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MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES
LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

DATE	BUYING	SELLING
MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2024	L\$191.6260/US\$1.00	L\$193.5419/US\$1.00

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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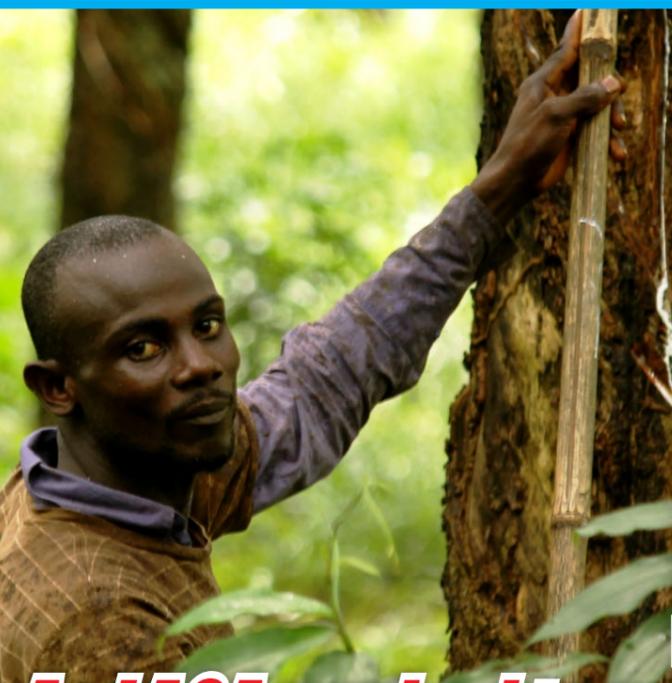
CDC to resist assets recovery team

-Says Koijee



Jefferson Koijee

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Liberians' jobs at stake

-As LACA pushed to maintain moratorium on unprocessed rubber

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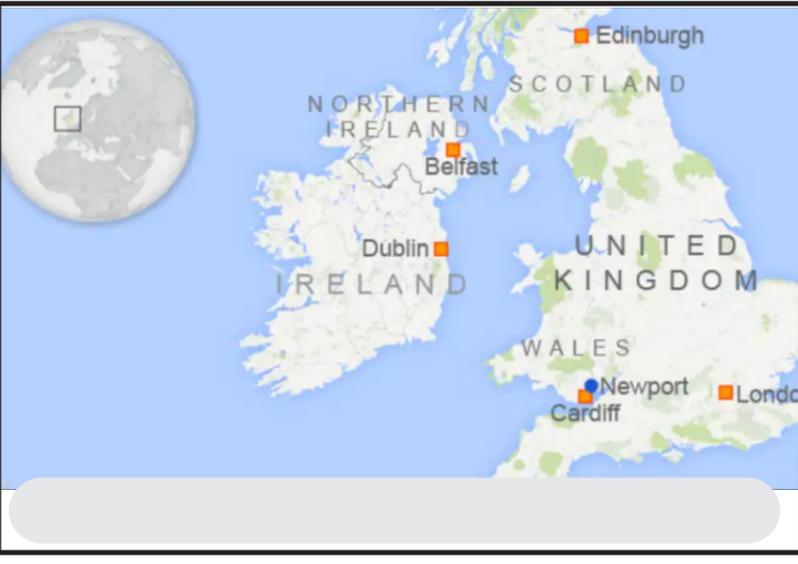
Wales to Name Its First Black Leader

Vaughan Gething has won the Welsh Labour Party leadership contest and is set to become the first Black leader of Wales' semi-autonomous government. Gething is currently Welsh economy

"I want us to use this moment as a starting point, for a more confident march into the future," he added. Gething, who is currently Welsh economy minister, narrowly beat Education Minister Jeremy Miles in a race to replace First Minister

governments will have nonwhite leaders. U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has Indian heritage, while Scottish First Minister Humza Yousaf was born to a Pakistani family in Britain. Northern Ireland is led jointly by Michelle O'Neill and Emma Little-Pengelly, meaning that for the first time there are no white male heads of government in the U.K.

Wales, which has a population of about 3 million, is one of four parts of the United Kingdom, along with England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The British government in London is responsible for defense, foreign affairs and other U.K.-wide issues, while administrations in Cardiff, Edinburgh and Belfast control areas such as education and health. Gething was Wales' health minister during the COVID-19 pandemic, and as economy minister has had to deal with fallout from Tata Steel's plan to close both blast furnaces at its plant in Port Talbot, eliminating 2,800 jobs at one of Wales' biggest employers. He'll take over a government that is often at odds with Sunak's Conservative administration in London. Wales has also seen a wave of protests over environmental rules by farmers, similar to those that have roiled France



minister. Gething, the son of a Welsh father and a Zambian mother, will be the first Black leader of a government in the U.K. — and, according to him, of any European country. "Today, we turn a page in the book of our nation's history. A history we write together," Gething said in his victory speech. "Not just because I have the honor of becoming the first Black leader in any European country — but because the generational dial has jumped too.

Mark Drakeford. Drakeford, 69, announced late last year he would step down once a replacement was chosen. Gething, 50, won 51.7% of the votes cast by members of the party and affiliated trade unions, and Miles 48.3%. Once he is confirmed on Wednesday by the Welsh parliament, the Senedd, where Labour is the largest party, Gething will become the fifth first minister since Wales' national legislature was established in 1999. Once Gething is in the post, three of the U.K.'s four

Niger's junta revokes military agreement with US

Niger's junta has ended a military agreement that allowed US personnel to be deployed in the country.

Saturday's announcement came in the week that a delegation from Washington had been in Niamey for talks with the country's military leadership.

The US used its base in Niger to monitor regional jihadist activity.

This latest announcement by the junta, in power since last July, comes as it moves closer to Russia and after French troops were kicked out in December.

"The US presence on the territory of the Republic of Niger is illegal and violates all the constitutional and democratic rules which would require the sovereign people... to be consulted on the installation of a foreign army on its territory," Niger's military spokesperson Col Amadou

at senior levels in Niamey this week about our concerns with the CNSP's trajectory. We are in touch with the CNSP and will provide further updates as warranted."

There are thought to be at least 650 US personnel in Niger.

In 2016, the US began investing around \$100m (£79m) in a drone base in the central city of Agadez, 750km (460 miles) north-east of Niamey. It was used for surveillance and targeting of Islamic State and al-Qaeda-linked militants operating in the wider Sahel region.

Jihadist activity in the Sahel has created instability in a number of countries, which, as well as Niger, has also led to coups in two of its neighbouring states - Mali and Burkina Faso. The three countries have now formed a military alliance.

The army in Niger overthrew the elected President, Mohamed Bazoum, last July citing the worsening security situation.

Following mounting resentment against former

US Plans Evacuation of Citizens in Haiti

The United States is organizing a charter flight to evacuate its citizens from Haiti, the US embassy said on Saturday, after weeks of gang violence that has paralyzed the Caribbean country.

The emergency flight will depart from Cap-Haitien, Haiti's second-largest city, as the main airport in capital Port-au-Prince remains shut amid the unrest.

"We are arranging a charter flight for U.S. citizens from Cap-Haitien to the United States, assuming the security situation in Cap-Haitien remains stable," the US embassy in Haiti said in a security alert posted on its website.

The embassy said the airport in Cap-Haitien is open "periodically" for departing flights.

No date for the evacuation has been announced and it is unclear how many Americans will be able to take the flight.

The embassy warned that the 120-mile (200-kilometer) overland journey from Port-au-Prince to Cap-Haitien is "dangerous," telling its citizens

to consider the flight "only if you believe you can reach Cap-Haitien airport safely."

The United States said last Sunday it had airlifted non-essential American staff from its embassy in Port-au-Prince and brought in additional personnel to boost security at the compound.

Several other countries and the European Union have evacuated diplomatic personnel due to the crisis.

The United Nations also said it was evacuating non-essential staff.

The UN mission in Haiti

announced Wednesday it would launch an "airbridge" from neighboring Dominican Republic to facilitate the movement of aid into the country.

Haiti has been convulsed for the last two weeks by a gang uprising, with the well-armed groups aiming to topple Prime Minister Ariel Henry, an unpopular and unelected leader.

Henry agreed to step aside after an emergency meeting Monday that brought together parties including the US, UN



A junta spokesperson made the announcement on state television on Saturday

Abdramane said in a damning statement on national television.

He also alleged that the US delegation had accused Niger of making a secret deal to supply uranium to Iran. Col Abdramane described the accusation as "cynical" and "reminiscent of the second Iraq war".

And finally, he suggested that the US had raised objections about the allies that Niger had chosen. "The government of Niger therefore strongly denounces the condescending attitude combined with the threat of reprisals by the head of the American delegation against the government and the people of Niger," Col Abdramane said.

Referring to Niger's governing military council by the initials CNSP, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said on X that it was "aware of the statement... which follows frank discussions

colonial power France, French troops, who had been helping to fight the jihadists, left the country in December.

The junta had appeared to take a softer line towards the US, but that has now changed.

Niger appears to be moving closer to Russia. Last December, junta-appointed Prime Minister Ali Mahaman Lamine Zeine was in Moscow to discuss military and economic ties.

