



# MEDIA NEWS BULLETIN

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Content

## Media Environment

New episode of "The Funeral March" by Slavisa Lekic is broadcast – Dereta is skeptical about media-related plans of the new government – Grujica Spasovic publishes a book about first three years of the daily newspapers Danas – Nedim Sejdinovic makes a complex analysis of the media situation in Serbia – Matic: None of the coalitions have mentioned the media in election campaigns since 2000 – New government in Bujanovac lays off the management of RTV Bujanovac – Former director of RTV Bujanovac hires eight new employees before his dismissal – Goati: The new government must abandon the practice of advertising in the media – Sale of Politika is deemed as non-transparent – Zoran Basanovic is a candidate for director of RTS, claims Kurir – Court in Cacak rejects 311 lawsuits filed by RTS because of unpaid TV fees – Legal process related to stolen camera lasts 12 years – The Municipal Council of Ljig bans a journalist from its session – Journalist is fired for refusing to change questions for the mayor – Verdict is passed against Dnevnik, Radio 021 and their editors because of publication of sentences against pimps – Six football fans receive suspended sentences for threats to Brankica Stankovic – Velimir Ilic attacks journalists again – Media organizations issue a protest – Basta denies that he is a protected witness in the Curuvija case – Media Coalition demands that the new government implement the Media Strategy

## Professionalism in the Media

NUNS calls on everyone to adhere to ethical and professional standards – Ivanovic says he is only making innocent jokes aimed at Croatians – Biljana Petkovic defends her master thesis on investigative journalism – Miklja: The summer TV programme schedule is a mess – The largest regional festival of communication to be held in Rovinj in September – Link issues its 100th edition – Link gets a makeover – Journalists Dragomir Popovic and Petar Popovic pass away

## Media Economy

Two leading TV companies are among 100 largest tax-owing debtors in Serbia – Strike of employees of TV Cacak is still ongoing – Masic: Advertising on radio has advantages – Bankruptcy proceedings against RTV 5 is delayed for the second time – Financial difficulties result in closing down of the Radio MIP – Electronic media from Krusevac refuse to pay increased royalty fees to Sokoj – AEMV is opposed to payment of increased royalties to Sokoj – Privatization of Vecernje Novosti is on the EU list of privatizations that should be investigated – Contract on privatization of the publishing company Nas Glas is terminated – 50% of shares in Politika is sold overnight – Russian company East Media Group buys Politika, according to the website of the Business Registers Agency – SNS and UNS accuse DS of involvement with the secret sale of Politika – Bogicevic and Petrovic deny involvement in the sale of Politika – Beta publishes details of the sales contract

## Media Institutions & Activities

NUNS demands publication of information about the sale of Politika – UNS asks Cvetkovic, Dacic and Markovic nine questions about the sale of Politika – Two trade unions of journalists of Politika have great expectations from new owners – The Media Association demands transparency in each change in ownership over the media – Journalists from Vranje help reconstruction of a theater destroyed in fire

## Media Innovations

Blogs will not replace journalism – Twitter is important for journalists – Various media forms are consumed via internet in Serbia – Disabled persons found an internet radio station in Kragujevac

### The media situation in Serbia

This evening's episode of the documentary series by Slavisa Lekic, which depicts a chronology of ruination of the media in the last 20 years, is entitled "The Funeral March". The episode describes a symbiosis between supporters of the ideas promoted by the anti-Hague lobby, some of the intellectuals and the media, which casts a new light on the organized campaign aimed at political and personal discrediting, and eventually assassination, of Zoran Djindjic. The episode also explains how a part of the media became a mouthpiece of politicians and members of various secret services and interest groups.

(Politika, 13.07.2012)

Miljenko Dereta, a member of parliament, writes: "We are witnessing a new agreement on joint political goals which specifies the priorities of the new Government. The agreement says that the Government will initiate 'the necessary struggle against censorship and self-censorship in the media'. I wonder who would report self-censorship and to whom, and why the section related to 'creation of conditions for elimination of political pressure' mentions only journalists, while omitting editors and media owners. The Government will control everything itself because 'cooperation with citizens and the non-governmental sector' is mentioned only with regard to the 'more intensive and efficient fight against corruption'".

(Blic, 13.07.2012)

Snjezana Milivojevic's article in daily newspaper *Danas* says: "The author of the book about the first three years of the daily newspaper *Danas*, Grujica Spasovic, who was the first editor-in-chief of *Danas*, has in fact managed to create two different books. One of them is a book about us, while the other is a book about *Danas*. The book about us is gloomy and terrifying. It is a testimony about the first three years in the life of the newspaper *Danas* and the last three years of the rule of Slobodan Milosevic (1997-2000). Even such a short period of time is enough to demonstrate how ruined this society was."

