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14th Anniversary of Croatia's International Recognition



Franjo Tuđman, first President of the Republic of Croatia, stood up to the challenge of establishing a free, modern and democratic European state. [Photo: www.iskon.hr]

Croatia: America's Choice



Falls on the River Krka, today a Croatian National Park [Photo: Croatian National Tourist Board] (Page 4)



Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader opens the international business, craft and agriculture fair VIROEXPO 2006 in Virovitica.

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Croatian skier Janica Kostelić claimed her first World Cup super-G victory to become the first woman with wins in six different disciplines on the skiing circuit.

At this moment, Kostelić tops this season's overall standings with 998 points. Austria's Dorfmeister is second with 830, and Sweden's Anja Paerson is third at 685.

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President Mesić Gives Reception for Members of Diplomatic Corps

ZAGREB, Croatia, Jan. 16 – Croatian President Stjepan Mesić wished a happy New Year to members of the diplomatic corps accredited in Croatia, at a reception he gave for foreign diplomats. Stressing Croatia's openness towards the world and readiness to cooperate with all, President Mesić said Croatia wanted to find a niche in the world and assume responsibility in the international community, notably in the United Nations. "This is why Croatia has applied for nonpermanent membership of the UN Security Council for a period of two years," President Mesić said. He thanked the Apostolic Nuncio in Croatia, Francisco Javier Lozano, who wished him a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year on behalf of the diplomatic corps. Lozano expressed satisfaction with the fact that Croatia showed maturity and started membership negotiations with the European Union last October. Lozano wished Croatia well in the fulfillment of its objectives, notably its full integration with the EU.

Prime Minister Sanader Issues Message on Occasion of the 14th Anniversary of Croatia's International Recognition



Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader remembered all those whose efforts went into the creation of a free, modern and democratic Croatia. [Photo: Večernji list]

ZAGREB, Croatia, Jan. 14 – Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader issued a message to Croatian citizens on the occasion of the 14th Anniversary of Croatia's international recognition. "Since its international recognition, Croatia has become a full member of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Council of Europe, building its way towards full membership in the European Union and NATO. January 15, 1992 was the culmination of our diplomatic efforts and Croatia's international affirmation, as well as the culmination and confirmation of our strength, demonstrated in defense from aggression. The start of membership talks with the EU on Oct. 3rd was an historic step in the completion of the Croatian state project, which started with the establishment of an independent Croatian state and its preservation and liberation, and which now continues with the country's joining the most important integration process of modern Europe at an accelerated pace. In a new time of progress, well-being and new opportunities we remember with pride all those who gave their lives for the free, modern and democratic Croatia," Sanader said in the message.

VIROEXPO 2006 Fair

VIROVITICA, Croatia, Jan. 20 – The international business, craft and agriculture fair VIROEXPO 2006 opened in Virovitica, about 120 kilometers Northeast of Zagreb, bringing together 355 exhibitors from 12 countries. The event was formally opened by Prime Minister Ivo Sanader, who said that the fair was one of the most successful country projects and could serve as an example of local economic development in Croatia. Sanader said that over the past two years his government had earmarked over 5 million Kuna to create the necessary conditions for the development of entrepreneurial zones in Virovitica County. He announced a series of government projects this year to help farmers and small business owners and to improve conditions for the adjustment of the Croatian market to the single European market. The three day fair is sponsored by the Ministry of the Economy, Labor and Entrepreneurship and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management. Exhibitors came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Poland, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, and Russia as the partner country.

For more information about VIROEXPO 2006, go to: <http://www.viroviticko-podravskazupanija.hr/Virexpo/2006/Viroexo6n.htm>

The World Bank

World Bank Supports the Rehabilitation of Croatia's Environmental Infrastructure

ZAGREB, Croatia, Jan. 17 – The Finance Minister of the Republic of Croatia Ivan Šuker and Hermann A. Von Gersdorf, World Bank's Sector Manager on behalf of Anand K. Seth, the World Bank's Country Director for Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania signed a 1,940 million euro (US \$2,461,674) Grant Agreement. The World Bank as administrator of grant funds provided by the Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation will supervise the technical assistance to support the implementation of the Coastal Cities Pollution Control Project. The implementing agency and the main beneficiary of the grant is the Croatian Waters Company. The purpose of this Grant is to assist in the implementation of CCPC Project and improve wastewater management and monitoring efficiency in the coastal area, through technical assistance and consultancy services. Under the Grant the development of preparation documentation will be financed (Environmental Impact Studies, Feasibility Studies, and Social Impact Assessments), as well as engineering designs up to the level of the project design for approximately 10 cities and municipalities in Dalmatia and a dozen cities and municipalities in Istria and Northern Adriatic, including the islands. Rehabilitation of environmental infrastructure will enhance prospects for tourism growth and enhance private sector investments which are expected to accompany the recovery in the tourism sector.

