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Source: Research, Policy and Planning Department, CBL.

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Govt. to deploy security at PYJ's grave

-Amid news of plot to remove his corpse

Govt. issues 72-hr ultimatum to Metech Scientific

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P11

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Continental News

87 miners dead in South Africa standoff amid Police tactics outrage

The death toll in a monthslong standoff between police and miners trapped while working illegally in an abandoned gold mine in South Africa has risen to at least 87, police said Thursday. Authorities faced growing anger and a possible investigation over their initial refusal to help the miners and instead “smoke them

details. Community groups launched their own rescue attempts when authorities said last year they would not help the hundreds of miners because they were “criminals.” The miners are suspected to have died of starvation and dehydration, although no causes of death have been released.

South African authorities have

and send supplies down from the surface.

A court ordered authorities last year to allow food and water to be sent down to the miners, while another court ruling last week forced them to launch a rescue operation.

Many say the unfolding disaster underground was clear weeks ago, when community members sporadically pulled decomposing bodies out of the mine, some with notes attached pleading for food to be sent down. “If the police had acted earlier, we would not be in this situation, with bodies piling up,” said Johannes Qankase, a local community leader.

“It is a disgrace for a constitutional democracy like ours. Somebody needs to account for what has happened here.” South Africa's second biggest political party, which is part of a government coalition, called for President Cyril Ramaphosa to establish an independent inquiry to find out “why the situation was allowed to get so badly out of hand.”

“The scale of the disaster underground at Buffelsfontein is rapidly proving to be as bad as feared,” the Democratic Alliance party said. Authorities now believe that nearly 2,000 miners were working illegally in the mine near the town of Stilfontein, southwest of Johannesburg, since August last year.



S.A. Protistan for the death of the Gold miners in the Buffelsfontein

out” by cutting off their food supplies.

National police spokesperson Athlenda Mathe said that 78 bodies were retrieved in a court-ordered rescue operation, with 246 survivors also pulled out from deep underground since the operation began on Monday. Mathe said nine other bodies had been recovered before the rescue operation, without giving

been fiercely criticized for cutting off food and supplies to the miners in the Buffelsfontein Gold Mine last year. That tactic to “smoke them out,” as described by a prominent Cabinet minister, was condemned by one of South Africa's biggest trade unions. Police and the mine owners were also accused of taking away ropes and dismantling a pulley system the miners used to enter the mine

Tanzania denies suspected outbreak of deadly Marburg virus

The World Health Organization on Tuesday said nine possible cases were reported last week in the remote Kagera region, adding that eight of those infected had died.

At the time, residents said they were adapting their behaviour as a result of the news.

“We have refrained from greeting each other by shaking hands, as was the custom in the past,” said local man, Finton Ishengoma.

“Instead, we greet from a distance while continuing to follow the guidance of health experts on how to protect ourselves from this disease.”

But Tanzania's Health Minister, Jenista Mhagama, said after samples were tested, all suspected cases were found to be negative for the Ebola-like virus. She said the country has strengthened its surveillance systems and disease monitoring as a precaution.

News of the suspected cases came weeks after an outbreak of the disease in neighbouring Rwanda was declared over.

Marburg has a fatality rate of as high as 88 per cent.

The WHO had cautioned that the risk of the suspected virus spreading in the region was “high” as Kagera is a transit hub to several countries.

Like Ebola, the Marburg virus originates in fruit bats.

It spreads between people through close contact with the bodily fluids of infected individuals or with surfaces, such as contaminated bed sheets. Symptoms include fever, muscle pains, diarrhoea, vomiting, and in some cases death from extreme blood loss.

There is no authorized vaccine or treatment for Marburg.



Tanzania on Thursday denied reports of a suspected outbreak of the deadly Marburg disease in the northwest of the country.

Enhancing trade relations: UAE and Kenya sign economic pact

This paradigm shift marks the UAE's inaugural bilateral trade agreement with an African nation, showcasing its commitment to diversifying its economy beyond oil dependency.

In the first three quarters of 2024, non-oil trade between the UAE and Kenya soared to \$3.1 billion, reflecting a remarkable 29.1% increase compared to the same timeframe in 2023.

This impressive growth highlights the strengthening economic relationship fostered by the CEPA.

Kenya, recognized as one of Africa's most promising economies, achieved a real GDP growth rate of 5.6% in 2023.

Forecasts suggest an average growth rate of 5.2% from 2024 to 2026

in the region.

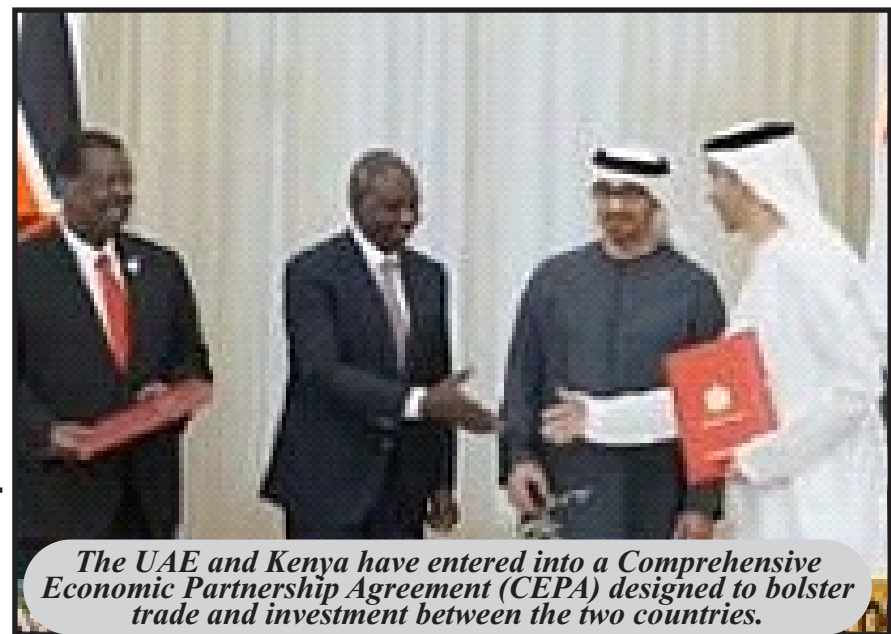
The CEPA is poised to enhance investment in high-potential areas, including information and communications technology (ICT), banking, tourism, infrastructure, and renewable energy.

This aligns with the UAE's broader economic strategy, which aims to double the economy's size to over \$800 billion by the decade's end, with foreign trade as a key pillar.

Additionally, the agreement seeks to eliminate trade barriers across a wide array of goods and services, opening new avenues for importers and exporters in both nations.

Kenyan businesses are expected to capitalize on the UAE's strategic geographic and logistical advantages to broaden their market access.

