

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

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

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

**as at:**

Thursday 6 & Friday 7 February, 2003

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

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# 'Johnny Paul Is Still PLP Leader'

- *Hon. Hassan Kamara*

*By Salamatu Turay*  
*Peace and Liberation*  
*Party (PLP) Member of*  
*Parliament* *Hon.*  
*Hassan Kamara, yester-*  
*day denied rumours that*  
*the leadership of the*  
*party will change fol-*  
*lowing the disappear-*  
*ance of its leader Hon.*  
*Johnny Paul Koroma*



*Johnny Paul Koroma*

*during police raid re-*  
*cently.*

In an interview with SALONE TIMES in Parliament, Tower Hill, in Freetown, Hon. Kamara said that the PLP has no reason to expel Johnny Paul from the party, even if he is replaced in parliament. He went on to say that there is a constitutional provision which states "if any party member is suspended from parliament, it is only the leader of that party that has the right to inform the Speaker of Parliament of any replacement. He further explained that "Hon. Koroma is still the leader of the PLP until he

decides otherwise."

Quoting Section 77K of the 1991 Constitution, a Member of Parliament (who did not want to be named), said that an MP would only be suspended

from Parliament if that MP does not attend parliamentary session for thirty sittings without any good reason. "But Hon. Koroma has only been absent for one sitting," the MP said.

*Salone Times*  
*Thursday February 6*

Salone Times  
Thursday, 6 February 2003

# D-16 SPEAKS OUT ON JOHNNY PAUL ESCAPE

*By Edison Kanu*

**The Deputy Inspector General of Police Brima Acha Kamara has said that the January 13 attack on the Military engineering base at Wellington would have got out of control, if it had not not been handled with tactfulness and competence to put things under control.**

SEE PAGE 3

Mr. Kamara was speaking to SALONE TIMES at his George Street office yesterday.

He said that the incident occurred at a time when most of the senior officers were on the province accompanying the president during his provincial tour.

"Who knows what might have happened if that attention had escalated, but I put it under control."

Commenting on the issue of Johnny Paul Koroma's escape, he denied having any hand in it, adding that it was from a message he received from one Mr. Daboh, informing him about Koroma being arrested during the raid.

"I passed the message to the Inspector General Keith Biddle who in turn, informed President Kabbah. I did not intend to misinform the president", he said.

Mr. Kamara further told SALONE TIMES that he has never exchanged visits with Johnny Paul. "It is only my detractors that are trying to destroy me" he said.

Meanwhile, the police has set up an internal investigation into the disappearance of Johnny Paul Koroma. SALONE TIMES gathered that Mr. Kamara is among police officers being investigated. Police sources have said that the outcome of this investigation would be out Friday this week.

Earlier, however, Mr. Kamara denied the allegation that he Vice President Solomon Islands had given him a 18 hour ultimatum to find Johnny Paul after it had arrested Koroma. He said that he had no contact with Johnny Paul Koroma at that time.

That is a blatant lie, and I am not a politician and I have never been involved in any political activity. I am a disciplined officer and I will always do what is right.

Salone Times  
Thursday February 6 2003

# Johnny Paul's Escape: Three Police, One Soldier Implicated

While investigations into the mysterious disappearance of fugitive junta leader turned Legislator, Johnny Paul Koroma is in progress, revelations indicate that three senior Police Officers and one Army

Major have been named in the cause of his escape. Police Headquarters sources have revealed that one Major Layahun of the Armed Forces of Sierra Leone, Police Inspector Lebbie who led the Team of CIDS, and two Assistant Superintendents of Police: E.S. Kamara alias Scorpion and A.M. Kamara alias O3 from the Operations Support Division (OSD) of the Police conducted the raid on Hon. Johnny Paul Koroma's house on that fateful day. They discovered arms and

ammunition and military outfit there, but only arrested the ARFC Security Guard of Johnny Paul, leaving him and showed him the exit, even though he was the prime suspect. According to our information, one Police Superintendent, Amos Kargbo followed them later but was deployed at the rare cordon area of the operations. These senior Police Officers are said to have been given no orders as to who should actually lead the troops by

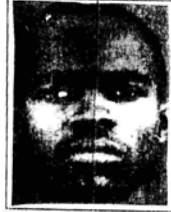
their bosses at the GOLD COMMAND so, none of them is taking responsibility for their collective action. The blunder technically started from the Senior Assistant Commissioners of

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## ALL DECLARED WANTED



J.P. Koroma



George Bamarro



Sella Bockarie



Lt/Cpl. Sesay (Ranger)



Abdul Mansaray (Ramba)



Samuel Kargbo

From Front Page

Police at the Gold Command level from whom the troops took the last orders to executive the operations.

The Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police in charge of Operations, Munu has refused, taking the blame for giving the inadequate command to the Team, and the technical adviser, Head of the OSD has also denied giving the last command /order, while SAC, CDHID, Somasa has in fact said he was not in the country when the incident happened.

Now it appears as if the Acting Deputy Inspector General of Police (?) Brima Acha Kamara and or his boss, the Inspector-General of Police may have given the orders/command.

What is more suspicious in all of these is that Brima Acha Kamara and Johnny Paul Koroma hail from the same village

They are also said to be first Cousins. He is said to have in fact been in charge of Johnny Paul Koroma's diamond deals from which proceeds he is alleged to have built that fantastic fully tiled mason up at Hill Station.

On the other hand, if Keith is absolutely innocent about Johnny Paul's escape, why has he not instituted his usual habit of quickly arraying suspects before the regular Courts of law?

Analysts are saying that Keith and Brima Acha Kamara should account for J. P Koroma, otherwise, they both be arrested for falling to either give appropriate orders for the arrest of Johnny Paul Koroma or spontaneously bringing to task the culprits/suspects involved in the operations.

Some observers say Keith and his "Son" B. A Kamara are toying with the security of this nation and thus they need to be held tight for questioning, if the truth should come out of the on-going investigations.

Johnny Paul, it is said, is in constant touch with some senior service men through a cell phone which, has made it difficult for him to be trapped down.

Some sources even insinuate that J.P Koroma has refused to go out of cell phone coverage area so that he can be properly and promptly briefed about the state of affairs by his *own men* in the system.

Another school of thought also suggests that J.P Koroma is in the firm grip of some disloyal security men in either Freetown or Makeni for his safety, finding way for him out of the country.

'A spontaneous all-round check on all the Military Barracks in this country at an odd moment will surely do us some good to track

this man down', remarked one Poyo Sella in Goderich.

Meanwhile, after the Monday January 13, 2003 shoot-out at the Military Engineering base at Wellington, the Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Keith Biddle told local Journalists at his usual press briefing, held at the Police Headquarters in Freetown on Tuesday January 14, 2003 that the attack on the Military Engineering base was a mere armed robbery.

He went further to say that the armed robbers met stiff resistance by the security personnel, which included the Police, SLA's and UNAMSIL.

Mr. Keith Biddle strongly dismissed any semblance of a Coup and said that every body should stay calm and go about his/her usual business.

However, few days later, about 18 people were arrested for what the Police referred to as an attempt to destabilise the State.

Before press time, about 77 people have so far been arrested, among which, it is speculated that about 20 are soldiers, and nine declared wanted for what?

Inspector General of Police is making fool of the people of Sierra Leone. We need to call things by their names.

*Continued*

The Policy  
Thursday, 6 February 2003

# Johnny Paul's Escape The Backlash on the SLP

The studied system of castigation and crucifixion being practiced upon the Sierra Leone Police Force in the wake of Johnny Paul's escape is currently undermining the rationality of the ordinary man in this country.  
*J.S.Mboka Reports.*

It is unfortunate that these things are happening in the terminal stages of Keith Biddle's invaluable service to this nation. It is being rumoured that Keith Biddle has already chosen a

ward after his departure in 2003. Undeniably, these officers were chosen on the bases of competence, integrity and maturity. If we continue to cast a blanket slur on this team, we can unpack the entire Biddulean administration before Keith Biddle leaves at the end of 2003. What team will steer the force after we have nipped

the shadow administration in the bud? Or do we want second-rated officers (raw and ill-equipped) to han-

*Cont'd Page 2*

*The Policy*

*Thursday, February 6th, 2003*

# Johnny Paul's Escape

## FROM FRONT PAGE

dle the affairs of the SLP because Johnny Paul is at large?

We should not forget that a few policemen and a soldier were under instruction to arrest Johnny Paul Koroma and present him to headquarters. It is not the manner of senior officers to effect arrests. If the team has failed to perform its duty, do we have to castigate the entire force for the failings of a handful of its members? I am asking these questions because the press has poured every species of abuse and scurrility on the SLP, and has thus succeeded in blackening the character of the entire institution in the wake of Johnny Paul's escape.

