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BENETTON OFFICIALLY IN NIŠ

The strategic partnership of Serbia and Italy has received best confirmation in the form of investments by big companies - Benetton in the textile industry and Fiat in the automotive, stated Serbian President Boris Tadić, at the signing of the Purchase Sale Contract for Nitex Factory between Benetton Group from Italy and RS Ministry of Economy and Regional Development in Niš, which made the Italian Company Benetton the official owner of the Nitex Factory.



Contract signing between Benetton and Serbian Ministry of Economy and Regional Development at Niš City Hall

The occasion was also attended by Benetton Group President Mr. Luciano Benetton.

According to President of the Benetton Group Luciano Benetton, the factory in Niš production will be focused on wool processing and it will be the leading plant of its kind in the world. The mixture of tradition and new technologies is bound to

make good results. Benetton will invest almost 50 million Euros in Niš firmly believing in the success of this project and they plan to hire between 2800 and 3000 workers. The textile industry in Serbia has a long tradition and well-trained workers and Benetton has recognized that potential.

Serbian Minister of Economy and Regional Development Nebojsa



Ćirić said that the signing Contract with Benetton represented revival and the new beginning for the textile industry in our country and he pointed out that although it took great efforts to have Nitex become Benetton we had succeeded. Only a year ago Nitex was just another unsuccessful privatization.

Today, a year after, Nitex becomes Benetton and Niš gets a complex of new factories where almost 3000 people from this region would find a job. The gratitude for hard work goes to RS Agency for Privatization, to SIEPA, to Niš City management. The final act of contract signing was the proof that RS Government, its ministries and agencies can achieve set objectives with the assistance from active local self-governments. Minister Ćirić added that he was sure that it would become new center of textile industry in Serbia.

President Tadić said that coming of big companies like Benetton would help the recuperation of the local economy and he added that he also expected new investments in other sectors, especially high technologies, electronics automotive industry. President Tadić congratulated all actively involved in the realisation of this project.

On the occasion of signing the Agreement Mayor Simonović said that it was the big day for Niš.

All of us in public offices are finding solutions on daily basis for different problems that our citizens are faced with. Today, I feel that this is one of the best days on the job. This investment wakes up hope for the future of textile industry and creates possibility for the City of Niš to become again the center of this branch of

industry", said Mayor Simonović. He emphasized that it was not only upon the state to move economy forward bit that it was also the task for local administration. He also added that without cooperation between state and local authorities good results could not be achieved.



Visit to Benetton production facility in Niš

INTENSIVE WORKS IN DONJE MEĐUROVO

First factory in the Work Zone Donje Međurovo - South Korean Yura Corporation is finished and this company obtained usage permit for this facility.

Factory construction met the planned deadline and all the works were done by the construction companies and contractors from our city. The investment is worth 12.000.000 EUR. At the moment, Yura Corporation is employing 460 Niš citizens and employment plan, until the end of the year, anticipates the total number of 1200 workers. By the end of the following year, it is planned to recruit 2000 workers in total.

As well, the construction of Italian Dytech, started at the beginning of the construction season, and it has been going on as planned. Preparatory construction works are completed and the installation of facility construction is getting close to the end. The total value of the investment is 8.000.000 EUR. According to the plan, the factory will be finished in the fall and it will employ 400 new workers.

Works on the construction of Shinwon factory, affiliate of Yura Eltec, started last month. The works are expected to be finished by the end of the summer while the production

is expected to start in the fall. This new factory will employ 300 people and the investment is worth 8.000.000 Euros.

The City of Niš is the first city in Serbia to develop the feasibility study of leasing construction land in line with new Law on Planning and Construction and based on the Ordinance issued by the Government of the Republic of Serbia which anticipates leasing construction land free of charge. As a form of subsidy, the City provided offices in the premises of Business Incubator Center which can be used by above mentioned companies until the end of works on the construction of factories in Donje Međurovo.

- Construction operative from Niš and Niš project design firms are engaged on the construction of the Factory. The investors are, at the same time, very satisfied with the quality of works and met deadlines. This is supported by the fact that Yura engaged the same contractors for project design and construction, again - said Milan Ranđelović, Head of the Office for Local



460 Niš citizens are already working for Yura Corporation

Economic Development.

