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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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--Speaker Koffa



Corrupt officials will pay the prize

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Continental News

Late Namibian President Geingob Laid to Rest

Namibia's late president Hage Geingob, who died in hospital on February 4, weeks after being diagnosed with cancer, was buried at the Heroes Acre on Sunday with thousands of mourners, including 25 heads of state and former presidents in attendance.

The burial was on the outskirts of Windhoek following 20 days of mourning.

Soldiers gave Geingob a 21-gun salute while K-8 fighter jets flew past.

southern African nation since 2015. He was serving his final year in office.

A veteran of the country's independence struggle, Geingob lived in exile for 27 years, spending time in Botswana, Zambia and the U.S. before returning to Namibia in 1989.

He held several senior positions in government and in his party, South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), including chairing the body that drafted Namibia's constitution, considered a model of good governance and the rule of law.

Nangolo Mbumba, interim president at the funeral. "You leave our country in better shape ... You have left us with an economic roadmap towards prosperity," he added.

Namibia is considered a middle-income country with abundant diamonds, uranium and lithium reserves needed for electric car batteries.

Recently, the country has made efforts to attract foreign investment in the global green economy by becoming the first African country to agree to supply the European Union

Senegalese Protest For and Against President Macky Sall

Hundreds of Senegalese demonstrated in Dakar on Saturday both for and against President Macky Sall with the country mired in political crisis following his postponement of this month's presidential election.

Sall has faced an uproar since he pushed back the vote scheduled for February 25, triggering one of the West African nation's worst political crises.

The Constitutional Council overturned the delay and called last week for the vote to be held "as soon as possible."

But Sall appears in no hurry to set a date to elect his successor before his term ends on April 2.

He has put off the decision until after talks with political and social actors from Monday

what people are saying about Macky Sall is totally false. Macky Sall has done all he needed to do for Senegal," he said.

In an apparent move to pacify public opinion, Sall has said he would consider provisional releases, pardons or an amnesty law for opposition figures including Sonko and his deputy Bassirou Diomaye Faye, who is also in jail.

According to Sall, he delayed the election because of disputes over the disqualification of potential candidates and concerns about a return to unrest seen in 2021 and last year.

Most of the candidates for president and a large civil society collective have announced they will refuse to take part in the talks Sall intends to stage.

"We oppose all proposals for dialogue and demand that a date be set before April 2," Boubacar



Geingob, 82, Namibia's two-time prime minister and third president since its independence from minority-ruled South Africa in 1990, has been in charge of the sparsely populated and mostly arid

As Namibia's first prime minister, Geingob is credited for introducing modern management approaches to the running of the government. "Your impact on us has been profound, your footprint on this nation is immense," said

with green hydrogen and minerals needed for clean energy. Namibia, a former German colony, is scheduled to hold presidential and parliamentary elections in November. VOA

Kenyan Marathoner Charles Kipsang Dies During Cameroon Race

Kenyan runner Charles Kipkorir Kipsang collapsed and died Saturday after crossing the finish line at the Mount Cameroon Race of Hope.

Media reports say he was taken to Buea Regional Hospital but staff there were not able to revive the 32-year-old athlete. Kipsang reportedly fell ill shortly shortly before crossing the finish line, coming in 16th place in Molyko Stadium. It was his fourth time taking part in the 42-kilometer competition in which he ran in the Men's Senior Category.

The region's governor Bernard Okalai Bilia reportedly told the press that Kipsang may have suffered a heart attack. The Kenya Times reported that

the competition – which included 600 runners –includes rugged terrain located more than four thousand meters above sea level.

The yearly Cameroon race this weekend attracted 600 runners from several African countries

including Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Chad, Cameroon and Morocco. Nineteen runners from Kenya also took part.

The tragedy took place just weeks after the death of Kenyan World Marathon record holder Kelvin Kiptum died in a car accident. VOA



and hopes to reach an agreement by late Tuesday.

That has left the Senegalese people in the dark as to when they will be able to vote and created a political clamor for the elections to take place soon.

Saturday's opposition protest saw hundreds answer the call of the F24 grouping to gather on a sandy open space in a working-class quarter of the capital.

"We want elections," protesters chanted, draped in national flags and calling Sall a "dictator."

Ibrahima Niang, a 34-year-old refuse collector, told AFP he was "demonstrating for one thing:" the release of jailed opposition figurehead Ousmane Sonko. Sall criticism 'totally false' A few hours afterwards, a boisterous pro-Sall crowd draped in Senegalese national colours marched in a residential area of Dakar. Mamadou Dia, a 30-year-old student, defended Sall's record as president since 2012 and believes the election date matters little. "We are here to show national and international opinion that

Camara, among the group of 16 candidates, said Friday.

'Attempt at diversion' If no agreement is reached during the dialogue, Sall said it would be up to the Constitutional Council to decide the next step.

He stressed that his mandate would end as planned on April 2.

But he left open the question of when the vote would take place, adding later that he did not think it would be possible before April 2.

The Aar Sunu Election (Protect Our Election) collective of 40 Senegalese civil society groups also rejected Sall's dialogue offer, describing it as an "attempt at diversion." "Our position is (before) April 2, otherwise there will be a crisis," said Malick Diop, one of the collective's organisers.

Aar Sunu Election mobilised several thousand people in the capital Dakar last weekend.

The opposition has denounced Sall's last-minute move to delay the vote as a "constitutional coup," saying his party feared defeat at the ballot box.

The election chaos has plunged the traditionally stable West African country into turmoil and sparked unrest that has left four people dead. VOA

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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 met 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 addressed.

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 be 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 Gordon Brown

Empowering the Pandemic Accord

EDINBURGH - The COVID-19 pandemic taught us several lessons, many of which came at great cost. Chief among them was that, despite years of rehearsals, the world was not prepared for a fast-moving outbreak of a novel infectious disease.

Countries failed their own citizens, but the global response was even more inadequate. It was marked by an inexcusable absence of cooperation and coordination, ugly nationalism that included vaccine hoarding, and greed on the part of Western countries, which refused to share information, pathogens, and therapeutics. I would say that the response was - to use a word that may seem old-fashioned and out of favor in some quarters - sinful.

The overwhelming lesson we learned the hard way is that no one is safe anywhere until everyone is safe everywhere. Could the wave of infections caused by the second Omicron variant have been avoided if the Global South had been vaccinated more quickly? We cannot be sure. But we do know that international cooperation is not compatible with nationalism, xenophobia, and new forms of colonialism. We need a form of globalization that works for everyone, because while our world may be deeply fractured, we are all still inescapably interdependent.

In response to our collective failures, the World Health Organization’s member states decided to negotiate a Pandemic Accord, an international legal instrument that would provide a global framework to ensure equitable access to vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics. You could call it a pandemic nonproliferation accord, an agreement to help each other and work together in the event of a new public-health catastrophe.

Unfortunately, this global effort is being threatened by a torrent of misinformation and disinformation, blatant lies, and percolating conspiracy theories. Among the falsehoods are that the WHO would be empowered to strip member states of sovereignty, deploy armed troops to enforce mandatory vaccinations and lockdowns, and monitor people’s movements through digital passports. All these claims are wholly untrue.

National governments themselves have proposed and are negotiating the Pandemic Accord, and they alone - not the WHO - will be responsible for its requirements and, ultimately, for its success or failure.