The Police Force has suffered death and humiliation in the performance of patriotic service to this nation. Official returns state that junta forces killed over 200 policemen in the course of the January 1999 invasion. Many complex cases have been successfully investigated and prosecuted by the Sierra Leone Police Force. These are all indices of professionalism and patriotism. Besides, the force has developed considerably over the

years as a result of Keith Biddle's leadership. Biddle has never been backward in sacrificing his time, talents, health and private interests at the altar of police development! Even the bitterest enemies of the SLP will admit that our police force is more professional than many other forces in the sub-region. The unwearied hostility of the press against the SLP is therefore unjustifiable. It is unfortunate that history repeats itself so accurately in this country. After all of the exertions of ECOMOG (now UNAMSIL) forces in this country, a security breach occurred in 1999, costing ECOMOG their hard-earned prestige in the sub-region. It was convincingly argued that ECOMOG troops were few on the ground, and that logistical insufficiency could not permit efficiency, but alas, ECOMOG troops were accused of selling out. Today, it is the turn of the SLP whose members suffered death in the course of junta expedition. The lapses of few people have engendered a campaign of profanity against the entire SLP, leading to accusations that bear no

proof.

It will be an unnecessary and unproductive task to enumerate all of the areas in which the Sierra Leone Police Force has demonstrated professionalism. It is an open book for the entire nation! Those who make further attributions of dishonesty to the Sierra Leone Police Force, on the basis of Johnny Paul's escape, should pray for forgiveness because the punishment being meted out to the entire force is incommensurate with 'the offence' committed by a few people. I am putting 'offence' in inverted commas because the issue is still being investigated and no specific allegation of deviance has been leveled against individuals. I do know that a Mr. Somassah has been charged with the responsibility of probing Johnny Paul's escape. Heads will definitely roll as a result of this investigation, but until the investigation is concluded, we should avoid hasty allegations and erroneous generalizations.

*See Next Issue.*

*Continuation*

### Johnny Paul's escape Accelerate infighting in Police force

Since the mysterious escape of Johnny Paul Koroma from justice as a result of the shooting incident at Wellington which observers suspect was another coup attempt to shatter constitutionality, the underground war of succession among senior cadres of the Police Force has reared its ugly head once more.

Suspicious fingers have been pointing against one personality ie Ag. DIG Brima Acha Kamara for the escape of fugitive Johnny Paul Koroma. This sad development is assuming awkward dimension every end of a second as vices such as ethnicity, sentiments and politicisation as the race for Inspector Generalship of the Sierra Leone Police Force after the incumbent Keith Biddle will blow out of proportion if president Tejan Kabbah and his government are not tactful in dealing with this complex issue.

It is plain truth that each of the senior cadre has his/her eyes focused on the pinnacle of the police administration. It is a hot seat, therefore, it must be competitive among those who deserve it in the police.

But the issue of casting aspersion against an individual perhaps, because of his ethnic and regional

**CONT'D BACK PAGE**

Rokel Times

Thursday February  
6, 2003

**From Front Page** now that Keith Biddle is still here is to address the affiliation to Johnny Paul Koroma (now wanted by the state) may not augur well in our present situation especially when the police force has been transformed to a "force for good".

The people of this country would like to inherit a post-Keith Biddle Police administration that is determined to forge ahead in the process of rebuilding a battered and tattered nation.

The Johnny Paul Saga should not be used as a yardstick to eliminate Brima Acha Kamara among senior members of the force from the race.

What needs to be done

now that Keith Biddle is still here is to address the issue of security in all the forces so that gruesome mistakes of the past may not re-occur.

In as much as the people of this nation deserve the right to know where lies the fault in the ongoing investigation, it should be genuinely carried out without targeting an individual, but to address what went wrong and how to prevent it in future.

Meanwhile, in order to ease the ongoing tension on the police force, president Tejan Kabbah should go back to the drawing board and work out another formula to replace

Keith Biddle. In helping the president work out tangible formula, we in the Rokel Times would like to sincerely admonish him to replace Keith Biddle with another colonialist or retain him for another term rather than eliminating Brima Acha Kamara and replace him with another officer because of ethnic, partisan or regional sentiments. On the other hand, give on to Caesar (Brima Acha Kamara) what is due him. In doing so, president Kabbah would have saved this nation from another catastrophe within the Police force.



