

A free press despite foreign investment

By K.K. Katyal

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B - Europe

Adam Michnik digs into tandoori chicken at Warsaw's Indian food restaurant, Maharaja, as he acquaints us, in reply to queries, with the state of the press in Poland. As Editor-in-Chief of the country's biggest daily, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, he appears to enjoy his role, practising what he had agitated for during the erstwhile Communist regime — freedom of expression. Informal, free in manner, he exudes great charm.

What was journalism like in the old days? Holding the chicken leg aside, he bursts into laughter, allowing himself a one-liner: "It was prison journalism." This, obviously, was a reference to his plight when he, as a leader of democratic opposition, wrote for "underground" broadsheets. The freedom of press is guaranteed now by the Constitution and newspapers are no longer the loudspeakers of the Government of the day, it is stated.

This does not mean, we are told, that the ruling establishment does not try to influence

newspapers or is not harsh with those, which dare to publish inconvenient reports. Citing the experience of his own newspaper, he recounts how a Minister got annoyed when it carried details of irregularities in the construction of his house. "We are strong enough to resist any pressure," Mr. Michnik adds. But this may not be the case with smaller publications,

POLAND TODAY — IV

which are penalised in various ways, notably denial of official advertisements.

Did they try this weapon on his newspaper? "They would have been the losers. They cannot withhold advertisements to us if they have to reach out to the large number of our readers. In any case, we can take such pressures in our stride."

He does not take a grim view of foreign investment in Poland's print media, which is a rule rather than an exception. This, in his view, does not mean external influences on the country's politics. We cite the

case of Poland's second biggest newspaper, *Rzeczpospolita*, in which a party from Norway has 51 per cent share and the Government 49 per cent. "What interest has Norway in the domestic politics of Poland," he asks. "What if the foreign investor had been from Germany," we ask. He laughs, saying: "That would have been a different story."

Mr. Michnik, along with two senior members of his editorial staff, tells us what is of major interest to the media here — European affairs. But they evince a keen interest in the affairs of South Asia, and seek to update themselves. They show a clear preference for India, a democracy, as against Pakistan, governed by a military ruler.

According to figures available from various sources, *Gazeta*, now with a circulation of 6,00,000, was launched in 1989 on the wave of changes that led to the country's first party-free elections. The paper's name means "the elections newspaper". Mr. Michnik seeks to reconcile post-Communist and post-Solidarity movements. It is

part of a domestic media holding, Agora, which has a 10 per cent stake by foreigners.

The country's second biggest daily, *Rzeczpospolita* (circulation: 3,00,000) is regarded moderate, reliable and influential because of its target groups: managers, businessmen, lawyers, etc. Then there are two popular weekly magazines, the centre-oriented *Wprost* and the left-leaning *Polityka*.

The Editor-in-Chief of *Polityka*, Jerzy Baczynski, has this to say: "Poland does have a free media and free press. There are no great doubts on this issue. However, particular publications are entangled in different sorts of relationships and political and business interdependencies, which make them subordinate media." This has led a commentator to offer the following recipe: "If a Polish citizen has to have a full picture of what is going on in the country, he or she should regularly consult several different press titles. This is the only way readers can have a relatively objective picture of Poland today."

(Concluded)

23 SEP 2002

THE HINDU

National security, the chief concern

By K. K. Katyal

"Back to Europe" has been the dominant sentiment, of late, in Poland and this manifests itself in the move, now at the final stage, to join the European Union.

It will be the culmination of a process that began with the country's entry into NATO three years ago.

As things stand, Poland will be in the E.U. on January 1, 2004 — a fulfilment of a dream of the post-Cold War period.

Even a brief visit to Poland is enough to be aware of the deep sense of expectancy, the keenness to return to the European mainstream.

The rationale is simple.

National security is the chief concern of Poland, the victim of invasions and occupations over the years.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc, of which it was a part since the end of the second World War, offered new opportunities to Poland, which it was quick to grasp. Because of the change in the region's political geography, Poland now has borders with seven countries, including two major ones, Germany and Russia.

There are no territorial disputes, no external threats. Rarely in the past was Poland that fortunate and, as such, it was keen to utilise the opportunity to work for permanent

safeguards or, in the words of a diplomat, "to use the 15 minutes granted by history".

My interlocutors tell me how the membership of NATO was hailed by all political parties, heaving a sigh of relief, as it were, over the guarantee of security.

They draw attention to the trans-Atlantic dimension of the arrangement, bringing the U.S. into the picture as a guarantor for the first time in history.

According to a senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (M.F.A), Poland set its sights on entry into the E.U. from 1989 onward.

