PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office as at:
Tuesday 25 – Friday 28 February 2003

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

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Sankoh's hand and foot
Paralysed

The medical condition of the detained former RUF leader, Corporal Foday Sankoh, who was reported to have been suffering from a mild stroke has now seriously worsened. Prison sources confirmed to Awoko's Senior Correspondent that the rebel leader is now suffering from "stroke on both his right hand and foot."

Accordingly, Sankoh's condition is now more serious than what was reported of his health about four months ago. It was further reported that "he cannot move from one place to another," adding that, "he also has serious mental instability." Sankoh is now undergoing medical attention from prison medical authorities, the sources further disclosed. Meanwhile, sources close to the Attorney General's office have intimated that the reason for Sankoh's absence from court is due to the seriousness of his medical condition. Court sittings on his charges of murder will continue to be adjourned until his condition improves.

However, political analysts are asking, that with the former RUF leader, Foday Saybono Sankoh, now paralysed and former Paina leader Johnny Paul Koroma on the run, who will face the Special Court?
Kamajors Fighting
With Lurd
Liberia Government Says

LIBERIA’S GOVERNMENT said on Thursday that former Kamajor militia men from Sierra Leone were fighting alongside the rebel Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) in the western part of the country.

The Kamajor militia are traditional hunters who fought against Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels during the country’s armed conflict (1991-2002). Liberian Justice Minister Lavela Kotobi Johnson said they had reliable reports confirmed by fleeing civilians about the presence of ex-Kamajor fighters within the LURD.

He described them as “hired killers”.

Fighting between LURD and loyalist troops has intensified in recent weeks, spreading to the coastal town of Robertsport, 70 km south-west of the capital, Monrovia.

LURD rebels had abducted 25 civilians, mainly women and children, in the town of Cheesemanburg, where LURD and government troops have been fighting since early February. The executive director of the Liberian Refugees, Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC), Sam Brown, told IRIN on Tuesday that the influx of internally displaced people was increasing daily.

The LRRRC had registered 25,000 IDPs by Thursday. Brown called on international humanitarian organizations to help address the alarming humanitarian crisis, saying the government could not handle the influx on its own.
former Kamajoh amputees abandoned

By Jemilatu Nababa

Amputees of the defunct Civil Defence Force who were evicted from Brookfields Hotel in Freetown and relocated to Jui transit camp say government has abandoned them.

Their secretary General, Mr. Andrew Allie told Concord Times that those who were heading CDF (a former pro-government militia) including Hinga Norman have earlier announced that, there were no CDF amputees and that they (the amputees) were not under their protection. He said they are not happy over the discriminate treatment they receive. He noted that whilst government was providing shelter for war-wounded amputees, they who fought for the government were never included in the list of amputees.

He said it’s only recently that government through NaCSA provided humanitarian aid for them.

Allie further said that on the 27th January, they were asked to quit the Jui transit camp again after they had been evicted from Brookfields hotel last year. “We have nowhere to go and government should provide shelter for us”, Allie said.

The amputees said they are appealing to government to provide shelter for them and strictly warned CDF authorities including Hingga Norman, Moynina Fofana and Charles Moiwo to stay away from the organization adding that any assistance for them should go
The chairman of the CDF Tegloma Amputees and Dependents Association (TADA), Mr. Frank H. Asimi has informed the New Citizen that certain OSD policemen led by S/LDR Tony and Corporal James invaded their camps and that they were forcefully evicted from the building by the police.

The letter further stated that the policemen told them to quit the building because the authority had to use the building. Mr. Frank Asimi said that they slept outside for three days by the seaside with their wives and children so they decided to make a formal complaint to the authorities concerned.

He noted that even the gardens which were used to generate funds for them in the camps were destroyed by the police during the raid.

The CDF amputees who are mostly young men have plans to pursue their education but now that the authority, Mr. Asimi explained, had swooped on them, their vision of sustaining themselves is questionable.
Why Johnny Paul Failed To Give Up On Sunday

Reports reaching The New Storm say that fugitive former junta leader Johnny Paul Koroma refused to give himself up on Sunday, because the police presence was too heavy for his comfort. Some body claiming to be Johnny Paul Koroma had called police boss and some other security top officials indicating willingness to surrender around Jui.

Police boss Keith Hiddle had marshalled his men and they flooded the entire Jui area. Johnny Paul was to have surrendered between 2-3 pm on the said day Sunday February 23. The police awaited for hour and a half but there was no Johnny Paul Koroma or traces of him. According to the report, he was to have surrendered together with some of his men. It is known who exactly were the men with the fugitive, but speculations are that some of his die hearted supporters were with him in hiding.