This initiative is part of the UAE's ongoing strategy to strengthen economic relations with African countries, following similar agreements with nations like



The UAE and Kenya have entered into a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) designed to bolster trade and investment between the two countries.

Key sectors such as services, which contribute 53.6% to Kenya's GDP, and agriculture, accounting for approximately 25%, offer substantial opportunities for UAE businesses looking to expand

Mauritius and the Republic of the Congo.

The CEPA with Kenya is expected to further solidify the UAE's role as a reliable partner and investor in Africa.



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PRESS

EDITORIAL

We need the donation from the AU

The Government of Liberia seems to be dragging its feet in providing transportation funding for logistical equipment donated by the African Union to the Armed Forces of Liberia. The AFL faces serious logistical challenges and needs the donation so badly to enhance its mobility and service-delivery capacity to the state.

But the government, under Commander-In-Chief President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, seems to be moving at a very slow pace in providing US\$1.3 million to transport equipment valued at about US\$20 million from Cameroun to Liberia for its military.

The donation includes military vehicles, earth-moving machines, fire trucks, and other essential assets left over from AU peacekeeping missions that are useful for Liberia and could go a very long way in boosting operational functions of the Armed Forces of Liberia.

But it is lingering at the AU’s Continental Logistics Base in Douala, Cameroon, according to Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) Brigadier General Davidson F. Forleh, who appears to be restless in knocking on every door in the government for the US\$1.3 million transportation cost to have it in the country.

Liberia seems to be behaving in a manner that we say here that you gave a man to a woman, and then he looks up to you for a mattress. The government of President Boakai should source funding immediately to have the equipment transported to the country; it is vital for our security sector, especially the military.

We believe that further delays could be dangerous, as other countries could take advantage of the opportunity if we failed to act urgently as a country. We cannot be lackluster about everything and expect to move ahead in this contemporary era.

We should not forget that a poorly prepared military in Liberia would become a laughter in the subregion. This is something that no patriotic Liberian wants. We may be a small country, but we are a proud and resilient people.

Negotiation for the equipment, including diplomatic and military engagement with the AU, started in 2018, according to Chief of Staff Brigadier General Forleh, who represented the country as Defense Attaché to the AU.

We call on the 55th Legislature to intervene in identifying funding for this important cause just as it moved with a 4G speed in budgeting US\$1.8 million to renovate the damaged floor of the Capitol Building that was gutted by fire.

We believe strongly that bringing in the equipment will be a significant boost for the security sector, particularly the AFL, a Force for Good. Government must place premium on our gallant men and women in arms as they sacrifice to defend the Motherland. This is an opportunity to modernize the capacity of our boys.

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COMMENTARY

By Eric Posner

What Happened to International Law?

CHICAGO – Over the last two weeks, Israel has repeatedly attacked Syria – destroying military facilities and occupying territory – in clear violation of the United Nations Charter, which forbids the use of military force against foreign states except in self-defense or with the authorization of the Security Council.

While some countries have condemned Israel, the United States and most others are withholding criticism. They probably fear that if Syria's weapons are not destroyed, they could fall into the hands of terrorist organizations. Never mind that international law does not allow for such exceptions; it has become another casualty of events.

Israel's strikes in Syria are hardly an isolated example. The ruins of international law are all around us. Russia invaded Ukraine in 2014 and again in 2022, illegally annexed Ukrainian territory, committed atrocities against Ukrainian soldiers and civilians, and now faces accusations of genocide. China has used violence to expand its control over the South China Sea, and it now seems poised to invade Taiwan – an outcome that no one believes will be stopped by international law.

Moreover, the US military interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and elsewhere over the past few decades were all based on dubious legal theories. International crimes are occurring worldwide, in conflict-ridden places like Israel and Gaza, Myanmar, Ethiopia, and Sudan, and within authoritarian countries that are at peace.

Nor are wars and violence the only indications of international law's decline. The same trend afflicts the global economy. With its appellate body unable to function, the World Trade Organization has sat by helplessly as the world turns to protectionism. Likewise, the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court's feeble records make a mockery of their founders' ambitions. The ICJ was supposed to prevent war, and the ICC to ensure justice for victims of war crimes. But neither court does much at all.

A less visible, but equally important, development is that international investment law has provoked a backlash from its intended beneficiaries. Bilateral investment treaties were supposed to promote economic development in poorer countries by protecting foreign investors from expropriation. But there is little evidence that the law has helped these countries catch up. Instead, multinational corporations have used it to block developing countries from implementing economic reforms and environmental regulations that might cut into their margins.

Meanwhile, international law protecting migrants has spurred a nativist backlash in many destination countries, especially those that have been flooded with asylum seekers. As democracy recedes around the world, human-rights law is in tatters. Many governments are stripping citizens of basic legal protections, and political repression is on the rise in countries once thought to be on the road to political freedom. Even the European Union, the most successful international organization, lost the United Kingdom, has had to contend with illiberal governments in Hungary and, until recently, Poland, and faces new challenges as Euroskeptical far-right parties gain power in its member states.

In the United States, Donald Trump won the 2024 presidential election despite, or perhaps because of, his contempt for international law.

In his first term, the US withdrew from more than a dozen international agreements and organizations relating to security, human rights, climate change, and migration. Now, Trump plans to withdraw the US from the World Health Organization, as benign an international institution as there is, on the first day of his next term. But Barack Obama and Joe Biden also did little to promote international law during their respective terms. US recalcitrance has been bipartisan.

Why has this happened? The simplest explanation is that international law is a victim of the anti-globalization backlash. Globalization was once the promised path to freedom and riches, but today people associate it with uncontrolled migration, job loss, pandemics, financial crises, and conflict. The benefits it generated for global economic growth were not sufficiently large, widespread, or visible to offset the real or perceived harms.

But international law was supposed to lock into place a liberal global order. In the 1990s, officials and commentators argued that international law enforces itself: as it spreads, it is internalized by states through their bureaucracies and further entrenched by public opinion. In fact, international law exists only to the extent that states – meaning their leaders, elites, and public – are willing and able to enforce it.

Enforcing international law is costly to the enforcer, who must impose sanctions, cut off diplomatic relations, or engage in other actions that may harm it as much as, or more than, the violator. As governments increasingly realized that the law stood in the way of their objectives, which change in response to changes in domestic needs and international relations, the incentive to maintain it waned. It didn't help that by the 1990s, it was common to claim that international law reached deep into states' traditional jurisdictions, with provisions to regulate family relations, religious norms, cultural values, and the organization of the economy.

Supporters of international law believed that it would spur countries to adopt common moral and political values; it obviously has not. They also believed that countries would kneel to the Washington Consensus – free trade and investment, property rights, robust markets, low taxes – since all these things seemed to make sense in the US and the West in the 1990s. But such policies turned out to be hard to impose on other countries and – we now know – hard to sustain at home. National prosperity depends on stability, and stability requires the broad sharing of economic benefits, respect for local cultures and norms, and a sense among citizens that their political leaders answer to them, not to the foreign NGOs and international bureaucracies that have become convenient political footballs.

