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CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA

MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES
LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

DATE	BUYING	SELLING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2024	LS178.7380/US\$1.00	LS180.3897/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.

The New Dawn

French Version Inside

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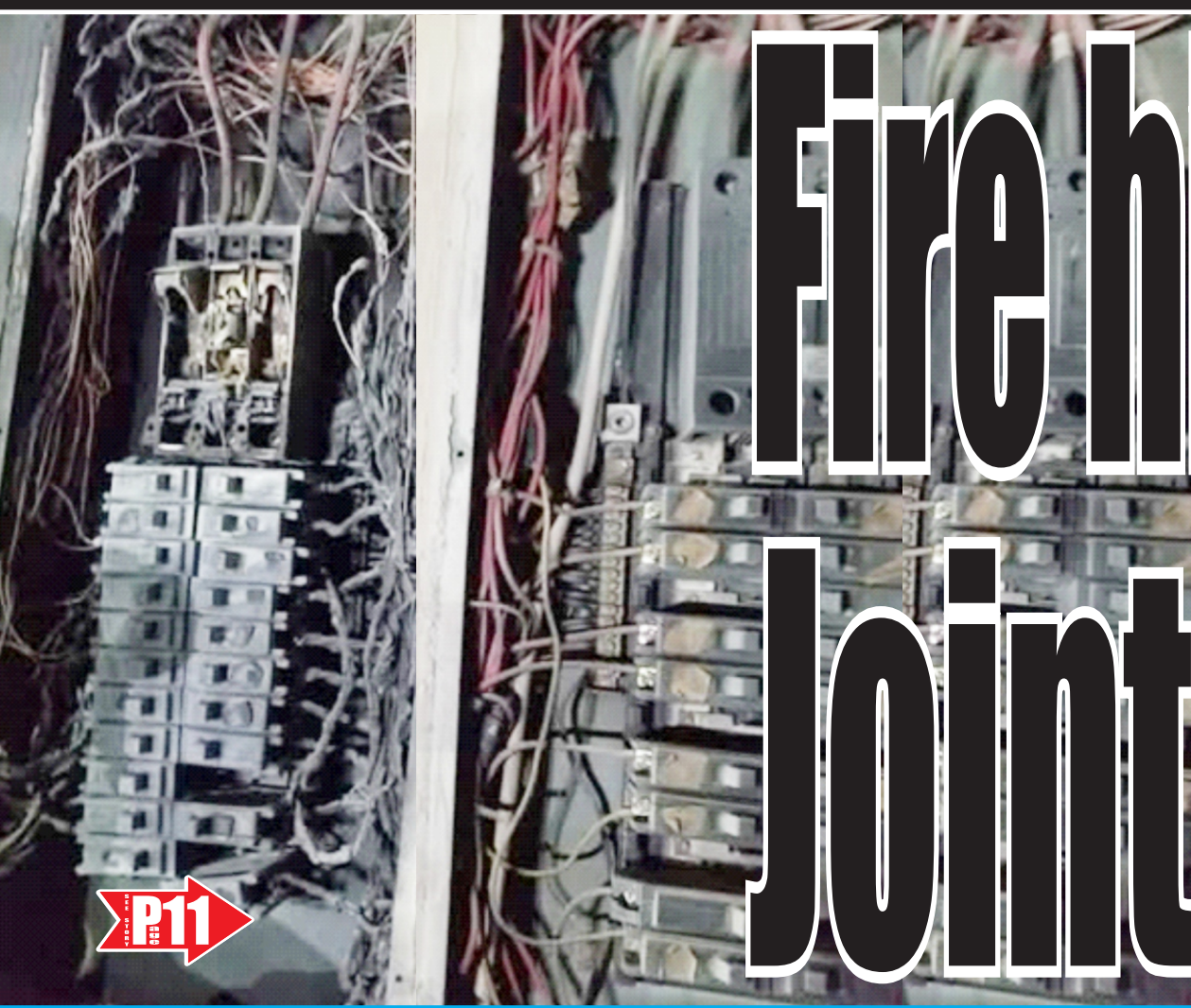
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Liberia: US flags concern



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Continental News

Zambia's ex-President Lungu barred from seeking re-election

Zambia's top court has barred former President Edgar Lungu from ineligible to participate in any future elections as a presidential candidate," the court ruled. Last month, Lungu was picked by the



Last month, Edgar Lungu was picked by the opposition Tonse Alliance to be its presidential candidate in the 2026 election

standing for re-election in 2026. The Constitutional Court ruled that the 68-year-old politician had already served the maximum two terms allowed by law. Lungu was first elected president in January 2015 to serve the remaining 20 months of his predecessor's term. President Michael Sata had died in office in October 2014. Lungu had argued that this should not count as he did not serve a full five-year term. But the court disagreed - reversing previous rulings that had cleared him to run three years ago when he lost to Hakainde Hichilema. "Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu has therefore been twice elected and has twice held office. The [constitution] makes him

opposition Tonse Alliance to be its presidential candidate in the 2026 election to challenge President Hichilema. Their choice of Lungu came a year after Zambia's government withdrew his retirement benefits and privileges following his decision to return to active politics. As part of efforts to revive his public profile, Lungu had started jogging in public along with members of the public and his supporters - which the police termed as "political activism". In a move that angered Lungu's supporters in October, President Hichilema sacked three top judges who had taken part in the controversial ruling that had allowed Lungu to stand in the 2021 elections. At the time the presidency defended the

dismissals saying Hichilema was bound by the decision of the Judicial Complaints Commission that had determined the judges should be removed following allegations of judicial misconduct. Lungu said he accepted the Constitutional Court's verdict, which he said did not come as a surprise as it had been steered by "the hands of political manipulation". "It speaks to the erosion of judicial independence, the weakening of our democratic foundations, and the weaponisation of our institutions for short-term gain," he posted on social media. "I am filled not with bitterness but with renewed determination, political hope and faith that democracy, not court politics shall certainly win in 2026 without any doubt." The government welcomed the ruling, which puts an end to what has been a long-running legal battle. "This decision provides legal clarity for citizens and safeguards our democracy, allowing us to look forward to free, fair and competitive elections in 2026," Attorney General Mulilo Kabesha said in a statement. Following Sata's death and Lungu's first election, the constitution was amended so that the vice-president automatically takes office if a sitting president dies. BBC

Victorious John Mahama promises new beginning for Ghana

Ghana's opposition candidate and former President John Mahama has promised "a new beginning, a new direction" for the country after being officially declared the winner of Saturday's presidential election. Mahama won with 56.6% against 41.6% for Vice-President Mahamudu Bawumia. It is the biggest margin of victory in the country for 24 years. Voter turnout was 60.9%, said the head of Ghana's electoral commission, Jean Mensa. Mahama said he felt "humbled" that he and his National Democratic Congress (NDC) had "chalked one of the best results in the electoral history of Ghana". He also noted that Ghana had "made history" by choosing its first female Vice-President, Jane Naana Opoku Agyemang. And he thanked Bawumia for conceding, which he did long before the official announcement of the results.

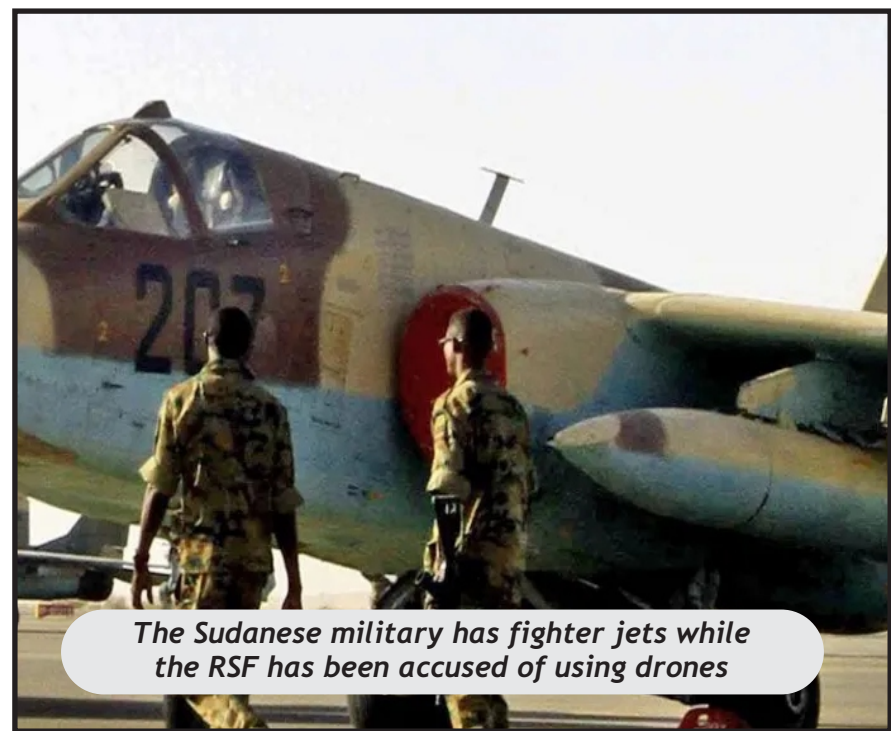


environmental impact of illegal gold mining, known as "galmasey", were among the key issues. With many Ghanaians desperate for a change, Mahama won several regions - including Bono, Ahafo, Western, and Central - which the governing New Patriotic Party (NPP) had won in 2020. Since Bawumia's concession on Sunday, Mahama's supporters have been celebrating across the country.

