

**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 Press and Public Affairs Office

as at:

Monday, 3 March 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Exclusive
Monday, 3 March 2008

"Taylor

"...Or else George Bush and Tony Blair would also be on trial. My case is he should not be on trial at all. He is being tried for his foreign policy. There is nothing to distinguish between what he has done and what other leaders in the West have done historically," lawyer, Courtney Griffiths Qc, representing Special Court indictee, Charles Taylor at The Hague, Netherlands is reported to have argued.

Not

Guilty"

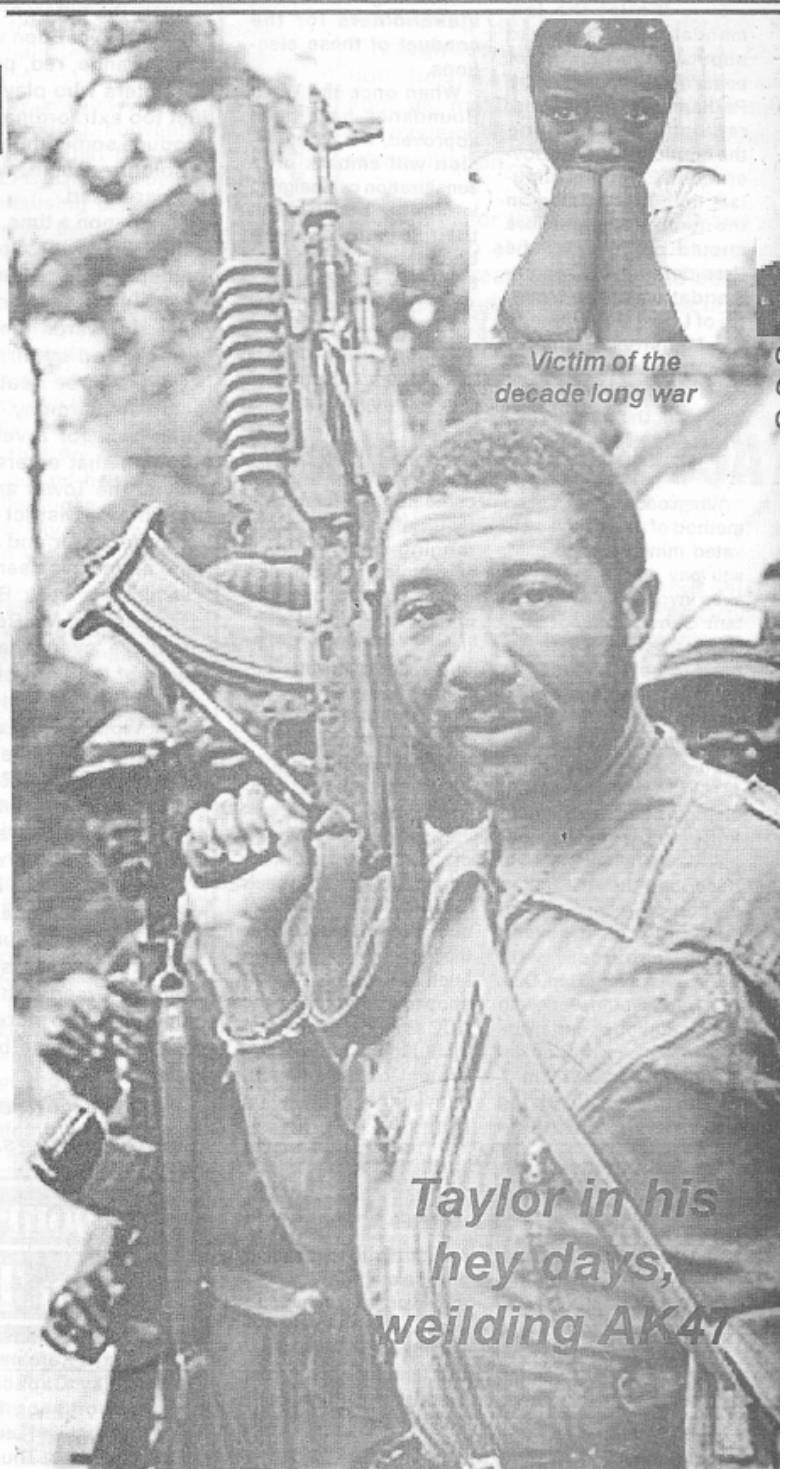
"Should Not Be On Trial..."

