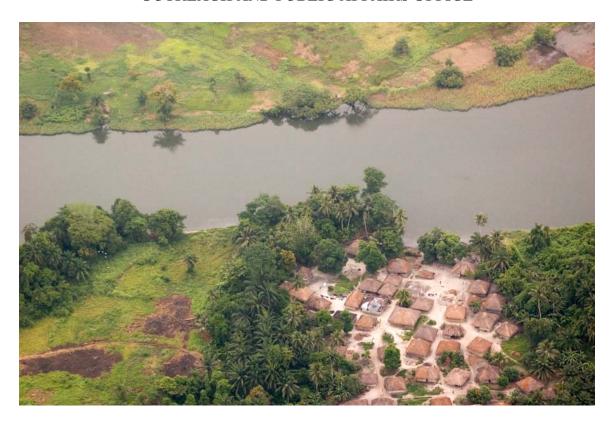
# SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



# **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:

Friday, 18 April 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.

Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact

Martin Royston-Wright

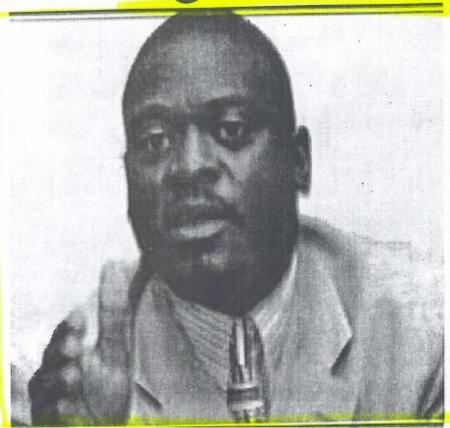
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The New Democrat (Liberia) Friday, 18 April 2008

Witness:

# **Johnny Paul Koroma Promiset Logistics From Taylor**



tion witness, a ex-junta Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), has taken the stand against former President should burn down houses in Charles Taylor, telling the court He said he was leaving to that erstwhile junta leader Johnny Paul Koroma had promised them after their defeat in 1999 that more logistics would come from Liberia should defend it to let the is to contine the war.

The witness, Alimamy Bobson Sesay, said he participated in Operation Pay Yourself, an organized looting orgy that rebels implemented after their government was chased out following ECOMOG in-

Sesay: "Bangura, Dennis Mingo, JPK, Issa Sesay, Mike Lamin, Morris Kallon, and some other senior commanders. Then we went to Koidu Town. When we arrived in Koidu Town, we took Johnny Paul to a village close to Gandon (ph), near Wohma and Tankoro. When we arrived in that village, Johnny Paul called an immediate meeting of all the commanders. I attended the meeting. Johnny Paul said that

nother prosecu- now we have seen that the of Koidu Town don't like tl key member of ta, and will bring the Kam: Leone's launch attacks on the junta should be a no-go area for cir He said we should get som bodied civilians to assist 1 Charles Taylor to get logist us. He will send them to Kon Kono is a diamondiferous as tional community recognize

"Johnny Paul went over the national media and declars eration Pay Yourself. It hap in my presence, and duri broadcast everyone had a Robin White asked where I and Johnny Paul said he w on the peninsula - and tha was no money to pay the st He said the fighters should loot and take whatever they ed. According to Operation Yourself, he said soldiers cou whatever they could see from

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Friday, 18 April 2008

#### Prosecution Witness Alimamy Sesay Describes Attack in Koinadugu and Other Crimes

9:30-11:30: Court is in session.

Prosecutor Shyamala Alagendra continues questioning the witness Alimamy Bobson Sesay. The following is not an actual transcript.

Pros: Did you receive a poll (message) from Savage that he captured 77 civilians in Tokpombu?

Wit: When we arrived there, we saw them and Savage put about 15 civilians in a house and set them on fire. Some of them he cut off their heads.

Pros: Interpreter, can you repeat the names of the fighters?

Wit: Alhagi, Savage, and others Sp?

Pros: Did any of the civilians survive from the burning building?

Wit: None of them survived.

Pros: Do you know who was doing the amputations?

Wit: Savage and some of the SBUs

Pros: Did Mohammed Savage also go by the name Changa Balanga?

Wit: Yes, this name was given to him after this incident

Pros: While you were in Tokpombu, do you recall if any of the commanders came there?