We must not underestimate the importance of the Accord, which represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to improve the world we live in, especially for young people and future generations. Young people, in particular, suffered greatly during the pandemic: their education was disrupted, their lives turned upside down, and their prospects diminished. And, given the endurance of the collateral effects of COVID-19 and its control measures, especially their adverse impact on mental health, young people have a right to expect that their future will be protected.

But the clock is ticking. Countries must act now to meet the self-imposed deadline of May 2024, when they are expected to present an agreement to the 77th World Health Assembly (the WHO’s decision-making body). They must not squander the opportunity to adopt a global pact that will protect future generations from a repeat of the devastation wrought by COVID-19. The unprecedented nature of the pandemic requires an unprecedented response.

Some of the current sticking points in the Pandemic Accord are related to intellectual property. But if countries embrace a spirit of global collaboration, they can devise creative solutions that balance intellectual-property rights, incentives, and the flexibilities in TRIPS, the World Trade Organization’s intellectual-property agreement. Compromise on this issue and others requires recognizing that the private and public sectors must work together in the fight against infectious diseases. But above all, security, equity, and equal access to information, technology, and products must be at the heart of the Accord.

People all around the world are desperate for hope. They want assurance that the future will be better than the past. Countries must recognize that adopting a give-and-take approach during the final negotiations is critical to reaching an agreement on the Pandemic Accord, which in turn could provide some much-needed optimism.

We must demonstrate through our deeds as well as our words that we live in a deeply interconnected world in which we share each other’s burdens, even when times are difficult. Establishing an effective model of open and inclusive health multilateralism will deliver the crucial message that cross-border cooperation can deliver global solutions to global problems.

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OP-ED

By Célestin Monga

How to Finance Higher Education in Africa

CAMBRIDGE - On-campus activities at Senegal’s Université Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), one of Africa’s largest institutions of higher education, have been suspended since last June, when students protested violently against the jailing of the country’s main opposition leader. The prolonged closure has made life difficult for UCAD students, many of whom normally reside on campus, and disrupted operations, because online classes are not widely available.

The learning gaps that have become visible are exacerbating inequities, fueling social tensions, and threatening the reputation of Senegal’s higher-education system. Calls to reopen UCAD have grown louder, but worsening political conditions - led by the postponement of the presidential election - all but preclude it.

UCAD is far from the only African institution of higher learning in crisis. Recent strikes by students and teacher unions have affected public colleges and universities in Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, and other countries. These strikes reflect diverse agendas, from political activism to demands for better pay, higher cost-of-living allowances, improved working conditions, and more financial aid for students.

The irony is that most students at public colleges and universities in Africa receive free on-campus housing and monthly grants, making them a privileged group, and the changes they advocate seldom address the biggest problems facing Africa’s colleges and universities. For starters, benefit-incidence analyses and public-expenditure reviews often show that students from the poorest families rarely enroll in tertiary education, implying a need to redesign admissions criteria.

African colleges and universities also tend to be poorly resourced, saddled with colonial-era curricula, ineffective at monitoring the quality of learning, and subject to bureaucratization and politicization. Government interference in their management and pedagogical choices also diminishes their effectiveness.

Perhaps the most important challenge facing African higher education, in the context of the continent’s rapid demographic growth, weak public finances, and low private incomes, is financing. There are three possible revenue sources, the most obvious being tuition fees. Moreover, governments can provide support in the form of land, capital grants for infrastructure, direct budget allocations for recurrent expenditures, subsidies for scholarships, and low-interest-rate loans. Lastly, colleges and universities can generate their own funding through endowments, fundraising campaigns, and income earned from research, patents, and consultancy services.

The three main university-funding models correspond to these three revenue sources. A fees-based system like that in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, which depends on a mix of public and private student loans, could be justified in Africa on the basis of tertiary education’s high returns. While well-trained, highly skilled African workers often move to developed countries, the benefits of migration - namely remittances - would likely compensate for the brain drain.

But, given high delinquency rates and the lack of reliable national credit-reporting systems, African financial institutions are reluctant to set up effective credit lines for students. Moreover, student groups (and parents of students) across the continent would likely balk at high individual and collective debt burdens and their attendant risks, exacerbating political instability and further weakening universities.

Many Asian and European countries have effectively established free or very low-cost higher-education systems financed by high tax-to-GDP ratios and tax collection. The rationale for this government-funded model is the high social returns of tertiary education, which contributes directly to economic growth and structural transformation by supplying workers who can implement scientific and technological advances and innovation. Well-educated people in the labor force also generate positive externalities by providing opportunities for others.

Africa has tried but failed to implement this model. As a result, such colleges and universities are often poorly equipped for teaching and learning - some even lack libraries - and many graduates cannot meet the increasingly technical requirements of the labor market. They end up underemployed or unemployed, which reduces the social value of higher learning and undermines Africa’s ability to build human capital.

Looking to the future, the prospects of making the model work are low, despite its attractiveness. African taxpayers are already heavily burdened. While governments could manage existing resources more efficiently, the savings would not be enough to cover the cost of quality higher education for the continent’s growing youth population.

A third option is for colleges and universities to tap into their endowment revenues to create a need-blind system. For example, many elite institutions in the US admit students on a need-blind basis and provide scholarships to those who cannot afford the cost.

But need-blind admissions are feasible only when schools have large endowments, most often built from grants, capital gains from assets, research and consulting income, alumni donations, and philanthropic initiatives. An additional challenge for African higher education is setting a credible income threshold for financial aid and verifying family income when most of the workforce is in the informal economy.

Given high demand for higher education, the rapidly growing student population, and most governments’ limited fiscal space, a mix of several funding streams represents the best chance to provide young Africans with access to quality colleges and universities. Such a hybrid model would combine public and private financing to ensure need-blind admissions.

To complement these measures, national, regional, and international development banks - such as the African Development Bank Group - could establish and invest in educational endowments. Africa’s resource-rich economies could allocate a percentage of the revenues to university endowments. Besides signaling strong commitment to higher education, this would receive support from student groups, teacher unions, and other civil-society organizations, while assuaging concerns that revenues from natural resources could be hijacked by a corrupt elite. Rigorous management would be required to create and enforce a transparent, rules-based system for granting subsidies and to align teaching quality with the highest international standards.

To compete in the twenty-first century, African economies must build, attract, and retain human capital. As economist L. Alan Winters of the University of Sussex put it, “The largest single contrast between developed and developing countries lies in the availability and use of highly skilled labor.” Drawing lessons from economic theory and experience, Africa can improve access to high-quality colleges and universities, and educate the types of workers and leaders the continent needs.

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OPINION

By Diane Coyle

Sharing the Tech Wealth

CAMBRIDGE - One of the defining economic challenges of our time is how to distribute the value generated by groundbreaking technologies, such as generative artificial intelligence and recent innovations in biomedicine and manufacturing, which rely on massive computing power. To improve living standards, the benefits of transformative technologies must be widely shared. So far, however, these benefits have been monopolized by a small cadre of tech billionaires.

Tesla CEO Elon Musk is a prime example. Most people recognize that Musk did not deserve the \$56 billion in annual compensation that the company’s board of directors attempted to give him in 2018, given Tesla’s relatively modest profits and years of losses. Nevertheless, the board argued that this enormous sum was necessary to incentivize Musk to remain at the company - an argument so baseless that a Delaware judge recently invalidated the board’s “unfathomable” compensation package.

