



CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA **MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES**

LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR DATE **BUYING SELLING** WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2024 L\$189.3372/US\$1.00 L\$190.9301/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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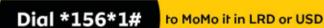


As anti-Koffa lawmakers summon 3 agencies

EG DOSS ussie over usty Chairperson Davidetta Browne-Lassanah

-Amid claims and counter

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Continental News

Equatorial Guinea VP warns against office sex after viral videos Nigeria drops treason charges against children after outcry The Nigerian turned violent in some places

ivil servants caught Facebook page, Mr Engonga has image of the country". having sex in their ◆offices will face "severe measures", the vicepresident of Equatorial Guinea has warned after hundreds of allegedly pornographic videos

posted that he is feeling sad, along with a photo of him with a woman and children captioned: "Family is everything".

Vice-President Teodoro leaked after Mr Engonga was Obiang Mangue said any officials

It added that he had recommended opening an investigation. The videos in question were

arrested on separate

corruption charges, state television TVGE said. Last week, Vice-President Obiang said "pornographic videos" had been "flooding" social media and ordered telecoms companies to curb

Since then, the flow of internet traffic - particularly the downloading of images has been severely disrupted in the country, people in Equatorial Guinea told the AFP news agency.

the spread.

As head of the National Financial Investigation Agency, Mr Engonga works on tackling financial crimes such as money laundering.

Following the furore over the videos, Equatorial Guinea's chief prosecutor Anatolio Nzang Nguema told state TV that if Mr Engonga was found to have been "infected with a sexually transmitted disease" he would be prosecuted for an offence against "public health".

He is reportedly nicknamed "Bello" - Spanish for beautiful on account of his good looks.BBC



were leaked to the public. The videos reportedly involve highranking civil servant Baltasar Ebang Engonga having sex with various women - including the wives of prominent officials in his office.

Mr Engonga is head of the country's National Financial Investigation Agency and also a relative of the country's president. The BBC has asked him for comment.On his

found engaging in sex acts at work would be suspended as this was a "flagrant violation of the code of conduct".

He has also ordered the installation of surveillance cameras in courts and ministries to combat "indecent and illicit acts". A statement from the vicepresident's office said the decision had been taken in the wake of the widely circulated videos which had "denigrated the

authorities have dropped treason and other charges against dozens of protesters, including more than 30 children, who were arrested in August after taking part in anti-government demonstrations.

President Bola Tinubu had already called for the release of all the minors - some as young as 14 - after footage of four of them collapsing in court on Friday, apparently due to malnourishment, sparked outrage. He also said the police and other officials involved in the arrests and subsequent legal processes should be investigated.

The viral videos of the young people writhing in pain led to a renewed debate over their treatment, as well as the length of their detention. Initial reports had talked of 27 young people

'he Nigerian turned violent in some places when protesters clashed with security forces.

Police say seven people died though rights groups put the death toll at 23. Nearly 700 people were arrested.

Some of those in court in the capital, Abuja, on Friday were accused of flying Russian flags and planning to overthrow the Nigerian government.

In a statement on Monday, President Tinubu's spokesman Bayo Onanuga said the Nigerian humanitarian affairs ministry had been asked "to ensure the safe return of all the minors to their families while an investigation has been opened into the circumstances leading to their prolonged detention".

When the courtroom footage emerged, Nigerian rights organisation Enough is Enough said they had been subjected to "institutional child abuse".

Amnesty International described the children's detention



Killers of Ugandan Olympian sentenced to 35 years court in Kenyan has premeditated act. The exact international runner and the

sentenced two men to 35 years each for the murder of Ugandan athlete Benjamin Kiplagat at the end of last year. The Olympic steeplechaser was stabbed to death on New Year's Eve in the town of Eldoret, known as a top training centre for athletes.

"Your actions were cruel to a defenceless person whose life you cut short," Justice Reuben Nyakundi told Peter Ushuru Khalumi and David Ekai Lokere during the sentencing hearing in the High Court in Eldoret.

Kiplagat's murder shocked people in Kenya, which has seen the killing of a number of other elite athletes in recent years. The judge said that Khalumi and Lokere had followed Kiplagat, who was in his car, and then CCTV footage showed that they had

intentionally killed him in a

motive for the murder was not clear but at the time of the arrests the police had said it was robbery. On Monday, in an emotional request to the court, the athlete's mother had asked Justice Nyakundi to hand down life sentences. She talked about how her son, who started his career running barefoot, had worked hard to become an

family's breadwinner, the Nation newspaper reports."My son had 8,000 [Kenyan] shillings (\$62; £48) and an expensive mobile phone, but the killers did not take any of the property from him. Their mission was to painfully finish him," the newspaper quotes her as saying.BBC

Benjamin Kiplagat competed at the 2016 Rio Olympics, as well as in London and Beijing

including more between the so far. ages of 14 and 17, have emerged since.

custody for nearly three months after participating in the #EndBadGovernance deepening cost-of-living crisis.The demonstrations

being affected, but details of was "one of the deadliest attempts another set of detainees, to suppress freedom of assembly"

Observers say the move to drop the charges and release the The suspects had been in children was a face-saving measure and that the government would have avoided the embarrassment if it had not protests which swept the engaged in a high-handed country in August over a approach against protesters demanding better governance.BBC

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Let discretion prevail at the Capitol

It's been a month since members of the House of Representatives broke into Anti-Speaker Fonati Koffa and Pro-Speaker Fonati Koffa groups, with the former opting for the removal of the Speaker. Styled as "majority bloc lawmakers," the rebel lawmakers, among others, accused Speaker Koffa of engaging in a conflict of interest. They expressed vote of no confidence in the Speaker.

But ever since they announced the coup while Speaker Koffa was out of Liberia, traveling with President Joseph Boakai to Rome, Italy, the rebels have failed to attain a two-thirds majority or 49 of their colleagues from the 73-member House as a quorum to vote Speaker Koffa out.

On the other hand, embattled Speaker Koffa, with just 30 supporters rallying behind him, including Deputy Speaker Thomas Fallah, has been unable to conduct business because of a lack of guorum. He has extended an olive branch to his colleagues on the other side to come and join him, where they will have an opportunity to put forth their grievances for redress, but this offer seems to have landed on deaf ears.

But both sides are digging in, maintaining their separate positions, with neither side willing to give in, not even the Speaker, who is hanging on to legitimacy. However, he cannot pull a quorum to preside over the session.

Report from the Capitol Building says 42 Rebel lawmakers appeared for session on Tuesday, October 29, 2024, in the Joint Chamber in defiance of a prohibition by Supreme Court of Liberia Justice-In-Chamber His Honor, Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay, Sr., to halt all activities pending a conference with the entire

Amid the impasse, the Liberian people's business is being held hostage, with neither side being able to obtain a quorum to hold a session. No one knows how long this will drag on indefinitely| while activities in the House are paralyzed.

It is even embarrassing to hear that rebel lawmakers allegedly received US\$15 000 each to oust Speaker Koffa, promising to collect a balance of US\$10,000 each after the job is done. Who is financing the plot against the Speaker is the sixty-one million dollar question that lingers.

Speaker Koffa and his Deputy, Thomas Fallah, hail from the main opposition Congress for Democratic Change, likewise rebel lawmakers seeking his removal. The CDC has not publicly stated that it is behind the rebellion against one of its own.

The 55th Legislature cannot hold the entire country hostage, I especially amid news that the Executive branch of government is preparing to submit the draft national budget for 2025 to a divided House. Do Liberians deserve all of this? Absolutely not!

We call on both sides in this current fight to exercise discretion for the country's and its people's sake. Liberia is above any personal interest. The nation should not be held down for any egotistic agenda. Lest we should forget, every bill sent to the 55th Legislature derives from the House before it is forwarded to the Liberian Senate for concurrence. But with a divided House, this cannot happen.

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By Kanika Mahajan

To Prosper, India Must Close Its Gender Employment Gap

disparities, with the largest gender of women in the workforce, also raise the cost North Africa (MENA) and South Asia.

(National Sample Survey (1980) and Periodic promoting gender equality in housing, pensions, country.

benefits of higher female employment, Indian groups. policymakers are eager to reverse this trend. Projections suggest that increasing the female GDP.

education, the unequal division of domestic measures to be effective. labor (particularly childcare and eldercare),

to a surge in women entering the labor market. million.

History also offers valuable insights. In the But the effectiveness of some of these emergence of alternative care options.

reinforces gender disparities while the lack of enough. decent jobs and the dominance of small firms limit women's work opportunities.

insufficient support for female partnerships, and amplifying voices. entrepreneurship and widespread employer discrimination against married women and

EW DELHI - While female workforce mothers. Moreover, well-intentioned participation consistently lags behind regulations like the Maternity Benefit Act and men's globally, there are deep regional the POSH Act, intended to increase the number employment gaps found in the Middle East and of hiring them, inadvertently creating additional obstacles.

