

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of the latest local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:

Tuesday, August 24, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
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Johnny Paul Surfaces In London

The embattled former AFRC Chairman and leader of the political party PLP, Johnny Paul Koroma, who was indicted 18 months ago by the Special Court for Sierra Leone for bearing the greatest responsibility during the ten-year civil conflict, has now surfaced in London.

This was revealed over the weekend by a senior military officer at his Wilberforce Barracks residence, who begged for anonymity.

According to the senior

officer, Johnny Paul Koroma has already sought asylum in the United Kingdom, adding that he is doing fine.

The officer further revealed that the former AFRC Chairman calls him on his mobile every two weeks, adding that during his recent call he expressed dissatisfaction with President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and his SLPP government for attempting to implicate him in a trumped-up coup plot, but was extremely grateful to the police who gave him a tip-off on his imminent arrest.

The senior officer further re-

vealed that Johnny Paul expressed regret for preventing the late RUF leader Cpl.

Foday Saybana Sankoh from assuming the seat of power in an abortive coup plot.

"I thought President Kabbah and his government were sincere to me when I returned

from the jungle but behold, they used me like a pawn on

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Johnny Paul Surfaces In London

From front page the political chessboard", the officer quoted Johnny Paul as saying.

When asked whether Johnny Paul still has the ambition to govern Sierra Leone in the near future, the senior officer replied

in the negative.

He revealed that John Paul is now interested in reading law and that he is keeping a low profile in London.

The army officer further revealed that Johnny Paul will call him again

in September and therefore extended an invitation to this press for an interview with Johnny Paul Koroma. The officer also promised to give this press the latest pictures of the fugitive indictee. Keep tuned.

The Exclusive
Tuesday August 24, 2004

Society & Development

By J.B. Roy Kajue

Peter Halloran-Guilty Or not Guilty?

Did Australian born Special Court investigator, police officer Peter Halloran actually commit rape with the underage girl between 31st May and 3rd June, 2004?

The evidence looks a bit suspect. Which leads one to do some surmising. Is there any element of black-mail involved?

One cannot argue with the fact that go down to Paddy's Beach bar on a typical Saturday night and see sweet sixteens and girls much younger than that cavorting with older men and especially white top class UNAMSIL personnel.

Such conduct, agreed, contravenes the laws of this land and many other lands. But beyond the law, let's look at the very human side of life.

Are not our fathers marrying legally, within our traditional laws, girls as young as 12, 13, 14 years old? Many matrons and midwives can testify to girls far below the age of consent getting pregnant and giving birth to children fathered by older men. Rape, of course, is quite another thing. But let us ask, how did the girl in question get into the house of Mr. Peter Halloran?

Was she abducted? Was she induced? Did she go voluntarily, tempted by the hope of making some quick big bucks from a special court official? After all, they and UNAMSIL personnel are known to be big spenders.

One in no way intends to prejudice the matter, as it before the court. I only want to say that from my own personal experience, girls who are money lovers can be very rascal. Here was I one night down at Big Market area hanging out enjoying the night life. I got friendly with

this lady, shared a cigarette and a drink with her. She enticed me into the basement of where Michael Foray's computer shop now is. It was yet an unfinished building. I however I'm a smart savvy streetwise dude. I knew what was coming.

The lady raised an alarm that I had had sex with her and refused to pay her. My God! Was I scandalised. Her pimp came along, grabbed me by the pants and insisted I should pay the lady for service rendered. I refused and said let us go to the central police station. When we got there, I removed all the money in my pocket, about Le70,000 and told the investigating officer adamantly that, see? I have enough money to pay this lady if a had contracted with her. But no, so not a penny of my money will go to her.

The officer believed me. Myself and the lady later got friendly. You know what she told me? "Ar bin mean say you nar mormior."

Special court registrar Robin Vincent, who I assume his integrity is above board in a pres statement issued 18 August 2004 had this to say in paragraph 4: "Based on the information and the statements presented to the Board of Inquiry, it was concluded that there was insufficient evidence to support the allegation against Mr. Halloran."

In paragraph 6, Mr. Robin Vincent goes on to say: "Let me stress that the Special Court her cooperated with the Sierra Leonean authorities since the beginning of the investigation (in June), as has Mr. Halloran the special court provided a copy of its internal re-

port, together with all supporting documents and statements, in order to facilitate police's own investigation. I personally made a full statement tot he police of our internal inquiry."

Now the sixty-four million dollar question is, on what grounds did the Sierra Leone Police go on to proffer a three-count charge of rape and related offences against Mr. Halloran?

And why is it that with all substantive evidence that Mr. Halloran will not jump bail was he refused bail? After all, is an accused person not presumed innocent until proved guilty?

