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These are indicative rates based on results of daily surveys of foreign exchange market in Monrovia and selected cities of Liberia. These rates are collected from the Central bank, commercial banks, parallel market and the license forex bureaux. The rates are not set by the Central Bank of Liberia.
Source: Research, Policy and Planning Department, CBL.

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Continental News

How Russia has rebranded Wagner in Africa

Russia is offering governments in Africa a "regime survival package" in exchange for access to strategically important natural resources, a major new report has found. Internal Russian government documents, seen

mostly being run as the Russian "Expeditionary Corps", managed by the man accused of being behind the attempt to murder Sergei Skripal using the Novichok nerve agent on the streets of the UK - a charge Russia has denied.

"This is the Russian state coming out of the shadows in its

Then, he decided to march on Moscow, ostensibly calling for the removal of the defence minister and head of the general staff, but in reality threatening President Vladimir Putin in a way no-one had before.

Within weeks he had died in a highly suspicious plane crash, along with much of the Wagner leadership. There was widespread speculation at the time about what would happen to the Wagner Group. Now, we have the answer.

According to Dr Watling, "there was a meeting in the Kremlin fairly shortly after Prigozhin's mutiny, in which it was decided that Wagner's Africa operations would fall directly under the control of Russian military intelligence, the GRU". Control was to be handed to Gen Andrey Averyanov, head of Unit 29155, a secretive operation specialising in targeting killings and destabilising foreign governments. But it seems Gen Averyanov's new business was not destabilising governments, but rather securing their future, as long as they paid by signing away their mineral rights. In early September, accompanied by deputy Defence Minister Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, Gen Averyanov began a tour of former Wagner operations in Africa. BBC



by the BBC, also detail how it is working to change mining laws in West Africa, with the ambition of dislodging Western companies from an area of strategic importance.

This is part of the process of the Russian government taking over the businesses of the Wagner mercenary group, broken up after a failed coup in June 2023. The multibillion dollar operations are now

Africa policy," says Jack Watling, land warfare specialist at the Royal United Services Institute (Rusi) and one of the report's authors. Back in June 2023, Yevgeny Prigozhin was probably the most feared and famous mercenary in the world. His Wagner Group was in control of billions of dollars' worth of companies and projects, while his fighters were central to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Lion kills zookeeper at Nigerian university

A zookeeper at a Nigerian university has been killed by one of the lions he had been looking after for close to a decade.

Olabode Olawuyi, who was in charge of the zoo at Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), was attacked as he was feeding the lions, the university said in a statement. His colleagues were unable to save him as one of the lions had already fatally wounded him, the university added.

The lion has since been put down. Mr Olawuyi, a veterinary technologist, had been "taking care of the lions since they were born on campus about nine years ago". "But, tragically, the male lion killed the man who had been feeding them," the university's spokesman, Abiodun Olarewaju, said.

"We never knew what came over the male lion that it had to attack [him]," he added.

Nigerians on social media have been sharing graphic images of the mauling at the university in Osun state in the south-west.

The university community is

in mourning, and a delegation has gone to the family of Mr Olawuyi to offer their condolences.

The university's vice-chancellor, Prof Adebayo Simeon Bamire, said he was "saddened" by the incident and ordered a thorough investigation.

The students' union leader, Abbas Akinremi, told Nigeria's Vanguard newspaper that the attack was caused by "human error" after the zookeeper had forgotten to lock the door after feeding the lions.

He described the incident as unfortunate, while paying tribute to Mr Olawuyi as a "good and

humble man, who attended to us nicely whenever we went to the zoo". Abba Gandu, who has been feeding lions for more

than 50 years at a zoo in Kano in northern Nigeria, described Monday's incident as unfortunate and said more safety measures were needed.

"This incident wouldn't in any way affect me personally as feeding lions is what I want to do until I die," said Mr Gandu, who started feeding lions in 1971. He added that his worst experience was when a baboon he was trying to feed bit his finger. BBC



Olabode Olawuyi, a veterinarian technologist, had been taking care of the university's lions for nine years

SA pupil may face adult trial over headteacher shooting

A 13-year-old school boy in South Africa, arrested after allegedly shooting and injuring his principal, may be tried as an adult, the prosecuting authority says. The boy, who has not been named, has been charged with attempted murder.

His alleged 51-year-old victim is currently recovering in intensive care in hospital. The shooting has shocked many people in South Africa, where there is growing concern over violence in schools. The pupil allegedly used his father's gun in Friday's shooting at a primary school in Germiston, east of the main city of Johannesburg. The father has also been arrested on suspicion of negligence in relation to a firearm and was expected to appear in court on Tuesday, a police spokesperson, Col Dimakatso

National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), a magistrate has ordered a report into the boy's ability to tell right from wrong and an assessment of his cognitive, moral, emotional, psychological and social development.

The magistrate will then decide if he can be tried as an adult. This was being done to determine the appropriate way to proceed with the case, NPA spokesperson Phindi Mjonondwane told the BBC. Reflecting on the case, Pretty Ndlovu, a senior social worker at the National Children and Violence Trust charity, said she was concerned about the prevalence of gun crimes in the country and their impact on children.

"We are going through a lot as people and there is often fighting in the home, which can lead to anger issues in a child. No child can wake up and carry a gun. Where are we as parents and



Gauteng province's Education Minister Matome Chiloane has visited the school where the shooting took place

Nevhuhulwi, told the BBC.

During a visit to the school on Monday, Gauteng province's Education Minister Matome Chiloane alleged that the boy drew up a "hitlist" of three teachers "who were giving him problems in school." As we interviewed his friends, they said this thing has been planned for a while. Apparently, they had a WhatsApp group where they were communicating and planning this gruesome event."

He alleged the pupil had taken bullets to the school on a previous occasion. Neither the boy nor his father has commented on the allegations.

Under South Africa's Child Justice Act, a 12- or 13-year-old is presumed not to have "criminal capacity" unless the state can prove otherwise.

In the case of this shooting, following a request from the

educators? Why are we not monitoring our children? We are losing a generation," she said.

Mr Chiloane said that whatever the outcome of the legal process the alleged perpetrator would have to "undergo stringent rehabilitation" before being allowed back into the education system. Safety in schools has been a major concern in Gauteng, the province with the biggest population in South Africa and its economic heartland. The shooting comes weeks after a student was stabbed to death and another injured at a secondary school south of Johannesburg. Mr Chiloane promised to increase security at schools across the province after that incident.

On Monday, Gauteng's Premier Panyaza Lesufi said that "selected high-risk schools" identified by the department of education are being monitored via CCTV cameras.

EDITORIAL

A messy PR

The Executive Mansion in Monrovia has struggled but failed to present pictorial or video evidence that during President Joseph Nyuma Boakai's recent visit to the Republic of Ghana, he met with Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo or Vice President Mahamudu Bawumia as it has claimed.

Last week, the Executive Mansion announced via a press release that President Boakai left the country Tuesday, February 13, 2024 for a two-day visit to meet and hold consultations with President Nana Akufo-Addo, on matters of mutual interest to both countries and issues obtaining in the sub-region.

But just as the Liberian President arrived in Accra, Ghana, President Akufo-Addo was leaving Ghana for an official trip abroad. Subsequently, it was gathered that President Boakai did not meet the Ghanaian Vice President either.

Who then did the President of Liberia meet with while in Ghana, is the US\$50 million question Liberians are seeking answer to, which the authority has been unable to clearly address.

In a fruitless endeavor to provide some explanations, as speculations grew in Monrovia, Presidential Press Secretary Kula Fofana told the NEW DAWN last week Thursday, 15 February that things may change in the presidential space.

The Executive Mansion in a release on Wednesday, 14 February had announced, "His Excellency Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr., President of the Republic of Liberia returns home following a brief successful working visit to the Republic of Ghana. While away, he held talks with members of the Ghanaian Government. During his meeting with the Ghanaian team, the President extended appreciation for the support received prior to and during his inauguration as well as the visitation by the Ghanaian Leader, President Nana Akufo-Addo.

For his part, the Vice President of Ghana, Honorable Mahamudu Bawumia expressed excitement for the visit and assured the Liberian Leader of their continuous support and commitment to Liberia."

However, a NEW DAWN's independent investigation that has not been challenged established that President Boakai was flown from Monrovia to the University of Ghana Medical Center last week Tuesday morning for treatment, a place that he had frequently even proper to becoming President of Liberia.

In the first place, there was absolutely no need for the Executive Mansion to have misled the Liberian public about the real intent of the President's trip to Ghana that has created serious embarrassment for the country. Mr. Boakai is now President of the Republic of Liberia and Liberians deserve all rights to know or to be told clearly where he goes and who talks with other than feeding the public with something totally different from the actual happening, as was unfolded recently.

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COMMENTARY

By Rabah Arezki

Africa's Shifting Economic Paradigm

ALGIERS - Before the outbreak of COVID-19, Africa experienced 25 years of uninterrupted economic expansion, prompting analysts to proclaim that the continent's growth momentum was no longer dependent on its extractive industries. As access to education and health care increased, so did life expectancy, nurturing an "Africa rising" narrative. To finance their development needs, African countries turned to international capital markets, many of them for the first time.

A close examination of the data, however, reveals that Africa's economic growth has not been broadly shared. Per capita growth, in particular, has been far less impressive than it initially seemed. Poverty remains endemic across the continent, with roughly 431 million people in extreme poverty (living on less than \$1.90 per day). Without decisive action, the United Nations estimates that an additional 60 million Africans will fall into extreme poverty by 2030.

Moreover, the inefficient delivery of public services like education and health care has led to widespread dissatisfaction. The ambitions of the continent's increasingly educated young people, in particular, seem to have outpaced actual material progress. Despite significant efforts to increase availability, half of Africa's population still lacks access to electricity. Consequently, millions of Africans have migrated in recent decades in pursuit of better opportunities.