Referring to relations with Russia, military spokesperson Col Abdramane said Niger is dealing with the country to "acquire military equipment necessary to its fight against the terrorists who have claimed thousands of innocent Nigerien victims under the indifferent eye of much of the international community". BBC



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EDITORIAL

The powerful few hate war and economic crimes court

Liberia seems to be heading on a path where a few handfuls of individuals who terrorized the entire population with arms, committing mayhem and killing thousands of civilians, including women and children, believe that they can still hold the country hostage with the barrel of the gun, against current calls for the establishment of war and economic crimes court to punish them for their deeds.

The few handfuls of citizens, predominantly warlords, some of whom are in the legislature, believe that they can shield themselves from accountability through court and have begun to issue threats of returning to the bush if such court comes into being and they were summoned to appear.

In their state of mind, they owe the population no explanation for the carnage they committed during the brutal civil war and should be business as usual, or they should continue to have their will.

But clearly, the rebel generals and leaders need to be told brutally that time has caught up with them, and their days are numbered to appear before an international criminal court to account for atrocities they committed against innocent and peaceful citizens.

They seem to be living in utopia, believing that they can challenge both the people of Liberia and the international community to escape justice while their victims continue to wallop in pain and tears with justice eluding them. No! There has to be a bus stop, and we believe now is the right time.

For obvious reasons, disbanded INPFL and MODEL rebels' leaders, Senators Prince Yormie Johnson of Nimba County and Thomas Yaya Nimely of Grand Gedeh County, are beating the war drum the loudest, raining threats and kicking against the establishment of a war and economic crimes court for Liberia because they are afraid of their past deeds.

All 98 individuals listed for prosecution by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report should know that President Joseph Nyuma Boakai is not the author of the report but is demonstrating leadership by doing what the report says: the need for accountability, not a witch-hunt, as some quarters are claiming.

The character or mark of a good leader is to stand and speak for the majority. President Boakai has embarked upon this fearlessly amid threats from those who see themselves in the mirror, saying that they cannot survive the war crimes court because their deeds are overwhelming.

The souls of fellow citizens who were murdered in cold blood in Kpolokpaila in Bong County, Mahed River in Grand Cape Mount County, Voinjama, Lofa County, Grand Bassa, and Sinoe counties, and other areas across Liberia are still crying for justice. Not only Liberia but the entire world is listening to the cries daily, while those who tormented them to death through summary executions and massacres live comfortably in impunity with no remorse for their actions.

One thing is sure. However, they are not in the majority, and their empty threats cannot scare away the international community that is resolved to bring justice to Liberians and put impunity to an end.

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COMMENTARY

By Nkechi S. Owoo

Give Women with Disabilities a Chance

ACCRA - It is well known that women in developing economies have fewer educational and employment opportunities than their male counterparts, leading to higher rates of poverty. In Ghana, for example, men have higher employment rates and incomes than women, and are less likely to be engaged in vulnerable jobs. Less widely recognized is that, by some metrics, the gap is not narrowing quickly enough: women in developing economies continue to account for a significant share of the economically disadvantaged. Add disability to the mix, and the challenges facing women are even greater.

There are over one billion people living with disabilities worldwide, some 80% of whom reside in developing countries. While there are many models for measuring disability, some conclusions are indisputable: disability is more prevalent among women (19%) than men (12%); people with disabilities face high barriers to education and employment, leading to higher rates of lifelong poverty; and outcomes for women with disabilities are even worse than those for their male counterparts.

Ghana's experience is a case in point. Women are disproportionately represented among the 8% of the population who face functional limitations related to sight, hearing, mobility, cognition, self-care, and/or communication. And, as the chart shows, 68% of men with disabilities are in vulnerable employment, compared to 80% of women with disabilities, while 40% of men with disabilities have attained secondary and post-secondary education, compared to just 31% of women with disabilities.

These poor outcomes partly reflect social biases. Expectations of the capabilities of people with disabilities tend to be low, so households are often unwilling to spend limited resources on educating and training family members with disabilities, and employers tend to be reluctant to hire them.

Since women and girls are more often underestimated than men and boys - nearly 90% of people worldwide hold fundamental biases against women - they are more likely to be left behind.

Though legal protections for people with disabilities are in place - Ghana ratified its Persons with Disability Act (Act 715) in 2012, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has been in force since 2008 - they have been insufficient to counteract entrenched biases.

A key reason may well be the lack of comprehensive data on disability-related issues, particularly in Africa. Such data is essential to design and implement more effective policies.

The first step toward addressing discrimination against persons (especially women) with disabilities is thus to ensure adequate collection of relevant information, especially labor-market data, not least by emphasizing more inclusive sampling. This would facilitate disability-disaggregated research and enable robust evidence-based policymaking.

Strengthening disability laws requires the use of sufficiently precise language - and implementation of supportive policies - to ensure that people can take advantage of the opportunities to which their right is guaranteed. For example, Ghana's Persons with Disability Act 715 guarantees persons with disabilities a free education, but fails to clarify until which level, let alone establish relevant supportive structures. The consequences of these failings are far-reaching: a comprehensive, high-quality education is vital to lift people with disabilities out of poverty, vulnerability, and exclusion.

So is access to quality employment. But here, too, laws in many countries - including Ghana - are lacking. Since the public sector can provide only so many jobs, governments must encourage private employers to ensure that (suitably qualified) persons with disabilities account for a certain share of their workers. Both "carrots" (like tax rebates) and "sticks" (repercussions for non-compliance) can be used. In Ghana, the Disability Common Fund - a social-protection program aimed at alleviating poverty among people with disabilities - should also be scaled up.

But economic empowerment is just the beginning. Women with disabilities in Ghana and elsewhere grapple with reduced access to health care and higher risks of sexual exploitation. Policymakers must therefore devise laws ensuring that all people have equal access to health care and other social services, including domestic-violence shelters.

All such efforts must recognize and account for the diverse challenges faced by people with different kinds of disabilities, as well as the reality that women face even greater discrimination than men. For example, while health-care access must be improved for all people with disabilities, special attention must be paid to the provision of sexual- and reproductive-health services - including breast-cancer screenings and family-planning services - for women with disabilities.

Furthermore, organizations working to protect persons with disabilities must design programs tailored for different groups. And relevant NGOs should promote participatory approaches to the development of interventions aimed at supporting vulnerable groups, including those with disabilities.

But all the policies and programs in the world cannot ensure full social and economic inclusion for people with disabilities. Campaigns are also needed to reduce the social stigma that contributes significantly to the marginalization faced by people with disabilities.

The fact is that disability is both a cause and a consequence of poverty. If the world is to have any hope of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals - especially eliminating poverty, achieving gender equality, and enhancing social and economic inclusion - the needs of people with disabilities must be fully considered.

This commentary is published in collaboration with the International Economic Association's Women in Leadership in Economics Initiative, which aims to enhance the role of women in economics through research, building partnerships, and amplifying voices.

OP-ED

By Gordon Brown

For Nigeria's Schools, Safety Must Come First

EDINBURGH - Last Thursday, more than 280 Nigerian students were kidnapped from their school in Kuriga, a town in the northern state of Kaduna - the second mass abduction of young Nigerians in the span of a week.

The international community must urgently act to secure the release of these children, some of whom are as young as eight years old. But equally important is creating safer schools for students throughout Nigeria's 36 states, so that all children can pursue an education without fear of abduction or violence.

The kidnapping in Kuriga was even larger than Boko Haram's infamous raid on a girls' secondary school in Chibok, a town in northeastern Borno State, in 2014.

The Islamic militants kidnapped 276 girls; a decade later, nearly 100 of them are still missing. Armed groups have targeted many schools in the intervening years, although not on the scale seen in the Kuriga attack, which took place only days after militants seized dozens of displaced people, reportedly including many young women and girls, in the Borno town of Gamboru Ngala.

The international community can and must help. First and foremost, the Nigerian government needs surveillance support to locate the abducted pupils. As the United Nations Special Envoy for Global Education, I am in contact with governments and urging them to help determine the students' whereabouts, with a view to their quick release.

But, more broadly, as terrorism continues to plague the region, and as the risk of kidnapping and violence climbs, more and more parents may decide to keep their sons or daughters at home. This is unacceptable. No child should have to fear going to school, and no parent should have to worry that their child may never return.

As my experience has shown, there are ways to ensure that students can continue to attend school safely. I have been involved in numerous initiatives around the world focused on improving school safety, not least in Nigeria after the Chibok kidnapping.

In response to the growing number of attacks, I visited the country on numerous occasions to advise successive presidents. Moreover, I worked with a coalition of Nigerian business leaders and the Global Business Coalition for Education to launch the Safe Schools Initiative at the World Economic Forum in May 2014.

It aimed to implement best practices, based on global standards, including school- and community-level actions and special provisions for schools in high-risk areas.

I believe that these same measures must be reintroduced, reinvigorated, and supercharged at the federal, state, and local levels in Nigeria.

Technical support and national and international funding must be increased and made widely available to ensure that schools receive significant security and safety upgrades. This will allow us to reassure Nigerian parents that schools can be safe places to learn.

Four broader initiatives, which together serve as a comprehensive blueprint for safe schools, should be implemented urgently.

For starters, the international community must engage Nigerian governors and intergovernmental forums to enhance intelligence sharing and security ties.

Second, state-by-state school-safety plans, including detailed proposals for building walls and fencing and introducing state-of-the-art telecommunications connections and security alarms that can be easily implemented, must be developed and presented publicly.

Third, investment in community outreach and engagement programs will be essential, as will close collaboration with community and religious leaders to explain how schools are being better protected, and how important it is for children to continue to attend.