Sudan air strike causes 'horrific massacre' in a Darfur market

Sudan's military has been accused of carrying out an air strike on a marketplace in the western region of Darfur in which more than 100 people were reportedly killed. The Emergency Lawyers rights group described the bombing in Kabkabiya town on Monday, the weekly market day, as a "horrific massacre". Clashes have intensified in different parts of Sudan in recent weeks between the army and its former ally, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Both sides deny carrying out war crimes during their 19-month power struggle that has caused the world's biggest humanitarian crisis and forced more than 11 million people from their homes. According to Emergency Lawyers, the air strike happened as residents from nearby villages came to shop in Kabkabiya, about 180km (112 miles) west of el-

infrastructure, such as fuel stations, for military purposes. On Sunday, an air strike hit a petrol station in an RSF-controlled area of Khartoum, killing at least 28 people. A volunteer group, the South Belt Emergency Response Room, said that 37 people were also injured. The army has fighter jets, but it has denied deliberately targeting civilians. On Tuesday, a military spokesperson said their airstrikes were part of a legitimate exercise to defend the country, adding that the army vowed to continue targeting RSF sites, which it claims are often hidden in residential areas. Campaign group Human Rights Watch (HRW) has appealed to the United Nations and the African Union to urgently deploy troops to Sudan to protect civilians. In its latest report on atrocities in Sudan, it accuses the RSF and allied Arab militias of killing scores of civilians - and injuring, raping and abducting many others - in waves of attacks in South Kordofan state from December 2023 to



The Sudanese military has fighter jets while the RSF has been accused of using drones

Fasher, the only city still under military control in Darfur and which has been under siege since April. "This attack on civilians on market day is a flagrant violation of international law," said Emergency Lawyers, adding that hundreds of people had also been injured in the air strike. The group has also condemned the RSF for its indiscriminate shelling of Omdurman, the city just across the River Nile from the capital, Khartoum. Emergency Lawyers said that 14 people had died after a shell hit a bus on Tuesday. It also condemned the RSF for using civilian

March 2024. The rights group has previously documented similar abuses as part of a campaign of ethnic cleansing in West Darfur. "The Rapid Support Forces' abuse of civilians in South Kordofan is emblematic of continuing atrocities across Sudan," said HRW researcher Jean-Baptiste Gallopin. "These new findings underscore the urgent need for the deployment of a mission to protect civilians in Sudan." In May, US special envoy for Sudan Tom Perriello said that some estimates suggested up to 150,000 people had been killed in the conflict. BBC

EDITORIAL

Giving coins to children is dangerous

Children in homes across Liberia are not safe enough. Not least with newly minted 5 and 10 Liberian Dollar coins in their reach. This is because most kids take these coins as toys and usually placed them in their mouths, and eventually swallow them with health implications.

Children are exposed to coins both in homes, school campuses and outside where the metals are given as change when they go buy bread, juice, candy, biscuit and other snacks during recess.

The situation is scaring, leaving a health practitioner in Monrovia to alarm recently, alerting the public especially, parents. A concerned X-ray technician, Jackson Coleman, revealed that he has handled 28 cases, and 12 of them were children requiring surgery after swallowing coins.

The alarming discovery is sparking growing concern among medical professionals and parents alike, as the ingestion of coins might lead to serious health risks, including choking, internal injury, or damage to the digestive system and other organs of the body.

As a parent, imagine yourself one day returning home from work or from business activity and being confronted with situation involving your little kid swallowing pieces of coins that could lead to unforeseen consequences. Surely this is not an experience you want to have.

The 5 and 10 Liberian dollar coins are part of a new family of currency issued by the Central Bank of Liberia, as part of a currency reform. The coins are made of nickel-plated steel and feature a latent image security feature.

Parents are being advised to be extra vigilant and ensure that these coins, which have become more common in daily transactions, are kept out of reach of children. This means they should not be kept or placed loosely in homes that children can easily access.

The Central Bank of Liberia is yet to comment on the situation, but we think there is a need for public education on radio, in communities and schools about keeping coins from reach of children to minimize risks.

All hands should be brought on deck to advert a potential health problem for our children. Remember, ‘a stitch in time saves nine.’

The coins are necessary to make daily transactions easier especially in market places and when riding taxi or commercial tricycles. But keeping them away from children especially minors, is safer.

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+231-775407211 Managing Editor: Othello B. Garblah; Editor-In-Chief: Jonathan K. Browne
www.thenewdawnliberia.com; Email: info@thenewdawnliberia.com

COMMENTARY

By Barak Barfi

Syria's House of Cards

WASHINGTON, DC - Some 54 years after Hafez al-Assad seized power in Syria, rebels overthrew the dynasty his son Bashar squandered. Bashar al-Assad's downfall was made possible partly by the fact that his Iranian and Russian patrons were distracted by their own existential problems. But it was Assad's own shortcomings that hastened the regime's collapse. Hemmed in by a parasitic economy and an ossified political system that brooked no dissent, Assad lacked the strength to reform much of anything.

Bashar was never groomed to lead Syria. His elder brother, Bassel, was their father's heir apparent. But after Bassel's untimely death in 1994, Bashar was summoned home from his ophthalmology residency in London.

When Hafez died in 2000, he bequeathed his son a strong and stable state. Syria's days as a pariah were over. It no longer clashed with America by shooting down Navy pilots. After Hafez pledged troops to dislodge Iraq from Kuwait in 1991, he became a partner in the quest for peace, developing a close rapport with US President Bill Clinton.

Many hoped Bashar's exposure to the West, which his father lacked, would help him moderate the ruling Ba'ath Party in power since 1963. Initially, Bashar seemed to embrace the role of reformer, releasing political prisoners and allowing intellectual salons to flourish.

But he abruptly changed tack, stifling dissent and allowing corruption to run rampant. To compensate, he diverted Syrians' frustrations by demonizing foreign bogeymen.

He blamed Jews for betraying Jesus. He opened his country to foreign jihadists, facilitating their travel to Iraq to fight Americans. And he proved willing to emulate his father's violent proclivities. When Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri refused to toe the line, Bashar threatened to "break Lebanon" and conspired with Hezbollah to assassinate him.

Bashar was shackled to the Ba'ath regime his father cobbled together from minorities to rule over the Arab Sunnis, who comprise around 64% of the Syrian population. The Ba'ath also appealed to provincial Sunnis who had long faced discrimination by urban elites. Any reform would jeopardize the supremacy of Assad's Alawi sect, a Shia offshoot accounting for around 12% of the population.

By 2006, even Syria's most fervent Western supporters had broken with Assad. French President Jacques Chirac, an ally of Hafez, confessed that Bashar "seemed to me incompatible with security and peace." Some nicknamed him the "blind eye doctor." Others dubbed him "Fredo," after Don Corleone's blundering middle son in The Godfather.

So, when revolts erupted throughout the Arab world in 2011, it was logical to believe the contagion would reach Syria. But Bashar was either oblivious to Syrians' grievances or chose to ignore them. Weeks before they took to the streets, he told the Wall Street Journal, "we are outside of this," and that Syria was "stable" because he was "closely linked to the beliefs of the people." But when the regime's rural base turned on it, protests erupted. To blunt the rebellion, Assad leaned on urban elites, who disdained the bumpkins, and on the working class, who never identified with rural grievances. This did not suffice to save Bashar, however, and he was compelled to turn to the Russians for air support and Iran-backed militias, especially Hezbollah. After several years of fighting, Bashar was able to claw back control of most territory comprising the spine of the country, from Aleppo in the north to Damascus in the south, where most Syrians live.

Like his father, Bashar was afforded a second chance; unlike his father, he frittered it away. Unable to secure political reform, his supporters now clamored for economic change, homing in on the distribution of resources and reconstruction. But a regime with so many similarities to the Sopranos could never concede its coveted rents, even if doing so would have brought social harmony. Like the fictional mafia family, Assad's regime relied on kickbacks from wealthy business owners and shaking down foreigners. When the World Food Program neglected to pay bribes at Syrian ports, its rice shipment rotted in storage. Similarly, Bashar's uncle once intimidated an American diplomat that Syria would purchase Boeing planes if he was appointed the sales agent.