The economic shocks of the past few years, especially the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, have undermined the "Africa rising" narrative by highlighting the continent's heavy dependence on imported medicines, food, and fuel. Despite being home to 60% of the world's uncultivated arable land, these crises have underscored Africa's slow progress in capitalizing on its vast land and subsoil resources to achieve food and energy security.

The situation in Africa today bears a striking resemblance to the 1990s, a decade marked by wars, coups, and severe food and debt crises. The convergence of internal instability and external shocks has set in motion a vicious cycle of economic and financial distress, raising questions about the continent's ability to shape its own destiny.

In the face of these challenges, however, African countries have become increasingly proactive in promoting their domestic and regional interests. This shift is reflected in their voting patterns at the UN General Assembly, particularly on issues like the war in Ukraine. African leaders have also assumed a more prominent role in international energy and climate discussions.

This newfound assertiveness is partly the result of a changing geopolitical landscape where African countries are increasingly courted by rival global powers. Political leaders now have a unique opportunity to leverage their growing clout by accelerating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area. The AfCFTA, which came into force in 2019, aims to boost cross-border trade by creating a unified market with rules of origin that provide preferential treatment to African-sourced goods. The establishment of this trade bloc could stimulate industrialization and strengthen Africa's position in global negotiations.

While the AfCFTA represents a significant shift in Africa's economic paradigm, unlocking its full potential will require a concerted effort. The continent's population is projected to increase from 1.2 billion today to 2.5 billion by 2050. While some commentators view rapid population growth as a potential trigger for sociopolitical unrest and a drag on public finances, the economic benefits should not be underestimated. By boosting cross-border trade and streamlining

their governance systems, African countries could capitalize on this demographic dividend.

For decades, African policymaking has been dominated by an economic paradigm that focused on meeting international market demand, akin to the export-led growth strategy that underpinned East Asia's "economic miracle" between the 1960s and 1990s. This approach was predicated on the belief that international competition would force governments to implement domestic reforms and boost productivity.

In reality, however, Africa continued to rely heavily on commodity exports. African economies have often struggled with high interest rates and overvalued currencies. Consequently, the prevailing macroeconomic paradigm fostered an over-reliance on imports, with domestic financial systems catering to governments and import oligopolies rather than diversifying the continent's economic base.

The new paradigm African countries must adopt relies on domestic demand-driven growth, capitalizing on the continent's fast-growing consumer base. To achieve this, policymakers must increase local production capacity by leveraging domestic demand. This is particularly relevant to sectors like agri-business, electricity, telecoms, and finance, where demand is rapidly rising and the potential for regionalization is huge.

For starters, African leaders should demonopolize the import sector by fostering more competition in transportation and distribution. Additionally, they should pursue competitive exchange rates while establishing adequate safety nets to mitigate potential adverse effects. By combining exchange-rate adjustments with enhanced product-market competition, policymakers could redirect spending from imports to domestically manufactured goods and avoid devaluation-induced inflation. A renewed focus on industrialization has the potential to integrate a large segment of the population currently working in the informal sector into the labor market, thereby providing workers with better employment opportunities.

While macro-structural adjustments are crucial to attracting domestic and foreign direct investment, African countries must also secure the necessary financing to meet their immense infrastructure needs, especially when it comes to eradicating energy poverty. To support their new economic strategy, many debt-distressed countries must first restructure their existing liabilities, a task that requires the support of international partners.

In terms of priorities, African policymakers must focus on boosting energy production, in addition to shifting to renewables. Governance reforms, supported by regional integration, will be crucial to meeting the continent's growing energy needs. De-risking strategies, such as guarantees offered by development banks, cannot enhance the attractiveness of energy projects by themselves. By implementing bold, comprehensive reforms, particularly in the electricity, financial, and transportation sectors, countries could make their energy industries more investor-friendly.

Success is far from guaranteed, in part because the interests of politicians and businesses in Africa are often aligned, breeding corruption and deepening public distrust. While the continent's emerging economic paradigm holds the promise of greater self-reliance, particularly in key sectors like food and energy, its potential cannot be fully realized without the rule of law. African leaders must use this opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to upholding it.

OP-ED

By Bogolo Kenewendo

The Case for Mission-Driven Climate Finance

GABORONE - As sea levels rise, Tuvalu, a small archipelago in the Pacific Ocean, is slowly disappearing under water. Australia recently signed a landmark agreement with the island state that offers residency to Tuvaluans displaced by climate change - a sign of the emerging economic, geopolitical, and humanitarian implications of global warming. Tuvalu's reckoning with its potential extinction offers a glimpse of what the future holds on a rapidly warming planet.

And yet many policymakers seem oblivious to the transboundary nature of the climate crisis and its imminent impact on all countries. Research shows that 3.6 billion people - nearly half of the global population - now live in areas that are highly susceptible to climate change. People in the world's poorest countries - in particular, women, girls, and indigenous communities - are especially vulnerable to its effects, despite contributing the least to creating the problem.

These populations often rely on the natural environment for their survival, which means that extreme weather events are more likely to destroy their lives and livelihoods. Over the last decade alone, natural disasters in the poorest countries have resulted in a threefold increase in economic damage compared to three decades ago and the reversal of hard-won development gains.

Developing countries cannot be left alone to face the frightening consequences of global warming. The severity of the current and future effects of climate change will depend on the world's ability to advance collective adaptation, mitigation, and resilience-building goals in a gender-sensitive and inclusive manner. These efforts must put human welfare and our planet's health front and center, which implies capitalizing on the wealth of knowledge that indigenous communities have amassed. Equally important, they will require adopting innovative, efficient, transparent, and equitable financing solutions.

The agreement at last year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) to operationalize the loss and damage fund, which will provide financial assistance to climate-vulnerable countries, is a step in the right direction. However, the initial pledges of \$700 million fall short of the \$215-387 billion that developing countries will need annually up to 2030 to meet their adaptation needs. As the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change executive secretary, Simon Stiell, stated, the loss and damage fund "is in no way a replacement for, or a reason to diminish, the urgent need for the scaling-up of adaptation finance."

Moreover, around \$4.3 trillion per year must be invested in clean energy until 2030 to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. This further highlights the urgent need to establish a comprehensive adaptation framework with monetary, qualitative, and quantitative targets that can be used to secure financing from high-income countries.

The incremental progress on climate finance achieved at COP28 is not ambitious enough. To pursue climate action that meets the needs of vulnerable and indigenous communities will require a mission-oriented approach to financing that focuses on achieving the most efficient and just transition. It will also be necessary to scale up investment in mitigation and adaptation efforts dramatically. At COP28, for example, governments agreed to triple renewable-energy production capacity and transition away from fossil fuels. To succeed, they will need to make bold, concrete commitments to boost transition finance.

Africa provides abundant evidence that climate finance continues to be unjust and insufficient. The continent is disproportionately affected by climate change (even though it contributes the least to greenhouse-gas emissions). Between 2016 and 2019, however, it received only 3% of global climate-finance flows, despite various initiatives aimed at supporting climate adaptation and mitigation on the continent.

Africa can play a leadership role in defining and championing progress and could even become a model for innovative, efficient, and equitable climate-finance deployment. African institutions, including the African Export-Import Bank, the African Development Bank, and the African Risk Capacity Group, are reputable partners with experience in financing and in navigating the political and economic environment on the continent. But we must urgently close the gap; climate shocks are exacerbating tensions in fragile areas such as the Sahel, fueling mass migration and security concerns worldwide, and disrupting global supply chains and trade.

Africa has the ideas, ambition, and capacity to implement climate solutions. For example, we have identified dozens of shovel-ready green projects that only need a financial push to get off the ground. The continent is also home to some remarkable women who are leading the fight against global warming. I have collaborated with some of these climate champions, whose dedication and expertise are second to none.

The Global South has immense potential to achieve a just transition and build climate resilience. All that is missing is the funding. Governments of high-income countries, multilateral institutions, the private sector, and international organizations should provide the necessary investment, while also ensuring that women have a say in the development of climate-finance strategies. But first, they must stop seeing investing in our countries as a risk - and understand that the real risk lies in the failure to act swiftly enough. It is time to rebuild trust and reconceive development cooperation through just, equitable, and financed frameworks.

OPINION

By Ana María Ibáñez

Rethinking Inequality in Latin America

WASHINGTON, DC - Nearly everyone agrees that the unequal distribution of income, wealth, and opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) has hindered efforts to build cohesive societies and robust democracies, as well as frustrating the ambitions of young people. But efforts to close the gap between rich and poor have fallen short, and progress has stalled. Governments urgently need better evidence on how to remedy this longstanding problem.

To this end, the Inter-American Development Bank has teamed up with the London School of Economics, Yale University, the Institute for Fiscal Studies, and academics from more than a dozen leading universities to launch a comprehensive reconsideration of inequality in LAC. The project's initial research - including critical reviews of the existing literature, fresh data, and new analyses - has already shown that inequality in the region is neither as predictable nor as static as many believe.

For starters, LAC is not uniformly unequal. Some countries, such as Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, and Panama, have extremely high income inequality, whereas others, including Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Uruguay, have income disparities similar to that of the United States.

Moreover, far from being a fixed feature of LAC societies, inequality has fluctuated over time. In most countries, it began to rise rapidly in the 1970s, peaked in the 1990s, and then began to drift downwards. Inequality in the region today is lower than it was three decades ago, owing to educational gains (which narrowed the wage gap), commodity-fueled economic growth, and a host of government social programs. But it has essentially plateaued at unacceptable levels since 2014, when economic stagnation set in across the region.

A study tracking the evolution of inequality since 1980 until today shows that this broad pattern hides significant variations. For example, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and Peru significantly reduced inequality between 1980 and 2010, even though their levels remain high compared to other countries at a similar stage of development. By contrast, inequality has steadily increased in Costa Rica over this period. The fatalistic assumption that the entire region is cursed by structural inequality that is impervious to policy interventions should be abandoned.

