

Discontent toward Zaire government grows

Clement Biondi Kalondwa pedals his bike hundreds of miles each month, hiding the diamonds he buys in his shirt collar to sell in this sweaty diamond-trading capital.

He makes just enough to feed and educate his five children by trading the diamonds at the garish storefronts - like Mister Cash and Rambo Diamond - that line Kisangani's broad boulevards.

"It's a brutal life," Kalondwa said. "I'm hoping for something better under the rebels."

More than anything else, economic hardship has fueled the rebellion that swept through eastern Zaire in the past six months. Throughout this vast land studded with diamonds and gold, people are angry with President Mobutu Sese Seko for impover-

ishing what should be a prosperous nation.

Rebel leader Laurent Kabila has said notching up military successes has been easy compared to what lies ahead: running a government and building an economy.

"If I can't do better than Mobutu, then our rebellion will have been a failure," Kabila told The Associated Press.

"We are looking at the economy so people in this liberated area can start normal life," he said. "Normal life not as before ... but something better ... so they can live in peace, without corruption, without the terrorizing of the people."

In the third of Zaire under his control, Kabila has reduced duties on most imports and exports,

trimmed the civil service, tried to quash corruption and encouraged investment from abroad.

Border crossings with Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi are again busy with traders, and ports have reopened on Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu.

Some foreign-owned businesses are starting up again after fleeing in October, including the Heineken brewery in Bukavu, a Canadian textile business in Kisangani and a sugar refinery in Uvira.

To residents of eastern Zaire it's the basics that count - electricity and water, hospitals, schools for the children.

Transportation is also a big problem.

Kalondwa - gesturing at his bicycle, known by Zairians as

"Mobutu transportation" - is pleased that the rebels have persuaded communities to improve the torturous 125-mile track from Bukavu to Walikale, where he buys a lot of diamonds.

Mobutu spent so little on infrastructure that most roads are nearly impassable. Railways, airports and ferries are decrepit. Telephones rarely work.

At a meeting of businessmen Thursday in Kisangani, Zaire's third largest city, Kabila's finance minister, Mwana Nanga Mawampanga, was peppered with questions.

Many wanted to know when the economy would boom and how to recover from the looting spree by government troops and civilians before the rebels took over Satur-

day.

Mawampanga promised tax concessions to help them get started.

"We don't have enough money, we don't have a lot of resources ... so there is only so much we can do with the means that we have, but we're trying our best," the former University of Kentucky economist said in an interview.

But he claimed credit for "doing things that even for 30 years Mobutu didn't do. We've lowered taxes, we're rebuilding roads."

Already, he's made it easier for Zairians to enter the lucrative gold-trading industry by reducing government-required deposits from \$200,000 to \$1,000.

As a result, smuggling has dropped, tax receipts are up,

Mawampanga said.

"The rebels get more money now than Mobutu did before. Money was going into people's pockets, now it goes to the cause," added Kotecha Ramniklal, president of Chamber of Commerce in Bukavu.

Under Mobutu, corruption was rampant. Poorly paid officials taxed almost everything and demanded bribes from anyone who needed government services.

None of the money was put in the treasury.

"We inherited a disaster," said Anatole Bishukwabo, governor of South Kivu. "We have to revitalize an enormous country that was neglected for a long time. That means starting again from the beginning."

Cellular code breached

A team of computer security experts has cracked the electronic code meant to protect the privacy of calls made with new digital cellular telephones. The New York Times reports Thursday.

The experts planned to announce the breach Thursday as a public warning that the new phones may be no more secure from eavesdropping than analog cellular phones in use the last 15 years, the Times said.

Independent security experts now say the code is so easy to crack that anyone with sufficient technical skills could make and sell a monitoring device as easy to use as a police scanner.

Technical details of the security system were supposed to be a closely

guarded secret, known only to industry engineers. But the researchers performed their work based on documents that were leaked from within the communications industry and disseminated over the Internet late last year.

"The industry design process is at fault," said David Wagner, a researcher at the University of California at Berkeley and a member of the team that broke the code. "We can use this as a lesson, and save ourselves vulnerabilities in the future."

The Times said other members of the team were Bruce Schneier and John Kelsey of Counterpane Systems, a Minneapolis consulting firm. Schneier is the author of a standard textbook on cryptography.