(Danas – weekend edition, 14.07.2012)

### Opinions about the current media situation in Serbia

Nedim Sejdinovic has published an article on the website of the Independent Journalist's Association of Vojvodina (NDNV): Out of more than 1,000 operating media outlets in Serbia, 137 media outlets are owned by the government. Considering the electronic media, 86 radio and TV broadcasters have a status of public service broadcasters, which is noted in the Strategy of Development of the Information System adopted in September 2011. However, the data from the Register of Media Outlets, which is not precise and updated, indicates the existence of 82 publicly-owned media outlets, out of which there are 29 television stations (26 percent of registered TV broadcasters) and 53 radio broadcasters (25 percent of registered broadcasters), as well as 13 newspaper publishers which publish a few dozen periodicals. The very fact that the data has not been updated although it is being changed every day indicates that the media scene in Serbia is in complete chaos. The media owned by the government is mostly financed from the national budget, which constitutes a brutal violation of the freedom of competition. It is also clear that the executive branch of government appoints or influences the appointment of the management structures in these media outlets, which threatens the freedom of expression and deprives the journalists of mechanisms that are necessary for protection of their profession. The full text is available on the web page of NDNV.

(NDNV, 05.07.2012)

The media in post-communist countries, as well as Serbia, are under economic and political pressure, says Jovanka Matic, a consultant with the Institute of Social Sciences. During a presentation of the results of legal monitoring of the media scene in Serbia by the Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM), she said that the high-quality press had disappeared and been replaced by tabloid content and commercialized. "State monopoly in Serbia has been replaced by factual monopolies of foreign corporations or domestic tycoons. Election of regulatory bodies and managing bodies of public service broadcasters is being conducted under political influence, while journalists are often being threatened, attacked and even murdered", said Matic. She added that since 2000, Serbian politicians have not mentioned in their election campaigns the reform of the media system as one of their political priorities, including during the elections of 2012, and that different behavior should not be expected from any other government in the following years.

(Beta, B92, UNS, NUNS, *Danas*, 06.07.2012, *Politika*, 07.07.2012)

## The state and the media

A new Albanian-Serbian coalition government has appointed a teacher Abedin Racipi, as the new director of the Public Information Company RTV Bujanovac. A long-time journalist, Mukarem Ahmeti, remains the editor-in-chief of the multi-ethnic news company. The Albanian, Serbian and Roma editorial offices will still be headed by Nedzat Vehbiu, Dusan Sikimic and Iljaz Kasumi, respectively. The deputy president of the Democratic Party, Nedzat Behlulji, said that the personnel changes had followed after the agreement of the members of the ruling coalition.

(Blic - Srbija, NUNS, UNS, 06.07.2012)

Sevdailj Hiseni from the Movement for Democratic Progress (PDP), who is the recent director and editor-in-chief of the Public Company Radio-Television Bujanovac, has left to his successor no less than eight newly employed workers. The new president of the Managing Board of RTV Bujanovac, Nedzat Beljulji (DP), said that he could not understand why the previous director had employed eight new workers on permanent employment contracts only one week before the end of his term in office.

(Tanjung, Press, 18.07.2012)

The current laws on information and public acquisitions will be repealed immediately after the election of the new government, reports the daily newspaper *Vecernje Novosti*. The regulations that have already entered the parliamentary procedure will be repealed as well. This could be the first step taken by the new ruling coalition consisting of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and the United Regions of Serbia (URS), reports *Novosti*.

(Vecernje novosti, 07.07.2012)

The director of Transparency Serbia, Vladimir Goati, says that the future government must stop the practice of buying influence in the media as well as the squandering of the public funds via sponsorships, promotional campaigns or advertising paid for by publicly-owned companies, ministries, provincial and local governments. "This would entail a legal ban on sponsorships and advertising of publicly-owned companies, including a clear regulation of financing of the media by any level of government", said Goati.

(Dnevnik, 11.07.2012)

The new government of Serbia, however and whenever it may be formed, will have a lot of work with regard to regulation of the media scene and improvement of the position of journalists, who have never been in such a precarious position in the last ten years, according to journalists' opinion, reports the daily newspaper *Danas*. The public probably considers that there are many other areas that should be given priority, and that the media offer no direct benefit, but we should not forget that the media is one of the primary preconditions for democracy and a mediator between the government and citizens.

(Danas – weekend edition, 14.07.2012)

Experts in the fight against corruption say that the non-transparent change in ownership over a part of the newspaper publishing company "Politika" proves that media owners in Serbia and the people who stand behind them are still not known. Danilo Sukovic, a member of the Anti-Corruption Council, emphasizes that this case involves a private transfer that cannot be controlled by the state, but that it can be made more transparent, and that the monopoly commission should investigate whether the transfer violates the rules related to concentration of ownership in the market and whether there is a monopoly. A member of the Anti-Corruption Council, Jelisaveta Vasilic, says that the government should finally begin establishing the identity of media owners by controlling the flow of money. "The Council was preparing a report on the media and it turned out that only in a small number of cases we were able to find information about media owners", said Vasilic. A member of the Managing Board of the Anti-Corruption Agency, Cedomir Cupic, considers that now is the time to investigate the contracts that were concluded during the sale of a part of "Politika" to a German company, and to establish whether these contracts allow further resale of "Politika". He is of the opinion that such a transaction was possible because the Law on Origin of Property has not been adopted yet, since the Law would stipulate that nothing can be sold if the owners are not clearly identified.

