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
Local News

Johnny Paul is Still PLP Leader / Salone Times  Page 3
D-IG Speaks Out on Johnny Paul Escape / Salone Times  Page 4
…Three Police, One Soldier Implicated / Concord Times  Pages 5-6
Johnny Paul’s Escape, The Backlash on the SLP / The Policy  Page 7
Johnny Paul’s Escape Accelerate Infighting in Police Force / Rokel Times  Page 8
Johnny Paul: Bombali or London? / Independent Observer  Page 9
…Police Increase Checkpoint / The Democrat  Page 10
…I Haven’t Set Eyes on Johnny Paul for 4 Months / Independent Observer  Page 12
Johnny Paul’s Escape…2 Police Officers Suspended / Independent Observer  Page 13
Court Investigation May Be Completed in June / IRIN  Page 14
‘Johnny Paul Is Still PLP Leader’

Hon. Hassan Kamara

By Salamatu Taray

Peace and Liberation Party (PLP) Member of Parliament Hon. Hassan Kamara, yesterday denied rumours that the leadership of the party will change following the disappearance of its leader Hon. Johnny Paul Koroma during police raid recently.

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.
D-1G speaks out on Johnny Paul escape

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 been handled with tactfulness and competence to put things under control.

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

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

"Who knows what might have happened if that situation had escalated, but we acted promptly," he said.

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

"I passed the message to the Inspector General Keith Biddle, but I warned Mr. Biddle about the president," he said.

Mr. Kamara further told SALONE TIMES that he has never been involved in a dispute with Johnny Fula. "It is only my attention that we are trying to keep up," he said.

Meanwhile, the police have set up an internal investigation into the disappearance of Johnny Paul Koroma.

SALONE TIMES gathered that Mr. Kamara is among the officers being investigated. Police sources have said they are in touch with the Salone Times for an update on this investigation, as well as the police..

Earlier this month, Mr. Koroma accused the police that the Vice President Salone has not been giving him a fair trial, stating that he has not been granted enough of a fair trial, saying that he is not satisfied with the outcome of the trial and that there is no evidence of his guilt.

The police have also denied the allegations, stating that "the police do not have any evidence against him."
Johnny Paul's Escape:
Three Police, One Soldier Implicated

While investigations into the mysterious disappearance of fugitive Major have been named in the cause of his escape, Police Headquarters sources have revealed that one Major Lihim of the Armed Forces of Sierra Leone, Police Inspector Labree, who led the Team of CID's, and one Assistant Superintendent of Police E.S. Kargbo, alias Scorpion and M. Kasainallie, both from the Operations Support Division (OSD) of the Police, conducted the raid on Hon. Johnny Paul Koroma's house on the fateful day. They discovered guns and ammunition and ordered out for these two only arrested the AFRIC 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 Sergeant named Amin Kargbo followed these two but was deployed at the rear bathroom area of the operations. These two senior Police Officers are said to have been given no orders as to who should identify and arrest which

## ALL DECLARED WANTED ##

- J.P. Koroma
- George Reama
- Selba Bukarrie
- L.Cpl. Sesay (Banger)
- Abdul Manuari
- Samed Kargbo
Police at the Gold Command level from whom the troops took the last orders are executive the operations.

The Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police in charge of Operations, Muuha, has refused to take the blame for giving the inadequate command to the team, and the technical adviser, Head of the ODS, also denied giving the last command order, while SAC, CDIII, Somase has in fact said he was not in the country when the incident happened.

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

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

They are also said to be first cousins. It is said to have been in charge of Johnny Paul Koroma's diamond deals from which proceeds are alleged to have been built on a fantastic fully filled mansion in 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 arranging 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 failing 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 trying 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 Seller in Goderich.

Meanwhile, after the Monday January 13, 2003 shoot-out at the Military Engineering base at Willington, 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 everybody should stay calm and go about his/her usual business.

However, few days later, about 15 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.

C.C.
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 Report.

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 team of officers to move the force forward 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 Biddulph 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-rate officers (raw and ill-equipped) to han-

Johnny Paul’s Escape

FROM FRONT PAGE

The Policy
Thursday, 6 February 2003

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 unwarranted hostility of the press against the SLP is therefore unjustifiable. It is unfortunate that history repeats itself 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.
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 an 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 suspicion against an individual perhaps, because of his ethnic and regional CONTD BACK PAGE

From Front Page
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 into 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 rehabilitating a battered and battered 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 is to make life easier for the president, Keith Biddle, in helping the president work out tangible formulae, 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.
JOHNNY PAUL:
Bombali Or London?

The whereabouts of the former member of Parliament Johnny Paul Koroma remains a mystery with conflicting reports coming in.

Yesterday reports reaching Independent Observer state that Koroma is hiding in a tiny village on the outskirts of Bombali town which is the site of the former junta leader's hide-out.

Although independent observers have not been able to get confirmation from Maskari 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 from the inhabitants of these regions. His recent report of former junta leader might have sought refuge after the war.
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 disclose

Johnny Paul Koroma: wanted

Commissioner of Police Professional Standards, Oliver Somass, at their weekly press briefing at the Police Headquarters, Tuesday 4.

Mr. Somass revealed that findings on investigations into how Johnny Paul Koroma was released awaited. The delay, he said, was due to the unavailability of key officers wanted for questioning. The said officers had been relocated to the provinces on official duties.

alike have expressed disgust at the new arrangement. The former say they are being hampered whilst the latter complained of extortion. Meanwhile, the number of suspects in Police custody has increased to 77. This was disclosed by the Senior
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. 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 blame on the police. The force decided to mount an in-house investigation involving mostly the arrest team that went to Johnny Paul's house.
Mandereh Tells Police...

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

Retired Const. Abubakarr Kamara, known popularly as Mandereh, has received 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 the police that for the past four months he stopped visiting Johnny Paul’s Jubba residence, because...
Johnny Paul’s Escape...

2 Police Officers Suspended

By Abu Bakarr Mumin

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 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 conduct on the part of the 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.
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 Ouyemi 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]

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