Wit: Yes, Superman, Sam Bockarie came

Pros: What did Superman do when he came?

Wit: He was shocked when Savage told him that they cremated the people and Superman said this was a crime against humanity. Then, everybody started drinking palm wine.

Judge: Witness used the word cremated the people, even though I do not have any evidence of it.

Pros: Did any cremation take place? Even though you mentioned that people's heads were cut off and put in a pit and Savage told Superman that he cremated the people.

Wit: Where you see the ashes and the bones

Judge: I understand now.

Pros: When Superman said this could be a crime, do you know if Superman took any action against Savage?

Wit: No, Superman like everyone else was just drinking palm wine.

Pros: Did Savage continue to be the commander after this incident?

Wit: Yes

Pros: During this time, did you go to Sierra Peilo?

Wit: Yes but only to see how the ground was doing.

Pros: What did you see in Inferma Sp?

Wit: Human heads displayed on sticks.

Pros: Do you know who killed these civilians?

Wit: Sedhe Sp? and his men

Pros: When did this incident take place?

Wit: July 1998

Pros: Do you know who burned the houses?

Wit: They burned them so that civilians could not come to those areas.

Pros: What happened when you go to Manseni Sp? road?

Wit: We started burning the houses to get rid of the civilians.

Pros: did any of the commanders know?

Wit: Bombas Sp? Superman, Isaac Mongor

Pros: Were there women among those civilians

Wit: yes, many

Pros: What was the age group of the women?

Wit: We had the young ones, who 8 to 12 and above 15 and 20

Pros: What happened to those women?

Wit: Those women were living with commanders. Some of them were made their wives.

Pros: What do you mean made them their wives?

Wit: I had one from Kono who was captured.

Pros: How were they made wives?

Wit: Well, I did not marry mine but we had guns and forced them to do whatever we wanted.

Pros: What were they forced to do?

Wit: We had sex with them and some of them got pregnant?

Pros: Besides sex, did these women have to do anything else?

Wit: They had to cook and some had to pound rice and do laundry.

Pros: What was their age group?

Wit: Above 15. Some of the SBUs had the younger ones, around 10.

Pros: When you say that SBUs had the younger ones, what do you mean?

Wit: SBUs would capture the younger ones and would live with them.

Pros: Did the SBUs do anything with the younger ones?

Wit: They had sex with them.

Pros: How do you know?

Wit: I saw it.

Pros: Did the commanders know?

Wit: Yes, but they did not discipline them

Pros: What commanders?

Wit: Superman, Babi Sp?

Pros: What time frame did this occur?

Wit: March, April, May of 1998 when we were in Kono.

Pros: Were there women among the civlians who were killed?

Wit: Yes, men and women unless you were beautiful or strong enough to be trained.

Pros: When did you go to Dambong Sp?

Wit: soon after

Pros: How did you know that Superman sent for Bomblas and Bazi?

Wit: I was there when a runner said that Superman wanted to talk with them.

Pros: What happened after you went to Dubaimbe street and met with Superman?

Wit: One of the commanders, Mosquito, said he had arms and ammunition and we were to fight Koidu town.

Pros: Did Mosquito say where in Liberia he got his ammunition from?

Wit: President Tilo from Liberia has organized for us to get arms and we should use them to defend Kono.

Pros: Did anyone else speak?

Wit: Morris Kolon spoke to Bazi and that he was coming very soon to reinforce us.

Pros: Did Morris Kolon come to Kono?

Wit: Yes

Pros: Did anything happen after this communication?

Wit: immediately after, Superman organized men in Koidu town to go to Dambundu street Sp?

Pros: Who were the organized men?

Wit: I was apart of it and it was combined force.

Pros: What happened?

Wit: We attacked Koinadugu and captured civilians. Some were hacked.

Pros: Who hacked them?

Wit: Rambo

Pros: How do you know that Rambo hacked the civilians?

Wit: Rambo told us that he hacked them and they were displayed in the streets.

Pros: Do you know why they were displayed?

Wit: To create fear so that no civilians would come to this area again.

Pros: Can you tell us who was there when Rambo told you this information?

Wit: Superman and Sp?

Pros: Can you describe what happened in Koinadugu?

Wit: When we arrived, we captured two Komojors. One of our men, Ahchebe, slit open one of the Komojors' stomach to eat from it. From then on, we called him Charma'raw.