(Tanjung, UNS, 18.07.2012)

## Public service broadcasters

A folk music manager, Zoran Basanovic, will be the general director of the public service broadcaster if the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) forms the government with the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and the United Regions of Serbia (URS), reports the daily newspaper *Kurir*. Basanovic was the manager and boyfriend of Dragana Mirkovic, as well as of Jelena Karleusa, Haris Dzinovic, Dzej and other folk music stars. He married in 2010, and his best man at

the wedding was the leader of the SNS, Aleksandar Vucic.  
(Kurir, UNS, B92, NUNS 06.07.2012)

The Primary Court in Cacak has refused 311 lawsuits filed by Radio-Television Serbia against citizens who had not been paying the TV fee, said today the acting president of the Court, Svetlana Krunic Tasevski.  
(RRA, Blic, 17.07.2012, Beta, Kurir, Danas, Press, 18.07.2012)

### Threats, attacks and legal processes against journalists; media-related trials

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) is dissatisfied with the inexplicable duration of the court proceedings related to the attempt of the Production Group *Mreza* to recover a stolen camera. For 12 years, PG *Mreza* has been trying to recover a camera stolen from its journalists by the security personnel of the Serbian Radical Party. 11 years and seven months have passed, and the legal process has not been completed. No less than 36 court sessions have been scheduled, reminds NUNS in its press statement.  
(NUNS, MC, NUNS Center for Investigative Journalism, Beta, 06.07.2012, Politika, Danas, 07.07.2012)

Danilo Ikodinovic, a former water-polo player, posted on his Twitter account that he had been questioned by the police because the car of "some journalist" was set on fire. That journalist is Zorica Radulovic, a journalist with the daily newspaper *Kurir*, whose car was set on fire during the night of June 22-23.  
(Kurir, 07.07.2012)

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) strongly condemns the decision of the new Municipal Council of Ljig to remove journalist Mira Kojic from its first session. Mira Kojic is a contributor to Valjevo newspapers *Napred* and *Revija Kolubara*. NUNS reminds that the Constitution and the law guarantee the freedom of information. Journalist Kojic demanded to be allowed to remain at the session and pointed out that the crew of TV Ljig was allowed to report from the session despite not having a broadcasting license, but her demand was rejected. The journalist suggested that all members of the Municipal Council confirm her removal from the session, which, unfortunately, they did unanimously. The new municipal government consists of members of the Socialist Party of Serbia, New Serbia, the United Regions of Serbia, the Democratic Party of Serbia and the Serbian Radical Party.  
(NUNS, 12.07.2012, Beta, Politika, 13.07.2012, Danas, 14.07.2012)

Journalist Dejan Ignjic has been dismissed from the newspaper *Dnevnik* from Novi Sad because he had refused to change and "soften" the questions for the mayor of Novi Sad, Igor Pavlicic. In a letter to the media, the president of Serbia and embassies of Western countries, Ignjic said that, according to previous agreement, he had sent questions about communal problems in the city to the cabinet of the mayor, after which the editor of the city section of the newspaper demanded that he modify and resend the questions because of their "bad writing style". After he refused to do so, the next day he was dismissed from work.  
(Danas, 12.07.2012)

The Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM), the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) and the Independent Journalists' Association of Vojvodina (NDNV) protest against the verdict of the Higher Court in Novi Sad which obliges Radio 021, newspaper *Dnevnik* from Novi Sad and the editors of these media outlets to pay compensation for damage to reputation and honor to prosecutor Goran Urosevic, who is currently serving time in a prison in Pozarevac. They have been sentenced to pay 200,000 dinars because they had published a sentence to two pimps. This verdict proves once again that Serbian courts almost routinely make decisions that jeopardize the media and the freedom of the media.  
(ANEM, NUNS i NDNV, MC, 12.07.2012, Beta, Danas, Politika, Dnevnik, 13.07.2012)

The First Primary Court in Belgrade sentenced six fans of the football club "Partizan" to suspended sentences of several months because of threats to the journalist and editor of the programme "The Insider", Brankica Stankovic, during the football match Partizan-Sahtjor that took place on December 16, 2009.  
(Press, Blic, Vecernje novosti, 14.07.2012)

The leader of the political party New Serbia, Velimir Ilic, attacked again at a press conference held today the media, TV B92 and the author and host of the programme "The Impression of the Week", Olja Beckovic.  
(B92, NUNS, UNS, 17.07.2012)

The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) strongly condemns the statement of the president of New Serbia, Velimir Ilic, that he made today at a press conference, during which he insulted journalists and said to Olja Beckovic

that he intended to re-educate her, i.e. find someone to do that.