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International Enforcement Law Reporter September, 2004

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HEADLINE: B. U.S. Imposes Economic Sanctions and Freezes Assets of Former Liberian Leader

BYLINE: Bruce Zagaris

BODY:

On July 23, 2004, President George W. Bush issued an executive order freezing the assets of former Liberian President Charles Taylor, as well as his family and top aides, accusing them of undermining Liberia's tradition to democracy.(fn. 1)

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(fn. 1) For more information and the executive order, see The White House, Executive Order Blocking Property of Certain Persons and Prohibiting the Importation of Certain Goods from Liberia , Office of the Press Secretary, July 23, 2004; Assets of Liberia's Ex-Leader Frozen, Washington in Brief , Wash. Post , July 24, at A7, col. 1.

-----End of Footnote-----

The executive order criticized said the actions and policies of former Liberian President Charles Taylor and other persons, stating that"their unlawful depletion of Liberian resources and their removal from Liberia and secreting of Liberian funds and property have undermined Liberia's transition to democracy and the orderly development of its political, administrative, and economic institutions."(fn. 2) The executive order explained that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed on August 18, 2003, and the related cease fire, ending the civil war in Liberia, have not yet been universally implemented throughout Liberia. The order observes that the illicit trade in round logs and timber products is connected to the proliferation of and trafficking in illegal arms, which perpetuate the Liberian conflict and fuel and exacerbate other conflicts throughout West Africa. Hence, these actions, policies and circumstances constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the U.S., whereby President Bush declares a national emergency to deal with the threat.(fn. 3)

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(fn. 2) The White House, Executive Order Blocking Property of Certain Persons and Prohibiting the Importation of Certain Goods from Liberia , supra .
(fn. 3) Id.

-----End of Footnote-----

The executive order forbids the direct or indirect importation into the United States of any "round log or timber product" from Liberia.(fn. 4)

-----Start of Footnote-----

(fn. 4) Id.

-----End of Footnote-----

The economic sanctions and asset freezes are directed at the property of 28 people close to Mr.

Taylor, including his wife, ex-wives, children, former ministers and legislators in Liberia, a member of Parliament of Gambia, various business and alleged dealers and transporters of weapons and mineral (e.g., Viktor Anatolijevitch Bout), former Liberian high-level officials in the maritime sector, and businessmen dealing with wood products. In addition, the order includes Foday Sankoh, who is deceased.(fn. 5) Most likely, the U.S. believes that bank accounts and/or other property may be traceable to Mr. Sankoh.

-----Start of Footnote-----

(fn. 5) Office of Foreign Assets Control, U.S. Department of Treasury, Recent OFAC Actions (<http://www.ustreas.gov/offices/eotffc/ofac/actons/20040723.html>).

-----End of Footnote-----

During the last few months Mr. Taylor has fought other efforts to prosecute him for crimes against humanity and related crimes in Liberia and **Sierra Leone. The Special Court for Sierra Leone** has denied Mr. Taylor's claims that it does not have jurisdiction. Mr. Taylor is trying to keep Nigerian courts from revoking his asylum in Nigeria. The executive order illustrates the breadth of the trouble (e.g., interference with peacekeeping in Liberia implicates U.S. foreign policy and causes a national emergency), how targeted U.S. sanctions may be in terms of coverage of economic products (e.g., the wood products industry) and persons. These sanctions are most effective if they are multilateral.

SLeone 'child-smuggler' arrests

Three people have been arrested and charged with smuggling 29 children to the United States for adoption, say police in Sierra Leone.



A senior policeman told the BBC the suspects used to work for a local aid agency running orphanages in the north.

The 10-year civil war has left many orphans and great poverty

He said two suspects then set up an orphanage, and persuaded poor parents to give up their children for adoption.

The police allege the children were then smuggled to a neighbouring country and flown to the United States.

The arrests followed an Interpol investigation into child trafficking in West Africa.

The remaining children from the home have been placed with social services, say the police.

The authorities say they are doing their best to track down the children in the US and get them returned.

The United Nations Children's Fund estimates that about 200,000 West African children are trafficked each year; most are taken to Europe or sold into slavery as domestic workers.

Straw visits Darfur refugee camp

UK Foreign Secretary Jack Straw is in the Darfur region of Sudan, where a million people have fled attacks by pro-government militias.

He is visiting a feeding centre for critically ill children at the Abu Shouk refugee camp in northern Darfur.

He will also meet representatives of the African Union monitoring mission.

The government and rebel leaders are struggling to agree an agenda at talks, sponsored by the AU in Nigeria, seeking a political solution to the conflict.

