

ELECTIONS

UNDER THE MAGNIFYING GLASS

13 days
until the
elections



DATE: 17-21/03/2022

The Three Freedoms Platform will monitor and record all irregularities in public information and the election process on a daily basis, and send its reports to the international community and the interested public.

The practice of canceling premises for opposition rallies continued

The candidate of the coalition "United for the Victory of Belgrade" for the position of Belgrade mayor, Vladeta Jankovic, announced on March 17, 2022 that the hotel "Zira" in Belgrade canceled a previously rented hall for a pre-election rally of this coalition. Jankovic stated that they received a notification from the hotel management about the cancellation only 12 hours before the scheduled time of the meeting, with the explanation that the duration of the second event, which was supposed to take place before the opposition event, was extended. Jankovic added that this was the sixth case that they were denied the opportunity to hold events in Belgrade, that "it can no longer be accidental" and that "the ruling party uses all permitted and impermissible means to prevent them."

An environmental activist under pressure because of her work

Activist of the association "Suvoborska greda" from Pranjane, Ljiljanja Bralovic, stated that she was exposed to daily pressure due to her activist work. She alleges that she has had three misdemeanor proceedings against her so far, one with a threatened fine of up to 12,000 dinars, that she was marked as an "enemy of the state" and that her neighbors gossip about her being a "foreign mercenary". Bralovic, who is also a poet, stated that it is forbidden to recite her songs at school competitions, and if someone dares to invite her as a guest to a school, according to her, "an interrogation by local authorities will follow".

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A worker at the Gerontology Center in Subotica was subjected to pressure

Ranka Kasikovic Davcik, legal advisor at the Gerontology Center in Subotica, states that she has been subjected to pressure since the moment she refused to participate in the activities of the ruling Serbian Progressive Party. She states that at the end of November 2021, she received an message from a colleague to get ready to go to the meeting of the ruling SNS in Belgrade, and according to her, it was done on the order of the director of the Center Brankica Tesanovic. She informed her colleague that she did not want to go and that she no longer informs her about party activities, but the next day she received a notification from the director of this institution, in which all employees were ordered to contact Kasikovic Davcik directly on the official phone in case of any question. She adds that this step followed with the intention of burdening her with calls, and she understood this change as a direct punishment for refusing to attend the SNS rally. Although she appealed to the director that she was overburdened, she got additional jobs and was excluded from important meetings. According to her, this was done in order to force her to make a mistake and thus violate her work obligation, so that the director would have a reason to initiate proceedings against her. She states that she suffered health problems due to the pressure, and she also filed a report against the director.

Portal punished for reporting on an opinion of a political party

The Independent Journalists' Association of Vojvodina (NDNV) announced on March 18, 2022, that the "Autonomija" portal was legally sentenced to a fine of 100,000 dinars for transmitting an opinion of one political party. According to the statement, the Court of Appeals in Belgrade confirmed the verdict of the High Court in Belgrade, by which the "Autonomija" portal must pay compensation on the lawsuit of Djordje Iskrin from Novi Sad due to "violation of his honor and reputation". The lawsuit came after the Democratic Party's statement entitled "DS: High School Principal Rejecting Cross-Border Project To Be Replaced" was passed on in this portal, and the court described the text as "editorial" because it was not transmitted under quotation marks, like some other parts of the text. NDNV states that "the judiciary does not understand the role of the media and journalists in a democratic society" and that this is an unprecedented verdict, because it suggests that the media cannot pass on views of political actors, that is that they can be prosecuted and punished if anyone sues them if they transmit anyone's political position. They described the ruling as a "direct attack on media freedoms" as well as on "the right to express one's opinion, public debate, political freedoms and pluralism".



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Police prevented the arrival of the protest participants to Belgrade

A group of activists from the villages of Slatina and Krivelj were prevented from coming to Belgrade for a protest organized by the "Ekološki ustanak" and the "Moramo" Coalition, scheduled for March 19, 2022. As it is stated, they were stopped by the police on the toll ramp in Paracin when entering the highway to Belgrade, after which they were not able to leave for three hours. Activist Miodrag Zivkovic stated that they were stopped under the explanation of routine control and checking the correctness of their vehicle, but he states that this is an excuse to prevent them to attend the scheduled protest in Belgrade. The police sent the mentioned vehicle for a technical inspection, and Zivkovic states that they were also "monitored a few days ago". As the portal Istmedia.rs reported, they were previously followed by Bor police inspectors when leaving the city of Bor.

Opposition activist attacked in Becej

The representative of the "Moramo" Coalition from Becej, Milan Bokun, was physically attacked while trying to record the activities of the ruling SNS in this place. It is stated that Bokun was attacked while filming the place where the locals of Becej came to get SNS gift packages, so that one man first kicked him, and then he received threats. Bokun immediately reported the case to the police and states that he is very upset about this incident.

An activist filmed by a drone during the stay of the President of the Republic

Youth Student Action (OSA) activist Brajan Brkovic said that he was filmed by a police drone that flew two meters from his terrace during the stay of the President of the Republic in Novi Sad at the train station near the apartment where he lives. He adds that a day earlier, he was warned by members of the Ministry of the Interior that "OSA activists should not make incidents at the opening of the railway station, because it will end very badly for them." He also states that in the morning on the day of the mentioned gathering, several members of the police without uniforms patrolled in front of the entrance to his building.

Activists locked up as they toured the factory

A group of activists from the "Moramo" Coalition was locked up by an unnamed person from the "Feitiansuye" factory in Zrenjanin, which they visited unannounced. They state that they visited this factory that processes waste plastic and made sure that the workers do not have protective equipment, that the plant is full of toxic smoke and that it is released without filtration, thus endangering the place where it is located. It is added that they were locked up until the arrival of the police.



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Environmental associations cite obstructions in the process of verifying signatures for the people's initiative

Environmental activists of "Suvoborska greda" and the "Kreni-promeni" campaign stated that the head of the Municipal Administration of Gornji Milanovac, Dejan Veljovic, is obstructing the process of verifying the signatures of support for the people's initiative to ban the extraction of boron and lithium ores in Serbia. As it is stated, the Municipal Administration, at the request of the association that the verifiers verify the signatures in two local communities in Pranjani and Vracevsnica, answered that "it is not able to verify" in those places, referring to the Law on Referendum and People's Initiative, which prescribes that the verification must be performed "in the city or municipal administration". "Suvoborska greda" states that other municipalities approved their verifiers to go on-spot and that Veljovic "subjectively interprets legal norms", as well as that Veljovic's position is "a mistake and unprofessional approach to the work he performs or intends to sabotage the position of most residents" of these villages. It was added from this association that it will continue with the requests to obtain verifiers, but that it will also initiate legal procedures in order to review the actions of the head of the Municipal Administration.

One more party is targeting civil society organizations in its campaign

The president of the "Serbian Right", Misa Vacic, who is the party's candidate in the upcoming presidential elections on April 3, 2022, targeted civil society organizations, presenting a number of already seen accusations with the aim of discrediting their work. Vacic stated that "any interference of foreign ambassadors in the internal affairs of the country, financing of non-governmental organizations that are fighting against the Serbian Orthodox Church, Serbian patriotism and the state itself is unacceptable to him." It is also unacceptable for him to "tolerate the media that publish maps of Serbia without Kosovo and Metohija, accuse the Serbian people of genocide and insult the feelings of the majority of citizens." We remind you that earlier the Sovereignists and the Serbian Radical Party made similar claims and accusations against civil society organizations in their pre-election activities and statements.



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The President of the Republic making accusations against N1 television

The President of the Republic and presidential candidate for the upcoming elections on April 3, 2022, Aleksandar Vucic, after being asked whether he would respond to the invitation of TV N1 to appear in a duel with presidential candidate Zdravko Ponos from the "United for Victory of Serbia" list, and after rejecting this offer, made a number of accusations against TV N1. He reiterated that N1 "called his children criminals all the time, sometimes murderers", as well as that he could not forgive himself and betray his children because of everything that N1 did to them. N1 announced on this occasion that it only transmitted the findings of research portals about the Skaljari and Kavac clan and a photo showing a member of the Kavac clan and the son of the President of the Republic Danilo Vucic.

A group of right-wingers tried to attack the premises of the League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina

A group of extreme right-wingers gathered at a rally in support of the Russian aggression against Ukraine on March 19, 2022, in the center of Novi Sad, during which they tried to attack the premises of the opposition League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina (LSV).

At the beginning of the war in Ukraine, this party publicly supported the Ukrainian side, and on that occasion, they pointed out the flag of Ukraine at their headquarters. With derogatory parols, and after gathering on the Freedom Square in Novi Sad, the group headed to the LSV headquarters, but the police prevented them from accessing the building.

Pressure on the workers of the Health Center in Kovacica

Dragana Rakic from the Democratic Party announced that the employees of the Health Center in Kovacica are under pressure from the Serbian Progressive Party. She states that the employees of this institution, upon arriving at their workplace, received the SNS package and the request to collect safe votes, go to the party's rallies and vote for that party on April 3, 2022. Rakic states that she received information about this case from the employees of the Health Center, who wished to remain anonymous, the day after her guest appearance in the debate within the show "Rec na rec" on the Radio Television of Serbia.