(UNS, Tanjug, 17.07.2012, 24 sata, Blic, BETA, Danas, Dnevnik, Kurir, Press, Politika, 18.07.2012)

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) has strongly condemned the latest Ilic's attacks on Beckovic and pointed out that "such a person must not be allowed to make important decisions on behalf of citizens". Ilic had already abused and verbally and physically attacked journalists without any consequences to his political career. It is time to stop such behavior, not only when it comes to Ilic, but also with regard to all other politicians. NUNS demands that the future prime minister and political leaders not allow history to repeat itself and protect journalists.

(NUNS, 17.07.2012)

SEEMO condemns the latest insults against journalists launched by Velimir Ilic, leader of the New Serbia party, and potential minister in the upcoming coalition government. Ilic has insulted reporters on several occasions over the past ten years and in 2003 he hit a journalist during an interview. The latest incident involving Ilic occurred on 17 July 2012 during a press conference. Targeting the host of the high-profile talk show, Olja Beckovic, Ilic said that he would find someone to re-educate the reporter. "I call on party leaders in Serbia to stop threatening and insulting journalists. Respecting press freedom is an essential part of democracy and a fundamental criteria for joining the European Union", said SEEMO Secretary General, Oliver Vujovic.

(SEEMO, 18.07.2012)

### Investigations about murders of journalists

"No one has offered me the status of a protected witness in the legal process related to the murder of Slavko Curuvija, and there is no reason that such offer be made", said to *Alo!* Stevan Basta, a former head of the Third Department for Extremism of the Belgrade Section of the State Security Service, in a response to speculations that he might become a protected witness in the investigation of the murder of the owner of *Dnevni Telegraph*.

(*Alo!*, 15.07.2012, NUNS, 17.07.2012)

### The Media Strategy

Media associations and organizations will judge the success of the new Serbian government in the media scene mostly on the basis of its attitude towards the Media Strategy, says a joint statement. Fulfillment of the demands specified in the Media Strategy, which the media associations and organizations have insisted on during the previous years, will serve as an indicator of the willingness of the government to truly implement the long-awaited reforms in the media sector. The sale of the daily newspaper *Politika* has offered the new government the first opportunity to ensure transparency of media ownership, which is one of the promises from its Coalition Agreement. Media associations and organizations expect that promises from the Media Strategy be fulfilled, especially with regard to withdrawal of the state from media ownership, changes in expenditure of budget funds allocated to the media and transition to budget-based financing, as well as measure intended to create equal conditions for all participants in the media market of Serbia. We remind that associations and organizations have not accepted the idea that another six regional public service broadcasters should be formed in Serbia, or the idea that councils of national minorities should own the minority media.

(NUNS, UNS, ANEM, Local Press and NDNV, 18.07.2012)

### Professional standards

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) called on the media to respect ethical and professional standards defined by the Journalistic Code of Conduct while reporting on tragic events and accidents. The NUNS statement says that the Association was contacted by the mother of a person who had recently committed suicide, telling them that the deceased's family and friends were deeply hurt by the fact that the news about the suicide was published in a large number of media outlets under the title "Psychiatric Patient Commits Suicide".

(Beta, Politika, Kurir, UNS, NUNS, 05.07.2012)

Ivan Ivanovic gave his first interview to Croatian media, in which he said to Croatians that it was not his intention to insult them in his programme broadcast by TV Prva, but to make fun, reports *Press*.

(Press, 05.07.2012)

Diplomat Biljana Petkovic defended yesterday her master thesis on investigative journalism of Milo Nedeljkovic at the Faculty of Humanistic Sciences in Belgrade. Biljana Petrovic is a diplomat from Stockholm. The committee recommended that her work be published as a contribution to analysis of the character and achievements of a famous Serbian ethnologist and the founder of Serbian investigative journalism.

(Press, 05.07.2012)

Dusan Miklja writes: "The so-called summer programme schedule, especially on private TV stations, has turned into a chaos. The programme is being arbitrarily changed, removed or rescheduled, even in the case of well-established news programmes, resulting in a mess that seemingly makes no sense. However, you would be mistaken to think that this madness is completely random: everything is ruled by one thing only – the ratings.

(Blic, 12.07.2012)

### Assessments, awards, training courses and competitions

The fifth "Weekend Media Festival", which is the largest regional communication festival, will be held this year on September 20-23 in the festival premises of the old Tobacco Factory in Rovinj. For the fifth year in a row, the Festival will bring together domestic and regional media, marketing and PR professionals. The president of the League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina (LSV), Nenad Canak, and the director of Radio-Television Serbia (RTS), Aleksandar Tijanic, will speak at the Festival.