But Musk is hardly alone. Other tech behemoths, such as Alphabet (Google’s parent company), have similarly lavished their CEOs with hefty salaries and stock options under the guise of retaining top talent. In reality, however, the actual contribution of star executives is often unclear. Notably, a classic 1991 study by Nobel laureate economists Bengt Holmström and Paul Milgrom suggests that incentive pay works only with simple tasks that have measurable outcomes and are executed by a single worker; in such cases, compensation can be directly linked to individual performance.

By contrast, the multifaceted nature of CEOs’ roles makes it hard to evaluate their individual contributions. But given that the metrics for measuring CEOs’ success, such as share prices, are shaped by the collective efforts of numerous employees and by chance, it could be argued that they should be the last to receive monetary incentives.

Moreover, Big Tech companies’ huge profits reflect their market power, which they have achieved by offering users “free” services like search and email while harvesting their personal data and copyrighted material to train AI models. In the absence of competitive checks, the quality of these services has gradually deteriorated - a trend that author and tech activist Cory Doctorow has described as “enshittification.” At the same time, the adverse effects of Big Tech’s business models, from rampant misinformation and deepfakes to clickbait, have become increasingly apparent.

The emergence of generative AI has further fueled concerns about tech giants’ market dominance, as writers, artists, and other creative professionals find their livelihoods undermined by large language models that circumvent copyright-law restrictions with impunity.

It does not have to be this way. In a recent essay, MIT economist David Autor argues that emerging AI technologies have the potential to complement the skills of human workers, particularly those, such as nurse practitioners, who typically do not receive incentive-based pay packages. Similarly, research by Autor’s MIT peers Erik Brynjolfsson, Danielle Li, and Lindsey Raymond finds that AI significantly boosts the productivity of call-center workers. Taken together, such studies suggest that generative AI could augment the work of creative freelancers instead of replacing them.

But systemic change requires more than individual efforts. The overwhelming power of Big Tech companies calls for government intervention to ensure that the value they create, as well as the value they extract in monopoly rents, is distributed fairly among workers and consumers. Although policymakers in the United States and Europe have rightly focused on competition-enhancing measures, including by examining the impact of major tech firms on labor markets, these actions are not enough.

To curb the market power of Big Tech firms and ensure that new technologies benefit everyone, governments must invest in developing digital public infrastructure. The concept of an open-standards technology stack - consisting of digital identification, a payment system, and a data-exchange platform - has gained traction in economic-development circles in recent years, and such frameworks could also streamline the provision of public goods.

But achieving this requires a change in mindset. Digital public infrastructure, typically viewed simply as a means to provide government services to individuals, has the potential to become a powerful platform for facilitating interactions among governments, businesses, and citizens. Ideally, a publicly owned payment system could process transactions both between firms and among individuals across different jurisdictions.

Moreover, the establishment of public digital infrastructure is crucial to implementing certain policy measures, such as Nobel laureate economist Paul Romer’s proposed tax on digital advertising. The revenues from such taxes could, for example, finance waste collection and recycling initiatives.

A thriving market economy operates as a partnership between the government and the private sector. Under this arrangement, businesses are allowed to manage their own affairs, provided they comply with laws and regulations, pay corporate taxes, and withhold their employees’ taxes.

But Big Tech firms have undermined this implicit agreement by exploiting various legal loopholes to minimize their tax burdens, compromising the quality of their services, and routinely violating copyright laws. The time has come to establish effective and necessary institutional mechanisms to ensure that potentially transformative technologies benefit everyone, not just a privileged few.

Diane Coyle, Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, is the author, most recently, of *Cogs and Monsters: What Economics Is, and What It Should Be* (Princeton University Press, 2021).

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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.



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUPMANO RIVER UNIONUNION DU FLEUVE MANO

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
(INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICE)

FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICE TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SERVICE PROVIDERS ON THE DESIGN, OUTREACH, MARKETING AND SUSTAINABILITY OF GENDER RESPONSIVE SERVICES.

COUNTRIES: Sierra Leone and Liberia

Sector: Gender Equality
Mode of Financing: Grant
Project ID: P-Z1-ID0-009
Grant No: 5900155016801
Issued Date: 25 February 2024

The Mano River Union Secretariat has received a grant from the African Development Fund to implement the project to Build Inclusive Business Ecosystems for Stabilization and Transformation (BI-BEST) in the Mano River Union (MRU) and intends to apply part of the agreed amount for this grant to payments under the contract for the recruitment of a consultant to provide technical assistance to Service Providers on the Design, Outreach, Marketing and Sustainability of Gender Responsive Services.

The services to be provided under the Assignment include the following:

- Design gender responsive product and services that will enhance the development of selected value chains (Cassava, Palm Oil and Vegetables)
- Develop an Outreach/Marketing Plan that promotes products and services to be designed.
- Prepare and roll out a technical support plan for service providers based on design and marketing strategies developed

The assignment will be undertaken in Two Months (not to exceed 45 working days), from the date of signature of contract.

The Mano River Union Secretariat is therefore inviting eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing these services. Interested Consultants shall provide information on their qualifications and experience (cover letter, supporting documents referencing similar services and showing demonstrated experience in similar assignments, etc.) to undertake this Assignment.

Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank’s “Procurement Policy and Methodology for Bank Group funded Operations” (BPM), dated 2015, which is available on the Bank’s website at <http://www.afdb.org>. MRU is under no obligation to shortlist any consultant who expresses interest.


Interested Consulting individual may obtain further information and Terms of Reference (ToR) from the Procurement Specialist email address: kensah@mru.int during the Office’s working hours between 09:00 to 17:00 hours GMT.

Proposals (technical and financial) must be delivered to the address below by March 18th, 2024.

Sierra Leone time and mention “CONSULTANCY SERVICE TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SERVICE PROVIDERS ON THE DESIGN, OUTREACH, MARKETING AND SUSTAINABILITY OF GENDER RESPONSIVE SERVICES FOR BI-BEST PROJECT”

Attention:

Mano River Union Secretariat
32 S Spur Loop, Wilberforce, Freetown
Republic of Sierra Leone
Tel: +232 76-964-965
E-mail : procurement@mru.int



MANO RIVER UNION
UNION DU FLEUVE MANO

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
(INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICE)

FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICE TO MOBILIZE VSLAs AND FINANCIAL PRODUCTS & SERVICES AND FACILITATE INTERNET INCLUSION OF WOMEN CROSS BORDER TRADERS FOR BANKING AND MARKETING.

COUNTRIES: Sierra Leone and Liberia

Sector: Gender Equality
Mode of Financing: Grant
Project ID: P-Z1-ID0-009
Grant No: 5900155016801
Issued Date: 25 February 2024

The Mano River Union Secretariat has received a grant from the African Development Fund to implement the project to Build Inclusive Business Ecosystems for Stabilization and Transformation (BI-BEST) in the Mano River Union (MRU) and intends to apply part of the agreed amount for this grant to payments under the contract for the recruitment of a consultant to Mobilize VSLAs and Financial Products & Services and facilitate Internet inclusion of Women Cross Border Traders for banking and marketing.