Reports now say somebody claiming to be Johnny Paul called again later on the same day saying that the police presence was too heavy and that they were afraid to give themselves up. Up to the time of going to press, it was not known what move the police were making to re-establish links with the man claiming to be Johnny Paul. Residents of Freetown are worried as to why some one would be afraid to give himself up after indicating he wanted to do so. Some people are of the opinion that some body is playing games with the police.

Johnny Paul
Friend Of Johnny Paul's Wife Wanted!

Reports reaching this press have revealed that one Amnatata Keita, a friend of Mrs. Mukuta Koroma, wife of fugitive Johnny Paul Koroma, is seriously wanted. According to the reports, Amnatata Keita has been accused by youths in her locality that she knew about Johnny Paul's alleged coup, and the youths have alleged that she knew about the attack. They said she was sponsored by Johnny Paul Koroma to leave the country until after the alleged coup would have taken place.

Aminata Keita

Base in Wellington.
East End Freetown.

and the subsequent search at Johnny Paul's Juba resident by a team of OSD personnel occurred.

Days after those ugly scenes, the reports stated, neighbours made a bitter complaint to the authorities against Amnatata Keita that she knew about the attack. They said she was sponsored by Johnny Paul Koroma to leave the country until after the alleged coup would have taken place.
Security Alertness On Border Lines...

RUF FIGHTERS
BACK HOME AS
REFUGEES!

RUF and government forces continue to clash on the border between Sierra Leone and Guinea. Reports indicate that RUF fighters have begun returning home after a period of struggle in Sierra Leone. The return of these fighters has raised concerns about their potential involvement in future conflicts.

The New Pioneer
Thursday, 27 February 2003
Indicting of suspects who bear the greatest responsibility in the decade long civil conflict may not start in June due to some reasons. According to investigations, Norman and Dowbar firm which has been awarded the contract, the designing of the courthouse will start end of April, while the construction of the courthouse itself ends in September, ahead of the scheduled date of June when the court was expected to have started.

Addressing a news conference last Thursday, the Registrar of the Special Court Robin Vincent said they needed the court as soon as possible, latest August.

Vincent maintained that it is up to the Chief Prosecutor David Crane to decide when the court will start and that if he insists that he wanted to start indicting people before the completion date, he will have no alternative but to find a temporary place for the sittings, while the construction work goes on.

Vincent mentioned that they have gathered a lot to kick-start the job.

The chairperson of the Special Court management committee Deborah Chatis said she was impressed with the amount of work done so far since August.
The Price Of

Our Peace

VP Berea...

We were so desperate for peace in Sri Lanka that we were prepared to appoint those who murder, terror and rap.

Thursday, 27 February 2003
vows development
Kono ex-combatants

BY TALKING DRUM STUDIO CORRESPONDENT.

There are many efforts put together in mending Sierra Leone after the brutal senseless war, which lasted for years.

The NCDDR, like many other organizations who are undertaking this effort, is now actively embarked on the reintegration of ex-combatants to their communities.

In the Kono district, there are many skills training centres that are for ex-combatants.

Very recently, NCDDR opened another training centre at Jima Nimikoro chiefdom to train the ex-combatants in skills like carpentry, masonry and tailoring.

The vow, which they made, was that, after their training, they will surely work towards the development of their community.

The zeal of the ex-combatants for skills training is enormous.

In Nimikoro alone, more than one hundred of them have already registered at the centre.

The ex-combatants are very much enthusiastic about the centre, as their trainers applauded them for their co-operation towards the training.

The ex-combatants vowed that, after their training, they will in turn train their fellow Kono youths so that they will not get involved into things which will destroy their future and consequently set the country behind progress. They also reiterated their determination to open up centres in Kono, so that the skills that they would have acquired will be exhibited within the district; and also promised to work hand in glove with their chiefs towards the development of their communities.

Chief Kail Bufai of the Nimikoro chiefdom confessed that the ex-combatants are very much instrumental in his chiefdom as they assisted manually in the construction of the Nimikoro market.