The grouping, however, was reluctant and it took full four years of patient effort by Warsaw to bring about a change of heart in Brussels.

Poland did sign an "association agreement" with the E.U., 13 years ago, but the stated purpose was to help it prepare for market economy and democratic processes.

Legally speaking, it was not a prelude to entry into the Union but, in fact, it did help Poland to pursue that objective.

In 1993, the E.U. summit at Copenhagen took the first concrete steps by setting criteria for new membership, including 1) domestic functioning, with stress on the rule of law, human rights and protection of minorities, 2) free market economy, and 3) ability of the candidates to take upon the obligations of

the Union. The application for membership was filed in 1994 and, three years later, at the Luxembourg summit, Poland and five others were invited to join the E.U. The number of invitees was later raised to 10, at the Helsinki summit in 1999.

The crossing of political divides was important and a matter of satisfaction, but their followed daunting preparatory talks, of ensuring that the administrative structures, legal regulations, legislations, policies and implementation pro-

POLAND TODAY — I

cesses in various fields, political, economic, foreign and security-related conform to the E.U. standards.

A separate set-up, the Department of European Union and Accession Negotiations, in the M.F.A conducts the elaborate confirmation exercises and seemingly interminable round of negotiations at various levels.

To cite one example, the ticklish issues like immigration regulations and policies and administration of justice, were settled some two months ago.

Poland will become the eastern border of the E.U.

The main purpose was to ensure that the E.U. borders remain protected after its expansion and that the country would undertake required obli-

gations for what would not be the national matter of Poland but the concern of the entire Union.

Some tough nuts have yet to be cracked — like an agreement on policies on agriculture, economy and the country's contribution to the E.U. budget. The accession treaty is intended to be ratified by a referendum, to be held in May. This step is not mandatory but is considered advisable on political grounds.

There is no uncertainty about the "yes" verdict, but support for E.U. entry has somewhat declined — it is no longer at the 80 per cent level, as was the case some time back — because of the misgivings and reservations of special interest groups.

"It will be well above 50 per cent", says a confident commentator.

If the entry into NATO and E.U. are two major planks of the present-day foreign policy, the special ties with the U.S. are a highly important factor.

Poland attaches considerable significance, as was evident from a conversation with Jan W. Piekarski, Director in the M.F.A.

He sees no contradiction between it and participation in the E.U., dismissing the speculative comments in a section of the media about the misgivings of some in Europe, of Poland being used as a Trojan

horse in the councils of Europe. To say that Poland fully supports the U.S. policies — be that in the fight against terrorism or Iraq — is to stress the obvious.

"We are a close ally of the U.S. and fully participate in its anti-terrorism campaign", according to the M.F.A. official. Poland's stand for the anti-Taliban operation was a logical extension of its recognition of the Northern Alliance in the past.

Poland re-opened its embassy in Baghdad soon after the Gulf War and, at the U.S. request, represents its interests there.

"Because of our presence there, we can witness political developments as also the games Saddam Hussain plays", says the official, adding that the Iraqi leader is not trustworthy and, as such, there was a case for a regime change.

Any notion that this position of vantage gives Iraq an opportunity to play a helpful role or that it is intended to be used, is rejected.

Think of the massive change. Once an integral part of the Soviet bloc, with Warsaw Pact a fulcrum of its security apparatus, Poland now values and takes pride in its close ties with the U.S. Officials and political commentators, hasten to stress that, during the Soviet bloc days, "we did not act according to our free will".

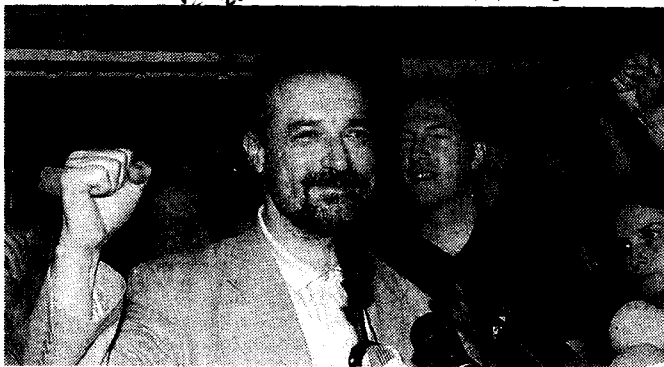
Opposition sweeps to power in Macedonia

SKOPJE (MACEDONIA), SEPT. 16. Opposition parties swept Macedonia's ruling coalition from power in the first elections since an armed rebellion, throwing a new challenge to a country still bitterly divided and rocked by ethnic tensions.

Voters weary of ethnic violence took out their frustrations on the current Government, which became enmeshed in last year's ethnic Albanian insurgency.