Niš City Assembly adopted a decision of establishing a Customs Free Zone together with the Municipality of Prokuplje, as well as a decision on establishing a company for the management of Free Zone SOUTH. The preparation process for registration of the company "Free Zone South" and process of obtaining the approval by the Ministry of Finance and Government of the Republic of Serbia are underway. Custom Free Zone is expected to start working in the fall.

NEW PRODUCTION FACILITY IN NIŠ

Niš City Mayor Miloš Simonović and Haj Ararat Company Director Raffie Karapet Benlian signed the Contract on Disposal of Infrastructurally Developed Public Land Property on the location of Electronic Industry Complex.

New production facility of total 1680m² will be built by the existing one on the land property of total 4350 m². 100 new workers will be hired for the production of confectionary products and healthy food products. The company has already managed to place its products through big market chains in former Yugoslav states, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and Greece. This whole investment project is worth 1.300.000 EUR.

The construction of new production and establishing of new production line with the products intended for exports as well as providing new jobs fulfil the set objective of implementing local economic development projects which are to increase the employment rate and public revenues for the local self-government. During last year an extremely good base was made for the development of the economy, opening new jobs and increasing the living standards for the citizens and that was recognised by Business Friendly Environment Certificate from National Alliance for Local Economic Development. According to the data by Serbian Standing Conference of Municipalities and Towns, Niš is the most



Niš City Mayor Miloš Simonović and Haj Ararat Company Director Raffie Karapet Benlian

attractive city in Serbia for investing. 42 investment projects with 7300 new jobs have been initiated. Most of them are ongoing or being finalized. 2770 new jobs are expected to be open by the end of 2011 with the assistance from SIEPA.

"A new phase has started in the development of this city. After 20 years of stalling, we are building factories again and that sends a good signal to new investors who want to develop their companies in Niš. Our plans came through and we kept our promises. The year of 2011 will be the first one after two decades with the decreasing unemployment rate. This should be the task of all public offices", said Mayor Simonović.

NIŠ CITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMES

For four years in a row the City of Niš implements actively the self-employment and apprentice programmes with the employers on Niš City territory.

This year the City allocated bigger funds for these particular programmes. 100 million dinars have been intended for these objectives. 52 million dinars were provided by the City of Niš together with the National Employment Service while 48 million dinars will be provided by RS Ministry of Economy and Regional Development. On the occasion of signing the Local Action Plan for Employment Programme, Boban Mihajlovic, Niš City Councilor said that the City expected 800 people to find employment for the first time through these programmes and thus start their professional careers.

The results from previous programmes show that 60-65% of the apprentices hired through these programmes find full time employment in the companies where they have finished their apprenticeship.

PRESENTATION OF NIŠ CITY BUSINESS POTENTIALS IN VIENNA

Niš City Mayor Miloš Simonović spent two days in Vienna on a promotional tour at the invitation by Serbian Embassy in Vienna.

The visit was focused on the presentation of the business opportunities in Niš to Austrian companies and entrepreneurs. Serbian Embassy in Vienna is very active in trying to connect Serbian and Austrian companies and it often organizes joint meetings in order to facilitate cooperation establishment and identification of joint interests.

Mayor Simonović held the presentation to the representatives from 40 Austrian companies. Personal involvement of the Mayor in the promotional activities of the business potentials in Niš as well as presentation of the subsidies made available by the city in order to attract new investors shows how important local economic development

is for the present Niš City authorities. This visit and the presentation itself aimed at drawing attention of the potential Austrian investors to Niš and this region since so far the investments of Austrian companies have been focused on the North of Serbia.

ARENA ČAIR RECONSTRUCTION PROGRESSING ACCORDING TO PLANNED DYNAMICS

Niš City representatives in charge of Arena Čair reconstruction presented the reconstruction works dynamics to Serbian Handball Federation.



Arena Čair Reconstruction progressing according to planned dynamics

The presented report confirms that the planned dynamics has been respected and that the suggestions made by EHF for the improvements of the facility itself have been incorporated into new Arena design.