The services to be provided under the Assignment include the following:

1. Identify and introduce a workable VSLA that will extend access increase access to financial products and services for cross border women traders.
2. Create awareness on identified VSLA products and services with associations of cross border women traders in the two project communities.
3. Assess and identify means to include internet support to improve cross border trade, marketing and banking involving cross border women traders across the three selected value chains in the project areas.

The assignment will be undertaken in Two Months (not to exceed 45 working days), from the date of signature of contract.

The Mano River Union Secretariat is therefore inviting eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing these services. Interested Consultants shall provide information on their qualifications and experience (cover letter, supporting documents referencing similar services and showing demonstrated experience in similar assignments, etc.) to undertake this Assignment.


Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short -list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank’s “P rocurement Policy and Methodology for Bank Group funded Operations” (BPM), dated 2015, which is available on the Bank’s website at <http://www.afdb.org>. MRU is under no obligation to shortlist any consultant who expresses interest.

Interested Consulting individuals may obtain further information and Terms of Reference (ToR) from the Procurement Specialist email address: kensah@mru.int during the Office’s working hours between 09:00 to 17:00 hours GMT.

Proposals (technical and financial) must be delivered to the address belowby March 18th, 2024 Sierra Leone time and mention “ **CONSULTANCY SERVICE TO MOBILIZE VSLAs AND FINANCIAL PRODUCTS & SERVICES AND FACILITATE INTERNET INCLUSION OF WOMEN CROSS BORDER TRADERS FOR BANKING AND MARKETING FOR BI-BEST PROJECT**”

Attention:

Mano River Union Secretariat
32 S Spur Loop, Wilberforce, Freetown
Republic of Sierra Leone
Tel: +232 76-964-965
E-mail : procurement@mru.int



MANO RIVER UNION
UNION DU FLEUVE MANO

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
(INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICE)

FOR THE CONSULTANCY SERVICE TO SUPPORT THE COLLECTION AND DISSIMINATION OF SEX DISAGGREGATED DATA ON INFORMAL VS FORMAL ECONOMY

COUNTRIES: Sierra Leone and Liberia

Sector: Gender Equality
Mode of Financing: Grant
Project ID: P-Z1-ID0-009
Grant No: 5900155016801
Issued Date: 25 February 2024

The Mano River Union Secretariat has received a grant from the African Development Fund to implement the project to Build Inclusive Business Ecosystems for Stabilization and Transformation (BI-BEST) in the Mano River Union (MRU) and intends to apply part of the agreed amount for this grant to payments under the contract for the recruitment o f a consultant to support the collection and dissemination of sex disaggregated data on the informal vs formal economy.

The services to be provided under the Assignment include the following:

1. Organize research activities that will lead to the collection and dissemination of gender disaggregated data of formal and informal trade covering cross border women traders in the three (3) selected value chains mainly in the selected project communities.
2. Analyze, interpret, and present data collected to stakeholders for informed national trade decision making and programme design that will lead to trade and institutional strengthening, capacity building, increased participation, and awareness among project beneficiaries/cross border women traders in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

The assignment will be undertaken Two Months (not to exceed 40 working days), from the date of signature of contract.

The Mano River Union Secretariat is therefore inviting eligible individual consultants to indicate their interest i n providing these services . Interested Consultants shall provide information on their qualifications and experience (cover letter, supporting documents referencing similar services and showing demonstrated experience in similar assignments, etc.) to undertake this Assignment.

Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short -list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank’s “Procurement Policy and Methodology for Bank Group funded Operations” (BPM), dated 2015, whic h is available on the Bank ’s website at <http://www.afdb.org>. MRU is under no obligation to shortlist any consultant who expresses interest.

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Attention:

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32 S Spur Loop, Wilberforce, Freetown
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Tel: +232 76-964-965
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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

LICOSESS graduates first Bachelor's students

By Emmanuel wise Jipoh

The Liberia Cooperative Standard Education School System (LICOSESS) on Saturday, 24 February 2024, graduated its first Bachelor of Education (B.ED) candidates. During the exercise, 90



candidates obtained a Bachelor's degree from the College of Education. The Teacher College awarded Associate degrees under the sponsorship USAID TESTS program, in its 20th "AA" degrees program. Additionally, 341 students obtained "C" Certificates. It was a colorful Convocation Commencement program held at the Liberty Christian Church in Johnsonville.

Dr. Benjamin Yele Wehye, president LICOSESS Teacher Training, said the Colleges of Education had undergone a sustainable transformation. He said the college has transitioned from just a "C" Certificate to a Bachelor's degree as part of its unwavering commitment to

the minds of the next generation of Liberian leaders and I have no doubt that you will rise to the occasion with grace and integrity," Dr. Wehye said.

He expressed gratitude to the Government of Liberia, the National Commission on Higher Education, and USAID Tests for their continuous support and collaborations in advancing education here.

"Your support has not only enabled these students to complete their education but has also empowered them to become future leaders and change-makers in the field of Education," Dr. Wehye said of USAID.

In her Keynote address, Charge d' Affairs of the United States Embassy near Monrovia, Catherine Rodríguez, entreated the graduates to be guided by the training they acquired to excel.

She commanded LICOSESS for the numerous contributions made towards the education sector of Liberia while assuring the US Embassy's commitment to supporting the college in its endeavors.

The valedictorian, Marita Coleman, thanked LICOSESS for ensuring that the college is accessible and affordable.

She admonished her colleagues to use the quality

help improve the education sector of Liberia.

He indicated that the move aligned with the government's quest to expand access to College education.

Dr. Wehye urged the graduates to continue to seek Knowledge and growth, while they embrace innovation and technology in their teaching practice.

"Remember you have the power to inspire and reshape

CDC condemns Kruah's second nomination

By Kruah Thompson.

Supporters of the Opposition Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) have condemned President Joseph Nyumah Boakai's decision to renominate Cllr. Cooper Kruah as Labor Minister, after his first nomination was stalled. Kruah was first nominated as Justice Minister, but he was recalled without facing Senate confirmation hearing amidst persistent accusations against him by different individuals. A group calling itself CDC Council of Patriots (CDC-COP) said Cllr. Kruah's sudden transfer to Labour Ministry has raised eyebrows and prompted questions about the motives behind the decision.

"If Cooper Kruah isn't good to be Minister of Justice, he's not worth to be Labor Minister," the group suggested. The CDC-COP in a press release over the weekend, denounced Cllr. Kruah's reappointment.

In a scathing statement, the opposition party's auxiliary accused President Boakai of alleged political manoeuvring and nepotism.

The group alleged that

Kruah's transfer is a clear example of the administration's vindictive tendencies.

The release underscores growing discontent among CDCians about President Boakai's governance style.

In the release, the group argued that such decisions undermine public trust and erode confidence in the government's ability to address pressing issues facing the nation.

In response to the criticism, officials from the Boakai administration have defended the decision on local media.

They said this was done in the best interest of effective governance. Officials have

emphasized the need for strategic realignment within the cabinet to ensure optimal performance and delivery of services to the Liberian people.

However, some opposition members remain skeptical about the reappointment of Kruah and the potential impact on government's operations.

Some have raised concerns about the broader implications for labour policy and governance in Liberia.