The State Electoral Commission was still counting votes on Monday, but the results were clear: a new government of liberal, moderate Macedonians and ethnic Albanians who rallied around a charismatic former rebel leader.

The Nationalist Prime Minister, Ljubco Georgievski, conceded defeat early on Monday for his governing party, known as VMRO, after voters in Sunday's parliamentary elections favoured the Opposition Together for Macedonia coalition led by the former communist, Branko Crvenkovski. "It is fully clear that we will not be able to form a new government, and we



A DECISIVE ELECTION: The leader of the moderate Social Democratic Union (SDSM), Branko Crvenkovski, celebrating his victory in the parliamentary elections, in Skopje, Macedonia, on Monday. — AFP

are congratulating the winner," Mr. Georgievski said. He called the vote "the most democratic election in the history of Macedonia."

Mr. Georgievski's concession came just hours after the leader of the Democratic Party of Albanians, the junior partner in the governing coalition, also acknowledged defeat to a new party headed by a popular former rebel leader.

Arben Xhaferi, leader of the

ruling Democratic Party of Albanians, conceded the election late on Sunday to the former rebel leader Ali Ahmeti, whose Union for Democratic Integration claimed a landslide win.

"We will cooperate with Ahmeti's party and work for the Albanian cause," Mr. Xhaferi said.

The first unofficial results were not expected until later Monday, but jubilant supporters fired guns into the air overnight in Skopje, the capital, and

in Mr. Ahmeti's power base near the northwestern city of Tetovo.

Ethnic Albanians praised Mr. Ahmeti for helping to lead last year's six-month guerilla uprising, an effort to win greater rights for the minority, which accounts for about a third of Macedonia's 2.2 million people.

Mr. Ahmeti, who now advocates ethnic reconciliation, enjoys almost hero status among many ethnic Albanians, though Macedonians consider him a terrorist and the authorities have issued a warrant for his arrest. Mr. Georgievski's party was ousted amid widespread voter discontent with a government perceived as corrupt and indifferent.

State television said the turnout surpassed 70 per cent, the strongest in 20 years.

In his victory speech, Mr. Crvenkovski thanked the voters, calling them "wise people who knew to choose who should rule the country from now on."

"We proved that Macedonia is going to survive for eternity," he said. — AP

66-14

Poll peaceful

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BUJANOVAC (YUGOSLAVIA), JULY 29. Serbs and ethnic Albanians in a tense region bordering Kosovo province passed a key test for ethnic reconciliation by peacefully electing power-sharing local governments, international observers said on Monday.

Stefano Sannino, the OSCE's chief in Belgrade, called the elections a "fresh start on the road to multiethnicity" and urged "wise political leadership" from local officials.

No violence — except for a minor scuffle between rival groups of ethnic Albanian voters at one polling station — was reported in Sunday's voting, which took place under the watchful eyes of international monitors and Serbian police.

Although the average turnout — set at about 55 per cent of the 75,000 voters in three municipalities electing mayors and council deputies — was less than expected, just holding the elections was an improvement from last year's gun battles that left dozens killed on both sides.

"The elections were generally in line with international standards," said head of a mission overseeing the vote for the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The area, part of Serbia located 280 km southeast of the capital, Belgrade, has a population of about 100,000. Serbia is the larger of the two republics that comprise Yugoslavia. — AP

30 JUL 2002

Spain pulls out, denies islet row exposes EU weakness

REUTERS

BRUSSELS, JULY 22

SPAIN on Monday denied suggestions that US involvement in defusing its row with Morocco had exposed the weakness of European Union diplomacy.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell helped to broker a deal over the weekend between EU member Spain and its North African neighbour Morocco which allowed Madrid to withdraw troops it had sent to the tiny disputed islet of Perejil.

Washington's intervention came after the EU failed to grant Spain its full support in the dispute. France, Morocco's former colonial power, had been particularly annoyed by Spain's decision to oust Moroccan troops from the islet by force.

"This (US involvement) is not a sign of (European) weakness. It is real politics, practical politics," Spanish Secretary of State Ramon de Miguel told reporters as he arrived in Brussels for a meeting of EU foreign ministers.

He said Morocco had requested



Moroccans hold banners and shout anti-Spanish slogans on a cliff next to the disputed Islet of Perejil on Monday. Reuters photo

the involvement of the US, an ally of both countries. Diplomats said Morocco did not see the EU as an honest broker because Spain is a member.

"The US acted as facilitator, it was the wish of Morocco. The Americans gave the guarantees that Morocco needed and that is why we reached an accord," said Miguel.

Asked whether France had shown enough solidarity with Spain

in the dispute, he said: "Yes, I think they and all our partners have shown solidarity."