For full information about this agreement, please visit: <http://www.worldbank.hr/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/CROATIAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20787461~menuPK:301250~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:301245,00.html>

Croatia Offers China Help in Combating Bird Flu



Minister of Agriculture Petar Čobanković attends an international conference on a bird flu in Beijing, China. [Photo: Večernji list]

BEIJING, China, Jan 19 – Croatian Agriculture Minister Petar Čobanković has offered technical assistance to China in efforts to prevent spreading of avian influenza from wild birds to poultry. Minister Čobanković made the statement at an international donor conference on bird flu in Beijing. During the first day of his visit to Beijing, Minister Čobanković held a number of meetings with his colleagues from other countries and offered technical assistance to countries in the region. On the last day of the conference, Minister Čobanković spoke about his country's experience in fighting the bird flu. Croatia is the only country in the world which has managed to prevent the spreading of bird flu from wild, migratory birds to domestic poultry.



Croatia offers technical assistance and its expertise to China in efforts to prevent spreading of avian influenza from wild birds to poultry. [Photo: Večernji list]

The international conference was sponsored by the Chinese government, the European Commission and the World Bank, in cooperation with the World Health Organization. The conference was organized in order to launch and coordinate financial assistance to combat avian influenza on the national, regional and global levels, as well as in case of a pandemic.

During the conference, Minister Čobanković met his Chinese counterpart. Both ministers expressed interest in the establishment and promotion of cooperation in agriculture. Croatia and China signed a joint statement on the establishment of partnership in overall cooperation in May 2005.

Janica Makes Historic Win – What Else is New



Janica made history with the a in the super-G and became the first woman with wins in six different disciplines on the skiing circuit. [Photo: www.eurosport.com]

BAD KLEINKIRCHHEIM, Austria, Jan 15 - Croatia's Janica Kostelić claimed her first World Cup super-G victory on Sunday to become the first woman with wins in six different disciplines on the skiing circuit. She finished .10 seconds ahead of Austrians Michaela Dorfmeister and Alexandra Meissnitzer. Kostelić's previous best result in the super-G was in 2002 when she won Olympic silver and was second in Aspen. "It's the dream of all skiers to win every discipline." It's been an amazing three-week period for the 24-year-old, who won three gold medals at both the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics and last year's world championships. Kostelić won her first World Cup downhill race on Saturday (Jan. 14) and her first giant slalom on the tour three weeks ago. She now has 24 World Cup victories, including wins in all five main disciplines: the giant slalom, downhill, slalom, super-G and combined. Only two others have accomplished that feat: Sweden's Pernilla Wiberg and Austria's Petra Kronberger. With her victory on Sunday, Kostelić tops this season's overall standings with 982 points. Dorfmeister is in second place with 730. Sweden's Paerson is third at 685.



Janica's wins and character made her popular beyond Croatia's borders. [Photo: www.iskon.hr]

For the CNN article about Janica's win in super-G, go to: <http://www.cnn.com/2006/SPORT/01/15/ski.kostelic.reut/index.html>

Janica Kostelić and Ivan Ljubičić Named Croatia's Best Athletes in 2005



Ivan Ljubičić and Janica Kostelić – the best Croatian athletes in 2005 – at the award ceremony in Zagreb [Photo: www.iskon.hr]

ZAGREB, Croatia, Jan. 16 – The Croatian Olympic Committee named skier Janica Kostelić and tennis player Ivan Ljubičić best Croatian athletes in 2005. Ljubičić led the national tennis team to the 2005 Davis Cup victory, and Kostelić won three gold medals at the Ski World Championship in Bormio, Italy. The women's table tennis team, silver medal winners at the European Team championships, was named best women's team and the Davis Cup winners were named best men's team in 2005.



Tamara Boroš, member of the women's table tennis team that won the silver medal in the European championship [Photo: Večernji list]

