

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
OUTREACH 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:**

Tuesday, 21 June 2011

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Who's Special Court Security Chief?

By Ibrahim Samura

The Special Court chief security officer, Saleem Vahidy, is reportedly having pressures from witnesses promised relocation after surrendering testimonies in wells of the court's chambers- trial chambers I & II.

It is a fact that Saleem, who acts as chief security officer for the Special Court, acts also as head of witness victims section (WVS).

It has also been told that Saleem, few months past, was in Ghana with a witness for medical checkups, but returned after confirming that the witness has an infectious sickness.

Be it known that one of revolutionary united front (RUF) commanders, who testified in the AFRC and RUF trials, Gibril Massaquoi, has since been relocated with his family to a country far off Sierra Leone.

Disclosures also have it that Saleem has never granted relocation opportunities to any of the hun-

dreds of Special Court defence witnesses.

It is reported though that a witness, sometime in 2010, approached Saleem along Crown Bakery in central Freetown, commanding him arrange his relocation or face the wrath.

The witness, we are told, was a prosecution witness and has longed been flown out of the country.

Shades of opinion query unfair conducts of management of the Special Court on issues adjoining the relocation of witnesses to western countries.

Inside Special Court source has revealed to this press that members attached to the defence are working on plans to locate better lawyers that will defend persons indicted for contempt.

Reflection must be drawn to the serialized and countless indictments of mem-

bers attached to or have dealings with the defence section of Special Court for contempt.

Just recently, five persons, all of whom have attachments to the defence of Special Court, faced charges of contempt.

Their indictment, according to a release put out by the court, came owing to allegation that the accused interfered with a witness that testified in the Charles Taylor trial.

It has been confirmed that the witness who claims to have been interfered with, is seemingly in a state of confusion owing to his present medical status; Saleem Vahidy knows it all, but scare to say it out.

More on this next issue.

Eye Witness News

Tuesday, 21 June 2011

'Ractliffe judgment won't affect Charles Taylor case'

Rahima Essop

War crimes accused Charles Taylor's defence on Monday said Jeremy Ractliffe's acquittal is significant but will not affect his client's case in The Hague at this stage.

It is alleged the former Liberian leader used blood diamonds to buy weapons and three of those stones ended up in Ractliffe's possession while he was the head of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund.

Last week, the Alexandra Magistrate's Court found Ractliffe not guilty of contravening the Diamond Act.

Taylor's defence counsel Courtenay Griffiths said he has been following events in South Africa with great interest. "Mr. Ractliffe featured in the testimony of Naomi Campbell and it is note worthy that he was in fact acquitted," he said.

Griffiths said the outcome will not affect Taylor's case at this stage but could have a bearing on a possible appeal later on. "So I cannot rule out the possibility that the outcome of the Ractliffe trial might feature at some stage in the Taylor proceedings."

It is alleged Taylor gave three uncut diamonds to Campbell, who in turn gave them to Ractliffe.

Worcester News
Monday, 20 June 2011

Legal man Robin loses cancer fight

By Mike Pryce

A MAN who rose from humble beginnings on a Worcester council estate to become one of the top legal administrators in the world has died.

Robin Vincent was born in a ground floor flat in Avon Road, Tolladine.



Mr Vincent went on to advise in some of the highest profile legal cases of recent times, including the trial of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein and British serial killer Dr Harold Shipman.

He died on June 12 at the age of 67 from cancer.

It was the date of his 40th wedding anniversary, He was made CBE in 2001 for his services to the administration of justice in England and Wales.

In the 2006 Queen's Birthday Honours List, he was made a CMG (Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George) for his work as registrar at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which he set up.

Former Worcester journalist Alec Mackie said: "Robin Vincent was quite simply one of the nicest people you could wish to meet. I have known him on both a personal and professional level for nearly 50 years and he has always been

the same affable person. A joy to be with and a pleasure to know."

The rise of Mr Vincent should give heart to all those who leave school with few qualifications. Four O-levels after gaining a scholarship to the King's School, Worcester, followed by moderate A-level grades gave no indication one day he would be sitting on a sofa with the then secretary general of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, talking tactics.

His early career survived against all the odds. A few months after he joined the court staff of Worcestershire Quarter Sessions as a junior clerk, Mr Vincent overheard his superior saying never again would he employ anyone from the King's School.

As a footballer, he played for Malvern Town, had trials with Worcester City and was watched by Wolverhampton Wanderers.

From junior clerk, he was promoted to regional circuit administrator for the North West, which saw him oversee the trials of Harold Shipman and Jamie Bulger's killers Robert Thompson and Jon Venables. In

2001, he was approached by the UN to set up a war crimes tribunal in Sierra Leone and that began his work at an international level.

Mr Vincent leaves behind a wife Hazel, two sons and four grandchildren.

His funeral will take place at St Michael's Church, Bramhall, Stockport, Cheshire, on Thursday at 1pm.

Hirondelle News Agency

Monday, 20 June 2011

Former Interahamwe militia leader pleads not guilty to genocide

The alleged Rwandan Interahamwe militia leader arrested last month in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Bernard Munyagishari, Monday pleaded not guilty to genocide and crimes against humanity in his initial appearance before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

"I plead not guilty," said Munyagishari as the Presiding Judge Dennis Byron read out one count after another to the accused and demanded a response.

Munyagishari, 52, is described by the prosecution as the former president of Interahamwe in Gisenyi prefecture, north Rwanda. He is accused of conspiracy to commit genocide, genocide or alternatively complicity in genocide and murder and rape as crimes against humanity.

"Your plea on each count has been recorded. You are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond reasonable doubts," Judge Byron assured the accused as he stood calm in the witness box.