Miguel was standing in for Spain's new Foreign Minister, Ana Palacio, who travelled to Rabat instead of to Brussels on Monday to hold talks with her Moroccan counterpart Mohamed Benaissa on the islet and other pressing bilateral problems.

Greek terror suspect seeks to address the nation

JOHN CARR AND
DANIEL MCGRORY
THE TIMES, LONDON

ATHENS, July 20. - A wispy-haired, softly spoken academic was charged yesterday with being the terrorist mastermind who for nearly three decades ran Greece's notorious 17 November group.

Just before Alexander Giotopoulos, 58, appeared in an Athens court wearing a bullet-proof vest he had demanded to make a televised address to the Greek people.

The economics professor insisted on explaining his group's ideological motives for murdering 23 people in 27 years, adding that he also wanted to outline his vision for a classless society. When police refused, he said that he would not answer any further questions and declared himself a political prisoner.

Streets were sealed by scores of armed police as the professor appeared in the dock alongside two more of 17 November's hit men. Police said they had arrested Marie Therese Peynaud, 48, the professor's French-born wife, who is seriously ill with cancer.

Officers are confident that they do not need Professor Giotopoulos to confess because they have his fingerprints on murder weapons found in one of the group's safe houses. In raids on his flat in the Athens suburb of Vyrona police say they found a typewriter that the professor used to issue his claims of responsibility for bombings and killings. They also took computer disks and financial records that could incriminate those who funded the organisation.

Six men have confessed to their roles in 17 November, the latest being Vassilis Tzo-

rtzatos, 48, an electrician, who admitted to participating in 17 murders, and Theologos Psaradelis, 55, a retired printer, who took part in armed robberies and shootings.

Police say they are hunting for the group's chief of operations, Dimitris Koufodinas, 44, a beekeeper. They have not yet named the second man in the murder team that killed Brigadier Stephen Saunders, the British defence attache. Vassilis Xiros, 30, one of three brothers, has confessed to taking part in that ambush in June 2000.

Panagiotis Angelopoulos, the prosecutor, described the professor as the "ideological leader" of 17 November and charged him with premeditated murder for his alleged participation in 11 killings carried out by the gang since 1984, including the murder of Brigadier Saunders.

THE STATZMAN

21 JUL 2002

Morocco sends peace overtures to Spain

By Vaiju Naravane

PARIS, JULY 19. Morocco has announced it will not send troops back to the rocky outcrop of Perejil-Persil Island that Moroccans call Leila (night), if Spain withdraws the soldiers it deployed there on Wednesday.

"I have already made my promise and I repeat: Morocco does not intend to go back to the island once Spanish troops leave it," Morocco's Foreign Minister, Mohammed Benaissa, said in a radio interview.

The Minister's remarks on Friday, prior to a visit to Paris to meet French officials, is likely to defuse heightened tensions between Spain and Morocco over a disputed, uninhabited island in Moroccan territorial waters that was occupied by Morocco last week and then taken over by the Spanish military. The Minister is to hold a press conference in Paris before leaving for Brussels in order to pitch his country's case to

the European Union.

On Thursday, the Minister had called on Spanish Prime Minister, Jose Maria Aznar, to withdraw Spanish troops not only from the tiny rocky outcrop (less than half a mile in length) but from the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Mellilla on Morocco's Mediterranean coast.

Spain tried to ease the situation on Thursday with Mr. Aznar saying Madrid did not wish for tension with its southern neighbour, but warned that Spain would not accept a Moroccan *fait accompli*. "We want to return to the pre-July 11 *status quo*," he said. Spain contends that by mutual agreement, the island was to remain uninhabited. Morocco, which claims sovereignty on this island and other enclaves and islets held by Spain, says the final status was never clarified when Spain's protectorate ended in 1956.

Although these latest developments are

likely to calm stormy seas, the problem remains unresolved with the possibility of more friction further down the line. Spain and Morocco have clashed over illegal immigration, fishing rights and the disputed territory of the Western Sahara, annexed by Morocco after the Spanish left Morocco. Last October, Rabat recalled its ambassador from Madrid and he has not been sent back.

The present row is causing tensions within the European Union, which went back on its initial reaction of unconditional support to Spain, and on Thursday called for a dialogue. Morocco has made it clear it does not intend to allow the matter to rest there. Spain is in a delicate position. Its demand for sovereignty over Gibraltar is inconsistent with its refusal to concede sovereignty over the enclaves of Ceuta, Melilla, Perejil and other islands or even share it with Morocco.

