BOSNIA MINISTER CALLS LIST OF SECURITY THREATS 'SPECULATION'

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Bosnian Security Minister Dragan Mektic has dismissed as "speculation" information published on the news website Index.ba on Sunday, concerning movements and individuals identified as posing a security risk to the country.

The list includes the organization Ravnogorski pokret [Ravna Gora movement] the Russian Night Wolves motorcycle club, the organization RS Honour of the Fatherland from Belgrade, the Veterans of Republika Srpska association, as well as radical Islamist Salafist groups.

Mektic declined to comment on the list, calling it pure media speculation. "The document is confidential and has a security code, and it is impossible for unauthorized persons who do not have access to the document to access it," he said.

"What some websites write is the fruit of their imagination and of their desire to become interesting through sensationalist news," he told the media.

However, Index.ba editor Edina Latif said the list was authentic, and accused Minister Mektic of breaching the secrecy of the information himself.

"He has violated the secrecy of the document, which he claims to be under the sign of secrecy. The minister, in continuity with his statements in public, violates the secrecy of many things," Latif said.

The information on security threats was reportedly submitted to the Bosnian parliament's Joint Commission on Defence and Security at its request six weeks ago.

Ognjen Tadic, a member of the committee, said that if such information was released, a serious crime had been committed.

The information published on Index.ba also contains the names of individuals who allegedly pose a threat to security.

Among them are Dzevad Galijasevic, a security expert, Predrag Ceranic, dean of the Faculty of Security from the Republika Srpska, Miroslav Lazanski, a Serbian journalist, and Dusko Vukotic, president of the Veterans of Republika Srpska.

All four close to the Republika Srpska President Milorad Dodik and often criticize Mektic and opposition parties in the RS.

Responding to the list published in the media, some of them accused Mektic of being the biggest threat to Bosnias security.

Mektic is spreading disinformation and so disturbing the public and making ill-founded comments, Ceranic said on Sunday.

Next on the list is Predrag Bogicevic, president of the Serbian nationalist Ravnogorski pokret, Aleksandar Sindjelic and Andrija Mandic. All three are linked to the alleged coup attempt in Montenegro in 2016.

According to the Ministry of Security, another security threat is Aleksandar Zaldostanov, head of the Russian Night Wolves motorcycle club, and the leader of this organization in Serbia, Sasa Savic.

Both were banned from entering Bosnia last week after the motorcycle group, known for its staunch Russian nationalism and close ties to President Vladimir Putin, announced its tour of Serbia and Bosnia.

"The tour will take place, even without me, but they can not stop", Zadostanov told the Russian news agency Interfax on Sunday.

According to the Bosnian media, Republika Srpska's chapter of the Night Wolves has announced a lawsuit against Mektic for allegedly lying about the Night Wolves and damaging their reputation.

The group aimed to tour Bosnia and Serbia for around nine days, during which they will cover around 2,000 kilometres, beginning on March 19 in the Serbian capital, Belgrade.

The US embassy in Bosnia on Wednesday said the tour should not be supported. It is up to the local authorities and relevant institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina to resolve this issue. We urge Bosnian authorities to seriously understand all possible security threats, the embassy said.

The US has sanctioned the Night Wolves for its involvement with anti-Western and pro-Russian separatist movements in Ukraine.

Radical Islamist Salafists are also listed as a potential security threat. Mentioned groups include the Askeri martial arts club, the Black Lightning club from Cazin and the Zelene Beretke [Green berets] veterans association of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/confidential-information-on-organizations-that-pose-a-threat-to-bosnia-a-security-breach-or-media-speculation-03-18-2018

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