, have brought any progress, with the exception of the agreement to "ensure a good atmosphere and parliament dignity".

The debate was marked by a number of criticisms directed against the ruling coalition – from its failure to observe procedures for the adoption of acts, to the discrimination of opposition proposals, through to not consulting the opposition enough when it comes to important topic.

The LDP, which votes for government proposals when it assesses that they are in the interest of Serbia's accession to the EU, has criticized the fact that MPs failed to meet on several occasions to discuss the declaration wording. The DSS and NS agreed with this criticism.

The SNS objected to the fact that the initiator failed to the demand that the document be examined under emergency procedure, whereas the SRS made objections of procedural nature.

The opposition also protested over the statement of Djukic-Dejanovic stating that the proposed wording may not be changed by amendments. The parliament speaker then corrected herself and said that each suggestion will be examined during the debate and that the parliament will take a stance on all potential modifications.

Declaration condemns "crime as established by the ICJ": The declaration draft states that the parliament condemns in the strongest terms the crime perpetrated against Bosniacs in Srebrenica in July in 1995 as established by the International Court of Justice, thus attempting to avoid the term genocide or crime, as not even the members of the ruling coalition agree among themselves about the

term. Such a definition is an attempt to overcome differences and bypass the expression.

The draft declaration states that other members of the former Yugoslavia are expected to condemn crimes perpetrated against the Serbs.

The declaration expresses “condolences and excuses” to the families of the victims for failure to do everything to avert the tragedy.

It has also been stated that the parliament provides support to government bodies entrusted with processing war crimes and successfully completing cooperation with the ICTY, in which special importance is given to the localization and arrest of Ratko Mladic, so that he may be processed in the tribunal.

The proposal states that the parliament “condemns in the strongest terms all the social and political processes and phenomena which have brought about the creation of the conviction that national objectives may be achieved through the use of armed forces and physical violence against members of other nations and religions”.

The list of objections to the offered wording was long.

LDP leader Cedomir Jovanovic declared that this party endorses a different resolution and wishes for the Srebrenica crime to be qualified as genocide in the resolution.

He assessed that “this obviously isn’t possible, not because the people are against it but because we lack inner forces in the society which would make the truth public”, news agency report.

DSS deputies assessed that the draft declaration is dividing victims; that it is damaging to Serbia and Republika Srpska (RS); that it creates conflict between nations and fails to condemn crimes against Serbs.

DSS caucus whip Milos Aligrudic declared that the adoption of the Srebrenica declaration will “smear the state” and “contribute to turning Serbia and Serbs into the eternal criminals”, news agencies reported.

Srebrenica is genocide, condemnation and apology required, Serbian mufti says: After the chief mufti of the Islamic community in Serbia Muamer Zukorlic, who requested that the crime in Srebrenica be called a genocide in the declaration, the same request was made on Tuesday by the deputy reis ul ulema of the rival Islamic community of Serbia and Serbian mufti Muhamed Jusufspahic.

Jusufspahic said that genocide took place in Srebrenica in 1995 against the Muslims and that Serbia could distance itself from this crime only by admitting it and by an apology, electronic media reported.

False tip-off of bomb planted in front of parliament: After more than 10 hours of debate in parliament, the police received a tip-off that a bomb was planted in front of the parliament building, *Beta* reported on Tuesday evening.

The tip-off was a false one. It was made from a public phone-booth, and the session continued without interruption.

On Tuesday evening, the first channel of *Radio Television Serbia (RTS)* was supposed to give a live broadcast of the Champions League match Bayern - Manchester United. In stead of the football match, however, the *RTS* gave a live broadcast of the parliamentary debate, so it is possible that the false alarm was provoked by some frustrated football fan.

Reinforces police presence after the false tip-off also subsequently caused a nervous reaction from certain opposition MPs who demanded an explanation in the parliament hall for the increase police presence in front of the building.

***Vecernje Novosti:* County Borders without Changes**

The borders of the counties would remain the same, and the changing of the order from 1992 that introduced them would not be discussed in due time, *Vecernje Novosti* daily reported on Wednesday citing several sources in the Government.