In the past, international law focused on protecting sovereignty, establishing basic forms of coordination (such as borders, time zones, maritime rules, and communication protocols), and, with more limited success, restricting the most extreme forms of violence, especially in war. Quite a few states, and not just China and Russia, have long urged the world to return to this modest but sustainable approach. The US, championing liberal internationalism, stood in the way. Under Trump, it may join them.

Eric Posner, a professor at the University of Chicago Law School, is the author of [How Antitrust Failed Workers](#) (Oxford University Press, 2021).



Lord, what happening to ley Rescue Train na?

Dear Father:
So, they say whatin happening to ley Rescue Train na. You wan tell us it will reach to our owner junction na? I thought they say, it wor coming with speed? Oh, my son, you na hear ley news? What news Father? Da whatin happening? You na hear they say ley Rescue Train engine get some problem? Tehy say ley Train na start leaking oil. You say whatin! So soon? Oh, you jest hearing it. They say ley Rescue Train mon be dragging again-lol. Look all da speed thing you used to be hearing they say da vla. You joking! Okay, be there. they say ley Recuse Train engine started smoking before it could even geh on ley main road. You wan see ley Rescue crew fighting for their own survival on le Train? Da lie...hahaha, are you killing me? Be there, be talking leh you jest from Uncle Sam's village. You will soon know whether goat can start from G. Father, what dog care about family planning-ehn da jest to born and leave it with ley owner to take care of it? Where? Da na in this rescue era oo. You hear ley people say ley oil seal and ley gasket maker on ley Rescue Train fini, they telling everybody to be patient da ley play ley dog mon come lee him children eh. Father, ley thing you talking ay making me scarry na oo. In fact, next week I will hustle to geh small money to carry my dog dem for family planning, because right now those three women dogs when they try it, it will na be small thing. Oh, you na wait for ley Resuce Train to come for you again. The play weh ley people fighting to rescue themselves eh da ley play you want com be waiting and expecting-you will balance. Father, dis one da true oo. Be there, they will wait for you. The play ley man dem eh their teeth dem sharp, sharp. Hmm, no wonder my man wor telling me ley other day that him wor going to Pekin man village to get some quick, quick spare parts. Yes, oo. If ley village people na do something, they will really stay long inside oo. Hmm, this our village-kpo. So, all ley delay ley train on, not knowing our man dem fighting for themselves inside there instead of helping to make sure ley train pick up very fast. Hmm, you know Father, I was listening to ley Pekin man dem light ley other day, I wor too shame for ley. Ley man jest looking for all kina means to geh ley kina attention he used to have before bor no way. Ley thing ley people can say empty drum can make plenty noise da true. How our man will make noise na when him gut full. You know, when we were growing up, our people used to tell us to stop talking when we eating. They used to tell us ay na civilized, Da na I understand. How you will talk sef, when your mouth full-ley food will be falling from your mouth. Hmm anyway, me I will na give up I still waiting for ley Rescue Train, even if da 2-hour sef remaining to reach, I will jump on it. Da me na suppose to?

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OP-ED

By Angela Bandemehr and Albert Park

Revealing an Invisible Health Threat

WASHINGTON, DC/MANILA – Lead is everywhere, often hiding in plain sight – in the water you drink, the air you breathe, the food you eat, your personal care products, and your children's toys. Despite being a useful metal, it is [highly toxic](#) and difficult to detect: its fumes and dust are odorless, and exposure to them does not immediately cause overt symptoms in most cases.

This is particularly worrying because exposure to and ingestion of lead can negatively affect almost every part of the body. Recent research finds that exposure [contributes](#) significantly to cardiovascular disease, [killing millions](#) worldwide. But while lead poisoning is responsible for more deaths annually than [HIV/AIDS and malaria](#) combined, and more than [tuberculosis](#), it receives a [small fraction](#) of the funding allocated to these better-known diseases.

The health effects are often irreversible and unequally distributed. For example, lead is especially harmful to children's cognitive development, leading to [lower IQs](#) and behavioral problems. Today, one in three children worldwide have [dangerous levels of the metal](#) in their blood, and nearly all of them live in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). This inequality in exposure accounts for more than [20% of the learning gap](#) between high- and low-income countries.

Moreover, the annual economic losses from lead poisoning are enormous, amounting to around [6.9% of global GDP](#). Health care for those sickened by the toxin, coupled with [additional financing](#) for special-education services to address the developmental and behavioral issues caused by lead poisoning, costs millions of dollars each year in the United States alone. Lead poisoning also reduces an individual's lifetime earning potential, leading to lost tax revenue.

This makes it all the more important to [reduce and eliminate](#) lead exposure. The good news is that it is possible to detect lead in soil, spices, food, paint, cookware, and other solid materials using a [portable X-ray fluorescence analyzer](#) (pXRF), which provides near-instantaneous results and has already proven effective in many settings.

In Nigeria, health officials used pXRFs to help identify and clean up the source of a [lead-poisoning epidemic](#) that killed more than 400 children, ultimately saving thousands of lives. An [assessment](#) of lead levels in consumer goods and foods used the devices to test samples in 25 LMICs, finding that 45% of ceramic tableware, 52% of metallic cookware, and 41% of paint exceeded regulatory limits. The technology has enabled some governments to test the safety of toys and playgrounds, enforce lead-paint regulations in houses, and investigate whether lead exposure is the cause of health incidents. Researchers using pXRFs identified [dangerous levels of lead paint](#) – which is [still sold](#) in many LMICs – in schools and playgrounds in Guyana.

But very few LMICs currently use pXRFs to determine the sources of lead poisoning. In some cases, policymakers lack awareness that lead exposure is a major public-health issue. Perhaps most importantly, these devices are expensive to buy and maintain, and training on how to interpret the data they produce remains limited.

What would it take to improve access to this valuable technology, so that LMICs can identify and eliminate the sources of lead poisoning that put their populations – especially their young people – at risk? To answer this question, [a working group comprising](#) global lead-poisoning experts, practitioners, policymakers, and funders gathered in “Room 3” – linked to Sustainable Development Goal 3 for Good Health and Wellbeing – within the [17 Rooms Initiative](#). In our discussions about how to make pXRFs universally available by 2030, we agreed that the recently launched [Partnership for a Lead-Free Future](#) (PLF), supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), is best positioned to bring together stakeholders to support such an initiative.

Regional hubs, centrally coordinated by the PLF, could be established to provide pXRFs at low cost, training for authorized users, and technical support – both in terms of maintenance and data analysis – for governments, NGOs, and academic partners. With sufficient demand, the proposed hubs can negotiate directly with pXRF manufacturers to lower prices and tailor device design to ensure cost-effective and accurate screening for lead in different sources.

