

Golf course plans facing cancellation

Mark Pullen - 08.04.2009

Montenegrin Tourism & Environmental Protection Minister, Predrag Nenezic, has confirmed that the second round of negotiations on the sale of Tivat's Montepranzo-Bokaproduct – earmarked for the construction of a coastal golf course – are on the brink of collapse.

Speaking to Montenegrin daily Vijesti, Nenezic said that after ten months of negotiations over the sale of defunct agriculture company Montepranza-Bokaproduct, the government will no longer wait for the tender participants.

The successful participants in the tender – Canadian billionaire Peter Munk and his local business partner Dusko Knezevic – haven't formally responded to elements of the sale & purchase agreement within the anticipated deadline, thus prompting Minister Nenezic to predict the collapse of the deal.

The successful consortium, which offered the second highest bid at the tender, consists of Atlas Group, Britain 'Brooklet' owned by Munk and Spanish professional golf player Jose Maria Olazabal.

Negotiations with Munk and Knezevic's consortium have been complicated by property disputes with former owners of the land, the unclear division of property of the company from which Montepranzo was established and unsettled town-planning issues regarding part of the project.

Minister Nenezic, who is also president of the Tender Commission for Tourism, claims that the interests and requests of the potential investor were considered closely in the course of negotiations and that the seller and strategic interest in building golf courses were protected, which resulted in creating all preconditions for concluding the agreement in mid-March.

"Given that the negotiating team hasn't been informed of the bidder's final decision by now, despite several urgings and the fact that anticipated deadlines have expired, conditions are ripe for the Tender Commission to be informed by the end of the week so the commission can suggest further actions on the matter to the Privatisation Council..." Nenezic told Vijesti.

Munk, who is developing Tivat's Porto Montenegro luxury marina, has said that golf courses in Tivat are "a key part of the long-term plan that will see the building of the complex Porto Montenegro in Tivat turn Montenegro into the Adriatic Monaco."