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Belgrade mayor calls for cancelation of “weekend events”

Source: Tanjug

Friday 30.09.2011 | 09:51

BELGRADE -- Belgrade Mayor Dragan Đilas called on the organizers to cancel all the events planned for this weekend.



Dragan Đilas (FoNet, file)

"As a Belgrade mayor, I once again call on all sides to maturely and responsibly consider the moment we as a country and a society are in and not go ahead with the gatherings scheduled for this weekend, because they complicate an already complex situation," he told Tanjug.

"Rights are guaranteed by law to all and I am not denying them to anyone, but I must remind that every right carries a certain responsibility with it. It is precisely this responsibility that I appeal to when I ask the organizers of all the events to cancel them. If a political culprit is needed for not holding all the announced events, and if that is the price for no new broken heads and raised tension, I consent to have that political minus put down in my column," Đilas stressed.

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=09&dd=30&nav_id=76632

Pride Parade won't be called off, organizers say Source: B92

Friday 30.09.2011 | 10:08

BELGRADE -- Pride Parade Organizing Committee member Goran Miletić told B92 that the gay parade would not be canceled.



Belgrade Pride 2011 Logo

He added that he was shocked by Belgrade Mayor Dragan Đilas' statement.

He believes that the mayor is equalizing the Pride Parade with the rallies organized by those who caused violence and demolished the city last year by calling on the organizers to call off all the events planned for this weekend.

Miletić has said that it is interesting that Đilas made the statement on Thursday, only three days ahead of the parade.

"The Pride Parade Organizing Committee will not call off the parade and believes that Mayor Đilas' statement is completely shocking, bearing in mind that he put an equal sign between all the events announced for the weekend. I have to remind you that the announced rallies are those of the organizations that organized violence last year and whose leaders were convicted of the violence," he stressed.

"The Parade organizers cannot be blamed any violence and they cannot be blamed for destruction of property since it was clearly determined by court decisions who did it and the state should take much better care and make sure that it is prevented this year," Miletić added.

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=09&dd=30&nav_id=76633

Patriarch says “shame parade” should not be held

Source: Beta

Friday 30.09.2011 | 15:50

BELGRADE -- Serbian Orthodox Church (SPC) Patriarch Irinej has called on competent authorities not to allow the Pride Parade, which he called “shame parade”, to be held.



Patriarch Irinej (FoNet)

“Our city and our public are this year being shaken by the issue of holding of so-called ‘shame parade’. I would with much justification call this plague ‘shame parade’, which drags human dignity through mud and steps on the holiness of life and family,” the patriarch said in a statement.

“We are getting the impression that the announced parade in Belgrade should cover up and hide the tragic condition of the Serbian people in sad Kosovo and Metohija,” Irinej stressed.

He wondered who needed unrests and clashes with all possible consequences in the streets of Belgrade.

“We also wonder who will Serbian police protect and defend. A group of queers, who want to impose their minority views, which are basically unnatural, to the other, vast majority that does not share and accept their understanding of the meaning of life and human freedom,” the Serbian patriarch pointed out.

According to him, there has been enough of humiliation and fulfillment of foreign wishes.

“Such perverse freedom that is offered by the Pride Parade is unknown in our history, tradition and culture. We appeal to all those who intend to stand up to the parade, if it is held, not to do that with use of force because it is not a Christian way of fighting,” Irinej stressed.

“Evil cannot be defeated with evil, only with good. In this specific case we believe that it would be most useful to totally ignore the parade participants. That may sober them up. We pray to our lord that common sense prevails in both sides,” the patriarch concluded.

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/comments.php?nav_id=76643

Serbian authorities ban Pride Parade

Source: B92

Friday 30.09.2011 | 16:28

The National Security Council decided on Friday afternoon to ban all gatherings this weekend, including the gay Pride Parade, B92 has learned.



Anti-gay graffiti in Belgrade (B92)

The National Security Council has assessed that national security would be seriously jeopardized if the Pride Parade was held.

Interior Minister Ivica Dačić said earlier Friday that police would ban the upcoming Pride Parade if the organizers did not cancel it.

B92 has learned that police security assessments showed that extremists were planning on creating disturbances in several parts of Belgrade in order to weaken police forces, burning down ruling coalition parties' headquarter.