Lastly, policymakers must empower local people to form school-based management committees and make their own decisions about how best to protect students and teachers according to local circumstances and needs.

Many Nigerian parents are currently facing a no-win situation: send a child to school and risk them being abducted, or keep a child out of school and risk them forgoing a better future.

That is why my message to these children - and their parents - is that if you make the effort to come to school, we will strive to ensure that your learning environment is more secure. Nigerians have suffered greatly from school interruptions caused by terrorist attacks and threats.

It is now time for the international community to show solidarity and support efforts to make schools safer. That is the only way to realize the promise of a high-quality education for all.

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OPINION

By Peter Singer

Does Religious Freedom Trump Animal Welfare?

MELBOURNE - Last month, the European Court of Human Rights decided a case, *The Executive Committee of Muslims of Belgium and Others v. Belgium*, that required balancing religious freedom and animal welfare.

The Belgian provinces of Flanders and Wallonia had passed laws requiring that all animals slaughtered for human consumption must be stunned before being killed. Muslim and Jewish communities sought to overturn the legislation, claiming that it violated their freedom to slaughter animals in the manner prescribed by their dietary laws.

Previous applications to the Belgian Constitutional Court and the Court of Justice of the European Union were unsuccessful, so the applicants turned to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), a court of the Council of Europe, to which all European countries, except Belarus and Russia, belong. All members of the Council of Europe must ratify the European Convention on Human Rights.

According to Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion ... and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice, and observance." This right is qualified, however, by a second clause: "Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others."

If animal welfare falls under any of these headings, "public morals" seems the most likely. The applicants argued, however, that the Convention's reference to the protection of "public morals" should be understood as aimed solely at protecting human dignity between individuals.

The ECHR had never previously heard a case requiring it to weigh the right to religious freedom against the welfare of animals, so it was not easy to predict how it would decide.

The ECHR's judgment, handed down on February 13, found that laws requiring prior stunning do restrict the applicants' religious freedom. It also found, however, that protecting the welfare of animals is part of the legitimate government objective of protecting public morals. The notion of "morality," the court said, is evolving, and what is held to be acceptable at one time may cease to be so later.

The ECHR's view is that it should give significant weight to decisions taken by legislatures, especially when they enact laws by large majorities - and in both provinces, the legislatures were almost unanimous in their support of the legislation in question.

The court also noted that the Belgian Constitutional Court and the Court of Justice of the European Union had both held, in their prior judgments upholding the legislation, that animal welfare, as an ethical value, is of increasing importance in contemporary democratic societies, and that this should be taken into account when assessing restrictions on how religious beliefs manifest themselves in actions affecting animal welfare.

The ECHR was not persuaded by the applicants' argument that the Convention limits "public morals" to the protection of human dignity. The court noted previous cases in which the court had paid attention to the protection of animal welfare and also to the environment. Accordingly, the ECHR held: "the Convention cannot be interpreted as promoting the absolute upholding of the rights and freedoms it enshrines without regard to animal suffering."

To judge that the laws were not an unreasonable restriction of freedom of religion, the court still needed to consider whether the restriction was proportionate to the objective.

It noted that the legislation was based on a "scientific consensus that prior stunning was the optimum means of reducing the animal's suffering at the time of slaughter." The legislatures, while requiring the use of that optimum method within their jurisdiction, had taken care to formulate their legislation in a manner that minimized the restriction of religious freedom and had not attempted to prohibit the sale of meat imported from outside the provinces, even if the animals were killed in ways prohibited within the provinces.

Here, the legislatures may have been too cautious. I doubt that it would be a violation of religious freedom to prohibit the sale of meat from animals whose throats are cut while they are fully conscious.

Jewish religious beliefs, as I understand them, do not require Jews to eat meat. So why is it a restriction of religious freedom to say: if this is what you believe, then don't eat meat. (I say this as someone who has not eaten meat for more than 50 years.)

The case is less clear for Muslims, because some Muslims believe that they are required to eat meat at the Eid ad-Adha, or Feast of Sacrifice.

If that claim is accepted, then legislatures could pass a law allowing meat from animals slaughtered without prior stunning to be sold during the week before the Eid. In that way, infringements of religious freedom would be kept to an absolute minimum, while the protection of animals, both within and beyond the jurisdiction of the legislature, would be maximized.

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ON 2ND THOUGHTS



with Othello B. Garblah

A tribute to my mother

They say life is a journey, and we are just strangers passing through. We may not be guaranteed a tomorrow, but we are promised to live a fulfilling life if we walk on the right path.

So, it was when the death news of my mother hit me on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, it pains my heart so hard. But she was just here for the Christmas Holidays, and none of us saw this coming.

Born Suetta Kpoyour, she would soon become a Bryant and, for the most part, affectionately called SB by her closest friends. Later, she will change to be called Suetta Davies. Yes, that is how she was known to be before her untimely death on March 12, 2024.

Ms. Davies was a true believer. She trusted God to the end. She was always willing to be there and stand up for the name of God. She never compromised her belief and could tell that men can tell you this, but God has the final say in all. Even on her dying bed, she refused to accept that she had cancer and that it had spread through her brain and the rest of her body.

Whenever I called to check on her during her last days, she would often tell me in her slurring voice, "Othello, don't worry, papa, God is healing me." It all started about 12 years ago when she was first diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer, a condition she refused to accept and never once mentioned by name. She always said, "The thing the people say I have, I don't have it."

However, two years later, she would go on to undergo the first painful process of Chemotherapy, a 20th-century form of treatment developed by Paul Ehrlich (1854-1915) based on the advice of family and friends.

Chemotherapy was not originally intended as a cancer treatment, but it has gone on to be one form of treatment that provides a 50-50 chance of life and death for the patient.

My mother survived the first treatment because she was healthy at the time and would go on to reach out to many. In San Antonio, Texas, where she lived for over 20 years, she helped many settle in by hosting them in her home. She was not discriminatory. Her desire to help cut across nationalities (Nigerians, Ghanaians, East Africans, Hispanics, etc.), and she enjoyed it.

On one occasion, I remember calling her San Antonio's unknown Ambassador because she wanted to lure friends and family to move to San Antonio. Whenever I called her from Africa and heard a stranger's voice in the home, I was never surprised.

She was such a sweet person who was willing to help with her last. I could not get over how far she was willing to go to help someone.

She would often call back home, sending me a list of people to help with specific amounts, and I would ask in return-rally. Did you give me money to keep? And she would tell family members, "Don't be afraid of him, just go to his house, he will give you the money you want." I could understand her, though, because she wanted me to reflect on her.

When family members turned on me, saying I was not relating to them, she always stood up to my defense: "You people can't blame him for not relating to you all because he never knew any of you while growing up."

During her last visit here in December, she made many requests for the kind of African food she wanted to eat, and when I bought the ingredients, she only prepared them for us.

When I asked why, you gave me such a hard time for something you won't eat. She will reply, "It's the same hard time you gave me."

I remember, while living in Ghana, on a Saturday, for example, she would bring out the dirty laundry on the porch to wash while at the same time preparing to bake. Only two of us were in the house. She would ask me to help out mix the flour and I would reply I am busy typing out a story, only because I didn't want to do it.

She would complete the washing and bake the cake. Upon completion, she would come running into my room, asking me to taste it. And before you know it, I would have eaten half of it. She would only stir at me and call me greedy and lazy while only hoping that I would end up marrying a very strong woman.

Her departure has left a void. She will surely be missed. She was a mother, a friend, a reconciler, and a counselor. Rest in Peace, Mama

DATE WITH THE NATION
WITH D. WAHNE, JR.

By D. Wa Hne, Jr.

PURSUE CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT- NOT MASS PROTESTS

The days and months ahead might be challenging for both the Government and the Opposition CDC, and by extension, the nation in whole. Unless both the Government and the Opposition begin to sit at the table to discuss how this nation should proceed, Liberia could stand still on April 6, 2024 and be dragged into prolonged crisis.

As protestors and government are engaging in bloody faceoff, there are more potential dissensions and possible outbreak of more bloody violence that may leave this nation wrecked if the CDC commits itself to its planned protest on April 6.

Both parties could avoid unfortunate occurrences by putting in place a constructive engagement policy that utilizes the Henry Kissinger's Dente strategy and the Mikhail Gorbachev's Perestroika and Glasnost methodologies.

Liberia's democracy is still fledgling, and there is no need to stretch it beyond its capacity to endure. Political parties are governments in waiting and must be interested in maintaining peace, stability, and promoting national unity and development, and not just the urge to obtain or maintain power.

Though the CDC endured six years of harsh criticisms and mass actions from rival parties during its reign, that should not lead to an adoption of a vicious cycle that may paralyze economic and social opportunities and lead Liberia into catastrophic events.

As the former ruling party, the CDC is in the best position to teach the lessons of what mass action (protest) does to the economy, and how the opposition actions led to hatred and almost pushed Liberia into another civil war. Thanks to former President George Weah for his endurance and his peaceful nature. But all presidents may not have the nature and abilities to respond to pressure and mass actions as former President Weah did.

It is therefore important that the Coalition set up a dialogue team to always sit with the Government to discuss national issues just as they were willing to sit with the opposition during their reign to discuss critical matters and find common grounds. The UP Government also needs to adopt a kind of "glasnost" policy (transparency, openness) and be willing to meet with the opposition at all times.

