

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office

as at:

Monday 20 & Tuesday 21 January 2003

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact

Local News

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Sierra Leone Web

Monday, 20 January 2003



"p.palmer"
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Sent by:
owner-leonenet@listproc.umbc.edu

To: <leonenet@listproc.umbc.edu>
CC:
Subject: A New Storm

21/01/2003 23:02

A New Storm

Concord Times (Freetown)

OPINION
January 20, 2002
Posted to the web January 20, 2003

Alpha R Jalloh
Freetown

The storm of yesterday has subsided, but barely as the traumatized people of Sierra Leone heaved a sigh of relief-thanks to Unamsil- a new one has started to rage. Unusual things have started to happen. But what worries many people is that the issues are shrouded in secrecy. Sierra Leone has gone through horrendous experiences since 1991. Two incidents have taken place recently that have aroused the concern of people in the metropolis: The attack on the army engineering section at Wellington in the East and the bomb blast that is reported to have taken place at Hastings . The two are under investigation. But why was the army garrison at Wellington attacked? What has been kept there that has attracted armed men? Who are these armed men? These questions remain unanswered to date. Residents of Calaba Town have reported of an ex-combatants being arrested in addition to the 13 men that were arrested on the scene of the attack. His house at Mayenkinah in Calaba Town was searched, and certain "things" were found there. There have been reports of certain soldiers still being disgruntled. The concept of reconciliation introduced in post-war era, gave cause for many malcontents to rejoin the army.

Pertaining to the bomb blast, it has been reported that it was caused during the fusion of mines that were planted during the war. The exercise is reported to be carried out by a team of soldiers and will go on till February 15.

Coming back to the issue of the attack on the army garrison, it can be attributed to desperate boys who earn wealth through armed robbery. It is reported that there are equipments there that are used by the engineering section to carry out certain works like rehabilitation of ferries in the provinces, vehicles, arts work and many more. The essence of training the engineering section is to enable them engage in social development. The objective is to make the Sierra Leone Army development oriented. One school of thought says it is the equipment that the robbers had wanted to cart away since they cost millions. The country's capitalist oriented system has created a mania for youths to get rich over night by all means necessary. The drive to lay hands on wealth has driven them to anti-social acts. That is why the society has been plagued by nightmarish phenomena. But another school of thought says the guys had wanted to dispossess the engineering section of their guns. What they had wanted to do with the guns is not yet known, but there are speculations that former renegade soldiers are scheming plots to create chaos. But that notwithstanding, there are indications that

Sierra Leone's peace is permanent. The country is on the path of recovery and will definitely stand on its feet. It has been observed that certain malcontents from time to time scheme plots to create panic in the society. But the potency of another war is not feasible. Therefore, it would be foolhardy for any group to try to make the country ungovernable by creating panic.

During the war, it was easy to cause instability in any part of the country by firing a few shots, because the moment people hear them, they would start packing their belongings and run helter-skelter. Today, Sierra Leoneans are no longer so. They have become au fait with the secrets of the war, so panicking them demands an unprecedented strategy. And very soon it will come to a point when the guys will realize that, too much of one thing is good for nothing.

However, the greatest weakness in president Ahmad Tejan Kabbah's government is in security arrangement. And it was that weakness that made the invasion of Freetown on Wednesday January 6 1999 to succeed. The country lacks robust intelligence networks. What the president is expected to do is to restructure the current National intelligence network and in addition, set up his own intelligence network answerable to him directly. State lodge has failed to have an intelligence network within the army and that has made the government to become a prey of malcontents at any time they succeed to lay hands on guns. Kabbah's biggest personal problem lies in his connectocratic orientation. He appoints people because they are connected to him one way or the other.

He is also fast isolating himself from society, thereby creating a vacuum between him and the actualities in the country. Too much security has de-linked him from the grassroots who are au fait with the prevalent phenomena. What Kabbah has failed to realize is that it is not the men in suits with series of degrees that hold the key to information in this country. The sooner he realises that, the better for him.

However, despite the ramifications of recent events, there are indications that the country is safe.