The project has also revealed that wealth inequality in the region seems to be more deeply entrenched than income inequality. Although data are still quite limited, one study finds that in Chile, Colombia, and Uruguay, around 1% of the population controls 37-40% of total wealth, while the poorest half of the population controls only one-tenth. Moreover, many low-income households have negative equity, because their outstanding debts are greater than the combined value of their home, vehicles, and other assets.

There is also new evidence that the opportunities and potential income of children in the region tend to mirror that of their parents, implying low levels of intergenerational mobility. One study shows that between 44% (Argentina) and 63% (Guatemala) of current income inequality in nine LAC countries is explained by "inherited" factors. Among the variables that contribute to the persistence of inequality across generations are being born in a low-income areas, belonging to an ethnic minority, and having parents with limited schooling or low-paying occupations. But here, again, the picture that emerges is more nuanced. In countries with a history of slavery or oppressing indigenous peoples, racial or ethnic factors predict much lower levels of intergenerational social mobility.

Finally, geography matters - but not always in predictable ways. The fact that 80% of the LAC population lives in cities, for example, has reinforced the assumption that rural dynamics have little effect on income inequality in the region. But new evidence suggests that agricultural income gaps, owing largely to the low labor productivity of small farms, explain between 11% (Uruguay) and 58% (Bolivia) of overall income inequality in nine countries.

So far, the project has confirmed that inequality in LAC is unacceptably high, while also demonstrating its fluidity and responsiveness to factors that can affect the degree to which it is "inherited." Armed with this nuanced understanding, policymakers should abandon some approaches to the problem, refine others, and test entirely new strategies that are more tailored to their country's specific needs. For example, countries such as Colombia and Peru, where many workers have informal contracts and thus pay little or no tax, would need a different set of policies for their tax and pension systems compared to countries such as Chile and Uruguay, where a larger share of the workforce contributes to pensions and social security.

While traditional strategies such as expanding and improving the quality of education and offering cash assistance to low-income households can be effective, they are not sufficient to reduce inequality in all settings. To achieve this, LAC governments must promote economic growth that can generate more productive (and formal) jobs and adopt a new generation of fiscal policies that give everyone a seat at the table.

ON 2ND THOUGHTS



with Othello B. Garblah

Liberian Aliens and Nationality laws-what are we protecting?

The sudden outburst of some Liberians, when it comes to debates surrounding the amendment of the country's Aliens and Nationality Law to be specific getting rid of Article 27 (b), of the 1986 Constitution leaves much to be desired.

Article 27 (b) of the 1986 Constitution, a clause retained from the 1847 Constitution states: "In order to preserve, foster and maintain the positive Liberian culture, values, and character, only persons who are Negroes or of Negro descent shall qualify by birth or by naturalization to be citizens of Liberia."

This law on our nation's statute books has become obsolete and is not in tune with current global reality it is nothing but a mere racist clause which is being used by a handful of people to foster their own political and economic agendas.

The law discriminates based on race; to say that only persons who are "Negro", (black) regardless of whether they were born on Liberian soil, jus soli, or abroad to Liberian parents, jus sanguinis, "shall qualify by birth or by naturalization to be citizen of Liberia," is racist- plain and simple.

Understandably, this Negro clause was inserted from the founding of the colony as a refuge for free people of color, and later former slaves, to prevent economically powerful communities from obtaining political power but same has no relevance today.

Today, the law appears to be "protecting" a privileged few, as it were in 1876 during the colonial and slave period, against being flooded by immigrants and even diaspora Liberians.

In 2022, the law was amended to remove discrimination in granting citizenship to children born outside Liberia. However, the amended law retained the statutory attribution of citizenship to every child born in Liberia (if of "negro descent"); the 1986 Constitution, meanwhile, provides explicitly for attribution of citizenship at birth only if either the father or mother is a Liberian citizen.

This law intends to prohibit dual citizenship for adults at all costs. A referendum to amend the Constitution to permit dual citizenship in all cases (among other propositions) failed in 2020, although many blame the past regime for not doing much to publicize the proposition.

The 2022 amendments to the law, albeit allow a Liberian citizen who acquires another citizenship to retain Liberian citizenship. This amendment comes on the heels of a 2019 Supreme Court decision which ruled that the statutory provision for automatic loss of citizenship was unconstitutional.

However, in the case of a person with one Liberian and one foreign parent, the Constitution requires the person to renounce the other citizenship when he or she turns 18 to retain his or her Liberian citizenship.

But who are we protecting?

Many of the arguments against getting rid of Article 27 (b), which when amended would permit persons of non-negro descent to acquire Liberian citizenship argued that indigenous Liberians are not yet economically empowered to compete with people of non-negro descent should they be allowed to acquire Liberian citizenship. But like it or not, the supporters of this race law are the same who are leasing land and properties all over the place to Lebanese, Indians, and other nationals of non-negro descent, lining their pockets under the protection of such law, while the entire country lieth in poverty and underdevelopment.

So, in reality, the law seems to protect the powerful few who parade with this assertion that granting people of non-negro descent citizenship will rob indigenous Liberians of their rights to own land in urban areas, etc, simply because they lack the economic muscle. But even as it stands, indigenous Liberians do not have such economic muscle to compete with the privileged few who are earning millions in property and land leases to these non-negros. If the law were to be removed and these non-negros were allowed to own land, these people will go out of business. This is what they are trying to protect not the impoverished indigenous people-plain and simple. Like NGOs who thrived in crisis, they thrived in abject poverty.

The Musa Bility bill to amend the Aliens and Nationality law.

So last week, Nimba County District #7 Representative Musa Hassan Bility, presented a bill to the House, seeking to amend certain provisions of the Liberian Aliens and Nationality laws of 2022.

According to Rep. Bility, the Bill undertakes a general revision and modernization of these laws that he says are needed and long overdue, particularly concerning citizenship, immigration, and naturalization, and seeks to provide a policy that is in tune with the current global realities. Rep. Bility is right, but only if his colleagues would see the importance and what the impact of such an amendment will add to the economic growth and development of Liberia, remains to be seen.

Rep. Bility's bill seeks an improved version of the 2022 Alien and Naturalization law but also frowns on the existing Article 27 (b) which discriminates on who becomes a Liberian citizen and it also seeks its amendment.

The Bility bill recognizes the domestic and international significance of Liberian citizenship, immigration, and naturalization policies, and takes a step to improve existing laws to alleviate the perpetuation of division that hampers efforts being made to rally support for unification and decrease the repressive and inhumane aspects of immigration procedures by removing restrictions on citizenship of natural born Liberians and their children, removing unnecessary barriers to immigration and naturalization, and proposing alternative immigration and migration requirements.

DATE WITH THE NATION
WITH D. WAHNE, JR.

By D. Wa Hne, Jr.

Partisan Politics Versus Tenure Positions

Ruling parties in Liberia have long held on to the doctrine of winner takes it all. It is the derivation of "this is our time syndrome" that have ravaged and contaminated the political landscape of Liberia and injected dangerous doses of separatism in determining development programs and opportunity distributions. Though former President Weah tried to weaken that doctrine by his "Liberia belongs to all Liberians" attitude, yet there were some partisans who thought differently and acted possessively.

In key policy areas within the governing structures of the state, this doctrine has been responsible for divisive implementation of well constructed developmental agendas meant to unite the nation and accelerate the implementation of socio-economic platforms of ruling parties. In realization of that fact, the Unity Party Government under President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Vice President Joseph Nyema Boakai, the latter who now presides as President of the Republic of Liberia, took strategic decisions meant to protect national interest areas from political invasions that would undermine and threaten their strategic functions and integrity.

Their decisions, though described and criticized at the time as a violation of Articles 52 and 56 of the Liberian Constitution which gave the President the power to appoint and dismiss at his or her will and pleasure, were seen as the best option to protect certain key functionaries of government from political and presidential interferences.

Some of these key functionaries are the Central Bank of Liberia, Liberia Revenue Authority, Liberia Maritime Authority, General Auditing Commission, Liberia Anti Corruption Commission, Liberia Internal Audit Agency, Independent Commission on Human Rights, Governance Commission, National Social Security and Welfare Corporation, National Identification Registry, Environmental Protection Agency, Liberia Aviation Authority including the now versatile National Fisheries and Aqua Culture Bureau.

These agencies and commissions which were set aside and protected under the tenure act are major revenues action and strategic policy areas that are very crucial to Liberia's economic growth and social development. In the past, they were treated with levity, waste, and abuse and were easily manipulated by partisan politics to such extent that the integrity of governance was undermined, economic growth opportunities slowed down and the nation was exposed to national security dangers by dysfunctional enterprises of government.

With the promulgation of the act, those agencies, commissions, and corporations were placed under tenure mandates and protected against undue presidential interferences, partisan politics and changes in leadership unless for a cause. Nevertheless the law, governments in waiting, prior to being given the mandate to lead, have always targeted those positions for immediate presidential appointments despite their tenure nature once they ascend the throne. It can be recalled that the CDC made initial errors by targeting some of those tenure positions for their partisans when it took over the mantle of leadership. That action dragged the CDC Government to public and international outcries, disrepute and indictments for attempting to abrogate the existing tenure laws.

The opposition led by Unity Party stood against the CDC attempts ferociously and associated its style of governance to profound miss-steps and ignorance of governing principles. A case in point was the Martin Kollie of the National Lottery case at the Supreme Court in which the Court ruled against the CDC Government for his removal as the head of the Agency without a cause.

Currently those voices that were critical against the CDC have now taken over as the People's elected Government and it is expected that they would not walk the same condemned steps as the CDC. Or is it possible that they would ignore their previous stance on tenure positions and also attempt to abrogate the tenure laws? Would President Boakai who was elected on the platform of the supremacy of the law and Due Process allow partisan politics to interfere with the repositioning of those functionaries of government that he and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf crafted? This is a litmus test.

Last week the nation woke up to crisis within the Environmental Protection Agency as the Agency's Executive Director was barricaded from entering his office by some employees who it is widely believed are operating under party or tribal considerations. If care is not taken, the LRA and other tenure agencies of government might also experience the overheating of their systems with the EPA spillover. Overzealous partisans with ambitions and possessive attitudes may want to dismantle the tenure mandates of those agencies to takeover.

