

**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:**

Friday, 2 May 2008

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

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BBC

Friday, 2 May 2008

## Taylor 'had billions' in US bank

**Liberia's ex-President Charles Taylor had about \$5bn in two US bank accounts during his presidency, his chief prosecutor has told the BBC.**

Mr Taylor is being tried by a UN-backed war crimes court for backing rebels in Sierra Leone while in office.

He denies trading arms for diamonds and challenged the international community when he stood down in 2003 to trace and seize any monies they alleged he had.

If any was found he would "turn them over to the Liberian people".

During Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war, which officially ended in 2002, tens of thousands of people died and thousands more were mutilated, raped and had limbs amputated.

Mr Taylor's case has been transferred from Sierra Leone to The Hague for security reasons, although it is still being conducted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

He denies 11 counts of crimes against humanity and war crimes.

### UN freeze

"We've certainly found evidence of hundreds of millions of dollars taken by Charles Taylor illegally in various banks at different times," chief prosecutor Stephen Rapp told the BBC's Focus on Africa programme.

"We have evidence of two accounts that were maintained in his name in the United States during his presidency," he said, adding that they had had almost \$5bn at one time.

He said he was in the process of tracing the funds and a number of countries were co-operating.

If recovered, Mr Rapp said that the money would be subject to a UN freeze on Mr Taylor's assets.

He said that he hoped any money recovered would be shared between the victims of the Sierra Leone civil war and the Liberian state, if Mr Taylor was found guilty.



Mr Taylor denies trading arms for diamonds

## Star Radio (Liberia)

Thursday, 1 May 2008

### **Government investigates Taylor's wealth**

Written by Vivian Gartyn

Thursday, 01 May 2008

Government says it has begun the process of establishing whether money traced to Taylor by the UN tribunal was stolen from Liberia.

Information Minister Laurence Bropleh said the government is working in consultation with the court to establish the truth.

Dr. Bropleh told Star Radio, government is firstly trying to verify the paper trail of the funds.

According to the Information Minister, when the trail is verified government would go after the money to help in its national recovery programs.

Dr. Bropleh said after the process is completed, international norms and standards would be followed in retrieving the money.

The Information Minister assured that no one who steals government's funds would go with impunity.

His statement followed a disclosure by the Chief Prosecutor of the Special Court that progress has been made in tracing Mr. Taylor's wealth.

## Cocorioko website

Friday, 2 May 2008

### **Lawyers demand speedy trial for 174 long-term detainees**

Written by Moses Kargbo

Friday, 02 May 2008

The Lawyers Center for Legal Assistance (LAWCLA) has condemned what it considered as a serious violation of the rights of some 174 accused persons being kept in detention for a period of about six years without trial.

In a letter of concern dated 29th April 2008 to the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, LAWCLA Executive Director Melron Nicol-Wilson called for the immediate intervention of the A.G. in commencing the trial of the accused persons presently incarcerated at the Pademba Road Central Prison.

“We act as retained solicitors for 174 prisoners presently incarcerated at the Central Prison in Freetown without trial for period ranging from few months to close to six years waiting for indictment to be drafted by the Law Officers Department and for the trial to commence at the High Court,” the letter reads in part.

Mr. Nicol-Wilson reminded the Attorney-General that their clients have all gone through preliminary investigation by various Magistrate Courts in Freetown and that they were committed for trial in the High Court, some as far back as 13th December 2002.

He said since the committals, the accused persons have been in detention at the Central Prison waiting the drafting of their indictment and trial by the High Court. He expressed concern that their clients have spent more time in prison waiting for their trial to commence than they would have spent if convicted.

The LAWCLA head drew the attention of the A.G. to the fact that presumption of innocence have been blatantly violated by what he described as their clients over-incarceration, and that it is very likely that no compensation will be paid by the government in the event the accused persons are absolved of their charges after trial.