Fears about the digital code's effectiveness were raised five years ago when the communications industry agreed under government pressure to adopt a watered-down privacy technology. Several telecommunications industry officials told the Times that the pressure came from the National Security Agency, which feared that criminals or terrorists might benefit from stronger encryption technology.

Chris Carroll, an engineer at GTE Laboratories and chairman of the industry committee that oversees privacy standards for cellular phones, told the Times that work is being done to fix the problem.

"We're already in the process of correcting this flaw," Carroll said.

Space trash threatens satellites

Thousands of pieces of space junk are orbiting Earth at enormous speeds, threatening to smash into satellites and manned space flights and interfering with astronomical observations.

After a three-day conference on space junk, scientists from 18 countries said while the probability of such collisions remains small now, the hazard would increase as the skies become more crowded.

The first confirmed collision between a working satellite and space trash occurred July 24, when a French microsatellite was damaged by a fragment of the exploded third stage of an Ariane rocket, they said.

Almost 300 new satellites are

scheduled to be launched over the next two years, 75 percent more than the previous two years.

Since "clean-up in space is neither technically nor financially feasible, efforts must be directed towards reducing and avoiding the creation of space debris," the scientists said Wednesday in a statement.

Only 5 percent of the more than 10,000 trackable, man-made objects orbiting Earth are operational. The rest is debris from sources such as exploded rocket stages and old satellites.

In addition, an estimated 70,000 to 150,000 orbiting bits - smaller than 4 inches - pose an even bigger risk because of their greater number, the statement said.

A half-inch diameter fragment, traveling at an average of 17,400 miles an hour, can destroy a \$100 million satellite. NASA has had to replace 50 tiles on its space shuttles that were damaged by tiny debris.

George Levin, a NASA spokesman, said the U.S. space agency supported international cooperation in monitoring the dangerous debris and will come up with recommendations on how to collect such trash.

Proposals include setting up a "space cemetery" for out-of-service satellites, destroying the trash with lasers, or forcing it to re-enter the atmosphere so it burns up.

The conference was organized by the European Space Agency.

NationsBank Donates \$350,000 To 100 Black Men of America, Inc.

100 Black Men of America, Inc., will use a \$350,000 gift from NationsBank (NYSE: NB) to help improve the quality of life and educational opportunities for African-Americans and minorities throughout the country.

The contribution was presented in Charleston, South Carolina at a regional training conference of the organization.

Thomas W. Dortch, Jr., National President of 100 Black Men, said, NationsBank has been a long-time supporter of the '100's' programs. This philanthropic contribution will

help to support our mission to empower a new generation of leaders.

"This gift is consistent with the goals of NationsBank and its Professional African-American Market Development Unit," said Sheddric Barber, national coordinator, Professional African-American Market Development for NationsBank.

"NationsBank partners with organizations like 100 Black Men to strengthen the communities we serve. These resources will not only benefit our communities, but will also benefit the individual members of 100 Black Men of America, Inc.,

as they go forward in their important work."

NationsBank, through its Professional African-American Market Development Unit, formed in 1996, is committed to assisting African-Americans in wealth accumulation, management and preservation.

Following its January 17, 1997 merger with Boatmen's Bancshares, Inc., of St. Louis, MO, NationsBank has primary retail and commercial banking operations in 16 states and the District of Columbia. On a pro-forma combined basis, NationsBank had total assets of approximately

\$227 billion at year-end.

100 Black Men of America, Inc., through the development and support of 69 chapters in 27 states, works to improve the quality of life for African-Americans and other citizens and to enhance educational opportunities for youth.

The organization has mentored more than 60,000 young men and women in its 34 year history. Recently, the 100 Black Men pledged to mentor an additional 120,000 youth by the year 2000 to the President's Summit on America's Future.

Railroads economic impact on Oregon

Oregon's freight railroads contributed more than \$200 million directly to the state economy in 1995 through wages and retirement benefits to current and former railroad workers in the state, according to figures released by the Association of American Railroads (AAR).

In addition, the AAR noted, the jobs of thousands of Oregonians depend on the safe, efficient and environmentally sound transportation that railroads provide to link Oregon business, industry and agriculture with markets throughout the nation and the world.

