

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



The Special Court Olympics, in pictures, in today's *'Special Court Supplement'*.

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:

Monday, 18 August 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Awareness Times
Monday, 18 August 2008

Moot Court Delegation Departs in September

Three students of the Njala University College, who won past May's Moot Court Competition organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), will depart in September this year to participate in the International Moot Court Competition in Arusha, Tanzania, local tabloids say. Reports say the Moot Court Competition is organized to support the efforts of States in disseminating International Humanitarian Laws (IHL) in educational institutions in Sierra Leone and other countries by increasing interest and awareness in the subject amongst students and lecturers.

The News (Liberia)
Monday, 18 August 2008

Judge Requested To Rescind Judgment

—In US\$4.5M Label Suit



Former President Moses Blah



Mr. Benoni Urey

Lawyers representing former Commissioner of the Bureau of Maritime Affairs, Benoni Urey are requesting the Civil Law Court at the Temple of Justice to rescind its ruling in a libel suit rendered in favor of former President Moses Blah.

The lawyers said the presiding Judge of the court Yusuf Kaba 'erred grossly' when he granted relief to a party by the use of one legal instrument to satisfy another.

The lawyers request was contained in a two-page Motion to rescind judgment filed on August 15, 2008.

They argued that a Motion for Summary Judgment cannot be used to dismiss a case on its merits when a Motion To Dismiss was pending before the court and undetermined as a matter of law.

The lawyers contended that the Motion for Summary Judgment and Motion To Dismiss are two separate and distinct legal instruments in which the former deals with the examination of facts of the case and the latter deals with the disposition of law issues.

They also contended that the decision by the court granting final ruling on the

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JUDGE REQUESTED

merit of the case in the absence of disposition of a Motion to Dismiss which deals with law issues, as is in the instant case, was contrary to law.

Movant says and submits, that "the only curable remedy available to such legal error is to rescind the said judgment and declare the entire ruling whatsoever, a complete legal nullity, with no binding force or effect, as a matter of law."

Plaintiff's motion to rescind judgment grew out of an Action of Damage for Libel filed by Mr. Urey against former Liberian President Blah.

Mr. Urey had filed a US\$4.5 million damage suit against Mr. Blah following his testimony at the Special War Crimes Court in The Hague, Netherlands. Mr. Urey said Blah accused him falsely when he alleged that he (Urey) gave US\$3 million of the country's maritime fund to ex-Liberian President Charles Taylor.

At the close of the case last week, Judge Kaba dismissed the Libel suit against Mr. Blah on grounds that it did not have merit.

The Judge said the libel suit against the former president could not be granted because defendant Blah should not have been taken to court for his testimony in The Hague.

Judge Kaba indicated that Mr. Blah served as prosecution witness and he enjoyed the privileges of the Special Court.

"Blah was a subpoena witness and, like in all other cases, a witness appearing before a common court would be required to answer all questions to the best of his knowledge," the court ruled out.

Continuing, the court added, "Since the testimony provided by the witness was not in anyway objected to by the court, defendant Blah can not be held liable for such testimony."

The ruling further stated, "there is principle of law that if the testimony is pertinent to the issue and relevant to the question posed by prosecution, though it may be defamatory, yet it is not answerable to."


The court said if the plaintiff is injured by the defendant's testimony, he should have appeared before the Special Court to exonerate himself.

New Democrat (Liberia)
Monday, 18 August 2008

Taylor Trial Resumes Today

The trial of former President Charles Taylor will resume today following a judicial break that began on 18 July. A notice from the court said:

The Special Court for Sierra Leone will observe its annual Judicial Recess effective July 21, 2008. Hearing in the Charles Taylor case will resume at 9:30 a.m. on Monday August 18, 2008. Blogging of the Taylor Trial on this site will re-commence as soon as the trial resumes.

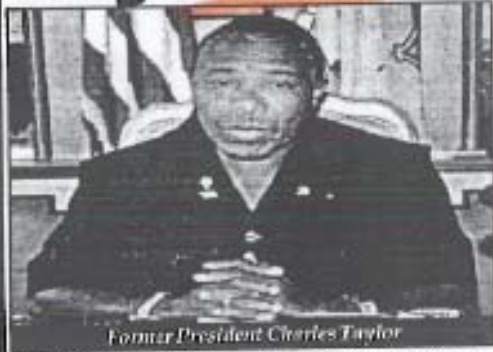
More witnesses are expected to testify in the coming weeks on charges of pillage, rape, crimes against humanity, etc. Prior to the break, Defence Counsel Terry Muryard continued his cross-examination of witness Jabati Jaward in open session as Mr Taylor listened. Mr Taylor's lead lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths said that the Defense regards the memo of Anders Beckman with total dissatisfaction and suggest  Page 10

Taylor Trial Resumes Today

ed: 1) the Court to order the Registrar for a full inquiry why it was necessary to conduct a strip search of the accused and 2) the Court to order the Registrar to conduct a regular research of detention to investigate whether Taylor performs any illegal activities. The Defense stated that a prisoner can only be researched if (there is the suspicion that) he has prohibited items in his possession. In the research mentioned above the Registrar should investigate whether inspections of Taylor are necessary, in order to prevent repetition of what happened yesterday. The Court conferred. Meanwhile Taylor handed over some documents to Griffiths. The Court did not find it necessary to grant reply to the Prosecution. The Court considered the Special Rules to be applicable (rule 59); the Registrar should conduct a research into these matters.