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THE HINDU

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ULSTER / UNIONISTS DISMISSIVE OF REPUBLICAN GESTURE

IRA 'committed' to peace process

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, JULY 17. In a dramatic move, widely noted for its huge symbolic significance, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) has publicly apologised to the victims of its over 30-year bloody campaign and reaffirmed its "commitment" to the Northern Ireland peace process.

The IRA, in a statement, said it offered "sincere apologies and condolences" to the families of non-combatants killed or injured in violence. Referring to Bloody Friday, it said: "It is...appropriate on the anniversary of this tragic event that we address all of the deaths and injuries of non-combatants caused by us. We offer our sincere apologies and condolences to their families." The IRA, it said, was "totally committed to the peace process and to dealing with the challenges and difficulties which this presents."

The apology, regarded as an unprecedented gesture from an organisation which has consistently refused to repudiate its actions, came ahead of the 30th anniversary of Bloody Friday when nine persons were killed in a series of bomb blasts in Bel-



A file photo of policemen standing in the rubble after a car-bomb ripped through the market town of Omagh in Northern Ireland, killing over 20 people on Aug. 15, 1998.

fast on July 21, 1972, marking a new phase in republican violence.

But Unionists dismissed it as a tactical move saying it was intended to fend off pressure on the IRA following allegations that the paramilitary group had been secretly re-arming itself despite its commitment to give up weapons. In recent weeks, the IRA has attracted a lot of flak for its alleged involvement in renewed violence, and hard line

Unionists are demanding that its political arm, Sinn Fein, should be expelled from Northern Ireland's coalition government for its failure to rein in the IRA.

Unionist leaders said it was significant that the apology came a week before the Prime Minister, Tony Blair's widely anticipated statement on IRA activities. The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) leader and head of the Northern Ireland Executive,

David Trimble, cautioned Mr. Blair not to allow himself to be deflected by the IRA's announcement. "It is quite significant that this statement says nothing at all about the recent violence that the IRA has been involved in, nothing about what their future conduct is going to be. Consequently, this statement does not absolve the Prime Minister from the need for him to make clear what the Government will do in the event of breaches (of the ceasefire agreed under Good Friday Agreement) by the republican movement," he said.

The British and Irish Governments, which have been working hard to avert a collapse of the peace process, welcomed the IRA's gesture describing it as a significant attempt by republicans to get over the past. Both London and Dublin were reported to have been pleasantly surprised by the IRA's announcement which came barely hours after Mr. Blair told a parliamentary committee that the IRA had "never been further away from the resumption of violence". The apology also went down well with families of victims though they said it meant nothing in real terms.

THE HINDU

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UN mission in Bosnia extended

Press Trust of India

UNHQ, July 4. — Averting a shutdown of its peacekeeping exercise in Bosnia, the UN Security Council has extended the police-training mission by another 12 days to resolve the contentious dispute caused by a US veto. Had the extension, the second in four days been not granted, the mission would have been shut down at midnight last night though the EU was reportedly making contingency plans to take it over immediately.

Faced with strong opposition from European allies to its proposal that its peacekeepers be exempted from the jurisdiction of the new International Criminal Court, the USA yesterday allowed extension of the UN mission in Bosnia till 15 July to give diplomats time to work out a compromise. It had vetoed a resolution on Sunday to extend the Bosnian mission for another six months by which time a European Union force was expected to take over. The American demand stems from its fear that its peacekeepers might be subject to politically motivated and frivolous prosecution by the court.

The American decision to allow the 12-day extension came after the UN Secretary-General, Mr Kofi Annan, in a blunt letter to the US Secretary of State, Gen Colin Powell, warned that the whole system of UN peacekeeping operations was being put at risk.

No peacekeeper in the UN history, he said, had anywhere been accused of the crimes against humanity which the court would try. "The issue that the USA is raising in the council is, therefore, highly improbable," he said. The USA on Tuesday proposed a compromise to avoid halting the world body's operation in Bosnia while keeping American personnel from being prosecuted by the International Criminal Court.

Its ambassador to the UN, Mr John Negroponte, said no one had really "slammed door shut on our proposals and it was on his basis that we should allow the opportunity for these discussions to continue next week." The American proposal that the peacekeepers be exempted from the jurisdiction of the court for 12 months and after that, they could be prosecuted only if the council agreed to that did not find favour with the members.

Diplomats said at least 10 of the 15 council members strongly opposed the proposal which would have required a minimum of nine votes to be adopted. One report said that among the supporters was China. The USA, along with Britain, Russia, France and China, has veto in the council and hence its effect would have been same as the original American demand that its peacekeepers be exempted from the jurisdiction.