The PLF could thus roll out this technology on a global scale – a breakthrough that would serve as a mechanism for international and local organizations to work together to raise awareness among LMIC governments about the importance of lead poisoning. This could include setting clear protocols and guidelines for using pXRFs to screen for lead in different sources and for acting upon the results.

When it comes to lead exposure, prevention is the only option, because there is no cure. Increased access to pXRFs could help us win the fight against lead poisoning, safeguard the health and future potential of millions of children and young people, and unlock billions of dollars in economic benefits.

Angela Bandemehr is International Environmental Protection Specialist focusing on Lead Pollution Capacity Building at the US Environmental Protection Agency. Albert Park is Chief Economist at the Asian Development Bank.4

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Bel

Traffic Problems Along Tubman Blvd to ELWA Junction

November 30, 2024

As a licensed professional engineer with over 35 years of experience developing highway infrastructure, friends, family members, and colleagues have queried me about the proposed overhead bridge for the Tubman Boulevard corridor. I was shocked to learn about this project, and I need to gain more knowledge or information about it and its objectives.

An SOS went out about the proposed overhead bridge project. I received a Facebook message from a friend about the proposed bridge on DN—News Liberia titled "Design of Liberia's First Overhead Bridge." Below is a photograph of what I received for your use as I discuss this project. Since it is not an official work, let us accept that DN—News Liberia has an official copy.



Please note that this work does not have dimensions. It is not a design file but an artist's projection.

Overhead Bridge Cross section and Two lanes

the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Geometric Design Standards call for lane width to be 12 feet. Let us assume the edges of the street below and the bridge above line up. The bridge deck has four lanes, and the street below has two lanes, totaling six lanes, 6 times 12 feet, equal to 72 feet. Let us include the medium barrier wall and the two barrier walls at the edge of the bridge. Let us assume the minimum width at the bottom of the wall is 2 feet, totaling 3 times 2 feet equal to 6 feet. Excluding sidewalks, if any, the total width across the street, including the bridge, is 78 feet.

Traffic Congestion: A Pressing Issue Requiring Immediate Attention

During the evening hours, between 4 PM and 8 PM, there is a substantial influx of traffic due to staff leaving the Ministerial Complex, shoppers trying to enter or

- 1 -

Bel

Traffic Problems Along Tubman Blvd to ELWA Junction

November 30, 2024

leave the available parking adjacent to Tubman Blvd. at STOP & SHOP Supermarket, and residents of the area being dropped off. This significantly disrupts the free traffic flow along Tubman Blvd., making it inconvenient for commuters trying to reach their destination.

These activities compound the traffic problem when vehicles that have stopped trying to enter the traffic flow interrupt the normal flow of vehicles with the help of the police. As vehicles drive away from the Ministerial Complex or the supermarket, other vehicles try to drop off shoppers or residents, disrupting traffic further. These disruptions contribute to traffic congestion with police-induced interference and other illegal interference called THIRD LANE, which puts motorists at risk of accidents in the lane they should be in.

An engineering problem exists, and it is unclear why it is allowed: the drop-off at the edge of the pavement at locations with no shoulder or curb. The drop-off is significant, causing motorists not to risk their vehicle's undercarriage. Therefore, they disrupt traffic by stopping in the lane to let out passengers, which leads to traffic backup during their stops.

The biggest surprise is that signalized traffic control systems are not utilized at most intersections to control traffic, and inadequate lane markings are being replaced with police use. Police are contributing to the traffic problems at these intersections because they lack a standardized frequency of controlling traffic, like a mechanized electronic system.

The Tubman Blvd corridor, stretching from Vamoma through Catholic Junction to ELWA Junction, is currently facing severe traffic congestion during rush hours between 7:30 AM and 10:00 AM and between 4:30 PM and 8:30 PM. This is not a problem we can afford to ignore.

Our Government Solution to Address the Traffic Congestion Problem

Our government believes that constructing an overhead bridge could be a solution to the traffic congestion problem. However, we must remember that there are many ways to address this issue. What we need is a comprehensive strategy that ensures the most efficient and effective use of public funds.

While constructing an overhead bridge may seem like a straightforward solution to the traffic congestion problem, we must ask ourselves if it best uses public funds. Are we prioritizing our egos over addressing our national pressing needs? We must consider all viable alternatives before deciding.

Viable options for Consideration

Boimah Engineering Inc. believes other viable alternatives to the bridge will be cost-effective, provide a long-term design life, and are aesthetic. For example:

- Spot widening critical areas along the corridor by adding dedicated lanes on each side of the boulevard
- Improving Cheeseman Avenue beginning at Airfield Road through and under James Springs Airfield to Old Road with a bridge above for aircraft to use during taxing
- Reconstructing the Congo Town Old Road

- 2 -

Bel

Traffic Problems Along Tubman Blvd to ELWA Junction

November 30, 2024

- Proposed Crossing Construction across the Montserrado Basin

When these treatments are finally achieved, they will severely ease traffic congestion, making the proposed overhead bridge obsolete.

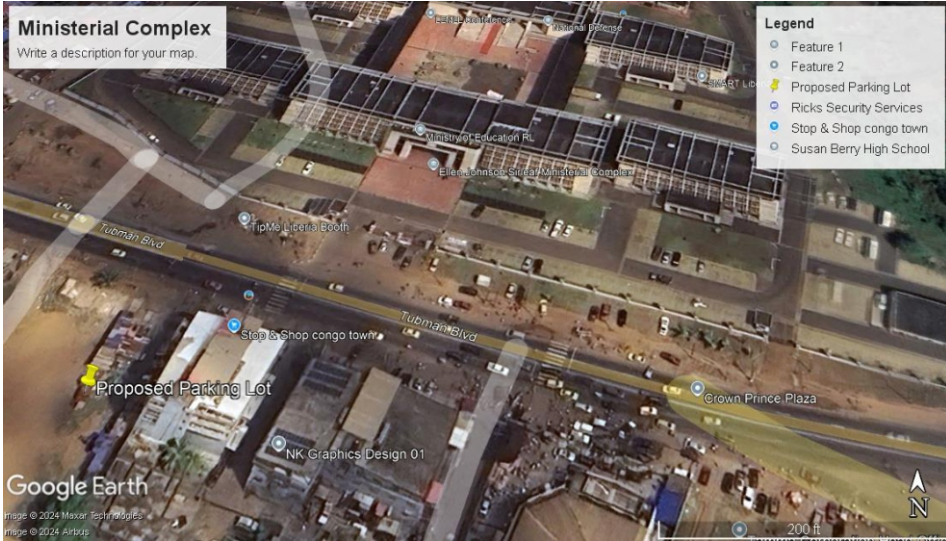
1. Spot widening critical areas

Boimah Engineering Inc. underscores the necessity for practical, cost-effective solutions with sound geometric designs and engineering decisions at its core to address the traffic problems along the Tubman Blvd corridor.