“This ended, at least for a while, the demands of Bosniaks and Vojvodina Hungarians for additional restructuring of Serbia after

the introduction of the five statistical regions in Serbia”, the daily reported.

Bosniak National Council delivered its written demand - that six Sandzak municipalities, which are at the moment divided into two counties: Zlatibor (Nova Varos, Priboj, Prijepolje, Sjenica) and Raska (Novi Pazar and Tutin), should be merged into one administrative unit - to the Prime Minister Mirko Cvetkovic fifteen days ago, but it seems without any results, *Vecernje Novosti* reported.

In case of Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ), the strongest party of Hungarian minority and the member of the ruling coalition, they reiterated that the changes in the borders of the counties were the agreed obligation that DS agreed on in the coalition agreement.

The coalition agreement said that the municipalities of Ada, Kanjiza and Senta would be transferred back from North Banat to North Backa county by the end of 2008, VMSZ MP Balint Pasztor said.

However, the Democratic Party confirmed to the daily on Tuesday that the issue of changing borders of the counties definitely would not be discussed in the upcoming changes of the Law on Regional Development.

Tadic, Josipovic, Solyom to Meet on April 16

Presidents of Serbia, Croatia and Hungary - Boris Tadic, Ivo Josipovic and Laszlo Solyom respectively - would meet on April 16 in the Hungarian city of Pecs, it was confirmed in the office of Serbian President on Tuesday, *Beta* news agency reported.

This information was previously reported by Hungarian Budapest-based *MTI* news agency, citing the office of Hungarian President Solyom.

The trilateral meeting of Foreign Ministers of the three countries - Vuk Jeremic, Gordan Jandrokovic and Peter Balasz was held on Tuesday in Budapest.

After the meeting Jeremic said that the support of Hungary and Croatia to Serbia’s membership in European Union was of the utmost importance, considering that joining the Union was the strategic priority of Belgrade.

***Blic:* DS Most Likely to Propose Dejan Soskic, NBS Council Chairman, for Governor**

The ruling coalition is one step away from deciding to appoint Dejan Soskic, the current Chairman of the National Bank of Serbia (NBS) Council, as the new governor, *Blic* on Wednesday writes.

According to the findings of this daily, Soskic is the “most serious candidate favoured by everyone in the government top”.

Other candidates which are considered are member of the NBS Council and former Vice-Governor Milojko Arsic and Dusan Vujovic, economist with the World Bank. In the past week, talks were led with several candidates, but the selection was narrowed down to these three – Soskic, Arsic and Vujovic, *Blic* writes.

The daily writes that Soskic is the candidate who will be proposed by the Democratic Party (DS), this party, according to the coalition agreement, having the right to this time propose the governor.

The G17 Plus would like to see Vujovic on the position of governor. The outgoing governor arrived to that position at the proposal of this party. However, the G17 Plus is in principle not opposed either to Soskic becoming governor, it is added.

“However, the final decision still hasn’t been brought. (...) Therefore the source states that he cannot at present claim with certainty that Soskic will be the new governor, but that he has the best chances”, *Blic* writes.

Governor candidate name to be revealed within the next few days, Cvetkovic says:

Prime Minister Mirko Cvetkovic declared on Tuesday that the ruling coalition will reach a consensus in the days to come about a candidate for the post of new governor of the National

Bank of Serbia and that his name will be disclosed thereafter, *Tanjug* reported.

The NBS council will formally release on April 6 outgoing Governor Radovan Jelasic who submitted his irrevocable resignation on March 23 but “the public should be acquainted with the name of the candidate for his succession”, Cvetkovic said, predicting that the election procedure will last around two months. The parliament financial committee will formally nominate the government to parliament.

Nevena Petrusic New Ruling Coalition Candidate for Commissioner for Equality

The parliamentary Committee for constitutional affairs, on Tuesday, proposed to parliament to, by urgent procedure, appoint the Dean of the Nis Law Faculty and long-term activist of the non-government sector Nevena Petrusic, as the Commissioner for Equality, electronic media reported.

Petrusevic was nominated by the *For a European Serbia* deputy group, lead by the Democratic Party (DS).