Meanwhile, the CDC-COP has called on the Liberian Senate to take a firm stance against such appointment, urging lawmakers to reject unfit candidates instead of engaging in clandestine negotiations.



Julie Endee alleges judicial manipulation

--In the case against Prophet Key

By Lincoln G. Peters

Liberia's Cultural Ambassador Madam Julie Endee has accused the Executive Branch of the government of allegedly manipulating the case she filed against controversial social media talk show host Nayapougma Oldpa Yeazeahn, alias Prophet Key.

Last week prosecutors withdrew all criminal charges brought against Mr. Yeazeahn due to lack of sufficient evidence to prosecute him. But his accuser could refile the case.

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

According to the court records, Madam Endee wrote the court through her lawyers and

knowledge. "Yes, let me say this, the Executive is interfering with the Judiciary. How can you trash the case on grounds that there is no sufficient evidence when the insult against me was said on a live video where the whole world was watching?" Endee wondered.

"The Minister of Justice controlled by the Executive did that because Prophet Key told me that nothing will come out of the case because it's his government," she alleged without giving any evidence to back her claim.

The long-serving Liberian Cultural Ambassador pointed out that she will not give up on the case until justice is served.

She said she is prepared to take the case at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) regional court.

Commenting on the solidarity shown to her by the Executive, Endee lamented that the only people that have reached out to her are senators and representatives, but not a single member of the executive.

"I petitioned the Executive through the political advisor, who is a woman, MacDella Cooper. She has never reached out to me since," said Madam Endee.

"Charles [Snetter], who knows about my commissioning as Liberia's Culture Ambassador from Radio Monrovia days has not reached out. Nobody in the executive including



entered a nolle prosequi (to voluntarily end a criminal case before trial) in favor of Mr. Yeazeahn for the charges of criminal coercion, menacing, and disorderly conduct.

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 need arises.

However, Madam Endee alleged that the Executive has interfered with the judicial branch and the justice system of the government.

She led a protest over the weekend dubbed "Women for Justice" at the grounds of the Temple of Justice in Monrovia.

During the protest, Madam Endee told reporters that the Executive had begun interfering with the case involving her and Prophet Key that's why the case was thrown out without her

the President, Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai has reached out to me. This is clear that the Executive is behind this," she claimed.

Madam Endee said that the word frustration can't properly explain the negative feelings and pain that she is undergoing at the hands of the Liberian Justice system and the Executive Branch of government.

"I'm disappointed in the partisan politic of our national government," said Endee.

She accused Yeazeahn of telling people that she allegedly slept with all the presidents just to keep her job.

"That old man Boakai is old so I want to sleep with Amos Tweh to keep my job. My first son is older than Tweh. These are the real issues and that's why I want him to account for," she noted.

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Français

Boakai a déjà passé un mois à la présidence, mais pas de signe des promesses des 100 premiers jours

Le président Joseph Nyumah Boakai a achevé son premier mois de son mandat le jeudi 22 février 2024, après son investiture le 22 janvier de cette année. Cependant, le 22 février. La lenteur de la formation du gouvernement a suscité des critiques. Certains espèrent que la nomination des responsables permettra à Boakai de commencer à travailler sur ses

second tour de l'élection présidentielle du 14 novembre 2023.

Boakai et son gouvernement ont été critiqués pour la lenteur avec laquelle ils ont formé le gouvernement depuis la victoire du Parti de l'Unité (UP) à l'élection l'année dernière. Certains estiment que ce retard pourrait affecter la réalisation des objectifs des 100 premiers jours.

Le résumé du plan d'action des 100 premiers jours présente le projet du gouvernement de préparer en toute sécurité la voie à suivre pour sauver le pays. Il s'agit de remettre le pays sur une trajectoire qui permettra de construire une économie plus forte, plus robuste et plus réactive, caractérisée par la responsabilité. Il vise également à offrir des opportunités et une prospérité à tous les Libériens, indépendamment de leurs affiliations politiques et religieuses.

****Plan détaillé des 100 premiers jours:****

* Lutte contre la corruption : la première action pour redresser l'économie et réduire le coût de la vie est la lutte contre la corruption. Le document propose des mesures telles qu'un audit complet de tous les organismes publics, un audit médico-légal à travers le gouvernement, et l'introduction

aucun signe concret des promesses qu'il avait faites pour ses 100 premiers jours n'a encore été observé.

Des questions se posent sur sa capacité à atteindre ses objectifs, ayant passé un mois avant de former son cabinet et de nommer d'autres responsables de son administration, également

promesses des 100 premiers jours, mais la réalisation de celles-ci reste à voir. Les responsables nommés font partie de l'équipe sur laquelle il compte pour atteindre les objectifs qu'il a promis au peuple libérien.

Le 26e président libérien a succédé démocratiquement à l'ancien président George Manneh Weah, à la suite du

La Chambre exige des éclaircissements sur les voyages de Boakai

La Chambre des représentants a voté pour inviter le ministre d'État aux affaires présidentielles et le ministre des finances et de la planification du développement mardi prochain afin de fournir des informations aux députés sur les voyages du président Joseph Nyumah Boakai.

Le vote du jeudi 22 février 2024 a été déclenché par la communication

controversée du député Yekeh Kolubah, représentant du district électoral n°10 du comté de Montserrado, qui avait soutenu la candidature de Boakai à la présidence.

Dans sa communication, Kolubah a appelé le corps législatif à inviter les ministres des finances et des affaires présidentielles à clarifier les voyages présidentiels.

Tout a commencé lorsque le représentant Clarence Garr du district électoral n°5 du comté de

Margibi a proposé l'ouverture de la communication de Kolubah à la discussion.

Cette proposition n'a pas été bien accueillie par les représentants Dorwohn Gleekia du district électoral n°6 du comté de Nimba et Foday Fahnbulleh du district électoral n°7 du comté de Bong.

Les deux députés ont soutenu que la communication ne devrait pas être ouverte à la discussion car, en tant que législateurs, ils n'ont pas le

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Speaker J. Fonati Koffa

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

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Boakai a déjà passé un mois

de règles fiscales et de directives pour les voyages.

* Masse salariale des fonctionnaires : le plan d'action aborde des questions telles que les disparités de salaire, la surcharge de travail, les arriérés de salaire et le transfert du système de gestion de la paie existant vers un système plus performant.

* Récupération des biens de l'État : le gouvernement vise à récupérer tous les biens de l'État auprès des anciens responsables et des utilisateurs non autorisés.

* Infrastructures routières :

le plan vise à garantir la praticabilité de tous les principaux corridors par tous les temps, le nettoyage des systèmes de drainage et la révision des performances des contrats.

* Mobilisation de fonds : le gouvernement prévoit de trouver des sources de financement et de sécuriser des contrats pour le déploiement d'entrepreneurs.

En conclusion, bien que Boakai ait commencé son mandat, il reste à voir s'il pourra atteindre ses objectifs ambitieux pour les 100 premiers jours, notamment en raison de la lenteur de la formation de son gouvernement.

Starts from page 8

La Chambre exige des

droit de remettre en question les voyages du président.

Gleekia et Fahnbulleh ont déclaré qu'ils seraient prêts à voter si les députés pouvaient comprendre l'importance du président et le rôle qu'il joue.

Le représentant Fahnbulleh a déclaré que pour un législateur, se lever en session et remettre en question les voyages du président est une insulte.