-Lawyer Argues

"Why start with a black man? Why has it got to be a

black man? Why not start with the Americans who have been misbehaving in other people's country for

Continued page 2



Victim of the decade long war

Taylor in his hey days, wielding AK47

"Taylor Not Guilty"

From front page

decade?" Taylor's lawyer asked, adding, "It is not justice but politics. If he is convicted then I think it is a sad day for Africa."

The Chief Prosecutor,

Stephen Rapp is however reported to have stated that the case rests on "linkage." "We have to show the connection to Taylor; that he knew the RUF was targeting civilians for murder,

for mutilation, for rape, and sexual slavery; that they were recruiting children under 15 to commit horrible acts. If he knew that, and he nonetheless aided them, then he is guilty of the crime," Rapp submits.

The prosecution also argues that if Mr. Taylor goes down it will be an important signal to Africa's leaders - "not just a step towards the noble goals of good governance and accountability but a genuine result for wounded civilians, the amputees, and their children, for potential future victims, those for whom the idea of International Justice and "never again" was conceived," the prosecution further maintained.

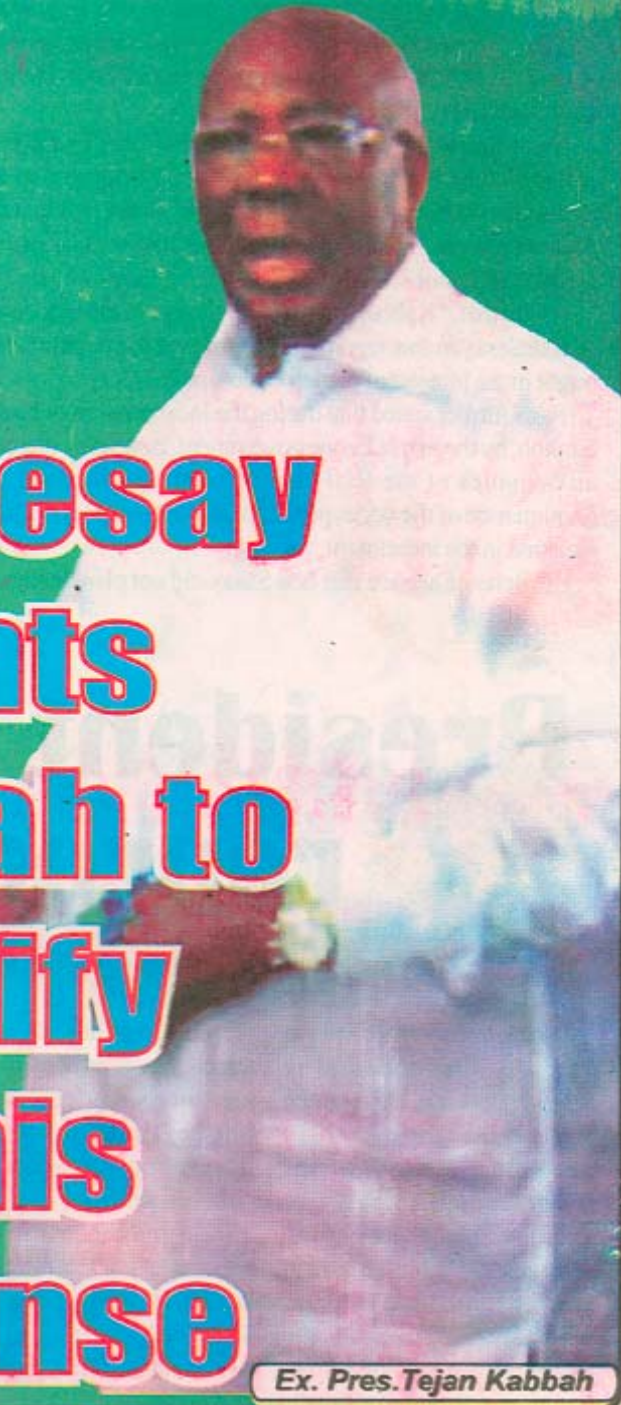
Awoko
Monday, 3 March 2008



Issa Sesay

**Issa Sesay
wants
Kabbah to
testify
in his
defense**

Ex. Pres. Tejan Kabbah



Issa Sesay wants Kabbah to testify in his defense

By Betty Milton

The first accused of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Issa Hassan Sesay, has filed a document requesting an order to subpoena former president Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to give a pre-testimonial interview and after which he will testify in his defence.

According to the document filed to the court by the lead counsel of the accused, Wayne Jordash, the purpose of the evidence of the ex-president is to establish the fact that the accused did not order an attack or coordinate attacks against UNAMSIL troops.

Urging that, "Kabbah has full knowledge of the innocence of Issa Sesay in this regard; he has refused to cooperate and ought in the interest of justice be compelled."