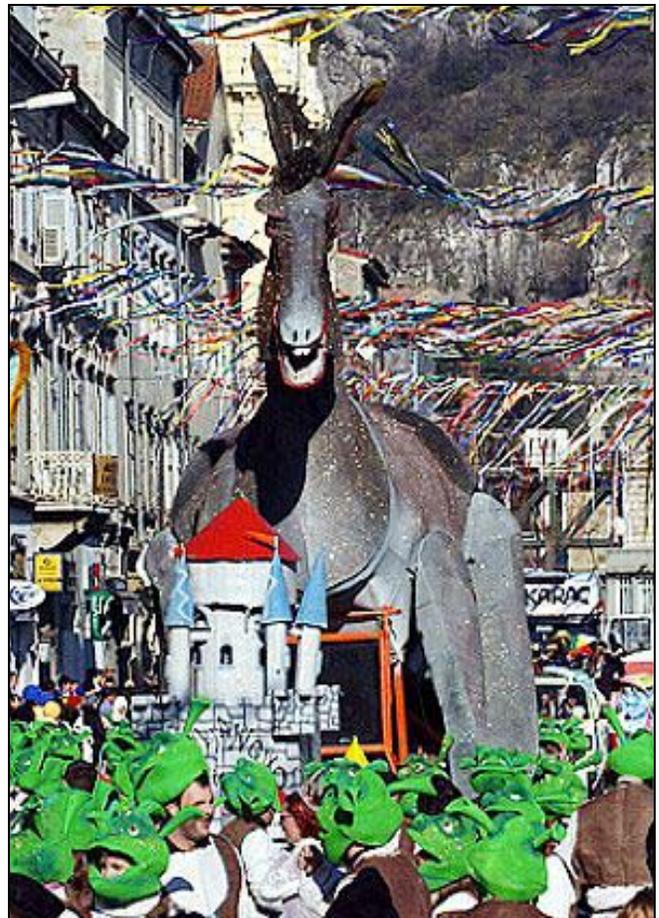


Gold Medal at the 2004 Olympic Games in Greece by Croatian handball team was recognized as the most successful Croatian sports achievement. [Photo: www.iskon.hr]



Croatia Most Desirable Destination for Americans in 2006

NEW YORK, N.Y., Jan 17 - The U.S. Tour Operators' Association (USTOA) has proclaimed Croatia to be the top new destination for American tourists in 2006, reports the web site TravelVideo.tv, which also notes that the award "The best destination for this year" was given to Croatia by the magazine National Geographic Adventure. The web site offers tourist information and videos to travelers, and writes about many offerings of Croatian tourism, such as the "Romance in the City of Hearts" special package for two at the Regent Esplanade Zagreb Hotel, the attraction of unique family-run hotels in picturesque corners of Croatia, and the famous City of Rijeka Carnival.



Rijeka's Carnival is the largest of its kind in Croatia and attracts people from all over the region. [Photo: www.iskon.hr]

Find out more about these and other attractions at: http://travelvideo.tv/news/more.php?id=7812_o_1_o_M

Prljavo kazalište – 2006 U.S. Tour



NEW YORK, N.Y., Jan 11 - One of Croatia's largest pop-rock bands of all time, Prljavo kazalište, will perform in New York City on Friday, Feb. 3, 2006, at the Croatian Center. The concert will be held to promote their new album "Moj dom je Hrvatska" (My Home is Croatia) and will mark the kick-off of their 2006 American-Canadian tour. Prljavo kazalište came together in 1977 and has been around ever since. Although popular since its establishment, the hit "Mojoj majci", written by band leader Jasenko Houra in honor of his late mother, became the band's hallmark song in the eighties.



Croatian "Rolling Stones", Prljavo kazalište at one of their concerts
[Photo: www.iskon.hr]

2006 Prljavo kazalište Tour Dates:

Jan. 27, San Jose
Jan 28, Los Angeles
Jan 29, Vancouver
Feb 3, New York
Feb 4, Mississauga
Feb 5, St. Louis

For more information about the group and upcoming 2006 US Tour, please visit:
<http://www.prljavo-kazaliste.com/>

News in Brief...

- The Croatian Office of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) on Jan. 18, 2006 distributed humanitarian aid to returnees and refugees who settled in Petrinja, Dubica and Dvor na Uni, as part of its post-war recovery program.
- The Ministry of Transport has revived a long-standing project to build a navigable canal between the Sava and the Danube rivers, which would shorten the route for transport vessels considerably.
- According to the Germanwings budget airline, the Croatian market is considerable the most profitable for the company. Germanwings, which last year earned revenues of 60 percent greater than the year before, has performed exceptionally well on flights to Croatia. Germanwings flies directly from Zagreb to Berlin, Stuttgart, Cologne and Bonn, with flights also connecting with Split and Dubrovnik.

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For more information, please visit:

http://www7.germanwings.com/en/reiseziele_zagreb.html

Chronology of Croatia's Road to Independence

- 1) Croatia's independence is recognized by Iceland, Lithuania, the Ukraine, Slovenia, Sweden, Latvia, Estonia (Dec., 1991), by the Holy See (Jan., 1992), and by the European Community (Jan 12., 1992)
- 2) On May 22, 1992, Croatia becomes a member of the United Nations, ending the nation's efforts toward its international recognition. Three months later, parliamentary and presidential elections are held.
- 3) The *kuna* becomes Croatia's new currency on May 30, 1993, instead of the Yugoslav *dinar*. With the arrival of the *kuna*, inflation disappears, and a new era of monetary stability is ushered in, which has lasted since then.
- 4) Pope John Paul's II trip to Croatia in Oct. 1994, confirmed the rightful wish of the Croatian people to create a fully independent, free Croatia. The last Pope contributed greatly to the international recognition of Croatia.
- 5) On Aug. 5, 1995, the military operation dubbed "Storm" was launched and one-quarter of the country that was occupied in 1991 and held by Serb rebels for 4 years was recaptured by Croatian forces, in a matter of days. In 1998, a sliver of remaining occupied territory in the region of Eastern Slavonia was peacefully reintegrated into Croatia, marking the complete territorial liberation of the country.

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