Cependant, Fahnbulleh a provoqué les membres du Congrès pour le changement démocratique (CDC), parti d'opposition, et la question s'est transformée en un échange houleux entre les députés.

Le débat tendu a conduit le président de séance, le vice-président de la Chambre Thomas P. Fallah, à demander au représentant Nimba Gleekia de sortir de la salle.

Pour sa part, le représentant Saah Foko du district électoral n°9 du comté de Montserrado a déclaré que la dernière fois, le président Boakai avait informé le peuple libérien qu'il vivait à crédit et qu'il n'avait pas d'argent.

Foko a déclaré qu'en moins d'un mois de sa présidence, le président Boakai avait pu quitter le pays, vraisemblablement dans un jet privé. Il a dit qu'il était bon d'avoir des éclaircissements sur son voyage.

Dans sa communication, le représentant Kolubah a déclaré qu'au cours de la période écoulée, les Libériens ont pleuré sur la question de la corruption (manque de responsabilité et de transparence).

Kolubah a déclaré que ce sont là quelques-uns des problèmes qui ont conduit à l'échec du gouvernement dirigé par Weah, en particulier l'échec de sa réélection.

Il a déclaré que lorsque des exemples de ces choses commencent à apparaître, il est de leur responsabilité de mettre en place des points de contrôle afin qu'elles ne deviennent pas incontrôlables avant d'essayer de redresser la situation.

Il convient de rappeler que le président du Liberia a écrit à l'auguste assemblée pour informer les députés de sa visite de travail de deux jours au Ghana. Au même moment, le vice-président libérien Jeremiah Koug s'était également rendu au Nigeria et à Casablanca pour des visites de travail.

Kolubah a déclaré qu'il pense que de tels voyages nécessitent le parrainage du gouvernement, et s'il ne s'agit pas de voyages sponsorisés par le gouvernement, ils doivent le savoir en tant que députés du peuple.

En outre, il a déclaré que cela devenait une préoccupation lorsqu'il a été dit que le vice-président avait voyagé dans un jet privé. "Considérant que nous ne voulons pas faire du business as usual, nous demandons l'indulgence de l'auguste assemblée pour inviter le ministre des finances et le ministre d'État aux affaires présidentielles à comparaître devant la plénière de la Chambre pour fournir des informations détaillées sur les coûts de voyage des différents déplacements effectués par le président et le vice-président", a déclaré Kolubah.

Le sénateur Dillon s'oppose à la demande de 41,3 millions de dollars américains de Boakai



Senator Abraham Darius Dillon

Le sénateur Abraham Darius Dillon du comté de Montserrado, connu sous le nom de "Rescue Light", a voté contre la demande du président Joseph Nyumah Boakai d'allouer 41,3 millions de dollars américains.

Le nouveau gouvernement a demandé l'approbation de l'Assemblée législative pour ce montant afin de financer ses opérations pour le mois de février.

Cependant, le sénateur Dillon, membre de la "Rescue Team", s'est opposé à la demande du président.

Selon lui, il ne pouvait pas voter pour la demande tant qu'il n'aurait pas reçu une ventilation détaillée des 41,3 millions de dollars demandés pour payer les dettes de l'État.

Néanmoins, le Sénat a accepté, comme la Chambre des représentants, d'autoriser l'utilisation des 41 300 000 dollars américains pour les opérations de février.

Le jeudi 22 février, le Sénat a voté à la majorité pour approuver la demande de financement, suite à un rapport de la commission statutaire du Sénat sur les moyens et

méthodes, les finances et le budget, présidée par le sénateur Prince Moye du comté de Bong.

Le sénateur Moye a expliqué que cette décision visait à accélérer le financement des opérations du gouvernement pour février 2024. Il a déclaré que, bien que des ajustements aient été apportés à la demande du président, le montant total ne pouvait être modifié.

Récemment, le président Boakai a communiqué avec l'Assemblée législative, demandant l'autorisation de dépenser 41 300 000 dollars américains pour couvrir les opérations de février.

Selon la communication du président, cette autorisation était demandée en raison du fait que le projet de budget pour l'exercice 2024 avait été renvoyé par la Chambre des représentants et était en cours de finalisation pour être soumis à nouveau.

La communication indiquait également que les opérations du gouvernement devaient se poursuivre pour éviter un arrêt de fonctionnement.

Ceux qui ont voté contre l'adoption de la demande du président étaient les sénateurs Abraham Darius Dillon, J. Gleh-Bo Brown du Maryland, Numene T.H. Bartekwa de Grand Kru, et Nathaniel F. McGill de Margibi.

Le sénateur Nathaniel McGill du comté de Margibi a voté contre l'approbation de l'instrument car les détails entourant le montant destiné à la dette intérieure n'étaient pas fournis.

Juridique pour l'équipe Kanubah-Sieh dans le litige de l'Union de la Presse du Liberia (PUL)



Le juge du neuvième circuit judiciaire du comté de Bong a rejeté la requête en radiation déposée par l'avocat représentant l'ancienne administration de l'Union de la Presse du Liberia (PUL). Le juge J. Boima Kontoe a pris cette décision le vendredi 16 février 2024 lors d'une audience portant sur la requête en radiation déposée le 23 décembre 2022. L'avocat de l'ancienne administration de la PUL avait contesté la légalité de l'équipe juridique de la campagne de Julius Kanubah et Beatrice Sieh pour le leadership de la PUL de retirer et modifier leur requête initiale pour jugement déclaratoire, demandant ainsi au juge d'annuler l'ensemble de la procédure car elle avait été retirée et modifiée prématurément. Cependant, dans une requête en opposition, les avocats de l'équipe de campagne de Kanubah-Sieh ont justifié la légalité de la requête modifiée, en citant les lois pertinentes en matière de procédure civile et électorale.

Le juge Boima Kontoe a donc accordé la demande des avocats de l'équipe de campagne de Kanubah-Sieh de voir la requête en radiation rejetée et annulée car il s'agissait d'une formalité juridique inutile.

Le rejet de la requête en radiation constitue une nouvelle

victoire juridique pour l'équipe Kanubah-Sieh. En annulant cette requête, le juge peut désormais entendre et statuer sur la requête en jugement déclaratoire concernant la fraude présumée liée aux violations de la constitution de la PUL par l'ancienne direction.

Parallèlement, le juge Kontoe a convoqué les avocats et les parties au litige du Congrès de la PUL 2022 à une conférence préliminaire le 26 février 2024, afin de déterminer si les deux parties sont parvenues à un accord pour résoudre le litige à l'amiable, et sinon, de présenter des témoins et des preuves pour commencer le procès.

Avant la conférence préliminaire, le juge Kontoe a ordonné aux avocats des parties au litige de la PUL de se concerter et de parvenir à un éventuel règlement, faute de quoi l'affaire se poursuivra conformément à la loi, comme l'a ordonné la Cour suprême, où l'équipe Kanubah-Sieh a remporté une victoire juridique majeure dans un arrêt historique du 19 décembre 2023.

À cet égard, l'équipe Kanubah-Sieh travaille avec ses conseillers juridiques sur la voie à suivre, tout en continuant à informer les médias et les acteurs de la société civile qui tentent de trouver une solution.

Tant qu'une solution n'aura pas été trouvée, l'équipe Kanubah-Sieh exhorte ses centaines de supporters et les personnes intéressées par le développement démocratique de la PUL à ne pas honorer toute invitation au nom de la PUL.

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IPER report alleges corruption in schools' registration fees

By Lincoln G. Peters

Research conducted by the Institute for Policy Evaluation and Research (IPER) in Bong and Lofa County has uncovered alleged huge corruption at the Ministry of Education and the findings were released at an elaborate program held in Monrovia on Friday, 23 February 2024.

IPER Executive Director Jacob Flomo said the study finds that there is no written policy governing the



public high schools in the respective counties.

The research focused on public schools' registration fees. Some months ago, IPER with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) embarked on a study to determine the pressing issues that Liberia is confronted with. It emphasized the accountability of public schools' registration fees and collection, utilization, and management of registration fees in the country.

He said the Ministry of Education (MoE) in 2019 called on all schools to collect registration fees and transfer them to the ministry through a consolidated mobile money account managed at the ministry's central office in Monrovia.

"Also, there is no record that systematically outlines the

policy, details its objective, or outlines the method for documenting and accounting for fees," he said.

"The lack of documentation results in limited transparency in the registration fees collection and management process," he indicated.

The research also finds that public schools are charging extra fees, adding that nearly all respondents in the study, both in the quantitative and qualitative research studies indicated being charged extra fees outside of the prescribed registration fees announced in 2019 by the Ministry of Education.

Mr. Flomo said for those who participated in the KIIs and FGDs, the combined extra fee charged per academic year sums above L\$ 10,000.00 and for participants in the quantitative survey, the amount averages more than L\$ 2,000.00.

These figures fall far beyond the payment required by the MoE.

Furthermore, the report pointed out that schools don't report on their annual operations to the Ministry of Education through the District Education or County Education Officers.

It said limited accountability for fees paid could undermine the stipulated objective for the

Zimbabwe's The NewsHawks freezes military story over fears for journalists' safety

Lusaka, February 22, 2024—Zimbabwean authorities must end the intimidation and surveillance of journalists working for The NewsHawks online newspaper and ensure they can report safely about the military, the Committee to Protect Journalists said on Friday.

The NewsHawks, a privately owned investigative online newspaper, announced on Tuesday that it had halted further reporting on its February 12 story that three army generals were dismissed following allegations of corruption, citing fears for the safety of its journalists, according to news reports and The NewsHawks' managing editor Dumisani Muleya, who spoke with CPJ.

The NewsHawks said in a statement that reporters had been removed from the story with immediate effect, it would threatened and intimidated, including through physical surveillance and call monitoring to identify their sources, Muleya said, declining to provide further details for publication.

"There was pressure from all over...so we had to make a decision to stop following this story up. There's no point in endangering the lives of reporters in pursuit of a story," Muleya told CPJ.

In a February 16 statement that The NewsHawks published on social media, a spokesperson for the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) confirmed that three general officers were under investigation. It also noted "with great concern attempts by The NewsHawks and other media outlets to peddle falsehoods."

On Tuesday, presidential spokesperson George Charamba told the Zimbabwean press to exercise "care and sensitivity" when reporting on "security structures," local media reported.

"The ZDF has got its own internal processes to investigate any allegation against any of its members and it is always prudent for the media to follow, rather than seek to lead such a process. Leading through advocacy muddies the water and may invite some responses, which may not be that palatable," Charamba was quoted as saying by Zimbabwean outlets.

Also on Tuesday, The NewsHawks said in a statement: "We are not being silenced, but forced to make some strategic decisions or choices to secure the safety of our reporters. Self-censorship and silence are not an option in investigative journalism, yet necessary if only to ensure journalists' safety and wellbeing, at least for the time being."

CPJ's texts and emails to Charamba and ZDF spokesperson Colonel Alphios Makotore requesting comment on the case did not receive any replies.

The NewsHawks' journalist Bernard Mpofu was also threatened and forced to go into hiding in 2021 after publishing several articles, including an exclusive about an emergency landing of Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa's helicopter, the outlet reported.



ECOWAS launches emergency response action in Todee District

The Project Cooperation and Funding Agreement is in collaboration with the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Agriculture with implementing partner Welt Hunger Hilfe with a value of USD 351,217.00.

It is expected to provide basic food assistance to 2,000 children under the age of five battling malnutrition in rural Montserrado, Todee District and train thirty Community-Based Nutrition Awareness Team with best practices on Nutrition.

Commenting on the initiative, the Resident Representative of the President of the ECOWAS Commission in Liberia Amb. Josephine Nkrumah outlined that the latest move of ECOWAS is in line with plans to reduce the effect of food insecurity that Liberia is challenged with.

The objectives include, providing assistance to strengthen resilience and recovery of vulnerable children to reduce the effect of food insecurity and malnutrition; provide immediate food assistance including the distribution of fortified cereals; and create awareness and knowledge on cultural food habits and nutrition sensitive agricultural practices.

'As an ECOWAS of the people with the vision of peace and prosperity for all, ECOWAS is committed to ensuring the wellbeing of all community citizens' Madam Nkrumah stated.

The ECOWAS envoy maintained that the project is part of ECOWAS Protocol on Mechanism Relating to Conflict Prevention, Management, Peace Keeping and Security of

Member States.

For his part, the officer in charge of the Department of planning and development at the Ministry of Agriculture, Dennis Waigbe embraced the initiative, noting that the move is a timely intervention that would yield results considering the high rate of malnutrition in Todee district.

'We are excited as a government for this initiative because it buttresses previous efforts to curb stunting in Liberia' he added.

Meanwhile, the Country Director Welt Hunger Hilfe, Liberia country office Hubert Charles assured ECOWAS of full swing implementation.

He acknowledged that the



not publish follow-ups, and stories would be pulled out of Tuesday's latest PDF edition.

"Zimbabwean authorities must guarantee the safety of journalists and take action against state officials whose threats and intimidation have forced The NewsHawks staff to censor their reporting on allegations of military corruption," said Angela Quintal, head of CPJ's Africa program in New York.

"Zimbabwe's defense force should not be above press scrutiny, particularly when senior military officers are implicated in allegations of public sector corruption involving taxpayers' funds. They must be barred from spying on journalists to uncover the identity of their confidential sources."

Following publication of the article, The NewsHawks' news editor and reporters were

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I won't hinder government's workings

By Bridgett Milton

House Speaker Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa says he will not do anything that will deny Civil Servants their timely salary payment or stop the workings of the Government of Liberia.

During a meeting with over thirty accredited reporters at

opposition Speaker of the House of Representatives.

On the contrary, Koffa said he is committed to working with all branches of the government to create a healthy balance in the interest of the country and the people.

Speaker Koffa added that

Recently, the House of Representatives unanimously voted to pass the request made by President Joseph Nyumah Boakai to spend a little over 41 million United States dollars.

The Executive requested the amount to cover the government's operations for the month of February 2024.

On 20 February 2024, the House Plenary agreed with the executive by approving the budget requested.

In a Report from its Joint Committee on Ways, Means, Finance and Development Planning and Public Accounts, it was recommended that the request be approved to avoid the government shutting down as well as the payment of civil servants' salaries.

According to Cllr. Koffa, the primary objective was to fortify the relationship between the House of Representatives and the media. During the engagement with reporters, Speaker Koffa expressed gratitude for the media's coverage of the House of Representatives and pledged to maintain regular interactions with the press.

For his part, outgoing Legislative reporters' president Henry Karmo congratulated Speaker Koffa on behalf of the reporters on his election.

Corrupt officials will pay the prize

President Joseph Nyumah Boakai has commissioned the first batch of officials of his government, warning them that anyone caught in corruption will pay the prize.

"When we officially took office, we informed the country and the world that the 'business as usual approach' would be a relic of the past for this Administration, and we mean it," he said during the ceremony last week.

President Boakai stated that his administration will not tolerate corruption and pilferage, warning that anyone caught in the act will face the consequences, with no consideration of status.

"Let it be known that we will not tolerate corruption and pilferage from the people's coffers, as those found to be in breach of our anti-graft laws will give account and pay the [prize]," President Boakai declared.

He continued that "a hint to the wise is enough."

development agenda set for the next six years without any excuses.

He also ordered all government officials to immediately declare their assets to comply with anti-graft regulations as required.

President Boakai declared that every cabinet minister and head of agency would sign a performance contract to ensure projected deliverables are met, and enhance government efficiency.

He urged that they promote an open, transparent, and accountable government.

President Boakai also announced that the Citizens Feedback Mechanism Project, piloted in five counties, will be activated, and implemented across the country to keep a close eye on the government's performance.

He reminded his ministers and heads of agencies that public service is not an entitlement but an opportunity for them to give back to the country and its people.

He urged them to carry out their duties with utmost professionalism and compassion and find fulfillment in genuinely transforming the country.



the Capitol Building on Friday, 23 February 2024, Cllr. Koffa said people expected him to prevent the passage of the US \$41.3m budget requested by the Executive.

He said people had thought that by blocking the passage of the budget, he would have been acting tough as an

the House of Representatives is committed to promoting transparency, accountability, and openness under his leadership.

At the same time, he encouraged reporters to seek clarification on issues to ensure accurate public information.

Journalist Henry Flomo died at 48

Start from back page

hearts go out to those affected by this sudden and irreparable loss. DA stands with you in this difficult time and is committed to seeking truth and justice in Flomo's honor."

DA calls on the Government of Liberia to finance an

independent autopsy by an internationally licensed pathologist to establish the cause of death.

It says there are reports that shortly prior to his unfortunate demise, the Henry was involved in a toxic exchange with some individuals in Ganta over the

recent elections with threats issued on his life.

SA notes that circumstances surrounding the journalist's death raise serious concerns about press freedom, safety, and potential foul play, thus calling for an independent autopsy to ensure transparency, accountability, and truth.

GVL clarifies media reports on Grand Kru

Butaw District, Sinoe County - Golden Veroleum Liberia acknowledges a go-slow action staged by workers in Grand Kru County, as reported in the New Dawn's article of 21 February, and is pleased to report that the issue has been resolved and workers involved have resumed work. GLV says this action, which lasted for several days, ended with a resolution signed between the workers, management, and the Workers' Union, witnessed by members of the Grand Kru Legislative Caucus and local authorities.

On workers' grievances with insurance arrangements, GVL clarified that apart from the National Social Security which covers every employee in Liberia, all other third-party insurance such as SAAR Insurance is negotiated by the Workers' Union directly with insurers, adding that management is not involved in

these negotiations. In a press release, the company says the contract alluded to in the NEW DAWN's publication with SUNU insurance was to insure GVL's assets, such as vehicles, motorcycles, and other equipment. It says SUNU does not provide insurance coverage for workers. Furthermore, SUNU's contract with GVL was terminated in April 2023.

The release continues that GVL provides housing with piped water and 24/7 electricity to those it terms as

qualified employees, while health facilities with professional nurses and essential drugs are in place at all of its farm sites to cater to the needs of its employees and their dependents.

It says other community dwellers benefit from the health facilities as well, and that Golden Veroleum Educational Support (GES) program supports the educational needs of both GVL employees' dependents and pupils from surrounding communities.



"This is why we expect nothing less from the ministers, heads of agencies, and advisors being commissioned today, and others to follow by executing the mandate of their respective offices and performing their duties efficiently and selflessly for the public good," he noted.

Following the exercise, the Executive Mansion issued a statement saying president Boakai had commissioned the first batch of members of his Cabinet Ministers recently confirmed by the Liberian Senate.

The Executive Mansion said the exercise was part of his constitutional obligation enshrined in Article 54 of the 1986 Constitution.

During the ceremony, President Boakai challenged the newly appointed officials to recognize the enormous task they have been called to perform in the interest of the country.

He urged them to perform at the highest level, ensuring the deliverance of the government's priorities to achieve his

Cabinet ministers and advisors commissioned at the occasion last week included Foreign Minister Sara Beyslow Nyanti, Finance Minister Boima Kamara, Public Works Minister Roland Lafayette Giddings, Minister of State Sylvester Grigsby, Youth and Sports Minister J. Cole Bangalu, and Agriculture Minister J. Alexander Nuetah.

The officials included Minister of Health, Dr. Louise Kpoto, Minister of Commerce and Industry Amin Modad, Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Mrs Gbeme Horace Kollie, Advisor to the President on Foreign Affairs, Amb. George Wallace, Senior Advisor to the President, Dr. Augustine Konneh, and National Security Advisor, Atty. Samuel Kofi Woods.

Others were Legal Advisor, Cllr. Bushuben M. Keita (Esq.), and Ms. MacDella Cooper, Political Advisor to the President.

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Journalist Henry Flomo died at 48

By Thomas Domah/ Nimba County

Doctors at the Ganta United Methodist Hospital in Ganta City, Nimba County have confirmed the death of the communication director of the National Elections

Jackie Guest House in Ganta, but report says he died while enroute to the hospital

His sibling Mr. Patrick Flomo explained that his late brother had bathed in a pool at the Jackie Guest House prior to his death.

Remains of the late Henry

death, the late Henry had been in communication with him throughout until Saturday.

He describes his death as a big lost to the family.

"Henry Flomo's death is unbelievable and a big lost to the family", Patrick Flomo laments.

The late Henry Flomo worked for the Liberia Broadcasting Corporation ELBC before joining the National Elections Commission (NEC) as communication director.

Several journalists, including the New Dawn Nimba County correspondent, referred to his death as a big loss to the media community, for the cordial working relationship he had with media houses while at the NEC.

Also speaking on behalf of the National Elections Commission, Head Trainer James Wallie, said Henry's sudden death is a big loss to the institution.

Mr. Wallie said Henry was not sick, so news about his death came as surprise.

Meanwhile, a group Diaspora Alert (DA) extends its deepest condolences to the family and loved ones of the late Journalist Henry Flomo, who passed away under mysterious circumstances, saying "Our

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Commission (NEC) Henry Boye Flomo.

Mr. Flomo met his demise while attending ten days intensive training in Building Resources in Democracy, Government and Elections (BRIDGE).

He was rushed to the Ganta United Methodist Hospital after he fell off while attending training at the

Flomo, 48, have been removed from the Ganta United Methodist Hospital and brought to Monrovia.

Mr. Patrick Flomo, head of the family, describes the death of his junior brother as unbelievable, noting that the deceased was not sick before his homecoming.

He explains that before his

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