

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



Lower Howe Street from Wallace Johnson Street, Freetown

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Monday, 11 February 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Standard Times
Monday, 11 February 2008

War amputees receive computers

A non governmental organization, Sierra Unite-Sierra Leone in collaboration with her sister organization based in Australia, has implemented the distribution of a consignment of used clothing, toys, books and computers to amputee camps in the Western area.

In a colourful ceremony held last Thursday, 31st February, 2008, the organization distributed to several camps including Grafton resettlement, Jui Kobba Town resettlement, Hastings resettlement, Benguema Road Resettlement, 555 Camp Waterloo, Newton Amputee and War Wounded Resettlement Waterloo and Ahmadiyya Agriculture Secondary School Newton.

Addressing beneficiaries at the various resettlement camps, the Coordinator for Sierra Unite-Sierra Leone, Mr. Alusine Osaio Kamara, who is also the Safety Manager of the Sierra Leone Ports Authority, disclosed that such a wonderful venture was the idea of Sierra Leoneans.

He said the gesture is a humanitarian one and promised to continue helping needy Sierra

Leoneans especially those who were severely affected by the eleven-years brutal rebel war in the country.

Mr. Kamara further said that he did not dismiss extending this assistance to other Sierra Leoneans especially the youth but insisted that the organization's initial target group for now is for the war affected persons.

The Coordinator went on to thank the Chairman Mr. Murray Kanneh, a Sierra Leonean based in Australia for the great initiative hoping that they will continue to help the needy Sierra Leoneans.

Mr. Kamara commonly called Scorpion; expressed thanks and appreciation for the great honored and confidence imposed to him and vowed that the rightful beneficiaries will benefit from the items donated to them.

One of the beneficiaries, Mr. Thomas Cole, a Senior Teacher of Ahmadiyya Agricultural Secondary Newton, thanked the organizers for their supports and assistance adding that he hoped the organization will continue to assist them.

Equity

Monday, 11 February 2008

Norman's families may be dragged to court

BY MOHAMED KAI

A former Officer-in-Charge, now Local Unit Commander, Mr. Abdul Kallay, has vowed to drag the family of the late Chief Sam Hinga Norman to court in connection with a house he sold under duress to the late man.

Recounting his ordeal to this paper recently, Mr. Kallay explained that in 2000 he was the Officer-in-Charge of one Police Station in Bo and was working in collaboration with Chief Norman who was then the Head of the Civil Defence

Forces and Mr. Charles Moiwo on security matters in the Bo district.

Mr. Kallay alleged that he was arrested and detained at the Pademba Road Prisons for seven months on allegation that he was collaborating with the now defunct Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

He said he was released and

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his services terminated from the Force immediately.

He said during this period, Mr. Charles Moiwo contacted him and inquired whether his house in Bo was for sale. He said he told Mr. Moiwo that he had no plans to sell his house even though conditions were very bad with him.

He narrated that a few days later, Mr. Moiwo stormed his residence with a group of Kamajors and informed him that Chief Sam Hinga Norman wanted

to buy the house.

Mr. Kallay said he was forced by Mr. Charles Moiwo to collect twenty-one million Leones Chief Norman had given to him (Moiwo) for the purchase of the house and forced to vacate the premises.

He maintained that he never gave them any documents relating to the said house and disclosed that he has instructed his to start legal proceedings for him to retrieve his lawful property.

BBC World Service Trust

Friday, 8 February 2008

Gambian Former Rebel Tells the Court about Taylor Support to RUF

By Abdul Rashid, at The Hague

RASHID: The Judges of Trial Chamber II of the Special Court for Sierra Leone have not been as busy as they are since the Prosecution's eleventh witness took the stand. They constantly interrupt the young lawyer performing the direct examination for the Gambian insider witness. The Judges intermittently told the young prosecution lawyer to avoid leading questions, rephrase his questions for clarity, and spell difficult African names he's using as references.

Notwithstanding, Suwandi Camara, the Prosecution's eleventh witness has testified that the plan for Gambians and Sierra Leoneans to participate in the war in Liberia was fixed in Burkina Faso by Charles Taylor, Dr. Mani – a Gambian – and Foday Sankoh.