Pros: What happened afterwards?

Wit: Superman was angry with Ahchebe for eating the man but he only warned him.

Pros: Did Superman explain why he did not like cannibalism?

Wit: He said if we ran out of food, then we would start eating human beings and Supermand did not like that.

Pros: Did he say anything else?

Wit: He just warned him but the next he would be harsh with him.

Pros: What happened after koinadugu was captured?

Wit; We waited and then the combined troops (AFLs mixed with RUFs) came from Kolon with ammunition?

Pros: How did you know where the ammunition came from?

Wit: It was written on the arms AFL "Armed Forces of Liberia."

Pros: What happened to this ammunition after it arrived?

Wit: It was under the full control of Superman.

Pros: Did Superman do anything with it?

Wit: He loaded it and then he distributed them.

Pros: What happened when you were in Kono?

Wit: They gave us information that there was money and we broke into the bank and took the money and the money was with Superman who said that Mosquito has called and asked for the money. Superman, myself, Bomblas, and Badi left Koinadugu to go to Koidu town.

Pros: Where did you get this information.

Wit: Mosquito said that he had got information from President Tilo that "448" was going to attack Koidu town.

Pros: Did this 448 information only come from Liberia?

Wit: That was the only source that we got information about the Echomo Sp? force movement.

Pros: What only source are you talking about?

Wit: Mosquito and those in the hide out, Sokion

Pros: What happened afterwards?

Wit: Troops prepared to fight Echomo including Superman, Bomblas, and myself

Court takes break.

## Allafrica.com

Friday, 18 April 2008

## Former AFRC Member Describes AFRC-RUF Structures, Cooperation, Crimes, And A Link to Charles Taylor

In the first full day of direct examination by Prosecutor Shyamala Alagendra, witness Alimamy Bobson Sesay testified that he had been an officer with the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) after it seized power in Sierra Leone in May 1997. He described his various positions in the AFRC and movements before his arrest in 2000. Much of his testimony today covered how the AFRC was organized, its relationship with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), and identification of key individuals in the AFRC and RUF. The witness also provided testimony about elements of the crime base covered in Charles Taylor's indictment. However, today he offered only one anecdote linking Taylor to support for the AFRC/RUF, which he testified had been responsible for these crimes.

#### **Background on the witness**

Sesay continued his account from yesterday by reviewing his various ranks and positions in the Sierra Leone Army from the time of the May 1997 military coup. He said he had been an Orderly Corporal at State House, which is the president's residence in Freetown, immediately following the coup. About a month later, he was assigned as a Military Transport Officer and security guard for one of the 17 coup leaders, or members of the AFRC Supreme Council: Hassan Papa Bangura, alias "Bomb Blast". Sesay held the position of Military Transport Officer until June or July 1998.

Sesay testified that in September 1997, he had been promoted to Sergeant. He said that he remained in Freetown until the ECOMOG intervention in February 1998 that drove the AFRC/RUF forces from the capital. Bangura made him a Regimental Sergeant Major after the intervention. He described a series of movements from Freetown, through the towns including Kabala, Lunsar, Masiaka and Makeni, eventually leading to his arrival as part of an AFRC/RUF invading force in Koidu Town, Kono district. The witness said that AFRC and RUF leaders wanted to make Kono into a new headquarters because of the diamond wealth there.

Tamba Alex Brima, alias "Gullit", promoted Sesay to Second Leftenant. Following a "problem", Saj Musa subsequently demoted him to Sergeant, but made him an acting Captain in reward for his bravery after the capture of Masiaka. From July 1998, he was assigned as the personal security guard to Hassan Papa Bangura and also fought as a battlefront commander. Sesay said that after Saj Musa died, Gullit promoted him to Leftenant in December 1998. He served as an intelligence officer and battlefront commander for one battalion before being assigned as battlefront commander of another. Gullit promoted the witness to Captain on the day of the successful Freetown invasion, January 6, 1999. The witness said he participated in the Freetown invasion, and had been a combat officer in most of the battles there. After the AFRC/RUF forces were driven from Freetown at the end of January, Ibrahim "Bazzy" Kamara promoted Sesay to Major, and made him an aide-de-camp (ADC) to Hassan Papa Bangura. From this time, the witness said the group headed by Kamara, with Bangura as second-in-command, was referred to as the "West Side". (Other witnesses have referred to the "West Side Boys".) The witness said he remained a Major and ADC to Bangura until they both were arrested on June 6, 2000.