It was further stated that during the incarceration of Foday Sankoh, by the Sierra Leone government, Issa Sesay directed all activities of the RUF and thereafter maintained the continuance of the widespread attacks during relevant time as stated in the indictment.

The defence argued that Issa Sesay did not plan, instigate,

order, commit, or otherwise be in the planning, preparations, or execution of any of the alleged crimes against the UNAMSIL troops and also the accused did not fail to prevent or punish any subordinate for any of the aforementioned crimes.

The defence also submitted that the accused played no role in the attacks on the UNAMSIL troops within the northern region, stressing that during these attacks Mr Sesay was located within the Koidu axis when news of the attack was made known to him and he had to travel to Makeni to ascertain the security situation.

"Mr Sesay was not acting on the orders of either Foday Sankoh or any other superior authority when he took charge of the UNAMSIL troops within the Makeni axis nor when he removed them safely of Kono.

The Issa Sesay defence also submitted on the issue of the evidence of the former president, they stressed that the president knew there was a deliberate governmental/United Nations policy to ensure that Foday Sankoh could not give orders to any RUF commander nor to Johnny Paul Koroma

concerning what should happen to the UNAMSIL troops or RUF activities in the country as it was alleged by the prosecution in the indictment.

"So [ex-president] Kabbah knows Issa could not have taken orders from Foday Sankoh at this time or during the remainder of the indictment period. Hence Mr Sesay could not have been receiving orders to continue any widespread attacks between April and 15th September 2000," the defence team stated.

Due to all of these factors, Issa Sesay's defence stated further that there was every need for the former president to testify on behalf of the accused.

It was revealed also that the defence has made several attempts to meet with ex-president Kabbah but to no avail.