Some of the campaigners for these agencies heads and deputies to relinquish power have drawn their actions from former President Weah's Executive Order instructing all appointed officials of the CDC Government to consider themselves duly resigned as of January 22, 2024. What they failed to understand is that the EO does not extend to tenure officials.

The new government which is suppose to correct all governing defects, abnormalities and ills should avoid any use of people with extremities, or arrest their actions that would seem to sum up and contemplate corrupting the new President determination to ensure the working of systems and eliminating "business as usual". He must discourage Lord Acton's theory of "power tempts to corrupt".

President Joseph Boakai who has already spoken to the nation and the world that partisanship and friendship will not herald his appointments needs to make an official pronouncement on the Tenure Positions. Those agencies and Commissions under threat by misguided individuals who set aside the appointing power to dismiss heads of agencies must be held accountable for their misconducts as those agencies and commissions are lifelines of the economy that need urgent protection. The error and confrontation during the early days of the CDC should not be repeated by its critics.

As the nation celebrates the dawn of the Boakai's Era, it is also celebrating an impending revolution in our political thinking and philosophy which the New President champions as "think Liberia, love Liberia and build Liberia".

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MOE to appear before House next Thursday

By Bridgett Milton

The House of Representatives has invited authorities of the Ministry of Education (MoE) to appear before the full plenary next Thursday.

Atty. Michael M. Thomas. According to Rep. Thomas, his attention has been drawn to the long-lasting ineffectiveness of the Free and Compulsory Primary Education and the Special Education Policy instituted by

of education, to encourage school enrolment, reform the governance structure of the education system and to fulfill the constitutional provision that obligates the government to develop the minds of Liberian Children.

He continued that it was meant to develop the people living with disabilities through the Special Inclusive Education Division of the Ministry of Education. But he said the deaf and visually impaired people have been neglected and have become mere street beggars.

Rep. Thomas added that, unfortunately, policies and programs outlined by the Ministry of Education have heavily challenged the educational sector, with state actors labelling the sector as a mess with little or no improvement.

According to Rep. Thomas, the availability of education to every Liberian child, and people living with disability will shape the minds of a huge portion of the future leaders in the right perspective and reduce the dangers posed by illiteracy to the basic equity in the social, moral, and political areas of the country.

the Government of Liberia across the educational sector. He said the government's policy on Free and Compulsory Education and Special education in Liberia was introduced in 2001 and reaffirmed in 2011. He added that it is an Educational Reform Act passed by the Liberian Legislature in 2011 to improve the country's quality

The MoE officials are to provide update about the Government of Liberia's compulsory primary education and special inclusive education for the deaf and visually impaired. The Plenary took the decision Tuesday, 20 February 2024, following a communication from Montserrado County Electora District #4 Representative



Aggrieved GVL employees protest

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

Despite a daylong dialogue with various stakeholders, aggrieved employees of Golden Veroleum Liberia (GVL) in Grand Kru County, southeast Liberia have refused to sign a resolution for calm to be restored to the concession area, vowing instead, to continue their go-slow.

Grand Kru County Legislative Caucus headed by Acting Chair Numene T. H Bartekwa and Electoral District #1 Representative Nathaniel Zoe Bahway engaged the aggrieved workers in two days of dialogue held in Nawaken on Saturday, February 17, and Sunday, February 18, 2024, respectively.

The dialogue brought together aggrieved workers of GVL, Workers Union, affected communities, local authorities, women, elders, youth, representatives from the

purposely for death and accident, but there have been several accidents at the company without any of the victims benefitting anything, including some of their colleagues and their family members.

They said though they have written many communications from GVL Management, calling for cancellation of the policy with SAAR Insurance Company in accordance with Article 19.4 of the 2019 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) that states "Any individual employee may withdraw from the insurance plan by advising the company in writing and the company shall honor their withdrawal request." But the aggrieved employees said the company has refused.

According to them, SUNU Insurance Company which is for staff, recognizes that every bike must be insured but refuses to accept the fact that an insurance company that no one has benefited



Gongloe calls for probe

By Lincoln G. Peters

Former Presidential Candidate and renowned Human Rights lawyer Cllr. Tiawan Saye Gongloe is calling on the Government of Liberia to establish a Special Commission of Inquiry to investigate all suspicious and mysterious deaths of past officials.

According to Cllr. Gongloe, such commission of Inquiry, when set up, will investigate suspicious deaths beginning from former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to President George M. Weah. Speaking recently in Monrovia, the Liberian People's Party-political leader said that doing so will help the Government of Liberia under the leadership of President Joseph Nyuma Boakai to secure the confidence of international companies. "We want to say that for the past fifteen to twenty years, there have been suspicious deaths in Liberia. Government investigated some and we are suspicious about government's findings. I strongly believe that the government should go ahead to establish a Special Commission of Inquiry to

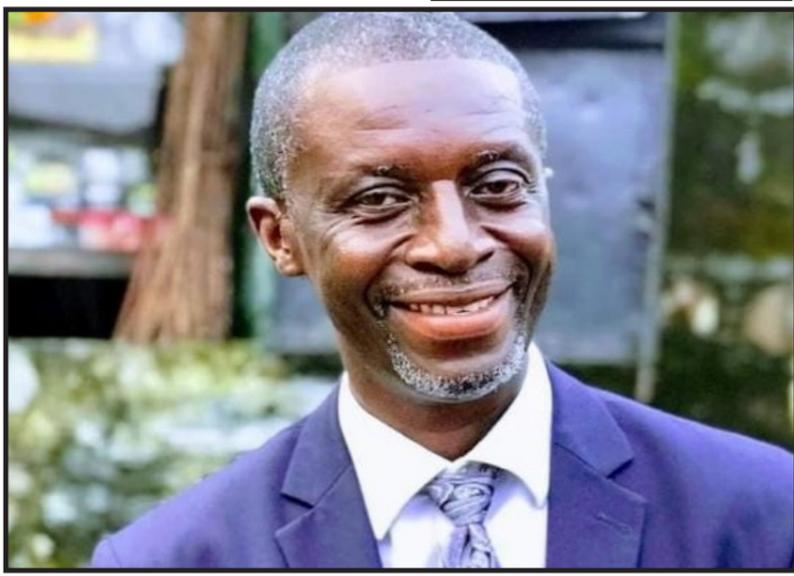
investigate all suspicious deaths in the country. This includes from former President Sirleaf to Weah", he noted. Cllr. Gongloe pointed out that under the administration of former President Sirleaf, there were many mysterious and suspicious deaths especially, Harris Greaves, and so it's important that those cases are investigated to bring those suspicions to rest.

He indicated that also under the administration of former President Weah, there were too many mysterious deaths, from auditors to Princess Cooper and

three missing boys, who went working for St. Moses Funeral Service Chief Executive Officer.

"I'm calling on the government to do so because with that I believe we can stop rumors mongering. Let us find the truth. Government can find money and get the best forensic investigator, so we can be comfortable with each other's. As we speak, former government officials are having all those rumors and gossips which do not help us. It undermines our unity and reconciliation", Cllr. Gongloe cautions.

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National Bureau of Concession, and GVL executives, amongst others.

The forum had aimed to address series of concerns raised by the aggrieved workers contained in a 13-count document presented against the Management of Golden Verolum Liberia.

Highlights of the complaints include qualms against SAAR and SUNU insurance companies, increment of housing allowance, good healthcare system, housing facility, education of employees' dependents, transportation allowance, and 100% payment for staffers' bikes, among others.

Reading out the counts, spokesperson for the aggrieved employees, Isaac Dweh said, SAAR Insurance company, whose policy covers field workers has allegedly received about US\$25,000, or an equivalent of 4.6 million Liberian Dollars from 1000 field workers since July 1, 2018, up to present.

The workers detail that the insurance company's policy is

from shouldn't be imposed on them.

Spokesman Dweh pointed out that they as staffers of GVL Grand Kru County have understood that SUNU Company is a scheme designed by management and her cohorts to exploit them and that despite payment of monthly premium of US\$12 by each employee, they benefit nothing.

He disclosed that since they agreed with management, the company has deducted over US\$20,000 from staffers' monthly salaries with nothing in return despite tragedies that befell some of their colleagues, resisting that such company can't keep deducting their salary, calling on the Management of GVL to terminate the contract with SAAR and SUNU companies because both institutions, according to them, are not in their interest.

Dweh continued that the company has jeopardized the health of employees because Article 10.1 of the concession agreement states in part "...The investor shall construct or cause to be constructed and

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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Boakai vex!