With sufficient revenue streams, the regime forged a trickle-down economic model, placating society with subsidized commodities while enriching itself with ill-gotten gains. But the civil war shrank the revenue base from which to extract domestic rents, and there were no more foreigners to extort. Today, Syria earns almost twice as much from illicit exports of the amphetamine captagon as it does from legal trade. With the economy contracting and cuts to subsidies making everyday staples unaffordable for the average wage earner, around 70% of Syrian households say they cannot meet their basic needs.

Nor are the poor the only ones who suffered under Assad. A regime built on capturing resources eventually turned on the entrepreneurs and business leaders whose legitimate companies sustained it.

Consider the case of Samer al-Dibs, a scion of the pre-Ba'ath elite who ruled Syria from 1860-1963. His family is active in industries ranging from paper manufacturing to banking. He never supported the protests in 2011 and was even willing to represent the regime at international conferences. But in parliamentary elections this past July, the regime deprived him of the seat he had held for 17 years, denying him the prerogatives that he and others leveraged to expand their businesses.

OP-ED

By Bartosz M. Rydliński

Democracy Needs Workers

WARSAW - Donald Trump shocked the world in 2016 when he was elected US president, winning swing states in America’s Rust Belt, including Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, that have traditionally backed Democrats. Much the same story played out in November. The country’s former industrial heartland overwhelmingly voted for Trump and his promised to “make America great again.” According to exit polls, a majority of working-class people in key states - those who did not attend college and earn between \$30,000 and \$99,999 per year - backed Trump. That was true of white, Latino, and Black voters.

This trend is not confined to the United States. In June, 57% of workers voted for the far-right National Rally (Rassemblement National) in the first round of the French parliamentary election. And in September, 50% of workers supported the populist Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) in the country’s general election, while the Alternative for Germany (AfD) won 46% of workers’ votes in the Brandenburg state election.

Poland’s right-wing party, Law and Justice (PiS), which governed between 2015 and 2023, offers a useful case study of why populist and authoritarian parties are increasingly attractive to workers in Europe and the US, and how the center left can win them back. PiS had a string of legislative wins, including lowering the retirement age, sharply increasing the minimum wage, and providing direct cash transfers to parents with children under the age of 18. By embracing the causes normally championed by social democrats, PiS promoted the economic interests of Polish workers. As a result, nearly half of this group voted for PiS during last year’s parliamentary election (in the end, a coalition of opposition parties won enough seats to form a majority government).

My research on the less-educated and lower-income voters in Poland’s small towns and rural areas, conducted on behalf of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, found an almost total disconnect between this group and the center left. Working-class participants in my focus groups associated social-democratic parties with the LGBTQ+ agenda, the sexualization of children, openness to migrants, and efforts to undermine state sovereignty. Instead of consuming traditional media, they get their news from niche groups on social-media platforms. These voters are proud of their anti-establishment stance, and see themselves as engaged in a fight for their livelihoods and access to “objective” information.

These findings match those of a systematic review of 51 studies examining declining support for center-left parties in the West. The Democratic Party in the US, social democrats in Western Europe, and progressive forces in post-communist countries have all lost traction with the working class. To reverse this trend, they must implement worker-friendly policies and change the way they communicate with this crucial segment of voters.

Progressives on both sides of the Atlantic have campaigned for years on increasing support for working families, including by spending more on public services, health care, education, and infrastructure. This has even helped them win elections (although often against unpopular conservative governments). Consider the 2008 and 2020 US presidential elections, when Democrats Barack Obama and Joe Biden, respectively, won, as well as the Labour Party’s resounding victory over the Tories in the United Kingdom’s general election earlier this year.

Once in office, however, these parties often fail to deliver on their campaign promises. Talking about creating good jobs in the industries of the future is not the same as actually doing it. Workers want bold, effective leaders who will take concrete action.

The center left must accept that it cannot communicate with blue-collar voters in the same way that it does with wealthy urban elites. Instead of dismissing workers’ concerns about migration, globalization, and the green transition, the Democrats in the US and social-democratic parties in Europe should address these fears on the channels and platforms that this segment of the population already uses. In that sense, they could learn a thing or two from the far right, which has become a dominant force on TikTok and X. Creating videos that put a more positive and pro-democratic spin on populism is less a matter of taste than of necessity.

The working class has played an essential role in building liberal democracies over the past two centuries, pushing for universal voting rights, the creation of social programs, and other policies expanding economic well-being and underpinning political stability. In times of turmoil, like now, center-left parties must ensure that blue-collar voters can find a home under their tent. That means making a concerted effort to court them, which starts by taking their concerns seriously and meeting them where they are. If they fail, the far right will continue to exploit workers’ anger to fuel their anti-democratic agenda.

Bartosz M. Rydliński is an assistant professor in political science at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw.

OPINION

By María Fernanda Espinosa

Did COP29 Fail Women?

MADRID - The most recent United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) focused on finance, but it fell short in more ways than one. The contentious negotiations - representatives from several developing countries walked out in protest - defied the odds to produce a commitment - the “Baku Climate Unity Pact” - from developed economies to deliver \$300 billion in climate funding annually to their poorer counterparts by 2035. That is triple the target agreed in 2009 (and reached, for the first time, in 2022), but it is nowhere near the estimated \$1.3 trillion in annual financing that developing economies will need over this period. Although the agreement represents progress, we must recognize it as merely a starting point.

But insufficient financing is only part of the problem. The reality is that as world leaders clashed in Baku amid unprecedented international tensions, the true battle being waged was for the future of climate finance - and women’s role in it. Women and children are 14 times more likely to die in climate-related disasters than men, and women comprise 80% of those displaced by extreme weather. These disparities are not incidental but are rooted in systemic inequalities. Yet the so-called New Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance includes just one reference to women and girls: in paragraph 26, it “urges parties and other relevant actors to promote the inclusion and extension of benefits to vulnerable communities and groups in climate finance efforts, including women and girls.”

Women and girls’ greater vulnerability to climate change reflects systemic inequality of access to education, economic opportunities, and decision-making power. These differences are also apparent at climate-related forums. While this year’s COP was heralded as the most gender-balanced in terms of registrations, women accounted for just 35% of delegates (up from 34% at COP28). Of the 78 world leaders who attended, a mere eight were women, and only four addressed gender-specific issues in their statements.

Climate initiatives that explicitly include women have been shown to produce better outcomes for entire communities. Moreover, women are already leading some of the most innovative and effective climate initiatives globally, in areas ranging from sustainable agriculture to renewable-energy deployment.

The conclusion should be obvious: the potential for gender-responsive climate finance to unlock more efficient pathways for decarbonization, adaptation, and resilience makes it a strategic necessity. And yet for every \$100 of climate finance deployed globally, only 20 cents goes toward supporting women, and only 0.01% of climate finance addresses both climate action and women’s rights.

Even so, COP29 was not a total loss for women and girls. The enhanced Lima work program on gender was extended for another decade, though without additional funding for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat to support implementation. In addition, the 27 gender-specific provisions in the final “Presidency text on gender and climate change” emphasized the vital role of women’s full, meaningful, and equal participation in climate action and the critical importance of incorporating gender considerations into all policymaking domains. The “gender action plan” that countries agreed to develop for adoption at COP30 provides a framework for progress.

Despite these commitments, COP29 fell short in addressing critical intersectional issues such as the links between gender equality, peacebuilding, and climate action. Similarly, calls to address gender gaps in skills - such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) training to access green jobs - and the care economy as part of climate action failed to make it into the final document. While the text encouraged gender-responsive climate finance and simplified access for grassroots women’s organizations and Indigenous communities, it lacked the structural push necessary to ensure implementation at scale.

To transform COP29’s promises into reality, we need clear international guidelines for gender integration, backed by allocated budgets, measurable targets, and participatory approaches to ensure effective, transparent, and accountable climate finance. High priority should be given to financing local initiatives, particularly in informal settlements, where women often lead climate-resilience efforts. Robust tracking systems - which monitor not only how much money is pledged, but also where it goes and who it benefits - are essential.

Of course, international action alone cannot close the gender gap in climate action; national policy frameworks are also vital. And here, too, women continue to be sidelined. According to the latest analysis from the UNFCCC, 82% of countries mention gender in their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), but fewer than 26% include meaningful gender considerations in their long-term strategies and investments. As countries prepare their updated NDCs - to be submitted this February and assessed at COP30 in November - they must take care to incorporate gender-specific programs and policies.