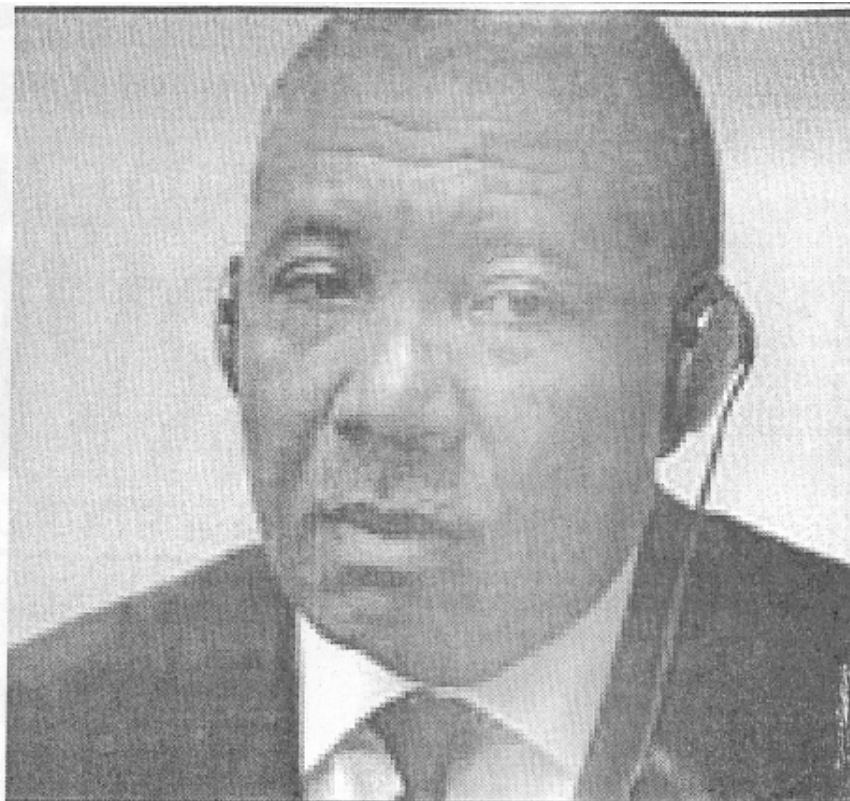
It will be recalled that this is not the first request made a Special Court indictee to subpoena ex-president Kabbah. The first was made by late Hinga Norman, first accused of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), and the second accused Moinina Fofanah and now Issa Sesay.

Independent Observer

Monday, 3 March 2008

Witness Flown From Pademba Road Prison to The Hague to Testify Against Mr. Charles Taylor

Witness Flown From Pademba Road Prison to The Hague to Testify Against Mr. Charles Taylor



A serving prisoner at the Pademba Road Maximum Prison has been flown to The Hague as a witness against Charles Taylor after his 10 year jail term was commuted and he was eventually released to the Special Court.

And this week, Foday Lansana, a radio operator was in the witness box. Defense Counsel Moris Anyah continued his cross-examination of Prosecution Witness TF-362 Foday Lansana.

Liberia's **THE ANALYST** newspaper carried the following story on what happened in the court.

During the day Lansana seemed restless at times, frequently stretching his arms and at times even yawning. Anyah continued where he left off yesterday, questioning Lansana about promises that were made to him by the representatives of the OTP (Office of The Prosecution) during the time he was in Pademba Road Prison. For example, he asked: "So if Mormor Rogers were to come to this Court and said he would have talked to you about the promises the representatives of the OTP made to you for testifying in this Court, he would be lying?" Lansana answered affirmatively.

Anyah mentioned two names of persons who would give similar testimony: Shake Nabbi and Shaku Kumba. Anyah then extensively questioned Lansana about money for his suit provided by OTP so Lansana could wear it for his first interview with the OTP's representatives.

In May 2000 Lansana was put in prison and on 11 April 2006 he was convicted for murder and conspiracy to murder and received a 10 year sentence. He was scheduled for release on 8 March 2009.

The Chief Prosecutor wrote a letter to the then-President of Sierra Leone for the early release of Lansana. Anyah quoted from this letter and asked if Lansana knew about it.

Lansana stated he had no knowledge of the letter, that a human rights lawyer appealed on his behalf and he thought his early release was part of a general pardon that was issued accordingly.

Anyah established that the OTP and Lansana discussed his safety and that of his family; money for the education of his children; and school uniforms for his children.

Time of arrest

Anyah disclosed that Lansana was brought to Pademba Road Prison on 8 May 2000. Lansana denied this, according to him it was 9 May 2000.

Events, names and places

Anyah asserted that everything Lansana said during the last three days of his testimony were stories Lansana heard in prison from other inmates and that none of it actually happened.

This included questioning the following: that in 1990 Lansana was with the NPFL; that in October 1990 he met with Charles Taylor; that in 1991 he was with Foday Sankoh; that in 1993 he was in the company of Zino a.k.a. Mohamed Tarawali; that in 1998 he was with Superman a.k.a. Dennis Mingo; that in December 1999 he was in Monrovia where he met Ibrahim Bah and Benjamin Yeaten. Lansana denied this and stated that it had all actually happened to him.