Mandates of four other peacekeeping missions are up for renewal later this month and diplomats said it would be better to sort out the issue right in the beginning so that others are not affected. Six members of the council have ratified the treaty establishing the court and six others have signed.

5 JUL 2002

THE STRAITS TIMES

Warrants issued for war crimes suspects

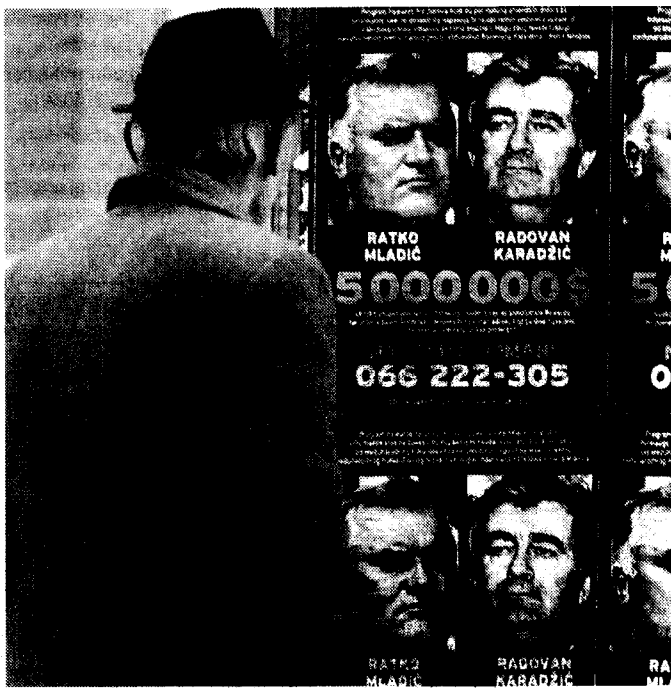
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BELGRADE, MAY 9. A Belgrade court issued arrest warrants on Thursday for 17 top Serb war crimes suspects, including the former Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, and his war-time commander, Ratko Mladic.

But the warrants issued may not result in the suspects' immediate arrests and extraditions to the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands. Yugoslav authorities say they do not know the whereabouts of Mr. Mladic, Mr. Karadzic and several other suspects wanted by the Tribunal, said the chief investigative judge of Belgrade's district court, Branislav Todic.

Mr. Karadzic and Mr. Mladic — the world's most-wanted war crimes fugitives — have been indicted by The Hague for genocide during the three-year military siege and shelling of Sarajevo, and for the 1995 massacre of about 8,000 Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica, Bosnia.

The U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for war crimes, Pierre-Richard Prosper, was recently quoted by Belgrade media as saying that Yugoslavia must arrest Mr. Mladic and Mr. Karadzic and extradite them to The Hague before the U.S. Congress would approve millions of dollars in aid to the economically troubled Balkan country. The aid could also be granted if Yugoslav authorities were to provide evidence that the two fugitives were not hiding in Ser-



A man looks at the posters of Bosnian-Serb war time leader, Radovan Karadzic (right) and his military commander, Ratko Mladic, wanted by U.S., in Sarajevo in this January file photo.

bia or Montenegro, the two republics that form Yugoslavia, he added.

His comments have angered Serbian authorities who advocate cooperation with the U.N. court.

The Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjic, has said that Mr.

Mladic and Mr. Karadzic are not in Yugoslavia and are probably hiding in the Serb controlled part of neighbouring Bosnia.

"Those who claim Karadzic and Mladic are in Yugoslavia should give us that proof, and not demand that we do it," Mr. Djindjic said. — AP

THE HINDU

10 MAY 2002

Belgrade wanted to destroy Kosovo, says Rugova

AD-15
A/S

THE HAGUE, MAY 3. Today the Kosovo President, Ibrahim Rugova, confronted his former foe, the former Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, telling a U.N. war crimes court that Mr. Milosevic unleashed a wave of violence in Kosovo in the 1990s in a bid to snuff-out calls for independence.

"Belgrade clearly decided to destroy Kosovo through violence and war," said Mr. Rugova, an academic who led a campaign of passive resistance by Kosovo's Albanian majority against Milosevic's rule in the 1990s.

Mr. Milosevic, on trial since February on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo in the last decade, yawned and looked bored as his former adversary testified against him.

The last time these two came face-to-face was in a filmed meeting stage-managed by Mr. Milosevic during NATO's 1999 bombing campaign against Yugoslavia, wherein Mr. Rugova denounced NATO's air



The Kosovo ethnic Albanian leader, Ibrahim Rugova (right), is seen with the then Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in this April 1, 1999, file photo.

campaign. Mr. Rugova fled abroad soon after the meeting, which was widely seen as a propaganda coup for the President.