"Police cannot support holding of all this gatherings for security reasons, because there will be clashes, victims, blood and we will end up a huge chaos," the interior minister pointed out.

"The Parade should be held but it would be canceled in all countries if there is concern that there could be bigger problems than holding of the Parade and that bigger incidents could happen," Dačić stressed earlier today.

Belgrade Mayor Dragan Đilas called on the organizers on Thursday to call off all gatherings and rallies scheduled for this weekend in Belgrade.

The interior minister stated on Thursday that the security situation in Serbia was more complex now than it had been several weeks ago, which was why the Pride Parade or any other gathering should not be held in Belgrade on Sunday.

The Pride Parade organizers said earlier today that they would not cancel the parade.

President supports decision to ban high-risk gatherings

Source: Tanjug

Saturday 1.10.2011 | 11:03

BELGRADE -- Serbian President Boris Tadić Friday backed the decision to ban all high-risk gatherings this weekend in order to protect citizens from possible violence.



Boris Tadić (Beta, file)

“For the purpose of protecting all citizens and in accordance with security assessments by relevant bodies, the state must postpone or prohibit events that are too risky,” he said.

“This way the citizens and members of the LGBT population are protected, and possible consequences of violence, including loss of human lives are prevented,” the president pointed out.

Tadić believes that the state has the right to ban rallies whose guiding principle is violence against those who are different and thus threaten public safety.

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=10&dd=01&nav_id=76646

LGBT community to respect Pride Parade ban

Source: B92, Beta, Tanjug
Saturday 1.10.2011 | 12:19

BELGRADE -- Pride Parade Organizing Committee members stopped traffic for a short period of time in downtown Belgrade on Sunday.



They have announced that they will respect the decision banning all public gatherings planned for this weekend in Belgrade.

About 30 LGBT activists stopped traffic at Terazije Street, holding banners "Love. Normal." The traffic returned to normal after several minutes.

The Pride Parade organizers said Friday they would not invite people to the streets on Sunday.

"We will not invite people to the streets because of the ban on holding the parade," Organizing Committee member Goran Miletić told Radio and Television of Vojvodina.

Miletić said that the decision to ban the parade was inconsistent with the law on the gathering of citizens, explaining that gatherings were prohibited when national security was threatened or when sensitive religious gatherings were planned.

Queeria NGO President Boban Stojanović told Tanjug that the decision to ban all public gatherings over the weekend, including the Pride Parade, meant that the state had capitulated and succumbed to the bullies and violence as such.

The Interior Ministry Friday banned all public gathering scheduled in Belgrade for the weekend.

After the decision of the Interior Ministry to ban all public gatherings the Dveri movement stated it will postpone its "Family walk."

"Even though there are no grounds for banning the 'Family walk', Dveri is ready to give its contribution to social responsibility," the statement reads.

According to Dveri, the ban on holding the Pride Parade is "a victory of family values, which brings hope and faith for a social turn, and beginning of addressing real issues."

Right-wing NGO Obraz stated on Friday that there would be no "Prayer walk" on Sunday.

In view of the decision to ban the Pride Parade, Obraz is cancelling the Prayer walk, which ought to have been held in Belgrade, the organization published on their website.

Obraz characterized the ban on holding the Pride Parade as "a victory of Serbian patriots."

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=10&dd=01&nav_id=76648

Serbia “won’t allow history to be rewritten”

Source: Tanjug

Saturday 1.10.2011 | 13:44

BELGRADE -- Serbian President Boris Tadić said Saturday the Balkans needed to become a place of cooperation and reconciliation where hatred and revenge would be wiped out.



Boris Tadić

He also underscored that Serbia would never forget its victims or agree to see history reshaped.

During a commemoration to victims of Nazism in Jajinci Memorial Park, the president underscored that every person and every ethnicity in Serbia, as a country firmly based on anti-Fascist tradition, were accepted as members of society with equal rights.

He stated that he would continue to defend civil and constitutional rights of all citizens and protect peace and equal opportunities for everyone.

According to Tadić, Serbia will never accept to see evils committed in the past forgotten and will never allow certain groups to be eliminated just because they are different in terms of their ethnicity, confession or ideology.