Suwandi said the plan was put together with the understanding that if Taylor succeeded in his war he would assist Dr. Mani and Foday Sankoh with their plans to launch rebel war in both Sierra Leone and the Gambia. Suwandi Camara, testifying in the Gambian Mandingo language, speaks through the Court's interpreter.

CAMARA: That is Dr. Mani, our leader, who gave those 16 people to Charles Taylor. I said these three leaders – Dr. Mani, Foday Sankoh, Charles Taylor – had a meeting at Burkina that we are going to help Charles Taylor. When Charles Taylor succeeds in his war, he will also help us. And also, he told me that these people were going to do their communication training at Liberia.

RASHID: Suwandi Camara told the Court that he was an instructor at the Gbartala Cobra Base in Bong County. On direct examination, Suwandi testified that two members of the Gambian group were assigned to Foday Sankoh to launch Sierra Leone's civil war.

CAMARA: These were the people of [Sofagu] who Charles Taylor assigned to go and join Sankoh to start the war in Sierra Leone. I said these people, [Lauren Campaware], Ibrahima Bah, these were working in Sierra Leone for said Foday Sankoh. These were the people who first went to Sierra Leone to start the war. But these people used to go to Sierra Leone and come back to Liberia because they have their wives and children in Liberia. They go to Sierra Leone and spend some time there and then come back to Liberia.

RASHID: Suwandi, the Gambian testifying against Taylor, said he trained a lot of fighters including a large number of the Small Boys Unit (SBU) at the Cobra Base. He said he trained many boys as young as 9, 10, 13 and 14 years. The Prosecution's eleventh witness told the Court he trained Liberians and Sierra Leoneans at that base.

CAMARA: Let me tell you, Liberians used to come there. Sierra Leoneans used to come there. I know the nationalities of these two countries who comes there for training.

The trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor, which resumed on January 7, enters its second month without any interruption.

Abdul Rashid for Search for Common Ground and BBC World Service Trust, at The Hague.

Voice of America

Friday, 8 February 2008

Former Liberian President Taylor's Imprint Still Felt in Guinea

By Nico Colombant
Bokoni

While former Liberian president, Charles Taylor, is being tried in The Hague for alleged war crimes in Sierra Leone, his imprint is still being felt in the neighboring country of Guinea as well. Some of his fighters repeatedly attacked villages there in 2000 and 2001. Women are only starting to recover from being kidnapped and abused, while former fighters who remained in Guinea also feel persecuted. VOA's Nico Colombant reports from the village of Bokoni, near the borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone.



Birds chirp in a courtyard as Ouidoh Sorogoui spins yarn at the entrance of her home, making clothes for other villagers.

She recounts harrowing tales from the Taylor era.

Taylor-backed Revolutionary United Front fighters from Sierra Leone along with soldiers from Liberia's army, and fighters recruited from refugee camps in Guinea, repeatedly attacked this village in 2000 and 2001.

Her husband was killed. Women, including herself, were taken hostage, to become porters, cooks, and sexual slaves.

War victim and widow Ouidoh Sorogoui

Sorogoui explains how she was forced to steal from other people's farms at gunpoint. She says younger women were raped. She says at one point she was asked to walk on all fours naked, but refused and asked to be killed instead.

Sorogoui says she finally escaped, naked, walking through forest back to her village.

During her ordeal, she tore up an ankle, which has now doubled in size. So, she sits and spins yarn to stay off her feet.

Other former victims who are helped by a local non-governmental organization sell vegetable oil at a market in the nearby town of Macenta.



Aid worker Amadou Oury Bah has been helping women with similar stories from 40 villages and towns.

"Most of these women suffered from sexual abuse and have been used as sexual slaves," he said. "They carried out some manual labor and [were] kept in cages without movement."

Aid worker Amadou Oury Bah

Guinea's army finally chased away Taylor's fighters from this region and then backed rebels who along with another group of fighters, backed by Ivory Coast, helped force Mr. Taylor into exile. The former Liberian president was then extradited from Nigeria and eventually sent to The Hague for trial, for his alleged crimes in Sierra Leone.

Bah says that for people affected by this turbulent time in West Africa's history wounds of war go away much slower than the fighting.

"We found upon their return that most of these women were stigmatized and some of them were rejected by their husbands and some relatives," he added.