Mr. Milosevic, who is conducting his own vigorous defence, is expected to cross-examine Mr. Rugova on

Monday in a showdown harking back to their crisis meetings in the late 1990s.

The accused leaned back nonchalantly in his chair when Mr. Rugova told the court that Mr. Milosevic had justified a Serb crackdown in the province at a meeting with

him in 1998 by branding a separatist campaign in the province as "terrorism". "We said that the situation in Kosovo was bad, that there was violence and repression and he justified it saying that the state must respond and these were terrorists," Mr. Rugova said.

Mr. Milosevic, who was in power for 13 years in Belgrade,

has blamed the West for fanning the flames of dissent in Kosovo and has accused it of supporting a separatist guerilla campaign by the Kosovo Liberation Army.

To convict Mr. Milosevic, prosecutors must prove not only that atrocities against ethnic Albanians took place, but also that he knew about them or should have known about them.

Any evidence that Mr. Rugova can provide about information he passed on to Mr. Milosevic, or how involved the ex-President was in the security forces' chain of command, could help make that case. — Reuters

THE HINDU

4 MAY 2002

A victory for
Milosevic

THE HAGUE, FEB. 20. In a first victory for the former Yugoslav strongman, Slobodan Milosevic, the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal excluded testimony on Wednesday from the prosecution's senior investigator, saying it was based on inadmissible hearsay. But in a personal setback, Mr. Milosevic complained the Dutch government denied his wife a visa for a weekend visit, and he asked the three tribunal judges to intervene.

Kevin Curtis, the prosecution's chief war crimes investigator for Kosovo, was due to testify about "the killing sites" where thousands of Kosovo Albanians were allegedly murdered by Serb forces during the 1999 war in the province.

But the judges ruled his testimony would be irrelevant, since he was repeating stories he had heard from others. Mr. Milosevic chided the prosecution for preparing what he said were hundreds more such statements.

"You will probably get down to the prosecutor's driver or a hairdresser," he said, before presiding judge Richard May cut him short: Mr. Milosevic, we are with you. We are going to exclude it."

Mr. Curtis and Stephen Spargo, the prosecution's intelligence analyst, were summoned as witnesses to outline Mr. Milosevic's alleged plan to ethnically cleanse Kosovo of its majority ethnic Albanian population— AP

THE HINDU

21 FEB 2002

Ex-Yugoslav President, Albanian leader in tense showdown

Milosevic in court brawl

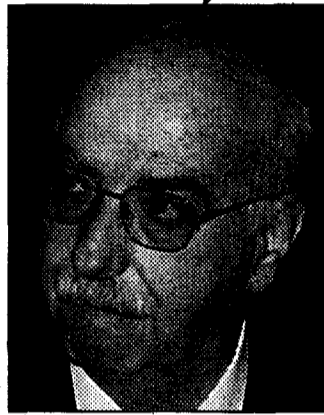
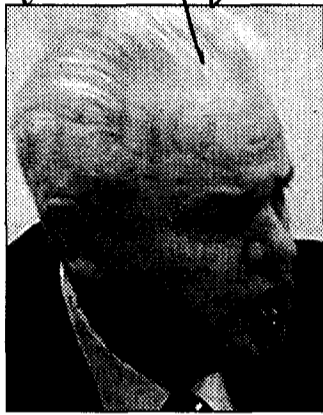
FROM ANDREW ROCHE

The Hague, Feb. 19 (Reuters): Slobodan Milosevic aggressively challenged the first of many witnesses in his war crimes trial today, an ageing Communist who accused him of destroying Yugoslavia and killing children.

The former Yugoslav leader locked horns with Kosovo Albanian Mahmut Bakalli in a four-hour cross-examination on the sixth day of Europe's biggest war crimes trial since World War Two.

Presiding judge Richard May intervened repeatedly during their acrimonious digressions into tangled Yugoslav politics, to insist they stuck to the evidence in a case expected to hear hundreds more witnesses and which might last years.

Milosevic challenged Bakalli's account of a Serbian campaign to impose "apartheid" on Kosovo's Albanian majority in the 1990s. Prosecutors say this was a prelude to "ethnic cleansing" by Milosevic's forces in the southern Serbian province in 1999. Bakalli, a former top Kosovo Communist party official who took part in talks to defuse tension after clashes between Serb security forces and ethnic Al-



Former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic (left) and Albanian politician Mahmut Bakalli. (AFP)

banian guerrillas in 1998, accused Milosevic of destroying Yugoslavia's ethnic harmony.

"You ruined every idea for such a Yugoslav future," the gravelly voiced, bespectacled academic told the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). "You, Mr Milosevic, destroyed Yugoslavia with pleasure by war."