We do not know whether the international environment will be any less tense when countries gather in Brazil for COP30. But we do know that the failure to pursue meaningful climate action would carry astronomical costs, as the proliferation of deadly climate disasters results in lost lives and trillions of dollars in lost output. We also know that if the fight against climate change is to succeed, it must be as inclusive as it is transformative. That is why COP30 offers us a unique opportunity to reflect on our priorities and align gender equality with the Paris climate agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.



What's driving Liberia's foreign policy?

Recent reports that Russia has announced plans to open an embassy in Liberia as part of its effort to expand its diplomatic footprint across Africa have ignited a new debate and raised questions about what is driving Liberia’s foreign policy. In plain English, Liberia’s foreign policy is firmly rooted in its political ideology of liberalism, democracy, and capitalism. It is modeled after the pattern adopted by the United States.

However, a foreign policy generally is a compendium of different strategies a country uses to guide its relationships with other countries and international organizations influenced by interests. Mutual interests are expressed in every relationship. How the parties maximize those expressed interests is left to them individually. A bilateral relationship between two countries is established through diplomatic interactions, trade agreements, and cultural exchanges to enhance mutual benefits. These mutual benefits are spelled out.

Thus, countries should have clear-cut goals or agendas before entering any bilateral relationship; they should know what they want and who to befriend to get it. These clear-cut goals should be tied to the country’s national development agenda, which should be the driving force for entering into bilateral relationships with strategic partners.

National Agendas are long-term plans whose implementation spans ten years and requires periodic updating and revisions. They include a set of national indicators in education, healthcare, economy, police and security, housing, infrastructure, and government services. The ultimate purpose of National Agenda is to achieve sustainable development through a transformation program. It promotes an inclusive environment that integrates all segments of society.




This is where strategic partners come in, and choosing these partners strategically to target individual pillar within a national development agenda is very important. Rather than a country spreading its net or its leader traveling around with a laundry list of development needs and wishing for any country to come to its aid, it is not strategic. It leaves donor partners confused. Each strategic partner has its unique strength. Therefore, when deciding to enter a bilateral relationship with another country, it is important to know what you want from that country. Your interests and having a clear-cut goal for that relationship are more important than wasting resources.

For example, the United States could be a strategic partner in energy and electricity, Germany for Hospitals and vocational schools, China for roads and bridges, Isreal for security and counter-terrorism training, Education the United Kingdom, Japan for airports and technology, The Netherlands for seaports and so on. Meanwhile, in the absence of a clear-cut national agenda and targeting strategic partners to serve your country’s agenda, such a bilateral relationship is a waste of state resources.

It is critical to note that a national agenda without a clear, developed roadmap to achieve it is mere words on paper. Knowing what you want is one thing but knowing what to do to achieve it and committing to that is another. It is good for a country to expand its diplomatic footprint across nations, but it should do so based on its interests. What can this country offer my country, and how does it contribute to my country’s development agenda? Are key questions to consider when entering diplomatic relationships the cost-benefit factors.

Liberia’s national vision should be a working tool for all administrations and a desire to implement the right programs to achieve it. This vision should be legislated to compel every government to commit to such an agenda by law. The indicators within the vision should be stand-alone items in the budget. Liberia’s National Budget has been recurrent expenditure-based and not development-oriented year on year, hindering progress in achieving the country's development goals.

The Boakai regime can get this right if it has a clearly defined goal and looks for strategic bilateral partners for each pillar of the ARREST Agenda. The author holds a master's degree in International Relations from the University of Liberia, with high distinction.



Invitation for Bids [IFB]

Forestry Development Authority/TSF Project

IFB Number:
Purchaser:
Project:
Contract title:
Country:
Grant No.:
Procurement Method:
OCBN No:
Issued on:

LIB/FDA/PIU/SMEs/TSF/OCB-N/003/2024
Forestry Development Authority (FDA)
Scaling up the participation of SMFEs in the Secondary Wood Processing Industry_ Phase II
" Provision of office materials to Three (3) Shared Facility Centers, and the provision of office materials to Eleven (11) Associations"
Liberia
5900155018403
Open Competitive Bidding National (OCBN)
LIB/FDA/PIU/SMEs/TSF/OCB-N/003/2024
December 2, 2024

1.

The Government of Liberia through the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) has received financing from the African Development Bank Group hereinafter called the Bank toward the cost of the Scaling up the Participation of SMFEs in the Secondary Wood Processing Industry_ Phase II, and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for the Provision of office materials to three Shared Facility Centers, and the provision of office materials to Eleven (11) Associations. “For this contract, the Borrower shall process the payments using the Direct Payment disbursement method, as defined in the Bank’s Disbursement Guidelines and procedures for Investment Project Financing.

2.

The Forestry Development Authority (FDA) now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for supply of **Stationery, ICT Equipment and Office Furniture’s**

Lot No. 1	Description	Quantity
i	Stationery	Various
ii	ICT Equipment	Various
iii	Office Furniture	Various

3.

Bidding will be conducted through the Open Competitive Bidding National, (OCB-N) method as specified in the Bank’s Procurement Policy Framework for Bank’s Group Funded operations² dated October, 2015, and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Procurement Framework.

4.

The bidding document in English may be collected by interested eligible Bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below

5.

Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before **1:00 PM, December 30, 2024**. Electronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders’ designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend at the address below

6.

All Bids must be accompanied by a **“Bid-Securing Declaration”**.

7.

Attention is drawn to the Procurement Framework requiring the Borrower to disclose information on the successful bidder’s beneficial ownership, as part of the Contract Award Notice, using the Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Form as included in the bidding document.

8.

For any further clarification, please contact:
Attn. Project Coordinator
Project Implementation Unit
Forestry Development Authority
Whein Town, Bernard Farm
Montserrado County
Liberia

Email Address: emmanuellewis965@gmail.com
0775-841-431/0886-570-320

Link for Clarification:

Email Address: wynnbryant12@gmail.com
0776-063-643/0886-551-249



Forestry Development Authority (FDA)

Whein Town, Bernard Farm, Montserrado County Liberia

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES)

Republic of Liberia

**Assignment Title: Individual Consultancy for the Position of Construction Supervisor
Completion of One Share Facility Centre and Construction of Two additional Share Facility
Canterers**

Name of Project: Scaling up the participation of SMFEs in the Secondary Wood Processing Industry_
Phase II

Sector : Forestry

Project ID No : P-LR-AAD-002

Grant No : 5900155018403

Issue Date : December 2, 2024

End Date : December 30, 2024

1. The Government of Liberia through the Forestry Development Authority has received financing from the African Development Bank toward the cost of the Scaling up the participation of SMFEs in the Secondary Wood Processing Industry Phase II, and intends to apply part of the agreed amount for this *grant* to payments under the contract for **Construction Supervisor**.
2. The services included under this project are [The individual consultant will be expected to undertake physical site assessments to support design of the three demonstration and storage facilities, support the review of designs, in coordination with the project teams and recommend approaches, Designs and responses to the resolution of comments, Daily monitoring of construction activities in accordance to the specifications and designs, cost, and schedule to ensure progress, Carry out site inspections and assessments as required, prepare periodic reports for submission to Project Coordinator (PC) and Project teams and Act proactively to identify key areas of concerns that relates to quality, health, safety and environmental issues at site and where necessary. The duration of the contract is Maximum Nine (9) months
3. The Forestry Development Authority now invites eligible Individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing these services. Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.).
4. **Qualification and Experience:** i. Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering, Technical Diploma in Civil or Construction Engineering, Electrical or related field required. Applicants with a relevant Vocational Certificate with additional 2 years of relevant working experience may also be considered. ii. Working knowledge of MS Office applications iii. Demonstrated planning and organizational skills and ability to coordinate the works, work on tight deadlines, and handle multiple concurrent activities iv. Ability to translate engineering drawings into physical implementation v. Organized, attention to detail, able to prioritize construction activities vi. Proven experience in the construction industry, with a strong record of accomplishment of managing construction sites and teams vii. Strong leadership and team management skills, with the ability to motivate and direct workers viii. Excellent organizational and time-management skills ix. Knowledge of construction processes, materials, and legal regulations x. Ability to read and interpret construction plans and specifications
5. Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short-list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank's "Procurement Policy Framework for Bank's Group Funded Operations" dated October 2015, which is available on the Bank's website at <http://www.afdb.org>.
6. Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours [9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Liberian Time], Mondays through Fridays (except public holidays): emmanuellew965@gmail.com with copy to: wynnbryant12@gmail.com.
7. Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by December 30, 2024 at 1:00 PM and mention "Construction Supervisor".