Mr Straw has said he is visiting Sudan to try to get Khartoum to do more to curb the Arab Janjaweed militia's harassment of the largely black refugees.

Later, he will see President Omar al-Bashir. Mr Straw has said he will tell the Sudanese leader that the government must do more to end the atrocities.

DARFUR CONFLICT

More than 1m displaced

Up to 50,000 killed

More at risk from disease and starvation

Arab militias accused of ethnic cleansing

Sudan blames rebels for starting conflict

As the former colonial power and Sudan's biggest aid donor, Britain has considerable influence in the country.

Mr Straw's trip comes a week before the expiry of a United Nations Security Council deadline threatening Sudan with action if it fails to ease the humanitarian crisis and find a political solution in Darfur.

Earlier, after talks in the Sudanese capital Khartoum, Mr Straw welcomed Sudan's decision to allow the British offices of rights groups Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch access to refugee camps in Darfur.

He said Britain had no plans to deploy troops to Darfur, but was prepared to support an African Union military presence in the region.

'Five star' camp

The BBC's Bridget Kendall, who is travelling with Mr Straw, says the British foreign secretary will not be seeing the worst of this crisis.

Abu Shouk camp, currently home to 44,000 people, is known as a "five-star camp" as it is close to the provincial centre and its airport.

Made up of rows and rows of white tents, water collection points and a feeding centre for malnourished children, it lies in the midst of the flat sandy desert.

The UN has accused the Janjaweed of killing an estimated 50,000 people in Darfur in an 18-month reign of terror.

More than a million people have been forced to flee their homes to escape the fighting, which escalated last year after rebels took up arms against Khartoum.

Our correspondent says a British military adviser who has been working with African monitors in western Sudan for the last two months is accompanying Mr Straw in Darfur.

She quotes him as saying that having ravaged villages and forced villagers into camps, the militia now roam the surrounding areas which have become bandit country.

Sudan's government denies the charge that it used the Janjaweed to quell the rebel uprising, and has promised to disarm the militia.

Troops offer

Sudan has meanwhile rejected calls for a large deployment of African troops to be sent to Darfur to disarm rebels fighting Khartoum's rule.

The offer was made by Nigerian leader Olusegun Obasanjo, who is hosting peace talks between the rebels and Sudan.

Sudan's agriculture minister and top representative at the talks, Mazjoub al-Khalifa, dismissed the offer, saying: "I don't think there is a need for this."

He said it was the role of "the government of Sudan and the security forces" to "simultaneously" disarm the anti-government rebels as well as the Janjaweed militia.

However, rebel leaders attending the peace talks in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, criticised Mr Khalifa's position.

"There is no way we can let our enemies disarm us," said Abubakar Hamid Nour of Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). "They are still killing and bombing us."

The rebels say they want to address political issues such as power-sharing, and not just security.

The BBC's Anna Borzello in Abuja says there is so far little sign of optimism at the talks, which its organisers, the African Union, hopes will prove the continent is capable of solving its own problems.

Previous talks collapsed in July when the rebels walked out after the government refused to meet their terms.

Story from BBC NEWS:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/3593190.stm>

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Eyewitness: Darfur's nightmare



By Barnaby Phillips
BBC Africa correspondent in Darfur

It is dawn, and the sun is rising over a remote and beautiful corner of Africa.

Beida is on the border between Sudan and Chad, a small town surrounded by mountains on one side, and a meandering river which marks the border on the other.

In normal times, some 5,000 people live in Beida. But these are not normal times.

The Arab militias have waged a campaign of terror in the surrounding countryside, and thousands of people have deserted their villages and fields, crowding into the town, seeking refuge from attacks.

Away to the east we can see a tiny speck in the sky. It is an Aleutian aeroplane, chartered by the United Nations World Food Programme.



It swoops over a field on the edge of the town, and drops dozens of bags of food from its hold. They tumble through the sky, and hit the ground with loud thuds.

More than a million people have fled their homes in Darfur

The aeroplane turns a big, lazy circle, and drops a second load. Then a third.

Soon, the field is littered with hundreds of 50kg bags of wheat, peas and maize, and a large crowd has assembled, waiting for the food distribution.

Air-drops are costly, and difficult to organise. But as heavy rains in Darfur continue, making many roads impassable, the UN has little alternative if it wants to carry on delivering food to remote communities.

"We began our air operations two weeks ago," says the WFP's Richard Lee. "The people we are reaching are not starving, but they are very hungry.

"They were not able to harvest this year, so they need this food now if the situation is not to deteriorate."

We spoke to one of the women queuing up for the food deliveries. Her name was Mariam, and her story was typical.

She said the Janjaweed Arab militia came to her village, Tukul-Tukul, and burnt it.

"They shot six people", she said, and started to cry. "I'm grateful for this food, but I'm not happy to be here. I want to be back in my own village, growing my own crops."

Searching for the Janjaweed

We drove out into the countryside, to try and meet the Arab militia. We saw large herds of camel and cattle, grazing through the remains of abandoned villages.

At one point, a group of Arab men on horseback rode past. Many were carrying AK-47 rifles, and they whooped with excitement when they saw us.

“ They killed our animals, they tried to drive us from our land ”

Arab elder, Darfur

We tried to follow them, but our battered old Land Rover got stuck in the mud, and they were gone.

But eventually two Arab teenagers, also armed, took us to a small camp. There we met an elder, Juma Jebbah.

Sitting cross-legged on a carpet under the trees, he denied his people were Janjaweed bandits. He said they had lived peacefully, side by side with the African Masalit people for 30 years.

The trouble began, he said, when other African tribes moved in from Chad. "They killed our animals, they tried to drive us from our land."

This is a complex crisis being played out at so many levels that it is very difficult for an outsider to understand. Only the scale of human suffering is obvious.

Back in Beida, I asked a Sudanese aid worker when the displaced people would be ready to go back home.

She looked at me doubtfully and said: "They are still scared of the situation, they don't know whether this thing will re-occur again. They are not certain of the future."

International News

Sudan, UN sign deal to protect displaced people

The Sudanese government has signed an agreement with the United Nations' migration agency ensuring that more than one million people displaced by the 18-month Darfur conflict will have the right to return home voluntarily, but only once they feel the situation is secure enough to do so.

Signed Saturday in Khartoum, the agreement aims to ensure that no people displaced by the conflict, which has killed an estimated 30,000 people and destroyed scores of villages, will be forced by Sudanese security forces to return home before security has been restored or they are ready to go back.

The agreement is one of several measures Sudanese authorities have committed to undertaking under the

Darfur Plan of Action, a framework drawn up to demonstrate to the UN Security Council that Khartoum is moving to end the conflict, which the UN says has produced the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

"We have put together something that can work," said Branson McKinley, director general of the UN's Geneva-based International Organisation for Migration (IOM), adding, however, that the return of the displaced people "is not going to be [an] easy or quick process."

McKinley told reporters he has visited several displaced people camps in Darfur, where most people told him that they want to return home providing that security is ensured.

McKinley, Sudanese Foreign Minister Mustafa

Osman Ismail and an envoy for UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, signed the agreement, which calls for forming a group to manage and coordinate the voluntary return of displaced people to their Darfur homes.

"Now we have a mechanism that would dispel any doubts as to whether the return of the IDPs [internally displaced persons] is voluntary or not," Ismail stressed during the signing ceremony.

There have been allegations of Sudanese security forces trying to force displaced people living in camps dotted throughout Darfur's three states to return home, a UN official said, adding,

however, that there have been no confirmed cases of this happening.

Ismail made a call for international support, particularly from the UN and NCOs, to help enable the return home of those displaced by the conflict.

Fighting in Darfur has been raging since African rebels rose up against the government in February 2003 over what they regarded as unjust treatment by Sudanese authorities. The region's nomadic Arab tribes have long been at odds with their African farming neighbours over dwindling resources, particularly water and arable land.

Since men, armed bands of

herders, most of them pro-government Arabs, known as the Janjaweed, have been torching village after village in the sprawling, arid region, the United States and aid agencies accuse the government of backing the Janjaweed, claims Khartoum denies.

But UN spokesperson Radhia Achouri said on Friday that Sudanese authorities "have acknowledged controlling some of the Janjaweed through promising to provide a list of militiamen suspected of involvement in the Darfur conflict."

The UN Security Council has given the Sudanese government until August 30 to disarm Arab militia, blamed for the violence in face of diplomatic and economic sanctions.

Peace talks sponsored by the African Union are scheduled to be held in Nigeria on Monday between the two African rebel groups and the Sudanese government.

The UN says the conflict has driven about 1.7 million

people from their homes, many of whom are now in displaced people camps, while another 180,000 have fled into neighbouring Chad.

Under Saturday's agreement, Sudanese authorities agreed to accept the IOM's determination on whether people are ready to return home voluntarily and to ensure the security of the UN agency's staff and displaced people in Darfur.

Paul Norton, the IOM's chief in Sudan, said it is crucial that displaced people in Darfur are not forced to return home before security has been established and suitable conditions, including living arrangements, have been provided in their former homes.

"We are talking about people who have been traumatised in one way or another, but ultimately the goal is to help these people go home and get on with their lives," Norton said in Egypt during a telephone interview.

Credit: Sapa-AP