67) Margaret T. Sarsih, Assistant Minister for Operations
 68) Sundiata Juaseii, Assistant Minister for Construction
 69) Isaac Vaye, Jr., Assistant Minister for Rural Road
 70) Abraham Rahim Bility, Assistant Minister for Program & Planning
 71) Albert Touklon, Assistant Minister for Community Services
 72) Julian Morias Johnson, Assistant Minister for Administration
 Ministry Of Finance
 73) Mrs. Sarah M. Mulbah, Assistant Minister for Budget
 L i b e r i a
 Telecommunications Authority
 74) Abdullah Kamara, Chairperson
 75) Patrick Honnah, Commissioner
 76) Clarence Kortu Massaquoi, Commissioner
 77) Ben A. Fofana, Commissioner
 78) Angela Bush Cassel, Commissioner
 L i b e r i a
 Telecommunications Corporation
 79) Richardson Ndorbor, Chief Executive Officer
 National Insurance Company of Liberia
 80) Nortu Jappah, Managing Director
 81) Abdullah Swaray, Deputy Managing Director
 National Road Fund of Liberia
 82) Hanson S. Kiazolu, Chief Executive Officer
 Liberia Agriculture Commodity Regulatory Authority
 83) Ceebee C.D. Barshell, Deputy Director General for Administration
 Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority
 84) Marilyne Logan, Director General
 National Port Authority
 85) J. Luther Tarpeh, Chairman Of The Board, National Port Authority
 86) Mohammed S. Kromah, Co-Chairman Of The Board, National Port Authority
 87) Jonathan Kaipay, Manager, Port Of Buchanan
 Environment Protection Agency
 88) Dr. Emmanuel K. Urey Yarkpawolo, Acting Executive Director,
 National Transit Authority
 89) Edmund Forh Forh, Managing Director
 90) T. Melvin Cephas, Deputy Managing Director for Administration
 91) Noah Zawu Gibson, Deputy Managing Director for Operations
 National Lottery Authority

92) Ciapha Saah Gbollie, Director General
 93) Ennish Fahnbulleh, Deputy Director General for Administration
 94) Christian Cooper, Deputy Director General for Operations
 National Housing Authority
 95) Florence K. Geegbae, Managing Director
 96) Steve Saah Kolubah, Deputy Managing Director for Administration
 97) Alex W. Railey, Deputy Managing Director for Technical Services
 Governance Commission
 98) Prof. Alaric K. Tokpa, Chairman
 Liberia Agency For Community Empowerment (LACE)
 99) Jefferson S. Tucker, Deputy Executive Director
 Civil Service Agency
 100) Josiah Joekai, Director General
 101) Dahnu Mianyen, Deputy Director for Administration
 Liberia Airport Authority
 102) Helena M. Doe-Knuckles, Deputy Director General for Administration
 Liberia Refugee, Repatriation & Resettlement Commission
 103) A.J. Armah Kanneh, Deputy Executive Director for Administration
 104) Richard Hoff, Deputy Executive Director for Operations
 National Bureau of Concessions
 105) Jsb Theodore Momo, Director General
 106) Cllr. Rachell Yabah-Duobah, Deputy Director General For Concessions
 National Public Health Institute of Liberia
 107) Robell Laytee Gbeintor, Director Of Public Health Research
 Central Agricultural Research Institute
 108) Joseph Toumed, Deputy Director General
 National Disaster Management Agency
 109) Konto D. Saygar, Deputy Director For Administration
 110) Louise K.D. Morris, Deputy Director For Operations
 Liberia Intellectual Property Office
 111) Garmai Koboi, Director General
 112) Clarence Cole, Deputy Director General For Copyright
 National AIDS Commission
 113) Alexander Zogbaye, Sr., Commissioner
 National Identification Registry
 114) Dr. Edward Liberty, Executive Director
 115) Alphonso Belleh, Deputy Executive Director For Administration
 General Services Agency
 116) Johnson P. Sloan, Deputy

Director General For Administration

117) Robert Wilson, Deputy Director General For Operations
 National Fire Service
 118) Emmanuel Farr, Deputy Director For Administration,
 National Fire Service
 Center For National Documents & Records
 119) D. Nelson Bearngar, Director General
 Liberia Water & Sewer Corporation
 120) Wilson Gaye, Deputy Managing Director for Administration
 121) Eddie B. Miller, Deputy Managing Director for Finance
 122) Janice Love Bropleh, Deputy Managing Director for Sales & Marketing
 123) Patrick Sandikie, Deputy Managing Director for Technical Services
 124) Dr. Khalipha Bility, Chairman, Board of Directors
 125) Mrs. Lucinda Cole Carter, Member, Board of Directors
 126) Mrs. Comfort Bedell Dahn, Member, Board of Directors
 127) Gabriel Flaboe, Member, Board of Directors
 128) Jonathan Paye-Layleh, Member, Board of Directors
 WASH Commission
 129) George W. Yango, Chief Executive Officer
 130) Jackson Paye, Commissioner
 Ministry of Agriculture
 131) David K. Akoi, Deputy Minister for Planning And Development
 132) Antoinette F. Dukuly, Deputy Minister for Administration
 133) Moses R. Gbanyan, Deputy Minister for Regional Development Research and Extension
 134) Solomon C. Hedd-Williams, Deputy Minister for Technical Services
 135) Edward B. Perry, Assistant Minister for Extension
 136) Folton Blasin, Assistant Minister For Administration
 137) Zogbo Luther, Assistant Minister For Technical Services
 138) Francis F. B. Mulbah, Assistant Minister For Planning And Policy
 Liberia Petroleum Refining Company
 139) Mrs. Nancy Moye, Member of the Board, Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC).
 The President has also recalled Ms. Masah Sobboh, Assistant Minister for Human Resources, Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs, and reappointed her as Coordinator for Special Services/Projects, Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs.
 These nominations, where applicable, are subject to confirmation by the Liberian Senate.

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Aggrieved GVL employees protest

operated at least one centrally located fully operational estate doctor hospital with basic facilities within ten(10) years..”, and Article 18.4 of the 2019 CBA also obligates the company to provides “medical facilities as per the government of Liberia District Clinic Standard.”
 According to him, the company’s hospital doesn’t even have a scale to test weight nor malaria test kits, essential drugs, physicians and medical doctors, forcing employees and their dependents to walk from Divisions 4&5 to Behwan and other clinics for malaria checker and test for skin diseases, because GVL-operated clinic lacks laboratory and technicians.
 He said though the company promised to provide health care service for employees, the facility lacks standardized services, including fully functional midwifery wardroom, and ambulance for patients.
 He disclosed that out of 100% workforce, senior staffers constitute only 1% that is entitled to housing facilities, while 99% that comprises field workers doesn’t benefit despite management’s promise to have constructed housing units for them, which is long overdue, causing 99% of the field workers in Garraway and other estates to rent outside of the camp, while management is providing mere US\$10 for rentals far less than the value of houses that the 1% senior staffers are domiciled in.
 “For instance, the 1% abode contains a flush toilet, bathroom, a kitchen, two bedrooms, big living room, and most importantly, 24/7 electricity and pipe borne water. Unarguably, the cost of rent for GVL apartment when commercialized will be at 60-80USD monthly. So we are asking the company since they don’t want to build us housing, let them increase our housing allowance which is \$10 to \$45”, he said.
 Mr. Dweh said they welcome the current mediation between management and them because the presence of GVL has impacted their lives in some positive ways, but they are compelled to inform the Grand Kru Caucus about some of the bad labour practices being meted against them, which he noted is unacceptable because it has the propensity to impair their growth perpetually.
 The aggrieved workers spokesperson said they’re fully cognizant that dialoguing to find a resolution is the most ideal methodology, but the Management of Golden Veroleum Liberia’s failure to do the right thing could intensify their go slow.
 For his part, Grand Kru County Legislative Caucus Chair Senator Numene T. H. Bartekwa said

although the workers were so angry, but for accepting to listen and dialogue with the company, showed some level of love and regard for the county officials and the company.
 Senator Bartekwa noted that it’s unfortunate to hear that the Management of GVL hasn’t addressed plights of the workers, knowing how damaging it is for workers to continue the go slow.
 “So my people, I have listened to your plights and that’s why Representative Bahway and I have come to say thank you for the orderly manner you have demonstrated doing this participatory meeting, though war can begin from the frontline but [it]can always end on the conference table”, he said.
 The senator said the caucus is proud of the aggrieved workers for the peaceful atmosphere under which the dialogue was held, saying “So what have been demonstrated by you people, the Grand Kru Legislative Caucus is proud of you, and we will never do anything that will go against your interest because you saw the way Representative Bahway and I were waking up; you should know that we are here for you, although the company CEO isn’t happy but the truth should be told and your interest should be their concern.”
 He pointed out that though the country is blessed with resources but its people can’t explore them because they’re not capacitated, so they have brought partners to help and these partners shouldn’t only exploit but ensure that the people benefit from their natural resources.
 “We have attached seriousness to this as a caucus and that’s why we have left Monrovia to come and listen to your plights and that aren’t CBA-related should be addressed by the company and those which are CBA should be handled by the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Agriculture though they haven’t started work yet, and once they start then both of us will sit on the round table to discuss these issues which are important and labor-related.”
 He promised to engage the GVL Management to address those urgent issues but appealed to the workers to exercise patience because collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is a joint discussion that needs presence of the Labour and Agriculture Ministers, including the union and the aggrieved workers’ head and can’t be done when these key ministers have not started work.
 “We have come Representative Bahway and I, to resolve this in a civil and polite manner, so I’m asking the GVL management to handle those plights that are urgent now and do the right thing for our people.”
 In response, Elvis H. Morris, Vice President for strategy and stakeholder engagements, said the company has listened to the aggrieved workers and will address those that are urgent.

Français

Grève à l'hôpital méthodiste uni de Ganta : le sort des patients en suspens

Ganta, comté de Nimba - Le personnel de l'hôpital méthodiste uni de Ganta, dans la ville de Ganta, comté de Nimba, notamment la salle d'opération, le laboratoire, les urgences et le service d'orthopédie. La clinique ophtalmologique, la radiographie, la pharmacie, le service dentaire, les archives, le

Ganta compte plus de 200 employés, y compris des médecins, des infirmières et autres.

Aucun décès n'a été signalé depuis le début de la grève la



observe une grève perlée pour réclamer trois mois d'arriérés de salaire et d'autres avantages.

Ce mouvement de protestation a paralysé les activités normales de l'hôpital, obligeant à refuser des soins aux patients venus se faire soigner.

La grève est soutenue par divers services de l'hôpital,

service de maintenance, le service comptable et administratif, ainsi que les médecins affectés à cet établissement confessionnel, s'associent également à la grève.

Le personnel mécontent a abandonné l'hôpital, laissant le sort des patients dans l'incertitude, les infirmières et les médecins ayant cessé leur travail.

L'hôpital méthodiste uni de

semaine dernière, qui réclame notamment le paiement des salaires, de meilleures conditions de travail, une augmentation de salaire et des prestations de sécurité sociale.