#### The junta period

After reviewing Sesay's ranks and movements throughout his time with the AFRC, Prosecutor Alagendra returned to May 1997, the time of the AFRC coup. The witness recalled hearing a series of

announcements over the radio: that officers were to report to barracks, that the military had taken over, and that a dusk-to-dawn curfew had been imposed. Soon after, he heard RUF leader Foday Sankoh on BBC radio saying that the RUF should join the AFRC junta and take orders from junta leader Johnny Paul Koroma. Thereafter, the witness heard RUF spokesman Eldred Collins on the radio saying that the RUF had indeed come to Freetown to join the government and take instructions from Koroma. Finally, he heard Koroma himself on the radio announcing the members of his Council.

Sesay listed most of the names of the 17 coup leaders who formed the AFRC's "Supreme Council". He said that the Council soon expanded, and was then just known as the "AFRC Council". The expanded council included top RUF commanders. Foday Sankoh was named vice chairman of the AFRC, but he was detained in Nigeria at the time, so Saj Musa served as acting deputy chairman. Among the members were Santigie Borbor Kanu, Ibrahim "Bazzy" Kamara, and RUF commanders Sam Bockarie ("Mosquito"), Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon, Dennis Mingo ("Superman"), Isaac Mongor (a previous witness), and Mike Lamin. Beyond members of the AFRC Council, the witness described other appointments he remembered Johnny Paul Koroma making to various positions.

Prosecutor Alagendra introduced a number of documents through the witness, which he said were various decrees on appointments that he had seen in 1997, shortly after the coup. He said that because the AFRC Council member to whom he was assigned - Hassan Papa Bangura - was illiterate, Bangura would routinely bring the council documents to him to read and explain following meetings.

Asked about the relationship between the AFRC and RUF at the time, Sesay said it was very good, and throughout his testimony he described mixed AFRC/RUF brigades, a unified command under Koroma, and joint operations. In describing events in 1997 and 1998, he gave detailed evidence about which commanders had been present at various locations.

#### **Crimes**

In the course of his testimony, the witness spoke of many crimes he had witnessed and some in which he had participated.

Sesay testified about diamond mining in Kono district, where he said that Koroma had sent Alex Tamba Brima, alias "Gullit", to bring order to AFRC and RUF mining operations. He testified that civilians were forced to mine at gunpoint, which he said he had seen himself in Kono and heard about in Tongo.

During the junta period, Sesay told of a three-day student strike against AFRC/RUF rule, and said that the troops had been sent to quell the demonstrations. He said he was with a group of AFRC men who shot and killed two students. Many students were taken to Pademba Road Prison. Other students were attacked elsewhere in Freetown, and he testified that back at the military headquarters after the demonstrations had been crushed, some AFRC and RUF fighters laughed and told of raping and killing nursing students.

The witness testified that when he was in Masiaka on the retreat from Freetown in February 1998, he and various commanders heard Johnny Paul Koroma on BBC radio announcing "Operation Pay Yourself". Sesay said Koroma explained that since being ousted from Freetown by ECOMOG forces he could no longer pay his soldiers, so he was ordering them to loot whatever they wanted from civilians. Sesay said that after that announcement there had been a "continuous looting spree". He admitted, "Between my God and myself, I participated in the looting". He said that where he was, civilians were captured and forced to carry loads of looted goods to the town of Makeni. He also witnessed looting in Lunsar, and saw civilians being forced to carry loads for RUF and AFRC commanders from Lunsar to Makeni. In Makeni itself, the witness said that he went with his boss, Hassan Papa Bangura, and Ibrahim "Bazzy" Kamara to break into

a bank and steal money from a safe. He described rampant looting from shops and civilians in the town.