Liberia can model its democracy in a way that produces politics with a human face rather than politics with a demon face. The opposition can become more powerful and meaningful when they, unlike the opposition of the past, invest their time and energy debating policies, making recommendations, working with citizens groups to maintain peace and bring investments that will help provide job opportunities for Liberians and make its democratic commitment enviable.

The CDC has already experienced what the UP is experiencing now. It is easy to govern when you are not seated in authority. It is easy to criticize when you are an observer. Governance is complex. It is the convergence of many interests and dealing with them could be very challenging.

Some of CDC's major challenges were power brokering, accessibility problems amongst institutions and officials, and supremacy competitions which created inner circles and domineering attitudes that erected barricades between the President and other officials. President Boakai must seek to terminate these from his Government. But CDC strength was in its commitment to infrastructural development and protection of democratic rights at its own peril of existence.

Channels must be opened at all times to access different or critical thoughts without plans of persecution and prosecution. When the channels of communication are opened and citizens are accessible to the powers that be, there would be the free flow of views, the buy-in of citizens and acceptability of policies.

On the contrary, when government becomes so self-protective, self-righteous, and critical voices are violently silenced, conflicts will take the center stage and crisis will ensue. Guns and bloodshed can oppress views, but cannot unite a nation and develop a people.

The Cape Mount violence and that of the University of Liberia students protest have generated so much negativity politically and have damaged Liberia's democratic image. This is not a good success story.

We can succeed and achieve better results at the negotiation table rather than in violence and bloodletting. Through negotiations, we build our democracy credibly and demonstrate political maturity. Through bloodshed, we show ourselves as the intolerant people who almost wipe themselves from the face of the Earth.

The recent bloodshed in the Bea Mountain Concession Area and the University of Liberia is the result of democratic rights exercised through protest. But moving forward, we can avoid further bloodshed when we constructively engage than when we seek to make the nation ungovernable.

Protest is however a democratic right, but should be the last recourse when all dialogues and negotiations failed. Government must therefore be sensitive and swift at addressing problems that might lead to protest and bloodshed.

In the same vein, we must avoid a vengeful protest that only seeks to provoke and achieve a payback.

The CDC needs to help guide the democratic process and protect the peace by utilizing its strength in the Legislature and its six years of experience. April 6 might not be needful as it might end up as the Bea Mountain and UL Students protests.

We need to reform our political and democratic approaches. Mikhail Gorbachev called his, the Perestroika Movement and Glasnost. Richard Nixon called it Détente and Constructive Engagement to manage crisis in the world, but we can call it the New Agenda to safeguard our peace and democracy.

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Cllr. Gongloe blames ignorance for Liberia's corruption

Cllr. Tiawan Saye Gongloe has been troubled by a recent incident in which authorities impounded three unauthorized trucks loaded with rice and arrested several suspects linked to the exit of the consignment from the Freeport of Monrovia.

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monrovia, Liberia, March 18, 2024: Renowned Liberian human rights lawyer Cllr. Tiawan Saye Gongloe has squarely laid blame on ignorance as root cause for

Freeport of Monrovia. The National Port Authorities (NPA) on Monday, 11 March 2024, informed the public that it had arrested seven of its employees and had them charged for collusion and facilitation of the unauthorized exit from the

Joseph Nyumah Boakai's ARREST Agenda. NPA Corporate Communication Manager Malcolm W. Scott named the suspects charged as Robert Yeah, Shift Commander, Charles Weah, Deputy Commander, and Ezekiel Kollie, Duty Officer.

Other suspects charged are Zwannah Haines, Duty Officer; George Boakai, Gate Commander; Michael Johnson, Gate Drop Officer; and Abraham Z. Tulue, Recording Officer.

But in a brief remark over the weekend at a program in Monrovia, Cllr. Gongloe said he agreed with former President Williams R. Tolbert's description of Liberia's three major enemies as poverty, disease, and ignorance. According to the former Liberian People's Party (LPP) political leader, if Liberians can kill a president because of bad governance largely rooted in corruption, Liberians should have no reason to engage in corruption. "President Tolbert said Liberia's three enemies are poverty, ignorance and disease. But, he concluded by saying the worst is ignorance. Because Liberians are ignorant that's why they repeat the things ...," said Cllr. Gongloe.



Cllr. Tiawan Saye Gongloe

corruption and bad governance across Liberia. The former presidential candidate's statement was in response to a recent incident in which authorities impounded three unauthorized trucks loaded with rice and arrested several suspects linked to the exit of the consignment from the

port of three trucks loaded with rice. The trucks allegedly exited the Freeport of Monrovia through the Bravo gate at about 3:22 A.M. on 6 March 2024. At a jam-packed news conference held at its national headquarters on Bushrod Island, the NPA said it is leaving no stone unturned in implementing President

LTA headquarters project stalled

Construction for the proposed headquarters for the Liberian Telecommunications Authority is being stalled here for various reasons, ranging from a land dispute to a financial crisis, thus delaying the regulatory body's arrival at a permanent headquarters.

By: Emmanuel wise Jipoh

Margibi County, Liberia, March 18, 2024 - Approximately valued about four million United States Dollars (US\$4 Million) and situated on about seven (7) acres of land in Duazon, Margibi County, adjacent to the Edward Binyen Kesselly Barracks, along Robertsville Highway, construction works on the proposed headquarters of the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA) has stalled after being reportedly abandoned by the BMC Group Construction Company.

The project's abandonment has sparked outrage among the public, with calls for accountability against the LTA from the Unity Party-led government.

The NEW DAWN gathered that funds were available for completing the project during

being carried out by the LTA in partnership with BMC Group of Construction Companies.

This is happening while the LTA leadership is in court regarding tenure positions for its commissioners. The Authority is currently assisting the Boakai administration in an attempt by the President to replace tenured officials at the entity.

Duazon Community Town Chief Amos P. Richards, who spoke to the NEW DAWN, said the land occupied by the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA) and the Millennium Construction Company was given by the indigenous people of Duazon as far back as the Sirleaf administration for use by the military.

Chief Richard explained that the land was provided based on appeals from the Government of Liberia with an understanding to construct housing units for soldiers of the AFL. At the same time, part of the



Respect the people & be committed to their welfare

-Dr. Fahnbulleh advises President Boakai

Liberian diplomat, politician and statesman, Dr. Henry Boimah Fahnbulleh, Jr., advises President Joseph Nyuma Boakai to love and respect the people of Liberia, and be committed to their welfare, if he wants to succeed.

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monrovia, Liberia, March 18, 2024: Former National Security Advisor from the administration of Ex-President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Dr. Henry Boimah Fahnbulleh, Jr., is urging President Joseph Nyuma Boakai and his administration to love and respect the people of Liberia, and be committed to their welfare. Speaking in an interview with Journalists over the weekend following the celebration of his late mother, Ma. Mary Brownell's 95th birth anniversary, Dr. Fahnbulleh described these as attributes of a good leadership, management, and governance process.

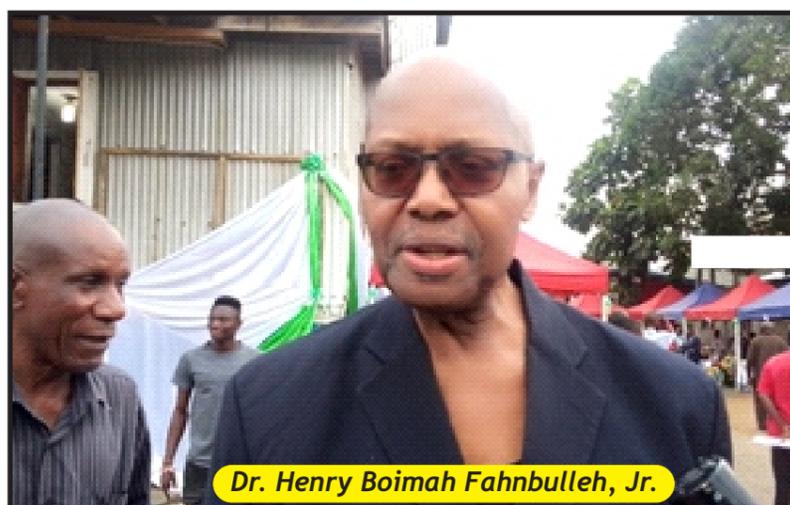
"What I have to advise President Boakai and his administration is to love the people, serve the people, respect the people, and be

committed to their welfare. That is the Hallmark of leadership", Dr. Fahnbulleh urged.

Born July 16, 1949, Dr. Henry Boimah Fahnbulleh, Jr., is a Liberian politician and diplomat. His last post was National Security Advisor to Ex-President Sirleaf. He also served as an advisor on international affairs for the same government.

Dr. Fahnbulleh also served as Minister of Education and Foreign Affairs, respectively, during the Samuel Doe military government from 1980 to 1983.

According to him, those were the leadership characteristics of his mother, the late Ma. Mary Brownell. Therefore, if President Boakai wants to succeed as his mom, the President should apply these principles in his leadership.



Dr. Henry Boimah Fahnbulleh, Jr.

the regime of former President Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

According to inside sources, work on the proposed LTA headquarters stalled because of a financing crisis engulfing the entity due to alleged misuse of funds allotted for the project.

Other sources attribute the abandonment of the project to an alleged clandestine deal the LTA Management entered into with the BMC Group of Construction Companies to construct an additional commercial housing rental facility on the land beside the proposed headquarters, something that has met sharp resistance from residents of Duazon community, which led to a riot and subsequent halting of the project. Residents of the community said they mainly provided the land to the Government of Liberia to construct housing units for soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and wasn't intended for private use or commercialization purposes, as

agreement was government's commitment to providing amenities for residents, including school, clinic, road, town hall, and hand pump, among others.