Les travailleurs mécontents affirment qu'ils sont sous-payés, le personnel titulaire d'une licence gagnant moins de 15 000 dollars libériens par mois, tandis que les agents de sécurité et les

178 jeunes en danger se préparent à la graduation au Liberia

Au moins 178 jeunes en situation de vulnérabilité ont achevé avec succès le programme de réhabilitation du gouvernement libérien et se préparent pour leur remise des diplômes dans les deux prochaines semaines.

Ces jeunes, qui ont auparavant fait face à de multiples défis et dangers, ont suivi un programme de réhabilitation rigoureux visant à leur fournir des compétences de vie essentielles, une éducation et un soutien nécessaires pour réintégrer positivement la société.

Lors d'une cérémonie de remise des diplômes au ministère de la Santé à Congo Town, l'ancienne ministre de la Santé, Dr. Wilhemina S. Jallah, a révélé que dans deux semaines, le groupe de jeunes en danger sera réintégré dans la société pour retrouver leurs familles.

Le 30 juin 2022, le gouvernement libérien, en collaboration avec le système des Nations Unies au Liberia, a lancé le

programme pour les jeunes en danger, visant à sortir des rues les jeunes Libériens dépendants aux drogues.

Il y a environ un an, après que l'ancien président Weah a lancé un programme de réhabilitation de 13 millions de dollars américains en 2022 pour les jeunes toxicomanes, un comité a été créé dans le but d'aider 500 personnes par an grâce à des séances de counseling, de formation professionnelle, d'ateliers éducatifs et d'activités récréatives adaptées aux besoins spécifiques de chaque

participant.

Le programme de réhabilitation, dirigé par les autorités locales en collaboration avec des organisations communautaires et des ONG, s'est concentré sur la lutte contre les causes profondes de la délinquance et l'apport d'un soutien complet aux participants.

Au cours de plusieurs mois, le ministre adjoint aux services curatifs au ministère de la Santé et chef du groupe de travail technique pour le

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Gloria Musu Scott

Éditorial

Un sale coup de relations publiques

La présidence à Monrovia a peiné à fournir des preuves photographiques ou vidéo de la rencontre du président Joseph Nyuma Boakai avec son homologue ghanéen Nana Akufo-Addo ou son vice-président Mahamudu Bawumia lors de sa récente visite en République du Ghana, comme elle l'a affirmé.

La semaine dernière, la présidence a annoncé dans un communiqué de presse que le président Boakai quittait le pays le mardi 13 février 2024 pour une visite de deux jours afin de rencontrer et de consulter le président Nana Akufo-Addo sur des questions d'intérêt mutuel pour les deux pays et la sous-région.

Or, au moment même où le président libérien arrivait à Accra, au Ghana, le président Akufo-Addo quittait le pays pour un voyage officiel à l'étranger. Il s'est avéré ensuite que le président Boakai n'avait pas non plus rencontré le vice-président ghanéen.

La question à 50 millions de dollars que se posent les Libériens et à laquelle les autorités n'ont pas pu répondre clairement est donc celle-ci : qui le président libérien a-t-il rencontré au Ghana ?

Dans une tentative infructueuse de fournir des explications, alors que les spéculations s'amplifiaient à Monrovia, le porte-parole de la présidence, Kula Fofana, a déclaré au NEW DAWN le jeudi 15 février que les choses pouvaient changer dans l'espace présidentiel.

La présidence avait annoncé dans un communiqué publié le mercredi 14 février : "Son Excellence Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr., président de la République du Libéria, est rentré chez lui après une brève visite de travail fructueuse en République du Ghana. Au cours de son séjour, il s'est entretenu avec des membres du gouvernement ghanéen.

Lors de sa rencontre avec l'équipe ghanéenne, le président a exprimé sa gratitude pour le soutien reçu avant et pendant son investiture, ainsi que pour la visite du dirigeant ghanéen, le président Nana Akufo-Addo.

Pour sa part, le vice-président du Ghana, l'Honorable Mahamudu Bawumia, s'est réjoui de la visite et a assuré le dirigeant libérien de leur soutien continu et de leur engagement envers le Libéria".

Cependant, une enquête indépendante du NEW DAWN, qui n'a pas été contestée, a révélé que le président Boakai avait été transporté de Monrovia au centre médical de l'université du Ghana le mardi matin de la semaine dernière pour y être soigné, un endroit qu'il fréquentait régulièrement même avant de devenir président du Libéria.

En premier lieu, il n'était absolument pas nécessaire que la présidence induise le public libérien en erreur sur le véritable but du voyage du président au Ghana, ce qui a créé un sérieux embarras pour le pays. M. Boakai est désormais président de la République du Libéria et les Libériens ont le droit de savoir ou d'être clairement informés de ses déplacements et de ses contacts, au lieu de nourrir le public avec des informations totalement différentes de la réalité, comme cela s'est récemment produit.

Français

Starts from page 8 Grève à l'hôpital méthodiste

concierges reçoivent respectivement 3 000 et 4 000 dollars libériens par mois.

S'adressant au personnel de l'hôpital, le chef du syndicat des travailleurs, Gabriel K.W.Tounzea, a déclaré que leurs revendications étaient constantes.

M. Tounzea a affirmé qu'ils continueraient à refuser les patients, à l'exception de ceux qui se trouvent actuellement à l'hôpital, et qu'ils ont accepté de rencontrer la direction de l'hôpital ce mardi 20 février 2024.

Selon les agents de santé mécontents, ils protestent régulièrement depuis 2021. L'administration dirigée par M. Allen Zormonway les a déjà apaisés, mais cette fois, ils n'écouteront personne, y compris l'évêque de l'Église méthodiste unie, Samuel J. Quire, Jr., jusqu'à ce que leurs demandes soient satisfaites.

"Personne ne nous arrêtera", ont-ils ajouté. "On nous a arrêtés plusieurs fois, mais cette fois, nous n'écouterons personne aujourd'hui jusqu'à ce que nos demandes soient satisfaites".

Pendant ce temps, certains patients hospitalisés n'ont toujours pas reçu de traitement de la part des infirmières et des médecins.

Chris Washington, un habitant de 58 ans de la ville de Sanniquellie, Richard Dokie et Aletha Kayee ont déclaré à notre correspondant qu'ils étaient venus à l'hôpital pour être soignés, mais qu'à leur surprise, ils ne recevaient aucune réponse.

S'exprimant au nom de l'hôpital, la surintendante de la mission, la révérende Priscilla Legay Gilayeah, a supplié les travailleurs mécontents d'abandonner la grève perlée, car la direction doit les rencontrer aujourd'hui, mardi.

Elle leur a demandé de reprendre le travail en attendant le résultat de la réunion de ce jour. La révérende Gilayeah a ensuite appelé le président Joseph Nyuma Boakai et le vice-président Jeremiah Koug à intervenir, car ils ont besoin d'aide pour l'entretien de l'hôpital.

Le NEW DAWN a appris que l'évêque de l'Église méthodiste unie devrait se rendre à l'hôpital aujourd'hui pour rencontrer le personnel mécontent.

Le Parti de l'unité conteste la certification de Thomas Goshua et saisit la Cour suprême



Mr. Goshua

Le Parti de l'unité (UP), le parti au pouvoir au Liberia, a déposé une requête devant la Cour suprême du pays contestant la certification de M. Thomas Goshua II en tant que représentant du district électoral n° 5 du comté de Grand Bassa.

Par le biais d'un "Writ of Prohibition" déposé devant la Cour, l'UP dénonce la certification de M. Goshua alors qu'un litige électoral est toujours en cours, ce qui constitue une violation de la procédure régulière.

"Le requérant déclare être le challenger et premier finaliste face au gagnant déclaré par la NEC, 2e défendeur, l'honorable Thomas Goshua", a déclaré le parti au pouvoir.

Il précise que le 26 janvier 2024, il a initialement déposé un "Bill of Information" auprès du Conseil des commissaires de la Commission nationale des élections (NEC) et l'a ensuite amendé en février 2024.

Cependant, l'UP affirme que le "Bill of Information" a été rejeté au motif que le Conseil des commissaires n'était pas compétent. Mécontent de la décision du Conseil des commissaires, l'UP a déclaré avoir déposé un "Bill of Information" auprès de la Cour suprême le 2 février 2024.

Le requérant a ensuite déposé une plainte auprès du Conseil des commissaires et une requête en "Writ of Mandamus" auprès du juge en chambre en février 2024. Alors que ces plaintes et requêtes sont toujours en cours d'examen, l'UP dénonce la certification de M. Goshua par la NEC sans conclusion logique des affaires en cours.

"Le requérant affirme que l'acte du co-défendeur/NEC de certifier l'honorable Thomas Goshua est contraire à la doctrine de la procédure régulière, justifiant la présente requête en 'Writ of Prohibition'", conclut l'UP.

Starts from page 8 178 jeunes en danger

programme des jeunes en danger, le Dr Gborbee G. Logan, a révélé que le Liberia comptait 47 917 jeunes en danger.

Le Dr Logan, le jeudi 13 juillet 2023, lors d'un briefing hebdomadaire du ministère de l'Information à Monrovia, a expliqué que plusieurs exercices de cartographie ont été menés à travers le pays, dont une évaluation en 2022 sur 13 244 jeunes en danger identifiés dans 396 groupes de travail différents des 15 comtés.

Il a indiqué à l'époque que des phases de formation ultérieures étaient prévues en août, septembre et novembre, respectivement, pour le groupe.

Selon un communiqué publié sous la signature du vice-ministre de l'Information, Jarlawah A. Tonpo, le gouvernement libérien, par le biais du comité directeur national du programme pour les jeunes en danger, a commencé le recrutement le 21 août, voyant 105 jeunes en danger documentés.

"Sur les 105 jeunes en danger enregistrés, 88 sont des hommes et 17 des femmes", a déclaré Tonpo.

Cependant, la cérémonie de remise des diplômes imminente constitue une étape importante pour les diplômés,

marquant non seulement la réussite du programme de réhabilitation, mais également leur volonté d'embrasser un avenir meilleur.