Payrolls for the 2,867 active Oregon freight railroad employees to-

taled \$142 million in 1995. Oregon railroad employees are near the top of the U.S. wage scale, with average individual salaries of \$49,682. The railroad retirement system, which is separate from the social security system, paid more than \$121 million in retirement benefits to 11,500 railroad retirees in Oregon and their families.

In addition to the \$263 million in wages and retirement payments, railroads contributed millions of dollars more to the Oregon economy through the purchase of goods and services from Oregon vendors, and the payment of income, property and other taxes. Unlike the highway and wa-

terway modes of transportation, railroads pay property taxes to state and local governments on their privately owned rights-of-way and are self-supporting.

During 1995, Oregon ranked 16th in the U.S. in the number of freight railroads (18), 31st in the total number of rail miles (2,445), and 40th in rail traffic (58 million tons).

Railroads move more lumber and wood products than any other commodity in Oregon, originating 5 million tons in 1995. America's railroads haul 41 percent of all U.S. intercity freight ton-miles, far more than any other mode.

Railroads are the environmentally preferred mode of transport and have improved their fuel effi-

ciency by 60 percent since 1980. Using the same amount of fuel, railroads move a ton of freight more than three times as far as a truck. Shipping by rail also eases highway congestion.

Since 1980, the rail industry has reduced train accidents by 68 percent. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, 1995 (the most recent year for which statistics are available) was the safest year in railroad history, bettering previous safety records in 1993 and 1994 - in spite of the fact that rail traffic was at an all time high.

AAR is the world's leading railroad policy, research and organization focusing on increasing the safety and productivity of rail carriers.

Africans die early, Westerners live longer

The average African continues to die relatively young while most Westerners live much longer, according to a new U.N. report. If you were born in Rwanda, chances are, you will survive only until 23, but in you were born in Europe or Japan, you may live to 75 years of age or more, says the new U.N. study, "The World Social Situation."

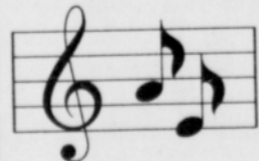
The report points out that the lowest life expectancies are in Africa, while the highest are in Europe, North America, Australia, Japan and New Zealand. Rwanda, which experienced genocide in 1994, saw life expectancy decline from 46.3 years in the period 1980-85 to 22.6 in 1990-95. Life expectancy in Sierra Leone is 34.4 years, 39.4 years in Liberia, and 41 years in Uganda. The highest African life expectancies are in Botswana (54.3), Kenya (54.1), Cote d'Ivoire (52.1), Congo (51.5) and Togo (51.0). According to the report, the average person in Japan lives the longest, reaching up to 79.5 years,

followed by Iceland at 78.8 years, and Canada at 78.5 years.

The overall figure for Africa is 51.8 years, for Asia 64.5 years, for Latin America 68.5 years, North America 76.2 years, Europe 72.7 years and Oceania 72.9 years. Although there is no gender breakdown by country, the study says that on average women can be expected to live about four years longer than men.

For the world, life expectancy for men is 62.2 years while that for women is 66.5 years. In the more developed regions, this male-female disparity is as high as 7.6 years, whereas in the less developed regions, women live only three years longer than men. In North America, however, women's life expectancy improved by four years over the past decades, while male life expectancy improved by five years, thereby decreasing the male-female gap from 7.7 years to 6.7 years. The male-female gap also decreased slightly in Africa, from 3.1 to 2.9 years.

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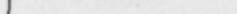
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U.S. Postal Inspectors in Portland and the Salem Police Department, in cooperation with Crime Stoppers, are asking for you help in locating and apprehending Sheila Melanee St. John.

U.S. Postal Inspectors currently hold a Federal Arrest Warrant, charging St. John with possession of stolen mail. In addition, Salem Police want to question her in connection with checks stolen from the mail in the Salem area that are being forged and passed as far north as King City.

Sheila Melanee St. John is a 22 year-old white female (DOB 050774), 5'6, 150 pounds, with brown hair and blue eyes.

If you have any information regarding this case, call the Crime Stoppers Program. Crime Stoppers is offering a cash reward of up to \$1,000 for information, reported to



Sheila Melanee St. John

Crime Stoppers, which leads to an arrest in this case or any unsolved felony crime, and you do not have to give your name. Call either U.S. Postal Inspectors at (503) 279-2072. Crime Stoppers at (503) 823-HELP.

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