Attn: *Project Coordinator
Project Implementation Unit
Forestry Development Authority
Whein Town, Bernard Farm
Montserrado County
Liberia*

E-mail: emmanuellew965@gmail.com
0775-841-431/0886-570-320

Link for Clarification:
Email : wynnbryant12@gmail.com
0776-063-643/0886-551-249

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Protest turns chaotic at Tubman University

-Several students arrested; others injured

A protest by students at Tubman University in Harper, Maryland County, leaves several students injured and others arrested.

By Patrick N. Mensah,
Maryland County

Harper City, Liberia, December 11, 2024 - Early Monday's peaceful protest by students

students Unification Alliance and a senior student of the College of Engineering and Technology, Jefferson Wah, among others for violation of the Student's Handbook.

not convinced.

As the protest raged, the administration called in the police to control the situation. Riot officers arrived on campus, armed with batons and teargas canisters. The students were taken aback by the show of force, but continued their protest, refusing to stop.

The police started to forcefully remove the students from campus, pushing and hitting them with batons, as they sprayed teargas canisters, reducing what was supposed to be a peaceful protest to chaos and violence.

Eyewitnesses report seeing several students being dragged and beaten by the police. One student, David, was hit in the head with a baton and had to be rushed to hospital for treatment. Another student, Sarah, was sprayed with teargas, resulting to breathing difficulty.

However, the heavy-handedness of the police only fueled anger of the students, who continued to resist and fight back. The campus was in chaos as students and police clashed. Students were seen throwing rocks and other objects at the police in desperate attempt to defend themselves.

Situation escalated further when the police brought in water cannons to disperse the crowd. The students were drenched and freezing, but

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

believed to members of campus-based Student Unification Alliance (SUA) at the William V.S. Tubman University in Harper, Maryland County turned chaotic, amidst alleged police brutality.

Protesting students peacefully gathered at the university's main campus, urging administration to reconsider the suspension of 14 students recently for disorderly conduct.

The University on December 2, 2024, suspended 14 students, including Paul P. K. Blanyon, chairman of the

Tensions reached a breaking point at the Tubman University when students gathered on campus to protest against rising tuition. But what started as a peaceful demonstration quickly turned into violent clashes between students and police.

The students were calling for the university to reconsider decision to raise tuition fees by 20%. Many of them are from low-income families and cannot afford the increased fees. The university claims that the increment is necessary to maintain the quality of education, but the students are

Chamber Justice declines issuance of writ of certiorari in Tweah's case

Liberian prosecutors have argued that the property bond filed by the defendants is insufficient to represent them in any jurisprudence.

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monrovia, December 11, 2024: Supreme Court Justice in Chamber Yamie Gbeisay has declined to issue a writ of certiorari prayed for by state prosecutors in the case involving former Finance Minister Samuel Tweah and others.

The Justice in Chamber recently placed a temporary stay order on the trial process pending a determination of a conference scheduled for Tuesday, December 10, 2024.

The justice is expected to mandate the lower court judge to proceed with the matter.

It's not clear whether or

not the state will take an appeal before the full bench of the Supreme Court.

Former Minister Tweah and other former officials are on trial for multiple charges on allegations of corruption.

Sources have informed this paper that the state might

pray for a change of venue.

The case is currently before the Circuit Court in Monrovia. The conference was held in the chamber of the Associate Justice. The state argued that the bond (property bond) filed by defendant Tweah was insufficient to represent the defendants in any jurisprudence.



former Finance Min. Samuel Tweah

Senators McGill, Chea reject Senate's decision

-to do business with majority lawmakers

Two senators on Capitol Hill detest the Liberian Senate doing business with majority bloc lawmakers in the House of Representatives, who have announced the removal of Speaker J. Fonati Koffa.

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monrovia, Liberia, December 11, 2024 - U.S.-sanctioned Margibi County Senator, Nathaniel F. McGill, and Sinoe County Senator, Cllr. Augustine Chea drawn red line with the Liberian Senate regarding its decision to uphold and implement the interpretation and opinion of the Ministry of Justice, recognizing Majority Bloc lawmakers as legitimate and reaching a decision to do business with them.

Senate Pro-tempore and Grand Bassa County Senator, Nyonblee Kangar-Lawrence, during the Senate 51st Day regular session on Tuesday, December 10, 2024, hurriedly read a decision following adoption of a draft agenda of the senate to uphold and

decision to use the Ministry of Justice's opinion as its decision on the matter. "I reject the fact that we are using the Attorney-General of Liberia report or opinion on the Supreme Court's opinion and interpretation to take a decision. I reject that decision of the senate to support the majority bloc", Senator Chea responds.

Similarly, Magibi County Senator Nathaniel McGill, following conclusion of the Consultative Meeting held in the office of Pro-tempore Senator Kangar-Lawrence, said that the decision of the Senate just clearly indicates their support for the greed for some individuals that he believes have no reason to have acted the way they did in the House.

Senator McGill further states that he completely disagrees with the opinion of the Senate,



Sen. Nathaniel F. McGill

implement the decision of the Minister of Justice.

According to her, the Liberian Senate has taken a decision to uphold the opinion of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Republic of Liberia, Oswald Tweh, by recognizing the Majority Bloc that has ousted Speaker J. Fonanti Koffa.

"The Senate in its consultative meeting, has taken a decision to uphold the opinion of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General, and the Dean of the Supreme Court in the crisis at the House of Representatives. That is, the information and decision that the Liberian Senate has voted to uphold. And so, thank you." She concludes.

But the Senate Chair on Judiciary rejects the senate's

arguing that such decision taken by the body has set a recipe for chaos in the country, which has a propensity of enabling citizens to thwart the law. He warns that "Town trap is not for rat alone."

According to McGill, all these are happening because few people want to create crisis and chaos which he notes, is being backed by the Executive, as manifested in its inability to manage the crisis thus, supporting violation of the Liberian Constitution.

Senator McGill wonders what becomes of President Boakai when the Liberian people take a decision rejecting him through protestation, pondering if the President would not use the security forces at his disposal to intimidate and brutalize them.

According to him, the United

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Koffa renforce son autorité après la décision de la Cour suprême

La direction de la Chambre des Représentants a interdit aux entités budgétaires de répondre aux convocations émanant du bloc majoritaire, à peine quelques jours après que la Cour suprême a rendu son verdict sur l'impasse qui divise l'institution.

entités budgétaires contre toute participation à des auditions convoquées par le bloc majoritaire pour examiner le budget cette semaine, précisant que de telles démarches seraient considérées comme illégitimes.

Le communiqué, signé par le Président Koffa, souligne que toute audition ou convocation non

des actions du « bloc majoritaire », notamment la tenue de sessions parallèles, la suspension de députés, la réorganisation des comités, la gestion du budget et l'élection d'un nouveau Président.

Dans son communiqué, il a exhorté les membres absents, alignés sur le bloc majoritaire, à « chercher des éclaircissements juridiques auprès d'autorités compétentes concernant la décision de la Cour suprême » au lieu de s'engager dans des actions susceptibles de compromettre l'État de droit. Une décision de la Cour suprême qui tranche le débat La Cour suprême, dans une décision historique rendue le 6 décembre, a statué que « toute session ou action menée par des membres de la Législature, non conforme aux articles 33 et 49 de la Constitution, est ultra vires et donc nulle et non avenue. » Le terme ultra vires, emprunté au latin, signifie que ces actions outrepassent les pouvoirs conférés par la Constitution.

L'article 33 de la Constitution libérienne exige un quorum pour la tenue de sessions, tandis que l'article 49 régit l'élection et la destitution des présidents et autres dirigeants de la Chambre.

L'article 33 stipule qu'une majorité simple des membres de chaque chambre constitue

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La présidente de la LACC exhorte la communauté internationale à exiger une gestion transparente des fonds

À l'occasion de la Journée internationale de lutte contre la corruption, la présidente exécutive de la Commission libérienne anti-corruption (LACC), la conseillère Alexandra K. Zoe, a lancé un appel pressant à la communauté internationale et aux partenaires au développement du Liberia. Elle les a exhortés à veiller à ce que les financements alloués aux projets de développement soient systématiquement évalués en fonction des résultats tangibles obtenus.

S'exprimant lors d'une cérémonie tenue à la mairie de Monrovia le 6 décembre 2024, Cllr. Zoe a souligné l'importance cruciale de mesurer les interventions de développement par leur impact réel. « Nous devons placer le suivi et

l'évaluation au cœur de toutes les initiatives de développement et exiger une véritable valeur pour l'argent investi », a-t-elle déclaré.