“Those who forget history or do not wish to remember it are doomed to repeat it,” Tadić stressed and added that such individuals were not desirable in Serbia nor were those who concealed or reshaped historical facts.

“We are not gathered here because of hatred or desire for vengeance, but we are aware that there are some people in the Balkans who use their hatred and vindictiveness to feed their patriotism and ambition to be more powerful and different from us,” he pointed out and warned that the future should not be built on such foundations.

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=10&dd=01&nav_id=76651

Pride Parade ban will not change EU stand, speaker claims

Source: Tanjug, Press
Saturday 1.10.2011 | 14:26

BELGRADE -- Serbian parliament Speaker Slavica Đukić-Dejanović says Serbia has met all the conditions for the EU candidate status.



Slavica Đukić-Dejanović (Tanjug, file)

She added that a decision to ban all public gatherings scheduled for the weekend, including the Pride Parade, would have no influence on Brussels' decision. The parliament speaker told Belgrade-based daily Press that she expected the European Commission to state on October 12 that Serbia deserves to be granted EU candidate status. The Serbian Interior Ministry on Friday banned all public gatherings that are considered to entail higher security risks this weekend in Belgrade. Đukić-Dejanović does not believe that organization of the Pride Parade was set as a condition for other countries on their EU paths either, and the ban regarding the gathering should not affect the country's prospects for obtaining the EU candidate status. She said that she did not expect to see the EU make such a move.

The parliament speaker added that she had planned to attend the Pride Parade.

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=10&dd=01&nav_id=76652

EP rapporteur: Citizens deprived of legal rights

Source: Tanjug
Saturday 1.10.2011 | 15:01

BELGRADE -- European Parliament (EP) Rapporteur for Serbia Jelko Kacin stated Saturday that the decision to ban the Pride Parade was Serbian government's sovereign act.



Jelko Kacin

However, he underscored that he deeply regretted the fact that such a decision was adopted because it deprived citizens of their constitutional and legal rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

“Instead of unambiguously backing the Pride Parade, the National Security Council transferred the responsibility for the ban to the police and the interior minister,” Kacin stated in a release submitted to Tanjug.

According to the EP rapporteur, there is no such moment when a country hoping to join the EU is not capable of extending a guarantee of human rights to its citizens.

He announced that he would visit Belgrade to give full support to the organizers of the Parade and all those who fight against discrimination in Serbia..

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=10&dd=01&nav_id=76655

Police deployed onto Belgrade streets

Source: B92

Sunday 2.10.2011 | 11:27

BELGRADE -- Police units have been deployed onto the streets of Belgrade and other cities in order to prevent possible attempts to organize high-risk public gatherings.



Police deployed onto Belgrade streets

Police have raised the alertness level in order to maintain public peace and order. Riot police were deployed onto the Belgrade streets on Saturday afternoon, the Serbian Interior Ministry has said.

Police Deputy Director Srđan Grekulović told B92 that police had been deployed in Belgrade and other cities in order to prevent high-risk gatherings and called on all citizens not to organize them.

“Otherwise, police will be ready to intervene, prevent such gatherings and arrest the perpetrators,” he pointed out.

Grekulović added that there had been announcements that several gatherings could be organized, but stressed that police would be ready to prevent them.

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=10&dd=02&nav_id=76658

Serbia didn't capitulate, minister says

Source: B92

Sunday 2.10.2011 | 12:08

BELGRADE -- Human and Minority Rights Minister Milan Marković told B92 the state would have capitulated if it had allowed Pride Parade to be held out of fear of criticism.



Milan Marković (Tanjug, file)

He added that the price could have been loss of human lives.

“It’s far from the truth that the state has capitulated and that hooligans are more powerful than the state, that’s complete nonsense,” the minister stressed.

According to him, the state has reacted the only way it could in order to save human lives and property.

Marković said that the state was able to stop all those who would try to demolish the city because it had monopoly to use force, but explained that the authorities’ job was to assess what certain events could cause.

“The state will suppress any such action in a day, two three or five, the British of the Serbian state. The state has a monopoly to use physical force and there’s no dilemma there. Does anyone honestly think that the state cannot secure the Pride Parade? Well, the state can roll out tanks if someone thinks that’s smart,” he pointed out.