The second candidate for Commissioner, Goran Miletic, who was proposed by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and who has long-term experience in the area of protection of equality, was not discussed by the Committee since, as Parliament Speaker Slavica Djukic – Dejanovic explained, he had failed to receive necessary support at the February session of the Committee.

The refusal of the ruling coalition to support Miletic, supported by almost 200 NGOS, additionally disrupted the already strained relations between the political parties and the civilian sector in Serbia. At the time, Miletic’s nomination was disputed by the ruling coalition because he lacked judicial practice in the cases of protection of equality.

According to the Law Against Discrimination, the parliament was supposed to elect a Commissioner by 1 March.

National Council: Routine and Complete Cooperation with ICTY

The National Council for Cooperation with The Hague Tribunal (ICTY) emphasized that the complete cooperation with this Tribunal was established in the areas in the authority of the Council, Belgrade-based news agencies reported on Tuesday.

The information regarding the current number and realization level of demands from the Prosecution of the Tribunal and the defenses of the indictees at the war crimes tribunal was discussed.

In the area of documentation delivery, approach to the records of the state authorities, lifting the duty to keep secrets from the witnesses and other issues in the authority of the National Council, the cooperation with the ICTY was “a routine” and it reached “the level of complete cooperation”, it was emphasized at the session.

COMMENTARY

Declaration on Srebrenica: Why Is It So Difficult to Say “We are Sorry”

The Serbian parliament on Tuesday late in the evening, following a heated debate lasting several hours, passed the declaration condemning the war crime committed by the Bosnian Serb Army against the Muslims in Srebrenica in July 1995.

After an exchange of accusations between the parties, this act, which had been expected for months, was passed and the likelihood is that it will satisfy neither the authorities nor the opposition – nor the perpetrators nor the victims, nor the Serbs or Muslims. It seems that the only thing in which this heated debate – on Tuesday also accompanied by the presenting of the gruesome details of the crimes committed by members of one nation against another one from this territory in World War II – has succeeded in, is to reignite, for a time, the settled political passions, not only in parliament, but also on the whole political scene of the country. Renewed attacks by representatives of virtually all parties one against

the others at the Tuesday session, returned parliamentary debate back in time to the frightening level familiar from the long years of Slobodan Milosevic’s authoritarian rule, when deep political divides surrounding the national question regularly culminated in fabricated divisions onto “patriots” and “traitors”.

The initiator of the declaration, three months ago, was President Boris Tadic. The initiative was, in a fashion, a repetition of the 2005 attempt when the proposal of the NGO sector failed – placed through two opposition MPs – to have a similar document passed in parliament. However, from the very onset Tadic’s idea was not entirely clearly presented. It was not known what would be written in the future document, who would draft it, how the opposition parties would participate in its creation; it also remained unclear as to the background of favouring such a move precisely at that time, when it could not be connected to some event current at the time. This all the more since it was on numerous occasions stated from European capitals that no one in the EU had pressured Belgrade into launching the initiative on the Srebrenica declaration.

Subsequent attempts at analysis indicated the following possible reasons of such timing. Firstly, Tadic presented the initiative at a moment when pressure was growing from the West to discipline the obstinate Prime Minister of the Republika Srpska Milorad Dodik, and Serbia was still showing no progress in the search for Hague fugitive Ratko Mladic, the main actor of the Srebrenica massacre. Furthermore, this was a period when the deterioration of the economic situation in the country was visible to the naked eye. This could have been the reasons to, by bringing up an old sensitive topic, initiate a strong campaign which would divert the public’s attention from current difficulties to unhealed wounds from the 1990s. However, this is now a less significant aspect of the story.

It was immediately clear that Tadic’s idea would create new disagreements on the local political scene, which unfortunately, in its greater part still refuses to come to terms with Serbia’s role in the 1990s wars. It could also be predicted that the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) would find itself in an especially politically sensitive situation. The party, according to public opinion polls, is seriously threatening Tadic’s Democratic Party (DS); the SNS is on the one hand trying to profile itself as a new political force and pro-European party, while on the other hand constantly struggling with the difficult burden of the past, since its leaders and many followers were until yesterday members of the extremist Serbian Radical Party (SRS) of Vojislav Seselj.