The Monitor (Liberia)
Monday, 18 August 2008

Taylor's trial resumes



Former President Charles Taylor

Tearing in the Special Court for Sierra

asures by which the court was subjecting Taylor. Taylor was subjected to not only search, but was

also stripped of all clothing. That latest action followed a request
See Story on Page 6

No doctor in -County Health Administrator

The Administration for Health Services on the Grand Bassa County Health Team Isaac Duah has

surgical Department of the Liberia government hospital in the county has become dormant with no electricity other clinical functions.

ushered in Charles Gyude Bryant as Chairman of the National Transitional government of Liberia, NTGL.

Although the Liberian leader has repeatedly denied being a founder member of the NPFL, she is however yet to comment on her role during the 1985 abortive invasion in which several Liberians were killed. The invasion heightened the tension between the Krahn, Gio and Mano.

Taylor's trial

from the prosecuting lawyer through a memorandum which was eventually granted by the Special Court.

But defense lawyer Griffiths, in counter arguments, told the Court that the defense regards the memorandum from Anders Beckman with total dissatisfaction and suggested that the "court order its Registrar for a full inquiry why it was necessary to conduct a strip search of the accused".

Counselor Griffiths also wanted clarification on why the Court ordered the "Registrar to conduct a regular research of the detainee to investigate whether he (Taylor) performs any illegal activities".

He argued that a prisoner can only be searched if (there is the suspicion that) he has prohibited items in his possession. In the research mentioned, the Registrar should investigate whether inspections of Taylor are necessary in order to prevent repetition of what happened on July 18.

In response, the Court said it did not find it necessary to grant reply to the defense but said it considered the Special Rules to be applicable (rule 59); the Registrar should conduct a research into these matters.

Meanwhile, the cross and re-examination of witness Jabati Jaward will likely continued.

The Inquirer (Liberia)

Saturday, 16 August 2008

Court Drops Charges Against Blah

Staff Writer

The Sixth Judicial Circuit Court at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia has dropped the libel suit levied against former Liberian care-taker, President Moses Blah by former Maritime Commissioner Benoni Urey.

Mr. Urey filed a libel suit against former President Blah this year alleging among other things that Mr. Blah told the United Nations Special Court in Sierra Leone, which is hearing the war crime case against former Liberian President Charles Taylor when he testified before the court that he, Urey negotiated and facilitated the release of the country's maritime fund to Mr. Taylor four years in advance to help the government finance the war against advancing rebel forces.

The former Maritime Commissioner sued his former boss for libel before the court claiming financial reward for injury done to his reputation.

But after hearing the case for the last few months, the circuit court yesterday dismissed the complaint against Mr. Blah.

The presiding judge of the court, Yussif D. Kaba in his ruling on the matter said the defendant's testimonies before the special court was voluntary upon which, he was questioned.

The court said it noted that the defendant, Mr. Moses Blah was subpoena and that the defendant was considered as a subpoena witness before the special court and in keeping with common law of court, was therefore under obligation to answer to all questions put to him to the best of his knowledge and recollection.

The court said it also noted that during Mr. Blah's testimonies, no objection was raised when the question concerning Mr. Urey was posed to him.

The Circuit Court said since the Special Court allowed witness Blah to answer the questions in the view of the court, the testimony of the defendant was relevant to the case and as such, he cannot be held liable for the answer provided before the court.

The Circuit Court added that as much as the plaintiff, Mr. Urey may have been injured by the defendant, yet, the defendant enjoys special privileges conferred upon him by virtue of his subpoena as a special witness before the special court.

The News (Liberia)

Friday, 15 August 2008

Court Dismisses Urey's U.S\$4.5 Million Libel Suit

C. Emmanuel Johnson
Monrovia

The Civil Law Court at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia has dismissed the US\$4.5 million libel suit recently filed against former President Moses Z. Blah by former Maritime Commissioner Benoni Urey.

Mr. Urey had filed a US\$4.5 million damage suit against Mr. Blah following his testimony at the Special War Crimes Court sitting in The Hague.

Mr. Urey sued Blah for accusing him of dishing out over US\$3 million of the country's maritime fund to former President Charles Taylor.