India is a striking example of this dynamic. Recognizing that low female employment Among women aged 25-60 in rural areas, the impedes economic growth, the Indian labor-market participation rate dropped government has allocated an unprecedented sharply from 54% in 1980 to 31% in 2017 6.5% of its latest annual budget to programs Labor Force Survey (2017)). In urban areas, the education, and health care. The budget also decline has been less dramatic, from 26% to boosts funding for initiatives aimed at 24%. Meanwhile, male employment rates improving women's safety, mobility, and remained relatively stable, further widening caregiving options, such as establishing the gender gap in the world's most populous targeted skills-training programs, hostels, and child-care facilities for working women, andexpanding market access for enterprises run Given the well-documented economic by women-led, community-based self-help

But the real test will be the quality and workforce participation rate by just ten reliability of these services. If child-care percentage points could increase India's GDP facilities provide substandard care, or hostels by 16%. In fact, improving female employment fail to ensure women's safety, participation will rates worldwide could add \$12 trillion to global remain low. Moreover, skills programs in India have had little success outside major cities. A recent study in Uttar Pradesh found that just To encourage women to enter the labor 11% of graduates of industrial training institutes market, policymakers must first understand were able to secure employment. International the root causes of India's low female workforce studies also suggest that insufficient job participation rate. Early research points to a opportunities may limit the impact of skillrange of supply-side barriers, such as the U- building initiatives. Creating quality jobs shaped relationship between income and offering higher wages is crucial for supply-side

and social norms that discourage women from When men struggle to find jobs, integrating working outside the home. The problem is also women into the workforce becomes even more exacerbated by the preference for non-challenging. Notably, nearly 12% of Indian men working women in the marriage market, aged 20-35 in urban areas who completed limited mobility, inadequate skills training, schooling were unemployed in 2022. For this and safety concerns at work and in public reason, the government's latest budget includes several initiatives to boost employment. One such program aims to Many of these barriers are rooted in household encourage internships, with the government dynamics, but governments can still play a providing firms a monthly allowance of ₹5,000 pivotal role in addressing them. One way is to (\$60) and offering labor-market entrants a onesupport export-oriented industries. While time wage-assistance subsidy of up to ₹15,000. supply-side constraints affect economies Employers will also be eligible for up to ₹3,000 across MENA and South Asia, countries like per month for two years following every new Bangladesh have experienced a rise in female hire, offsetting their social-security employment thanks to growing demand from contributions. Other measures to expand small export-driven sectors. This mirrors the firms' access to credit markets include doubling experience of Southeast Asian countries, the limit for small loans by public-sector banks where export-oriented manufacturing has led to micro enterprises from ₹1 million to ₹2

United States, the female employment rate measures remains uncertain, given that top rose dramatically in the space of 100 years, firms are likely to hire the most skilled from less than 5% in 1890 to more than 60% in candidates even without government 1990. The critical turning point came during intervention. Employers will increase hiring World War II, when labor shortages led to only when the benefits outweigh the costs. As higher wages, greater acceptance of women in long as burdensome regulations, inflexible labor traditionally male-dominated jobs, and the laws, infrastructure bottlenecks, and unfavorable industrial and trade policies persist, job creation will continue to stagnate. In India, much of the policy debate has By fostering a business-friendly economy - one focused on the demand-side barriers that that simplifies firm entry and exit and removes women face in the job market. Labor demand barriers to growth - India could both empower has not been favorable to Indian women, as women and unlock its economic potential. It's a mechanization in the agriculture sector lesson many countries cannot learn soon

many of which fail to provide essential This commentary is published in collaboration amenities like maternity leave and child care - with the International Economic Association's Women in Leadership in Economics Initiative, which aims to enhance the role of women in The impact of such barriers is compounded by economics through research, building

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WEDNESDAY

By Hippolyte Fofack

The Right Climate Finance for Developing Economies

ASHINGTON, DC - In 2011, the Busan Partnership agreement recommended a shift toward increased national ownership of the development agenda as part of the international drive for more effective development policies. The agreement was a welcome recognition that lower-income countries were more likely to improve resource allocation and achieve sustainable growth when they set their own development priorities.

But more than a decade later, the prevailing top-down, one-size-fits-all approach to development interventions remains stubbornly intact. This is particularly true for climate finance, which tends to be largely earmarked for projects aimed at reducing greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions, including in countries that have contributed the least to the climate crisis. For example, 58% of the \$83.3 billion in climate finance that the Global North delivered to developing countries in 2020 went toward such mitigation initiatives.

In fact, the most pressing challenge facing low-income countries is to bolster the capacity of governments and societies to endure and adapt to the adverse effects of global warming. But only 34% of climate-finance flows to low-income countries, totaling \$28.6 billion, went toward adaptation measures in 2020, and that fell to around 27% in 2021 and 2022 (totaling \$24.6 billion and \$32.4 billion, respectively). These sums fall far short of the estimated \$160-340 billion needed annually for climate-change adaptation in developing countries.

Moreover, nearly three-quarters of the climate finance provided to developing countries between 2016 and 2022 came in the form of loans, which could further exacerbate macroeconomic instability and debt vulnerabilities. Nearly 60% of these countries are already confronting or at high risk of debt distress, owing to the "original sin" of foreign borrowing together with growth-crushing interest rates that dramatically increase the fiscal incidence of external debt.

Global investors are drawn to climate-mitigation projects because they generate more immediate returns, compared to the longer-term payouts of investments in adaptation. But this skewed approach fails to account for the asymmetric nature of climate change: even though the Global North has historically caused the majority of GHG emissions, the Global South, where average annual temperatures in most countries have largely exceeded the upper threshold for life of 24° Celsius, has suffered the worst effects, and is especially vulnerable to further projected increases in average temperatures.

It is hard to imagine how the effects of climate change could be much worse for low-income countries. In 2022, flooding submerged one-third of Pakistan, killing 15,000 people, forcing more than nine million into poverty, and generating economic losses that amounted to 2.2% of GDP. And in 2023, East Africa - despite contributing only 0.1% of global GHG emissions - experienced extreme droughts that decimated around \$7.4 billion worth of livestock, fueled an alarming hunger crisis, and exacerbated poverty. The Global North's failure to take responsibility for rising temperatures and consider vulnerable countries' specific needs risks further magnifying the climate emergency's already-high economic and social costs in these countries.

Crucially, making progress on adaptation does not depend entirely on successful mitigation measures - the relationship is not unidirectional. In fact, some adaptation initiatives, such as improved building insulation and energy-conservation measures that reduce the need to use coal-fired power plants, can turbocharge mitigation efforts. Unless we adapt our behavior and systems to moderate the devastating effects of GHG emissions, the social and economic costs of climate change will continue to rise, hitting the most vulnerable countries hardest.

More broadly, building sustainable and resilient infrastructure would mitigate countries' vulnerability to adverse climate shocks and other related risks. Such infrastructure would not only reduce the direct fiscal impact of such shocks, as well as contingent liabilities that could pose a threat to macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability, but could also enable energy-poor countries to leapfrog into a new era of clean power, accelerating the transition to net-zero emissions.

Increasing coordination between adaptation and mitigation efforts could make them more cost-effective and appealing to investors, thereby catalyzing more climate-adaptation financing in the Global South. At the same time, mobilizing more private capital for adaptation requires increasing the number of climate-resilient and investment-ready infrastructure projects at a sustainable pace and with appropriate levels of risk allocation among stakeholders.

A recent analysis conducted by J.P. Morgan of greenfield projects in emerging-market and developing economies estimated that there is around \$1.2 trillion worth of "investable" sustainable-infrastructure projects in the pipeline - representing roughly half of these economies' annual investment needs for such infrastructure. But many of these projects are in the very early stages of development and will not be shovel-ready for years to come. Clearly, the demand side of the adaptation-financing equation must be strengthened to direct more funding to low-income countries, in addition to rebalancing the international community's allocation of climate financing away from its excessive focus on mitigation.

Boosting adaptation financing in the Global South is not only the right thing to do for the planet. It is also smart economics. Preliminary estimates indicate that every dollar invested in adaptation could yield up to \$10 in net economic gains. Moreover, delaying or short-changing investment in adaptation could raise overall costs and undermine global efforts to reach net-zero emissions by 2050 and limit global warming to the Paris climate agreement's target of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

The world cannot win the battle against climate change if it neglects an important front - adaptation - on which it is incurring huge losses, especially in terms of human casualties. To avoid focusing exclusively on mitigation, wealthy countries must foster a more inclusive development partnership that narrows the adaptation-financing gap in the most climate-vulnerable countries.

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By Ajay Mathur, Fatih Birol

Unleashing Solar Power's Bright Future

ARIS - Solar power has been the star of the clean-energy transition, delivering major benefits for the climate, the cost of living, and energy security. With an average annual growth rate of almost 30% over the last decade, the market for solar power has undergone a rapid transformation. What was once a heavily subsidized renewable-energy technology is now a readily available mainstream solution - whether one needs to power skyscrapers in large cities or deliver electricity to small businesses in rural areas.

Solar has become an increasingly attractive option for electricity producers and consumers alike. In 2023, additions to the world's renewable power capacity grew by 50%, and most of that was solar PV. With supportive policies already in place in more than 130 countries, solar power looks set to continue playing its starring role for the rest of this decade. Compared with the previous five years, solar PV deployment through 2030 is expected to more than double in major economies such as the United States, China, the European Union, India, and Brazil.

Falling costs have been a key driver of this growth, with solar-panel prices declining by almost 50% in 2023. The combination of lower costs, scalable manufacturing, and quick installation means that solar PV is cheaper than new fossil-fuel power plants in most markets. Moreover, the benefits of solar can be amplified when paired with energy storage such as batteries or connected to larger, flexible systems via grids to deliver reliable power supplies.