They therefore appealed to their fellow former fighters throughout Sierra Leone to make good use of the opportunities that are given to them for the development of themselves and their communities.
PLP Says:
Johnny Paul
Is Still
Our Leader
See Story On Back Page

From Page 1
The Peace and Liberation Party (PLP) has emphatically indicated that fugitive member of parliament Hon. Johnny Paul Koroma is still the substantive leader of the party. "We want the public to know that Hon. Johnny Paul Koroma will remain the leader of the party until voted out at a party convention as mandated by the laws of the party," a release from the party said Wednesday. The party called on the police to expedite the on-going investigations, charge those found culpable and release the innocent. "The police is a custodian of the law, therefore we expect them to respect Sec 173(2) A, E of the Sierra Leone Constitution. The PLP also calls on the police to return all party documents that were confiscated."
The release further urged government to work within the ambit of the law to promote peace and justice. "The party is not a warning station, a pressure group or an NGO. The party has two honourable members of parliament therefore it reserves the right to assemble at any time, call upon persons to discuss matters of vital importance to the party and state."
"We support any action that is taken in our best interest but we cannot support other people's wrong."

The Democrat
Friday, 28 February 2003
War Crimes And Other Violations Of International Humanitarian Law

The Special Court for Sierra Leone, like the ICC, has jurisdiction over crimes against humanity. Under Article 7 of the Statute, these crimes consist of any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, either as such or in connection with any other crime, notably: deportation or forcible transfer of populations, in particular of women and children; enforced disappearances of persons, apartheid and other inhumane acts of a similar character causing great suffering, or serious injury to physical or mental health.

Genocide

This crime is defined under the Statute of the ICC (Article 6) and in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948). Article 2(1) identifies the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately preventing reproduction of the group; forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.
UN Special Envoy for Children visits Kono and Kailahun Districts

Continuing his week-long visit to Sierra Leone, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for children and Armed conflict, Under-Secretary Oliver A. Otafuku, yesterday flew to the eastern districts of Kono and Kailahun to witness first hand the conditions of children in the aftermath of the ten-year conflict.

He called for efforts to break the cycle of poverty, which caused children to enrol in education and engage in dangerous activities such as diamond mining.

Mr. Otafuku was accompanied on his trip by officials from the UN peacekeeping mission, UNAMSIL, UNICEF, the National Commission for War Affected Children, and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s affairs.

Speaking to journalists following his tour of the diamond-rich town of Koindu, Mr. Otafuku said he was “horrified” by what was going on in diamond mining sites in the district.

“We have seen children being forced to work. None of them want to be in the mines,” he said.

“But they have told me that they have no alternatives.”

The Special Representative, however, said it was encouraging to note the numbers of children, particularly child ex-combatants, who had been able to return to school and were “no longer a destabilizing factor”.

He stressed that everything should be done to improve conditions for education.

“I am happy most of them are in school even though some are sitting on rocks, instead of at desks with chairs,” he said after touring the Roman Catholic School in Koindu, which has an enrolment of more than 1,400 children, 43 of whom are former child ex-combatants.

Following his visit to a diamond-mining site in Koindu, Mr. Otafuku held several interactive discussions with children in the city and in Kailahun district.

They stressed that although primary education was free, they were required to buy books and uniforms, which their parents could hardly afford.

He advised them to concentrate on their studies and to refrain from mining.

“They spend weeks digging and probably get very little money after a long time. Don’t do it, it’s not worth it. You should all go to school,” he told children of the Maluma Kids Club in Duru who had gathered to discuss their problems with him.

The Special Representative said his visit to the eastern districts had made him “acutely aware of the needs of children”.

He expressed the hope that UNAMSIL, UN agencies operating in Sierra Leone, non-governmental organization and the National Commission for War Affected Children would do their best in addressing the pressing needs of the children.
Olara Otunnu shocked at child miners in Kono

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Under-Secretary-General Olara O. Otunnu, was Wednesday shocked at the growing numbers of child miners in Kono.

UN press release states, Otunnu called for efforts to break the cycle of poverty which caused children to miss out on education and resort to dangerous activities such as diamond mining.

Mr. Otunnu, who visited Kono, said he was "brought" by what he saw going on in diamond mining sites in the district. "So many children have been forced to labour. None of them want to be in the mines," he said. "But they have told me that they have no alternatives."

The Special Representative, however, said it was encouraging to note the number of children, particularly child ex-combatants, who had been able to return to school and were "no longer destitute or beggar children." He also said that the de-mining programme was helping to improve conditions for education. "It is hoped most of them are now going back to school despite the problems they have been through and are sitting on desks instead of at desks with claim," he said.

He said allowing the Roman Catholic School in Kono, which has an enrolment of more than 1,400 children, to obtain and finance child ex-combatants, states Unauw release.

Following his visit to a diamond mining site in Kono, Mr. Otunnu held several interactive discussions with children in the city and in Ban, Kolahun district. They stressed that although primary education was free, they were required to buy books and uniforms which their parents could hardly afford.

He advised them to concentrate on their studies and to refrain from mining. They spent weeks digging and hardly get any little money after a long time. Don't dig it, it's not worth it.