Promouvoir l'intégrité et la responsabilité

La journée, placée sous le thème national « Promouvoir

l'intégrité et la responsabilité pour une participation accrue des citoyens dans la lutte contre la corruption », a réuni des responsables gouvernementaux, des étudiants, des partenaires

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Éditorial

La chute et l'essor de la démocratie américaine

Par Daron Acemoglu

BOSTON - Il n'aurait pas dû être si surprenant que les électeurs américains soient largement insensibles aux avertissements des démocrates selon lesquels Donald Trump représente une grave menace pour les institutions américaines. Dans un [sondage](#) Gallup de janvier 2024, seuls 28 % des Américains (un niveau historiquement bas) se sont déclarés satisfaits du « fonctionnement de la démocratie américaine ».

La démocratie américaine promet depuis longtemps quatre choses : une prospérité partagée, une voix pour les citoyens, une gouvernance fondée sur l'expertise et des services publics efficaces. Mais, comme celle des autres pays riches et même des pays à revenu intermédiaire, elle n'a pas répondu à ces aspirations.

Il n'en a pas toujours été ainsi. Pendant les trois décennies qui ont suivi la Seconde Guerre mondiale, la démocratie a produit des résultats, en particulier une [prospérité partagée](#). Les salaires réels (corrigés de l'inflation) [ont augmenté](#) rapidement pour tous les groupes démographiques et les inégalités [ont diminué](#). Mais cette tendance s'[est interrompue](#) à la fin des années 1970 et au début des années 1980. Depuis lors, les inégalités sont [montées en flèche](#) et les salaires des travailleurs sans diplôme universitaire ont à peine augmenté. Environ la moitié de la main-d'œuvre américaine a vu les revenus de l'autre moitié s'envoler.

Si les dix dernières années ont été un peu meilleures (l'augmentation des inégalités, qui dure depuis près de 40 ans, semble [s'être arrêtée vers 2015](#)), la poussée d'inflation induite par la pandémie a fait payer un lourd tribut aux familles de travailleurs, [en particulier dans les villes](#). C'est pourquoi tant d'Américains [ont cité](#) les conditions économiques comme leur principale préoccupation, avant la démocratie.

La conviction que la démocratie permettrait à tous les citoyens de s'exprimer était tout aussi importante. Si quelque chose n'allait pas, vous pouviez le faire savoir à vos représentants élus. Si ce principe n'a jamais été pleinement respecté - de nombreuses minorités sont restées privées de leur droit de vote pendant une grande partie de l'histoire des États-Unis -, la privation du droit de vote est devenue un problème encore plus généralisé au cours des quatre dernières décennies. Comme le [dit](#) la sociologue Arlie Russell Hochschild, de nombreux Américains, en particulier ceux qui n'ont pas de diplôme universitaire et qui vivent dans le Midwest et le Sud, en sont venus à se sentir « *étrangers sur leur propre terre* ». Pire encore, les démocrates ont cessé d'être le parti des travailleurs pour devenir une coalition d'entrepreneurs de la tech, de banquiers, de professions libérales et de diplômés de l'enseignement supérieur, qui partagent [très peu](#) de priorités avec la classe ouvrière. Oui, les médias de droite ont également alimenté le mécontentement de la classe ouvrière. Mais ils ont pu le faire parce que les médias grand public et les élites intellectuelles ont ignoré les griefs économiques et culturels d'une grande partie du public. Cette tendance s'est accélérée au cours des quatre dernières années, pendant que les segments hautement éduqués de la population et l'écosystème médiatique mettaient constamment l'accent sur les questions identitaires, ce qui a encore aliéné de nombreux électeurs.

S'il s'agissait simplement de technocrates et d'élites intellectuelles qui fixent l'ordre du jour, on pourrait se dire qu'au moins les experts sont à l'œuvre. Mais la promesse d'une [gouvernance fondée sur l'expertise](#) sonne creux au moins depuis la crise financière de 2008. Ce sont les experts qui ont conçu le système financier, soi-disant pour le bien commun, qui ont fait fortune à Wall Street, parce qu'ils savaient comment gérer les risques. Or, non seulement leur beau discours s'est avéré faux, mais les politiciens et les régulateurs se sont empressés de [sauver](#) les coupables, tout en ne faisant presque rien pour les millions d'Américains qui ont perdu leur maison et leurs moyens de subsistance.

Daron Acemoglu, lauréat du prix Nobel d'économie en 2024 et professeur d'économie au MIT, est coauteur (avec Simon Johnson) de [Power and Progress : Our Thousand-Year Struggle Over Technology and Prosperity](#) (PublicAffairs, 2023).

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Français

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Koffa renforce son autorité après

un quorum pour délibérer, tandis que l'article 49 précise que le Président de la Chambre des représentants, élu pour un mandat de six ans, peut être destitué pour des motifs valables par une résolution des deux tiers des membres.

La Cour suprême a ainsi invalidé les actions du bloc majoritaire, notamment l'organisation de sessions parallèles, la suspension de membres, la réorganisation des comités, et l'élection d'un nouveau Président. Ces actes sont jugés contraires à la Constitution et dépourvus de toute légitimité.

Cependant, la Cour a également précisé qu'elle n'a pas le pouvoir de contraindre les députés absents à assister aux sessions, faute de disposition constitutionnelle en ce sens. Une interprétation controversée

de la décision

Bien que la décision de la Cour suprême ait tenté de clarifier l'impasse, les deux camps revendiquent chacun une victoire.

Le bloc majoritaire soutient que l'utilisation de l'expression ultra vires par la Cour signifie qu'elle s'est déclarée incompétente pour trancher sur un conflit politique interne. De son côté, le Président Koffa considère que la décision confirme son autorité légitime et invalide les actions de ses opposants.

Alors que la Cour suprême a jeté les bases d'un retour à l'ordre constitutionnel, les divisions au sein de la Chambre des représentants demeurent profondes, laissant planer l'incertitude sur une résolution rapide de cette crise institutionnelle.

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La présidente de la LACC exhorte

locaux et internationaux ainsi que des acteurs de la société civile. À l'échelle mondiale, le thème « S'unir avec la jeunesse contre la corruption : façonner l'intégrité de demain » a mis en lumière le rôle essentiel des jeunes dans la lutte contre ce fléau.

Cllr. Zoe a insisté sur la nécessité d'intégrer un cadre de suivi et d'évaluation (S&E) dans tous les projets de développement. Elle a proposé que les partenaires au développement collaborent avec la LACC pour surveiller et évaluer systématiquement les projets après leur mise en œuvre, afin d'identifier les réussites, les défis et les leçons à tirer.

« Une telle approche renforcera la planification des projets futurs et améliorera les résultats, tout en assurant une transparence accrue », a-t-elle affirmé.

Un message fort aux dirigeants politiques

Dans un ton critique mais constructif, Cllr. Zoe a exhorté les leaders politiques libériens à abandonner les discours creux et à privilégier des actions concrètes en faveur des citoyens. « Les regards sont tournés vers vous. La jeunesse du Liberia attend de vous honnêteté, responsabilité et équité. Vous n'avez pas le droit de trahir leurs espoirs », a-t-elle déclaré.

Elle a également salué l'initiative technologique du président Joseph Nyuma Boakai, qui vise à offrir aux jeunes des opportunités d'emploi et à renforcer leurs

compétences dans les mois à venir.

S'adressant directement à la jeunesse, elle les a encouragés à s'impliquer activement dans les processus de décision nationale. « Lutte pour une place à la table des décisions. Exigez votre représentation dans l'élaboration des politiques et la planification du développement. Refusez les gains issus des pratiques corruptives », a-t-elle plaidé.

Un bilan préoccupant après 177 ans d'indépendance

Dans un discours empreint de gravité, Cllr. Zoe a dénoncé les lacunes persistantes du Liberia malgré 177 ans d'indépendance. Elle a déploré l'incapacité du pays à fournir de l'eau potable à Monrovia, à garantir une électricité fiable pour soutenir le développement industriel et à assurer la sécurité alimentaire malgré des sols fertiles et des ressources naturelles abondantes.

« La majorité de nos citoyens vivent encore avec moins d'un dollar par jour, et nous construisons toujours des routes primaires pour relier les capitales des comtés. C'est un échec collectif », a-t-elle souligné.

L'éducation, clé de la lutte contre la corruption

Pour Cllr. Zoe, l'éducation représente un levier fondamental dans la lutte contre la corruption. « L'éducation joue un rôle essentiel dans la formation des valeurs et des perspectives des jeunes.

Ngafuan soutient un plan de sauvetage pour les banques commerciales en difficulté



Le ministre libérien des Finances, Augustine Kpehe Ngafuan, a exprimé son soutien sans réserve à l'initiative du gouvernement visant à venir en aide aux banques commerciales en difficulté, dans le cadre d'un plan de sauvetage de 12 millions de dollars.