We believe spot widening in strategy critical traffic congestion locations with dedicated left or right turning along Tubman Boulevard within the discussed limits is a viable option. Prohibiting parking at selected locations will also ensure smoother traffic flow during rush hours and reduce the risk of accidents.

Enhancing Safety and Convenience: Our Proposal for a Shared Controlled Parking Lot

Adjacent to the supermarket shown in the photograph below, labeled "Proposed Parking Lot," a parking lot can be created with a transition to the supermarket for patrons. The parking lot can be designed to accommodate the anticipated vehicles, with controls, clear markings, and lighting for safety and convenience.



This parking lot could be made available to visitors and staff of the Ministerial Complex for a fee.

2. Improving Cheeseman Avenue

The extension of Cheeseman Avenue under James Springs Airfield will involve cutting through the airport pavement connecting to the Old Road to Congo

- 3 -

Bel

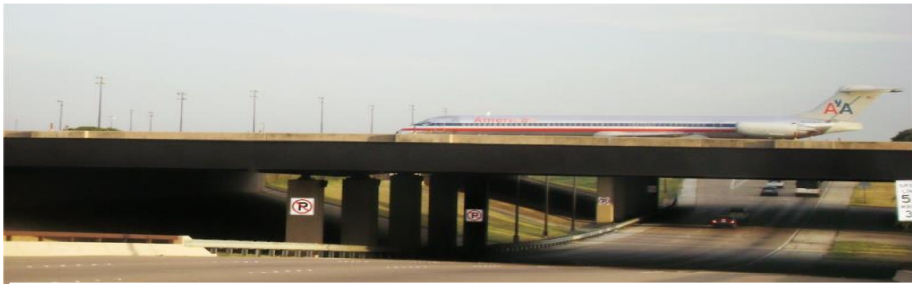
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Town Back Road and constructing a bridge above the cut section for aircraft to use during taxing.



A proposed alignment connects Cheeseman Avenue under the airport to Old Rd.



A view of a similar proposed road that would go under James Springs Airfield, with a bridge for aircraft to use for taxing.

Cutting through the JS Airfield limits the landing strip so the designed aircraft can land safely. As shown below, the recommendation is to extend the landing strip into the Montserrado Basin by treating it to the required length.

- 4 -

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Govt working group to engage Firestone Liberia

The Government of Liberia constitutes working group to engage Firestone Liberia to discuss mutual interests.

Monrovia, Liberia, with fostering constructive dialogue with Firestone Liberia's leadership. January 16, 2025 - In line with President Joseph N. Boakai's directive to strengthen Liberia's rubber industry and improve conditions for smallholder farmers, a high-level Government Working



The Government of Liberia constitutes working group to engage Firestone Liberia to discuss mutual interests.

Group has been constituted to engage with Firestone Liberia on critical issues of mutual interest. According to a press release from the Ministry of Agriculture, the Working Group, chaired by Agriculture Minister Dr. J. Alexander Nuetah, comprises key government officials and advisors, tasked

and local communities," the release says.

Members of the Government Working Group are: Minister of Agriculture – Chairman; Minister of Justice – Co-Chairman, Minister of Labor – Member; Minister of Public Works – Member and Minister of State for Presidential Affairs –

Member.

Others are Minister of Finance & Development Planning – Member, National Investment Commission – Member and the Economic Advisor to the President – Member.

The release further says the panel will engage Firestone Liberia's management in regular consultations, focusing on identifying and addressing challenges hindering rubber production, developing strategies to support smallholder farmers and local farmer programs, improving communication and collaboration between the government and Firestone Liberia and resolving regulatory and logistical concerns tied to concession agreements.

According to the release, the government is keen on maintaining productive partnerships with private sector entities such as Firestone Liberia and notes their significant contributions to the country's development as the rubber sector remains vital to Liberia's economy and the livelihood of its smallholder farmers. Press Release

Ecobank didn't authorize release of LISGIS' account statement

-Defense first witness testifies

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monrovia, Liberia, January 16, 2025 - Testifying as co-defendant, Ecobank's first witness in the ongoing US\$700,000 libel lawsuit at the Civil Law Court in Monrovia, Mr. Stephen Howard had admitted that the account statement of the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) was leaked to Alex Williams, former Deputy Director General for Statistics, a non-signatory of the account by one of its employee Yussif Kromah, for Acting head of the Card Operation Department. Witness Howard, the bank corporate manager, testified here on Monday, January 13, 2025 that at no time did the bank authorize Kromah to release any information about customers' account details to a non-signatory of the account.

"Kromah violated the confidentiality agreement signed with the bank and he was dismissed immediately after an investigation by the internal audit department, and I approved the findings," Witness Howard said, during his testimony.

Wilmot Smith, the dismissed deputy director general for information coordination at LISGIS, filed an Action of Damages for Wrong lawsuit

against the bank and Kromah, seeking US\$500,000 as general damages and US\$200,000 in punitive damages, for allegedly committing a libelous act of harming his reputation.

Smith argued that Kromah allegedly shared details of LISGIS' account statements with Alex Williams, former Deputy Director General for Statistics, a non-authorized individual of the account, who displayed the information with co-defendants Spoon TV, Mr. Stanton Witherspoon and Martin K. N. Kollie, on social media, manipulating the information and accusing him (Smith) of withdrawing monies from the Population Census fund intended to pay

enumerators to his personal use.

Smith further argued that under the doctrine of Respondent's superior, the employer is responsible for the act and conduct of its employee, especially when the wrongful conduct was done during the course of duty of the employee and within the working hourly time of the employee in the bank facility.

But Howard countered that the bank cannot be responsible for the act of Kromah's because they conducted an investigation and established that it was him (Kromah) who allegedly leaked the information with co-defendant Williams. "Kromah violated the bank's confidentiality agreement when he, without any authority,

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Govt. admits failure in assets recovery

The Government of Liberia says its Assets Recovery Team established last has failed to recover stolen state assets here.

By Kruah Thompson

Monrovia, Liberia, January 17, 2025 - The Deputy Minister of Information, Culture Affairs, and Tourism (MICAT) Daniel O. Sando, expresses frustration over failure of the government's Assets Recovery Team established by President Joseph Boakai, to recover stolen state assets.

Speaking at a regular press briefing Thursday, January 16, 2025 in Monrovia, Deputy Minister Sando noted that nearly a year after its creation, the team has yet to secure a single cent of misappropriated state funds or property.

According to him, since its inception on March 5, 2024, the team, formed under Executive Order No. 126 with the mandate to identify and recover assets illegally acquired by officials from past administrations, has left its mission unfulfilled due to a combination of legal challenges, attributing to its operational delays. Shortly after taking office, President Boakai signed Executive Order# 126 on March 5, 2024, establishing the Office of Assets Recovery. The task force was mandated to identify, trace, and retrieve assets illegally acquired or converted to private use by officials from past administrations.