So far the new construction mantling works and works on the Arena façade have been done. The floor base for Arena stands has been prepared as well as the ceiling itself. The carpentry works of both exterior and interior have been completed. All the dressing rooms have been entirely renovated. The installation works on water supply and sewerage pipe line, heating and air conditioning system at the Arena ground floor has been done. The electric and telecommunication network has been laid all over Arena.

The presented report has been forwarded to EHF which assessed positively the completed reconstruction works.

Serbian Handball Federation sent an official request to Nis City Mayor Miloš Simonović for booking the Arena Čair for the period of January 12 to January 23, 2012 for the organisation of

European Men Handball Championship 2012.

European Men Handball Championship Draw will be announced on June 15 in Belgrade.



Arena Čair Reconstruction



Arena Čair Reconstruction

NEW PHASE OF STADIUM ČAIR RECONSTRUCTION SOON

Preparation works on the Stadium Čair reconstruction and stabilization of the facility are coming to an end, as well as the works on the screeded bed for this capital facility.

Architectural, construction, electrical, mechanical and water and sewage system works are planned for the next reconstruction phase.

Conceptual project design of Stadium Čair reconstruction underwent Republic revision while the approval for the fire protection is expected.

- Total investment in the reconstruction of Arena Čair and Stadium is around 16 mil. EUR and this has been the greatest investment in sports infrastructure in Serbia in last several years. I am glad that we will use this mandate to complete sports infrastructure. A year and a half ago a swimming pool complex was finished and after the completion of works on the Stadium and Arena Čair, Niš would get the best sports complex in Serbia. This is the first pre-condition for top-sport and enabling young people to play sports, said the Mayor of Niš Miloš Simonovic who, together with the Minister of Youth and Sports, Snežana Samardžić Markovic, visited the reconstruction site. The Minister Samardžić-Markovic said that she was very satisfied with the dynamics of works on the reconstruction of sports facilities.

Main project design envisaged the reconstruction of the facility on the east side for 6966 spectators, stands on South and North side for 9037 spectators and reconstruction of West stand for 2154 spectators. In the last phase, East, South and North stand will be covered.

Reconstructed stadium will have the capacity of 18 151, with additional 120 seats for VIPs and 50 seats for media.

Niš Stadium Čair was built in 1963. No investment has been made for last 30 years. After the reconstruction Niš Stadium will have a completely new look and will be reconstructed in line with FIFA standards.

EUROPE OPEN

City of Niš and EU Delegation in Serbia organised manifestation all around Niš to celebrate Day of Europe.



Europe Day Celebration at European Corner

Miloš Simonović, Niš City Mayor met with the Head of the European Union Delegation in Serbia H.E. Vincent Degert at the meeting at Niš City Hall. On this occasion Mayor Simonović emphasized that the City was intensively preparing for everything that was awaiting us on our way to the European Union and reminded that the Niš City Representative Office in Brussels had been working from April 1st, adding that in October, Niš and other cities from Southeast Serbia represented by Niš Office in Brussels would participate for the first time at 9th European Week of Regions and Cities. Ambassador Degert emphasized that the issue of European integration was not only a question of money, finance, donations and investments, but primarily the question of accepting European values, and that was why it was extremely important to meet and talk about European integrations with citizens since they were the ones who would make final decision.

Later that day Mayor Simonović, Ambassador Degert and Professor Obradović participated in the debate with Niš high school pupils. Europa Diary publication intended for high school pupils was presented at the debate held at grammar schools

of Stevan Sremac and Bora Stanković. Project Europa Diary is financed by the EU Delegation in Serbia and is implemented in schools with the support of RS Ministry of Education and Science. After the debate a basketball match was played in the school yard between the pupils from two grammar schools. Ambassador Degert and Mayor Simonović awarded the winners and reminded them of the importance of sport in life of young people.

Within the manifestations marking the Day of Europe, Association of Development for Children and Youth Open Club within its EU financed project YouthNet which represented the network of young people fighting for equal rights and tolerance made a performance entitled Invisible dedicated to marginalized people with no official identification documents being invisible for the official administration structures.