Lors de son passage à l'émission Spoon Talk le 7 décembre, M. Ngafuan a salué l'intervention en faveur de SIB Liberia Limited, qualifiant cette mesure de « stratégie économique responsable » conçue pour préserver la stabilité financière, protéger les déposants et éviter une crise économique plus large.

Ce plan de sauvetage, orchestré par le gouvernement en collaboration avec la Banque centrale du Liberia (CBL), inclut une injection directe de 8 millions de dollars dans SIB Liberia et une garantie supplémentaire de 4 millions de dollars pour couvrir les risques de défaut de paiement.

Une réponse nécessaire pour la stabilité économique

Le ministre a défendu ce type d'intervention comme un mécanisme essentiel pour éviter les crises systémiques dans le secteur financier. « Lorsqu'une banque est en difficulté, cela ne se limite pas à l'institution elle-même : des milliers de vies peuvent être affectées. Stabiliser le système financier est donc une priorité absolue », a-t-il déclaré.

Ngafuan a précisé que la CBL, en tant qu'institution autonome, a supervisé l'ensemble du processus, tout en soulignant que des discussions restent en cours pour déterminer si l'aide sera structurée comme un prêt ou une subvention. « La CBL veille à ce que les intérêts du gouvernement et des contribuables soient pleinement protégés », a-t-il ajouté.

Controverses et critiques

Malgré les objectifs annoncés, le plan de sauvetage a suscité des critiques. John Morlu, ancien vérificateur général du

Liberia, a dénoncé ce qu'il qualifie de « dangereux précédent », mettant en garde contre le risque d'encourager une gestion imprudente au sein du secteur bancaire.

Ngafuan a reconnu ces préoccupations tout en défendant l'intervention comme une décision nécessaire pour éviter des conséquences économiques graves. « Dans des moments comme celui-ci, l'inaction n'est pas une option », a-t-il affirmé.

Le ministre a également évoqué des tensions passées entre le gouvernement et les banques locales, notamment des accusations selon lesquelles l'État aurait manqué à ses obligations en matière de paiement d'intérêts sur des emprunts contractés auprès de ces institutions.

Assurer la responsabilité et la transparence

M. Ngafuan a insisté sur le fait que les fonds publics mobilisés pour ce sauvetage devraient être remboursés une fois que SIB Liberia retrouvera sa rentabilité, afin de garantir que les contribuables libériens ne supportent pas le poids financier de cette intervention à long terme.

Cependant, certaines inquiétudes demeurent quant au fait que le gouvernement ait engagé cette aide avant de conclure un accord clair sur les modalités de remboursement.

Alors que ce plan de sauvetage continue de susciter des débats, il pose des questions fondamentales sur l'équilibre entre la stabilisation du secteur bancaire et la responsabilité financière, tout en soulignant la nécessité d'une gestion prudente des ressources publiques.

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RIA security under probe

-Over alleged extortion and intimidation

Security at the Roberts International Airport are to face investigation for alleged extortion.

By Stephen G. Fellajuah
(contributing writer)
Margibi County, Liberia, December 11, 2024 - The Liberia Airport Authority (LAA) launches an

Airport (RIA) in Margibi County. Reports surfaced here, indicating that passengers arriving at the Airport accused state security officers of engaging in

conduct a thorough investigation. The authority plans to collaborate with relevant law enforcement agencies and stakeholders to fully review the situation and ascertain the facts. A statement from the LAA emphasizes its commitment to addressing allegations of misconduct with urgency. "The integrity and safety of our airports, as well as the wellbeing of passengers and staff, remain our highest priority," the statement reads. The LAA encourages anyone who has experienced or witnessed any form of misconduct at the airport to report it, assuring confidentiality for those who may come forward. The Authority also expresses gratitude for the public's cooperation and reiterates its dedication to upholding the highest standards of professionalism and integrity in airport operations. Updates on the progress of the investigation will be shared as it develops, Airport authorities promise. Editing by Jonathan Browne



investigation into allegations of extortion and intimidation involving security personnel at Roberts International

"robbery and intimidation," demanding bribes to clear luggages. In response to these serious claims, the LAA pledges to

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Protest turns chaotic at Tubman University

they refused to give up. They continued to demand justice and for their voices to be heard. After several hours of chaos and violence, the protest finally came to a halt. The campus was left in shambles, with several students injured and traumatized by the brutality they suffered at the hands of the police. In a press statement, the university condemns the violence on

campus, promising to investigate the incident. But for the students, the damage had already been done. They were left with a deep sense of betrayal and mistrust towards the very institution that was meant to protect and educate them. The incident at the Tubman University serves as a stark reminder of power dynamics at play between students and authorities. It also sheds light on the harsh

reality that many students face in their pursuit of education - a reality where their voices are often silenced and rights disregarded. The fight for better education and a better future continues amid disagreement and mistrust. Meanwhile, several students from the campus-based Student Unification Alliance have been arrested by State Security for protesting on campus. Editing by Jonathan

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Senators McGill, Chea

States government placed people under sanctions for corruption and undermining the country's democracy, therefore, he is watching to see decision of the International Community, especially, the United States on the

matter. "All efforts were made to ensure that this government respect and uphold the rule of law. The Executive has decided to do what I believe is a coup by illegally removing the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The interpretation from the

Minister of Justice has no serious business in law. Even the chaired of our Judicial Committee disagreed with this decision. The Supreme Court has ruled to recognize the action of the majority as illegal", he reminds. Editing by Jonathan Browne

BWI still challenged

-Principal tells Boakai

Dr. Freeman has complained that modern machines have been invented to replace human efforts, but BWI still uses human efforts for the training of students.

By Ramsey N Singbeh,
Jr in Margibi

Monrovia, December 11, 2024: The Principal of Booker T. Washington Institute (BWI), Dr. Nancy T. Freeman, has informed President Joseph Nyuma Boakai that the institution is still challenged with major issues. Dr. Freeman informed President Boakai at the 2024 National Agriculture Fair in Margibi County recently on the main campus of BWI. She listed inadequate budgetary appropriation for the smooth running of the institution and the lack of mobility to transport goods and services from vendors to BWI. She lamented the challenge in the movement of staff and students when senior students are going for job training. In addition, the principal said seven of the trade shops at the school need serious intervention.

Agricultural and Industrial and Technical High School, they are still teaching with cutlasses and hoes in the 21st century. She lamented that modern machines have been invented to replace human efforts, but BWI still uses human efforts for the training of students. She noted that this makes the training of students slow, and they are not being exposed to modern technology. Dr. Freeman explained that they are aware that the teaching of agriculture is about 60 to 65% practical. However, she noted that the instructional areas are not spacious and equipped enough to enhance the smooth learning of their students. Further, the Principal detailed that the agriculture department at the institution needs to be expanded to accommodate the growing population of students. She mentioned that there are two classrooms and a soil



Dr. Nancy T. Freeman

She stated that the agriculture department, which is the flagship of BWI, faces a lack of essential tools and equipment. According to her, power tillers, tractors, pickups, motorbikes, and other agriculture machinery needed to support the training program effectively are not available. The shortage of these pieces of equipment, she added, is greatly causing hindrance to the practical training. She continued that it limits the hands-on experience that the students need to succeed in the agriculture sector. Dr. Freeman also told the president that at the BWI

laboratory that are not equipped. Against this background, the BWI Principal said her administration had written the Agriculture Minister, Dr. J. Alexander Nuetah, appealing to his office to help the institution with the above-mentioned agriculture tools that will enhance the learning condition of the students. She, at the same time, appealed to President Boakai to kindly assist the institution. Meanwhile, Dr. Freeman has recognized the efforts of international partners towards the institution.

