

JUNE 4 - JUNE 17, 2021

# THREE FREEDOMS UNDER THE MAGNIFYING GLASS

Cases of violations of basic human rights in Serbia June 4 - June 17, 2021



## Freedom of expression – *Civic activist detained for satirical tweet*

Civic activist **Zoran Čičak** was brought in for questioning by police because of a joking tweet which described the current situation regarding the holding of elections for local communities in Novi Sad. On that occasion, Čičak alluded to the nickname of a prominent activist of the Serbian Progressive Party, who was photographed with Andrej Vučić, the brother of the President of the Republic. This move is not the result of a mistake in the understanding of the mentioned tweet by the authorities, but a continuation of the practice of intimidating political dissidents, bearing in mind that this is one in a series of arrests of citizens immediately following their giving public statements criticizing the government. **In this way, the right to free expression is grossly violated, and the goal of such acts is not only to punish citizens for their views, but also to intimidate them in order to achieve self-censorship and restrain critical voices in society.**

**Zoran Čičak** @zorancicak

Свака месна заједница  
Да задужи један снајпер  
Да би утакмица  
Била фер.

**NAŠA PRIČA:** Šta pokazuju atmosfera zastrašivanja i pojavljivanje brata predsednika države uz gradonačelnika i visokog funkcionera SNS Miloša Vučevića na izborima za savete mesnih zajednica u Novom Sadu

### Andrej Vučić imao zadatak da opominje i disciplinuje

Poseta jednom od oštrih SNS uopć izbora: Andrej Vučić sa sestrama članovima stranke

- Sumnja se da su Marko Bosanac Boske i Slobodan Milutinović Snajper bili zaduženi za navodnu kupovinu glasova i pritisak na birače
- **Dario Hajrić:** SNS se i dalje ponaša kao da je učešće u političkom životu mimo te stranke nekakva polulegalna aktivnost
- **Jovo Bakić:** Naprednjaci se plaše da, ako negde izgube kontrolu, to će početi da se širi i na druga mesta

Strane 2-3

9:08 PM · Jun 14, 2021

280 25 Share this Tweet

Početna • Ekonomija • Nelegalan prevoz ili nelegalno suzbijanje konkurencije

## EKONOMIJA

Kako je Savatrans dva puta dobio i dva puta gubio dozvolu za vangabaritni transport trafostanice kroz Srbiju

# Nelegalan prevoz ili nelegalno suzbijanje konkurencije

Mirjana N. Stevanović  
03.06.2021. 11:03

1 komentara



## NAJNOVIJE

Scena • danas 11:40

Bend „Keni nije mrtav“ objavio novi singl „Samodisciplina“



BBC News na srpskom • danas 11:36

Nova eksplozija u fabrici Sloboda u Čačku: Troje povredjenih radnika, požar pod kontrolom, evakuisano oko 350 ljudi



Kultura • danas 11:22

Treći Somborski filmski festival od 13. do 16. jula



## KOLUMNNE



Božidar Andrejić

Nedefinisana država, nedefinisani zakoni

## Citizens' right to express their political will violated in Novi Sad

The local community elections in Novi Sad caused unusually great public attention, but also increased activities of the ruling party, which is why incidents and cases of violations of the election process were ubiquitous. The most obvious case was an attack on one of the independent candidates who was attacked by two men while sitting on a bench near the Liman 4 polling station. **The behavior of ruling party activists who did not refrain from open violence shows that the space for free expression of political will and citizens' electoral rights is so endangered that even local community elections which have so far been of secondary importance given the marginal legal and statutory powers of these bodies, are no longer free from the repression that has become a common companion of every election process in the last 10 years.**

## Transport company owner insults female journalist over her reporting

The Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia (NUNS/IJAS) condemned the insults directed at a journalist of the independent newspaper *Danas*, **Mirjana Stevanović**, by **Žarko Kosović**, the owner of the transport company "Bora Kečić".

The motive for this attack was the mention of Kosović's company in an article the journalist wrote for this paper, which dealt with the issue of illegal transport operations and non-compliance with antitrust/competition regulations. Feeling threatened by the article's publication, Kosović repeatedly insulted Stevanović through phone calls and text messages, warning her that he would discuss the incident with her employer.

**This is an obvious attempt to illegally influence the work of journalists and suppress citizens' freedom to report on all relevant issues.**

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# MONITORING

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## Problematic changes to Serbia's FOI Law

After the publication of the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance and the opening of a public debate, a group of civil society organizations gathered around the Coalition for Free Access to Information drafted a document with proposals for improving the draft law. The Coalition expressed concern over the solutions contained in the proposed Draft, emphasizing that its adoption and implementation in practice would significantly jeopardize and limit the level of achieved rights in the area of access to information, and that the proposed solution will not contribute to solving problems identified during the implementation of the current law. The most problematic solutions are the provisions concerning the restriction of the law's application to political parties and religious communities, as well as the provisions that enable the denial of the right to access information to the applicant if this would jeopardize the legal or natural persons". The Coalition also proposes solutions regarding the identified problems in the area of the execution of the Commissioner's decisions and the lack of an effective system of supervision over the implementation of the Law. **The long-standing practice of state bodies not acting on the Commissioner's decisions has already made the institute of free access to information of public importance rather meaningless, and the adoption of such legal solutions would set back the legal framework and adapt it to the previous negligent actions of state bodies. Such an outcome would not only run counter to the very purpose of the law, but would significantly contribute to further deterioration in the area of media freedom and access to information for citizens.**



## Still no answers regarding the death of a man detained for endangering the President's safety

Four years after the death of Milorad Nikolić, who died in a prison hospital in Serbia, the public and the family of the deceased have yet to receive an answer to the question of who was responsible for his death and why he was detained at all. **We remind you that Nikolić was arrested because of text messages he sent to his neighbor, the content of which was characterized by members of the security structures of the Republic of Serbia as endangering the security of President Aleksandar Vučić.** Even after four years, it has not been explained to the public on what legal basis Nikolić was arrested, or what his illegal behavior consisted of, which raises the suspicion that the act of his detention represented political revenge. **The passage of time without providing an adequate explanation confirms the thesis that the key problem in this case is the lack of political will to really solve the case.**