

**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:

Tuesday, 20 May 2008

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

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The news vendor was ill and did not deliver the local newspapers today.

International News

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Exclusive

Tuesday, 20 May 2008

How Kabbah Spent Honeymoon In Court

By Musa Sesay

While many Sierra Leoneans thought Ex-President Alhaji Tejan Kabbah was busy hon-

eymoonning with newly wedded wife, he spent the whole of last Friday at the Special Court at New England in Freetown,

where he served as a witness for former RUF Leader, General Issa Sesay, exactly five days

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How Kabbah Spent Honeymoon In Court

From front page

after his wedding.

The former President started his long testimony at 9:25am and ended it 6:15am.

He told the court that the RUF leader Foday Sankoh misunderstood his position as Chairman of the Strategic Mineral Resources Commission which gave him a status equal to the Vice President and answerable only to him.

"From his reaction, I knew he did not understand clearly his position and this compelled him to get back to his original stance" Kabbah said.

He added that, Sankoh cooperated with his government as a result of the

tremendous pressure from the International Community and had to stay away after signing the Lome Peace Accord until he was forced to return home.

He said he cannot guess what would have become the reaction of the RUF if they had denied cabinet positions they requested.

The peace accord, he said was signed to reach peace building objective as the only available option at the time. The signatories to the accord, he revealed included himself, Foday Sankoh, Charles Taylor, Blaise Camporee and President Eyadema of Togo. The UN representative Okello

he said, refused to sign.

He said he never knew Special Court's indictee, Augustine Gbow nor did he have anything to do with him as an individual. He said he was briefed of every movement taken by the rebels which he said included how many people were killed. The RUF, he stated continued to commit atrocities after January 1999.

"Even though we mobilize funds to resettle them they continued to commit more atrocities" Kabbah said.

He neither exonerated nor implicated Issa, who he testified for. However, Judging from his testimony, observers believe, except otherwise, Issa will be slammed a shorter jail term when compared with the others.

Press Association

Monday, 19 May 2008

Taylor 'may have eaten human flesh'

Charles Taylor's former vice president and successor as Liberia's leader has testified that he never saw Taylor engage in cannibalism or heard him order his fighters to eat their slain enemies.

In testimony at Taylor's war crimes trial, Moses Blah refused to rule out, however, that Taylor ate human flesh or ordered his troops to do so.

In March, a witness told the Special Court for Sierra Leone that Taylor ordered fighters in his National Patriotic Front of Liberia to eat their enemies as a way of striking terror into his opponents.

Joseph Marzah, who described himself as Taylor's chief of operations and head of a death squad before Taylor became president, said African peacekeepers and even United Nations personnel were killed and eaten on the battlefield by Taylor's militiamen. He also said he had sat with Taylor as he ate a human liver.

Mr Blah, who said his own cousin was killed and cannibalised in 1985 by forces loyal to former Liberian dictator Samuel Doe, told judges that he had "never heard such an order from Mr Taylor" but he could not vouch for every second of Taylor's time.

Taylor has pleaded not guilty to murder, rape, torture and enlisting child soldiers during Sierra Leone's 10-year civil war, which ended in 2002. He is accused of pulling the rebels' strings from his headquarters in Liberia's capital, Monrovia.

Mr Blah, 61, was speaking under cross examination by Taylor's lawyer, Courtenay Griffiths. In testimony last week, he told the court he saw one of Taylor's fighters in Liberia roasting and eating a man's hands.

He acknowledged that he had received thousands of dollars from the court and immunity from prosecution by investigators who questioned him about Taylor's rule.

He said the money was to help him cover medical, travel and security costs. He has told the court he has a heart condition and that his family has received death threats as a result of his decision to testify against Taylor.

The trial is being held in a courtroom rented from the International Criminal Court in The Hague because of fears prosecuting him in Sierra Leone could spark new violence.

SABC News (South Africa)

Tuesday, 20 May 2008

High food prices threaten Africa's stability



The rise in food and fuel prices is posing a threat to African countries

By Thami Dickson

The rise in food and fuel prices is presenting a major threat to the delicate stability of African countries emerging from years of conflict. This came out at the UN meeting focusing on how to help the West African country of Sierra Leone and prevent it from slipping back into conflict.

Sierra Leone endured a decade long civil war which left the country in ruins with thousands of people killed while many others had their limbs chopped. Former Liberian President Charles Taylor was indicted for alleged crimes during the war.

He allegedly traded weapons for diamonds with the rebels who were fighting the Sierra Leone government. The UN Peace Building Commission seeks to help Sierra Leone with resources in its transition from war to peace.

The Security Council will wrap up the peace building operation by September. But there are still some challenges ahead with the current economic situation the new major threat.

Following the presidential and parliamentary vote three months ago, Sierra Leone is now gearing for local government elections in July. This will further assist in strengthening its democracy.

Cocorioko website

Tuesday, 20 May 2008

Johnny Paul Koroma is dead

Written by APA

The former Chairman of Sierra Leone's military junta Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), Lt. Col. Johnny Paul Koroma has indeed died as reported many years ago. Johnny Paul was killed in the Lofa Forest on the orders of former Liberian rebel leader and President, Charles Taylor.

APA-Monrovia (Liberia) On the second day of his testimony at the Special War Crimes Court in The Hague on Thursday, former Liberian interim President Moses Blah revealed that Mr. Charles Taylor ordered all executions and that he ordered the killings of defunct Revolutionary United Front (RUF) strongman Sam Bockarie and chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) Johnny Paul Koroma.

Blah said Johnny Paul Koroma was killed in the Lofa Forest in northern Liberia, while Sam Bockarie was beheaded by Taylor's rebel commander Benjamin Yeaten in north-eastern Nimba County.

He said Taylor's orders saw many of the original Libyan-trained fighters of his defunct NPFL 'eliminated' (killed).

He gave details of how each of the original NPFL members was ordered executed or died.

Blah was subpoenaed last month to testify in the trial of his former boss Charles Taylor, who is standing trial for 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in the Sierra Leone conflict.

Cocorioko website

Monday, 19 May 2008

CDF Appeals judgement due May 28

Written by Rev. Alfred SamForay

Monday, 19 May 2008

Appeals judgment for the two remaining CDF leaders, Second Accused, Moinina Fofana, and Third Accused, Alieu Musa Kondewa, has been set to Wednesday May 28 2008 at 10:30 AM according to a release from the UN-backed special court for Sierra Leone

Appeals judgment for the two remaining CDF leaders, Second Accused, Moinina Fofana, and Third Accused, Alieu Musa Kondewa, has been set to Wednesday May 28 2008 at 10:30 AM according to a release from the UN-backed special court for Sierra Leone. Mr. Fofana and Dr. Kondewa were both found guilty August 2, 2007 on four counts each of violations of protocols of war under Article III Common to the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols (collectively known collectively as war crimes). Additionally, Dr. Kondewa was found guilty on one count of ordinary international humanitarian laws for recruitment and enlistment of child soldiers. Neither of the CDF Accused was found guilty of the most serious offence of Crimes Against Humanity. The lone Sierra Leonean jurist on the Trial Chamber, Professor Roslo Bankole Thompson, rejected the majority verdict with a strongly worded dissenting opinion in favour of a not-guilty verdict for the CDF Accused. His two foreign colleagues, Canadian jurist, Pierre Boutet, and Cameroonian, Benjamin Mutanga Itoe, ruled against the CDF.

The prosecutor in September 2007 asked the court for a thirty-year prison sentence for each of the CDF leaders, but the court sentenced Fofana and Kondewa to six and eight years, respectively for their roles in the eleven-year civil war in Sierra Leone. Mr. Fofana did not appeal his sentence but the Prosecutor appealed for higher sentences for the former CDF Director of War. Dr. Kondewa appealed to have his conviction set aside. Not to be outdone, the Prosecutor appealed for a higher sentence for Kondewa. The Appeals Chamber may rule for outright dismissal of the conviction against both men, increase or reduce the sentences as the case may be.

Meanwhile, the man who birthed the UN tribunal, newly married and former President Tejan Kabbah, was forced to cut short his honeymoon and appear as a witness for RUF Accused, Hassan Isa Sesay, last Friday. Sesay called Kabbah to testify to claims that Sesay ordered the attack on UN personnel during the civil war. Claiming that he feared for his life and privacy, Kabbah had asked the court to have the former president testify in private or via written submission. The judges rejected Kabbah's argument stating that Sierra Leone was not Iraq where witnesses are summarily executed for appearing for or against accused persons. Kabbah heaped praises on the former rebel leader for his "contribution to the peace process." During the trial of his former Deputy Defence and Internal Affairs Minister, Chief Sam Hinga Norman, then President Kabbah claimed executive privilege and refused to testify for Chief Norman and Mr. Fofana. Chief Norman died in detention without a verdict in his case in February 2007. He dislocated his hip when he was presumably pushed to the floor of a moving truck by Sierra Leone Police officers, Tamba Gbeki and Kalia Sesay. Mr. Norman later died following hip replacement surgery in a dilapidated prison clinic in Dakar, Senegal. Gbeki was later promoted to the rank of Chief Police Officer.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

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

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

Newspaper Summary

Taylor's Vice President Begins Cross Examination from Defense Lawyers

(The News, New Democrat, The Liberian Express, National Chronicle, Public Agenda, New Vision, The Analyst, Heritage, The Monitor)

- The testimony of Charles Taylor's former Vice President Moses Blah remains a major talking point and is the subject of public discussions across the country. Blah has for the last few days provided detailed insider's account linking Taylor to atrocities committed in neighboring Sierra Leone. Media reports suggest that Blah faces cross examination from Taylor's defense team after completing direct examination from the prosecution.

UNMIL Takes Rape Campaign to Margibi County

(The Analyst)

- In an effort to help government prevent rape, the Outreach Section of United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) over the weekend launched its Anti-rape Campaign in Kakata, Margibi County. Officials say the campaign is intended to sensitize people on the danger rape poses in the county.

Newspaper Claims LISCR Funds Taylor's Deadly Arms Deal

(Public Agenda)

- [sic:] Information gathered by this paper shows the company that was put together by former President Charles Taylor to control Liberia's Maritime money, aided and abetted him to pay for his killing machines that were allegedly used for the destabilization of the Mano River Basin. The Liberia International Ship Corporate Registry (LISCR) has been accused of being one of the financiers of Taylor's arm deal during his reign in Liberia. Taylor, now held in The Hague for war crimes and crimes against humanity, used unscrupulous means to violate UN sanction on the importation of arms to Liberia. Sources say Taylor used the arms in prosecuting his wars in the Mano River Basin, which left massive destruction of lives and properties. In recent years, the prime concern of the Liberian Government was not the technical quality of Liberia's shipping registry but what happens to the money generated from it. From 1949 to 1999, research indicates that the registry earned around U.S. \$700 million for the Liberian government. During the 1990-1996 civil wars in Liberia and during the interim period following that war, revenue from the registry represented some 90 percent of the Liberian government's total income. But according to information obtained by this paper, when President Charles Taylor came to power in Liberia in 1997, he sought to obtain control of the registry. During the civil war he had failed to raise funds for his war efforts from IRI Company that ran the registry at the time.

Police Intensifies Road Safety Campaign

(The Inquirer)

- The Liberian National Police (LNP) through its Traffic Division has impounded six trailer trucks for allegedly being defective and for improper carrying.
- The vehicles which were pulled-over during the weekend are in line with the Traffic Division's attempt at minimizing traffic accidents on state highways.

- The operation that is in its third week was climaxed with police arresting six vehicles at the Mount Barclay checkpoint in Montserrado County.
- Speaking to reporters at the central police station in Monrovia, Chief of Traffic, Mickie Gray said the vehicles were arrested because some of the trucks are unsafe to be in the traffic and that most of the six vehicles impounded were carrying an over-load of goods and passengers that could possibly cause a major accident.
- The Chief of Traffic said that people who were on the trucks would be released, while trucks with perishable goods would be escorted by officers to drop their commodities and be brought back to the police station to await traffic court charges.

Police Entangled in US\$30,000 Theft Case

(Public Agenda)

- [sic] It seems that the Liberia National Police (LNP) is finding it very difficult to disentangle itself from a criminal case in which one Abraham Bah allegedly stole US\$30,000 from Atef Youssou Adidibe of the Royal Diamond Company in Monrovia. According to our investigation few months ago, Bah reportedly stole the amount from Adidibe who reported the case to the police for redress but the police arrested the culprit and later released him after he confessed to the crime and wrote a promissory note to retribute the amount. Reliable information gathered by this paper say Bah has escaped to Guinea. Sources at the police headquarters said during the case, lot of scheming took place which led to the culprit writing a promissory note before his subsequent release. The delay by the police to settle the case made the lawyers hired by the victim to write a second complaint this time against the police to the Minister of Justice Philip Banks which prompted the Justice Minister to write Gayflor Tarpeh who was acting as Director of Police at the time to furnish him with an update of the case. The letter dated February 9, 2008, requested Tarpeh to with a matter of urgency, provide an update on the status of the case within 72 hours upon receipt of the letter. It is almost three months now, the status of the case is yet to be known, as the Justice Minister is yet to provide relief to the complainant. When this paper contacted the office of the Minister of Justice for comment on the issue, the Public Relations Officer at the Ministry said the minister was out of the country.

UNMIL Assures Secured Foreign Investment in Liberia

(Public Agenda, Liberian Express, The Analyst, The Informer)

- The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has reiterated its determination to help create a conducive environment for attracting foreign investors into Liberia. Decorating Philippine peacekeepers with UN service medals in Monrovia, the Deputy Head of UNMIL for Recovery and Governance, Mr. Jordan Ryan said UNMIL has the mandate to ensure that Liberia's stability and security are strengthened so that the country can continue to develop and prosper.
- "We want to help the government to ensure that crime and criminals do not deter investors from coming into this country to create jobs. This is one reason UNMIL is supporting Liberia's security agencies to clamp down on crime and other activities that undermine peace and security," he emphasized.

Deactivated Soldiers Oppose New National Defense Act

(Public Agenda)

- [sic:] Aggrieved deactivated soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) say they oppose in the strongest term, the submission to the National Legislature for passage of the National Defense Act. According to a press release issued over the weekend, the former soldiers said President Ellen Johnson-Sieleaf, predicated upon numerous complaints from them, constituted an Ad-Hoc Committee led by Rev. Emmanuel Bowier to investigate and submit its findings to her within 30 days. The deactivated soldiers said President Sirleaf asked the committee to look into their claims and promised to uphold and endorse any recommendations there from. The deactivated soldiers said while they anxiously await the response from the Presidential Ad-Hod Committee on their claims which they said centered on the restructuring of the AFL to include the bulk payment of salaries arrears, they were

informed with disappointment that the Executive Branch of Government has submitted a National Defense Act to the House of Representative, for deliberation and subsequent passage. The press release signed by Col. Wolo Nagbe, Chairman of the aggrieved soldiers said they believed the act, when passed into law, will possibly repeal the Act that created the AFL in 1908 and empower the President of Liberia to raise a new army. They stated that Article VII, Section 1-B of the Ghana-Accra Comprehensive Peace Accord states that the AFL must be restructured with a new command structure and the forces drawn from the AFL, LURD, MODEL and the Civilian Sector. Notwithstanding, the release said, "we the aggrieved soldiers whose plights are yet to be properly addressed by the Government of Liberia, do hereby opposed in the strongest term the passage of such bill calling on the Government to follow the comprehensive restructure plans as enshrined in the Accra Instrument that restored peace to our war-ravaged country". The soldiers called on members of the House of Representatives not to pass such bill in the interest of peace until all legal implications in the CPA and the laws that give rise to formation of the AFL are revisited and certified. When the Minister of Defense Brownie Samukai was contacted last evening to comment on the former soldiers concern, he said the soldiers are Liberians and entitled to their views. He indicated that the National Defense Act has no link with the grievances of the deactivated soldiers.

Radio Summary

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

President Sirleaf Moves to Curtail Lapses in Protocol Arrangements

- An Executive Mansion release issued in Monrovia says President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf have suspended the Chief of Protocol of Liberia and his Deputy.
- The President's decision followed lapses in protocol arrangements during the just-ended Mano River Union (MRU) Summit.
- Last Friday, the President met with Protocol and other senior Foreign Ministry officials and expressed disappointment over the continuing lapses in protocol arrangements that have caused the Administration serious embarrassment and warned that sterner measures would be instituted to deal with the problem.

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

Liberian 12th Graders Write Regional Exams Today

- The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) today commenced the administration of the 2007/2008 national exams to over 80,000 12th, 9th and 6th grade students across the country.
- Addressing journalists at the weekend, the Head of WAEC Monrovia office, Thomas Gaie said over 19,000 candidates from 83 Senior High Schools, 23,577 candidates from the Junior High division and 39,975 candidates from the six grade level registered to sit the exams that will run from May 19-29, 2008.
- Mr. Gaie warned against examination malpractices during the conduct of the test and threatened that those caught will be prosecuted in keeping with the law.

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

Cabinet Convenes in Western Grand Cape Mount County

- The Liberian Cabinet is convening in Robertsport, Grand Cape Mount County, at the start of a three-day Cabinet retreat the second gathering of the cabinet outside the capital, Monrovia.
- An Executive Mansion release issued in Monrovia said President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf will use the Cape Mount Cabinet retreat to tour and dedicate a number of development projects in the county.
- Among the projects to be dedicated is a newly constructed local station, Radio Cape Mount in Sinje, a branch of the Liberia Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI) and she will also break grounds for the construction of a police barracks in Robertsport followed by a tour of an unfinished Polytechnic University on the outskirts of Sinje in Garwular District.
- It can be recalled that two months ago a meeting of cabinet ministers, chaired by the President, was held in Voinjama, Lofa County.

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

Five Former Transitional Officials Appear in Court Today

- Former Finance Minister, Luseni Kamara is due to appear in court today along with his Deputy Tugbeh Doe and three others including Pyne Wollo for economic crime.
- According to court records, the accused are charged with embezzling over LD\$11 million and US\$3 million during the transitional government of Gyude Bryant.

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