Sesay described a meeting of AFRC/RUF commanders convened by Johnny Paul Koroma in Koidu Town, Kono district shortly after AFRC/RUF forces captured it in March 1998. At the meeting, which the witness said he attended, Koroma explained that the civilians of Kono were against them. He said the area should be made a no-go zone for civilians: their houses should be burned, the able-bodied should be put to work, and all other civilians should be executed. The witness said Koroma also announced that he was going to meet Charles Taylor in Liberia to get arms and ammunition, which he felt would be forthcoming because these would help them to secure diamond-rich Kono. Sesay said that Issa Sesay (no relation) of the RUF rose to say that Koroma's plan was good, agreeing that houses should be burned and that all non-able-bodied civilians should be executed. The witness said that after this meeting, he went with Hassan Papa Bangura, other AFRC members, and RUF members to Yardo Road in Koidu, where they encountered a group of civilians and shot them all dead. Sesay said he could not remember how many people they had killed. They then displayed the corpses at road junctions because the chairman (Koroma) had said they should create fear so that other civilians wouldn't come to Koidu.

#### Courtroom drama

Following the morning break, Sesay brought to the attention of the judges that he was having problems with a court official from the Witness and Victims Section (WVS), who he said had been treating him like a prisoner. He said his dispute with her was causing him to be "stressed, tormented and worried". Sesay was willing to proceed with the questioning once Presiding Judge Teresa Doherty assured him that the bench took his concerns very seriously, would raise the issue with the registrar and head of WVS, and ensure that a different officer dealt with him for the time being.

Shortly before the end of the court day, when Sesay was naming AFRC and RUF members assigned as military supervisors in 1998, he spoke of an Idrissa Kamara and said Kamara also went by another name. However, the witness said he didn't want to provide the nickname for security reasons because Kamara was now a close protection officer for Sierra Leone's new president (Ernest Bai Koroma), and remains more commonly known by his wartime nickname. After brief deliberation, the judges ordered Sesay to state the nickname. The witness said it was "Leatherboot", a name already mentioned by previous witnesses in the trial.

# The Analyst (Liberia) Friday, 18 April 2008

#### Chilling Testimonies in Lofa, Grand Bassa COUNTIES

"Victims" Grill NPFL, Dearboy

Witnesses and "victims" in Buchanan in Grand Bassa County and Voinjama in Lofa County said NPFL commanders subjected them to inhumane treatment including cannibalism, a TRC press statement said here Wednesday.

Militiamen loyal to former President Charles Taylor forced civilians to eat human flesh and dogs after they massacred scores of civilians in 2003 in Popalahum, Lofa County, a witness told commissioners of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

25 year-old Siafa Amadu said government fighters under the command of Zigzag Mazzah and one Stanley fed the town's inhabitants with dogs and human flesh and threatened to kill anyone who refused to eat them

"When they killed dogs and human beings they used to force us to eat them. If you failed to eat the dogs and human beings they cooked, they will kill you. So we were forced to eat what they gave us, he explained.

Amadu said during repeated onslaughts of rebel fighters of the defunct Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) on the towns and villages of Kolahun District, government fighters massacred hundreds of villagers and inhabitants accusing them of being sympathizers of the advancing rebels or Muslims.

He said the civilians including his father were slaughtered by the fighters and survivors were given their flesh to feed on or be killed by the government fighters. He explained that Mazzah and his men dismembered the bodies of victims by extracting parts including their hearts, legs and hands and then piled their remains in a house and burned them.

Amadu was testifying Wednesday at the ongoing rural public hearings of the TRC in Voinjamin City, Lofa County. He narrated that government fighters killed 33 inhabitants of Kailahun Town and left the bodies in the open to rot.

He said the decomposed bodies of the dead were buried when fighters of LURD overwhelmed government troops and briefly captured the town. The witness said he was compelled to join LURD rebel forces in their military campaign against the Taylor government because most of his relatives were killed.

The TRC is an independent body set up to investigate the root causes of the Liberian crisis, document human rights violations, review the history of Liberia, and put all human rights abuses that occurred during the period from 1979 to 2003 on record.

The TRC mandate is to also identify victims and perpetrators and make recommendations on amnesty, prosecution and reparation. The public hearings are being held under the theme: "Confronting Our Difficult Past For A Better Future."

At the same time, a witness told commissioners of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in Buchanan this week that popular musician "Sundaygar Dearboy" ordered the killing of her son in 1994 when rampaging fighters of the defunct National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) under his command captured the town of Sagbah, Grand Bassa County.

Weeping profusely while testifying recently at rural public hearings in the port city of Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, the witness, Madame Tohn Suah said Michael Davis ordered fighters to tie her son before they slaughtered him on the outskirt of the town.

"So they took us to one town call Sagbah town. When we got there, they started singing one song that means: that place is hot, don't put your self there. They had their commander call Michael Davis. He said they should tie my son. When they tied him, I started crying. Even his father wanted to talk, they started putting fire on him," she explained.