After the initial proposal, for a time Tadic left the presentation of this story to others, primarily his own party and coalition partners, who had to negotiate the declaration with the opposition. The standpoints of the SRS and Vojislav Kostunica’s Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) were immediately clear – they were against it from the start. The SNS’s position was therefore the most interesting from the political standpoint: this party found itself between the electorate which it wants to win over and the international community which expects from it new confirmations of the proclaimed dedication to European values. And the massacre at Srebrenica is precisely one of such test cases. The SNS so found itself in a situation in which if it were to vote against the declaration it would be stigmatized as being anti-European, and if it voted for the proposed text it would have to count with a backlash among a part of its potential voters.

This especially in a situation when, considering numerous complications which are following Serbia even ten years after the bringing down of the authoritarian regime – and as the former deputy prime minister and former G17 Plus leader Miroslav Labus concluded two evenings ago – it would seem more natural to follow the order of things in which all the culprits for the terrible crime in Srebrenica would be arrested and convicted first; then allow for a period of remorse and confronting moral responsibility; and then would come a time for issuing a symbolic apology. Instead, the declaration became

the subject of political deals, Labus said then. There is also the statement of the leader of the Islamic Community of Serbia Muhamed Jusufspahic, who said on Tuesday that the initiative for the passing of the Srebrenica declaration lacked sincerity, which rings true.

With a better preparation – for instance if Tadic had come before the parliament to elaborate on his initiative; if the task of preparing the document had been entrusted to independent legal and history experts instead of politicians; if had there been more thorough discussion on the content of the declaration, etc. – it is probable that a better result could have been achieved than the present one in which it seems that at the very least there is a lot of improvisation, if not even irresponsibility.

In this way, Serbia has got its declaration on Srebrenica, passed by a tight majority, which because of the said political and ideological divisions does not even closely have the symbolical force it should necessarily carry. And on the other hand, a step back has been made in the process of national reconciliation and confronting the past, and finally in the process of pacifying the political scene in the country.

PRESS

Why is Telekom Srbija for Sale?

“Serbian authorities are in serious problem because they have to explain the unexplainable: why they decided to sell Telekom,” Belgrade-based *Danas* daily wrote in editorial on Wednesday.

“They have to find out how to come up with a plausible response that people can swallow and to cover up the true motives of this move. And the last in the series of explanations is that the farmers across Serbia want the Internet. That is what the President [Boris Tadic on Monday] said without a shame. As if Telekom was not able to secure them that in the past.

“They failed to do so because it was not profitable and because people were not ready to pay the necessary price. These wonders of modern science will probably never come in large number to some villages in the hills and the mountains where there are no landline phones or the internet, even if we sell Telekom to Japanese or Martians. A simple reason for that: dragging the cable to one of these villages is not profitable for any operator. These are people who mostly need a telephone to receive calls and not to call and this is the reason why they do not make a profit to any company, just expenses. The only option for them is to acquire wireless telephone and wireless internet. However, they have to pay at least 100 EUR for that and many of them are not ready to pay that price. They can use the so-called CDMA technology at the moment, but the internet speed that this technology offers is a little bit better than poor. (...) And besides, the question is which operator will show interest to build the wireless infrastructure for, let’s say, 50 households at Mt. Golija, even if the people there are interested to acquire the internet. The 3G mobile network is out of discussion.

“This Government is not only using the same methods as Slobodan Milosevic to save their positions, but it is dangerously using his rhetoric too. It is hiding behind the citizens that voice themselves because they want to have the internet in their village. Not all citizens want internet in all the villages. It is not profitable to install it for those who want it. And the operators, especially foreign ones, are not here to be philanthropists and altruists, especially not when this will cost them millions of Euros. So better tell us that Telekom was sold from political reasons. We will get over it somehow and go on with our lives”, *Danas* daily wrote.

KOSOVO

Fule: EC Remains Neutral Regarding Kosovo Status

European Commission would remain neutral regarding Kosovo status, and both, Serbia and Kosovo, had a clear European perspective, EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fule said.