Youth Center Together We Create organised the exhibition at European Corner presenting more than 100 EU themed works prepared by secondary school pupils and students. As part of the project dedicated to 8 EU countries the young people, secondary school pupils and university students from Niš, participated in



Ambassador Degert , Head of European Union Delegation in Serbia

the research group that worked on discovering the traits of European countries and what they discovered they presented in their work.

At EU corner Mayor Simonović and Ambassador Degert met the Dean and students from the University of Nis Law Faculty – the winners of the Regional Competition in Court Proceedings Simulation in front of European Court for Human Rights. 10 teams from ex-Yugoslav countries participated in the Competition and Niš team won the first place. This was the first time that Serbian Law Faculty team won the first place. Simulation was held under the auspices and with support of Civil Right Defenders, Young Lawyers of Serbia, Legalis-Croatian Legal Portal and Macedonian Young Lawyers Association.



Ambassador Degert and Mayor Simonović at European Corner

NIŠ CITY REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE IN BRUSSELS AT EU PARLIAMENT DISCUSSION

Niš City Representative Office in Brussels participated at the EU Parliament discussion about Serbia and its contribution to regional cooperation in Western Balkans.

Ms. Aleksandra Lugovic, who manages Niš City Brussels Office, presented the contribution of Niš City as a local self government to EU integration processes. She also informed all the participants about the initiative taken by local and regional governments from former Yugoslavia countries of forming Western Balkans Working Group in Brussels which met regularly and exchanged information, contacts and best practices related to EU

regional policies and available funds. That initiative is also one of the examples of strengthening regional cooperation.

The Head of the EU Delegation for relations with Serbia and Member of European Parliament (MEP) Edurad Kukan took active part in this discussion as well as his deputy, MEP Victor Bostinaru, Myriam Veger, the Head of the Unit for Serbia of the European Commission Directorate-General for Enlargement, Milica Delević,

Director of RS Government Integration Office. Jelko Kacin, EP Rapporteur, joined the discussion via video conference link.

General impression from the discussion is that European Parliament and European Commission valued positively the efforts made by Serbia on improving the regional cooperation and the general notion was that Serbia could be the main pillar of regional cooperation network.

FARMERS FROM NIŠ ON A STUDY TOUR IN SLOVENIA

The representatives from Niš City Administration for Agriculture and Rural Development, Institute for Viticulture and Wine Making, RDA South, City Municipality Pantelej and the members of the agricultural associations, went on a three-day study tour to Slovenia in order to learn more about good practices in agricultural development in the context of EU agricultural development and regional policy and inter-sectoral networking.

The delegation will have the opportunity to find out more about the ways EU is financing regional and local development through accession aid programmes and to learn more about practice of integrated production for the needs of local markets. The visit to Slovenian Institute for Control and Certification in Agriculture and Forestry is also planned as well as the meeting with Slovenian Minister of Agriculture Darja Radič.

This study tour is also an excellent opportunity for farmers from Niš to meet with their colleagues from Slovenia and to find out more about modern organisation of farming production and stock growing. The delegation will also visit fish ponds, modern slaughter houses and vineries. The great progress of Slovenian grapes growing and wine making lie in the activities of Local Action Groups.



Head of Niš City Administration for Agriculture and Rural Development

Individual farmers realised that by joining forces they could use available finances more rationally, reach better quality of their products and make better product placement for on the markets.

RAFTING IN NIŠ BECOMES TRADITION

Rafting Euro Cup 2011 held on the River Nišava opened the season of rafting in Serbia.

26 teams from Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Serbia competed in four disciplines: slalom, sprint, downriver and H2H. The men team from Slovakia and women team from Bulgaria won first places in their respective categories.

This is the third time the rafting competition has been organised in Niš. The City of Niš made great efforts in order to secure the best possible conditions for training and competing for the sportsmen.

Niš with its River Nišava found its place on the map of extreme sports. Being supported amply by Niš City management, Serbian Rafting Federation will apply for the organisation of World Rafting Cup in Niš in 2013.

Niš City Mayor Miloš Simonović said that rafting made Niš recognizable as new destination on the map of extreme sports fan and sportsmen. The River Nišava offers great possibilities for different rafting disciplines. By organising World and European Rafting Cup competitions the City of Niš made sports tourism one of its priorities.