According to him, the agreement has since been defaulted, as they have now seen private construction companies occupy their land and make millions of dollars while the concerns and welfare of dwellers are thrown out the window. He said government has been paying deaf ears to their plights, which led community dwellers to rampage against the (LTA) and the privately-run Millennium Construction Company that are occupying premises.

Chief Richard maintained that they demand immediate compensation or a return of their land. The embattled Chairperson of the Liberia Telecommunications Authority, Mrs. Edwina Zackpah Crump, confirmed that construction for the proposed headquarters has stalled over a land dispute with residents of the Duazon Community.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

CECPAP ends peace dialogue in Zwedru

Center for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding, a Liberian group, has ended the peace and reconciliation dialogue in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County, following post-election violence in the county as a result of the death of an elected lawmaker.

Monrovia, Monday, March 17, 2024—A two-day reconciliation dialogue session organized by the Center for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding (CECPAP) has ended in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County, with participants resolved to work for peace and

participants drawn from the religious and disabled communities, women and youth groups, and representatives from parties involved in the recent violence that led to the destruction of properties, including the home of Senator Zoe Emmanuel Pennon, in Zwedru, Grand

Grand Cape Mount County.

During the two-day session held in Zwedru, participants deliberated on issues they see befitting the growth of their city and its people. According to the participants, one of the issues that is most important to them is for the dwellers of Zwedru City to reunite for the sole purpose of moving their city and county forward in all aspects of life. The representatives of the two opposing parties in the recent Zwedru violent act resolved to put the conflict behind them and reunite for their city's growth.

To enhance the reconciliation process in Zwedru, the two parties and other participants called on their Senator, Emmanuel Zoe Pennon, to intervene in the case by releasing from further detention their colleagues that were arrested by the Liberia National Police and later sent to incarceration by the court. The participants said Senator Pennon's intervention in releasing their colleagues from detention is very important as it will further speed up the reconciliation process, stressing that reconciliation taking place in Zwedru is paramount and can never be over-emphasized.



unity in their various places of work, worship centers, schools, and communities.

According to a dispatch from Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County, the reconciliation dialogue session was held under the theme: A Reconciled Society for Sustainable Growth. The dialogue session brought together 25

Gedeh County.

CECPAP's reconciliation dialogue session is expected to reach areas identified by the Peace Building Office (PBO) as hotspots during the 2023 presidential and legislative elections. The areas are Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County, Zuo-Zualay, Nimba County, Bellefani, Bong County, Foya, Lofa County, and Porkpa.

Finance Ministry submits 2024 draft budget, totaling US\$692 Million

The Boakai administration has submitted its first draft national budget for fiscal period 2024, totaling US\$692 million, to the House of Representatives of the 55th Legislature for scrutiny and subsequent enactment into law.

By Bridgett Milton

Monrovia, Liberia, March 17, 2024—Following much delay, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning has submitted the draft national budget for 2024 to the House of Representatives, amounting to Six Hundred and Ninety-two Million United States Dollars (US\$692M). Finance Minister Boimah Kamara and his three Deputies submitted the draft budget last week, marking a crucial step in the nation's fiscal planning and governance. It may be recalled that Bong County District #6 Representative Moima Briggs Mensah wrote the Plenary of the House of Representatives recently, raising a red flag over the delay of the draft budget without any formal communication from the Executive.

According to Rep. Mensah, the Minister of Finance and Development Planning needed to explain to that august body the reasons for the delay in submitting the 2024 National Fiscal Budget. "Speaker and Colleagues, resulting out of communication from the Co-Chair on Ways, Means and Finance Committee, Hon. Ellen Attoh Wreh, and in the spirit of coordination, the House of

Representatives unanimously voted to send back the 2024 national fiscal Budget to the Executive for proper adjustment and realignment in order to suit the President's 100-day deliverables and arrest platform for the collective achievement of our nation. Still, unfortunately, the ministry has ignored the Thursday, February 15th, 2024, mandatory date

associated with the budget submission as communicated to the Ministry of Finance Development and Planning by the House of Representatives", she wrote.

She said President Boakai's vision, "ARREST" (Agriculture, Roads, Rule of Law, Education, Sanitation, and Tourism), is the path for the country's development, and as such, its earlier implementation depends on the submission of the 2024 fiscal budget.



Finance Minister Boimah Kamara

Chamber Justice halts EPA's operation

-Professor Tarpeh demands 43 months' salary

The Supreme Court of Liberia has suspended all activities of the Environmental Protection Agency, pending hearing into a Writ of Prohibition filed by former EPA executive director, Professor Wilson K. Tarpeh, who is demanding 43 months' salary for uncompleted tenure.

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monrovia, Liberia, March 18, 2024—Chamber Justice Yussif Kaba has halted all functions of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) pending a final decision on a prohibition filed by former executive director Professor Wilson K. Tarpeh.

Recently, Chamber Justice Kaba held a conference with Prof. Tarpeh and Acting Executive Director Dr. Emmanuel Urey-Yarkpawolo concerning Tarpeh's writ of prohibition.

The halt in the EPA's functioning is based on a Writ of Prohibition against the Government of Liberia and Dr. Emmanuel K. Urey Yarkpawolo, the Acting Executive Director of the EPA, filed by Tarpeh.

The prohibition has halted all

President from a list of three names recommended by the Council, except that the President may appoint an interim Executive Director pending the formation of the Council; 2) The Executive Director shall serve for a period of 7 years and shall be eligible for reappointment, except that there shall be appointed an interim Executive Director"

However, legal experts say such a speedy appointment, Senate confirmation, and commissioning has never happened before in Liberian history. They also wonder how it was possible for him to go through Senate confirmation if the Act creating the EPA does not call for Senate confirmation of the Executive Director of the EPA but through recruitment by the Policy Council.

This paper has gathered that Prof. Tarpeh was never appointed from a list of 3 persons submitted by the Policy Council as mandated by the law creating the EPA.

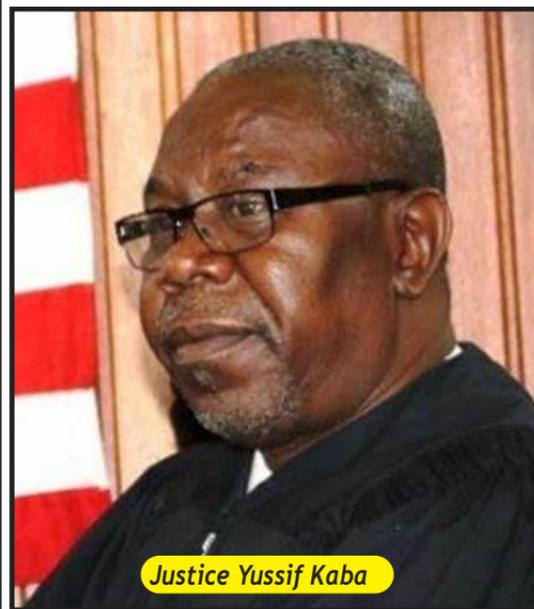
The Weah administration did not constitute the National Environmental Policy Council, which is responsible for recruiting the Executive Director.

Prof. Tarpeh admitted during his taking-over ceremony at the EPA that he has a financial background but not an environmental background, as mandated by the EPA law. This may have prevented him from encouraging the

formation of the Policy Council, knowing fully that he was not qualified and was unlikely to pass the Policy Council's scrutinizing check on environmental Backgrounds. Section 9 of Executive Order 123 by President Weah clearly states that "Non-tenured Presidential appointees shall be presumed to have resigned as of the date of inauguration. Accordingly, the most senior civil servant at all ministries, agencies commissions, and state-owned enterprises shall act as Office-in-Charge pending the appointment of their successors."

This was why, on January 23rd, 2024, the day after the inauguration, Mr. Benjamin Karmoh, supported by EPA workers, attempted to prevent Prof. Tarpeh from serving as Executive Director.

The EPA workers also wrote to President Boakai (a copy of which is in this paper), asking him to appoint a new Acting Executive Director pending the formation of the Policy Council.



Justice Yussif Kaba

EPA functions pending a return to the Honorable Supreme Court, presided over by His Honor, Associate Justice Yussif Kaba.

In his petition, a copy of which is in the possession of the NEW DAWN, Prof. Wilson Tarpeh argued that he has 43 months remaining in office and should, therefore, be paid for this period before his exit or before turning over to the new administration.

According to him, his argument is based on a commissioning certificate dated October 2, 2020, as his appointment letter date.

In quoting Part III, Section 16 of the EPA Act in count 4 of his petition, Prof. Tarpeh writes, "That the Act creating the EPA states in clear and unequivocal terms under section 16: 1) There shall be an Executive Director who is a person with wide environmental knowledge and recognized commitment to sustainable management of the environment, appointed by the

Français

Le ministre des Finances sortant menace de représailles les chefs de guerre

L'ancien ministre des Finances, David Farhat, défie les chefs de guerre et les Libériens opposés à la création d'un tribunal pour les crimes de guerre et les crimes économiques au Liberia, affirmant qu'ils n'ont pas le pouvoir d'empêcher la création d'un

de guerre et les crimes économiques au Liberia. Il a déclaré que le chef rebelle, le sénateur Prince Johnson, et d'autres chefs de guerre seraient décapités et leurs corps démembrés s'ils entreprenaient une quelconque action ignoble pour empêcher la création dudit tribunal.