VOA Photo: N. Colombant

Women were abused in villages like Bokoni



VOA Photo: N. Colombant

A regional government official in charge of women's issues, Marguerite Guilavogui, says men rejected these women after saying they had been passed on from one fighter to the next. She says some husbands abandoned them, and that the war also created many widows and orphans.

Many women also never returned. Bah tries to track down minors who disappeared, including one young girl who was kidnapped when she was a toddler.

"She was about three years old when she was adopted by the rebels and taken to Liberia in Lofa county," he explained. "According to information we received, she was there with one of the rebel leaders, who felt threatened and fled from Liberia to Ghana. Since then, we have had no

information about the little girl."

Bah says he is trying to help the hundreds of women who did come back. He wants to make them more independent and confident in themselves with revenue generating projects, like making soap.

Abraham Bility helps former Liberian and Sierra Leonean child soldiers who feel persecuted now that the fighting is over.

"They are still considering anyone who can speak English, they consider you as somebody who is supporting Charles Taylor," he said.

Many are too afraid to go back to their home countries where they think the situation would be worse for them. Many were recruited as fighters in refugee camps, from groups that had fled Liberia following the start of the initial Charles Taylor-led rebellion, which began in 1989.



VOA Photo N. Colombant

"We have 112 children who were involved in the war during the Charles Taylor regime," added Mr. Bility. "We are trying to talk to the community now, the quarter chief, the prefect, the governor of this forest region to allow them to move freely but they consider them to be the troublemakers in the community."

Back in Bokoni, in another courtyard, Mari, 13, is doing dishes. Her mother was taken away from her by rebels during the war, and then died after returning to the village.

Mari says she never wants to see another armed man disrupt her peaceful village, or anywhere else in Guinea.

Mari, 13, in Bokoni

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
8 February 2008**

[The media summaries and press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]

Newspaper Summary

UNMIL Clarifies Media Reports on Drawdown Process

(The News, The Informer, Heritage, Public Agenda and The Parrot)

- The UN Mission in Liberia in a statement circulated Thursday says its attention has been drawn to media reports misquoting the mission's Military Deputy Chief of Operations, Lt./Col. Greg Tasker, on the drawdown process. These stories reported that the Mission's drawdown process will leave only 2,450 UNMIL troops in Liberia, by September this year.
- The statement reiterated Lt. /Col. Tasker's statement that, in keeping with UN Security Council Resolution 1777, UNMIL is authorized to reduce its military forces by 2,450 personnel. This clearly means UNMIL will still be maintaining more than [11,000] half of the current number of peacekeepers in Liberia by September.
- Despite this misconception, the relevance of UNMIL continues to be seen and cherished and as can be deduced from recent media reports, the population is upbeat about the mission's achievements, particularly in consolidating peace and stability in Liberia.

Bomi Superintendent Craves UNMIL's Intervention in Administrative Problems at Key Rubber Plantation

(Daily Observer)

- The Superintendent of Bomi County, Mohammed Massaley, is requesting the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to intervene in the administrative problems at the Guthrie Rubber Plantation, a farm sandwiched between Grand Cape Mount and Bomi Counties in western Liberia.

Accident Victim Father Appeals to UNMIL

(The Inquirer)

- [sic:]The father of a little girl killed in an United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) accident that occurred on November 29, 2007 is appealing to the mission to see reason and respond to him. Mr. William Zazay, Jr. whose wife was also involved in the accident said since the accident occurred, nothing has been heard from UNMIL. Mr. Zazay in a document submitted to the INQUIRER said on November 29, 2007 an employee of UNIML, in the person of Mr. Brainislau Bozonuia took away the life of his daughter, Willioma Kolu Zazay and three other persons and left more than 12 persons seriously injured on the Tubman Boulevard in Congo Town. According to the statement, police investigation revealed that Mr. Bozonuia the operator of UNMIL 255 misused his lane while driving with excessive speed, leading to recklessly killing Willioma Zazay and three other persons.

NIC Attracted US\$150M Investment in 2007

(The Inquirer, The Analyst)

- The Chairman of the National Investment Commission (NIC), Dr. Richard V. Tolbert, has disclosed a staggering US\$150 million investment attracted by his commission in 2007 due to commitment and dedication to the country for growth and development following years of civil strife.
- In an interview with reporters, Dr. Tolbert expressed his satisfaction over the level of cooperation from investors who went through the entity's system. Speaking further he named some of the investors as Equatorial Bio Fuel, Liberia Mining Incorporated and the much talked-about Buchanan Renewable Energies Incorporated (BRE) among several others.
- The NIC boss added that with the level of improved business climate in post-war Liberia, he is optimistic that the country is "heading for glory in a not too distant future".