Independent Observer  
Thursday, 6 February 2003

# JOHNNY PAUL: *Bombali Or London?*

The whereabouts of wanted member of Parliament Johnny Paul Koroma remains a mystery with conflicting reports coming in. Yesterday reports reaching Independent Observer state that wanted Member of Parliament Johnny Paul Koroma is hiding in a tiny hamlet on the outskirts of



Johnny Paul, uncertain location

Makeni town in northern Bombali District. According to unconfirmed reports, the former junta leader who had earlier stated that he was in Lungi heading for the north was actually speaking the truth and not trying to divert attention from the location of his hide-out. Although Independent Observer has not been able to get confirmation from Makeni sources, there is every indication that the PLP presidential hopeful could only be able to hide in the north as he will not gain sympathy either in the south or east as he is seen by the inhabitants of these regions as one of the main people behind the destruction of these regions.

However, the police have not named any vicinity either in the country or outside where the former junta leader might have sought refuge after

evading police arrest last month at his Juba Hill residence.

An angry youth has however pointed out that the news of Johnny Paul's escape to

London or Ghana is just a ploy to occupy the security

forces and thereby give chance to the former Major to evade arrest while hiding conveniently somewhere in the north.

It could be recalled that Johnny Paul Koroma used Makeni as his headquarter when he fled from Freetown following the 1998 military intervention that ousted the AFRC junta which he was then heading. Meanwhile, the SLPP government is yet to come out with a statement on the present situation. Information Minister Professor Kaikai who had been running his weekly press briefing in his Youyi Building office has refused to comment on the on-going search for the alleged coup plotters as well as the continuing arrest of suspects in the country. Although the Civil Society Movement has given a 72 hour deadline to the police to produce the fugitive politician, there is still no information from the security forces about Koroma's whereabouts.

Independent Observer  
Thursday February 6 2003

The Democrat  
Thursday, 6 February 2003

# Hunt For Johnny Paul Intensifies Police Increase Check Points

By Umaru S. Jarr

**POLICE** have intensified their search for fugitive Member of Parliament and erstwhile junta leader Johnny Paul Koroma and eight of his accomplices declared wanted. This is evident in an increase in the number of check points along the Freetown/Waterloo highway.

Three check points which were dismantled after the official declaration of the end of the war have been erected again. Commuters have also been subjected to rigorous searching and in some cases asked to produce identity cards for the establishment of their true

status.

Police have confirmed the report but insist the check points were mounted for precautionary measures and that they would be removed once their objective is accomplished. They declined to elaborate.

Commuters and drivers



Johnny Paul Koroma: wanted

alike have expressed disgust at the new arrangement. The former say they are being harassed whilst the latter complain of extortion. Meanwhile, the number of suspects in Police custody has increased to 77. This was disclosed by the Senior

Commissioner of Police Professional Standard, Oliver Somasa, at their weekly press briefing at the Police Headquarters, Tuesday 4. Mr. Somasa revealed that findings on investigations into Hon. Johnny Paul's escape will be released latest today. The delay, he said, was due to the unavoidable absence of key officers wanted for questioning. The said officers had traveled to the provinces on official duties.

The Democrat  
Friday, February 7, 2003

The News  
Friday, 7 February 2003

Friday February 7, 2003

THE NEWS

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# *Johnny Paul's Escape:* **Police Release Findings Today**

Top level management of the Sierra Leone Police Force, were meeting late yesterday evening ahead of the release of a report into an investigation surrounding the escape of former Junta leader Johnny Paul Koroma.

The report is expected to be released today, according to police Commissioner responsible

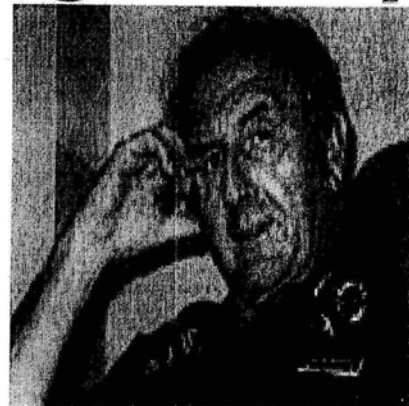
for Professional Standards, Oliver Somassa.

In the wake of the recent attack on an army base in Wellington, the police

conducted a swoop on Johnny Paul Koroma's Juba Hill residence and made some arrests.