Still, despite the unprecedented growth of solar power in recent years, the world needs to triple its renewable-energy capacity by 2030. At the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai (COP28) last year, all countries agreed that meeting this goal is necessary to keep the 1.5° Celsius target for global warming within reach. The task for policymakers is to provide regulatory certainty for the private sector; ramp up investments in solar and other renewables, electricity storage, and grid infrastructure; cut red tape and remove administrative barriers; and improve access to finance, particularly for projects in emerging and developing economies.

Fortunately, even high inflation and tightening supply chains have not prevented the cost of solar PV from falling dramatically. But since this trend is largely due to China's massive investments in solar-panel production, the international solar supply chain has become highly concentrated. As the growth of solar PV continues, manufacturing will need to become more diversified to ensure resilient supply chains. Initiatives such as the US Inflation Reduction Act, India's Production-Linked Incentive, and the EU's Net-Zero Industry Act will be crucial to building and revitalizing homegrown clean-energy industries.

Solar will be essential to meet growing energy demands, not least in emerging and developing economies, where policymakers are seeking to help their citizens realize their economic aspirations while limiting greenhouse-gas emissions. For many countries, renewables like solar can also reduce reliance on energy imports, limit exposure to global supply disruptions, and improve energy security over the long term. But as technologies and consumer behavior evolve, the need for more sophisticated energy infrastructure will grow.

As matters stand, investments to expand grid infrastructure are not keeping pace with the growth of clean-energy technologies, and this is delaying the rollout of new projects, including for solar. New electricity networks often take 5-15 years to plan and complete, whereas new renewables projects take only 1-5 years. Making matters worse, investment in grids - which needs to reach more than \$600 billion per year by 2030 - is not flowing to the regions that need it most. Grid investments in many emerging and developing economies have been well below the levels needed to meet robust growth in electricity demand and to expand access.

This shortfall represents an opportunity that must not be squandered. Solar PV has enormous potential to provide electricity to the many millions of people who currently lack it, most of whom are in Africa. But access to finance is crucial. Many emerging and developing economies (with the exception of China) are missing out on the current wave of clean-energy investments because of the high costs of capital for new projects. The risk premium that investors demand to enter less-established markets is directly undermining solar power's competitiveness.

Removing this obstacle requires action from governments, multilateral development banks, and others to bring down the cost of capital in these markets. The situation is urgent. To limit global warming to 1.5°C, we must more than triple annual clean-energy investment in emerging and developing economies within the next decade.

Solar's growth shows what is possible. If policymakers can overcome the remaining technological, regulatory, and financial barriers, the COP28 goal of tripling renewable-energy capacity by 2030 will be well within reach - with solar leading the way. But if these barriers remain unaddressed, the energy transition will leave many countries behind, and it will fall far short of what the world needs.



e Boakai an cials on the same pace?

NOVEMBER 06

hen candidate former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai campaigned on the "Rescue" slogan in 2023, it was believed that all those who campaigned with him were in sync with his vision t rescue the country from a "corrupt regime" and set it on the path of transparency, economic growth, and development. At least, this is what everyone thought of the "Rescue Mission."

However, barely ten months into President Joseph Nyumah Boakai's administration, one official has been dismissed for administrative reasons two forced to resign, one due to his tastes for luxury and the other poor health, and six have been suspended, among them, three relieved of their positions following investigations into acts of misconduct leading to their suspensions.

So, what has happened?

Last week, Mr. Boakai suspended three senior officials of the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) immediately following serious allegations of financial misconduct and protests from workers at the entity.

LRRC Executive Director, Mr. Patrick Worzie, and his two deputies, Mr. Richard Ho ffand Mr. AJ Armah Karneh, were suspended and subsequently turned over to the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission for investigation. These men were accused of engaging in questionable financial transaction at the Liberian returnees' agency, allegedly taking bread from returning refugees' mouths.

Just around the same time, the President announced the appointment of new Executive Director of the Liberian Drugs Enforcement Agency (LDEA) while relieving the entity's Executive Director, Col. Abraham Kromah, and his two deputies, Mr. Hassan Fadiga and Mr. Gbawou Kowou.

The three men were suspended for months following allegations linking them to fights over drug money. Though the committee that investigated the incident at the LDEA has yet to confirm these allegations, it has set a bad example for the "Rescue Team."

It all started just 7 months into the Rescue administration when President Boakai dismissed Mr. James Armah Massaquoi, the then Deputy Minister fo Administration at the Ministry of Education, for administrative reasons and appointed Atty. Nyekeh Y. Forkpa.

As if that was not enough, former Commerce Minister Amin Modad, acting in consultation with the Liberia Revenue Authority Commissioner General Dorbor Jallah, violated the 2024 National Budget law to satisfy Mr. Modad taste for luxury by purchasing a USD98,000 vehicle for him.

LRA Commissioner Jallah will soon justify his conniving with former Minister Modad before a Senate hearing committee, saying he followed the example of his predecessors.

For weeks, Mr. Modad had been accused of purchasing a luxurious SUV for his official use at the cost of US150K. The vehicle was initially alleged to be a gift from MedTech Scientific Liberia Limited, a Dubai-based subsidiary, t purchase a car valued at US\$150,000.

The Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) will later provide conflicting information regarding vehicle purchases' controversy.

These unfolding events have left citizens wondering whether these officials in the Boakai regime have actually come to "rescue" the country from wha they claimed was a rogue regime or have come to rescue themselves from poverty just six years after losing power.

Thus, questions now abound, and ongoing debates are raging as to whether these officials, including the ones yet to be exposed, are moving at the same pace as President Boakai.

President Boakai seems not to be having it with them, at least for those whose shady deals have been brought into the public domain. Mr. Boakai's ability to act swiftly against officials who have been linked to corruption demonstrates his level of commitment to some extent.

However, when we think of it, these are the early days, but compared to immediate past administrations around the same time, President Boakai has demonstrated some level of commitment towards the fight against corruption.

Meanwhile, some officials appear to be resolute about their desire to redirect state funds for their personal benefits, and this is where the problem lies with the "Rescue Mission."



he Need to Cond(**Chieftaincy Elections in Liberia**

he 1986 Liberian Constitution was adopted on 6 January 1986, replacing the 1847 Constitution that had been suspended in 1980. The 1986 Constitution guarantees the rights of all Liberians, regardless of their background, tribe and religion and establishes a democratic society. The constitution protects fundamental rights such as the right to liberty, life, and property, as well as the right to equal protection under the law. It also prohibits slavery and forced labour. The constitution guarantees equality for all people, regardless of race, gender, origin, political party, or creed. It aims to strengthen national unity and integration and encourages citizens to participate in government (see Article 1). The president is the Head of State, Head of Government, and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Liberia. The Constitution provides for periodic elections so that the people of Liberia can freely elect their leaders. It is organized into chapters, including the structure d the state, fundamental rights, the Legislature, the Executive, the Judiciary, etc Article 56 of the Constitution indicates that:

"All cabinet ministers, deputy and assistant cabinet ministers, ambassadors, ministers and consuls, superintendents of counties and other government officials, both military and civilian, appointed by the President pursuant to this Constitution shall hold their offices at the pleasure of the President.

There shall be elections of Paramount, Clan, and Town Chiefs by the registered voters in their respective localities, to serve for a term of six years. They may be re-elected and may be removed only by the President for proved misconduct. The Legislature shall enact laws to provide for their qualifications as may be required."

Members of the House of Representatives were reminded by a communication from Nimba County District # 3 Representative, Nehker Gaye. Rep. Gaye who claimed that "the prolonged delay in conducting such elections violated Article 56 B of the 1986 constitution". According to him and this writer agrees that "the law provides that there shall be elections of Paramount, Clan, and Town Chiefs **l**y the registered voters in their respective localities, to serve for a term of six years, and that they may be re-elected and may be removed only by the President for proved misconduct". This action was in the right direction and the National Legislature must take it seriously through an affirmative action. It has been 21 years since the end of Liberia's Civil War.

To the best of my recollection, Liberian has not held any chieftaincy elections since the end of the Civil War in 2003 that witnessed the arrival of ECOMIL which later became UNMIL, the largest UN Peace keeping troops globally then. The fulfilment of the Constitution assures democratic governance. It guarantees peace, security, and national unity. The basic unit of any society is the family. Families in Liberia have their roots from villages, quarters, towns, clans, chieftaincies, districts, and counties. The national traditional structures are organized in ways that accommodate for Quarter Chiefs, Town Chiefs, Clan Chiefs, and Paramount Chiefs. Once these traditional structures are effectively organised; they will help support the county and national government to preside over the state substructures and regulate the Republic in a decentralised and acceptable manner. AS I SEE IT, Liberia's acceptable cultural or traditional values could gain prominence and be upheld. I can recall that back in 2004/2005 we formed part of a research team sponsored by UNDP through a national NGO called RECEIVED that undertook a research project on the traditional forms of peacebuilding in Liberia. That research found out that the traditional structures of the state, which help to build and keep peace locally and nationally. have broken down. That research also found that intermarriage can promote peace and curb national, tribal cultural and religious tensions and existential conflicts in Liberia. Without doubt, all chiefs around the country are acting. They are not elected in line with Article 56B of the Constitution.