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among some residents and causing many traders to close their shops. In Wellington, where people are still jittery after thieves attempted to shoot their way into a military supply depot earlier in the week, some people gathered a few belongings and fled their homes. One Freetown resident told the Sierra Leone Web he thought he heard "bombs or heavy machine guns," while another spoke of an explosion which rocked the neighbourhood. Police put out a statement later in the day explaining that the Sierra Leonean military and IMATT, the International Military Assistance Training Team, had blown up unused military ordinance at Hastings, BBC correspondent Lansana Fofana told the Sierra Leone Web. This was subsequently confirmed by presidential spokesman Kanji Daramy, who added that the exercise would continue until February 15, along with live firing exercises. Fofana said the army had not made any advance announcement of the operation, nor had they coordinated with the police afterwards to explain the cause of the explosion. Daramy said radio stations had aired the announcement as a public notice. "I understand people who had not heard the announcement on radio became confused, but radio stations were quick to repeat the announcement and put out statements in order to allay any fear on people's minds," he said.

Al-Ameen Mustapha Kanneh won the chieftaincy election in Koya Chiefdom, Kenema District Thursday, more than a month after the vote had been originally scheduled. Kanneh outpolled Mohamed Vandi Sellu by 206 votes to 63. The election was originally supposed to have taken place on **RESULTS** December 13.

Sierra Leone's Special Court has begun relocating to its new, still unfinished site in the Freetown suburb of New England, since the war crimes tribunal is at the point of outgrowing its temporary offices at the Bank of Sierra Leone complex. The court, which is mandated to bring to justice those who are deemed to bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's civil war, will expand in coming months from 70 employees to over 200. "We are going to be operating in a construction site for the next



six months," said Court Registrar Robin Vincent (pictured right). "But we are on our way to becoming an international criminal court on schedule to complete our mandate." The offices are being built on 11.5 acres of land provided by the Sierra Leone government. A local company was contracted to clear the land, which was rocky and covered with thick undergrowth, and also had a number of abandoned buildings on it. The company erected a perimeter fence and renovated two cell blocks which remained from a former Prisons Department training school. 188 prefabricated container-sized structures arrived from Slovenia in December, and a team of Slovenian technicians arrived in Freetown to help assemble them into fifteen office blocks. So far only the Registry – the court's administrative division – has moved into the new offices.



Exchange rates for the leone against the U.S. dollar and pound sterling, posted in Freetown on Friday: [Buying / Selling] Standard Chartered Bank: [\$] 2150 / 2350. [£] 3100 / 3350. Commercial Bank: [\$] 2150 / 2350. [£] 3150 / 3350. Frandia: [\$] 2300 / 2400 [£] 3150 / 3350. Continental: [\$] 2350 / 2480 [£] 3250 / 3700. Dollar Boys (Black Market): [\$] 2380 / 2400 [£] 3400 / 3500.

16 January: Patrick Jaia Modibor Kaikai is the new paramount chief in Pujehun District's Kpanga Kagonde Chiefdom. He defeated Christiana Salimatu Mikailu Jah, the sister of the former Minister of Works, by 336 votes to 209 in the second round of voting. Kpanga Kagonde includes the major southern town of Pujehun. In Kissi Kama Chiefdom, Kailahun District, it was a straight contest between Tamba Okeke Jabba and Amara Mbayo Tengbe which was won by Jabba 160 votes to 117. In Bo District's Wunde Chiefdom Mohamed Tshombe Kargo won over Sidique Brima Dabor by 92 votes to 78

BBC

Monday, 20 January 2003

Interview with Johnny Paul Koroma



Johnny Paul Koroma has strong support in the army

interview

with the BBC on Sunday he accused the government of starting a witch hunt against him, and said he would only feel safe if UN peacekeepers or the British Government gave him protection.

He said the Sierra Leonean authorities saw him as a political threat and wanted to find a way to get rid of him.

Army attack

Mr Koroma's house was raided as part of an investigation into Monday's attack on a military barracks.

The involvement of army soldiers in the attack led to a rumour that a coup attempt had taken place, and that Mr Koroma was involved.



The UN helps maintain order in Sierra Leone

Although the rumour was later dismissed, Mr Koroma, a former army officer, does have strong ties with the military, the BBC's Tom McKinley reports.

Turbulent history

Mr Koroma ruled Sierra Leone during one of the bloodiest periods of the decade-long civil war.

He seized power from President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah in 1997, but was driven out again early in 1998.

A 10-year civil war ended last year, followed by elections, easily won by Mr Kabbah.

BBC

Monday, 20 January 2003

Former Sierra Leone ruler flees



Koroma says he may give himself up to the UN

A former military ruler in Sierra Leone, Johnny Paul Koroma, has gone into hiding following a police raid on his house in the west of the capital Freetown.