Milosevic is accused of "crimes against humanity" in Kosovo — murders, persecution and the deportation of 800,000 Albanians from January to June 1999. After Nato bombing, Serb

forces withdrew and the United Nations has since run the province.

In his dogged questioning of Bakalli, Milosevic in turn accused Nato, the West and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) of driving out some 360,000 Serbs, Roma and other minorities from the mainly ethnic Albanian province since 1999.

Bakalli said Milosevic's estimate was an exaggeration but acknowledged many Serbs had fled Kosovo fearing revenge attacks by Albanians angry at years of Serb repression. Inter-

national bodies say around 230,000 non-Albanians have left.

Milosevic, who studied law at Belgrade University and is conducting his own defence with the help of legal advisers, fired dozens of brisk questions at Bakalli.

"Could you explain to us what apartheid means?" Milosevic asked Bakalli after the Kosovo Albanian used the word on Monday. "You are under solemn declaration here, Mr Bakalli," he added. "You don't need to remind me of that," Bakalli replied.

"You took away our right to autonomous government," Bakalli said. "You took away our right to have our own police force. You took away our right to have our own education."

Milosevic appeared to relish his inquisitorial role, leaning back nonchalantly in his chair as he challenged the witness repeatedly. Only his fast-tapping foot seemed to betray tension.

Presiding judge May showed growing impatience with the wrangling. "I think we are moving away somewhat from the subject at this time," he told Milosevic.

"We will not get on if we have these very long answers," he in turn told Bakalli.

THE TELEGRAPH

20 FEB 2002

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Milosevic 'responsible' for genocide

By Vaiju Naravane

PARIS FEB 12. On Tuesday morning, the historic trial of former Yugoslav leader opened at the International Criminal Tribunal on the former Yugoslavia at The Hague. Switzerland's Carla del Ponte, Chief Prosecutor, held him personally responsible for unleashing three bloody wars in the Balkans that tore Yugoslavia apart and claimed thousands of lives between 1991 and 1999.

"An excellent tactician, mediocre strategist. Slobodan Milosevic did nothing but pursue his ambition at the price of unspeakable suffering inflicted on those who opposed him or represented a threat to his personal quest for power.

No state organisation is on trial here today. The accused is brought before you to answer for his own actions and for his personal involvement in the crimes alleged against him," she said

Throughout her requisition, Mrs. del Ponte stared the former Yugoslav leader straight in the eye. During the entire proceedings, Mr. Milosevic wore a sphinx-like mask that he allowed to slip occasionally, to express disgust, disdain and contempt.



Srebrenica survivors watch a live broadcast of the start of the trial of the former Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, on Tuesday. Mr. Milosevic is accused of genocide in Bosnia including the massacre of over 7,000 Muslims from Srebrenica in 1995. — AFP

The first head of state to appear before an international court for war crimes and crimes against humanity, Mr. Milosevic remained impassive as the charges against him were read out.

These include acts committed in the three Balkan wars, of Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo and cover ethnic cleansing, torture, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Prosecutors arrived at the court with video footage and transcripts of phone interceptions. But these are unlikely to be admitted as legal evidence

and they will have to rely heavily on the testimony of several people who worked closely with the former Yugoslav strongman.

The court has reportedly amassed an enormous pile of evidence against Mr. Milosevic and it will take the international bench several months to sift through all the evidence that will be placed before it.

Mr. Milosevic has hitherto refused to recognise the legitimacy of the court on grounds that it was set up by the U.N. Security Council and not by the United Nations General Assembly.

THE HINDU

13 FEB 2002



Ibrahim Rugova (right), president of the Democratic League of Kosovo and a candidate for the President of Kosovo, leaves the Assembly hall in Pristina, on Thursday. — Reuters

Rugova fails to win support *E. Europe*

AP-15
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PRISTINE (YUGOSLAVIA), JAN 10. Veteran pacifist leader, Ibrahim Rugova, has failed to win enough support in Kosovo's new legislature to be elected president of the Yugoslav province in a second round of voting. Instead of the two-thirds majority needed, only 50 deputies in the 120-seat assembly backed Mr. Rugova, who led passive resistance by Kosovo's ethnic Albanian majority to harsh Serb rule for a decade before war engulfed the province in 1999. In the first round of voting on December 13, Mr. Rugova received

support from 49 deputies.

Mr. Rugova's Democratic League of Kosovo won the November 17 general election in Kosovo, designed to give the province self-government under a U.N. umbrella, but will need the support of other parties to get him elected president. Failure to pick a president soon would disappoint western officials, who have urged Kosovo's newly elected leaders to show they are ready to face the challenge of governing following November's historic general election. — Reuters