AS I SEE IT, after electing a new national government in 2023; this is another opportunity for the government to restore an elected national structure in line with the Constitution of the Republic. Constituting this community-based leadership structure will not only help the leadership and governance of local communities, but also, support the national government to lead legitimately. The National Legislature needs to ensure that these local elections are held across the country to help resolve the crisis of legitimacy. Liberia needs elected chiefs in the villages, towns, clans, chiefdoms, districts, counties, and country a large. By so doing, Liberia would have a constitutionally recognised national and local constitutional authority. The National Government with its authority will not be every where but these locally elected traditional authorities will be there to administer and lead the local communities. The National Legislature must ensure that the National Elections Commission appear before its relevant budget committees to present and discuss the budget for these elections and put this in the National Budget for the Executive to sign. The Liberian Immigration Service (LIS) is present at 40 of the 173 entry points around Liberia. Undoubtedly, these

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

LACC conducts anti-corruption training Gov't rolls out dev't plan

-to strengthen transparency and accountability

Amid widespread impropriety in government, the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission embarks on training to strengthen transparency and accountability in the public sector.

onrovia, Liberia, November 6, 2024—The Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC), with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and

institutions and the judiciary to foster a deeper understanding of anti-corruption legislation and accountability instruments.

LACC Executive Chairperson, Cllr. Alexandra K.



funding from the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, is holding a three-day anticorruption training to enhance transparency, justice, and integrity in governance.

Under the theme "Enhancing Justice and Transparency and Building Integrity through Collaborative Governance," the workshop brings together personnel from integrity Zoe reiterates the Commission's commitment to fostering integrity.

"Integrity institutions and the judiciary are key stakeholders in the fight against corruption. This workshop equips them with the necessary tools to promote transparency and accountability. Together, we are building a future where integrity is the foundation of our nation's development," she

Representing the Bomi County Superintendent, Mr. Alphonso Sherman welcomed participants and emphasized the government's commitment to transparency. "This government is serious about governance; there is no business as usual. We invite the public to verify how we manage development funds, ensuring accountability," Mr. Sherman said.

He also acknowledges the unprecedented nature of such training in Bomi County and highlights its critical role in fostering transparency.

UNDP's Programme Associate, Atty. Marzu Stubblefield-Quaye expresses gratitude for the collaborative effort and underscores the importance of addressing corruption at all levels.

"Corruption undermines democratic institutions, economic development, and societal progress. This training equips participants with the knowledge and skills to champion integrity within their institutions," she remarks, emphasizing the global impact of corruption and the pivotal role of the LACC in combating

Deputy Executive Director Atty. Francis Gray, representing the James A.A. Pierre Judiciary Institute, highlights the judiciary's

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Paynesville City Corporation heightens security presence

The Paynesville City Corporation boosts security to enforce city ordinances.

By Stephen G. Fellajuah

aynesville, Liberia, November 6, 2024 -The Director of Police at the Paynesville City Corporation (PCC) boasts of a significant increase in presence of city police officers in and around Monrovia to enforce ordinances. However, he appeals to the Paynesville Legislative Caucus for support to addressing logistical challenges faced by the police force.

The request aims to enhance the operational capabilities of the police in ensuring better public safety and efficiency in law enforcement.Speaking over the weekend from his office in Paynesville, Director Melvin Tolbert highlighted pressing logistical challenges facing the Paynesville City Police, including shortage of manpower and uniforms. He emphasizes that lack of

adequate logistics could

significantly hinder the police's effectiveness in maintaining law and order.

Tolbert's remarks underscore the urgent need for support to bolster the police's operational capabilities, as he stresses need for adequate resources in effectively managing the city's security needs.

"I would like to appeal to the five electoral districts in Paynesville City, particularly the Legislative Caucus, to assist us with logistics," he pleads."We need vehicles-pickups and motorbikes-to facilitate our work. We are also appealing to philanthropists to assist us in this direction.'

Paynesville City serves as the gateway to Liberia's capital, Monrovia. The city police are responsible for enforcing ordinances throughout Paynesville, ensuring that residents are protected from criminal threats and maintaining a safe environment

for the community. However, Mr.

Tolbert also discloses that the Corporation recently trained up to two hundred additional personnel, raising the number of police officers from fifty-six to two hundred and forty-six. While this expansion will enhance the police force's capacity to serve and protect the community, there remains a pressing need for additional manpower to meet ongoing challenges. He emphasizes that it is important to note that the PCC does not receive external support and relies solely on revenue generated within the city. This situation has prompted calls for additional assistance to strengthen the corporation's resources and capabilities.



-As Ngafuan stresses need to diversify economy

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

The medium-term agenda of the government's development plan emphasizes roads and other infrastructure in ICT, Energy, Sea Ports, and Air Transport.

By Lewis S. Teh

onrovia, November 6, 2024: Liberia's Finance and Development Planning Minister Augustine Ngafuan has stressed the urgent need to diversify the economy for the growth of the country.

"Diversification of our economy remains paramount because it will target lowhanging fruits in the tourism sector, which has a huge potential of driving private investment," Ngafuan said Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

Minister Ngafuan's statements came at the start of a two-day Draft ARREST Agenda for the government's inclusive development exercise.It was held at the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Ministerial Complex in Oldest Congo. Minister Ngafuan believes that the tourism sector and agriculture sectors are highly private-sector-driven.He noted that he expects the private sector to seize the opportunity.

"Let me take this opportunity to welcome you all and thank you

infrastructure in ICT, Energy, Sea Ports, and Air Transport.

It further emphasizes good governance, especially upholding the rule of law and strengthening the fight against corruption.

In addition, Minister Ngafuan explained that it tackles the education value chain from early childhood education to basic, secondary, higher learning, and

He continued that it targets improved health outcomes through WASH."Diversification of our economy is targeting low-hanging fruits in the tourism sector which has a huge potential of driving private investment," Minister Ngafuan detailed.

The indicative cost of the Plan is US\$7.6m. 30% of that amount will be the contribution from the GoL.

The development stakeholders such as the private sector are expected to contribute 35%, Official Development Assistance (ODA) is estimated at 25% and remittances

diaspora is 10%. However, Minister Ngafuan said it is important for turning up to this validation that every stakeholder has a role to



meeting," said Minister Ngafuan.

According to him, it is one of government's roadmap to launching and implementing the new National Development Plan, Agenda for Inclusive preliminary figure. Development (AAID).

Minister Ngafuan stated that the process leading to the formulation of this draft Plan has been highly consultative and inclusive from the outset. "The draft AAID we are validating today is the outcome of a series of consultative meetings that we have held across the country."

Planning is grateful for the response, support, and goodwill received in the formulation process. Explained that the government's medium-term driven by 'ARREST'-

agribusiness value chains.

play in national development.

In a PowerPoint presentation to the last milestones in the stakeholders, the Assistant Finance Minister for Development Planning said the proposed amount announced by Minister Ngafuan for which is dubbed the ARREST the draft development plan is a

> In remarks, the Acting Chairperson of the Governance Commission, Professor Alaric Tokpah, thanked the MFDP for organizing the draft arrest agenda validation exercise.

> He termed it as a milestone in the development agenda of the country.

"There's no country that He disclosed that the Ministry witnesses immense growth without of Finance and Development proper planning, and we are grateful to form part of this exercise which is aimed at gathering ideas for the country's national plan," said Prof. Tokpah.

The MFDP draft arrest agenda development agenda is largely validation exercise brought together key stakeholders from line Agriculture with a focus on ministries, agencies, and commissions. The gathering According to him, the included development partners, medium-term agenda and civil society organizations, emphasizes roads and other among others.

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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internal tensions, complicating her efforts to manage the Commission's broader operational issues.

However, co-chairperson Cllr. P. Teplah Reeves denied having any conversation with the chairperson regarding the declaration of the remaining US\$8 million to the government on Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

Cllr. Reeves emphasizes that she had never discussed or been involved in decisions about declaring or not declaring the remaining funds. This statement adds to the growing discord within the NEC, highlighting communication gaps and conflicting accounts between the two key officials, further complicating the Commission's financial and operational challenges.

When asked if there was any personal conflict between her and Chairperson Davidetta Brown-Lassanah, Cochairperson Reeves clarified that there was no personal animosity between them.

She explains that the issues were strictly related

NEC bosses tussle over US\$8m

to organizational structure government. and leadership roles within the NEC.

Reeves points to the new elections law as a key factor that guides roles and arose from differing interpretations of these rules rather than any personal NEC. dispute.

the situation's complexity. The challenges seem to stem more from procedural conflicts.

Cllr. Reeves expresses surprise and frustration over Chairperson Davidetta Brown-Lassanah's statement, noting that she (Reeves) was taken aback by the claim that she had told the Chairperson not to return the remaining US\$8 million.

Chairperson to take the US\$8 million back when I am a lawyer," emphasizing that as a legal professional, she understands that the Public Financial Management (PFM) law requires any leftover funds to be returned to the

According to her, the law stipulates that unused funds should go back to the government, and only upon approval can those funds be responsibilities of reallocated to the Commissioners at NEC, Commission. Her response suggesting that the tension further underscores legal and procedural differences fueling the ongoing dispute within the

She criticizes Chairperson This response underscores Davidetta Brown-Lassanah for making decisions unilaterally, emphasizing that, as a collective body, the NEC disagreements than personal should involve all commissioners in decisions.

