

## NRA partners with District Councils to fight smuggling

An official at the National Revenue Authority has disclosed that the NRA has involved the District Councils to help in monitoring smuggling activities in chiefdoms that border our neighboring countries and that the councils were supplied with bikes to patrol their respective chiefdoms and give out vital information to the Preventive Services and Special Division personnel for necessary action

Mr. Alfred Kamara, Principal Economist at the Commissioner General's office spoke on Thursday February 26 during the official opening of the Sierra Leone Traders Union office in Kenema. Alfred Kamara said, combating smuggling in Sierra Leone requires the concerted effort of all stakeholders including Traders Union, Boat Owners Association, and security forces.

Speaking on the topic, 'The effect of smuggling and tax education', Alfred Kamara said, smuggling deprives a government of the much needed revenue as a high percentage of potential revenue is lost. He said, 'smuggling has the potential of bringing in contaminated, expired and illegal substances that pose threat to state security or public health.

imposed on captured goods...'

On tax education, he disclosed that the Commis-

sioner General together with his Principal Economists have undertaken a number of tax education drives, especially with the business community, in trying to explain the negative effects of smuggling. He therefore called on all stakeholders, especially traders to help combat smuggling so that the

country will once again free itself from the bottom position of the UNDP Development Index.

Earlier, Brima Bawo, Trades Union Regional Chairman, East spoke on his development plans for this year, which he said, include but not limited to sensitizing people on the importance of trade unions,

and also ensuring that their members comply with the NRA Act, Nassit Act and the labor laws in the country. 'We should do all we can to honor our taxes', he told the gathering in Kenema.

He also spoke that smuggling is highly concentrated in the East since they have porous bor-

ders and therefore called on all to help stop the act. Also present at the official opening ceremony was the Deputy Trade Minister, Mabinty Daraby who spoke of her government's commitment to improving trade issues in the country as well as the welfare of traders.

## Kailahun calls on govt. to declare March 23rd National Day for reflection"

Paramount Chief of Upper Bambara Chiefdom, Kailahun District PC Cyril Foray Gondor II has on behalf of the people of Upper Bambara Chiefdom and Bomaru Town called on the government of Sierra Leone to declare March 23rd, the date the war started in Sierra Leone, specifically in Bomaru Town a National Day for reflection. Speaking at a press conference yesterday at Forum of Conscience headquarters on Fort Street in Freetown, PC Gondor II said; "we need to reflect on what went wrong and why did we, Sierra Leoneans do, go so low to kill one another. As a family, we need to sit together and discuss that we shall never return to those dark and ugly days of war". The Paramount Chief said they welcome the Fambul Tok community healing initiative, which facilitates dialogue between offenders, victims and members of the community in the spirit of national healing and reconciliation.

PC Gondor disclosed that

on behalf of the Fambul Tok District Executive I Kailahun, Upper Bambara Chiefdom and Bomaru town and in collaboration with Forum of Conscience and Catalyst for Peace, they are going to observe the one year anniversary of the Fambul Tok's reconciliation, which coincides with the national day of reflection.

He said the day would be observed with series of activities ranging from feasting, traditional dances, cultural performances to foot-

ball matches among many other activities.

He extended invitation to the Government of President Koroma, Members of Parliament, the Judiciary, members of the diplomatic community, local and international NGOs, religious and traditional leaders and the entire nation of Sierra Leone to Bomaru and join them in observing the occasion. "As a nation, we need to collectively reflect on the past and say Never Never again shall we use guns and machetes to

settle our disputes".

PC Gondor stated that they welcome the verdict of RUF members at the Special Court and reiterated that the verdict brings an end to the retributive process. "Now the country needs to focus on restorative justice. It can be achieved through community reconciliation and the implementation of the TRC recommendations with emphasize reparation programs for war victims" he stressed.

**Nibuhun chiefdom gets new community market**