Awareness Times (Online)

Friday, 29 February 2008

Red Cross Sensitizes on Moot Court Competition in Sierra Leone

By Aruna Turay

The National Society of the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society has concluded a sensitization tour to various universities chosen to participate in this year's Moot Court competition on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) to be held in March at the Red Cross Hall in Freetown.

According to the Communication Coordinator of the Society Mr. Abubakarr Tarawalie, the rationale behind moot court competition is to promote respect for and compliance to International Humanitarian Law which he said the government of Sierra Leone is signatory to.

Quite apart from that, the Coordinator said it is also aimed at preventing the abuse of human rights. He said moot court competition is usually organized for tertiary institutions for students to enhance their expansion of knowledge in Humanitarian Laws. He disclosed that six institutions-Njala University, FBC, both Polytechnique colleges in the North and Southern Provinces, the Islamic College in Freetown and the Fatima Institute in Makeni will be represented in the competition.

He stated that after the preliminary rounds, the two best institutions will contest in the finals at the premises of the Special Courts at New England Ville to be presided over by the Court authorities. He said at the end of the sessions, the winning institution would be accorded the opportunity to travel to Arusha, Tanzania under the sponsorship of the ICRC to represent Sierra Leone at the 8th Pan African Moot Court competition later in the year.

Before leaving for Tanzania, the winning team will undergo series of training sessions also to be organized by the ICRC as usual. In the training, the Special Court and the RSLAF will be involved to help prepare the competitors for the next stage, he concluded.

New Democrat (Liberia)
Monday, 3 March 2008

Over US 0.5b Near Grab



Lawyers and a special team chasing former President Charles Taylor's fortune say over US\$600m is in sight, and they could grab it.

"We're working on the Taylor assets with a special team from the British government (to) make them available to victims both in Sierra Leone and Liberia," Stephen Rapp said in an interview with AFP in The Hague.

"We believe there are some assets that are still there, they are not in his name but there is the ability to (...) bring them back," Rapp told the AFP.

"If the judges convict him for pillage, in part for pillaging the diamonds in Sierra Leone, we can then go back to the court after that judgement and say 'these diamonds were worth X amount of money, so we want a judgement for X million dollars'," Rapp said.

"We can then enforce that judgement against his assets and ask an order for restitution to the victims and the Sierra Leone government."

Rapp said the sums amounted to "600 million dollars" which were "stolen from the Liberian treasury" and largely composed of diamonds taken from Sierra Leone during the war.

He added that countries with bank-

Over US 0.5b Near Grab

ing secrecy laws are "increasingly willing to cooperate (-) particularly when talking about individuals involved in war crimes, in a brutal civil war."

In power, however, Taylor denied having assets and money outside Liberia, saying everything he owns was in the country, and that whatever money and assets attributed to him are found, they be seized.

Rapp said since his trial opened on January 7, a total of 18 witnesses have testified to Taylor's role during Sierra Leone's bloody 1991-2001 civil war, and that they had helped him to build a "strong and compelling case."

Taylor's defence team have mounted stern cross-examination of the witnesses brought to testify against him, with Rapp adding that persistent intimidation has meant an extensive witness protection programme being implemented.

"We offer temporary relocation while (the witness's) situation is evaluated. At the end of the day some of them may have to be relocated to another country or continent.

"Generally they're not going back home immediately after their testimony. There have been threats, they are being investigated and pursued.

"Whatever the situation, we will seek the strongest protective measures to make sure the witness is not at risk," Rapp said.

STEPHEN RAPP



He said eight crucial insiders were able to testify to links "between Taylor and the people who physically perpetrated the crimes", the "loyalty" of these testimonies shaping "a strong and compelling case."

"We'll show that it's possible to hold a chief of state responsible for these massive crimes," Rapp added.

Sierra Leone's civil war left some 120,000 people dead and thousands more mutilated.