> She also expresses concern over the Chairperson's claim that preparatory activities were ongoing, questioning how such activities could continue when all the Commission's funding had been suspended.

Reeves' comments reflect "Why I wouldn't want the growing frustrations over what she perceives as a lack of collaboration and transparency in decisionmaking, further deepening the current divide that left some staff of the Commission protesting here on Tuesday, 5 November. Editing by <u>Jonathan Browne</u>

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LACC conducts anti-corruption training

commitment to dispelling perceptions of corruption.

"This workshop is an opportunity to enhance the understanding of the judiciary's workings and foster public confidence. Transparency initiatives, such as displaying court fees and fines, are crucial steps toward accountability," he noted.

Atty. Gray also stresses the importance of continuous engagement in addressing corruption holistically and comprehensively.

Bomi Resident Judge His

Honor Nelson Tokpah expresses optimism about the workshop's impact and calls for ongoing efforts to tackle corruption. "We need collective support to ensure corruption cases are addressed efficiently. This training should not be a onetime event but a continuous process to uphold justice and integrity," he urges.

Judge Tokpah emphasizes the judiciary's role in promoting fairness and transparency.

The training held in Tubmanburg, Bomi County, from 4-6 November 2024,

attracts personnel from Gbarpolu, Grand Cape Mount, and Bomi counties.

It covers various critical topics, including analysis of anti-corruption legislation, whistleblower and witness protection acts, the role of civil society in fighting corruption, and judicial transparency measures.

This initiative marks a significant step in Liberia's ongoing efforts to combat corruption, enhance governance, and build public trust. Editing by Jonathan Browne

Resilient Health System focused efforts. The Strengthening (RHSS), COVID-

delegation has met with officials from the Ministry of Health and the Liberia Coordinating Mechanism, the body responsible for overseeing Global Fund activities in Liberia.

The meetings compliment current Global Fund Grant Cycle Seven (Gc7). This cycle covers multiple integrated grants, including those for HIV and TB programs,

19 (C-19RM), and malaria interventions. The grants, totalling US\$117,546,670, are designated to support key initiatives under the Global Fund's new funding framework for 2024-2026.

In July 2024, President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, President of the Republic of Liberia, officially launched the GC-7 and C-19RM grants. The

Starts from back page Plan Liberia holds workshou GC7 funding focuses on national programs for HIV, TB, Malaria, and COVID-19 response, alongside efforts to strengthen Liberia's health systems. Notably, it also includes a Wave 2 COVID-19 investment aimed at bolstering the country's resilience and preparedness. This funding is a crucial step forward for Liberia in advancing health security and addressing priority health needs.

U.S.-based Christian Magazine Global Ekklesia launches in Liberia

Global Ekklesia, an international Christian news magazine, based in Minneapolis, Minn., that began publishing free and high-quality online Gospel news, since Oct. 2021, has been formally launched here.

By Global Ekklesia Staff Writer

he colorful ceremony was hosted at the Joseph Nyuma Boakai Foundation, located on Rehab Road, Paynesville. The occasion held recently

drew an array of local broadcast a n d newspaper editors/publishers, pastors, as well as national musical stars. Others attending the event were college students & graduates, and a team of medical practitioners from Liberia and the USA, among others. The Inquirer's Managing Editor, C. Winnie Saywah-Jimmy, and Chief Editor for The New Dawn, Jonathan Browne, also attended the occasion.

Liberian native and Christian, now a US-based neurologist, Dr.

of this online Gospel news magazine for many years.

"We all have a story," continued Dr. Zumo, who's also an Associate Clinical Professor of Neurology and author of "The Boy Who Loved Math," a novel translated into his Native Bassa tongue that features probably one little Bassa Mathematical genius, "ERDO'S BASSA," and published 2016, by Kiiton Press of the USA.

He spoke of how Fasuekoi's "Liberian civil war file," given to a publisher, had gone missing for years, while he (Fasuekoi) was in the process of publishing "Loot, Rape & Murder: Liberian Civil War-A Journalist's Photo Diary," his widely acclaimed civil war book (later sold from US \$860. to \$1, 250.00, per copy) and became a key referenced material at several



Lawrence Amos Zumo of international war crimes trials Baltimore, Maryland, visiting the including in the USA. country together with his wife, exceptional work in public service journalism here and abroad. The couple visits Liberia humanitarian and medical audience. missionary work while providing for half-the-price for lessfortunate people.

"I'm very touched by his story," Dr. Zumo, a son of both Lofa and Grand Bassa, who grew up in the Zorzor District Lorma town called Zolowo, said of James Fasuekoi, a former war correspondent and writer, and twice 2017 Bush Foundation Scholar. Dr. Zumo is a member of the American & European Academy of Neurology.

A longtime fan of the awardwinning former AP-Liberia war photographer, Zumo spoke highly of Mr. Fasuekoi, saying he was "very delighted" to be selected to officially launch the Global Ekklesia, having known and

worked with the editor-publisher

"We should never give up," Dr. Janet Gbeymah Zumo, Zumo encouraged Evangelist performed the launching Fasuekoi and members of the ceremony and praised Ekklesia's audience, saying: "Whatever you editor, Fasuekoi for his do, do it right." "We launched it [Global Ekklesia] today for all Liberians, so we all can see and follow the works of God," Zumo yearly, carrying out declared amid applause from the

Global Ekklesia was inspired by free medical care, or offering it the publisher's own family's tragedy in the United States at the height of COVID 19, and began its online publication free-of-charge, Oct. 6, 2021, from a sleepy western Minnesota town named Howard Lake. It's an independent (nonpartisan) and nonprofit media group whose sole objective is to use interpretative journalism to spread the Good News of Christ's Second Coming!

An expert in Neuroscience & Epilepsy, Dr. Zumo works at a major hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, and was one of three distinguished personalities Ekklesia picked for special recognition and honor during its 3rd anniversary celebration for rendering

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r'rançaıs

Les députés rebelles se plient à l'injonction de la Cour suprême

majorité opposés au ∎président de la Chambre, Johnathan Koffa, ont accepté de se conformer à l'injonction de la Cour suprême les enjoignant de respecter le cadre légal dans leur tentative de le destituer.

es députés de la Koffa. Par des réunions séparées, les députés dissidents ont réussi à paralyser le fonctionnement législatif, tandis que les partisans de Koffa ne peuvent pas rassembler le quorum nécessaire pour siéger.

Suite à l'audience de lundi, les députés dissidents se sont engagés à respecter le processus



Lors d'une audience au Temple de la Justice le 4 novembre, le juge Yarmie Quiqui Gbeisay a exhorté les deux camps à revenir à la Chambre des représentants et à respecter les procédures juridiques en vigueur. Depuis plusieurs semaines, les sessions parlementaires sont gravement perturbées par les actions de ce bloc majoritaire, qui conteste ouvertement la direction de

légal exigé par le juge. Ils ont précisé qu'ils entameraient cette procédure dès aujourd'hui, mardi 5 novembre.

Le bloc majoritaire a affirmé avoir transmis une communication officielle pour convoquer une session aujourd'hui, qui sera présidée par le vice-président Thomas Fallah, récemment rallié au groupe rebelle sous la pression de ses collègues favorables à la destitution de Koffa.

Lors de l'audience, l'ancien

Craintes de compromettre les opportu

sénateur de Grand Cape, H. Varney Sherman, a représenté le bloc majoritaire sur le plan juridique, tandis que l'ancien procureur général, Syrenius Cephas, et l'ancien juge associé, Kabineh Ja'neh, ont défendu les intérêts de Koffa. Les deux parties ont convenu que la procédure formelle de destitution n'avait pas encore débuté et que Koffa n'avait pas été autorisé à se défendre, comme le requiert le processus légal.

Le député Foday Fahnbulleh, figure de proue du bloc majoritaire, a déclaré devant la presse que la procédure serait enclenchée ce mardi 5 novembre dans la salle plénière de l'Assemblée. « Le juge Gbeisay nous a rappelé l'importance de suivre une procédure conforme à la loi », a indiqué Fahnbulleh, précisant que la communication officielle avait été transmise au greffier adjoint et acheminée au juge en chambre pour validation.

« Aujourd'hui, sous la présidence du vice-président Fallah, la plainte sera lue et la procédure légale commencera en toute transparence dans la salle plénière, conformément aux exigences légales en matière de quorum », a-t-il affirmé.

Fahnbulleh a précisé que la décision de la Cour suprême ne limitait pas les actions du

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Éditorial

La montée en flèche du taux de change est insupportable

Les Libériens assistent, impuissants, à une augmentation soudaine du taux de change entre le dollar américain et le dollar libérien. 1 USD est passé de 150 LRD à 168 voire 170 dollars libériens en seulement un mois.

La hausse soudaine du taux de change crée des augmentations correspondantes des prix des produits de base, en particulier la nourriture, le carburant et les frais de transport, imposant de sérieuses contraintes aux citoyens ordinaires.

L'opposant Tiawan Saye Gongloe, candidat à la prochaine présidentielle, a récemment dit que la hausse rapide du taux de change est attribuable à l'injection incontrôlée de dollars libériens sur le marché par les dignitaires du régime de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC) pour séduire les électeurs pour la réélection du président George Manneh Weah.