(Pregled, NUNS, UNS, 05.07.2012, Beta, Press, 09.07.2012)

Journalists with the newspaper *Dnevnik* and TV Pink, Dragan Milivojevic and Milan Atanasijevic, respectively, are the recipients of the monthly award for the best media report on trading of financial derivatives via FOREX platform given by "FX-Leader" from Belgrade.

(Dnevnik, 13.07.2012)

### Anniversaries

In the eleventh year of its existence and its hundredth issue, the magazine for media professionals *Link* appeared with a new co-publisher. The magazine has discussed and analyzed crucial topics from all media-related fields. The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) has offered its support to the founder of this unique monthly magazine, Rastislav Durman, and the magazine's publisher, the Media Art Content company, which will probably ensure the future existence of an important specialized publication. During the last decade, with cooperation of many media experts from Serbia and abroad, *Link* has initiated, analyzed and discussed numerous significant topics from all areas related to today's media, from the press to the Internet, with equal attention given both to the radio and television. The magazine has discussed both ethical and technical issues, current legislation, and technologies of the future, and at the same time reported on scientific and professional events organized by media professionals, offered its recommendations on domestic and foreign books, and published interviews with renowned individuals from the media

scene.

(Politika, UNS, 18.07.2012)

### **In Memoriam**

A retired journalist with *Politika Ekspres* and a long-time member of the Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS), Dragomir Popovic, passed away at the age of 58 after a long and difficult illness, says UNS.

(Beta, Danas, Politika, 12.07.2012)

Petar Popovic – a journalist, music and theater critic, editor of newspapers *Borba*, *Nasa Borba* and *Danas* – has passed away in Novi Sad at the age of 78. Among all other duties and positions that he held in the field of journalism and cultural institutions since his early years, Petar Popovic was a gifted poet and a translator of poetry of numerous Hungarian poets.

(Tanjug, Dnevnik, Danas, Politika, 14.07.2012)

### Media business operations

The Tax Administration of Serbia has published on its website a list of 1,000 biggest tax debtors, which includes two of the leading media companies in Serbia: Radio-Television Serbia (RTS) and TV Pink. According to data from the Tax Administration, the debt owed by the public service broadcaster, RTS, has grown from 173 to 357 million dinars. (Informer, Blic, 05.07.2012)

The strike of employees of TV Cacak, which began last Monday, is still ongoing. The company has also incurred a huge debt exceeding 16 million dinars, which is why the employees do not have even basic preconditions for work. The TV station is currently broadcasting only series, films and advertisements. (Vecernje novosti – Serbia, 05.07.2012, Politika, UNS, NUNS, 06.07.2012)

In an article published by the RAB newsletter, Dusan Masic says: "In Great Britain, TV advertising is seven times more expensive than advertising on the radio. In Serbia, it is much more expensive than that. Those who think that digital advertising is most important should also consider advertising on the radio. The radio and the digital world can (and should) be viewed together because a half of internet users listen to radio online during a week. Also, a fifth of them always listens to radio while surfing the Internet. If you send a message to online radio listeners asking them to visit a website, chances that they will do that increase by 52% as compared with an online-only campaign. At the same time, internet banners and pop-up ads are avoided by 65% and 73% of users, respectively, while only 18% of radio listeners avoid advertisements. (RAB Newsletter, 09.07.2012)

Yesterday, in the Commercial Court in Nis, the bankruptcy proceedings against RTV 5 was rescheduled again. The proceedings were initiated because the bank account of the TV station had been blocked for a long time due to huge debt. This is the only TV station that has been subjected to bankruptcy proceedings. (Blic, 11.07.2012)

A radio station from Belgrade, Radio MIP, stopped broadcasting its program yesterday because of financial difficulties, announced the editor-in-chief of the station, Zarko Obradovic, according to press statement issued by the Journalists' Association of Belgrade (UNS). Employees of the station claim that Radio MIP was owned by the Football Club "Partizan" although it had formally been founded by the recently bankrupted company Mipos d.o.o. Obradovic said that the football club had bought the radio station on January 1, 2001, while its program had been broadcast since 1997. The bank account of Mipos d.o.o. has been blocked for more than a year. In Obradovic's words, the owners were not interested in survival of the radio station. (Beta, Politika, 13.07.2012)

After a meeting held yesterday, the electronic media in Krusevac announced that they would not accept the January and February bills delivered to them by Sokoj because of increased royalty tariffs as compared with the last year. In their words, the amount of tariffs has been increased almost four-fold. (Blic, 14.07.2012)