Speaking to the BBC from an undisclosed location, Mr Koroma - who led a junta which came to power briefly in 1997 - accused the Sierra Leonean Government of "trying to eliminate" him.

“ A major search has been carried out along the Freetown peninsula, but there is no sign of him ”

UN security source

Eighteen people were arrested in Saturday's raid, which the authorities say was part of an investigation into an attack on an army barracks in Freetown.

Mr Koroma denied any involvement in the attack, but said he might give himself up to international peacekeeping troops.

He was elected to parliament last May after getting a large number of votes from the military.

'Witch hunt'

"Following his escape, a major search has been carried out along the Freetown peninsula, but there is no sign of him," said a security source with the UN peacekeeping force.

Sierra Leone police spokesman Brima Acha Kamara called on Mr Koroma " to give himself up, wherever he is".

Vanguard

Tuesday, 21 January 2012



"Excellent, inexpensive
reference work..."

**AFRICA
2003**

Police Ask Ex-Military Ruler to Surrender

Vanguard (Lagos)

NEWS

January 21, 2003

Posted to the web January 21, 2003

SIERRA LEONE police Monday called for former military ruler Johnny Paul Koroma to give himself up after going into hiding following an attack on a military supply depot in the capital Freetown. "Wherever he is, he should give himself up... He will not be tortured," Brima Achara Kamara, police deputy inspector told AFP, adding that police had detained 32 people since the January 13 attack in Freetown's Wellington area. Kamara said Koroma was "still in Freetown", adding: "We are on top of the situation."

Police last week arrested 14 men after the attack and went on to raid Koroma's house on Saturday "based on the information we got during the interrogation", said Kamara. "We were given to understand that some of the attackers who evaded arrest were being sheltered in the house. We arrested 18 people, including some former renegade soldiers" at Koroma's home, he said. "Rifles, ammunition and military uniforms were found," Kamara added. But Koroma "evaded arrest" by fleeing. "We are looking for the suspects who are still at large," he added. Koroma, a former officer of the Sierra Leone Army who led a short-lived military regime after toppling President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, has meanwhile accused the government of trying to assassinate him. Last week's attack, although thwarted immediately, raised fears that the west African country, which last year emerged from a brutal 10-year civil war, could lapse into a spiral of violence and anarchy again.

Leading newspapers Monday spoke of a "coup plot." But both the police and the government have maintained a studied silence. Kabbah has meanwhile urged Sierra Leoneans "to go about their business peacefully and calmly".

Koroma was suspected of plotting a coup and imprisoned by Kabbah in 1997 but was freed during a putsch in the same year by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). Koroma seized power, gaining the backing of two-thirds of the Sierra Leonean army. He quickly set up an AFRC government with allies from the erstwhile Revolutionary United Front rebel group, and ruled for nine months amid international condemnation of the coup.

However, Kabbah was reinstated following the intervention of a West African peacekeeping force. Koroma then distanced himself from both the RUF and their leader Foday Sankoh, currently in jail facing a slew of charges ranging from murder to robbery. Two of the people arrested following last week's attack had been members of the military junta headed by Koroma. Koroma, popularly called "JP," contested last year's historic elections -- the first since the end of the civil war -- in which Kabbah was re-elected to power with a resounding majority. His Peace and Liberation Party also fared miserably in the legislative polls, which were swept by the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party.

Awoko

Tuesday, 21 January 2003

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Johnny Paul says he's innocent

Tuesday, January 21, 2003

The leader of the Peoples Liberation Party Johnny Paul Koroma has told the International press that he was fleeing for his life. Johnny Paul Koroma explained his own side of the story to the BBC's Lansana Fofanah. Later he called up *Awoko* Editor, to say that he was "moving out of coverage area", and that Lansana Fofanah should be contacted because he had already explained the story to him. Lansana Fofanah told *Awoko* Editor and REUTERS Correspondent that Johnny Paul Koroma had explained that the whole incident started with the raid on Momoh's House where some of his former boys were staying. He said that all the boys moved down to his residence, but he drove them away. He said he told them that they should go to the police, but the boys told him that the police wanted to arrest them. Johnny Paul insisted that he still told them to leave his house and their plight was not his business. He explained further that a team of police had come to his house to conduct a search, and he had already spoken to them when he heard firing. He said the police knew how he escaped, but he was not going

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