« Ils mettent une grande masse de dollars libériens en circulation et gardent les dollars américains. Ils économisent les dollars américains parce qu'ils ne sont pas trop sûrs de gagner les élections », a-t-il expliqué.

Les membres du parti au pouvoir, aussi bien ceux qui ont un poste que ceux qui n'en ont pas actuellement, distribuent d'énormes quantités de dollars libériens aux citoyens de tout le pays pour renforcer leurs chances d'être élus et réélus. Cela a bien sûr de graves conséquences négatives pour le pays dont l'économie est fortement dépendante des importations.

Economiste et professeur de droit, Me Gongloe a averti que les Libériens ordinaires vont être poussés à l'extrême pauvreté et aux difficultés en raison de ce qui se passe dans le pays, où d'énormes quantités de dollars libériens est en quête des quelques dollars américains disponibles.

« Sur le plan économique, ce qui se passe actuellement est terrible pour le Libéria. D'ici les élections, la vie sera beaucoup plus difficile que les Libériens n'ont jamais imaginé », a-t-il prévenu.

Avant même le début officiel de la campagne, la Coalition pour le changement démocratique au pouvoir mène une série de projets politiques dans plusieurs comtés, dont Lofa et Nimba, pour adoucir le terrain et rallier le soutien des citoyens.

Comme cela a été le cas lors de l'élection présidentielle de 2017 et de l'élection sénatoriale spéciale de 2020, lorsque les candidats du parti au pouvoir ont distribué des millions de dollars libériens aux communautés et aux électeurs, et ont inondé le marché, une répétition similaire est attendue, alors que les Libériens se rendront aux urnes le 10 octobre.

Nous ne pouvons que rejoindre Me Gongloe pour prévenir nos compatriotes libériens de se serrer la ceinture et de se préparer aux conséquences économiques négatives pendant et après les élections auxquelles ils devraient faire face en conséquence directe des dépenses électorales, bien que la loi électorale du Libéria ait un plafond sur le financement des campagnes.

La Commission de Commission insiste sur l'importance d'une stabilité

Gouvernance, un groupe de réflexion gouvernemental, met en garde contre les dangers que représente la Chambre des économique. représentants, qui pourrait nuire aux perspectives d'investissement et freiner le bien que des voies développement économique du pays.

Dans une déclaration récente, la Commission exprime une profonde préoccupation concernant les implications de cette situation sur la stabilité économique nationale. Elle appelle toutes les parties impliquées à s'engager dans des négociations pour résoudre leurs différends et créer un environnement politique propice à la croissance économique.

« Les négociations facilitées sont le moyen le plus efficace de surmonter cette impasse législative »,

souligne le communiqué. La

opérationnelle au sein de la législature pour maintenir un climat d'investissement favorable l'impasse politique actuelle à et favoriser le progrès

> Elle met également en avant l'urgence d'agir, déclarant que «

constitutionnelles et juridiques soient disponibles, les négociations médiées représentent la solution la plus efficace et la moins conflictuelle ». Ce point de vue souligne la nécessité d'un dialogue constructif pour surmonter les défis actuels et garantir la stabilité législative.

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Français

Les députés rebelles se plient à

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groupe dissident, sauf pour le voie de recours, estimant que respect des règles dans la ses droits avaient été violés. procédure de destitution. « La Sénat. Nous poursuivrons nos processus juridique suit son activités en conformité avec ces cours. Avant de rendre une règles », a-t-il ajouté.

avait invoqué l'article 26 de la a-t-il conclu. Constitution pour obtenir une

L'avocat Thomas a ajouté que loi ne restreint pas les sile juge en chambre émettait délibérations à une salle un bref alternatif, cela particulière ; elle exige donnerait aux deux parties simplement une session avec un l'opportunité de présenter leurs quorum de 37 membres arguments. «Le document remis minimum, un président de aux députés de la majorité lors séance et que cela se déroule à de la conférence n'était pas le Monrovia, où siège également le bref d'interdiction définitif. Ce décision, le juge organise une Le représentant Marcus conférence avec les parties Thomas, du district #4 de concernées. Dans ce cas, il s'agit Montserrado, a souligné que d'une demande de bref toute affaire en cours devant la d'interdiction. Si le juge accepte justice, en particulier devant le cette demande, un bref juge en chambre, ne peut être alternatif sera émis. En discutée publiquement. Il a l'absence de ce bref, nous néanmoins précisé que Koffa poursuivrons notre procédure »,

Craintes de compromettre les opportunités

deux options contradictoires, il stabilité et d'unité législatives. y a toujours place pour une politique.

Commission exhorte à une de la Chambre, est requise pour économiques. Elle souligne protocoles constitutionnels. l'importance de l'unité et de la coopération pour relever les marche précisent qu'ils ne défis auxquels le pays est s'opposent pas à la destitution confronté et favoriser la du conseiller Koffa, mais stabilité et la croissance.

Koffa, accusé de malversations. législateurs. En parallèle, 30 députés Vandalark R. Patricks, leader

Dans son communiqué daté session sous la direction du du 3 novembre 2024, la président Koffa, témoignant Commission rappelle qu'« entre ainsi d'une demande publique de

Baptisée « Marche sur le troisième ». Elle appelle les Capitole » et dirigée par parties prenantes nationales et l'activiste Vandalark R. Patricks, internationales à soutenir les cette assemblée vise à inciter efforts de dialogue, réaffirmant les 43 législateurs à respecter son engagement à trouver une les procédures légales solution équilibrée à la crise nécessaires à la destitution du président. Selon l'Article 49 de Face aux préoccupations tant la Constitution, une majorité nationales qu'internationales, la des deux tiers, soit 49 membres action collaborative pour éviter une telle mesure, soulignant d'autres revers socio-ainsilimportance du respect des

Les organisateurs de la appellent les députés à se Cet avertissement intervient conformer à la Constitution du alors que des tensions Liberia ainsi qu'aux règles croissantes secouent la internes de la Chambre. Ils Chambre des représentants, où soulignent que les Libériens sont un bloc majoritaire de 43 préoccupés par les allégations députés cherche à destituer le portées contre le président, président de la Chambre, le comme mentionné dans la « conseiller Jonathan Fonati Résolution » adoptée par les

continuent de soutenir le de la marche, exprime sa président contesté, ce qui conviction que si le président est révèle la division au sein de la destitué conformément à la Constitution et dans le respect De plus, une mobilisation des procédures, cela pourrait citoyenne est prévue mettre en lumière des aujourd'hui à 10 heures devant problèmes importants le bâtiment du Capitole. Des susceptibles de conduire à des citoyens de tous horizons s'y réformes significatives au sein rassembleront pour inciter le de la Législature nationale, dans bloc majoritaire à reprendre la l'intérêt de tous les Libériens.

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Le Liberia vise une réduction de 45 % de ses importations de riz d'ici 2025



e ministre de l'Agriculture, Dr J. Alexander Nuetah, a annoncé que le Liberia prévoit de réduire ses importations de riz de 45 % d'ici 2025 en augmentant sa production locale. Ce projet stratégique, mené par le ministère de l'Agriculture, vise à renforcer la sécurité alimentaire nationale en encourageant les Libériens à produire davantage de riz pour répondre aux besoins du pays.

Lors d'une interview à Bong Mines, dans le comté de Bong, Dr Nuetah a souligné l'importance pour le Liberia de diminuer sa dépendance aux importations en développant les ressources agricoles locales. « La sécurité alimentaire du Liberia dépend de notre capacité à produire le riz que nous consommons, » a-t-il affirmé, en insistant sur la nécessité d'une mobilisation accrue des terres agricoles du pays.

Le gouvernement soutient actuellement la culture du riz sur environ 4 696 hectares, une superficie qui pourrait produire jusqu'à 7 000 tonnes métriques. Une fois récoltée, cette production permettrait d'injecter près de 3 000 tonnes métriques de riz local sur le marché, bien que cette quantité demeure modeste face aux 516 000 tonnes métriques consommées en 2023. « Si nous atteignons cette année 4 000 tonnes métriques, en intégrant la production des petits exploitants non soutenus par le gouvernement, nous pourrions couvrir environ 35 % de notre consommation de riz, » a indiqué le ministre. « Avec les efforts continus, nous visons 45 %l'année prochaine. »

Dans le cadre de ce programme, le ministère de l'Agriculture a marqué un tournant important ce week-end en inaugurant une

récolte de riz sur 100 acres de terres basses à Bong Mines, en partenariat avec la Makona Agriculture and Development Corporation (MADECO). Cette organisation, dirigée par l'agriculteur libérien James T. Nyumah, participe activement à cette initiative visant à accroître la production locale et à renforcer la sécurité alimentaire nationale.

La société MADECO, avec une capacité de production d'environ 215 acres, représente une contribution essentielle au développement agricole et témoigne de l'engagement du ministère à soutenir l'autonomie alimentaire du Liberia sous l'initiative « Les Libériens se nourrissent euxmêmes. »

Dr Nuetah a également visité la coopérative polyvalente de Fuamah, autre partenaire du ministère, où une vaste plantation de riz couvre 900 hectares, avec une capacité de croissance estimée à 2 400 hectares. Cette tournée a pour but d'inspirer les agriculteurs libériens à étendre leur production et de sensibiliser la population sur l'importance d'un avenir alimentaire sécurisé.