Bien que le Dr Jallah n'ait pas donné tous les détails de la cérémonie de remise des diplômes, elle a indiqué que la première promotion de diplômés sortira dans deux semaines.

Alors que ces 178 jeunes en danger se préparent à recevoir leurs certificats d'achèvement, ils servent d'exemples brillants de résilience, de détermination et de potentiel de changement positif chez chaque individu.

La remise des diplômes à venir ne signifie pas seulement la croissance et la réussite personnelles, mais souligne également l'importance d'investir dans des programmes de réhabilitation pour soutenir les jeunes vulnérables et favoriser des communautés plus sûres et plus inclusives.

La cérémonie de remise des diplômes se présente comme un symbole d'espoir, illustrant le pouvoir transformateur de la réhabilitation et la promesse d'un avenir meilleur pour tous.

D'autre part, le Dr Jallah a révélé qu'ils ont formé au total 105 personnes aux services de prévention, de traitement et de réhabilitation pour aider à la situation de la drogue et des jeunes en danger à travers le pays.

Des partisans du Parti de l'unité réclament un audit des fonds d'investissement



Des partisans du Parti de l'unité (UP) dans le comté de Margibi réclament une enquête pour dissiper leurs doutes sur l'utilisation de 5 000 dollars américains fournis à chaque district pour célébrer l'investiture du président Joseph Nyumah Boakai. Ce groupe de militants de l'UP, composé de motocyclistes et d'auxiliaires pour la transparence et la responsabilité (MUPPCMATA), porte des accusations de corruption présumée. Ils accusent la présidente de l'UP dans le comté de Margibi, Mme Cecelia K. Doe, et d'autres piliers du parti dans le comté de détournement présumé de fonds. Dans un document transmis à notre correspondant, le groupe affirme que Mme Doe a déduit 200 dollars américains des 5 000 dollars américains fournis à chacun des cinq districts électoraux du comté de Margibi. Le groupe allègue que Mme Doe a soustrait cet argent en s'engageant à organiser des activités pour l'investiture au siège du parti à Kakata, ce qu'elle n'aurait pas fait. Les partisans de l'UP affirment également que Mme Doe est apparue sur une radio locale du comté et aurait expliqué qu'elle avait utilisé l'argent déduit pour de l'essence et des cartes téléphoniques prépayées. Ils accusent cette responsable du parti dans le comté d'avoir

nommé unilatéralement Mme Harrisona Grimes comme responsable des moyens et des finances au sein du comité d'investissement du comté.

Le groupe déplore également avoir découvert que le samedi 20 janvier 2024, une réunion orchestrée par Mme Doe a été convoquée par le coordinateur du district n°2 de l'UP Margibi, M. Reuben Cooper.

Ils affirment que la réunion a été manipulée et que Mme Grimes et certains membres de sa famille faisaient partie du comité d'investissement. Le MUPPCMATA affirme que 100 dollars américains ont été retirés des 5 000 dollars déjà réduits pour le transport du maire de la ville et de la présidente.

En outre, les partisans de l'UP affirment que Mme Doe a reçu 3 500 dollars américains et a organisé un programme visant à présenter l'ambassadeur Boakai et les candidats de l'UP pendant la campagne, sans la participation du leadership du comté et des autres districts. Selon eux, Mme Doe et Alphanso Belleh de l'UP auraient reçu 3 100 dollars pour former les superviseurs de circonscriptions à Margibi. Cependant, ils affirment qu'elle a déclaré à la direction du parti dans le comté qu'elle n'avait reçu que 650 dollars et qu'elle n'en aurait pas rendu compte. Les partisans désabusés du Parti de l'unité affirment également que Mme Doe a reçu 1 200 dollars américains supplémentaires, somme faisant partie d'un montant présumé de 6 000 dollars envoyé à Margibi pour préparer la visite de M. Boakai et de M. Jeremiah Koug.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Boakai inherits Liberia's high debt

By Seltue Karweaye

As the 26th president of Liberia, Joseph Nyumah Boakai inherits an economy that is grappling with inflation, chronic unemployment, extreme poverty, an enormous infrastructure gap, insecurity, etc.

Liberia's debt profile stands out among these problems like a sore thumb. The external debt stock - what it owes non-residents - was US\$1.3 billion in 2022. Multilateral lenders accounted for almost two-thirds of Liberia's debt. The World Bank and the IMF are Liberia's two largest external creditors. The country's public debt stock - what the government owes in total - was about US\$2.21 billion at the end of December 2023.

External debts can become a significant burden for countries as they are denominated and serviced in foreign currencies, which can lead to fluctuations in interest payments due to exchange rate changes. For example, if the currency of a debtor country depreciates, it may increase interest payments, negatively affecting the country's budget. Furthermore, interest rates may rise, making it even more difficult for the country to manage its external debt.

The country's debt profile, which includes the amount and type of debt, as well as the interest rates and repayment terms, should be a concern for Boakai and his team as they work to revitalize the Liberian economy. However, this concern need not hamper their ability to implement policies that reduce unemployment, poverty rates, infrastructure deficits, etc.



President Joseph Nyuma Boakai

Is the current

debt level in Liberia sustainable?

When evaluating a country's debt sustainability, economists have a range of indicators at their disposal, however, two of these metrics stand out as the most commonly utilized and reliable. One of the indicators is gross debt as a percentage of gross domestic product (also known as the debt-GDP ratio). In Liberia, it is 52.7% in 2024. The average for sub-Saharan African countries was 56%.

Debt begins to harm an economy when the debt-GDP ratio surpasses 77% according to a World Bank report. In comparing debt to GDP ratios, Liberia's ratio is moderate and significantly lower than the stipulated threshold of 77%. For example, Ghana's debt to GDP has crossed the dreaded 77% to 98.7% in 2022, the country's unsustainable debt levels forced the government to go back to the IMF for another bailout in July 2022- despite the IMF deal - Ghana isn't out of trouble yet, the country's debt to GDP stands at 81.5% in 2024.

Moderate increases in Liberia's national debt will unlikely lead to insurmountable repayment burdens within the next few years; however, reckless financing schemes aimed at supporting unnecessary infrastructure endeavors must be avoided as they could have adverse fiscal consequences. Instead, measures are needed to create an enabling environment conducive to encouraging investor confidence while fostering tangible progress in economic growth, employment generation, and poverty reduction.

Although the United States and Liberia differ in various aspects, the former has demonstrated that a high debt-to-GDP ratio does not necessarily constrain economic vitality. Despite having a debt-GDP ratio of approximately 126.9%; the US managed to reduce the unemployment rate to 3.8% while keeping inflation at a stable level of around 3.1%.

The debt service ratio, another indicator of debt sustainability, measures the portion of export earnings used to repay borrowed funds. A healthy rate is below 18%. Liberia's debt-service ratio was 6.4% in 2022 and 3.7% in 2017. The 2022 number shows Liberia is getting closer to the point where servicing its debt would become a problem. In the 2016/2017 budget, debt servicing amounted to US\$30.2 million (6.1% of recurrent expenditure), and by 2023, debt servicing amounted to 99.91 million (15.72% of recurrent expenditure) in the budget.

To alleviate Liberia's increasing debt burden, the Boakai administration must prioritize boosting the country's revenue. With one of the lowest revenue-GDP ratios, Liberia registered 27.3% government revenue as a percentage of GDP. Unfortunately, average annual government revenue declined by 0.05% between 2015 and 2021.

Liberia's reliance on iron ore and rubber as major sources of revenue implies that revenues will continue to fall with the prices of iron ore and rubber, given uncertainties in the global iron oil and rubber market. The economic growth of Liberia slowed down between 2022 and 2023, specifically from 4.8 percent to 4.6 percent, which also negatively impacted the country's ability to generate revenue.

In addition, President Boakai stated in his State of the Nation Address (SONA) that

government expenditure has been growing faster than expected, resulting in a significant budget deficit of over US\$80 million as revealed by Revenue collection reported for 2023 standing at US\$710.23 million while totaling expenditure was recorded as US\$796.32 million.

In 2024, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reported that Liberia's debt-revenue ratio was 18.1%, which is a consequence of dwindling revenue leading to high debt-revenue ratios and creating an unending cycle of borrowing for government expenditures as more revenues are devoted towards servicing existing debts thereby increasing the

overall debt burden. Liberia's debt-to-revenue ratio might be lower, but the proportion of external debt service to revenue is alarmingly high. In the 2022 budget, Liberia spent \$105 million on debt servicing which includes interest payments and principal repayment, however, \$79.6 million was specifically utilized for settling external debts.

The Boakai administration must be mindful of the country's debt profile and avoid exacerbating it through prudent management of Liberia's debt, steering clear of the financial mismanagement that characterized the early 2000s when the debt-to-GDP ratio soared beyond 80%. To improve the current state of affairs, Bokaia's administration must reduce governance costs and eliminate wasteful spending. This can be achieved by streamlining processes, cutting unnecessary expenses, and implementing more efficient systems. Additionally, measures should be taken to combat corruption while also exploring alternative methods for addressing economic problems that do not rely solely on perennial borrowing which can lead down a dangerous path towards unsustainable indebtedness.

Given the current low revenue and the numerous projects announced in his SONA aimed at promoting economic growth, employment generation, and poverty reduction in Liberia, the Boakai administration will have to continue implementing deficit spending policies. However, this approach is mainly financed by domestic and external borrowing. To change the prevailing narrative about the risks associated with investing in Liberia, the Boakai administration must prioritize introducing policies that strengthen the nation's economic foundation and increase its attractiveness to potential investors.

In conclusion, a country's debt stock, although often viewed as a critical factor in assessing its economic health, pales in comparison to the significance of the quality of its economic policies. Well-crafted and effectively implemented economic policies have the potential to generate budget surpluses that can be utilized to repay debts. Economic growth and expansion require a strategic approach that includes investment in physical capital like roads and electricity, infrastructure, and access to capital for businesses of all sizes. Moreover, prioritizing tourism and agricultural development can significantly contribute to the overall economy and lead to long-term success.