But, the most significant obstacle came in March 2024 when Gracious

there were arguments in court, and we are hopeful that the matter will be resolved soon."

Further complicating the task force's mission, allegations of unauthorized expenditures surfaced in May 2024. The reports accused the team's chairman, Counselor Edward Kla Martins, of mismanaging US\$321,000 in funds.

These revelations fueled criticism from key figures, including House Speaker Jonathan Fonati Koffa, who advocated at the time for restructuring the task force to include seasoned professionals and mitigate perceptions of political bias.

Amidst these setbacks, Deputy Minister Sando defended the government's commitment to combating corruption.

"Every time I speak with Counselor Martins, he remains optimistic about retrieving the stolen assets," he says. Acknowledging that the delays have hindered the government's anti-corruption drive, Sando expresses confidence in the judiciary's ability to resolve the ongoing case, while emphasizing the importance of holding individuals accountable for looting public institutions.

"People who came to serve the government, used the opportunity to steal from the country," he laments. "Once the team's mandate is reactivated, those involved will face



Dep. Minister Daniel O. Sando

Ride, a private transportation company, filed a petition in the Supreme Court after its vehicles were forcibly seized by the task force under the intention that the vehicles were allegedly acquired illegally or converted to private use from government resources.

Following the filing of the partition to challenge the seizure, the Supreme Court of Liberia halted the task force's activities to review the case.

However, Minister Sando laments that the partition filed by Gracias Ride has paralyzed the team's operations for over nine months, leaving other alleged cases of corruption uninvestigated.

"This legal wrangle has caused significant delays and crippled the task force's progress," he says, and adds, "People are questioning whether the president has the authority to set up a task force to retrieve stolen assets. Yesterday,

investigations and be brought to justice."

After outlining the hurdles that have crippled the task force's progress, Sando reiterates the current administration's resolve to recover stolen assets and restore public trust. He calls on Liberians to remain patient, as the government navigates legal and operational challenges to fulfill its promise of accountability and transparency to the Liberia people.

"The nation now awaits the Supreme Court's ruling, which could determine the future of the Assets Recovery Team and the broader fight against corruption under President Boakai's administration."

Meanwhile, the mandate which was explicitly outlined as part of the order granting the task force a limited period to identify, trace, and recover stolen government assets will expired on 5 March 2025.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Starts from page 6 **Ecobank didn't authorize release of LISGIS' account statement**

released the account statement of LISGIS to a non-signatory of the account," testified Howard, who heads the Disciplinary Committee at Ecobank (Liberia) Limited.

Howard further testified that the matter was brought to his attention by former Finance Minister Samuel Tweah, after it was reported in a daily.

"Immediately when Minister Tweah wrote us that we have released the LISGIS's Account Statement to the press, accusing him (Tweah) and Smith of opening an account in Cote d'Ivoire, where they transferred millions from the Census fund, we responded by denying any connection with the publication," Howard said.

"This publication is misleading and it was Ecobank that transferred the money to a bank in Cote d'Ivoire to purchase Census materials for LISGIS." Howard said.

Further to his testimony, Howard also explained that he got to know about the leaking of LISGIS's account statements, when he was approached by Smith in his office.

He said, Smith informed him that he (Smith) was allegedly maligned by Williams and Spoon TV and Mr. Stanton Witherspoon and Martin K. N. Kollie, incriminating him to diverting Census money into his personal benefits on the social media.

H continued that it was then that he ordered the bank's audit department to conduct an investigation of the matter, since it was grave.

"It was during the investigation that we were able to trace Kromah to the violation of the confidentiality agreement signed with him, preventing employee from disclosing clients' account information. After the investigation, we're dismissed," Howard said.

Smith's lawsuit argues that the defendants produced the bank statements of LISGIS' account numbers #6101350441 and 6100064362 to Mr. Alex Williams, an employee of LISGIS, who is one of the panelists on the Spoon Talk Show.

According to him, he was accused of withdrawing monies from the accounts, and diverted same to his benefits.

According to Cllr. Arthur Johnson, Smith's lawyer, the bank statements were printed while his client was still in the employ of LISGIS as deputy director.

"The said statements were manipulated by the defendants and the management of Spoon TV, and Mr. Stanton Witherspoon, to lie that the said statements were evidence of the wrongful withdrawal," the suit claims.

The court record said that at the time of the libelous action, co-defendant Kromah was then employed by the co-defendant bank, assigned in the Card Operation Department.

"This act of Kromah was carried out on October 31, 2022, admitted to it in an Affidavit of attestation dated March 30," the record alleges.

The suit further details that co-defendant Ecobank after investigating, was fully aware that their conduct against the plaintiff had harmed his reputation.

He noted that "the defendants engaged in a cosmetic approach of attempting to deal with the situation, dismissed co-defendant Kromah on January 19, 2023."

The lawsuit claims that the defendant Ecobank is responsible for the act and conduct of its employee, Kromah because the co-defendant Eco-bank lawfully employed Kromah." *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Fight at PYJ's funeral in Nimba

By Thomas Domah, Nimba County

Street girls or prostitutes who reportedly trooped from Monrovia, Grand Bassa, Lofa and Bong counties to Ganta, Nimba County for the burial ceremony of the late Senator PYJ are engaged in serious fight with their colleagues in the county over male customers.

Those they met on the ground are contending that they will not allow street girls from other counties to dominate their business, especially with guests from Monrovia arriving there for the burial rite.

Tension flared among the call girls following news of the presence of high-power government delegations alongside former President George Weah and supporters.

The commercial sex workers are usually at each other's throats in the vibrant commercial district for customers, but no one had thought that they would not spare a solemn gathering such as burial of a statesman in plying the world's oldest profession.

There has been no arrest, as state security, officials of government, lawmakers, most of whom are married, are their target in the social fight.

Editing by Jonathan Browne



Pres. Boakai & First Lady Kartumu Boakai Console Eminent Wettee

-Following the Passing of His Mother

Eminent Emmanuel S. Wettee bows in gratitude to President Boakai and First Lady Boakai for the honor

President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr. and First Lady Kartumu Y. Boakai have expressed their deepest condolences to the Eminent Chairman of the All-Liberian Conference on Dual Citizenship (ALCOD), Mr. Emmanuel S. Wettee, and his family on the passing of his mother, Madam Rebecca C. Doe.

The Boakais' condolence message was extended to Eminent Wettee during a rendezvous with diaspora Liberians held at President and Frist Lady Boakai's residence on December 19, 2024.

The late Mother Doe, a cherished member of the Liberians in Columbus Incorporated (LICI), and the River of Life Global Ministries Church, departed this world at the Ohio State Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, USA, on December 14, 2024. Her loss has left a significant void in the hearts of her family including her son, Eminent Wettee, and the diaspora communities, both in Liberia and the diaspora.

