

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



Draught players square off on a Saturday afternoon in Murray Town.

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office

as at:

Monday, 26 February 2007

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

Special Court President Orders Inquiry into Death of ... / <i>Public Affairs Office</i>	Page 3
Special Court Principal Defender Regrets the Death of... / <i>Defence Office</i>	Page 4
Special Court Orders Inquiry Into Death of Chief... <i>Sunday Leone Times</i>	Page 5
Special Court to Probe Norman's Death / <i>Concord Times</i>	Page 6
Family Members to Witness Norman Autopsy / <i>New Citizen</i>	Pages 7-8
Kamajors Call Emergency Meeting / <i>Exclusive</i>	Page 9
PMDC Campaigns With Norman's Death / <i>Spectator</i>	Page 10
After Norman's Death...Security Beefed Up in Bo / <i>New Vision</i>	Pages 11-12
No State Funeral for Chief Norman – Family Protests / <i>Spark</i>	Pages 13-14
SLPP Warned! V.P. Demby Takes Over Norman's Funeral / <i>Standard Times</i>	Pages 15-16
SLPP, PMDC Fight Over Hinga Norman / <i>Pool</i>	Page 17
Kamajors Warned / <i>Pool</i>	Page 18
Norman Family First Press Release / <i>Awareness Times</i>	Page 19
Full Update on Hinga Norman / <i>Awareness Times</i>	Page 20
The Day Norman's Heroism Became a Curse / <i>Concord Times</i>	Page 21
The Tragedy of Sam Hinga Norman / <i>For di People</i>	Pages 22-23
The Special Court – Sheer Waste of Money!! / <i>Spark</i>	Page 24
The Passing Away of a Great Man / <i>Standard Times</i>	Page 25
Opinion Poll / <i>Awoko</i>	Page 26
'Special Court is a Killer' / <i>African Champion</i>	Pages 27-28

International News

Interviews with Peter Penfold and Stephen Rapp / <i>BBC Newsnight</i>	Pages 29-30
Sierra Leone Court to Investigate Militia Suspect's Sudden Death / <i>VOA</i>	Page 31
Interview with Yves Sorokobi, Spokesman for the UN Secretary-General / <i>VOA</i>	Page 32
Sierra Leone: Victims of International Justice / <i>Analyst (Liberia)</i>	Pages 33-35
UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary / <i>UNMIL</i>	Pages 36-38
UN Envoys Highlights Progress in Liberia But Cautions Against Complacency / <i>UNMIL</i>	Page 39
Guinea Unions 'Call Off Strike' / <i>BBC</i>	Page 40



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 23 February 2007

Special Court President Orders Inquiry into Death of Hinga Norman

The President of the Special Court, Justice George Gelaga-King, today ordered an inquiry into the death of indictee Sam Hinga Norman.

The order was issued pursuant to Rule 22 of the Rules of Detention, which allows the President to order an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of any detainee.

The inquiry will be headed by Appeals Court Justice Renate Winter of Austria.

Mr. Norman died on Thursday at the Hospital Aristide Le Dantec, a military hospital in Dakar Senegal. His death came two weeks after he received medical treatment which, although considered routine, is unavailable in Sierra Leone. The procedure was performed successfully, and Mr. Norman had been receiving post-operative care.

#END



Special Court for Sierra Leone
Defence Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 23 February 2007

Special Court Principal Defender Regrets the Death of Samuel Hinga Norman

Statement Attributable to Principal Defender Vincent O. Nmehielle

The Defence Office of the Special Court for Sierra Leone was informed yesterday that Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, a CDF indictee at the Special Court for Sierra Leone passed away at 11:15 am in Dakar, Senegal where he was recuperating from surgery.

Chief Norman, former Deputy Defence Minister and later Minister of Internal Affairs, was indicted on 7 March 2003 on an 8-count indictment for crimes against humanity, violations of Article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Chief Norman had been experiencing health problems that were not life-threatening but needed treatment. As result, he was taken to the L'Hopital Aristide Le Dantec (a military hospital) in Dakar, Senegal on 17 January where he successfully underwent a medical procedure. Chief Norman had been in good spirits after the surgery until 22 February when he collapsed at about 10:55 am. Efforts to resuscitate him failed and he passed away at about 11.15 am.

Chief Norman was a great friend of the Defence Office in its duties to facilitate and ensure the rights of accused persons before the Special Court. His death therefore is a tragedy not only to the bereaved family but also to the Special Court and in some particular way to the Defence Office. We express our sympathy to the bereaved family and friends with whom we share this loss. The Defence Office is closely working with the Registry in all the arrangements to deal with this tragedy.

#END

Sunday Leone Times
 Sunday, 25 February 2007

Special Court Orders Enquiry Into death of Chief Sam Hinga Norman

The president of the Sierra Leone special court Mr. Justice George Gelega- King has on Friday February 23 ordered an immediate enquiry into the death of Sam Hinga Norman, the first inditee at the United Nation's backed Special Court of Sierra Leone. This is in pursuant of Act 22 of the special court rules of procedures on the death of inditee in custody.

The statement named Justice Renate Winter of Austria to head the enquiry. Chief Sam Hinga Norman died on Thursday February 22 at a military hospital in Dakar, Senegal of heart failure as stated in a communique issued by hospital sources. News of the death of former Internal Affairs Minister and Head of the Civil Defence Militia (Kamajors) Chief Sam

Hinga Norman was received in Freetown on Thursday February 22, 2007.

The Special Court of Sierra Leone in a Press release states that at 10:55 in the morning of Thursday, February 22, Mr. Norman collapsed and despite attempts to revive him, was pronounced dead at about 11:15 am that same day.

Initial indications are that Mr. Sam Hinga Norman suffered heart failure during postoperative care. The Registrar Love more Munlo, SL has ordered an independent investigation by international

medical experts to determine the exact cause of death.

It will be recalled that Chief Hinga Norman and another Special Court detainee were

taken to Dakar on January 17 for medical procedures which were considered routine, but which were unavailable in Sierra Leone.

Cont. page

Special Court Orders Enquiry Into death of Chief Sam Hinga Norman

From page 1

Those procedures were performed on Thursday February 8 without complication.

Mr. Munlo together with the Special Court of Sierra Leone expressed deep regret and he has personally informed family members at their loss.

Coincidentally Chief Norman was born on the 1st January 1940 was 27 years old, in 1967 when he was implicated in the first ever Coup de E'tat in Sierra Leone. He was just past his 67th birthday, when he died suddenly on 22nd February 2007. 40 years after! May he rest in peace.

Concord Times
Monday, 26 February 2007

Special Court to probe Norman's death

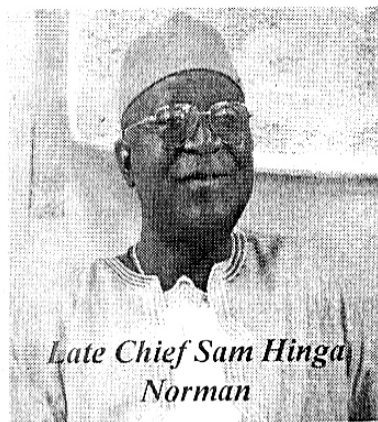
Special Court President, Justice George Gelaga-King Friday issued a press release ordering an in-depth investigation surrounding the circumstances leading to the death of Chief Sam Hinga Norman.

"The order was issued pursuant to Rule 22 of the Rules of Detention, which allows the President to order an inquiry

into the circumstances surrounding the death of any detainee," the release stated and disclosed that the inquiry will be headed by the Special Court's Appeals Court Judge, Justice Renate Winter of Austria.

Mr. Norman died on Thursday at the Hospital Aristide Le

Cont. page 3



Late Chief Sam Hinga Norman

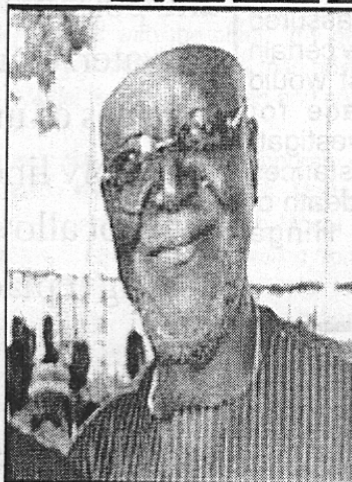
Special Court to probe Norman's death

From page 1

Dantec, a military hospital in Dakar Senegal. His death came two weeks after he received medical treatment which, although considered routine, is unavailable in Sierra Leone. The procedure was performed successfully, and Mr. Norman had been receiving post-operative care.

New Citizen
Monday, 26 February 2007

FAMILY MEMBERS TO WITNESS NORMAN AUTOPSY



*The late Chief Sam
Hinga Norman*

Family members of Chief Sam Hinga Norman are expected to be flown to the Senegalese capital of Dakar this week to be present at the autopsy to determine the cause of death of the late CDF leader who died suddenly in Dakar on

Thursday, 22nd February. The death of Sam Hinga Norman after he underwent a medical operation in a military hospital in Dakar took many Sierra Leoneans by surprise and the death of the late chief became a national issue that was discussed in many quarters throughout the length and breadth of the country. According to Special Court

sources, the surgery performed on Sam Hinga Norman was satisfactory until his medical condition deteriorated sharply after which he collapsed and died in Dakar.

When asked whether Sam Hinga Norman was kept in a cell, a Special Court Spokesman said, "Chief Sam Hinga Norman was not

Contd. back page

FAMILY MEMBERS

From page 1

TO WITNESS

NORMAN AUTOPSY

kept in a cell, in fact, he was admitted in a well staffed military hospital, the hospital in which senior military personnel of the Senegalese Army receive treatment and are also sometimes actually hospitalised. It is a good hospital and this is why we also want family members of Chief Sam Hinga Norman to witness the autopsy if only as a way of assuring them that no attempt was made to unfairly handle Chief Norman's medical condition."

On whether or not the case for which Chief Sam Hinga Norman was standing trial would continue, the Spokesman for the Special Court replied, "I can only suspect that the case will be terminated as there may be no verdict on Sam Hinga Norman

but such decisions are taken by the top administrators of the Special Court, but I am certain that there will be no verdict on Sam Hinga Norman."

The Sierra Leone Government totally overwhelmed by the death of Sam Hinga Norman on February 22nd circulated a brief press release which merely stated that government had learnt about the death of Chief Sam Hinga Norman, the former Deputy Minister of Defence and that the government expresses its condolence to the family of the late Chief Sam Hinga Norman.

The press release did not recognise the fact that Chief Sam Hinga Norman was Minister of Internal Affairs at one time, including the time of his arrest.

Sam Hinga Norman, a

strong SLPP member at the time he was arrested in 2003 was not only perceived as the heroic head of the resistance against the illegal AFRC regime, but also he occupied important positions in President Kabbah's government but mainly as Deputy Minister of Defence and Minister of Internal Affairs.

Public opinion on whether or not Sam Hinga Norman deserved to stand trial at the Special Court after the role he played in restoring President Kabbah's government remains divided.

A Special Court Spokesperson assured that he was now certain that an inquest would be put in place for purposes of investigating the circumstances that led to the death of Chief Sam Hinga Norman.

Exclusive

Monday, 26 February 2007

Kamajors Call Emergency Meeting

Over one thousand members of the civil defence force (CDF) 'kamajors' in the South and East of the country will tomorrow summon an emergency meeting at a secret location in Bo district, The Exclusive has learned. The objective of the meeting is to discuss the sudden death of their national coordinator, Chief Siam Hinga Norman at a military hospital in Dakar, Senegal last Thursday.

Speaking to The Exclusive on the line from Pujehun, Dr. Alpha Lahai an executive member of the kamajor militia in the district said they will have to decide which line of action to take against the ruling Sierra Leone Peoples Party for the death of their leader. He described Chief

Norman as a hero and liberator and a man who stood by his people in difficult times to restore democracy in the country.

Such a man he said should not be allowed to die this way. Lahai said the kamajors are planning to give their leader a befitting funeral as a sign of their respects to a brother who worked tirelessly to restore peace and tranquility in the country.

"The death of Norman is a big blow to the country in general and kamajors in particular," Lahai said; adding that they will continue to respect him for ever. The meeting he said, will attract both old and young including executive members to brainstorm and chart the way forward.

Asked if government

representatives are invited to the meeting, Lahai replied in the negative pointing that there was no need to invite them since they did nothing to ensure the release of the late man from custody.

The kamajors he said, are demanding an inquest to ascertain the actual cause of his death.

Chief Norman was indicted by the United Nations backed Special Court in March 2003 and was standing trial on eight counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity in the course of decade long civil war in the country.

He led the kamajors against the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels who caused a lot of sufferings on the people of Sierra Leone.

Spectator
Monday, 26 August 2007

PMDC campaigns with Norman's death

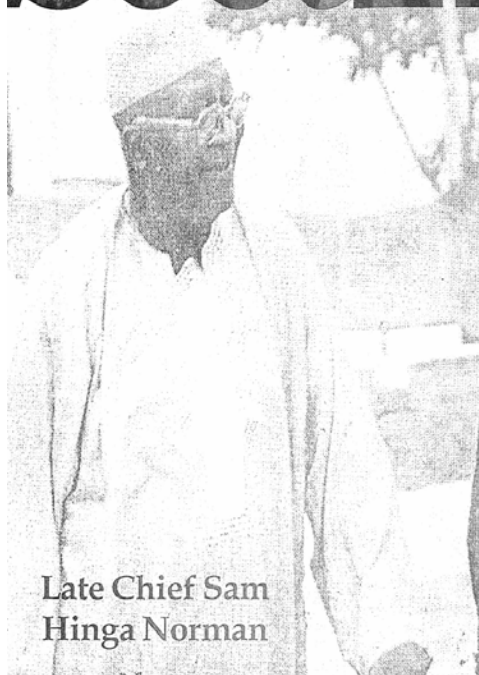
As some Sierra Leoneans mourn the death of Chief Sam Hinga Norman, one time internal affairs Minister and Head of the Civil Defence Forces, members of the People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC), are reported to have begun mapping out strategies to take the unfortunate event as a yard stick to win the sympathy of the electorate against the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) in the July 28 elections. According to our political Affairs correspondent, the leader of the PMDC, Mr. Charles Margai, summoned an emergency meeting at his party's Hannah Benka Coker Street Secretariat in Freetown just after news about Chief Norman's demise broke out. Similar meetings have been held in other parts of the country including Bo and Kenema where the PMDC claims to have much support. Supporters have already reportedly

embarked on propagating that the PMDC did everything to protect and secure the life of Chief Norman, unlike the SLPP which they allege orchestrated his detention and death. Reports monitored in Freetown and from the Southern Region in particular say that Charles Margai's party is working out modalities to flood the streets of Freetown to receive the corps of Chief Norman when it arrives from Senegal and subsequently grace the burial which is expected to take place in Bo. Sources close to Presidential Lodge at Hill Station, Freetown, and the SLPP Head and Regional offices throughout the country are reportedly putting arrangement in place to accord the late man a state burial. Meanwhile, SLPP supporters have categorically disassociated their government and party from any involvement in Chief Norman's death, saying his arrest and detention was purely a Special Court affair.



New Vision
Monday, 26 February 2007

After Norman's Death... Security Beefed Up in Bo



Late Chief Sam
Hinga Norman

By Amara A. Samura

Barely twenty four hours after the death of Special Court indictee, Chief Sam Hinga Norman in a military hospital in Senegal last Thursday after a long period of illness, armed police have been deployed in Bo. The Inspector General of Police, Brima Acha Kamara last Friday ordered the immediate deployment of an additional one hundred well

Contd. Page 10

Security Beefed Up in Bo

armed Police Support Unit (PSU) to the Southern Regional city of Bo to beef up security in that region. The Deputy Director of OSD, Chief Superintendent Thomas T. Kamara made the disclosure over the weekend to New Vision at his Kingharman Road office.

The purpose of beefing up the security in Bo, according to Mr. Kamara, is to forestall any problem that might erupt following the death of Chief Sam Hinga Norman. He said since Chief Norman hails from that district and has a good following, people might want to create problem.

“As a law enforcement agency, we have already put modalities in place to quell down any attempt by people to create problem. As I am talking to you the men are now fully deployed in Bo since last Friday”. Mr. Kamara said.

The Deputy Director indicated that the OSD Regional Coordinator South, Superintendent Mohamed Turay (alias Yatay Yatay) will be working with the reinforced PSU’s while headquarters monitor the situation in the entire district on a twenty four basis. He said the standby force now deployed in Bo is led by one Assistant Superintendent of

police Ketu Gibson, adding that the standby force is well trained in riotous conduct and are well armed and determined to do their work professionally.

The standby force in Bo, Mr. Kamara said will also provide security there for the presence of the President Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and Vice President Solomon Ekuma Berewa who were there over the weekend to take part in the convocation ceremony of the Njala University in Bo. He emphasised that the officers will stay in Bo until they are satisfied with the security situation there.

The OSD, Mr. Kamara said is the backbone of the police which helps the Local Unit Commanders in the day to day community policing, the general duty and the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) in executing search warrants etc.

Meanwhile, the Director of the OSD, Assistant Inspector General, David S. Sesay has returned to Freetown after a week long stay in Tongo Field where some armaments were discovered recently. He also used the opportunity to address the OSD officers deployed there on their specific role in the execution of their duties.

Spark

Monday, 26 February 2007

No State Funeral for Chief Norman

-Family Protests

By Salifu Conteh

Reports flowing in have revealed that the family and relatives of the late Chief Sam Hinga

Norman are strongly objecting to a state funeral of their late relative as they continue to express dissatisfaction over his tragic demise.

They further expressed their hatred for the SLPP government which they referred to as betrayal.

Ever since the death of Chief Norman was announced, a strong gap between the family and government has reportedly continued to mount, as members of the family are said to be suspecting a foul play.

Trusted family sources revealed that even the son of the late former Minister of Defence in an interview with a BBC programme, categorically stated that they were not interested in government's participation in the

Continued page 7

No State Funeral for Chief Norman

From front page

funeral of his late father, blaming the government for being ungrateful and full of a bunch of betrayers. He also accused the government of being heartless and has seemingly forgot about the works of the late man. Norman's son, Junior Norman vividly recalled how his father risked his life and fought valiantly to reinstate the Kabbah led SLPP government to power, acting directly under his (Kabbah's order), only for him to be compensated in such a disgraceful manner.

He reportedly told the BBC in that interview that his father was publicly humiliated and forced to eternity.

It has been learnt that the family members have rejected the traditional condolences 'Kasankay' sent by government officials for their father's funeral.

This was proved when a renowned SLPP member was disgracefully booted out of the family house in Bo by the relatives of the deceased when he visited the house to

pay what should have been regarded as last respect.

State Lodge trusted sources revealed that there was a close door meeting of cabinet members and other SLPP supporters to find ways and means to appease the bereaved family of the late Minister of Government and the people's militia Co-ordinator.

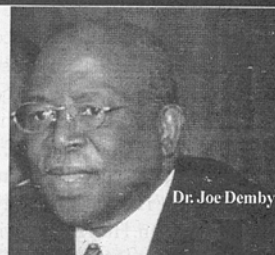
In a separate but similar development, family members has kindly asked the Interim Leader of the People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC), Mr. Francis Charles Magai who was the late man's legal representative during the Special Court trials to fully be in charge of all funeral arrangements of the late Chief, Minister and Co-ordinator.

The remains of Chief Norman who reportedly passed away in a Military Hospital in the West African State of Senegal are said to be flown home for burial shortly after an independent post mortem is been conducted, if the Special Court so approves.

Standard Times
Monday, 26 February 2007

SLPP warned!

V.P. Demby takes over Norman's funeral



Dr. Joe Demby

...Bereaved family rejects Ansu Kaikai

The first SLPP sympathizer to taste the wrath of the bereaved family of deceased of the Special Court for Si-

erra Leone, Chief Sam Hinga Norman, is the SLPP party whip and Member of Parliament, the Hon. Ansu Kaikai.

Kaikai's baptism of fire came about when he went to sympathize with the family a few days back with a paltry token of Le 50,000. A

close family source confided in Standard Times that the SLPP politician was ordered to quit the residence of the bereaved family immediately or has himself to blame.

The source added that the Le50,000 he had brought to the family in observance of tradition was

thrown at his face. "Take your Le50,000 and leave our house now!" Kaikai was reportedly ordered.

The late man's family had ever remained bitter with the treatment meted on the late chief before his

CONTINUED PAGE 15

V.P. Demby takes over Norman's funeral

FROM PAGE 1

death and after his death; something they had not concealed from the SLPP government which they blame for his fate.

In the south and east of the country where the late Sam Hinga Norman is highly respected, supporters and family members have warned that the SLPP, being the artitech of Norman's demise should distance itself from every arrangement that has to do with the funeral rites of the late chief and former coordinator of the civil militia group, which contributed significantly to restore the SLPP government in 1998; and fought alongside the Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) of ECOWAS to liberate the country from the combined grips of rebels and renegade soldiers.

News of the death of Chief Sam Hinga Norman has been received with shock and astonishment by the general public given his role in the war.

Meanwhile, the family has appointed Dr. Albert Joe Demby, former vice President in the first SLPP government as head of the

family and in charge of all burial arrangements of the late chief.

Furthermore, Standard Times has learnt that a private pathologist from London has been contacted by the family, and will join Dr. Joe Williams in London, while Dr. Joe Albert Demby and Lawyer Bubakie Jabbie will be part of the team to Senegal -Dakar next week for an independent autopsy to be carried out. Family sources say after the autopsy the remains of the late chief would be flown to Sierra Leone and burial take place in his home.

Former British High Commissioner to Sierra Leone Peter Penfold is reportedly very instrumental in putting mechanism in place for the autopsy and all other things including the burial arrangement of his once intimate friend.

The death of Chief Norman is not only a loss to the family and Sierra Leone, but has a negative impact on the Special Court for Sierra Leone that most people have perceived as a source of money making for foreign nationals working there.

Pool

Monday, 26 February 2007

SLPP, PMDC fight over Hinga Norman

A war of words has ensued between the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and the People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC) following the sudden death of Special Court indictee, Chief Sam Hinga Norman.

SLPP Secretary General, Jacob Jusus Saffa aka JJ Blood, responding to questions as to whether the SLPP saw the death of Chief Norman, in Special Court detention, a man who had fought gallantly for the party to be restored to power, as a slap in the face, maintained "it is not as easy as people imagine... Chief Norman was a party man. As far as my knowledge goes, he was a chief patron of the party and has never resigned. He died SLPP and has never resigned from the SLPP...It is not a slap in the face of

the SLPP, but just another political challenge which the SLPP is capable of managing."

However, a member of the PMDC Media Unit, J. Alusine Kamara, says "SLPP are like ostriches that bury their head in sand." He continued: "Hinga Norman and other Kamajors indictees signed an open letter declaring for PMDC. Norman sent a personal envoy to PMDC Interim Leader, Charles Margai and had closed door meetings with the PMDC top hierarchy. If SLPP say he did not resign, they are short-sighted."

Kamara claimed that the way the Norman family is feeling, SLPP will not dare to show their faces at the Norman funeral home and ceremonies. Meanwhile, the SLPP

Secretary General has commented that it would be "criminal for anyone to use Norman's death as political gimmick... everyone should mourn."

PMDC Interim Secretary General, Ansu Lansana said the death of Hinga Norman is an indictment to the SLPP and the people of Sierra Leone. "A man who did and sacrificed so much for a party and the country to die in such a manner is really, really pathetic," Lansana stated.

PMDC Interim Leader, Charles Margai refused to comment on the death of Norman. "I'm in pathetic situation, too grief to comment on Hinga Norman's death thinking of all the sacrifices this man has done to the SLPP and the country".

Pool

Monday, 26 February 2007

Kamajors

Warned

A very sad and grieving Rev. Alfred Samforay has called on all members of the Civil Defence Force to remain calm and continue to respect the law and peace.

Rev. Samforay, who is the spokesman of the Hinga Norman Defence Fund said Chief Norman died from internal bleeding. The Chief, Samforay went on, did not want to go to Senegal for the operation. He wanted to go to a more advanced hospital, but was not in position to determine the final decision and he had to go to Senegal. He just wanted the surgery done.

The family of the Chief are waiting the autopsy by international experts.

Mr. Samforay indicated that, chief Norman's daughter, Juliet, was so shocked that she had to be hospitalized. She had return home but she was still so devastated she was not able to talk to people and was just crying.

Mr. Samforay said the chief's death was very shocking and sad, but he appealed to all Kamajors and supporters to keep the spirit of calmness they had been observing before. *"We don't want any activity that will detract the sadness"*.

Awareness Times
Monday, 26 February 2007

NORMAN FAMILY FIRST PRESS RELEASE

14D Hanneson Street
New England Ville, Freetown, SL
232 - 76 - 614177
29B New Place Square, Drummond Rd
London, SE16 2HW, UK.
0207 394 1397 & 44-7985 695 135

It is with regret that we have been informed of the unexpected loss of our Father, Chief Sam Hinga Norman who passed away in Dakar, Senegal on Thursday, 22nd of February 2007.

The cause of death remains unknown and the UN administered Special Court of Sierra Leone who has been responsible for our father's protection and welfare are carrying out an autopsy which will be attended by an independent UK forensic pathologist to represent the interests of the family. The family hopes this matter will be carried out expeditiously so that the

body can be returned to Sierra Leone for burial.

Whilst the family wishes to mourn in private their, husband, father, brother, grandfather, and uncle, the family also recognises, that the people of Sierra Leone wish to recognise the loss of this National Hero. The family supports this, but does not wish to see the death and funeral to become immersed into party politics of Sierra Leone.

Dr. Joe Demby has been asked by the family to assist with the funeral arrangements, which will take place in Bo. Once the appropriate funeral arrangements have been made, the family will inform the public.

In the meantime, books of condolence have been placed in the Church of Salvation in Edward Lane, Freetown and Sewa Road, Bo.

Awareness Times
Monday, 26 February 2007

Full Update On Hinga Norman

By Savoh Kamara

The Special Court for Sierra Leone has issued out a Special Telephone number for members of the public to call to enable them to listen to full and latest updates on the Hinga Norman death and other matters concerning the Special Court. The Special number is 022-297070 if dialled from a landline and if calling from a mobile phone or outside the country, one can dial +232-22-297070. Calls to the number will have the caller listening to a pre-recorded

update. Meanwhile the family of the late man have sent to Awareness Times their First Press Release on the death. It is on Page 2 of this edition.

Additionally, the President of the Special Court, Justice George Gelaga-King, last Friday ordered an inquiry into the death of Hinga Norman. The order was issued pursuant to Rule 22 of the Rules of Detention, which allows the President to order an inquiry into the circumstances

surrounding the death of any detainee. The inquiry will be headed by Appeals Court Justice Renate Winter of Austria. Mr. Norman died on Thursday at the Hospital Aristide Le Dantec, a military hospital in Dakar Senegal. His death came two weeks after he received medical treatment which, although considered routine, is unavailable in Sierra Leone. The procedure was performed successfully, and Mr. Norman had been receiving post-operative care

Contd Page 2

**Chief Dura
of Binkolo is
'Gravely Ill'**

He 'fell gravely ill' on the same day
that Hinga Norman passed away.

Full Update on

Contd from Front Page

when he reportedly died from what his adopted son referred to as "excessive bleeding".

There have been mixed reactions ranging from deep mourning to outright condemnation of the sudden death. One such condemnation which referred to the death as a murder has been heavily criticised by many around the world especially as there was no proof to back such a claim.

In an interview with the Registrar of the Special Court last Thursday at the SLENA building, Mr. Munlo expressed sadness and that the incident had come as "an utter surprise" especially after the operation Chief Norman had

Concord Times

Monday, 26 February 2007
Opinion

The Day Norman's Heroism Became a Curse

Osman Benk Sankoh

Hush-hush - that was how it started. Then, the rumours started raging like wild-fire in the harmattan. With the advent of mobile phones and the internet; texters, e-mailers and callers took charge. They wanted to know if what they were hearing was true or just another 'April fool' in the middle of February. Remember the late Alfred Akibo-Betts? (Concord Times used to describe him as 'enigmatic'). He was considered to be like the proverbial cat with nine lives that always bounced back every time people 'pronounced' him dead. So, many thought the news about Chief Hinga Norman's death was a hoax, not until the Special Court confirmed it and the BBC and other international media organizations made it a lead story. The news was absolutely shocking. Many were speechless.

Truth is, Chief Sam Hinga Norman of Ngolala Village, Moineri, Valunia Chiefdom, Bo District, in the Southern Province of the Republic of Sierra Leone is no more. He died in the custody of the UN-backed Special Court while in Senegal for medical attention last Thursday.

To some, he is considered a war hero. To others, he is a villain that deserves nothing but indictment for war crimes and should have been found guilty, locked up in jail and the key to freedom flung into the Sewa or River Moa. However, whatever your take is on this, Chief Sam Hinga Norman, the Kamajor chief who fought for the restoration of democracy and indeed the return of President Kabbah to power after he was booted out by the khaki boys in 1997 has begun his journey in the spiritual realm. Norman is dead and like a one time fallen Comrade once opined: "Let the laws of the land be like death that spares no one". Cruel death has struck once again and this time, landed a devastating blow on Norman who now joins the list of those indicted persons like Foday Sankoh, Sam Maskita Bockarie and Johnny Paul Koroma that never had the opportunity of proving their innocence or guilt before the Special Court.

Ever since news of Norman's death became public property, shock and dismay have been two major words that have gripped people's emotions. If I had my way, I would have blocked my ears from hearing about Norman's death. Come to think of it, when Sankoh and Maskita died, I am sure, apart from their close families and associates, many shouted Hallelujah! Allahu Akbar (God is great) or even, 'praise be to Jah! Rastafaria! for removing them from the face of the earth. For Norman, the story is different and I can't resist the urge to salute a war hero by taking some time off my somewhat busy official schedule for my first love, writing and to pay a well-deserved tribute to Norman.

When I first got a call from a friend in Freetown with the 'breaking news', I was totally dismayed if not devastated and for one split second, over a thousand thoughts readily came to mind. Questions that I could not instantly provide answers to myself - was this conspiracy that those indicted

for crimes 'are guilty' and will never see the light of a free day? Did he die of natural causes? Have the fears of his family not to take him to Senegal but UK or America for medical attention not come to pass? What of his recent declaration of support for Charles Margai's PMDC instead of the SLPP he sacrificed his life to bring back to power, and what are the political and need I say security ramifications of such a high profile death as we march towards the July polls? Describe me a doomsday pessimist if you like, but I am still struggling to get answers to at least few of my questions. Need I remind you that war crime suspects like Slobodan Milosevic and Foday Sankoh died in their cells even before the rule of law was put to test? If these two are lucky to have even started the process, what of Sam Maskita Bockarie and Johnny Paul Koroma? For the latter, no one knows if he is still alive or not.

I belong to the school of thought that believes that war crimes and crimes against humanity should not go unpunished, but when the catch phrase, "those who bear the greatest responsibility," becomes very difficult to quality, then, if you like, that is where my woes begin. To sound like Mark Anthony in the famous Shakespearean masterpiece, 'Julius Caesar,' am not writing to praise Norman but to simply talk about a simple village chief who took up arms at a time those constitutionally charged with doing so, kicked out a fourteen month old democratically elected government from power and turned themselves into a rare specie called 'sobels.'

The late Alpha Lavallie should be credited for being the pivot behind the formation of the Kamajor militia, but it was Norman, as Coordinator that gave them much prominence. Norman used his one time military experience to make this group of local hunters much more potent and a major auxiliary force to ECOMOG troops in their quest to see Kabbah back to State House. No matter what, he did so at the behest of sacrificing his own life for the good of all Sierra Leoneans. That he was made Deputy Defence Minister and Internal Affairs Minister in Kabbah's government amidst the numerous accolades show-

**Chief Norman has
only retreated to
take his rest in the
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live on forever. Rest
in peace great
patriot!**



ered on him and his Kamajors were all pointers to the fact that he was a major player in Kabbah's second coming.

Indeed shock and bewilderment were understatement for many Sierra Leoneans when on March 7, 2003, Norman was indicted, put in cuffs and thrown to jail in Bonthe. His crime was for fighting for the restoration of democracy, he stands indicted for war crimes and crimes against humanity. But why Norman? I am sure this was the question on the lips of many people. This was a moment of crisis and defenseless and innocent Sierra Leoneans were like animals in a slaughterhouse, at the mercy of rebels. Where did the short hand or long sleeve 'ideology' come from? Was it not to prevent people from voting Kabbah in the 2002 elections? The word junta or collaborator became legalized by the government in exile on their return while targeting those they deemed sympathetic to the AFRC and the truth is all sides were guilty of committing atrocities.

Let us just imagine what would have happened had Norman not mobilized this outfit? Of course, your guess is as good as mine. But with all of this, I wonder who would want to be a Norman again even in the pursuit of truth, justice and democracy. Just imagine you fought on the side of truth and that truth handed Norman a date with David Crane who indicted him for war crimes while a serving minister in the government he helped bring back to power. Tell me, would you have been surprised if the like of the late Alpha Lavallie and Maxwell Khobe were indicted and arraigned before the Special Court?

According to newspaper reports, the Kamajor Chief was said to have shared his belongings to cleaners at the Special Court. Again, it was reported that he scraped dust from the tarmac at Lungi Airport, kissed it and said, "May God bless Sierra Leone."

It is a pity that Norman died even before he could prove to the entire world that he was guilty or innocent. Was Norman a true hero or villain? I would have loved to say goodbye Norman. But did he really die? No! Chief Norman has only retreated to take his rest in the spiritual kingdom, but his legacy will live on forever. Rest in peace great patriot!

For di People

Monday, 26 February 2007

Opinion

The Tragedy of Sam Hinga Norman

TO ME, tragedy simply means the fall of a great man or hero from grace to grass just like in the case of Chief Sam Hinga Norman who died last week of heart attack in a Senegal army hospital.

by

MALIK JIBRIL

Tragedy is common in English or Greek plays.

For example, what befell Hamlet after the death of his father and the prevarication of his state of mind whether to act or not to revenge that death created the pathos for his tragedy.

The same characterised the end of King Odewale in Rotimi's adapted play 'The Gods Are Not To Blame' from the Greek play Oedipus Rex when the protagonist's son had it with the mother unknowingly and paid the price of death and ostracism for such sacrilege. Even those who wanted to stop the course of nature like in the Greek play 'Hippolytus' by remaining a virgin forever too had to pay the ultimate price with his life.

We do not know whether this is also nemesis for Chief Norman because in Greek or Shakespearean plays, the evil that men do lives after them and they often end in tragedy. So to understand nemesis, the character or protagonist falls from a state of grace by his evil deeds and he therefore pays for them in the end in the ever-ending truth that good always defeat evil.

So if it should be nemesis for Norman, then he must then drop from a state of being a hero of great deeds to a tragic end of being dragged to the state of a villain and a criminal before the international court of justice. There is a time when an individual or character is confronted by his own tragic state and he normally takes poignant steps to redeem himself.

The step taken by Norman to deny the SLPP for its ungratefulness and the humiliating treatment meted to him after he had done so much to bring back the government to power was the final straw that broke Norman's backbone and a case in point. Clawed by illness and realising that the end is nigh, Norman severed all final links with the SLPP forever.

However, Norman's love for the SLPP now becomes eclipsed within the PMDC party of Charles Margai whose ancestry were founding fathers of the SLPP. The PMDC party has the kernel of the palm-tree as its symbol so symbolically, Norman remains a true palm-tree by heart if not by action of the head. His burial will be symbolically within the realms of the PMDC to lay him to his last resting place. It is also a bad payment to the Kamajors by the very party they worshipped and died for.

This shows the complete

parting of ways between Norman and the SLPP and for both Kabbah and Berewa's continuity agenda. Some see this as heralding the defeat of the SLPP in the July 2007 elections for it is bound to record more anti-SLPP votes especially from kamajors in the traditional SLPP strongholds.

This symbolism can be extended by some to the funeral in Moyamba of one of the stalwarts of the SLPP, Tarashid Tarawallie who was dressed-up in green and a coffin draped in green as well causing Bishop Humper to raise concern whether it was not in fact the burial of the SLPP party itself.

So is it nemesis for Norman? Those who know his life history will tell you that he is a coupist responsible for the first coup in Sierra Leone in 1967, jailed and on release stayed for sometime in Liberia and later became a chief in the south. The war brought him to prominence and was made deputy defence minister and later Internal Affairs minister before his arrest and charged before the Special Court for crimes against humanity and cannibalism.

Others will tell you that he is a hero who fought for democracy and the restoration of the democratically-elected SLPP government to power and was also head

of the kamajors that fought against the Ruf-rebels to achieve this end but then in the end, was disgraced by his own very party.

Others still will tell you that he is a tribalist and



BEREWA:blamed for plotting Norman's tragedy

sectionalist who only concentrated on the kamajors and neglected the other civil militias from other parts of the country. That he as a soldier ought to have known better than disbanding the army and subjecting it under the kamajors with much loss of life of soldiers and policemen in the hands of the kamajors including civilians from other non-mende parts of the country as well as notorious for eating human flesh which they call 'yamoto.'

However, all these charges or support for Norman could not have mattered so much if the SLLP did not plunge the 'Brutus' dagger on Norman's jugular trans-

forming his status to ignominy-a terrible nightmare and subsequently died like a villain in jail. This is Norman's tragedy.

There is also Norman's last command to all those who revere his death and his contribution to the war and identity of his clansmen to vote against the SLPP under Kabbah and Berewa.



MARGAI:chief mourner



KABBAH:ungrateful

This might be a case study for it is true that the majority mendes are SLPP to the backbone and the same time, revere Norman as their hero but it is still uncertain whether they would rally behind his call.

What is certain is that Norman had passed a 'fatwa' to vote against SLPP for the mendes which has been so ungrateful and machiavellian to him with his blood in their hands. Indeed, Norman has shown all the trappings of a tragic man and would elicit diverse comments about his life and times for sometime to come.

Spark

Monday, 26 February 2007

Opinion

When the idea of setting up a Special Court in the West African sub region was mooted, Nigeria and Ghana were the first countries to say a big NO to the idea of having the infrastructure and administration in their countries. This was simply because the authorities in those countries knew the implications and dangers surrounding such an edifice.

Not so Sierra Leone! Still licking the wounds after our leaders agreed to have the ECOMOG base right here in Sierra Leone so that, according to them, it could be advantageous to attack Charles Taylor and his NPFL in Liberia, stupidly forgetting the fact that the repercussions will fall right under noses, we, the innocent who did not eat, drink or benefited a single cent from the proceeds of such a calamitous deal ended being lambs and sheep herded into the abattoir for over a decade. They, who milked and dined, took the first means of flying over to a safe haven while we were left like parentless children in the hands of the ruthless Hitlers of the twentieth century. We suffered, suffered and SUFFERED. What came out of it was a blanketful of amnesty while till date we the victims continue wallowing in the streams of pain.

Knowing us to be the worst fools in the world, the United Nations took advantage of our gluttony and came to Sierra Leone with conditionalities and what not and BOOM! We had zillions of Leones being spent on a jailhouse for 'those who perpetrated the worst crimes during the war' when in fact everyone knows who the real actors and stage makers were. A handful of inditees were bundled into the palace and were fed like royal goats while we the innocent had to go searching morn, noon and night to secure a loaf of bread without butter. The staff, mostly from the United Nation's pool of idle technocrats, earns thousands of dollars a month for doing sweet Fanny Adams. To make it

The Special Court-Sheer Waste Of Money!!

more painful, the whole complex looks like an airport for small planes especially at nights with thousands of fluorescent bulbs shining like a galaxy of stars while even the house next door have to do with kerosene lamps, the fleet of vehicles, security personnel for just a dozen inditees and food from the most expensive hotels and swimming pleasures on our beaches are

thousands of nationals strongly hold the view that, that expense could have been used to augment the areas of agriculture, education, health, social services and in a nutshell, provide employment for tens of thousands of educated youths now plying the streets looking for something to do.

With Foday Sankoh gone under confused circumstances, Johnny Paul Koroma

in our National Den' has one more player to complete the castigated chair. Who that would be is a jigsaw puzzle even a genius cannot solve.

Back to my point; after the demise of two of the dozen detainees, what purpose would our Beverly Hills serve? Of what economic value, I am seriously thinking of my starving, roofless breth-

With Foday Sankoh gone under confused circumstances, Johnny Paul Koroma living in a nowhere land and now our hero Sam Hinga Norman who lay bare his neck under the rebels' guillotine for love of country and to save his compatriots while those who actually caused or rather ignited the flames of discord flew away Peter, and came back Paul when the fire had been extinguished, only for the Robin Hood of our times to be treated like a scapegoat leaves one thinking whose next

part of the UN's assistance to poor old miserable Salone.

In a country where the majority of its people live on less than a dollar a day, it is common sense that if the UN was really genuine about salvaging us from the woes of hunger, thirst and deprivation, the use of those zillions of Leones, I would deliberately not refer to the wasteful exercise in dollars because, though poor, my country has its currency, however weak it is, the Leone,

living in a nowhere land and now our hero Sam Hinga Norman who lay bare his neck under the rebels' guillotine for love of country and to save his compatriots while those who actually caused or rather ignited the flames of discord flew away Peter, and came back Paul when the fire had been extinguished, only for the Robin Hood of our times to be treated like a scapegoat leaves one thinking whose next. The 'Farmer

ren, who, because of some people's quest for vengeance and to be tautological, vengeance, have misdirected our priorities from sustenance to personal vendetta. If that complex had been or could be converted to a factory, educational institution, hospital, a scientific laboratory, youth skill training centre or any project that could be of economic and social benefit to my country, I would die a rather happy man.

As I see it, the Special Court is nothing short than a waste of the UN's money, greed on the part of our political authorities, and the accomplishment of personal hate and envy



As I see it, the Special Court is nothing short than a waste of the UN's money, greed on the part of our political authorities, and the accomplishment of personal hate and envy.

Why was the Special Court not equipped with highly professional medicos? Instead of providing lush courtrooms, lavish cells and heaven in hell, I would strongly suggest that we close the damn place and lease it to a business entrepreneur who would pay something to our nation's coffers, although the bulk will be chopped by our ever hungry and gluttonous rats. Charles Taylor is far, far away in the Netherlands. So transfer the remainder of the inditees to meet Charles Taylor so the 'Vacancy Notice' could be pasted on the walls and advertised.

At least Sierra Leone could benefit from the revenue and our hungry bellied youths could at least have a mouthful from the rent or lease. They would have a new lease of life because at least, they could gain employment to feed their already dying families. Even prostitution and drug addiction could be minimised to a very great extent, but no, our so-called leaders cannot think it that way. The reason is obvious; their bulging pockets, their vicious minds and their dirty politicking must swell like a hurricane ready to swallow right thinking souls. One thing that will definitely be of benefit to all Sierra Leoneans, I mean P-A-T-R-I-O-T-I-C Sierra Leoneans is to close the damn place and think of development for our very existence. At least, it is better than locking people for committing the (did I hear you say worst) atrocities.

As far as I am concerned it is Special Court, fare thee well, you have outlived your usefulness. Bye, bye!!!

Standard Times

Monday, 26 February 2007

Opinion

THE PASSING AWAY OF A GREAT MAN

THE SUDDEN DEATH of Chief Sam Hinga Norman is not only a shock to many Sierra Leoneans but also a heavy blow and a great loss to the nation. Dying from a heart attack in a military detention hospital away in a foreign land at the hands of people who were supposed to care for him, makes his death even more painful.

MANY SIERRA LEONEANS had hoped to see the return of Chief Norman to normal life after his acquittal by the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Many may have thought it rightly, with hind sight, that his trip to Senegal was predetermined to be his last trip, but due to their helplessness they could do nothing about it.

MANY BELIEVED HE should never have been a Special Court detainee but that because of the manipulations of powerful politicians threatened by his increasing popularity among the people, he was dragged there, literally in chains, to be incarcerated for over three years, until his death.

INDEED, the first Prosecutor of the court, the brash American David Crane, had declared that anyone who falls within the net of the court and get to be arrested "will never see the light of day again."

TRUE TO HIS words, nearly everyone who has been indicted and caught by the claws of the court has not seen the light of day again, like we do. Two have died, one is still being treated in Senegal, where Chief Norman died, and while others are fighting for their lives in the Freetown detention facility.

CHIEF NORMAN's passing is that of a great man who saved his country from burning down to ashes, and for that his name will ever go down in the history of this country as one of those few Sierra Leonean patriots who lived and died for his country.

THE CRIMES FOR which he was accused may have or have not been committed by him, and the truth of that is now only a matter between him, his accusers and the almighty God, who knows and sees everything.

HOWEVER, his role in redeeming a suppressed people from the violence and brutality of the rebels who everyone feared then, is well known and will ever be commendable. Indeed, it is clear from the amount of hate the rebels had for him that had it not been for him they would have succeeded in establishing their rebel government for far longer that it lasted.

WHATEVER CRIMES HE may have committed were long forgiven by the sacrifices he made to free his people from bondage, and it is the reason why many Sierra Leoneans will never forget Chief Norman. His enemies will now finally let him to rest in peace.

STANDARD TIMES STANDS by all other Sierra Leoneans and join them as they mourn the death of the only person who have was very qualified for the accolade of a hero, a true hero of the people.


HIS LOSS LEAVES a big vacuum in the hearts and minds of the people that will take a long time to refill.

WE HOWEVER APPEAL to all Sierra Leoneans aggrieved by the passing of Chief Norman to take heart and count on the almighty God, who knows why.

MAY HIS SOUL rest in perfect peace.

Awoko

Monday, 26 February 2007



Opinion Poll

Who would you say is responsible for Norman's death?

Text: "S" for Special Court - "G" for Government or "H" for Hospital

To numbers 076-444444 or 030-445566

Your phone calls will not be answered text only please

Texts close Friday 2nd March, 2007

African Champion
Monday, 26 February 2007
Opinion

Page 7

The African Champion

February, 2007

“Special Court Is A Killer”



RUF leader Foday Saybannah Sankoh, first to die



Civil Defense Force Chief Hinga Norman,

"The Special Court is the killer responsible for the death of Chief Hinga Norman," so stated Alhaji Foray, a student in the Njala University College in Bo responding to questions from *The African Champion's Bo* correspondent who was conducting a vox pop in the Southern city.

According to Mr. Foray, the former deputy Defence Minister was deliberately killed because of a hidden agenda yet to be disclosed and that "his fate had already been sealed and his death signed from the very day that he was thrown into the prison in Bonthe Island." The student, in an angry tone, lambasted the handling of Norman's matter as a disgrace to international standards and questioned why the

Sierra Leone government should allow its own minister to be treated in such a manner. "We know that the late chief had repeatedly stated that he was not well but his calls had fallen on deaf ears both by the government and Special Court officials," Foray said. He further intimated that Bo has decided not to support the SLPP in the forth coming elections because the people of that city owe an obligation to the late man for protecting them during repeated attacks from rebel and junta forces.

In a related development, family members of the late Hinga Norman over Citizen Radio's Talk To Your President programme recently, have warned the SLPP not to have anything to do with his funeral and burial arrangements. "We are

warning the SLPP not to touch the body or even attend the funeral if they do not want war to erupt in this country again," one family member said. Numerous callers also condemned the SLPP government and called for voters not to support them. "We can take care of Chief Norman's burial without any sycophant coming here to use the even as a political ladder," one irate caller said. Meanwhile the death of Norman continues to generate dissatisfaction country-wide and even abroad. The manner of his death has been questioned and the conclusion drawn is that the former Kamajor Coordinator did not die a natural death. Sam Norman jr. son of Chief Norman has stated that an independent pathologist will be contacted to carry out investigations into the cause of death. Arrangements are currently being put in place to fly the corpse to London before bringing it to Sierra Leone for final internment.

BBC Newsnight

Thursday, 22 February 2007

A former Defence Minister in Sierra Leone, Sam Hinga Norman, has died in custody at the age of 67. Now he was indicted for murder and terrorism by the UN war crimes tribunal in Sierra Leone for his role in leading a paramilitary force which fought on the government's side, fighting against rebel in the conflict there around a decade ago. Now some Sierra Leoneans thought he should never have been imprisoned, and that is also the view of a former British ambassador to Sierra Leone, Peter Penfold, who told the Special Court when he gave evidence to it, "I feel, like many others, Norman is a hero, not a war criminal, and I believe the indictment here is a grave injustice". Well I've been speaking to Peter Penfold, and asked him to explain his view.

PENFOLD: When the coup took place in 1997 he was the one minister who stayed in the country when the president and others had to flee. He tried to organize a resistance against the coup. We had to hide him for four days in the lift shaft of a hotel because he was the one person all the rebel soldiers were after. We managed to get him out on a US warship. Then he came back in on behest of the government to organize the civil resistance against the notorious rebels and the rebel army – the one person who was doing that.

So you think basically he stood up for law and order in Sierra Leone?

PENFOLD: Undoubtedly, and for peace and democracy. He was very committed to democracy. He was very committed to see the restoration of the legally democratically-elected government of President Kabbah. I mean at one stage it could be said he was probably one of the most powerful people in Sierra Leone if, for example, he'd wanted to take over the country he could have, but he was so committed to democracy and the restoration of law and order that he fought for the restoration of President Kabbah's government.

The indictment against him, though, makes pretty grim reading, accusing fighters allegedly under his control of human sacrifice, of cannibalism even.

PENFOLD: You have to remember what the situation was. You were dealing with a bunch of thugs and killers called the RUF under this messianic megalomaniac called Foday Sankoh who were going around terrorizing people, they were chopping off arms and legs, killing people, killing women and children, raping, looting, pillaging, and it was the civil militia – because there was no police force, there was no army to protect them – who organized resistance. Now when these thugs and killers come to your village you can't just wag a finger at them and say "uh uh, that's against human rights". You have to a certain extent fight fire with fire. So I don't think, no one ever denied that maybe there were one or two excesses committed by the civil militia in defence of their positions. But that was totally different from saying that this was an organized policy orchestrated by Chief Norman who in any effect was not the person totally in charge of the civil militia. That leadership went all the way up to the president himself. They were fighting on his behalf.

And you spoke to the family today I think, so can you just tell us what you know about how he died in prison?

PENFOLD: Well I was talking to many members of the family. He has family both in Freetown and here in the UK. I mean they're obviously sort of shocked and devastated by the news. It's very unexpected and, you know, I share those feelings and the anger as well. I mean as I've just been saying, here's a person who was a hero, and there is this hero who spent the last four years of his life incarcerated in a prison. And then he dies in rather peculiar circumstances it seems to me far away, not even in Sierra Leone, not even in UK, away from his family and friends apart from just one member of the family who was with him when he died. I still find it very strange to understand what has happened. I spoke to him just a couple of days ago. I speak to Chief Norman regularly. He had had an operation [redacted]. Last week that operation had gone perfectly well. Everybody had reported a success as indeed Chief Norman had. Last night I know for

example that there he was watching football in his cell, very happy and content. And then this morning there he suddenly gets on his bed, he faints and he dies.

Do you suspect foul play?

PENFOLD: I can't say that because I don't know specifically, but it does seem to me that certainly the medical attention that was being given to him was not good enough.

That was Peter Penfold, former British ambassador to Sierra Leone. We're joined now by the Prosecutor for the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Stephen Rapp. Well you know that is a senior person, a former ambassador saying really what is quite unusual to hear from such a person, that he doesn't think the medical facilities being laid on by you guys was good enough. What do you say to that?

RAPP: Well the medical facilities were arranged with great effort over a period of several months, attempting to find a country that would accept Hinga Norman and another accused. Senegal agreed to accept him and to provide the medical treatment, and they're a military hospital – the same facility used for military officers and senior government officers in Senegal. Certainly the most up to date facility in West Africa. And as the ambassador has indicated, the operation itself, which he indicated was a [redacted], which is true, went well, and the recovery was going well. And today Chief Norman, who's 67 years old, died of heart failure. This is very regrettable. We're in a state of shock. We wanted justice done in this case for the people of Sierra Leone, for the victims of the crimes committed in this country, and for Chief Norman. And what's happened with his death is denied that opportunity. Now he was tried with two other individuals, allegedly very close subordinates, of him and the CDF force, and the Judges will render a verdict, a judgment in regard to their two cases, some of which involve allegations of a common criminal enterprise or joint criminal enterprise with Chief Norman, so there'll be some light drawn on these events, but it cannot be a judgment that will directly determine the guilt or innocence of Chief Norman, and that is a tragedy.

Well let me just put the main point being put by Peter Penfold to you, that you basically have got the wrong person – that Norman served his country with bravery in the face of a vicious rebel campaign and that most Sierra Leoneans are grateful for what he did.

RAPP: Well you know whenever the world has had to deal with these situations of alleged atrocities committed during civil or international conflicts, there's often the allegation that what you have is "victor's justice" – that the side that wins, their crimes are brushed under the carpet...

Yeah, I think precisely the point is...

RAPP: ...(two speaking together) they're indicted. In this case my predecessor took the evidence, heard the witnesses, presented indictments against both sides in the conflict. And evidence came forth, public evidence, during the course of this trial, tested by Chief Norman's attorneys and others that were co-defendants with him, indicating that you speak of fighting fire with fire, if one side is engaged in terrorism, murder of civilians, ritual killing, utilization of child soldiers, that does not justify anyone in a civil conflict – particularly a person of the maturity and experience of Chief Norman...

Okay.

RAPP: ...in authorizing, condoning, ordering the same kind of acts on his side.

Stephen Rapp, thank you very much. That's the Prosecutor for the Special Court in Sierra Leone.

Voice of America

Monday, 26 February 2007

Sierra Leone Court to Investigate Militia Suspect's Sudden Death

By Howard Lesser
Washington, DC

The death of a reputed leader of Sierra Leone's Kamajor militia just days before a verdict was to be rendered at his two-and-a-half year long trial has drawn expressions of regret from the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Court spokesman Yves Sorokabi says that militia chief Sam Hinga Norman's death Thursday at a Senegalese military hospital of an apparent heart attack was unexpected.

"His death was, from what we understand, probably a heart attack, and it took everybody by surprise, including the court officials who were accompanying him to Dakar," said Sorokabi.

On January 17, representatives of the UN-backed court transported Norman to Senegal to undergo what was described as routine hip surgery. Relatives, supporters, and human rights groups in Senegal questioned his transfer and the status of his detention in Senegal. But Norman, who had served as Internal Affairs Minister until the time of his arrest, underwent a successful operation on February 8, and was said to be recovering without complications.

"Mr. Norman was being held in all the best conditions provided under international law. His defense team never questions the conditions of his detention. He had access to the best medical facilities, and professionals that the court could provide," said Sorokabi.

The Court representative vowed to forego any speculation about the sudden death until a full autopsy and medical report are conducted. During Sierra Leone's civil conflict in the 1990's, Sam Hinga Norman reportedly assumed leadership of a pro-government civil defense militia made up of traditional Kamajor hunters, supporting President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah against rebels of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF). In June, 2004, Norman was charged on eight counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for having recruited and trained child fighters younger than 15 years of age for attacks civilians suspected of collaborating with the RUF.

"Mr. Norman was prosecuted under the legal theory of common responsibility under the accusation that he was the leader of the militia that is documented to have killed very many people. Under common responsibility, now that Mr. Norman as number one of that unit is no longer here, the Court will have to determine whether or not it wants to pursue the case of perceived leaders of that militia. Whether or not, it may be advisable for the Court to consider dropping the case altogether. Now, whatever the court decides to do, it still has to establish what happens for the sake of the victims and for the sake of the survivors," said Sorokabi.

Sam Hinga Norman joins former RUF commanders Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie as suspects who have died before facing a court verdict. The fate of a fourth Special Court suspect, coup leader Johnny Paul Koroma, who disappeared years ago and has not been heard from since, is also uncertain.

Voice of America

Monday, 26 February 2007

Interview with Yves Sorokobi, Spokesman for the UN Secretary-General

YVES SOROKOBI: We understand from the Court that the procedure that he underwent on February 8 were routine procedures that all went very well and there were no reported complications. In fact, Mr. Norman appeared to be on the up to the point that the Court had scheduled to have a verdict in this case shortly.

You see his death was, from what we understand, probably a heart attack, and it took everybody by surprise, including the Court officials that were accompanying him to Dakar.

Mr. Norman was held in all the best conditions provided under international law. His Defence team never questions the condition of his detention. He had access to the best medical facilities and professionals that the Court could provide, and whether this had a psychological effect that may have reverberated into an actual medical condition, that's a hypothetical road we will refrain from going down until we have the full autopsy and the full medical report on what might have caused what seemed to be a fatal heart attack. We should probably not speculate on that.

HOWARD LESSER: Where does the Court proceed from here now that the figure charged is no longer with us?

SOROKOBI: Well, Mr. Norman was prosecuted under a legal theory of command responsibility under the accusation that he was the leader of a militia that is documented to have killed very many people. Under command responsibility, now that Mr. Norman is no longer one of that unit, he is no longer here, the Court will have to determine whether or not he wants to pursue the case against other perceived leaders of that militia, and whether or not it may be advisable for the Court to consider dropping the case altogether. Now whatever the Court decides to do, it still has to establish what happened for the sake of the victims and for the sake of the survivors of that event that took place during the civil war that are believed to have been caused by the CDF militia which Mr. Norman was supposedly the leader. That work is still going on. The historical documentation of war crimes and crimes against humanity is also part of the mandate of the Court. We may not have an accused now to sentence or to acquit, but we still have the responsibility toward the victims of the conflict.

LESSER: How close has the Special Court come to a verdict in the case at this point?

SOROKOBI: We understand from the Court that it was very close. We've had a press release that the Court put out saying that it could have been any day now, It is very unfortunate that somebody who is widely suspected, in fact has been convicted, of having committed horrendous crimes that the Court has determined were crimes against humanity and war crimes could escape final judgment. We certainly share the pain of his relatives and family, but the victims of that conflict would not have any sense that justice has been done, which is very unfortunate.

The death of Mr. Norman technically, should the trial continue, would make it a trial *in absentia* which goes against the statute of the Court, so very likely the case would be dropped altogether.

The Analyst (Monrovia)

Friday, 23 February 2007

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200702230893.html>

Sierra Leone: Victims of International Justice

Great Britain and other members of the United Nations Security Council, in 2002, established a hybrid Special International Court for Sierra Leone with the acquiescence and active participation of that country. The court is fashioned after the International Criminal Court with the mandate to deliver justice in order to eradicate the culture of impunity and to send home the message that even war has limits.

But more than three years on and with a bankroll running into millions of U.S. dollars, the court is yet to hand down a verdict. But it is progressively claiming victims: first Foday Sankoh of the rebel Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) and now Hinga Norman.

Norman commanded what some critics described as the "vicious pro-government Kamajoh rebel movement" known officially as the Civil Defence Militia.

Added to Milosevic's 'suicide' in a Hague jail cell last year, many see a pattern of tele-guided justice forming and are worried over the fate of the remaining inmates.

The Analyst Staff Writer has been looking at circumstances leading to the Special Court's newest death-in-detention.

The Press and Public Affairs Office of the Special Court for Sierra Leone announced in Freetown that indictee Sam Hinga Norman died, yesterday, at a military hospital in Dakar, Senegal.

Mr. Norman's death while awaiting court verdict into the role allegedly played in Sierra Leone's war excesses brings to two the number of persons known to have died in jail under similar circumstances.

The first to die under mysterious circumstances while awaiting justice in the detention facilities of the Special Court was Corporal Foday Sankoh.

Corporal Sankoh commanded the rebel RUF that is blamed largely for the dismemberment, disembowelment, raping, kidnapping, and decapitation of thousands of Sierra Leone's hapless villagers running from violence during a decade-long warfare.

"It is with deep regret that the Special Court for Sierra Leone announces the death of former Sierra Leone Internal Affairs Minister Sam Hinga Norman, who was on trial before the Special Court for Sierra Leone," the Press and Public Affairs Office of the Special Court said in dispatch yesterday.

Mr. Norman and another Special Court detainee were taken to Dakar on 17 January for medical procedures which were considered routine, but which were unavailable in Sierra Leone.

"Those procedures were performed on Thursday, 8 February, without complication. At 10:55 this morning Mr. Norman collapsed and, despite attempts to revive him, was pronounced dead at about 11:15," the dispatch noted further.

It said the initial indications were that Mr. Norman suffered heart failure during post-operative care.

"[Special Court] Registrar Lovemore Munlo, has ordered an independent investigation by international medical experts to determine the exact cause of death," the dispatch said and added that the Registrar informed family members early yesterday afternoon and expressed his deep personal regret at their loss.

Mr. Norman had been charged with 8 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity stemming from acts allegedly carried out by the Civil Defence Militia he headed during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil conflict.

His job, which some say was bankrolled by the government of the incumbent Ahmed Tijan Kabbah, was to coordinate the pro-government Civil Defense Forces (CDF) militia, known as Kamajoh, during the former British colony's 1991-2002 civil war.

Like his bitter battlefield rival Cpl Foday Sankoh, Norman had maintained his innocence throughout the trial, which began in June 2004. But he died just before the verdict currently pending before the Trial Chamber was due to be handed down within a week.

The Special Court is an independent tribunal established jointly by the United Nations and the government of Sierra Leone. It is mandated to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996.

To date, the Prosecutor has indicted eleven persons on various charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

The indictment against Hinga Norman and two CDF co-defendants said members of the militia practiced human sacrifice and cannibalism during Sierra Leone's war, a brutal conflict in which rebel fighters chopped off civilians' limbs.

The court's highest-profile indictee, former president of neighboring Liberia Charles Taylor, has been sent to a special sitting of the court in The Hague to face war crimes charges linked to his support for rebels during the war.

Others blamed for ordering massive war excesses during Sierra Leone's war, including Sam Boukarie and Johnny Paul Koromah, never had the courtesy of a court trial.

They were reportedly compromised by former mentors amongst whom, reports say is the former president of Liberia and now ICC inmate Charles Taylor, in order to hide evidence.

With what appears to be serial deaths in prison facilities run by the ICC and the SLSC, many are worried that the international system of justice once considered summary-justice proof is sliding into a scenario of death chambers.

Relatives and defense counsels of the ten known indictees currently awaiting justice within the walls of Freetown Special Court's maximum security detention facilities are worried that their kin or clients may never get the benefit of international justice, lest to talk about getting out alive.

This sentiment is especially high amongst the legal defense team of Mr. Taylor. The head of Mr. Taylor's legal team, Mr. Karim Khan, told a press conference in Monrovia recently that the team was worried about the condition in jail and fair trial for its client.

"It is time Liberians engage the process through scrutiny to make sure that the former president is given his rights in court," the British lawyer said during campaigns to recruit investigators who will help with information to enable them to adequately get ready for the proceedings.

Earlier, some members of Taylor's counsels issued a joint statement with the Association for the Legal Defense of Mr. Taylor alleging that Mr. Taylor's condition at The Hague detention facilities were below expectation.

They complained of delayed meals, less contacts with family members, and media publicity that ran against the legal interest of Mr. Taylor and concluded that he may not get fair trial.

It is clear that Yugoslavia's Milosevic committed suicide in his ICC cell, but with the deaths of Sankoh and Norman under baffling medical circumstances, critics say, it is frightening that international justice is claiming victims when it should be delivering speedy justice.

If the pattern critics are suspecting becomes the case, analysts say, submitting to such courts is to submit to Mafioso-style jungle justice or to knowingly walk into a deathtrap.

"But can any one indictee raise that argument and win?" is the question on the lips of many who are worried over the next victim of the lapses of the international justice process.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 23 February 2007

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

International Clips on Liberia

Kagame, Sirleaf Discuss Bilateral Ties

Kigali, Feb 23, 2007 (The New Times/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --President Paul Kagame has promised to fully support Liberia in her reconstruction endeavors. Addressing journalists shortly after President Kagame met with a visiting Liberian delegation led by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf on February 21 at Village Urugwiro, Foreign Affairs minister Dr Charles Murigande said the President briefed the delegation about Rwanda's post-genocide reconstruction, 13 years after the 1994 Genocide, and how **Liberia** could borrow a leaf from the achievements registered.

Liberia President, Mrs. Blair Jet in for Summit

Kigali, Feb 22, 2007 (The New Times/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Cherie Booth Blair, the wife of UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, arrived in Kigali yesterday for the International Women Parliamentarians' Conference. The Liberian President was received at Kanombe International Airport by President Paul Kagame and Prime Minister Bernard Makuza, among other dignitaries.

International Clips on West Africa

Guinea parliament rejects prolonging martial law

CONAKRY, Feb 23 (Reuters) - Guinea's parliament on Friday refused a request from President Lansana Conte to extend martial law in a rare act of defiance against his autocratic rule over the West African country. The period of martial law, imposed nationwide 11 days ago to quell violent protests accompanying a general strike, was due to expire later on Friday, but the president had asked the National Assembly to prolong it, citing security concerns.

Guinea strike floors currency, hits gov't revenues

CONAKRY, Feb 23 (Reuters) - Martial law and a nationwide general strike have flooded Guinea's fragile franc currency, sending prices soaring and threatening to punch a big hole in government finances, economists said on Friday. As Guinea's second general strike this year entered its 12th day, with shops and businesses shuttered, the U.S. dollar climbed ever higher on "Wall Street" -- the potholed Conakry thoroughfare which serves as the currency black market.

AP February 23, 2007

Sierra Leone War Crimes Defendant Dies

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone_Sam Hinga Norman, a former government minister on trial for allegedly overseeing a militia accused of torturing and mutilating civilians during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war, died Thursday at a Senegalese hospital, a court statement said.

War Crimes Indictee's Death is Blow to Special Court

Dakar, Feb 22, 2007 (UN Integrated Regional Information Networks/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --Sam Hinga Norman, the leader of the local civil defence militia that helped defeat the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) during the 1991 to 2001 civil war but who was later indicted by the UN-backed court in Sierra Leone, has died.

Local Media – Newspaper

Journalists Call for Dismissal of Minister

(The Informer, The Analyst, The News and Heritage)

- In a statement issued in Monrovia yesterday, the Press Union of Liberia announced the suspension for three months, the membership of *The Independent* newspaper for publishing in its February 20 edition an obscene photograph of State and Presidential Affairs Minister Willis Knuckles in a sex orgy with two women and imposed a fine of 2,500 Liberian dollars on the Catholic-run Radio for vividly describing the sex orgy in its broadcasts.
- In a press statement today, 23 February, the Station acknowledged that it committed ethical transgression and attributed the error to a "slapdash gate-keeping regime" on the night of Tuesday February 20, 2007 when the news items were being compiled.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored today at 9:45 am)*

Journalists Call for Dismissal of Minister

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Some Lawmakers Demand Resignation of Acting House Speaker

- Quoting legislative sources, Radio Veritas said that some members of the House of Representatives are demanding Acting Speaker, Tokpah Mulbah to resign or face a vote of no confidence.
- The source however said, Deputy Speaker Mulbah who has been acting following the resignation of former Speaker Snowe appears not willing to leave the position.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Truth Commission Assesses Operations

- In an interview, the Chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Counsellor Jerome Verdier said why statement takers are yet to go back on the field, the commission is engaged in a mid term review and assessment of its operations with its partners to enhanced a more sustainable TRC in Liberia.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Justice Minister Recommends Electoral Tax System

- Speaking at a one day electoral law reform forum, Justice Minister Counsellor Frances Johnson-Morris recommended that government introduce an electoral tax system to support the work of the National Elections Commission.
- The forum held under the theme: "Consolidating the Gains and Making further Improvement in the Democratization Process through Elections" is considering the amendment of various constitutional provisions with respect to the holding of elections.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Star Radio *(News culled from websites today at 8:30 am)*

Health Ministry official warn against stigmatizing HIV/AIDS patients

- Speaking at the start of a capacity-building workshop, the National Coordinator for People Living with HIV/AIDS at the Ministry of Health, Mr. Prince Kun called for people with HIV/AIDS not to be stigmatized or discriminated against but given hope and a sense of belonging.
- The workshop is organized by the National Aids Control Program with support from the Global Fund and the UNDP.

Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at karpeh@un.org.

UN envoys highlights progress in Liberia but cautions against complacency

Harbel, Liberia – The UN envoy in Liberia, Mr. Alan Doss, has commended Liberia for the tremendous progress the country has witnessed since the start of the UN peace mission in the country in 2003, but cautioned against complacency. The UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative in Liberia was speaking at a ceremony at the Roberts International Airport, about 45 kilometres outside Monrovia, during which 301 officers of the Ukrainian Aviation Unit were honoured with UN medals for their contribution to the UN peace mission in Liberia.



Mr. Doss congratulates a Ukrainian officer

“Through the efforts of the democratically-elected government and the international community, Liberia is now on the path to recovery after years of conflict and violence”, he observed, but warned that “outbursts of violent public disorder and troubles in neighbouring countries must not be allowed to undermine the consolidation of the peace in Liberia”. Mr. Doss stressed that UNMIL will remain vigilant to ensure that security conditions enable the government to move ahead with its programme of national reform and renewal.

The UN Envoy commended the Ukrainian Aviation Unit in UNMIL for their dedication and professionalism. “The helicopter gunships that this unit manages, provide a critical and unique armed capability for the peacekeepers of this mission” adding that “our blue helmets know they can rely on this overhead support for border patrols and in times of crisis”. Mr. Doss noted that the Ukrainian Aviation Unit also provided transport and cargo airlifts and undertaken medical evacuation missions across Liberia.



Mr. Doss inspects Ukrainian officers on parade

The UN envoy urged the peacekeepers to abide strictly by the Secretary-General’s policy of zero tolerance of sexual abuse and exploitation, calling on commanders and officers to lead by example to get the message across to all their troops.

The occasion was held on Ukraine’s “Defender of the Motherland Day”, a day on which Ukrainian military and war veterans are remembered and honoured. Among the dignitaries present at the medal-awarding ceremony were UNMIL Deputy Force Commander Major-General Mohammed Tahir and Ukrainian Contingent Commander Colonel Shluharchuk Taras.

BBC

Sunday, 25 February 2007

Guinea unions 'call off strike'

Trade union leaders in Guinea say they will suspend a long-running general strike after President Lansana Conte agreed to replace his prime minister.

The new PM is to be chosen from a list compiled by unions and the opposition.

The strike began more than six weeks ago, as unions demanded the appointment of an independent prime minister to carry out wide-ranging reforms.



The deal emerged after days of intense negotiation

Since then, more than 100 demonstrators have been shot dead by the security forces and martial law was imposed.

The deal to end the political crisis was struck after lengthy talks involving the unions, the president and West African mediators.

A union negotiator, Ibrahima Fofana, told AP news agency that although the strike would technically end at midnight on Sunday, Monday should be a day of prayer devoted to all those who died in the strike-related violence.

According to a statement read out by regional negotiator Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the unions "have decided to suspend the strike call across the whole national territory and they urge workers to go back to work on Tuesday, 27 February."

Guinea's parliament voted on Friday to reject the president's request for an extension of martial law.