"So they carry my son. We were sitting down and one boy came and asked: oldma how many children you got? I say I get three children. Then the boy said, your son they carried, they not finish killing him," the distressed mother continued.

Madame Suah said the fighter later displayed the cutlass used to slaughtered her son after she disputed the story of his death, saying, "I asked him if that true you talking so? He said here is his blood here on the cutlass. I wanted to cry but the soldiers said if I cried they will kill me."

She said one of her nieces bled profusely to death after the fighters' gang raped her. The witness said when the fighters captured the town they assured inhabitants that they had come to redeem them, but no sooner they separated the men from the women and started raping the women.

"They took the men from us. They put them in the artic and they put fire under it with pepper. Then they started sleeping with our daughters them. I had one of my daughters with me, who was sick, and they wanted to sleep with her, I say she is sick oh, but they still raped her," she explained.

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United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

# UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 17 April 2008

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

#### Newspaper Summary

#### **Deputy UN Envoy Says No Compromise for Rape**

(The News, Heritage, The Informer, New Democrat)

• The media report that as efforts intensifies to stamp out rape in Liberia, the "Stop Rape Campaign" has been extended to Lofa County with a UN official calling for full implementation of the law. The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Rule of Law, Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu said families of rape victims must not compromise to reach private settlements with rapists or their families." Such a rapist would go on to rape other children and women," she added. "Compromising rape amounts to betrayal of the victim and endangering other girls as well the law must be allowed to take its course when this crime is committed.

## **NGOs, Locals Implicated In Gravel Theft - Police Put on the Alert** (The News, Daily Observer)

- The Government of Liberia (GOL) and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) have expressed serious disappointment over the collection of laterite and gravels from newly-rehabilitated stretch of roads across the country by some unscrupulous people and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Speaking at the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) weekly press briefing in Monrovia, the Officer in Charge of the UNMIL Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Recovery(RRR) Doris Kleffner said they had evidence that the rehabilitated roads continued to be destroyed as locals and NGO's remove the laterite and gravels from the roads. Kleffner called on locals engaged in profiteering activities surrounding the theft of gravel to seek employment instead in road construction projects.
- In addition, Deputy Minister of Public Works, Togba Nganga vowed that government through the police will arrest and prosecute anyone found removing gravel or other materials from public works project sites including the refurbished roads.

## **New Georgia Residents Embark on Road Project** (Heritage)

Residents of New Georgia Gulf Community are to shortly embark on the rehabilitation of a
one mile road project. The road project is a self-help initiative which was borne out of the
deplorable condition of the community. According to the Chairman of the Community, David
Cuttuman because of the condition of the road development efforts are being hampered
saying community dwellers are sometimes constrained to trek long hours to reach their
homes. Mr. Cuttuman said already an amount of LD\$ 21,000 has been collected and that the
project will soon kick off.

## **Radio Summary**

#### Three Bills for Media Reform Goes to Legislature Today

• The Liberia Media Law and Policy Reform Working Group Thursday submitted three sets of Bills to the National Legislature for enactment.

- It is believed that the proposed laws will bring Liberian media legislation into substantial conformity with regional and international standards for the protection of media freedom and freedom of expression, thereby ensuring that the media is able to play an optimal role in the reconstruction of Liberia.

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

#### **Information Minister Appeals for Postponement to House Summons**

- In a letter addressed to the House of Representatives, Information Minister Laurence Bropleh has requested a postponement of his appearance before the house to give details on how the US\$ 200,000 for the relocation of Kendeja was spent.
- Dr. Bropleh wants the House to postpone his appearance until an ongoing investigation into the relocation of the Kendeja School is completed, saying it is improper to make public statements now.

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

#### **AARDO Impressed with Reconstruction**

- The Afro-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO) says it would provide training opportunities, development of pilot projects and support capacity building in the country.
- Speaking following a meeting with Liberia's Internal Affairs Minister, the Secretary General of AARDO, Mr. Abdalla Yahia Adam said he is encouraged by the level of progress being made in the rebuilding of post-conflict Liberia and the fostering of peace and economic development in the country.
- Internal Affairs Minister, Ambullai Johnson appealed to AARDO to cancel Liberia's debt in membership fees with the group during the war years.

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