During their tribute, President Boakai and the First Lady commended Eminent Wettee for his dedication to uniting Liberians at home and abroad, even as he endured the loss of his beloved mother.

In 2022, Eminent Wettee was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Liberians in Columbus Incorporated (LICI), where his late mother was also a respected member.

In 2023, he was named "The Father of Dual Citizenship" by European Federation of Liberian Associations (ELFA). He has received countless awards and recognitions for his successful leadership roles in the diaspora and Liberia.

The loss of Madam Rebecca Doe has been deeply felt by her family and the communities she touched. Sympathies have poured in from members of LICI, ALCOD, EFLA, The Federation of Liberian Associations in Ohio (FOLAO), ULAA, ULAA Persons of Eminent Council, Sinoe County Associations in the Americas (SCAA), The National Krao Associations in the Americas (NKTA), The New Kru Town Association in the Americas (NKTA), Liberia Advocacy for Change (LAC), The Booker Washington Institute (BWI), Liberians in the diaspora and at home, and many other diaspora Liberian organizations. Members of these organizations have united in their support and comfort for Eminent Wettee and his family during this challenging time.

Ma Rebecca Doe will also be



Eminent Wettee and his late mother – Mother Rebecca C. Doe

The First Lady, specifically, at the end of her remarks, honored Eminent Wettee by gowning him on behalf of the President and nation and applauded his selflessness and patriotism.

"We are so proud of you. The idea that you came here, despite losing your mother, shows that Liberia is above all," the First Lady said.

She continued: "Your love and passion for our country are evident. Please accept our sympathy on behalf of the President and the people of Liberia. Thank you for all your sacrifices."

Eminent Emmanuel S. Wettee is widely recognized as the foremost advocate for dual citizenship in Liberia. He is the Chairman of the All-Liberian Conference on Dual Citizenship (ALCOD). He is a former President of the Union of Liberian Associations in the Americas (ULAA). His continuous advocacy and contributions to the dual citizenship movement have earned him national and international accolades.

remembered for her warmth, kindness, and her support for her community.

The nation joins the Wettee family in mourning the loss of Madam Rebecca Doe while celebrating her contributions and legacy.

Funeral Arrangements

The family, friends, and community will gather to honor the life of Madam Doe with the following services:

He wake-keeping will be held on January 17, 2025, at the River of Life International Ministry, 3509 Refugee Rd, Columbus, OH 43232. Viewing of Mother Doe's remains will begin at 5 P.M. to 7:30 PM and the wake-keeping service will start at 7:30 PM and end around 9:30 P.M.

On January 18, 2025, Mother Rebecca Doe's Funeral Service will take place at Brice United Methodist Church, 3160 Brice Rd, Brice, OH 43109 and it will start at 9 A.M. and end around 11:30 A.M. She will be laid to rest at Forest Lawn Memorial Gardens.

Following the burial, a repast will be held at the Star Event Center, located at 4257 Eastland Square Dr., Columbus, OH 43232.

Français

Joseph Boakai lance un ambitieux plan national de développement sur cinq ans

Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, 16 janvier 2025 – Le président du Liberia, Joseph Nyuma Boakai, a officiellement lancé un Plan National de Développement quinquennal, baptisé Agenda ARREST pour un Développement Inclusif



(AAID), accompagné des Agendas de Développement des Comtés (ADC), lors d'une cérémonie tenue à Buchanan, dans le comté de Grand Bassa. Ce programme ambitieux,

élaboré en mai 2024 à la suite de consultations approfondies menées dans les 136 districts administratifs, 15 comtés et 11 secteurs budgétaires, représente une étape stratégique pour le développement national. Fruit d'une collaboration étroite avec des acteurs clés, ce plan s'inscrit dans une démarche alignée

milliards de dollars américains, l'AAID repose sur six axes prioritaires : l'agro-industrie, les infrastructures routières, la gouvernance et l'état de droit, l'éducation et le capital humain, l'assainissement et le tourisme. La mise en œuvre de ce plan s'étalera sur la période 2025-2029.

Une vision fondée sur les acquis et les aspirations des Libériens Lors de son discours de lancement, le président Boakai a déclaré que l'AAID s'appuie sur les enseignements tirés des initiatives précédentes, notamment la Stratégie de Réduction de la Pauvreté, l'Agenda pour la Transformation et l'Agenda Pro-Pauvres pour la Prospérité et le Développement.

Il a souligné que l'AAID et les ADC visent à répondre aux aspirations des Libériens issus de divers horizons – agriculteurs, entrepreneurs, jeunes, membres de la diaspora ou encore personnes vivant avec un handicap – tout en combattant la pauvreté

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Le gouvernement poursuit un juge dans l'affaire des allégations de torture de Tom Ethridge

Le gouvernement libérien, représenté par le ministère de la Justice, a porté plainte contre le juge Koboi Nuta de la Cour criminelle « B ». Cette action vise à contester la décision du juge d'autoriser Tom Ethridge, suspect clé dans l'enquête sur l'incendie du bâtiment du Capitole, à consulter un médecin indépendant. Cette démarche s'inscrit dans le cadre d'une requête en habeas corpus déposée par les avocats d'Ethridge, après trois jours de détention. Le tribunal

avait ordonné la présentation de l'accusé en audience, conformément à la procédure légale visant à garantir les droits fondamentaux des détenus. Des allégations de torture au cœur de la controverse Tom Ethridge, employé de Fonati Koffa, président contesté de la Chambre des représentants, a déclaré avoir été soumis à des actes de torture et à des pressions psychologiques par les forces de sécurité lors de sa garde à vue. Face à ces accusations, ses avocats ont demandé un examen médical indépendant, une requête

approuvée par le juge Nuta. Cependant, dans une plainte déposée devant le juge en Chambre Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay, le ministère de la Justice affirme que cette décision est erronée. Le gouvernement considère qu'un examen médical indépendant pourrait compromettre les preuves recueillies dans le cadre de l'enquête et porter atteinte à l'intégrité des procédures en cours.

Retour sur les faits

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Éditorial

Le Libéria doit agir sans délai pour sécuriser la donation de l'Union africaine

Par Daron Acemoglu

Le gouvernement libérien tarde à mobiliser les fonds nécessaires au transport d'équipements logistiques offerts par l'Union africaine (UA) aux Forces armées du Libéria (AFL). Cette donation, d'une valeur estimée à 20 millions de dollars, comprend des véhicules militaires, des engins de chantier, des camions de pompiers et d'autres matériels stratégiques. Ces ressources vitales, capables de renforcer significativement les capacités opérationnelles de l'AFL, restent immobilisées à la Base logistique continentale de l'UA à Douala, au Cameroun.