The former junta leader escaped under mysterious circumstances which left the tongue-wagging public heaping blames on the police.

The force decided to mount an in-house investigation involving mostly the arrest team that went to Johnny Paul's house.



Independent Observer  
Friday, 7 February 2003

# Mandereh Tells Police...

## I haven't set eyes on Johnny Paul for 4 months

Retired Capt. Abubakarr Kamara, known popularly as Mandereh, has regained his freedom, 72 hours after he was taken into police custody for questioning in relation to the Wellington Barracks attack for which Johnny Paul Koroma and several others on the run are also being sought. Mandereh has convinced police that for the past four months he stopped visiting Johnny Paul's Juba residence, because,

*By Brima Dawson Kuyaten*

according to him, the ex-junta supremo's wife, Makuta insulted him on several occasions for which he resolved to keep away from that family. His statement to the police was collaborated

with that of some of those held in custody.

Mandereh's former association with Johnny Paul Koroma was what made him a suspect. And according to a senior police officer who spoke to this medium yesterday he said that in a

situation like this, people like those arrested are suspects until proven not guilty, as was in Mandereh's case. The officer made it clear that those still in custody who have no case to answer will be released, but no specific time was given.

Friday February 7 2003  
Independent Observer

Independent Observer  
Friday, 7 February 2003

Independent Observer

Friday February 7 2003

# Johnny Paul's Escape...

By Abu Bakarr Mumu

Inspector Lebbie of CID headquarters and ASP Kamara of Police Headquarters who led the team of security personnel to effect the botched arrest of Johnny Paul Koroma have been suspended from duty indefinitely, a police press release said last night. No further details were given.

It is also revealed that an undisclosed number of other personnel sent to Juba Hill residence with

# 2 Police Officers Suspended

instruction to arrest all those residing there two weeks ago were among the suspended. A police news release is expected today to ascertain whether or not there was a breach of professional codes of conduct on the part of the

See back page

police personnel in the escape of Johnny Paul, now a fugitive. Members at the Complaint Discipline Internal Investigation Department (CDIID) unit of the police force have spent the last two weeks conducting an in-house investigation to establish any possible involvement of personnel in the escape of Johnny Paul. This comes in the wake of public criticisms pointing accusing fingers directly at the police to which the police had accepted blame.

## IRIN

Friday, 7 February 2003



"p.palmer"  
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 Sent by:  
 owner-leonenet@listpro  
 c.umbc.edu

To: <leonenet@listproc.umbc.edu>  
 cc:  
 Subject: SIERRA LEONE: Court investigations may be completed in June

07/02/2003 14:59

SIERRA LEONE: Court investigations may be completed in June

ABIDJAN, 7 February (IRIN) - Investigators for the Special for Sierra Leone may complete their work by June, the Court reported in a press statement on Thursday. Depending on the information the investigators collect, the Court may thereafter indict and eventually try suspects.

Court Prosecutor David Crane told residents of the western district of Port Loko on Tuesday that his team of investigators was "working hard to put together our cases" and had made significant progress. "I am pleased to announce that my team of investigators could complete their investigations ~~by June of this year,"~~ Crane said.

Since August, Crane and his staff have held community meetings in various parts of the country to seek views on how they should prosecute those who bear the greatest responsibility for violations of international humanitarian law during Sierra Leone's 10-year civil war. They have visited 11 of the country's 12 districts.

The court, expected to cost just under US \$60 million, was created through an agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone and has a three-year mandate. It is expected to work side by side with Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Its eight judges were sworn in in December. Three were appointed by the government of Sierra Leone and five by the UN Secretary-General. In January, the Court moved its registry and administrative branches into its new site in the centre of the capital, Freetown.

Meanwhile the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General to Sierra Leone, Ambassador Oluyemi Adeniji, on Wednesday officially opened a five-lecture-room building built at a polytechnic college with funds provided by the UN Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).

According to a UNAMSIL press statement, Adeniji said the mission's involvement in constructing the building at the Eastern Polytechnic in Kenema District, eastern Sierra Leone, resulted from the urgent need to repair the damage done by the war.

The additional space means more students can now be admitted into the polytechnic and over the next five years, about 1,000 additional students can graduate from it. Five lecturers from Nigeria have been seconded to teach at the polytechnic.

[ENDS]

IRIN-WA

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