The minister noted that the government’s decision to ban all public gatherings was exactly what any government would do. He added that it was a separate issue whether we had problems with differences, mutual understanding and respect.

According to Marković, human rights in Serbia are on a good level, which does not mean that they should not be improved. He added that minority rights were also at a high level.

“We have independent organs, like the ombudsman, equality protection commissioner, public information commissioner and Serbia in that sense really does not have anything to be ashamed of when it comes to the level of human rights protection,” he concluded.

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=10&dd=02&nav_id=76659

Press conference held instead of Pride Parade

Source: Tanjug

Monday 3.10.2011 | 09:07

BELGRADE -- Pride Parade organizers hosted a news conference on Sunday under the slogan "Parade within four walls".



Pride Parade organizers are seen at the press conference (Beta)

The participants and organizers expressed criticism of the police decision to ban all high-risk meetings scheduled for the weekend, including the Pride Parade.

Representative of the Parade organizers Goran Miletić stated that the only Pride Parade that could be organized was the one within four walls.

European Parliament Rapporteur for Serbia Jelko Kacin said that it was not known whether the ban of the parade would affect the recommendation of the European Commission, but that it would certainly have an effect on the member countries in charge of deciding whether the document regarding Serbia's progress on its EU path would be adopted.

According to Kacin, the nature of the decision to ban the Pride Parade is political and the police are capable of protecting the Parade just as they are when it comes to a football match.

Belgrade Centre for Human Rights Director Vojin Dimitrijević stated that by adopting the decision to ban the meetings scheduled for the weekend, including the Pride Parade, the government showed that they had no means to protect those whose rights were guaranteed in the Constitution.

Faculty of Electrical Engineering Professor Srbijanka Turajlić noted that by their perseverance, participants of the Pride Parade pointed to the complete disorientation of the country.

She believes that the government is not helpless under the pressures of hooligans, but rather that it does not want to do anything to cause their dissatisfaction because it probably needs them for some other activities.

Actress Mirjana Karanović made an ironic remark saying it seemed that several hundred up to one thousand people who wanted to take a walk along Belgrade streets are the enemy who can destroy and jeopardize Serbia's prosperous society.

The conference hosted in the Media Centre was secured by the police and ended peacefully.

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=10&dd=03&nav_id=76668

Belgrade Mayor: I would ban Pride Parade

Source: B92

Monday 3.10.2011 | 09:43

BELGRADE -- If a mayor could decide on holding of the Pride Parade, like in other countries, I would not allow such manifestations, Belgrade Mayor Dragan Đilas has said.



Dragan Đilas

He told B92 on Sunday evening that he would not allow gay Pride Parade in order to save “people’s lives”.

“It allegedly aims at showing differences and waking up tolerance, but it always causes the opposite. Xenophobia has increased in Serbia after last year’s parade,” the mayor pointed out.

“If you are a homosexual, that’s your right and nobody should harass you because of it, but you won’t gain anything with a walk,” he said and insisted that it was important to come out with an idea how to make our society more tolerant and expressed belief that the only way to do so was through dialogue and concrete actions.

Đilas stressed that Serbia currently had much more serious problems than the Pride Parade, pointing out that Serbs were unable to walk freely in a part of its territory.

“Today you have a situation that you cannot walk around a formal and official part of Serbia’s territory, in Kosovo and Metohija. Somebody gets killed over there just because they are Serbs and we live with it,” he pointed out and added that it could not be expected to have such situation in one part of the country and completely different in the other.

The Belgrade mayor rejected accusations that the Pride Parade was cancelled because of the upcoming elections.

“Do you really think that somebody out there is thinking whether there will be more votes if the Parade is held or banned, and the elections are in April of next year? That has nothing to do with it,” he explained.

According to him, all those who pose a potential threat to security should be arrested if there is evidence.

Pride Parade Organizing Committee member Goran Miletic said he believed there were threats but that police could have dealt with them.

He stressed that the main problems of the LGBT community were violence, discrimination and their invisibility in the society.

Q: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2011&mm=10&dd=03&nav_id=76670