Judge Yusuf Kaba dismissed the case on grounds that it did not have merit.

The Court said the libel suit against the former president could not be granted because defendant Blah should not have been taken to court for his testimony in The Hague.

Judge Kaba said Mr. Blah served as prosecution witness and he enjoyed the privileges of the Special Court.

"Blah was a subpoena witness and, like in all other cases, a witness appearing before a common court would be required to answer all questions to the best of his knowledge," the court ruled.

"Since the testimony provided by the witness was not in anyway objected to by the court, defendant Blah can not be held liable for such testimony," Judge Kaba ruled.

The ruling further states "there is principle of law that if the testimony is pertinent to the issue and relevant to the question posed by prosecution, though it may be defamatory, yet it is not answerable to."

The court said if the plaintiff is injured by the defendant's testimony, he should have appeared before the Special Court to exonerate himself by testifying.

Prosecution took exception to the ruling and announced an appeal at the Supreme Court sitting in its October A.D. 2008 Term.

United Nations  **Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
15 August 2008

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

Newspaper Summary

Court Thrashes US\$4.5 million Libel Suit against Ex-President Blah

(Daily Observer, New Democrat, The Informer, The Inquirer, National Chronicle, The News, Heritage)

- The Civil Law Court at the Temple of Justice on Thursday dismissed a libel suit recently filed against former President Moses Blah by former Maritime Commissioner Benoni Urey.
- Urey filed a US\$4.5 million damage suit against Blah following the ex-president's testimony at the War Crimes Court sitting in The Hague. Urey sued Blah for accusing him of dishing out over US\$3 million of the country's maritime fund to former President Charles Taylor.
- Judge Yusuf Kaba dismissed the case on grounds that it did not have merit. The Court said the libel suit against the former president could not be granted because defendant Blah should not have been taken to court for his testimony in The Hague. According to The News newspaper and a host of publications, Judge Kaba said Mr. Blah served as prosecution witness and he enjoyed the privileges of the Special Court. "Blah was a subpoena witness and, like in all other cases, a witness appearing before a common court would be required to answer all questions to the best of his knowledge," he said. "Since the testimony provided by the witness was not in anyway objected to by the court, defendant Blah cannot be held liable for such testimony," the court ruled.

Acting President Pro-Tempore to be elected Tuesday following Leadership Crisis in the Senate

(The Inquirer, National Chronicle, The News, Heritage)

- Members of the Senate are due to elect an acting President Pro-Tempore next Tuesday following three weeks of leadership wrangling at the Liberian Senate. The decision to elect an acting President Pro-Tempore comes in the wake of a communication from Nimba County Senator Prince Y. Johnson requesting his colleagues to elect one of them while Isaac W. Nyenabo was serving his six months suspension.
- Senator Johnson's communication, among other things, noted that the President of the Senate, Vice President Joseph N. Boakai who was selected by plenary to serve as presiding officer of the Senate was very busy and could not perform effectively in both positions.
- Speaking to legislative reporters following a closed door session Thursday, the Director for Press and Public Affairs at the Liberian Senate, Varney Gbassie said the decision by the Senators to elect an acting Pro-Tempore was based on the vacancy created by the six months suspension imposed on Senator Nyenabo. He said beginning Monday the Senate would conduct regular session to complete all unfinished businesses before assuming their annual break.

House Seeks New Law to Allot US\$1M - in National Budget for Census

(The News)

- An Act seeking to authorize the executive branch of government to allocate US\$1million in every fiscal budget for the smooth conduct of national census in the future has been introduced at the House of Representatives.
- Sponsored by Lofa County Representative Eugene Fallah Kparkar, the Act was introduced Thursday during regular session.

- The proposed law was read for the first time at Thursday's session following which it was sent to the committee room for review. The second reading is expected next week when brought to the floor. After that reading, it could constitute a third reading, provided the lawmakers decide to enact it due to its urgency.
- Lawmakers who are pushing the new legislation have given legal justification for their decision. They said the new law would enable government to allocate sufficient money for the census every ten years other than soliciting financial assistance from donors which at times become complex.
- According to the proposed Act, immediately upon its passage, the Executive Branch of government shall proceed every fiscal year to appropriate and reserve US\$1 million for the conduct of National Census.