In the interview given to *EurActiv*, cited by *Tanjug* news agency, Fule said that the position of the Commission would remain status-neutral.

“We see a clear European perspective for both. Serbia applied for EU membership at the end of last year and the Commission is waiting for a green light from the European Council to start the process of forming an official opinion. In the meantime, we are working hard with the Kosovo authorities in three specific areas to promote their European aspirations, because from the Commission's perspective it is very important that none of these countries are left in the cold”, he said.

Encouraging progress of Serbia, US Deputy State Secretary says: *Tanjug* news agency also reported on Tuesday the assessment of US Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg that the progress of Serbia in European integrations was encouraging and that he would discuss the issues over which the two countries did not share same opinion, first of all Kosovo, during his upcoming visit to Belgrade in the early April.

Steinberg emphasized at the media conference in Washington that the encouraging signs were the application of Serbia for the EU membership, Schengen visa abolishment for Serbian citizens and the start of Trade Agreement implementation, as well as the awareness of Serbian officials about the importance of cooperation with The Hague Tribunal.

He said that the he would discuss the ways to overcome the differences in the views - especially over Kosovo - in Belgrade and added that the most important thing would be to avoid the instability in the region.

Steinberg would start his tour by visiting Ljubljana and then he would travel to Sarajevo, Belgrade and Pristina.

KPS, EULEX Take over Supervision over Borderline with Macedonia

KFOR soldiers from the Multinational Battle Group East handed over the authority in securing the borderline with Macedonia to Kosovo Police Service and EULEX, *Tanjug* news agency reported on Tuesday citing the reports of Pristina-based media in Albanian.

The members of the border police in Kosovo would control the borderline with Macedonia from the Kosovo side without KFOR, but in cooperation with EULEX and the constant synchronization and contact with the members of Macedonian border police.

Desecrated Serbian Cemetery near Lipljan

Several gravestones and crosses at the Orthodox cemetery in the ethnically mixed village of Rabovce, near Lipljan, were desecrated, *Tanjug* news agency reported on Tuesday.

The inhabitants of this village discovered the vandalism during the day and the exact time when the gravestones were damaged was not determined so far.

Kosovo Police Service confirmed the case and started the investigation.

Greek Flags Burnt in Gnjilane City Center

A group of Albanians set several Greek flags on fire in Gnjilane city center and thus reacted to the offensive statements of Greek soldiers in Athens during the parade organized on the occasion of Greek national holiday, *Tanjug* news agency reported.

Some members of Greek army shouted slogans against Macedonians, Turks and Albanians during the military parade in Athens on occasion of marking of the Independence Day, March 25.

Some former members of the self-proclaimed Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) were among those who burnt Greek flags in Gnjilane.

BUSINESS IN BRIEF

Key Monthly Monetary & Economic Indicators

December 2009

External debt by debtors: **22,787.0 million EUR**

- *official*: **7,231.4 million EUR**

- *private*: **15,555.6 million EUR**

Money supply in EUR: **2,695.2 billion**

Current foreign currency reserves in the NBS and in commercial bank accounts: **16,632.9 USD million**

Exports: **570.0 USD million**; Imports: **1,058.3 USD million**;

Trade balance (January 2010): **-488.3 USD million**

Industrial output: **-21.7%** (January 2010 / December 2009); **+3.7%** (January 2010 / January 2009)

Average gross wage: **RSD 41,651**

Average wage without taxes and contributions: **RSD 29,929**

January 2010

Monthly inflation rate: **0.5%**

- **Wirtschaftsblatt: Austrian Telecom could join Serbian Telekom purchase race.** Telekom Austria (TA) could take part at the tender for the purchase of 40% of stocks of Telekom Srbija, Vienna-based daily *Wirtschaftsblatt* reported. TA in Serbia already owns Vip Mobile and had taken part at the tender for the second landline telephony operator through this mobile telephony operator, but lost to Norwegian Telenor. By purchasing 40% stakes in Telekom Srbija, TA would practically get hold of the landline network license, reports the daily.