TAYLOR'S TRIAL RESUMES AFTER REST

The War crimes trial involving former President Charles Taylor which adjourned last Thursday, after doctor's advice he takes a rest, resumes today, at the U.N.-backed

Special Court for Sierra Leone in The Hague.

The doctor said Taylor's case was not serious but he needed some rest.

AP/WIDE WORLD



Former President Charles Taylor

Drinking Makes Heart Sorrowful

The age-old belief goes that alcohol helps people drown their sorrows, but in truth the bottle only makes bad memories linger, a Japanese study said Friday.

Researchers at the University of Tokyo concluded that ethanol — an intoxicating agent in alcohol —

does not cause memory to decrease, as widely believed, but instead locks it in place.

The researchers, led by pharmacology professor Norio Matsuki, gave mild shocks to lab rats to condition them to fear. As a result, the

AP/WIDE WORLD

TAYLOR'S TRIAL

He returned to court but the defense counsel requested for an adjournment so he could rest on doctor's advice."

Taylor, once Africa's most feared warlord, faces charges of rape, murder, mutilation and recruitment of child soldiers at the court, set up to try those bearing the greatest responsibility in the Sierra Leone decade long war.

The former Liberian leader has pleaded not guilty to all charges. His trial was delayed for six months after opening in June 2007 after he appealed for more resources to fund his defense.

The court had hoped for a rapid trial, after seeing previous international war crimes trials dogged by lengthy legal arguments or posturing by the accused, notably the trial of former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic.

Milosevic died in jail before a ver-

Reuters

Friday, 29 February 2008

Defence rests ... literally in war crimes trial

Charles Taylor's war crimes trial was adjourned until Monday so the former Liberian President can rest on doctor's advice, a spokesman for the Special Court for Sierra Leone said.

"He wasn't feeling well a few days back," the spokesman said. "The doctor said it wasn't serious, but he needed some rest. He came to court yesterday and today, but the defence counsel asked for an adjournment."

Taylor faces charges of rape, murder, mutilation and recruitment of child soldiers at the court, set up to try those most responsible for the 1991-2002 conflict.

BBC World Service Trust

Friday, 29 February 2008

By Abdul Rashid, at The Hague

RASHID: Court monitors have become an important feature of transparency and fairness of the Special Court for Sierra Leone at The Hague. A group of three civil society activists are on a week long observation of the courts proceedings. They include Jabaty Mambu of the Sierra Leone Amputee Association, Civil Society Movement Sierra Leone Abdul Gillen, and Civitan's Frank Sebureh. Critical minded as they may be, Abdul Rashid caught up with the group and spoke to Abdul Gillen and asked him about his impression of the trial.

GILLEN: Well my impression about the trial at The Hague, process is on and the trial is going on smoothly. I don't see any cause to complain about it. And I have seen the Judges and the Defence and the Prosecution. They are cooperating with each and every other. And then, I feel that the trial is going on smoothly.

RASHID: So when you go back to Freetown, what will you tell the people about Taylor's trial?

GILLEN: Well when I'm back to Freetown I will tell the people of Sierra Leone that the trial is going on and there is no cause to alarm. As far as we are concerned, Charles Taylor's defence and he himself wants his trial to (be) speedily concluded. I want you people in Sierra Leone to know that this trial is going on smoothly.

Diamond Intelligence Briefs

Sunday, 2 March 2008

<http://www.diamondintelligence.com/magazine/magazine.asp?id=6122>

War Crimes Prosecutor Seeks \$600M of Taylor's Assets as Restitution for Victims

Stephen Rapp, the prosecutor in Charles Taylor's war crimes trial, is working toward making some of the former Liberian president's assets, said to be worth US\$600 million, available as restitution to the victims of the civil wars in both Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Rapp told the AFP that the amounts were "stolen from the Liberian treasury" and largely composed of stolen diamonds from Sierra Leone.

