

Tim Atiep Times

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Fergus's bit

Since the last newsletter, we have been busy with fund-raising and have exceeded the target of £5000 by over £1000. Well done to all and many thanks to all those who contributed or organised events. By the time you read this issue, I hope to be back in Bahr el-Ghazal, or at least Nairobi, and I will be back home in April. This means that the March edition will not be out until the end of April, but it will let you all know what I got up to! My main intention is to use up the funds raised, on the school project in Ajiep and planning with the community the next stage. The money will be spent on buying locally available building materials,
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Christmas Day 1996 - Ayien

So it is Xmas and I am sitting on a box of fishing twine with people all around playing cards, talking, drinking and listening to Kanda Bongo man. It is warm but not over hot and there is a bit of a breeze. The a.m. was quite cool but I didn't feel so cold. I had a

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wash and a shave, which was cold and had coffee and biscuits and I had a bottle of vodka, from which I doled out drams to those

who came to greet us. I had a dram or two myself. I felt quite relaxed. Jim and I are camped under a tamarind and a latrine has been dug nearby. A dog barked a lot all night, so a bit disturbed. Later in the morning drumming could be heard in the distance and then singing as the kids from Manyiel came by singing Xmas songs as they went towards Akon. A chicken was killed and a very nice broth produced with rice, as last night. Almost as good and certainly less heavy on the stomach than turkey, roast tatties and Xmas pud, though I think we will consume some quantities of alcohol. Majokdit turns up looking a shadow of his former, but

seemingly fit, though he says his small daughter is sick. Otherwise all is quiet except the hammering of a blacksmith. Then some dancing: Ayuong in his now cut down trousers with the karate man inside out and a large hole in the bum, another man in a short jellabia and gumboots and yet another in frayed shorts and a smart shirt. Some women are trilling and singing over by. I think they have been at the araki as well. More people turn up and things get a little chaotic. Eventually we all settle in for a good dance and some food. I try some Luo as well as the usual bull dance and we go on till about midnight.

Soup, Ceilidhs & Fundraising

Since we launched our appeal to raise £5000 for the school project in Ajiep in the June Newsletter, we have had a marvellous response and in many different ways. Many people have made generous donations and the people of Millport have really excelled themselves with their support. The Yuletide Festive Evening raised £65 in donations for soup or gluwain and the Hogmanay

Highland Ceilidh raised an incredible £1400.

In November, the Sudan British Government Pensioners Association very kindly agreed to include our leaflet in their Newsletter and the response was marvellous, with many of the members making generous donations as well as writing or phoning to add their own personal interest in what is happening in Sudan.

Thanks are also due to a number of our members, who have made such an effort to interest others in the work of the STTA. It has been a lot of hard work, but Fergus will be able to take £6200 with him on the 22nd January, all of which will be spent on the school project in Ajiep. Many thanks to all who contributed in one way or another - Happy New Year dan.

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 some labour costs, which will be in kind, not cash, and buying some grain and other food stuffs for the children, so that they can get at least one meal a day. The school will get most of its teaching materials from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the teachers will undergo three months training through existing UN or NGO programmes. I am hoping to be able to sit under shady trees for long periods of time talking with the community and the local administration, so that we can draw up a plan of action for the next 12 months. The ultimate aim will be for the school to be self-sufficient, at least in terms of being able to feed the children and remunerate the teachers, as well as being able to pay for repairs, expansion etc through having working income generation schemes. Until there is an end to the war, however, schools in the South will be dependent on the UN or aid agencies for school materials and teacher training. Relief aid is necessary, but education is vital.

Books and publications

Report of an Investigation into Oil Development, Conflict and Displacement in Western Upper Nile, Sudan October 2001 by John Ryle and Georgette Gagnon

This disturbing report documents the increase, in the past two years, of coordinated and targeted attacks on civilian populations in Western Upper Nile, by helicopter gunships and aerial bombardment, followed by ground attacks by government backed militias. Often these attacks operate from the oil consortium facilities: the consortium, Greater Nile petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC) is made up of the China National Petroleum Corporation, Petronas Carigali (Malaysian), Sudapet (Sudanese) and Talisman Energy (Canadian).

A Press Release dated

October 16 2001 states "The report finds that the Government of Sudan has intensified a terror campaign of armed attacks against civilians living in oil areas in 2000-01, has used oil infrastructure to support military action, and has increased its military spending as its oil revenues have increased. Talisman and other oil companies are "knowingly or unknowingly, involved in a government counter insurgency strategy that involves the forced displacement of local people from rural areas" of the oil concession of the GNPOC consortium, the report states."

The report urges all of the oil companies operating in Sudan to make their continued presence there contingent on independent monitoring of human rights in the oil development areas.

War and Slavery in Sudan by Jok Madut Jok. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001. (Obtained at Foyles, London at £20.50)

The Murahileen chain people
 As the fisherman chains his catch with a rope
 The Murahileen take us into servitude in their land
 The Murahileen drag us on the surface of our land
 But we will not let go of our land
 Sudan is our land

With this Dinka verse, Jok prefaces his book in which he argues that today the slave trade in Sudan "persists as a complex network of buyers, sellers and middlemen that operates most actively when times are favourable to the practice...the present day is one such time.."

More fundraising news

The Committee of the Renfrewshire versus Ayrshire challenge, mentioned in the last newsletter, presented us with a cheque for £126.44. The Shading Tree (Tim Atiep) Cards sold very well. 1000 were printed (though there were perhaps 100 extras for which there was no charge) and all but a few have been sold. After deducting

printing costs, the cards made £147.75. The STTA video has been shown on a number of occasions and a short presentation given. The Cumbrae Parish Women's Guild Opening Meeting was one such occasion and £50 was donated. Copies of the video are available on loan, please write or call 01475 530550. Fergus

Thanks

hopes to be able to produce another later in 2002. Thanks are due to many people for donations, contributions, participation and exhortation, but especially to:

Laura Pennick
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