Electronic media outlets from Krusevac have sent a letter of protest to Sokoj, protesting the four-fold increase in this year's January and February bills. "We want to know which criteria were used to justify the increase in tariffs and whether those who make such decisions have any idea how difficult is the position of the media in Serbia", says the press statement issued by representatives of TV Krusevac, TV Plus, TV Jefimija, Radio Antena and Radio Rubin. The statement points out that media outlets in Krusevac are not willing nor objectively able to pay the increased tariffs, and that therefore they returned the invoices sent to them by Sokoj, demanding their reconsideration. Sokoj representatives say that they have not received the letter. We have not been able to obtain a response from them even after we sent them the protest letter, reports the daily newspaper *Danas*. (Danas, 18.07.2012)

The Association of Electronic Media of Vojvodina (AEMV) announced today its intention to begin the process of establishing a Vojvodina analogue to Sokoj, if it turns out impossible to reach an agreement on minimal royalty fees with Sokoj. At a press conference, AEMV said that Sokoj had increased royalty fees on music and other works and



that the amount of the fees is excessive taking into account the revenue of radio and TV stations in Vojvodina. According to words of the secretary of AEMV, Aleksandar Dukic, not a single commercial station will be able to pay such fees, because the minimal monthly fees to be paid by radio stations would amount to 100,000 dinars. (RTV, 18.07.2012)

Radio-Television Smederevo has sent three journalists to a prolonged 45-day paid leave until its debt to Electrical Power Company is paid, i.e. until economic conditions improve, says the director of the station, Goro Redzic. (Beta, NUNS, UNS, 17.07.2012, Pregled, 18.07.2012)

### Privatization and the state-owned media

When one of the former employees of *Vecernje Novosti* dies – one of those who have been robbed in an illegal privatization, the only thing I can do is write a newspaper article and remind the Serbian public about the injustice that was done to us, says an article written by Natasa Markovic. In the meantime, five of our colleagues have died while waiting for justice in Serbia. "The case of the *Novosti* company" is one of the cases that is on the list of 24 privatizations whose investigation is being demanded by the EU. (Danas – weekend edition, 07.07.2012)

The Privatization Agency has terminated the contract on privatization of the Newspaper Publishing Company *Nas Glas* since the buyer, Zodufin d.o.o. Belgrade, has not paid its obligations in accordance with the contract. The value of the capital amounted to 369,000 euros, while the buyer has so far paid only three installments of 34,000 euros each. (Vecernje novosti – Serbia, 14.07.2012)

As of July 16, the oldest newspaper in the Balkans, *Politika*, has a new owner. 50 percent of its capital is now owned by the company East Media Group from Moscow. The Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) and the United Regions of Serbia (URS) claim that the Democratic Party (DS) and tycoons with close ties to DS are behind the transfer. The website of the Business Register Agency shows that the ownership structure was changed on July 16, 2012. An Austrian company, Ost Holding GmbH, was removed from the ownership structure, while the company OOO East Media Group, headquartered in Moscow, is now one of the owners, with a share of 50 percent. The Managing Board of the Media Association considers that the change in the ownership structure of the daily newspaper *Politika* has been non-transparent and expects an immediate response from authorities that would make transparent the ownership structure of the oldest daily newspaper in the Balkans. (NUNS, B92, Beta, Tanjug, Vecernje novosti, 17.07.2012, Blic, Press, Kurir, 24 sata, 18.07.2012)

Almost overnight, an obscure Russian company East Media Group has become the owner of 50 percent of shares of the company *Politika Novine i Magazini*, which owns the daily newspaper *Politika*, reports the media in Belgrade. While WAZ was one of the owners of *Politika*, the newspaper was controlled by the state. Press department of the Committee for Protection of Competition says that it lacks information about whether the company East Media Group has taken over control over *Politika* due to some new agreement. The management of *Politika* unofficially said that they had not been informed either. "We found out that we were sold to East Media Group when we saw the information on the website of the Business Registers Agency. At the moment, we are not aware of any details about the sale, and we don't know who is behind the company that bought us", says Zefirino Grasi, the general director of *Politika* a.d. "We learned about the new developments after one of our associates downloaded the data from the website of the Business Registers Agency. I have no other information besides that and I had not been informed about the sale beforehand", says Grasi. (Politika, Beta, Danas, 18.07.2012)

The daily newspaper *Politika* has a new owner, since 50 percent of the shares of the company was bought from the German group WAZ by the company East Media Group, registered in Moscow, said yesterday the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), reports Tanjug. SNS has accused the Democratic Party (DS) of being behind the decision to sell the ownership share of WAZ, pointing out that the change in ownership was done overnight and in a non-transparent manner, violating the freedom of the media. The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS) says that according to their sources, one of the financiers of the DS, Miroslav Bogicevic, is connected to the East Media Group, and that during several months there were rumors of him financing the transaction. (Tanjug, Pregled, Alo!, 18.07.2012)