Le sénateur Johnson, chef de

que cela pourrait conduire à la violence.

L'ancien chef de guerre devenu évangéliste, s'exprimant lors de son culte dominical habituel en janvier de cette année, a déclaré que les hommes qui se sont battus pour lui pendant la guerre civile libérienne dans les années 90 ne resteraient pas les bras croisés et ne le laisseraient pas être arrêté et traduit devant ce tribunal pour être jugé, bien que la Commission Vérité et Réconciliation du Liberia mentionne le sénateur Johnson comme l'un des acteurs qui ont commis des crimes odieux et des crimes contre l'humanité pendant la crise civile, et qui devrait donc être poursuivi.

"La guerre est finie ; nous avons besoin de développement ; quelle est votre contribution ? Vous pensez que les garçons qui ont combattu auparavant viendront vous permettre de venir nous chercher ?" a demandé l'ancien chef de guerre.

Mais, répondant à PYJ dans une interview accordée aux journalistes après la célébration du 95e anniversaire de la naissance de la défunte dirigeante Mary Brownell, M.

▶ CONT'D page 9

Éditorial

Les puissants redoutent le tribunal pour crimes de guerre et économiques

Le Liberia semble s'engager sur une voie où une poignée d'individus qui ont terrorisé la population entière avec des armes, semant le chaos et tuant des milliers de civils, y compris des femmes et des enfants, pensent toujours pouvoir prendre le pays en otage par la force des armes, face aux appels actuels à la création d'un tribunal pour crimes de guerre et économiques afin de les punir pour leurs actes.

Cette poignée de citoyens, principalement des chefs de guerre, dont certains siègent au parlement, pensent pouvoir échapper à la justice par le biais d'un tribunal et ont commencé à proférer des menaces de retour dans la brousse si un tel tribunal venait à être créé et s'ils étaient convoqués à comparaître.

Dans leur esprit, ils ne doivent aucune explication à la population pour le carnage qu'ils ont commis pendant la brutale guerre civile et devraient pouvoir continuer comme si de rien n'était, ou imposer leur volonté.

Mais il faut dire clairement aux généraux et chefs rebelles que le temps les a rattrapés, et que leurs jours sont comptés pour comparaître devant une cour pénale internationale afin de répondre des atrocités commises contre des citoyens innocents et pacifiques.

Ils semblent vivre dans une utopie, croyant qu'ils peuvent défier à la fois le peuple libérien et la communauté internationale pour échapper à la justice, alors que leurs victimes continuent de se lamenter dans la douleur et les larmes, la justice leur échappant. Non ! Il doit y avoir une limite, et nous pensons que le moment est venu.

Pour des raisons évidentes, les chefs des rebelles dissous de l'INPFL et du MODEL, les sénateurs Prince Yormie Johnson du comté de Nimba et Thomas Yaya Nimely du comté de Grand Gedeh, sont ceux qui battent le tambour de la guerre le plus fort, proférant des menaces et s'opposant à la création d'un tribunal pour crimes de guerre et économiques au Liberia parce qu'ils ont peur de leurs actes passés.

Les 98 personnes identifiées pour être poursuivies par le rapport final de la Commission Vérité et Réconciliation doivent savoir que le président Joseph Nyuma Boakai n'est pas l'auteur du rapport, mais qu'il fait preuve de leadership en mettant en œuvre ce que le rapport préconise : la nécessité de rendre des comptes, et non pas une chasse aux sorcières, comme le prétendent certains milieux.

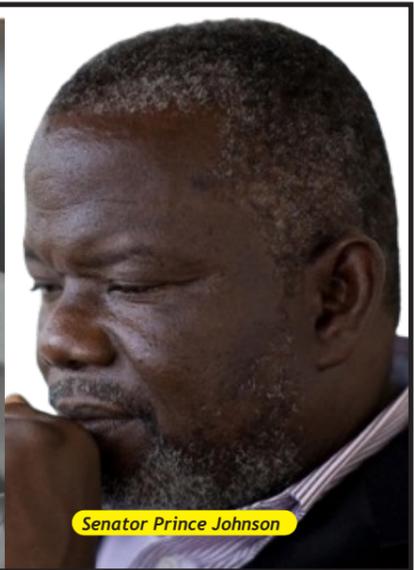
La marque d'un bon dirigeant est de se lever et de parler au nom de la majorité. Le président Boakai s'est lancé dans cette entreprise sans crainte face aux menaces de ceux qui se voient dans le miroir, affirmant qu'ils ne pourraient pas survivre au tribunal pour crimes de guerre car leurs actes sont accablants.

Les âmes de concitoyens assassinés de sang-froid à Kpolokpaila dans le comté de Bong, à la rivière Mahed dans le comté de Grand Cape Mount, à Voinjama, dans le comté de Lofa, dans les comtés de Grand Bassa et de Sinoe, et dans d'autres régions du Liberia, continuent de pleurer justice. Non seulement le Liberia, mais le monde entier entend leurs cris chaque jour, tandis que ceux qui les ont tourmentés à mort par des exécutions sommaires et des massacres vivent confortablement dans l'impunité sans aucun remords pour leurs actes.

Une chose est sûre. Cependant, ils ne sont pas majoritaires, et leurs menaces vides ne peuvent effrayer la communauté internationale qui est résolue à rendre justice aux Libériens et à mettre fin à l'impunité.



Former Minister of Finance David M. Farhat



Senator Prince Johnson

tel tribunal chargé de rendre la justice et de mettre fin à l'impunité.

L'ancien ministre des Finances, David M. Farhat, s'en prend à ceux qui s'opposent à la création d'un tribunal pour les crimes

de l'ancien groupe rebelle INPFL, a vivement averti l'administration du président Joseph Boakai d'abandonner son projet de création du tribunal tant attendu pour les crimes de guerre et les crimes économiques, menaçant

Le Liberia s'apprête à criminaliser les mutilations génitales féminines (MGF)

Une décision importante a été prise au Liberia pour mettre fin aux mutilations génitales féminines (MGF). Une députée a annoncé que ce pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest, peuplé de 5 millions d'habitants, s'apprête à criminaliser la pratique des MGF.

Dans une démarche significative vers la protection des droits et du bien-être des femmes et des filles, Moima Briggs Mensah, députée de la circonscription électorale n° 6 du comté de Bong, annonce ici que le Liberia est sur le point d'adopter une loi criminalisant les mutilations génitales féminines (MGF).

Cette annonce intervient après de longs efforts de plaidoyer et de sensibilisation, mettant en lumière les effets néfastes des MGF sur la santé physique et mentale des femmes et des filles.

Lors d'un atelier consultatif régional de deux jours sur le rôle des leaders traditionnels, culturels et religieux dans la lutte contre la violence sexiste (VSG) qui

s'est tenu le lundi 11 mars 2024 à Monrovia, la députée Mensah a souligné l'engagement de la 55e législature à mettre fin à cette pratique, tout en soulignant que le soutien des chefs traditionnels était crucial à cet égard.

Selon la députée, il est nécessaire que les chefs traditionnels, y compris le chef Zanzan Kwar, la reine de la culture Judy Andy et tous les autres Zoes du pays, fournissent à la législature un document de pétition exprimant leur accord pour criminaliser cette pratique.

Elle exhorte ses collègues à

inclure dans la pétition des dispositions relatives au financement budgétaire visant à aider les Zoes à obtenir la formation nécessaire pour abandonner leurs pratiques néfastes.

Actuellement, 31,8 % des femmes et des filles libériennes vivent avec les conséquences de cette pratique néfaste, et beaucoup d'autres sont à risque. Ces femmes et ces filles n'ont guère le choix en la matière, et les mutilations forcées sont

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Rep. Moima Briggs Mensah



Français

Starts from page 8 **Le ministre des Finances**

Farhat a déclaré que les anciens soldats ou combattants ne sont pas stupides au point de recommencer des actions insensées dans le pays.

“Laissez-moi vous dire quelque chose ; il peut y avoir d’anciens soldats, ils ne sont pas stupides pour faire quoi que ce soit, vous comprenez. Ils ne sont pas stupides. S’ils font quoi que ce soit, on leur coupera la tête et on leur découpera le corps en morceaux. Ils devraient arrêter ces bêtises sur la guerre et les anciens soldats dans la brousse. Ils ont peur maintenant et c’est pour ça qu’ils courent”, a souligné l’ancien ministre.

M. Farhat, qui a servi sous l’administration du président assassiné Samuel Doe, estime que le Liberia doit créer ce tribunal car il servira d’exemple et de norme pour la jeune génération, car le pays compte un grand nombre de jeunes.

Il affirme que les anciens soldats ont du bon sens et c’est pourquoi ils s’enfuient, ils

n’ont donc pas les moyens de faire la guerre ou d’empêcher la création du tribunal pour les crimes de guerre et les crimes économiques au Liberia.

M. Farhat a ajouté : “Sauf si le gouvernement n’est pas fort. Sauf si le gouvernement est stupide face à ce que le Prince Johnson a dit qui allait se passer. Le tribunal n’apportera pas de division, mais plutôt l’unité. Vous avez tué mon peuple, ce n’est pas la division, mais la justice est la division.”

Il insiste pour que le tribunal soit créé car c’est ce que lui et de nombreux Libériens attendent depuis longtemps, afin que les chefs de guerre puissent répondre de leurs actes.

“Vous pensez que ce que ces gens ont fait dans ce pays était quelque chose de facile et de petit ? Certains d’entre nous en souffrent encore ; c’est pourquoi nous travaillons toujours dur parce qu’ils ont tout détruit de ce que j’avais. Avec ce pays, c’est une occasion pour les gens d’être libres et pour ceux qui ont été reconnus coupables de répondre devant la justice.”

Starts from page 8 **Le Liberia s’apprête**

courantes.

Cependant, la députée du district 6 a révélé qu’un projet de loi se trouvait actuellement en salle de commission à la Chambre en attendant son adoption, mais a fait remarquer que l’absence d’un document de pétition des chefs traditionnels exprimant leur

consentement à l’adoption de la loi et à l’allocation de fonds pour la formation est le seul obstacle à son adoption.

Bien que le Liberia reste l’un des trois pays d’Afrique de l’Ouest à ne pas avoir de loi criminalisant les MGF, alors qu’il a signé et ratifié des instruments régionaux et internationaux de

Proposition d’évaluation de la sécurité par la CEDEAO et l’ONU au Liberia



Madame Olubanke King-Akerele, ancienne ministre libérienne des Affaires étrangères, a proposé que la CEDEAO et l’ONU évaluent la situation sécuritaire du Liberia, qu’elle considère comme une menace pour le pays et la sous-région.

L’ancienne ministre libérienne des Affaires étrangères, l’ambassadrice Olubanke King-Akerele, a proposé que le président Joseph Nyumah Boakai demande une évaluation externe de la sécurité du Liberia en raison des menaces qui pèsent sur le pays et la région.

Elle souhaite que la Communauté économique des États de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (CEDEAO) et la Mission des Nations Unies en Côte d’Ivoire (ONUCI) entreprennent cette évaluation et analyse de la sécurité du Liberia.

L’ambassadrice King-Akerele a proposé l’évaluation de la sécurité lors du 95e anniversaire de la naissance de feu Madame Mary Brownell, le mardi 12 mars 2024 à Central Monrovia.

“Étant donné la menace sécuritaire dans la sous-région et celle qui pèse également sur notre nation et nos voisins, et compte tenu de l’impératif entourant le Liberia, nous croyons fermement et exhortons la nouvelle administration du président Joseph Nyumah Boakai à envisager sérieusement et à demander à la Mission des Nations Unies en Côte d’Ivoire et à la CEDEAO de venir effectuer une évaluation et une analyse de la sécurité du Liberia”, a exhorté Mme King-Akerele.

Selon elle, il y a tout simplement trop de discours de haine, de violence et de haine dans tout le pays, ce qu’elle a qualifié de provocateur et inacceptable. Elle estime que ces facteurs ont le potentiel de ramener le pays sur une voie qu’il ne veut pas emprunter.

“Tous les partis, en particulier l’opposition, doivent en être conscients. Nous les exhortons à garder à l’esprit le respect et la reconnaissance que le monde et l’Afrique accordent à l’ancien président George M. Weah pour la façon dont il a reconnu la victoire du président Boakai”, a-t-elle souligné.

Elle a également exhorté l’ancien président Weah à ne pas

perdre le respect accordé à lui et au Liberia. Elle a déclaré que le parti de l’ancien président Weah, le Coalition pour le Changement Démocratique (CDC), promeut des messages de haine et se livre à la provocation.

“Nous l’exhortons à parler. Je suis allée en Ouganda et au Rwanda trois fois pour les Nations Unies et je sais donc de quoi je parle. Nous ne pouvons pas nous permettre des discours de haine et des messages provocateurs qui détruiraient à nouveau notre pays”, a-t-elle conclu.

Mardi, des dizaines de citoyens, en particulier des descendants congolais ou américano-libériens, se sont réunis à la résidence de feu Madame Mary Brownell pour célébrer le 95e anniversaire de sa naissance. Ce rassemblement a réuni d’éminents hommes et femmes d’État d’hier et d’aujourd’hui, dont Dr. Togba Nah Tipoteh, Cllr. Tiawan Saye Gongloe, Dr. H. Boimah Fahnbulleh, Auntie Mitta Fahnbulleh et Dr. Emmanuel Urey-Yarkpawolo, entre autres.

Ils se sont réunis pour réfléchir au rôle de Madame Brownell dans la promotion et la pérennisation de la paix, de la démocratie et de la sécurité. À cette occasion, plus de douze personnes ont reçu la médaille de la juge Emma Shannon Walsler pour la bonne gouvernance, l’État de droit et le patriotisme, en reconnaissance de leurs services précieux à l’humanité, à la société et au pays.

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COMMENTARY

By: Austin S. Fallah:
A Progressive Nationalist
and Student of Public Policy:

Reestablishing Democratic Tenets:

The Case for the Direct Election of City Mayors in Liberia

Democracy is a form of government renowned for its respect for every individual's voice.

It places power in the collective hands of the citizens and encourages active participation from all quarters of society.

Broadly epitomized by the legislature and presidencies, the democratic government structure is emblematic of ideals that fortify the popular will of the people.

Liberia, like many other nations that pride themselves on democratic values, has evolved with this principle at the core of its system.

However, it is about time we go back to the fundamental tenets of democracy when addressing our City Mayor selection process.

Alongside the Presidency and the Legislature, City Mayors play a critically influential role in Liberia's administrative landscape.

Nevertheless, the current method of their selection, which leans heavily on political appointments, is somewhat incongruous with the democratic ideals we so dearly uphold.

To further democratize our system, the election of City Mayors should no longer be a political appointment.

Instead, it must be a decision derived from the collective and direct participation of the very people in whose interests City Mayors operate.

One might argue that political appointments ensure governance by capable individuals who possess the required expertise.

However, these appointments often fail to fulfill the popular will of the citizens, as they lack the citizens' collective endorsement and don't necessarily reflect their preferences.

Allowing the Liberian people to directly elect their City Mayors, reinforces the essence of Liberia's democracy.

Liberians give the power not just to those appointed by politicians, but to the very people who live, work, and dream within these cities.

My opinion is anchored in the belief that the visions, popularity, and capabilities of prospective City Mayors must be tested

with similar rigor as those of our Legislators, President, and Vice President.

This entails an electoral process involving the masses, whose lives and livelihoods these City Mayors have the pledge to uplift.

The Mayors' allegiance needs to be primarily towards the citizenry they serve, not the political machinery, and direct elections serve as a promising mechanism to ensure this.

Moreover, direct elections can serve as a pathway toward city modernization.

City Mayors play a critical role in the development and modernization of cities.

Through their leadership, they have the potential to catalyze significant strides in urban infrastructure, digital inclusion, public amenities, and numerous other areas that directly impact the citizens' quality of life.

However, for such changes to occur, Liberia's City Mayors need to be fully embedded within the local context, understand its challenges, address its concerns, and visualize its potential.

A City Mayor chosen by the citizens from among themselves inherently has a better comprehension of the city's pulse and, as such, becomes a more effective agent for modernization.

Liberia's democratic foundation can be bolstered by advocating for the direct election of City Mayors.

It is not merely a question of decentralizing authority but rather empowering the citizens through their solidified participation in governance.

It emphasizes that the essence of democracy lies in the trust and voice of the populace, which should ultimately chart their nation's trajectory.

It is time the nation Liberia goes back to the fundamental tenets of democracy, wrests the power from the political elite, and hands it over to the deserving citizens in electing their City Mayors, thus embedding the true principles of democracy within Liberia's administrative structure.

Let the potential candidates be tested by the masses, it is by their will that people shall uplift the modernization of Liberian cities.

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ARTICLE

ARTICLE

The decade of healthy ageing – responsibilities and prospects for the Africa we want

Angeline Marokoane

While Africa is a continent with a rapidly growing population of young people, it is crucial for the region to pay attention to the global agenda on ageing.

The United Nations declared the years 2021 to 2030 as the "Decade of Healthy Ageing". This global collaboration, aligned with the last 10 years of the Sustainable Development Goals, seeks to improve the lives of older people, their families and the communities in which they live.

"With increased longevity in Africa, it is imperative to focus on research, policy and infrastructure development to properly support and care for current and future cohorts of older people and their families. There will be a huge increase in the absolute number of older persons on the continent."

This is according to Prof Jaco Hoffman, an expert on ageing in Africa and professor of Socio-Gerontology at the NWU's Optentia research unit. He is also a professorial fellow at the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing at the University of Oxford.

"The number of older people aged 60 and above in Africa is projected to nearly triple by 2050, from 74 million in 2020 to 235 million, making Africa the third-largest grouping of older persons globally after Asia and Europe," says Prof Hoffman. He says in South Africa alone, the current population of 6 million older individuals is estimated to double to around 12 million, exceeding the entire population of some European countries like Denmark.

Research, appropriate policy and investments in infrastructure for the elderly will be crucial in preparing for the needs of a growing ageing population.

Research for better understanding

Africa must invest in research that delves into the social and healthcare needs of its ageing populations, says Prof Hoffman. This continent must bridge the knowledge gap by conducting studies on the social determinants of health and subsequently put relevant long-term care systems in place. It must concurrently also capitalise on the potential and contributions of this group.

"The field should prioritise translational research by integrating evidence, advocacy, policy and practice. Research should be guided by local contexts, and emerging researchers ought to concentrate on mainstreaming African research on ageing," he says.

Policy implementation for inclusive ageing

The development and implementation of comprehensive policies are necessary to address the needs of the ageing population. To this end, the NWU was extensively involved in the development of the Policy on Ageing of the African Union (AU), approved by all member states in 2022.

Although governments across Africa are increasingly putting policies and initiatives in place to cater for the needs of older people as they become more aware of the significance of healthy ageing, Prof Hoffman asserts that greater effort is required to implement the AU Policy on Ageing and the Protocol on Human Rights for Older Persons in the contexts of (South) Africa.

Infrastructure and investment to support ageing communities

Adequate infrastructural planning and investments are crucial for a society to support its ageing population. This includes accessible healthcare facilities, age-friendly housing and transportation systems, and user-friendly public spaces. For South Africa in particular, Prof Hoffman emphasises the importance of a long-term care system focusing on community support, and the development of a long-term care economy where carers are valorised.

Positive outlook on ageing and intergenerational learning at the NWU

Prof Hoffman underscores the importance of the NWU establishing itself as a reference point for research on ageing in Africa and as a centre for intergenerational learning, and fostering a positive approach to ageing across the entire life course.

By investing in healthcare, social support and age-friendly environments, Africa might harness the wisdom and experience of older Africans, who can contribute to shaping the continent's future towards the Africa we want for all ages.

To this end, the NWU, in partnership with the International Federation of Ageing, will host the 17th Global IFA Conference on Ageing in Cape Town from 9 to 12 September 2025.

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CDC to resist assets recovery team

With several of its top officials placed on U.S. sanctions for acts of corruption and human rights abuses, Liberia's former ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) feels threatened by assets recovery efforts initiated by President Joseph Nyumah Boakai.

By Lewis S. Teh

Monrovia, Liberia, March 18, 2024: President Joseph Nyumah Boakai's newly established Asset Recovery Team has put officials of the

During its administration, the CDC, led by former President George Manneh Weah, refused to correct the alleged wrongs that it claimed existed during the 12-year rule of its predecessor, Madam

CDCians, thereby urging it to desist from witch-hunting his partisans.

"If you think you can harm our people you end up becoming the collateral damage," he said.



Jefferson Kojee

former ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) in panic, with some loosely suggesting non-cooperation.

One of the CDC's ring leaders in a purported plot to resist asset recovery efforts is Jefferson Kojee, the immediate past mayor of Monrovia during the CDC's six-year rule.

Kojee has been leading the campaign to resist actions he termed inappropriate and illegal against former government officials.

"We like to inform Mr. Boakai that no member of the CDC will subject themselves to that so-called asset recovery task force," he said over the weekend.

Mr. Kojee, the CDC's National Secretary General, believes that any attempt to probe alleged acts of corruption committed in the CDC administration is a witch hunt.

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.

While the CDC installed its new party chairman, Mr. Janga Kowo, on Friday, 15 March 2024, in Oldest Congo, Kojee used the occasion to announce the CDC officials' plan does not avail themselves to the asset recovery team.

"What you term as an asset recovery is total nonsense because those you line up to do that job have fallen short of everything," he lamented.

Kojee said President Boakai and his government must focus on the task given to them. He did not say how asset recovery does not include the government's task but insisted that past CDC officials should not be deterred by asset recovery. He further told CDCians working in the Boakai-led administration to have no fear because the government is not Boakai's agency.

He alleged that the new government is witch-hunting

"Government is not Mr. Boakai's enterprise, and as such, none of you, his officials, should dare try to go after our people," he continued.

"Don't push us. We have what it takes to make you feel uncomfortable. Any attempt to deny President Weah's request to provide him security we ourselves will protect him," Kojee noted.

While the CDC insists that it will not submit to the asset recovery team, it said it was extolling the government through the Legislature for passing a resolution to establish a War and Economic Crimes Court. Meanwhile, the CDC appointed Janga Augustus Kowo as the new party chairman following Mr. Mulbah Morlu's recent resignation.

Kowo's leadership role within the party signifies a new chapter in the CDC's ongoing efforts to strengthen its structure.

Liberians' jobs at stake

Thousands of Liberians working in the rubber sector will face redundancy if Executive Order #124, which bans the exportation of unprocessed rubber, is lifted, LAC fears.

Monrovia, Monday, March 18, 2024- Thousands of Liberians working in the rubber sector find their jobs at stake amidst repeated calls for lifting Executive Order # 124, which bans the exportation of unprocessed rubber out of the country.

A rough estimate of Liberians currently employed by the six rubber processing companies operating here, including Cavalla, Firestone Liberia (FSLB), Liberia Agriculture Company (LAC), Jeety Rubber, and Lee Group, is 20,000. Firestone has the largest number of employees, followed by LAC.

In separate meetings held last week with the Joint Legislative Committee on Agriculture and government officials, including Liberia's new Justice Minister and Attorney General Oswald Tweh and Commercial Minister Amin Modad, the Liberia Agriculture

will be commissioned at the end of 2025. When commissioned, the factory will process most of the latex within its concession area. Therefore, it would need to source additional cup-lump volumes from smallholder farmers to maintain its current TSR factory capacity.

These companies are currently shipping millions of metric tons of processed rubber annually and rely partly on cup-lump purchases from smallholder farmers.

These projections could decrease should the ban be lifted. The Lee Group and Jeety Rubber could close shop since their productions rely entirely on purchasing raw latex from small farmers. The Jeety Rubber Factory LLC's current export projection is 75,000 metric tons of processed rubber per year.

LACA further fears that lifting the current moratorium could promote theft and supply of farmers' cup lumps to brokers and/or exporters who do not comply with international standards on traceability, labor rights, and deforestation.

"To supply sufficient volumes of



Companies Association (LACA) comprising the six rubber processing companies and the Rubber Planters Association of Liberia expressed fears that the lifting of Executive Order #124 could discourage existing processors from expanding their factories and new ones from investing in Liberia.

LACA noted that such action would increase the cost of production (\$/lb), causing some processors to reconsider whether to close their operations. This, in turn, would lead to redundancies, lower tax revenue, and a decrease in GDP.

For example, the two biggest Technically Specified Rubber (TSR) companies, Firestone Liberia and LAC, purchase approximately 60 percent and 30 percent of their rubber from smallholder farmers. These operations support the indirect employment of thousands of farm workers and transporters.

Firestone is constructing a second factory to produce Ribbed Smoked Sheet (RSS) that

cuplumps and latex to fulfill the processors' factory capacity requirements, Executive Order #124 must be maintained. All the processors purchase and process rubber from Liberian farmers, providing a steady source of income to the farmers, their workers, and their transporters and contributing to Liberia's economic development," LACA said.

Moreover, in their meetings in the Senate Joint Committee and earlier with Justice Minister Tweh and Commerce Minister Modad, LACA explained that maintaining Executive Order #124 would generate more employment at all levels across the Liberian rubber industry supply chain, add value, and increase government revenue.

Wilson Tarpeh demands 43 months salary

Start from back page responsible for recruiting the Executive Director.

Many here are wondering how Prof. Tarpeh can make claim that he must serve a seven-year-tenure.

During his taking over ceremony at the EPA, Prof. Tarpeh admitted that he has finance background and does not have environmental background as mandated by the EPA law.

This may have prevented him from encouraging the formation of the Policy Council, knowing fully that he was not qualified and was unlikely to pass the environmental backgrounds check of the Policy Council.

Section 9 of the Executive Order 123 by President Weah clearly states that "Non-tenured Presidential appointees shall be presumed to have resigned as of the date of inauguration."

Mr. Weah turned over power on 22 January 2024, but Tarpeh continued to serve as EPA boss.

Following Weah's exit, most Senior Civil Servant at all ministries, agencies and commissions and state-owned enterprises, we mandated to act as Office-in-Charge pending the appointment of new heads of those institutions.

This may have led Mr. Benjamin Karmoh, supported by EPA workers, to attempt to prevent Prof. Tarpeh from

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Wilson Tarpeh demands 43 months salary

Due to the absence of a Policy Council, President Joseph Nyumah Boakai appointed Dr. Emmanuel K. Urey Yarkpawolo on 15 February 2024 as Acting Director of the EPA in fulfillment of Section 16 of the EPA Act.

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monrovia, Liberia, 18 March 2024: Former Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Acting Executive Director Prof. Wilson K. Tarpeh is demanding

EPA pending final decision concerning the case. Recently, Justice Kaba had a conference with Prof. Tarpeh and his successor Dr. Emmanuel Urey-Yarkpawolo, EPA's new Acting Executive Director.

environmental knowledge and recognized comment to sustainable management of the environment.

Prof. Tarpeh noted that the Act requires the Executive Director shall be appointed by the President from a list of three names recommended by the Council.

He said the exception is that the President may appoint an interim Executive Director pending the formation of the Council.

He added that the Act provides that the Executive Director shall serve for a period of 7 years and shall be eligible for reappointment, except that there shall be appointed an interim Executive Director.

This paper has gathered that Prof. Tarpeh was never appointed from a list of 3 persons submitted by the Policy Council as mandated by the law creating the EPA.

The Weah administration under which Tarpeh was appointed did not constitute the National Environmental Policy Council that is



Prof. Wilson K. Tarpeh

payment of salaries for 43 months which he believes he should have served before the appointment of a new EPA boss.

Tarpeh had petitioned the court for a writ of prohibition after President Boakai appointed Dr. Yarkpawolo.

In his petition, Tarpeh said the Act creating the EPA states in Section 16 that there shall be an Executive Director who is a person with wide

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