

Serbia re-issues arrest warrant for Milosevic widow

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BELGRADE, Mar 23 (Reuters) - A Serb court asked police on Thursday to re-issue an arrest warrant for the widow of the late Slobodan Milosevic, which had been withdrawn to allow her to attend his funeral last weekend.

Mira Markovic, who has lived in self-imposed exile in Russia for the past three years, did not show up for his burial and failed to appear at a court hearing on Thursday.

She was charged in 2003 of abusing her power to get a flat for the family nanny.

Milosevic's Socialist Party posted bail of 15,000 euros (10,380 pounds) guaranteeing she would appear at the hearing if the court withdrew the arrest warrant and allowed her to return to Serbia for the funeral.

But a court statement said Markovic did not appear and the bail money would be forfeit. "An arrest warrant will be re-issued against the accused," it added.

The shrunken and impoverished Socialists raised money from wealthier members for the widow's bail, party official Zoran Andjelkovic told the daily Blic.

"It took us about a week to collect 15,000 euros," he said.

Milosevic died in his detention cell in the war crimes tribunal in The Hague on March 11, over four years after the start of his trial on crimes committed in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s.

He was buried on Saturday in his hometown of Pozarevac without state honours and without the presence of any members of his family, including son Marko and daughter Marija.

The funeral was organised by his Socialist Party but Mira pulled strings behind the scenes, telephoning from Moscow to dictate which television networks would be allowed to cover the grave site inside the family compound.

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