- **Bodies for sale of Telecom Serbia constituted.** The work group for monitoring and coordinating activities relating to the sale of the government shares in Telecom Serbia and the Committee for public acquisition of management consulting services were constituted on Tuesday, announced the Finance Ministry. At the same time, the Ministry is "intensively working on preparing a public tender and documentation", states the announcement. The public invitation for gathering bids of interested bidders in the procedure of public acquisition should be published at around April 10. The plan is to conclude an agreement with the bidder with the best offer by mid-June.

- **Management of Belgrade Port convinced: No foul play during sale.** Belgrade Port, on Tuesday, requested that the privatization of that company be reexamined so that all suspicions would be removed surrounding the legality of this procedure, estimating that an investigation would show that the privatization was "carried out with a full respect of the law". The investigation will confirm that the privatization took place without support of any one political authority, that the transaction was financed by a reputable European bank and that the Port has to this day carried out its business conscientiously", states the announcement

- **Djelic: Jat Airways, Airbus contract detrimental to Serbia.** Serbian Deputy Prime Minister assigned to European integrations Bozidar Djelic declared on Tuesday that the earlier concluded contract between Jat Airways and France-based pan-European manufacturer Airbus on the purchase of planes for the needs of the national flag carrier is "ineffective" and that it is not in Serbia's interest, *Tanjug* reported. The realization of the contract between JAT and Airbus from 1998 of 580 million USD, over the purchase of eight type A 319 airplanes, was interrupted by the NATO bombing of former FR Yugoslavia in 1999. Although JAT made the advance payment of 23.5 million USD and the deadline for delivery was between 2000 and 2005, not a single airplane arrived to Belgrade from France.

- **Jat Airways CEO: Government does not have to cover company debt.** Jat Airways's CEO Srdjan Radovanovic declared that the government does not have to cover the debts of that company, a possibility announced last week by premier Mirko Cvetkovic. "The government may cover Jat debts if the strategic partner so decides. Otherwise, it is not indispensable for subsequent company operations", Radovanovic said. He said preliminary talks about strategic partnership with Turkish Airlines are still continuing, and that no negotiations are being held with any other company.

- **Automatic bankruptcy to start on Wednesday.** The implementation of automatic bankruptcy procedures will start on Wednesday. This is a new institute in the local legislation prescribed under the Bankruptcy law, the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development announced on Tuesday.

- **NBS passes new legislation for swap transactions.** The National Bank of Serbia (NBS) enacted a decision on the terms and conditions for performing swap transactions between the NBS and banks, whereby the sales and purchase of foreign currencies between the central bank and other banks, at auctions or bilaterally, is regulated as a regular way of NBS participation on the foreign currency inter-banking market. This will enable swap sales and purchases of foreign currencies for dinars between the NBS and banks for a term of three months, thereby boosting transactions on the inter-banking foreign currency market.

- **Municipalities late with declaring Danube Strategy projects.** Of the 24 Serbian municipalities through which the Danube passes, only nine of them have provided projects for the European Commission's Danube Strategy, Deputy Prime Minister Bozidar Djelic declared on Tuesday. The projects have been submitted by the municipalities of Golubac, Veliko Gradiste, Backi Petrovac, Backa Palanka, Pozarevac, Sremski Karlovci, Stara Pazova, Majdanpek and Negotin. The first projects will be examined in April and the list of projects that will receive funding will soon be filled. The remaining municipalities will therefore need to complete their projects in the weeks to come, Djelic who is also Danube Strategy national coordinator declared.

- **Djelic: Belgrade authorities to make metro decision next summer.** Belgrade Mayor Dragan Djilas declared on Tuesday that he expects the Belgrade Assembly to render a general decision on the type of metro which would be built in the city, *Beta* reports. "After that, the main project could start and the construction of the first metro line could begin within the next two years", Djilas told reporters in Vienna, where a Belgrade

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delegation has come to familiarize with the functioning of the metro in that city. The estimate cost of the 30 km-long, with 60 million euros per kilometer and its construction will span over the period of 10 years.

- **Jat Airways offers free insurance to Serbian passengers.** Jat Airways CEO Srdjan Radovanovic and director of company DDOR Novi Sad Christian Ottu Nou have signed a contract on basis of which Jat passengers traveling from Serbia to a European Union destination will be offered free medical insurance, as of next Wednesday. Only passengers with Serbian passports round trip tickets will be entitled to free insurance. The insurance is valid for a maximum 30 day period and includes necessary medical assistance in the amount of 5000 euros, *Beta* reports.