Boakai vex!

Liberian President Joseph Nyumah Boakai has nominated the highest number of officials in one night, in what appears like he is vexed over longstanding criticisms that he had been too slow in forming his cabinet. On Monday night, 19 February 2024, President Boakai nominated 139 officials to lead

and Robert Bestman, Mayor of Paynesville City, Montserrado County. At the Ministry of Health, President Boakai has nominated Roger S.W.Y. Domah, I., as Deputy Minister for Administration, and Martha Morris, Assistant Minister for Administration. At the Liberia Immigration



Pres. Boakai

different government ministries and agencies, the highest single nomination list released since his ascendancy on 22 January 2024. At the start of his nomination of officials, President Boakai would slowly name cabinet officials and other nominees in smaller numbers, and at some point, wait for several days before naming additional officials.

His style of picking officials, which is said to involve a thorough vetting of potential nominees, has had the public eagerly waiting to know who their new officials are.

Monday's presidential nominations affected several line Ministries and Agencies. At the Ministry of Internal Affairs, President Boakai has nominated Samuel Brown as Deputy Minister for Administration; Selena Polson Mappy as Deputy Minister for Operations; Cllr. Loseni F. Bility, Assistant Minister for Legal Affairs; James K. Yolei, Assistant Minister for Operations; and Mike Khailelu B. Jabateh, Assistant Minister for Urban Affairs.

Additional nominations at Internal Affairs include Brown B. Sarlee, Sr., Assistant Minister for Administration, and William Jallah, Assistant Minister for Cultural Affairs.

For the Local Government, which is under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, President Boakai has named Whroway Bryant as Superintendent for Montserrado County; Byron W. Zahnwea, Superintendent, River Cess County; Alex Grant, Superintendent, Grand Gedeh County; Miatta Dorley, Superintendent, Bomi County; Alfred Zinnah, Assistant Superintendent for Development, Bomi County;

Service, President Boakai has named former Lofa Senator Stephen Zargo as Commissioner General; Elijah F. Rufus, Deputy Commissioner for Administration; A. Kundukai Jaleiba, Deputy Commissioner for Operations; and Atty. Dickson R. Tamba, Deputy Commissioner for Naturalization.

At the Ministry of Education, President Boakai has nominated Amos Fulley, Deputy Minister for Instructions; James Armah Massaquoi, Deputy Minister for Administration; Jonathan S. Jackson, Assistant Minister for Fiscal Affairs & Human Resource; and Clifford Konah, Jr., Assistant Minister for Teacher Education.

For the rest of the nominees announced, please read through the following list:

Ministry Of Information, Culture & Tourism:

24) Atty. Dogba K. Norris, Jr., Assistant Minister For Culture & Tourism

Ministry Of Youth & Sports

25) Henry Yonton, Deputy Minister For Administration

26) J. Bryant McGill, Deputy Minister For Youth Development

27) G. Andy Quamie, Deputy Minister For Sports

28) Laraamand Nyonton, Deputy Minister For Technical, Vocational Education & Training

29) Valerie Williams, Assistant Minister For Administration

30) Kuta Gbakolay, Assistant Minister For Youth Development,

31) Murvee Gray, Assistant Minister For Sports

32) Collins Tamba, Assistant Minister For Technical, Vocational Education & Training

- Telecommunications
- 33) Jeneba Paasewe, Deputy for Operations
- 34) Sheikh Sheriff, Chief Information Officer
- 35) V. Marshall Sambola, Assistant Minister for Operations
- 36) Moses Wright, Assistant Minister for Planning, Research Statistics & Documentation Ministry Of Transport
- 37) Archibald S. Abban, Deputy Minister for Administration
- 38) Kansualism B. Kansuah, Deputy Minister for Land & Rail Transport,
- 39) James Karpu Momo, Assistant Minister for Administration & Insurance,
- 40) Zunu Kokolo Duyann, Assistant Minister for Land & Rail Ministry Of Labor
- 41) Emmanuel C.D. Gonquoi, Deputy Minister for Planning & Manpower
- 42) Jackson F. Wolobah, Assistant Minister for Statistics
- 43) Emmanuel K. Barnes, I., Assistant Minister for Planning & Manpower Development Ministry Of State for Presidential Affairs
- 44) George T. Marshall, Jr., Assistant Minister for Special Services
- 45) Mohammed Kromah, Assistant Minister for Human Resource
- 46) Terrence T. C. Woods, Presidential Aide
- 47) Terry L. Quoie, Assistant Minister for Logistics Ministry Of Foreign Affairs
- 53) Cllr. Deweh Gray, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
- 54) Gabriel H. Salee, Deputy Minister For Administration
- 55) Cllr. Jeddi Armah, Deputy Minister For Legal Affairs
- 56) Dr. Ibrahim Nyei, Deputy Minister For International Cooperation & Economic Integration
- 57) Cllr. Rosetta Nagbe Jahkollie, Assistant Minister For Legal Affairs
- 58) Naomi Gray, Assistant Minister For International Cooperation & Economic Integration
- 59) Leon M. Talery, Assistant Minister for European Affairs
- 60) Daniel Koikoi, Jr., Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs
- 61) Karishma Pelham-Raad, Assistant Minister for International Organization
- 62) Saywah Gbar, Assistant Minister of Public Affairs
- 63) Bob H. Sheriff, Ambassador Designate Foreign Service Institute
- 64) Reginald B. Goodridge, Director General, Foreign Service Institute Ministry Of Public Works
- 65) Jocelia J. Tarpeh, Deputy Minister for Rural Development & Community Services
- 66) John K. Zogar, Assistant Minister for Technical Services,

House approves \$41m request

The House of Representatives through a vote has accepted President Joseph Nyumah Boakai's request to authorize his government to use one-twelfth of the 2024 National Budget.

Representatives voted Tuesday, 20 February 2024 during regular.

The Chairman of the Joint Committee on Ways, Means and Finance and Development Planning and the Public Accounts and Expenditure Rep. Dixon Seboe said the House of Representatives instructed their committee to look into President Boakai's request.

He said the purpose of President Boakai's communication is to keep the operation of the government running pending the passage of the National Budget. Rep. Seboe added that the joint committee was charged with reviewing the amount requested, ensuring that the amount reflects realistic funding for government operation within

\$41,300,000.00 and sent to the Senate for concurrence. When passed by the Senate, the instrument will be sent to the Executive for action.

Earlier on 15 February 2024, President Boakai wrote the House of Representatives its authorization to spend the amount of US \$41,300,000.00 to cover the government operations for the month of February.

He said that given that the draft budget for the fiscal year 2024 was returned and is being finalized for resubmission, the operations of the government must continue to avoid a shutdown.

According to President Boakai, the authorization to spend the amount of US \$41,300,000.00 covers the government operations for the month of February. On 25 January 2024, the House of Representatives unanimously voted to return the National Budget to the Executive.

In a communication by Rep. Ellen Attoh-Wreh, she had observed that the budget would need to be aligned with the agenda of the current government. The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning submitted the Draft National Budget in December 2023 to the 54th



the time frame. The Montserrado lawmaker stated that the Joint Committee after reviewing President Boakai's request recommended that the report be passed at US

Legislature in the tune of US \$625.57 million for the fiscal year of 2024. The budget was submitted during the rule of the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)-led government.

Starts from page 6 Gongloe calls for probe

According to him, the struggle for what is right is good, but when people are in position they should talk about it.

He further indicated that Liberia's true reconciliation and happiness can only be expressed when those investigations are done and findings are made available to the public. He notes that Liberia had a good market and better law but because of those suspicious deaths, nobody had ever thought of bringing genuine investment here, something, he says has caused lower investment and investors in the country.

Meanwhile, Cllr. Gongloe on Monday, February 19, 2024, during the official taking over of the newly

appointed Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Dr. Emmanuel Urey-Yarkpawolo, extolled President Boakai for the appointment, of the guy, who was his (Gongloe's) running mate during the 2023 election.

"We want to thank President Boakai for the appointment of my Vice President of the LPP. We know that there are many appointments to come but this is an openness and integrity to the team. We believe that his presence in this government will boost trust, and confidence and improve our sector based on his expertise", he assures. Editing by Jonathan Browne

Government drops all charges against Prophet Key

-But with reservation

By Lincoln G. Peters

social media talk shows. According to the court records, Madam Endee wrote the court through her lawyers and entered a nolle prosequi (to voluntarily end a criminal

The Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Justice has withdrawn all criminal charges against controversial

need arises. Monrovia City Court Magistrate Ben Barco accepted Madam Endee's request and dismissed the case.

The Prosecution was represented by Cllr. Swahilo Sesay, Acting County Attorney for Montserrado; Atty Young and Cllr. Joseph Sammy.

Mr. Yeazeahn was represented by Atty. Samwar Fallah and others.

On 5 February 2024, Madam Endee filed a complaint against Prophet Key at the Monrovia City Court. She said in December 2023, the accused used a video podcast on social media to wilfully, intentionally, and purposefully inform the public about certain things concerning her character.

She asked the court to hold Prophet Key liable and award her damages in the amount not less than US\$5,000,000.00.

She said Mr. Yeazeahn had accused her of allegedly sleeping with some former Liberian presidents to solicit jobs.

According to her, Prophet Key alleged that she wants to do the same in President Joseph Nyumah Boakai's administration to sustain her Cultural Ambassador job.



social media talk show host, Nayapougma Oldpa Yeazeahn, Alais Prophet Key.

case before trial) in favor of Mr. Yeazeahn for the charges of criminal coercion, menacing, and disorderly conduct.

Mr. Yeazeahn has been in court based on an action of damages for slander and libel filed against him by Liberia's Cultural Ambassador Madam Endee.

Accordingly, the prosecution stated that it was dropping the charges against the defendant in the proceedings due to a lack of sufficient evidence to prosecute and may re-file if the

She accused Yeazeahn of allegedly defaming and humiliating her through his

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