"We're working on the Taylor assets with a special team from the British government (to) make them available to victims both in Sierra Leone and Liberia," Prosecutor Stephen Rapp told the AFP in The Hague. "If the judges convict him for pillage, in part for pillaging the diamonds in Sierra Leone, we can then go back to the court after that judgment and say 'these diamonds were worth X amount of money, so we want a judgment for X million dollars,'" Rapp continued in his interview with the newspaper. "We can then enforce that judgment against his assets and ask an order for restitution to the victims and the Sierra Leone government."

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is charging Taylor on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in Sierra Leone's diamond-fuelled civil war during 1991-2002. Since trial, which is taking place in The Hague, opened on January 7, 18 witnesses have testified to Taylor's role in orchestrating rebel forces and their brutality in neighboring Sierra Leone. Some of the witnesses have been put in protective custody, fearing repercussions should they return home to Sierra Leone. The AFP noted that, so far, some insiders' testimonies have been able to link Taylor to the people who physically carried out the crimes.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries
29 February 2008**

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

Newspaper Summary

Defense Clarifies – Says Veteran Bill only meant for AFL Soldiers, Not Factional Fighters

(The Inquirer)

- The Ministry of National Defense has clarified that the veteran bill which is being debated by the Liberian Senate is intended to serve the needs of former soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), who served the nation and were honorably retired from the army.
- The ministry says contrary to the perception that the bill is seeking to reward former fighters of the Liberian civil conflict, it will actually be an advocacy avenue where former soldiers of the AFL, who have been retired and pensioned can pursue issues relating to their salaries and other benefits among others.

Magistrate Taylor Dismissed

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

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on Thursday announced that Judge Milton D. Taylor has been relieved of his post as stipendiary magistrate of the Monrovia City Court at the Temple of Justice on Capitol Hill. The Daily Observer and The News newspapers report that the announcement sacking Judge Taylor did not contain any reason and legal practitioners thought that it was due to Judge Taylor's ruling to hear a motion filed by lawyers representing Hans Williams and his fiancée Mardea Paykue who had filed a bill of information requesting the court to put a stay order on the burial of 13-year old Angel Togba pending another autopsy and DNA test.
- The Inquirer and National Chronicle newspapers quoted Deputy Information Minister Cletus Sieh as saying that the judge was sacked for releasing the crew of a vessel seized with cocaine on board. Magistrate Taylor said he has no regret for his dismissal by President Sirleaf. Meanwhile, the Public Agenda, Informer, and Heritage newspapers quoted the lead counsel representing Hans and Mardea in the Angel Togba murder trial as fearing that his clients will not receive a fair trial with the sacking of Magistrate Taylor terming the dismissal as a "travesty of justice".

President Johnson Sirleaf Aborts Strike Action at Freeport

(The News,)

- A planned strike by the Dock Workers Union of Liberia (DOWUL) at the National Port Authority was aborted Thursday through the timely intervention of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Speaking to reporters following a closed door meeting with President Sirleaf, DOWUL President Grace Kpan said the union was demanding increased benefits for their colleagues who will be affected by the pending downsizing exercise. She indicated that the NPA management refusal to cooperate with the request had prompted the union to plan a strike action which would have begun within minutes of the President's intervention. She said during the meeting, President Sirleaf instructed the NPA management to add US\$400 to the benefits of those to be downsized.

Radio Summary

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

Teenager laid to rest after controversy over her death

- Reports say 13-year old Angel Meideh Togba was buried in Monrovia Friday following months of "controversy" over her death.
- The guardian of Angel, Hans Williams had reported that she committed suicide but information provided by examination proved otherwise.
- Announcing a second autopsy report few days ago, Justice Minister Cllr. Philip A.Z. Banks said based on the report conducted by a licensed pathologist, it has been established that Ms. Togba was strangled to death just after she was sexually abused in contrast to an earlier autopsy report which indicated that the 13-year old died by hanging and there was no foul play.
- Lawyers representing Hans Williams and Fiancée Mardea Paykue accused in the death of Angel on Thursday filed a bill of information requesting the court to put a stay order on the burial pending an autopsy and DNA test.
- Justice Minister Philip Banks had earlier said the body could be exhumed at any time to allow for the DNA.