“This is a serious violation of the right to liberty to keep a man in prison for almost six years before he is tried for an offence. The state must not be seen to be violating the rights of its citizens. We are therefore calling on the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice to intervene immediately in order to save the country's judicial and legal process from further embarrassment,” the LAWCLA Director urged

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries  
1 May 2008**

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

**Newspaper Summary**

**Police Give Six "Notorious" Armed Robbers 48 Hours Ultimatum to Surrender**

(The Informer, Heritage)

- Police in Monrovia have given six armed robbers 48 hours to turn themselves in to authorities. The ultimatum follows the launch of "Operation Thunderstorm", a joint security campaign aimed at dealing with the upsurge in armed robbery. The six armed robbers have been identified as George Washington alias Four Fair, Daniel Vaye alias Four Five and Junior Jerry also know as School Face. Others are Allison Wowah or Gio Boy Lewis Kennedy and Nathaniel Toe also identified as Black Dog. The Deputy Chief Commissioner of Crime Services of the Liberia National Police(LNP) , Sam Saryon warned the armed gang to turn themselves in or have themselves to blame. Meanwhile, the Heritage reports that a 35 year old man has been arrested for impersonation as a police officer.

**FDA Bars More Logging Companies from Operating**

(The Inquirer, The News)

- The Inquirer reports that an additional 5 logging companies have been barred from operating in the country by the Concession Review Committee. The five are the Cavalla Timber, Exotic Timber Corporation Enterprise Incorporated, Nature Liberia Incorporated, Salami Mohammed Incorporated and Timber Management Corporation. The banning of the 5 brings to 17 the number of logging companies banned by the Concession review Committee.
- It can be recalled that the 12 companies were stopped from working in the country when it was discovered that they operated outside of the threshold behaviour criteria and were found to have been overtly involved in at least one of the following actions; support to militia, participated in, or facilitation of, arms for timber, or otherwise aided or abated civil instability. Meanwhile, one of the affected head of a logging company (BIN Liberia Incorporated), has taken exception to the FDA Concession Review Committee report.

**Chinese Government to Build US\$10M Hospital in Nimba County**

(The News, The Inquirer, The Analyst, Liberian Express)

- The Chinese Ambassador to Liberia, Zhou Yuxiao has disclosed that his government is about to build a 100-bedroom-hospital in Tappita, Nimba County. Ambassador Yuxiao said the new hospital, which is estimated at US\$10 million, would be one of the best hospitals in the country. Speaking at the closing of a one-day malaria-training workshop at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, he observed that malaria is a common disease that Liberians need to pay attention to. "Malaria is curable and it can be prevented," he added. In remarks, Dr. Moses Pewu expressed appreciation to the Chinese government for the numerous contributions to Liberia and its people.

**Radio Summary**

**Star Radio** *(News culled today from website at 8:35 am)*

**Defense Takes Recruitment Drive to Rural Liberia**

- A Defense Ministry release issued in Monrovia yesterday announced the launch of a weeklong rural recruitment drive in Central and South-eastern Liberia.
- The ministry said the up country recruitment drive is in line with efforts to build a vibrant and geographically balanced army.
- The recruitment exercise is a joint effort of the Ministry of National Defense and Dyncorp International, an American firm hired to train the new army.

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

#### **DEA Nabs “Wanted” Drug Traffickers**

- Speaking to reporters yesterday, the Director of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), James Jaddah said agents of the DEA have arrested a “wanted” drug trafficker hunted for years by security forces in the country.
- Director Jaddah said Jerry Ojidiga, a Nigerian was picked up Wednesday in Barnesville, outside Monrovia along with five of his associates.
- He said the suspected drug traffickers were arrested in an operation co-named “Operation Sting Monrovia” and that several harmful substances including cocaine, heroine and marijuana were seized from them.

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

#### **JPC Wants the Police Empowered to Fight Armed Robbery**

- The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) has called for the empowerment of the Police to enable them respond to crime.
- In an interview, the Executive Director of the JPC, Cllr. Augustine Toe said the act seeking to make armed robbery a capital crime would be meaningless if the Police and other state security agencies are not equipped.
- Police authorities have repeatedly complained that the force was logistically stranded.

#### **Liberia Electricity Corporation Reports Theft at Installations**

- The Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) has reported serious looting of its installations around Monrovia.
- The LEC said unknown persons are in the habit of digging out wires planted underground and cutting wires in certain parts of Monrovia.
- The Public Relations Manager of the Corporation, Mr. Slewoin T-Toe said as a result of the power theft and vandalism, the LEC is suffering severe financial loss on a monthly basis.

**E.L.B.C.** *(News culled today from website at 9:00 am)*

#### **Chinese Government to Construct Modern Hospital**

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