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Fire hits House's Joint Chamber

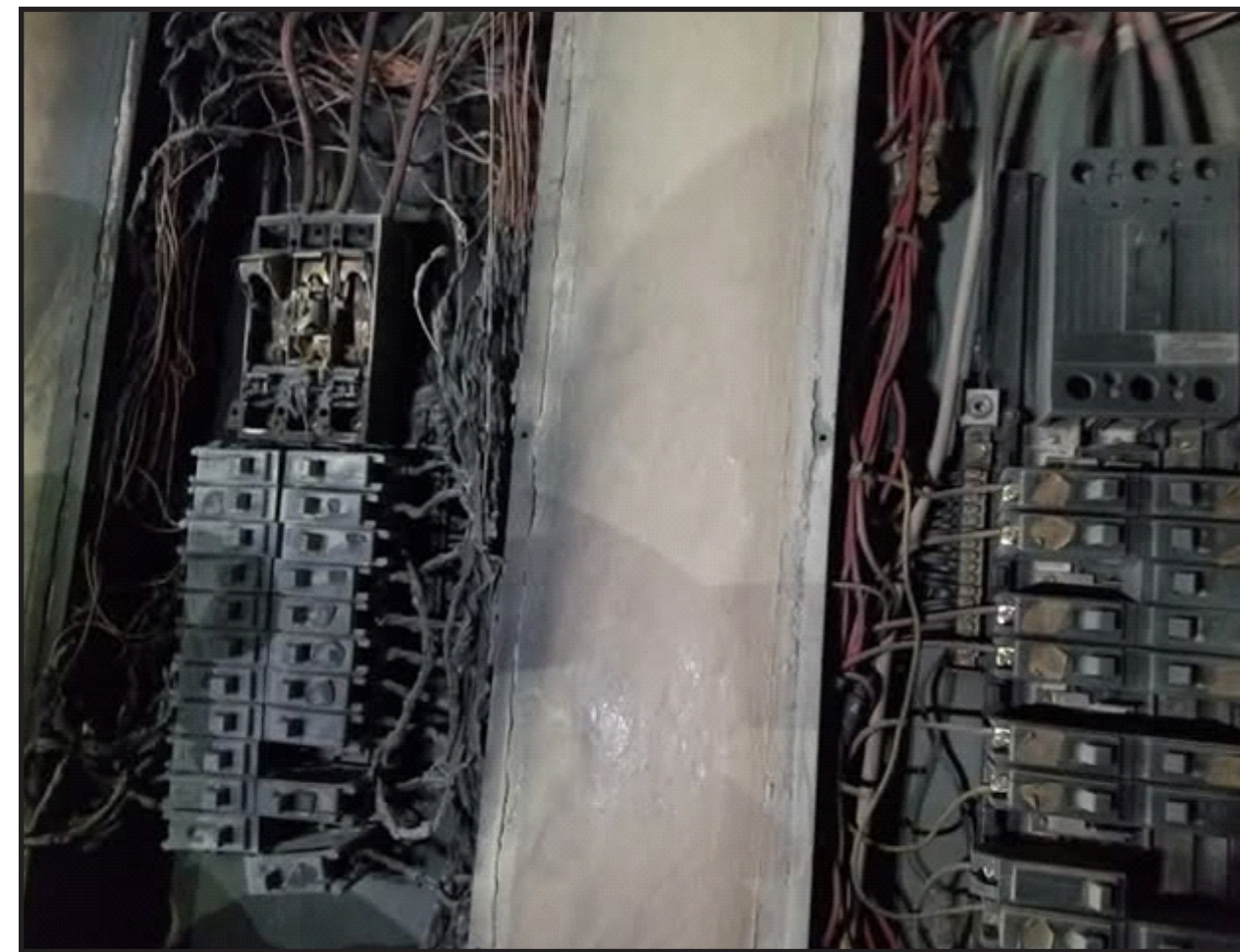
The fire incident caused significant damage at the Capitol on Tuesday, but there was no official account of its cause.

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monrovia, December 11, 2024: Fire broke out at the Capitol of the House of Representatives. The fire incident happened shortly after the Government

conditioning and the first floor of the Capitol Building.

The smoke gradually filled the building, leaving the walls hot. People could not easily access the building.



Building in Monrovia on Tuesday, 10 December 2024, but the source was not identified immediately.

The Joint Chamber of the House of Representatives, where absentee Representatives have been meeting to oust Speaker Fonati Koffa, survived the incident.

The fire broke out while members of the Liberian Senate on Internal Affairs and the Local Government were in a public hearing.

Members of the Senate at the hearing came running following the heartbreaking news regarding the fire outbreak in the joint chamber

of Liberia, through the Ministry of Justice, recognized Mr. Richard Koon as Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The Liberian Senate also recognized Mr. Koon and announced that it would do business with the majority bloc, which elected Mr. Koon as the Speaker.

When reporters, along with security officers, went to the Joint Chamber, the entire building was filled with smoke. People could not breathe easily in the chamber due to the smoke.

During the team's inspection, it was observed that the devastating fire had burned the power breakers that control air

The fire incident has caused significant damage at the Capitol. Many believe it was due to emergency shock, while others believe that somebody may have carried out a terrible act.

There is no official account of what may have caused the fire. Following efforts by officers of the Liberian Senate to extinguish the fire, they placed a call to the Liberia National Fire Service which took over an hour to respond to the situation. The Senate called the Liberia National Fire Service because the smoke was still in the building despite efforts to extinguish the fire.

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BWI still challenged

She averred that most of the trade shops at BWI would have been extinct if their partners had not come to assist the institution.

She listed the partners as the United States of America through its implementing agencies, the European Union through the United Nations International Development Organization (UNIDO), under the Youth Rising, the Sweden Government through its Embassy near Monrovia, and the French International Organization (IECD).

Dr. Freeman reported that the European Union has reconditioned and refurbished four major trade shops with state-of-the-art equipment. The four trade shops according to her, are

Automotive, Carpentry, Electrical, and Machinery.

She continued that the European Union, through UNIDO, reconditioned and refurbished the TVET building, a space now used to teach trainers of trainers from TVET schools around the country. Recently, Dr. Freeman explained, the IECD provided a modern mixer for block making along with its accessories to the Masonry Section of the General Building Trade Department.

She then revealed that there are plans underway for IECD to expand the Domestic Science Department.

Liberia: US flags concern

A 2024 Report on Liberia's Fiscal Transparency released by the Department of State of the United States Government says the country has made significant strides in improving fiscal transparency, but flags several areas of concern, including government's continued use of off-budget accounts, which are not subject to audits or oversight.

By Stephen G. Fellajuah
(contributing writer)

Monrovia, Liberia, December 11, 2024 - The U.S. Department of State 2024 Fiscal Transparency Report on Liberia offers a mixed assessment, recognizing both progress and areas requiring attention in the country's fiscal management and transparency efforts.

The report highlights that Liberia has made significant strides in improving fiscal transparency, noting the government has improved its timeliness in publishing end-of-year reports and has made budget proposals available to the public in a timely manner. The report also notes that basic information related to natural resource extraction awards is now publicly accessible, marking a positive development in the transparency of the country's resource sector.

The General Auditing Commission (GAC) is also commended for having adequate powers to directly access the national budget in

enterprises, further reducing transparency in public financial management.

Despite the GAC's powers to access the budget, the report points out that the commission still falls short of international standards of independence, potentially limiting its effectiveness in holding the government accountable for its fiscal decisions.

Further concerns include government's failure to make the enacted budget publicly available in a reasonable timeframe, which hinders public access to critical financial information. The report also notes that information on national debt is not easily accessible or widely disseminated, which limits public understanding and oversight of Liberia's financial obligations.

It points to ongoing corruption and inconsistent application of regulations, particularly in awarding of natural resource contracts, noting that these problems suggest persistent challenges in governance and the rule of law.

Covering the period from January 1 to December 31, 2024,



time that helps to ensure proper oversight of the government's fiscal management.

However, the report flags several areas of concern, including government's continued use of off-budget accounts, which are not subject to audits or oversight. The report says this practice raises significant concerns about the transparency and accountability of public spending. Additionally, the government did not disclose earnings from state-owned

the report acknowledges progress Liberia has made in fiscal transparency but emphasizes the need for further improvements.

It underscores that addressing the concerns around off-budget accounts, lack of disclosure of State-Owned Enterprises or SOEs' earnings, and persistent corruption would go a long way in strengthening public trust and enhancing the government's overall accountability in fiscal management. Editing by Jonathan Browne

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-More than 80 Guests Expected

conference on Wednesday, December 11, 2024. Among the huge guests expected in the Liberian Capital Monrovia later, include the Fisheries Ministers of Nigeria, Ghana,

International Fisheries Conference will run from 11-13 December 2024 with two days of technical sessions at the Ministerial Conference in Congo Town. The FCWC Fisheries Conference is bringing together Regional Fisheries Ministers representing Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Togo, and Cote D'Ivoire, as well as Heads of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations/Bodies, International fisheries-related Institutions, and International Observers. At the same time, during the three-day International Fisheries Conference, Liberia will assume the Chairmanship position from Ghana as the main driver of fisheries policies and good governance within the subregion. A NaFAA press release added that the conference will adopt a resolution named and styled "The Monrovia Declaration" to honor the host country. Meanwhile, the release further indicated that the Government of Liberia through the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority, NaFAA is honored to host this auspicious International Fisheries Conference in Monrovia.



Already about 46 international guests have arrived in Monrovia ahead of the opening of the

Togo, Cote D'Ivoire, and Benin. Also expected are the heads of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, JICA, and other international Fisheries Organizations and partners. The government of Liberia through the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA), has announced that it will host the 15th Ministerial Conference of the Fisheries Committee for West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) in Monrovia. The three-day