La somme requise pour assurer leur acheminement au Libéria, fixée à 1,3 million de dollars, n'a toujours pas été débloquée. Le général de brigade Davidson F. Forleh, chef d'état-major des Forces armées, multiplie les appels au gouvernement pour obtenir ce financement crucial, mais l'administration sous la direction du président Joseph Nyuma Boakai semble avancer à un rythme préoccupant face à l'urgence de la situation.

Ce retard met en lumière une certaine négligence qui pourrait avoir des conséquences graves. Si le Libéria ne prend pas rapidement des mesures, d'autres pays pourraient revendiquer ces équipements, compromettant ainsi une opportunité précieuse pour moderniser les capacités de ses forces armées. Une telle inaction constituerait une perte stratégique majeure pour le secteur de la défense, déjà fragilisé par des défis logistiques importants.

Il est impératif que le Libéria accorde une priorité absolue à son secteur sécuritaire. Une armée insuffisamment équipée affaiblit non seulement la défense nationale, mais expose également le pays à des vulnérabilités dans une région où les défis sécuritaires sont croissants. Le Libéria, bien que petit par sa taille, a toujours été reconnu pour son courage et sa résilience. Laisser cette opportunité lui échapper serait un affront à ces valeurs fondamentales.

Selon le général Forleh, les négociations pour cette donation avaient été initiées dès 2018, lorsqu'il représentait le Libéria en tant qu'attaché de défense auprès de l'UA. Aujourd'hui, il revient à la 55^e Législature de démontrer la même réactivité dont elle a fait preuve récemment en allouant 1,8 million de dollars pour rénover une section endommagée du bâtiment du Capitole. Les priorités budgétaires doivent refléter les enjeux stratégiques du pays.

Le transport de ces équipements au Libéria représente bien plus qu'une simple opération logistique. Il s'agit d'une opportunité unique de moderniser les Forces armées et de renforcer leur capacité à protéger la souveraineté nationale. Ce soutien logistique est essentiel pour faire des AFL une force véritablement opérationnelle et efficace, capable de relever les défis sécuritaires contemporains.

Dans un contexte mondial marqué par des menaces croissantes et des attentes élevées en matière de sécurité, le Libéria ne peut se permettre d'hésiter. Il en va de l'avenir de ses forces armées, de la sécurité de ses citoyens et de l'honneur de la nation. Fin.

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Happy New Year to all
our Readers

Français

Starts from page 8 Joseph Boakai lance un ambitieux plan

multidimensionnelle qui touche une large partie de la population.

« Le Liberia, bien que riche en ressources naturelles, continue de faire face à des défis structurels majeurs, notamment un chômage élevé, une infrastructure inadéquate, une faible alphabétisation, ainsi que des inégalités persistantes. L'Agenda ARREST exige un changement de mentalité et une action collective pour libérer le potentiel de chaque citoyen », a déclaré le président Boakai.

Un plan aligné sur des objectifs ambitieux Positionnant l'AAID comme un pilier central de la Vision 2030, le chef de l'État a indiqué que la transformation du Liberia nécessite une gouvernance efficace, la modernisation des infrastructures et des services essentiels tels que l'éducation et la santé, tout en veillant à l'inclusion des femmes, des jeunes et des plus vulnérables. Un Comité National de Pilotage, dirigé par le président lui-même, supervisera la mise en œuvre du plan, en collaboration avec les Nations Unies et des équipes techniques. Le président Boakai a insisté sur l'importance de la transparence et de la redevabilité dans l'utilisation des fonds, affirmant que chaque dollar investi doit produire des résultats concrets.

Des objectifs économiques et sociaux ambitieux Le ministre des Finances, Augustine Kpehe

Ngafulan, a présenté les projections économiques du plan, prévoyant une augmentation de 37 % du PIB, qui passerait de 4,75 milliards à 6,5 milliards USD, ainsi qu'une hausse de 23,6 % du PIB par habitant, de 850 à 1 050 USD.

Sur le plan social, le plan vise à accroître l'espérance de vie de 60 à 65 ans, à réduire le taux de mortalité maternelle de 742 pour 100 000 à 440 pour 100 000 et à abaisser le taux de pauvreté multidimensionnelle de 45 % à 36 %. Ces progrès devraient permettre au Liberia de gagner sept places dans le classement de l'indice des ODD, passant de la 152e à la 145e place sur 166 pays.

Engagement des parties prenantes Lors de la cérémonie, les représentants des 15 comtés ont présenté leurs plans de développement locaux, qui seront intégrés au cadre national. « Ces documents deviendront des outils de travail essentiels pour mon administration », a affirmé le président Boakai.

Par ailleurs, la présidente du Sénat, Nyonblee Kangar Lawrence, a annoncé que les sénateurs examineront et apporteront leurs recommandations au cours de la mise en œuvre, réitérant leur soutien à cet instrument stratégique. Le président Boakai a conclu en appelant les citoyens et les partenaires au développement à s'unir autour de l'AAID pour bâtir un Liberia plus prospère et équitable.

Starts from page 8 Décès à l'hôpital catholique St. Joseph :

Arrêté le 10 janvier 2025, Tom Ethridge est soupçonné d'être impliqué dans l'incendie qui a ravagé le bâtiment du Capitole. Après trois jours de détention au siège de la Police nationale libérienne, ses avocats ont déposé une requête en habeas corpus, contraignant les autorités à le présenter devant le tribunal. Malgré les accusations de torture formulées par Ethridge, le

gouvernement maintient que le suspect ne devrait pas être autorisé à consulter un médecin indépendant. Selon les autorités, cette demande s'apparente à une tentative de fragiliser l'enquête en cours. Délibérations en cours L'affaire est désormais entre les mains du juge en Chambre Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay, chargé de statuer sur la légalité des

décisions du juge Nuta. Cette affaire illustre les tensions récurrentes entre la protection des droits fondamentaux et la gestion des enquêtes sensibles dans des affaires à forte connotation politique. Une décision judiciaire est attendue dans les prochains jours.

Le gouvernement nie les accusations de torture contre un suspect dans l'incendie du bâtiment du Capitole

Le gouvernement libérien a fermement rejeté les accusations de torture et de violations des droits humains portées contre Thomas Etheridge, un suspect dans l'enquête sur l'incendie du bâtiment du Capitole. Ces accusations ont émergé le lundi 13 janvier 2024, lorsque M. Etheridge, collaborateur du président contesté de la Chambre des représentants, le conseiller J. Fonati Koffa, a affirmé avoir subi des mauvais traitements infligés par la Police nationale libérienne.

Lors du dépôt d'une requête en habeas corpus, M. Etheridge a accusé les forces de sécurité de l'avoir soumis à des violences physiques et psychologiques, notamment des menaces de viol, afin de le contraindre à signer une confession le liant à l'incendie qui a endommagé le bâtiment du Capitole. