
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA MARKS INDEPENDENCE DAY

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Celebrations were held across Bosnia and Herzegovina on Thursday to mark the 26th anniversary of its independence.

A ceremony in the capital Sarajevo began at the Kovaci Martyrs Memorial Cemetery, where the tomb of the republic's first president, Alija Izetbegovic, is located.

It was attended by politicians, soldiers, local administrators and citizens as well as Izetbegovic's son, Bakir, who is the Bosniak member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Participants prayed and laid wreaths at Alija's tomb and the martyrdom monument.

Bakir Izetbegovic said at the ceremony that it is their duty to develop Bosnia and Herzegovina.

"The Western Balkans strategy of the EU will solve many problems starting with the region. We will enter a difficult path, but this path will lead us to the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina," said Izetbegovic.

The ceremony continued at the "Memorial for Children Killed During the Siege" and at the Eternal flame memorial to the military and civilian victims of the Second World War.

The president will also hold a reception tonight.

Independence Day is treated as an ordinary day in the Serb-dominated Republika Srpska, one of two constitutional and legal entities of the country. The other is the Bosniak-majority Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which observes the holiday.

Bosnia and Herzegovina became independent from the former Yugoslavia when an independence referendum was held between Feb. 29 and March 1, 1992.

Most Serbs boycotted the referendum while the 64% of the population that took part voted for independence.

The results of the referendum were announced on March 6, 1992 and Bosnia and Herzegovina was admitted to the United Nations on May 22, 1992.

Bosnia and Herzegovina became an independent state as a result but had to suffer a bloody battle for independence and the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives.

<https://aa.com.tr/en/europe/bosnia-and-herzegovina-marks-independence-day/1077507>

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