Lors de sa visite, Dr Nuetah a expliqué que la ferme de Fuamah pourrait produire jusqu'à 900 000 sacs de 25 kg de riz, avec un taux de récupération de 60 % après transformation, soit environ 450 000 sacs prêts pour le marché.

Fuamah est la première exploitation agricole mécanisée du comté de Bong, tandis que des sites similaires sont en développement dans les comtés de Nimba et de Lofa, chacun couvrant 200 hectares et prévus pour la récolte l'an

Notre nation est sur une bombe à retardement, alerte le député Thomas Goshua

e député Thomas Goshua, président de la Commission des ■stupéfiants à la Chambre des représentants, a mis en garde contre une "bombe à retardement" au Libéria en raison de la montée alarmante de la consommation de drogues parmi les jeunes.

Pour M. Goshua, l'avenir de la jeunesse libérienne est gravement menacé si aucune action déterminée n'est entreprise pour enrayer la propagation rapide des stupéfiants. « Il n'y a pratiquement aucun foyer au Libéria qui échappe aux ravages de la drogue », a-t-il déclaré récemment lors d'une campagne de sensibilisation anti-drogue, ajoutant que chaque famille, y compris celles des dirigeants et responsables publics, est touchée par ce fléau.

Ces propos interviennent alors même que le président Joseph Nyuma Boakai a déclaré cette année les drogues comme une urgence nationale de santé publique. Malgré les efforts initiés, le problème persiste, et les jeunes continuent d'avoir un accès croissant aux substances illicites, gonflant les rangs d'une population de plus en



plus vulnérable.

Lors d'une récente campagne de sensibilisation organisée à Grand Bassa, le thème « Des livres, pas des drogues » a été choisi pour encourager les jeunes à privilégier l'éducation. M. Goshua, représentant de la circonscription électorale n°5 de Grand Bassa, a qualifié la situation de « critique » et réitéré l'urgence de l'action : « C'est une guerre contre notre avenir. Si nous n'agissons pas maintenant, les conséquences seront lourdes. »

Le député a appelé à intensifier les campagnes de sensibilisation, à renforcer la surveillance et à engager des mesures actives contre les stupéfiants.

ARTICLE ARTICLE

Padding as Legislature criminality 101

By Seltue Karrweaye

WEDNESDAY

or over three weeks, Liberians have been watching in awe as their representatives in the House of Representatives have engaged in heated debates over the allegations surrounding the embattled Speaker of the House, J. Fonati Koffa. Koffa, who once served as Deputy Speaker of the 54th Legislature, recently revealed on Spoon Talk that some members of the 54th Legislature's Joint Committee on Ways, Means, and Finance would meet in Room 1026 at the Boulevard Palace Hotel to discuss the budget. He mentioned that during these discussions, various government ministries and agencies would be invited to review the initial budget allocations proposed by the Ministry of Finance. However, Koffa also noted that some lawmakers would inform these officials of their intentions to inflate the budget to secure kickbacks for themselves.

Budget padding highlights a significant challenge within our legislative process, where the practice of creating new budget estimates often strays from the original proposals put forth by the Executive. According to the Liberian Constitution, the Executive is empowered to propose budget estimates, which the Legislature then reviews and approves. Ideally, these estimates should be grounded in well-established national programs and plans, developed by government ministries, departments, and agencies that understand revenue sources and have meticulously planned and costed their

However, there are instances where the National Legislature, feeling empowered by its authority to approve the budget, introduces additional elements that may not have been originally planned. This phenomenon, known as padding, involves adding projects that lack prior planning or cost estimation.

projects.

In the last 18 years, the National Legislature has sometimes responded to perceived imbalances in funding allocations by proposing new initiatives. While these adjustments may be well-intentioned, aiming to address inequalities, they can unintentionally lead to poorly conceived projects that do not serve the public interest effectively. We must find ways to channel this legislative creativity toward initiatives that are carefully evaluated and strongly aligned with national priorities.

As such, the budget allocated to the National Legislature has increased significantly, rising from USD 9.4 million in Fiscal Year 2006-2007 to USD 57.9 million in the recast budget for Fiscal Year 2024. This growth presents an opportunity for us to reevaluate our budgetary processes and encourage transparency and accountability that better serve our constituents and strengthen governance overall. Fostering constructive dialogue and collaboration between the Executive and Legislature will help ensure that our budget reflects the actual needs and aspirations of the people we serve.

A critical area of concern within the legislative budgeting process is the inclusion of phantom projects, often created through collaborations among likeminded ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs). These projects can lead to fraudulent collection and distribution of allocated funds. Speaker Koffa recently brought attention to this issue during his appearance on Spoon Talk. It is vital to recognize that such padding harms governance, as it distorts the alignment between governmental programs and the budget, ultimately compromising its intended objectives.

The challenge of legislative padding has deep roots in

Liberia, with notable budget increases illustrating this trend. For example, the budget for the Speaker's office has grown from \$605,412 in 2010 to \$1.9 million in the 2024 budget. Similarly, the budget for the Deputy Speaker's office rose from \$334,088 in 2010 to \$1.3 million in 2024, while the Office of the President Pro Tempore saw its budget grow from \$334,088 to \$1.5 million during the same period.

To address these challenges, current administrations must adopt a proactive approach. Over the past 18 years, no president has felt empowered to reject the budget passed by the National Legislature, despite concerns about significant additions to the budget line. Additionally, there has been limited progress in identifying inaccuracies stemming from MDAs. Moving forward, we must prioritize transparency and accountability in our budgeting processes, ensuring that every budget reflects genuine needs and supports effective governance. Through collaborative efforts, we can work towards restoring integrity in our financial practices and safeguarding public resources for the benefit of all citizens.

Oversight is an essential sector within our legislature that, unfortunately, has faced challenges due to instances of criminalization. The National Legislature holds the important responsibility of overseeing and reviewing the activities of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). To effectively fulfill this role, legislative committees are created alongside government structures, allowing them to monitor MDAs closely and ensure they operate under the

the 73 Representatives will receive US\$100,000 for District Development Funds, while each Senator will be allocated US\$150,000. The funding distribution across counties reveals alarming sums: Montserrado will receive \$2 million, Nimba \$1.2 million, Sinoe \$600,000, Grand Bassa \$800,000, and Maryland \$600,000, among others. This strategy is designed to create the illusion for constituents that their representatives are delivering essential projects to their communities.

In these regions, influential legislators wield significant power in determining project allocations, often coordinating closely with their party and the executive branch. However, it deviates from the normal practice for each legislator to pursue their projects, as their primary roles should focus on lawmaking and legislative oversight, not project initiation.

The most alarming issue is that, while these projects are supposed to be managed by Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), legislators have manipulated the process to demand that contracts for "their" projects be awarded to companies they endorse By personalizing the process, numerous projects remain unrealized, and substantial funds often end up misappropriated, highlighting an urgent need for accountability and reform in project management. This trend, evidenced by practices in the County Development Fund (CDF) and the Social Development Fund (SDF), severely undermines proper governance.

Maybe, the most serious element of padding in the National Legislature is the budgetary increment to their budget. Over the years, we have witnessed the emergence of a huge slush fund for the leadership of the National Legislature. The greatest secret in contemporary Liberia is the detailed budget of the National Legislature. They make their budgets and spend it without any element of transparency and accountability. It was during the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf administration that the National Legislature took a great leap forward. It went from 16 million in 2007 to US\$ 47 million in the fiscal year 2016/2017. Since then, it has continued to grow.

In the 2023 budget, the National Legislature was allocated \$51,614,330, but the outturn report amounted to \$67,963,832. This was \$16,349,503 higher than the actual amount allocated to the National Legislature in the 2023 approved budget, which included a \$1,520,854 allocation to the Office of the Senate Pro Tempore. However, the outturn report for the Senate Pro Tempore amounted to \$3,351,821, which was \$1,217,231 higher than the actual amount allotted to the

Senate Pro Tempore's office. How and where did we get the additional \$16,349,503, what did we spend it on?

We must save our legislature. The theory of representative democracy is constructed on the principle of the election of legislators by the people to represent them at the lawmaking level. It is this legitimacy derived from the electoral process that gives them the power to map and mold the views and concerns of citizens and constituents into public policy.

When, however, legislators put aside the public good and negotiate pecuniary benefits using their constitutional powers as a bargaining tool, they are abusing, rather than exercising, their powers of representation. Today, the Liberia National Legislature has developed a fairly bad reputation with the public due to criticisms of their perceived selfishness and focus on excessive benefits to themselves. The circle must be broken. The budget is neither for the executive nor for the legislature. The budget is an instrument for the pursuit of the PUBLIC GOOD Not for Conmen. I rest my pen.



principles of good governance while serving the needs of citizens.

Recently, there have been concerns raised by embattled Speaker Koffa regarding the conduct of some committees. It has been reported that a few committees have strayed from their intended purpose by pressuring MDAs to pay bribes. When MDAs have resisted these demands, threats to reduce their budget allocations have been issued, while some committees inflated their budgets to secure kickbacks.

These practices jeopardize the integrity of the oversight function and can undermine public trust. Rather than pursuing a path of accountability and transparency, these committees risk adopting tactics that parallel organized crime, shifting focus from exposing wrongdoing within MDAs to participating in the very criminality they should be combating.