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

General Auditing Commission Clarifies Lands & Mines Audit Reports

- In a release issued in Monrovia, the General Auditing Commission (GAC) has clarified that it has not carried out any audit of the Ministry of Lands Mines and Energy.
- This is an apparent reaction to reports in the media that the GAC had conducted an audit of the ministry clearing it of all financial malpractices.

IRI Holds One-Day Roundtable for National Legislature, NEC and Others

- The International Republican Institute (IRI) will today hold a one-day roundtable forum for members of the National Legislature, Political Parties Executives and the National Elections Commission (NEC).
- In an interview, the Resident Country Director of IRI, Monte Machimo said it is hoped that at the end of the forum draft legislation on public financing on accountability, standards and performance from the three groups will be developed.
- The forum is hosted by IRI with support from USAID.

IPPF Gives US\$29,000 Equipment to Family Planning Association of Liberia

- The International Plan Parenthood Federation (IPPF) Africa Regional office has donated a consignment of laboratory equipment valued over US\$29,000 to the Family Planning Association of Liberia (FPAL).
- The IPPF Programme Director, Sander Ojianbo said the donation is to strengthen the capacity of the Family Planning Association to provide services to Liberia.
- An FPAL release said the equipment will be set up in a modern laboratory at the association's clinic in Kakata.
- The clinic was constructed with funds from the United Nations Funds for Population Activity (UNFPA).

New Liberian website

Sunday, 2 March 2008

<http://newliberian.com/?p=274>

Abbas Fawaz Supported Ivorian Rebels, Rural Journalist Tells TRC Commissioners

TRC, Fish Town

Abbas Fawaz, Lebanese businessman and owner of the Maryland Wood Processing Industries (MWPI) provided logistical and financial support to Ivorian dissidents to invade La Cote D' Ivoire, a rural journalist accused of committing atrocities Wednesday told commissioners of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Zico Dalieh, programs manager of Gee Radio in Fish Town, River Gee County said several truck loads of arms and ammunitions concealed under bags of rice, were regularly transported by Mr. Fawaz from the Port of Harper in Maryland County across the Ivorian frontier to supply the rebels.

The company, Dalieh said, paid monthly salaries to the rebels and repaired vehicles used for their operation in La Cote D'Ivoire.

"One day, arms and ammunitions concealed under bags of rice arrived in the company's trucks from Harper before Generals Benjamin Yeaten, Paul Vaye, Chuckie Taylor and others arrived to transport them across the Ivorian border for operation," recounted Mr. Dalieh, who headed the company's operation in River Gee at the time.

He revealed that during the company's operation in the area, former president Charles Taylor established military barracks at Jidepo Jaklaken for the government militia fighters, adding that Fawaz was given the responsibility to support them financially and logistically.

Dalieh said one day a convoy of vehicles arrived at the border with the Ivory Coast carrying General Benjamin Yeaten, Chuckie Taylor, William Sumo and some French - speaking soldiers. He said the group later crossed into the Ivory Coast where they were engaged in military operations against Ivorian government forces.

The rural journalist, who appeared before the commission to respond to accusations by previous witnesses that he committed atrocities, said Lebanese managers of the company were seen armed with AK-47 rifles when fighters of the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) launched their rebellion against the Taylor government in 2003.

He said on one occasion, one of the managers Joseph Noredin escorted a truck loaded with food, arms and ammunition for use by the fighters in the Ivory Coast.

Dalieh's testimony was similar to claims by Solo Chea, the County's revenue judge that arms and ammunitions bound for rebels in La Cote d'Ivoire were shipped into Liberia through the Port of Harper and transported by road to River Gee County by Fawaz, who was Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of MWPI.

The TRC is an independent body set up to investigate the root causes of the Liberian crisis, document human rights violations and other abuses that occurred from 1979 to 2003. The TRC mandate is to also identify victims and perpetrators and make recommendations on amnesty, prosecution and reparation.

The public hearings, under the theme: "Confronting Our Difficult Past for a Better Future will Monday convene in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County for a week before moving to Greenville, Sinoe County."