Witness Accuses TRC Commissioner of Bias

(Public Agenda, Daily Observer, New Democrat, The Informer, The Inquirer, National Chronicle, The News, Heritage)

- A witness told the ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Thematic and Institutional hearings Thursday that Commissioner Pearl Brown Bull is 'bias with dirty hands'.
- A former member of the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL) D. Kahn Carlor said Commissioner Bull is a True Whig Party (TWP) partisan who has been proven to be partial in the hearing process.
- Responding to questions from Commissioner Bull, Mr. Carlor noted: "You are bias. You need to come to this process with clean hands. Your hands are not clean."
- He said if Commissioner Bull wants to establish historical facts, she needs to avoid favouritism.
- "This panelist needs to do justice to this process. You are doing this process injustice; this is why you are finding it difficult. You need to be neutral," Mr. Carlor responded harshly to a question from Commissioner Bull.
- He warned the TRC commissioner to desist from taking side in the ongoing process if she wants to get to the root of the Liberian crisis.
- Mr. Carlor's statement was in response to irritated questions from Commissioner Bull concerning the TWP.
- He accused Commissioner Bull of attempting to justify the actions of the TWP government.

Health Volunteers Honoured

(The News)

- [sic:]The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has honoured several health workers for the completion of a six-month voluntary work in rural Liberia.
- The more than 40 health workers were honoured for voluntary services rendered in Bong, Lofa, Maryland and Bomi counties.
- According to the Director of Human Resource at the Ministry of Health, Julie Browne, the voluntary program was intended to recruit college graduates from different areas of disciplines including sociology and other social sciences.
- She said the volunteers, upon recruitment, were dispatched to government hospitals and clinics in designated areas to provide psychotherapy to patients while those with degrees in Accounting were sent to the accounts sections

Man Arrested with Firearm

(Public Agenda)

- [sic:] A resident of the SKD Boulevard, William Knowlden, has been arrested with a loaded pistol and several rounds of AK-47 ammunitions by police. The arrest was made Wednesday after a Sheriff of the Paynesville Magisterial Court went to evict the accused from a rented

house. According to information, the arm and ammunitions were discovered while the Sheriff was carrying about the eviction.

Radio Summary

Star Radio *(News culled today from website at 10:00 am)*

Court Dismisses Libel Suit Against Blah

(Also reported on Truth FM, Sky FM, Love FM, and ELBC)

Association criticizes drug trafficking laws

- The Liberia National Law Enforcement Association has criticized the narcotics and drug trafficking laws of the country.
- According to the President of the association, the current laws on narcotics and drug trafficking are lenient.
- Mr. Cecil Griffiths wants the laws amended to conform to present day realities.
- Mr. Griffiths said the Drug Enforcement Agency is still operating under the public health law, which makes a perpetrator to be put on bill.
- He indicated that in most countries, any person arrested and convicted serve long-term imprisonment and their properties confiscated.
- The forum was intended for Civil Society Leaders to discuss issues that need urgent attention by government, the international community and other civil society groups in the country.

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

Truth F.M. *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

Senators to Elect Acting President Pro-Tempore Tuesday



Press Release, 16 August 2008

UNMIL/PIO/PR/ 68

UNMIL to continue supporting Liberia establish an effective judicial system, Deputy UN Envoy assures

Unification Town, Liberia – The Deputy Head of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Ms. Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu and Liberia’s Chief Justice, His Honour, Johnnie Lewis, have jointly performed a groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of a new UNMIL-funded magisterial courthouse in Liberia, stressing the importance of magisterial courts in strengthening the country’s judicial system. The US\$25,000 courthouse is being built at Unification Town, close to the Roberts International Airport, about 45 kilometres from Liberia’s capital, Monrovia.

Ms. Mensa-Bonsu, who is the UN Secretary-General’s Deputy Special Representative for the Rule of Law, described magisterial courts, the first court of instance, as the pivot of a nation’s judicial system. “They say the strength of a chain lies in its weakest link; so does the strength of a judicial system lie in its magisterial courts.”

The Deputy UN Envoy said it was for the realization of the unique role magisterial courts play in promoting the rule of law that UNMIL was committed to building new courthouses and rehabilitating old ones in Liberia. She pledged UNMIL’s determination to support the Government of Liberia establish an effective judicial system in the country. Ms. Mensa-Bonsu told residents of Unification Town to ensure that the courthouse project is properly executed, as it will bring justice to their doorsteps.

For his part, the Chief Justice of Liberia, His Honour Johnnie Lewis, expressed the gratitude of the government and people of Liberia to UNMIL for assisting re-build the country’s judicial sector, saying “UNMIL has been instrumental in ensuring the rule of law in Liberia.” Chief Justice Lewis urged the contractor of the project, the Liberia Care for Humanity, to do quality work.

The Unification Town courthouse project is the fourth magisterial court under construction this year through the UNMIL Quick Impact Projects programme. When completed, this will bring to 17 the number of courthouses constructed and rehabilitated in Liberia by UNMIL. In all, UNMIL has since 2004, spent more than US\$1.2 million constructing and rehabilitating rule of law institutions such as courts, police stations, prisons and immigration posts across Liberia.

Special Court Supplement
Special Court Olympics, at the Young Sportsman's Club, Freetown
Sunday, 17 August 2008