The owner of the company "Farmakom", Miroslav Bogicevic, said that he had not bought the daily newspaper *Politika*, and that he had not been involved in that deal in any way.  
(Tanjug, 18.07.2012)

"Insinuations made by the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) about my involvement in the change of ownership over the newspaper publishing company 'Politika a.d.' are completely untrue and not worthy of any further comment", said Minister Dusan Petrovic to Tanjug.  
(Tanjug, NUNS, 18. 07. 2012)

News agency Beta reports that a contract shows that out of the total purchasing price, the seller – the Austrian company Ost Holding, owned by WAZ – has already received four million euros, while the remaining 700,000 euros are to be paid on December 1, 2014. The contract states that the company "Politika a.d.", which is the owner of the remaining 50 percent of "Politika PNM", "has not exercised its right of first purchase". "Politika a.d." is directly or indirectly in majority ownership of the state. The contract on the sale of a half of the shares of "Politika PNM" was signed on June 29 by Uros Stefanovic, the director of East Media Group, on behalf of the buyer, and Mark Mickas and Folker Venc, on behalf of the seller, Ost Holding. It seems that employees of *Politika* and its senior executives had not been aware of what was going on. The director of *Politika*, Zefirino Grasi, confirmed in the today's edition of *Politika* that the media conglomerate WAZ, which owns the Ost Holding company from Vienna, had offered "Politika a.d." its 50 percent of shares in accordance with the right of first purchase. After the purchase of the majority of shares, East Media Group is obliged to request approval from the Committee for Protection of Competition not later than 15 days after the registration of the change in ownership.  
(Beta, RTV B92, 18.07.2012)

### The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS)

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) calls on the members of the outgoing Government of Serbia and the daily newspaper *Politika* to immediately reveal to the public all relevant information about the transfer of ownership over the newspaper. The fact that WAZ, as a co-owner of *Politika*, had announced its intention to sell its share long time ago, does not explain why the sale was conducted in a non-transparent manner. NUNS welcomes the decision of the state not to use the right of first purchase, since its Media Strategy stipulates withdrawal of the state from media ownership. NUNS expects that the controversial sale of a part of *Politika* will be clarified as soon as possible, preventing speculations and political fighting between the outgoing and future government. (NUNS, UNS, 18.07.2012)

### The Journalists' Association of Serbia (UNS)

The Journalist's Association of Serbia demands that Mirko Cvetkovic, Ivica Dacic and Predrag Markovic immediately investigate the suspicious purchase of *Politika* and answer the questions about the ownership over the company East Media Group:

- What happened to the government's right of first purchase in relation to Politika AD?
- Is Miroslav Bogicevic in any way involved with the East Media Group? Does the Committee for Protection of Competition know the identity of the real owner of East Media Group?
- How quickly did the Anti-Monopoly Commission approve the purchase?
- Has the Administration for Prevention of Money Laundering verified the origin of the money?
- Who issued the bank guarantee for the loan that was used to buy *Politika*?
- Is it true that the transaction is worth more than only ten million euros?
- What have the authorities done to verify that the transaction does not involve money of suspicious origin?
- What is the reason for instant registration of the new owner of *Politika* by the Business Registers Agency, i.e. on the same day when the request was submitted?
- Is it true that the legal representative of the East Media Group is the former deputy director of the Business Registers Agency?

(Informer, UNS, 18.07.2012)

### Novinski sindikati

In a response to the change in ownership structure, the Trade Union of Journalists of *Politika* and the Independent Trade Union of PNM expect that the ownership change, the new owner, and the new government of Serbia will create conditions for more successful business operations. (UNS, 18.07.2012)

### The Republic Broadcasting Agency (RRA)

The Council of the Republic Broadcasting Agency has decided to initiate proceedings against broadcasters who had aired the advertisement of the National Lottery of Serbia, *Sportingbets.rs*, which advertises sport bets. Taking into account the report from experts about the content of the advertisement, the Council has decided that in given circumstances it can be considered indecent. The Council has also decided to begin procedure for adoption of a new Rulebook on categorization and classification of programme content that can jeopardize physical, moral and mental development of children and youth. (RRA, 13.06.2012)

### The Republic Agency for Electronic Communication (RATEL)

The Republic Agency for Electronic Communication (RATEL) is not authorized to regulate the roaming prices, precisely because of the fact that roaming is regulated by bilateral commercial contracts between domestic providers

and their partners from other countries, in which foreign partners have the right to freely form the price of roaming services. On June 13, 2012, the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers of the European Union adopted regulations about roaming within public mobile communication networks within the countries belonging to the European Economic Zone. The regulation limits the price of the roaming services to not more than: 29 eurocents per minute for outbound calls, 8 eurocents per minute for inbound calls, and 9 eurocents per each sent SMS (reception of SMS messages remains free). The Republic of Serbia became a candidate for EU membership in March 2012 and soon after that RATEL was allowed to participate in the activities of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) as an observer. Observer countries have launched an initiative to receive recommendation from the European Commission that would allow implementation of limited roaming prices in the countries outside the Zone, since such a decision is not within the scope of authority of national regulatory bodies of individual countries.