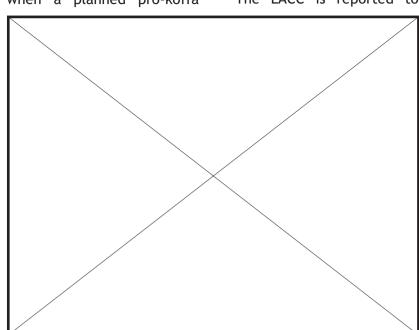
In 2024, the 55th National Legislature cleverly maneuvered to persuade President Boakai into endorsing their controversial Legislative Support Projects and district development efforts, amounting to a staggering US\$13.2 million. Through the Legislative Support Project, each of

It has been alleged that US\$750,000 was made available accused of taking money from through some government agencies to fund anti lawmaker's plot to remove Speaker Koffa.

By Bridgett Milton onrovia, November 2024: Drama unfolded at Capitol on Tuesday, November 5, when a planned pro-koffa

Corruption Commission (LACC) that they were the sources of US\$750,000 made available to lawmakers to fund Speaker Koffa's removal plot.

The LACC is reported to



protest failed to make an impact after organizers pulled out amidst confrontations from anti-Koffa lawmakers' employees.

As if that was not enough, the group of lawmakers seeking to dethrone House Speaker Fonati Koffa summoned three government agencies that were reported to be the alleged sources of their bribes.

The members of the House of Representatives, under the banner "Majority Bloc," have summoned Mo Ali, the Managing Director of the Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC), Sirleaf Tyler, the Minister of Transport, and Francis Nyumalin, the Minister of Internal Affairs.

The officials have been ordered to appear before the majority bloc on Tuesday, November 12, 2024.

Their appearance before the lawmakers is to clarify a statement by the Liberia Antihave indicated that the alleged funding was made available through the Ministry of Transport and LWSC accounts.

Internal Affairs Minister Francis Nyumalin is expected to address the status of implementing the Local Government Law.

LWSC boss Mr. Mo Ali and Transport Minister Mr. Sirleaf Tyler will face questions regarding an ongoing LACC investigation tied to the alleged bribery in the removal of the Speaker.

According to a communication from Rep. Johnson Williams of River Gee County Electoral District #3, the allegation against them is very strong and must be addressed.

Rep. Johnson stressed the importance of the House of Representatives taking the matter very seriously.

He suggested that it is a public notice and on the public record that the House of Representatives has been those institutions.

"It is important for them to come and clear our part to save us from the public outcry," said Rep. Williams.

At the same time, the House of Representatives majority bloc has mandated its Secretariat to formally inform the Senate, Executive, and Judicial branches not to do business with Speaker Fonati Koffa and his supporters.

Grand Gedeh County Electoral District #1 Representative Jeremiah Sokan said they are the majority bloc of the House of Representatives and that the government should prioritize engagement with them.

To oust Speaker Koffa, the majority Bloc needs 49 lawmakers, but it is yet to obtain this number.

Koffa controls the minority bloc and needs 37 Representatives to conduct legislative sessions.

While the majority Bloc continues to struggle to get the required number, it has called on those supporting Koffa's leadership to join the anti-Koffa bloc to oust him.

The majority Bloc claims that if the Koffa bloc does not join them in the next legislative session, it will face consequences under House

Meanwhile, the Majority Bloc is expected to investigate six members of the Koffa bloc for disrupting House proceedings on October 22, 2024.

Those Representatives include Rep. Frank Saah Foko, Rep. Marvin Cole, Rep. Luther Collins, Rep. Edward Flomo, Rep. Abu Kamara, and Rep. Zinnah Norman.

The majority bloc has ordered them to appear before a committee of the whole to explain their action.

NEC bosses tussle over US\$8m

Two senior officials of the National Elections Commission (NEC) are in a tussle over leftover money in the Commission's budget, trading claims and counter-claims.

By Stephen G. Fellajuah internal conflict at Liberia's (NEC) escalates amid a dispute over US\$8 million leftover from its US\$53 million budget Presidential and Representative

This issue, marked by claims and counterclaims, seems to prolong the turbulence within the NEC, raising concerns about its financial management and transparency.

Elections.

The disagreement between Chairperson Davidetta Browne-Lassanah and Co-Chair Commissioner P. Teplah Reeves could potentially have broader and effectiveness of their million. activity, especially as the next elections in 2029.

began, I approached the Minister onrovia, Liberia, of Finance, Augustine Kpehe November 6, Ngafuan, to reaffirm the ■2024—The current declaration of the US\$8 million."

She further explains that US\$8 National Elections Commission million had been declared to the government under the previous Finance Minister, Boimah Kamara.

The NEC Boss emphasized that disbursed for the 2023 she resubmitted the funding allocation details to the Ministry of Finance, making it clear that no further financial actions could be taken at the NEC until the ministry's approval.

> This step reflects the NEC's procedural and bureaucratic hurdles as it seeks to undertake preparatory activities.

However, during the period, over US\$2 million was spent on bye-elections in Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties, reducing the implications on the credibility balance to US\$5 million from US\$8

Current Finance Minister country looks forward to the Augustine Kpehe Ngafuan allegedly informed the NEC board The dispute over the that the time had elapsed for



remaining US\$8 million at the utilizing the remaining US\$8 managed.

declared to the Government of Liberia in line with the Public coffers. Financial Management (PFM) law following the elections.

However, this move seems not being welcomed by Cochairperson Reeves, who allegedly argues that rather than being cleared, the remaining funds should be used to address pressing issues within the Commission.

The disagreement highlights ongoing governance challenges at the NEC and raises questions about the allocation and usage of public funds, especially in the aftermath of a historic election that was generally fair, transparent, and credible. The incumbent conceded defeat prior to the announcement of the final results.

over the remaining funds

According to Madam Brown-Lassanah, "When the agitation

NEC is rooted in disagreement million. As a result, any future over how the funds should be work or proposals for reallocating funds would only be based on a Chairperson Brown-Lassanah balance of approximately US\$2 says the money has been million, not the over US\$5 million that was still in the government's

> The NEC proceeded with its work and submitted a supplementary budget proposal of US\$2 million. Among key items in the proposal was hazard pay, with a portion of this amount intended to cover insurance costs.

Chairperson Brown-Lassanah expressed frustration on OK FM on Monday, stating that one of her primary challenges is not being recognized as the legitimate head of the National Elections Commission.

She reveals that some officials within the Commission have downplayed her authority, saying that her only role is to serve as spokesperson for the NEC. This alleged undermining of her position has contributed to

U.S.-based Christian Magazine

Starts from page 7 country and humanity. Executive Director for JNB Foundation, Jackson George, and Cultural Ambassador, Kekura Kamara, were the

other two. At the time of writing, Zumo was in Buchanan, Bassa, finishing his sixth medical tour here. In mid-October he participated freeof-charge in a lecture series here organized by John F. Kennedy Hospital (the country's top hospital), for doctors and made presentations on medicines on emerging challenges, advantages & disadvantages, in addition to new ways of treating certain diseases

including epilepsy. He and his wife, Mrs. Janet

outstanding services to this Zumo who hails from Central manner in which each Liberia, own and operate individually encouraged and CEND-LIB, acronym for Center supported his effort at working for Epilepsy & Neurologic to become a career journalist, Diseases, located in Wein Town, Piped Line Road, in the Red Light District. They are expected to return to the United States shortly.

> Earlier, Fasuekoi separately praised the honorees and explained how each has impacted his life or career, and the way all three men have enormously given back to general society as a whole, and prayed that every citizen would emulate their fine examples.

> He especially referenced Dr. Zumo and Mr. Kamara, both of whom he has known for decades regarding and the

a dream he said finally came through.

Global Ekklesia staged a fundraising exercise (1st since its founding) during Friday's event, in hope of reaching its target goal of US \$1,500.00 which it intends to use and pay for domain hosting as well as web maintenance costs for several years, but received a total donation of US \$480.00 cash, with the exception of US \$50.00 pledge that remains outstanding.

The Inquirer Newspaper, the first independent post-war paper Fasuekoi helped edit, made the highest contribution

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Plan Liberia holds workshop to boost quality lab services

two-day workshop to boost quality Laboratory services and integrated Lab system management strengthening ended in Monrovia on Thursday, through support from Global Fund.

The workshop organized

focused on "Integrated Lab response efforts in Liberia, System Strengthening and address key challenges, and Change Management, discussed the status of Laboratory quality in Liberia, key challenges, management system, and recommendations to improve laboratory quality Global Fund, healthcare and leadership in Liberia.

develop strategies to strengthen the country's intervention efforts.

Attendees include investment partners from the providers specializing in TB



by Ministry of Health (MoH) in collaboration with Plan International Liberia and other partners, brought together members of Association of Lab Technicians in Liberia, among other technocrats and laboratory and diagnostic service providers in and out of <u>Liberia</u>. The workshop which

Similarly, The Ministry of and HIV, and various other Health with support from the Global Fund, its Principal Recipient Plan International a concurrent high-level visit Liberia, and other health sector partners, concluded two other workshops focusing on tuberculosis (TB) and HIV interventions. These workshops aim to evaluate the current status of TB and HIV

stakeholders.

This workshop aligns with from the Global Fund Africa delegation to Liberia, aimed at reviewing health sector investments, particularly TB-

CONT'D ON PAGE 7