Munyagishari who was arrested on May 25, 2011 in North Kivu in DRC was transferred to the Tribunal's detention facility in Arusha, Tanzania on June 14, 2011. During his initial appearance the accused was represented by Tanzanian Duty Counsel, Nelson Merinyo.

Born in 1959 in Rubavu commune in Gisenyi prefecture the accused is alleged to have recruited, trained and led Interahamwe militiamen in mass killings and rapes of Tutsi women in Gisenyi and beyond, between April and July 1994.

Munyagishari's arrest has reduced the number of fugitives still at large to nine.

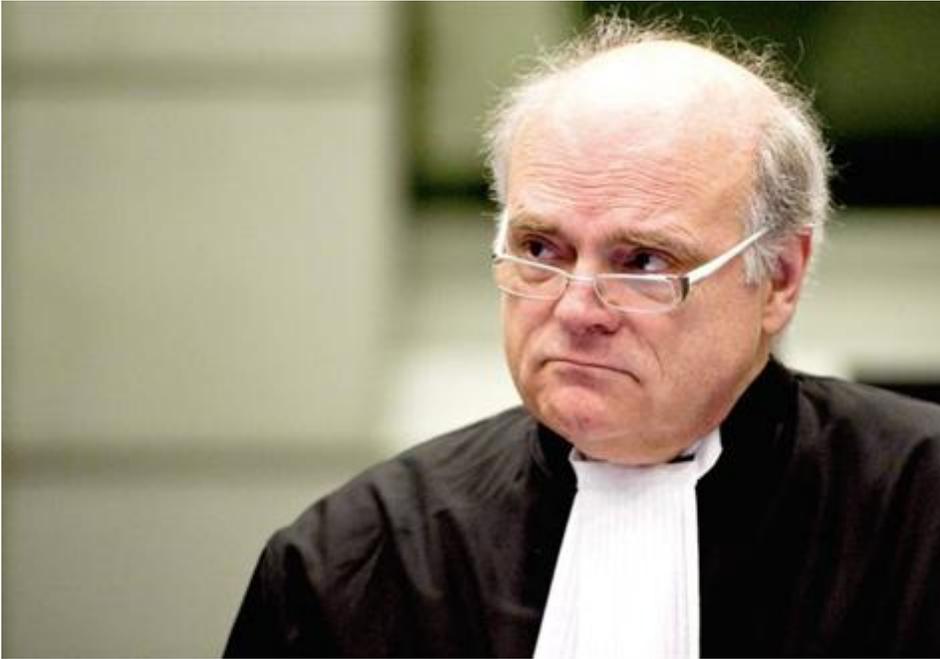
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The Daily Star
Tuesday, June 21, 2011

STL refuses comment about end-June indictment rumors

By Patrick Galey



BEIRUT: The court probing the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri declined to be drawn Monday on rumors that a finalized indictment naming suspects was imminent, as Prime Minister Najib Mikati stressed that all forces and Lebanese political groups sought to achieve justice and avoid any security risks.

Sources have suggested that Pre-Trial Judge Daniel Fransen of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon will finalize an amended indictment by Prosecutor Daniel Bellemare in the coming days. An STL spokesperson said the timeframe the court issued in May, when Bellemare issued a second amendment to the indictment, was still valid.

“We said on May 6 that we anticipate the Pre-Trial Judge will complete the review process in the coming months. That timeline still stands,” court spokesperson Marten Youssef told The Daily Star. “The timing is entirely dependent on legal considerations and the review will conclude when the pre-trial judge completes his work.”

Bellemare issued an initial indictment in January, only to amend it in March and a second time in May.

The United Nations-backed court is one of the new Cabinet’s thorniest foreign policy issues.

Lebanon agreed in 2007 to cooperate with the court although such a pledge could be challenged by the March 8-dominated government if, as anticipated, Hezbollah members are named in the indictment.

Minister of State Salim Karam indicated to The Daily Star Monday that Lebanon’s cooperation with the STL will not feature in the new Cabinet’s policy statement.

“We have been given a very bad impression of the STL and there are many things that give us the impression that they are not trustworthy,” Karam said.

The minister added that the new Cabinet would not vow to continue cooperation with the court and would instead judge the situation after an indictment emerged.

“I think that we took a decision about the tribunal to deal with [the indictment] when it comes. [Bellemare] is not certain of what he is doing, therefore we should wait until the time to take a decision to deal with him,” Karam said.

“There is no problem as long as everything is legal and nothing is handled in political ways. Things should be judged fairly. “Finishing this story would be the best. At the moment, the tribunal is the only voice on this issue and the world believes their word, no one else’s. Anyone who can see that when there is something wrong, we need to be careful,” he added.

Mikati demurred over Lebanon’s commitment to the court. “There are two parts of the STL, an internal one and an external one. In the internal matter, I am certain that all forces and Lebanese political groups want to achieve justice and avoid security risks,” Mikati said in a statement.

When Fransen accepts Bellemare’s amended indictment, the pre-trial judge will submit it to nations in which suspects are believed to reside. Fransen himself decides on whether or not the contents or suspects of the indictment are publicly announced. The court has no specific timeframe for this and both Bellemare and the STL’s defense office have the option to appeal.

The country or countries that receive the indictment are expected by the court to seek out named individuals. The tribunal’s statute says that STL President Antonio Cassese needs to be satisfied that states are making sufficient efforts to apprehend the accused.

If no suspects are located, Cassese will issue a public advertisement, providing the accused a 30-day grace period to hand themselves in to local authorities. If this fails to materialize, the court has the right to commence in absentia proceedings.

“As for Lebanon’s cooperation, according to the agreements between Lebanon and the STL as well as U.N. Security Council resolutions, Lebanon is obliged to cooperate with the work of the STL,” Youssef said.

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