(RATEL, 16.07.2012)

### **The Media Association**

The Media Association expects that the authorities immediately make transparent the new ownership structure of the oldest daily newspaper in Serbia and the Balkans. "The Managing Board of the Media Association has repeatedly insisted on the need for absolute transparency of changes in ownership, especially over the media whose part is owned by the state", says the organization's press statement.

(Beta, Vecernje novosti, 18.07.2012)

### **Other news**

A call for assistance to the Theater of Vranje, which was destroyed in a fire, was initiated by journalists of *Danas*, RTV B92, *Vecernje Novosti*, NTV 017, RTV Vranje, *Press*, Tanjug and Beta, with support from the management of the Theater of Vranje.

(Danas, 06.07.2012)

The Managing Board of RTV Vranje has decided to pay 100,000 dinars for renovation of the old building of the Theater "Bora Stankovic" that has been destroyed in a fire.

(Blic – Serbia, UNS, 06.07.2012)

### Media-related news

Writing of blogs will not replace journalism, and those who want to write about any subject still need to know the basics of journalism – this is the conclusion reached by journalists at the end of the debate organized by the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia under the title "Should Bloggers Know the Basics of Journalism?". On the other side, bloggers point out that the most important thing is that they write well and that their blogs have a lot of readers. Participants of the event agreed that writing of blogs involves the same principles as writing for the media. (Fonet, NUNS, UNS, 05.07.2012)

An article written by Ana Martinoli, the director of the programme of Radio B92, for the RAB newsletter says: "Social Networks can bring new listeners to radio stations. The number of users of Facebook, Twitter... is huge. Information sent via these channels, together with interesting and amusing excerpts from the programme and audio teasers, can bring new listeners to your radio station or make them delete your station from their favored lists. The radio programme has never been more available than today – one click on the Internet or mobile phone, and listeners are tuned in. Therefore it is necessary to use all available channels and platforms every day, so that you can always command the attention of your listeners, even during the moments when they do not listen to your programme." (RAB Newsletter, 02.07.2012)

The latest research on the manner and frequency of the use of the media entitled "Mediascope Europe 2012", presented in Belgrade to the public by IAB Serbia, shows that the younger population has a tendency to access all traditional media via internet – from TV stations to reading news to listening to radio. Results of the research show that 3.2 million of inhabitants of Serbia aged 16 or more use the Internet actively, which is 52% of the Serbian population. When it comes to other media, television leads the way with penetration of 98% in Serbia, followed by daily newspapers (64%), radio (59%) and magazines (48%). It has become obvious that makes no sense to view "internet usage" as a separate activity, since the research conducted in 2012 proves that users do not leave one platform to consume another one, and instead use several platforms at the same time. The complete Mediascope Europe 2012 study can be downloaded from [IAB Serbia](#). (eKapija, 11.07.2012, Danas, Vecernje novosti, 12.07.2012, Politika, 13.07.2012)

Since four months ago, members of the association "Ekspres", which brings together disabled persons, have been broadcasting their programme via humanitarian internet radio headquartered in Kragujevac. Their programme is dedicated to problems of disabled persons and in a short time it has managed to reach listeners in all parts of the world. It is being listened in Canada, Alaska, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sweden, Kuwait, even Sudan. "We are the first radio station in this region whose programme is dedicated exclusively to elimination of prejudices about disabled persons, their problems and their inclusion in everyday life. We are being financed only from our own revenues and modest donations. Aside from our own programme, we regularly report on all humanitarian campaigns organized by people in Serbia and abroad", says Branko Lukic, the editor. Branko Lukic is blind and is assisted by Dejan Milivojevic, technical organizer and contributor to most of the radio stations from Kragujevac. Although it has been founded only recently, the station has received support from the media in Serbia, The Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. (Blic, 12.07.2012)

- Abbreviations - [www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin-abbreviations.2317.html#104230](http://www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin-abbreviations.2317.html#104230)
- Sections - [www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin-abbreviations-and-sections.2317.html](http://www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin-abbreviations-and-sections.2317.html)
- Archive - [www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin-archive.2381.html](http://www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin-archive.2381.html)
- Media News Bulletin home - [www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin.2298.html](http://www.mc.rs/media-news-bulletin.2298.html)

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Media News Bulletin is a short account of media reports on the situation in the media. It has been created with the aim to register the information about the media published in the previous 14 days in Serbia, shortened to reflect the basic message of media reports and grouped in thematic subsections. The editors convey the news without changing the essential meaning of media reports on the media. For the readers interested in the complete published article, its source and date of publishing are given.

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