Four Swindlers Arrested for Duping Businessman of Over US\$17,000

(New Democrat, Heritage, The Informer)

- Police in Monrovia have arrested four persons and charged them with theft of property. According to a police charge sheet, the suspects Nmadi Okafor, Hilary Obi, Rita Guzeh and Theo Sackie were recently arrested for allegedly duping one Octavius Kpan of US\$17,000 under the pretext that they would sell him animal vaccine. The suspects are presently in detention are to appear in court shortly.

Radio Summary

Local Media – Radio Veritas (News monitored today at 9:45 am)

Senate Financial Report Sparks Concern

- Some members of the House of Senate have rejected the financial report of the suspended Chairman of the Ways, Means and Finance Committee, Richard Divine, which covered the period July 31, 2006 to June 30, 2007.
- Senators Lahai Lasanna and Joyce Freeman of Bomi and Montserrado Counties denied receiving the amount reflected in the report for their foreign travels.
- Senator Gbezohngar Findley of Grand Bassa observed that the report is marred by discrepancies and requested an audit.
- Meanwhile, the President of the Senate, Vice President Joseph Boakai has named a five-member committee to evaluate and analyze the Devine Report.

(Also reported on *Star Truth F.M.* and *ELBC*)

U.S. Based Lawyer in Liberia to Train State Prosecutors

- A former U.S. Prosecutor, Cllr. William Gardner is in the country to help strengthen the prosecution arm of government on how to probe and gather evidence in corruption cases.
- Cllr. Gardner who now serves as a Defense Counsel in the US worked for nine years fighting corruption and is also expected to train criminal investigators of the Liberia National Police.
- Solicitor General Tiawon Gongloe said the lawyer's visit comes at a time government was preparing to prosecute some of its corruption cases.
- Former Transitional Chairman Gyude Bryant and several officials of his transitional government are standing trial for alleged corruption.

The Inquirer (Liberia)

Friday, 8 February 2008

TRC On Doe's Family Claim, Other Issues

Contrary to recent utterances made by Mr. Jackson E. Doe, the brother of former Liberian President, Samuel K. Doe, that his family will not appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the commission has said that members of the family are cooperating with the process.

On Wednesday, this paper, quoting the brother of former President Doe, who is now minister designate of the Ministry of Transport, termed the TRC process as a "rubbish" and said members of the family would not cooperate by appearing before the commission.

But contrary to Mr. Doe's assertion, the TRC on yesterday said members of the family are cooperating with the process, describing his recent comments as something that is contrary to the government's reconciliation drive, under which it has expressed for the TRC process.

A member of the commission, Massa Washington, told this paper that with the support expressed for the TRC process, coupled with the statement by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf urging all members of her government to submit to the process, it leave one to ponder for a senior minister of government like Jackson Doe to make utterances that he does not support the TRC process and it is intended to just open old wounds.

Madam Washington wondered as to whether Minister Doe supports the policies and agenda on peace, unity and reconciliation of which the TRC is serving as the foremost institution leading such efforts?

Addressing concerns as to why the TRC has not been bringing forward high profile individuals like for example the former warlords since the public hearings commenced, Madam Washington said the commission has its own strategies but stressed that several persons including these individuals have been invited.

She added that a bulk of what the commission is doing is done in confidence because of the sensitivity of its work; stressing that most of these individuals have been coming to the TRC and providing statements.

On the issue of bringing individuals before the commission, who may not be willingly or have out rightly said that they will not appear, Commissioner Washington said the process is a delicate one and that the TRC and that it is taking its time in exercising control on the usage of its subpoena powers.

Addressing herself to Senator Price Johnson's recent comments that he will not appear before the commission, she said, "Mr. Johnson has assured us before that he will cooperate with the process and will come before the TRC."

She added that with such assurance, whether Mr. Johnson will change his mind not to appear and should the commission exert all amicable means if he still does not appear, the commission will be left with no other alternative but to exercise its subpoena powers.