- **RTV: Serbia to lose two sugar refineries?** Local experts have assessed that at least two sugar refineries in Serbia will have to close their doors in the foreseeable future, *Radio and Television of Vojvodina* reported at on its website. Due to intense competition, remote transportation destination burdened by high fuel prices and the fact that large amount of beetroot, primarily from Srem (Vojvodina), ends up in Croatian refineries, they expect the number of sugar plants in Serbia to drop from seven to five, reads the report.

- **Modest trade with Romania.** Trade exchange between Serbia and Romania was just 818.3 million dollars, the Romanian Ministry of Economy announced. The value of Romanian exports to Serbia amounted to 558.1 million dollars, and imports from Serbia to USD 260.2 million. Serbia occupies the 16th rank on the list of Romania's foreign trade partners, with just 1.4% of its overall exports going to Serbia, *Beta* reports.

- **Minimum BSE indexes rise.** Belex 15 index rose on Tuesday by 0.18% to 676.87 points sty the Belgrade Stock Exchange whereas composite Belexline index edged up by just 0.09% closing at 1,296.32 index points. Turnover from 214 transactions were worth 58.23 million dinars (583.926 euros).

Weather Forecast

Cloudy and slightly colder, with occasional rain. Minimum morning temperature 7 - 10 degrees, maximum daily temperature 19 degrees Celsius. Similar in Belgrade. Morning temperature about 11 degrees, maximum daily temperature about 19 degrees Celsius.

NBS Exchange Rates

1 EUR - 99.76 RSD
1 USD - 73.93 RSD
1 GBP - 110.96 RSD

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Apartment for Rent

Vracar, very near Kalenic green market & St. Sava Hram, 70m2, Brand new building (first time living-in tenant), 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully equipped brand new city-kitchen, big living/dining room combo. Beautiful luxurious interior, fully furnished, Central city heating, air conditioning, Cable TV, Cable Internet 24h, two telephone lines, hardwood floors throughout, tiled kitchen & bathrooms, big wardrobe space. Fifth floor, elevator. Contact 063/371 287 No agents, please.

Very Nice, Attractive Apartment to Rent

Located in Kosovska Street, in the heart of the city, near the Serbian Parliament, 100sqm, 2nd floor, parking space. Open space, living room, kitchen and dining room, 2 bedrooms, storage space and bathroom. Central heating, digital phone line, cable Internet and TV, air conditioning. The apartment has just been completely renovated, newly and fully furnished, very nicely decorated. The entire apartment faces a quiet park behind the building. All appliances are brand new. Available immediately. For further information, please call: (+381) 65 888 15 52 or send an e-mail to: nenadue@yahoo.com

Car for Sale

Renault Clio, 1.4 gasoline, 75 horse power, navy blue metallic, BG registration. Registered until July 2010, air-conditioned, ABS system, servo, airbag, central locking system, electric windows, aluminum wheels, fog lightning, radio, CD. Price EUR 3.300. Telephone: 065 23 24 255.

Car for Sale

Skoda Octavia Elegance 2.0. Year: 2002. Automatic, climatronic, alarm. 110.00 km. Gasoline. Price: EUR 5.500. Tel: 063 214 568.

Jeep Grand Cherokee Laredo for Sale

Year 2000, 84,700 km. Excellent condition, US specifications, diplomatic plates, Navy blue with gray interior, 7000 Euro or best offer. email: marianne.mahaffey@gmail.com or call 066/5111 754.

English Classes for Foreigners

English classes for foreigners and locals held by a native speaker with longstanding experience. Classes held at your home or place of work, or at mine. Contact: 064/301 0 302

Professional Translations

Professional translations Serbian/English, English/Serbian. More than ten years of experience. Contact: 064/301 0 302

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Interested in learning Greek or Serbian? Experienced teacher offers Greek and Serbian lessons to foreigners and locals. Contact: 064/567 73 73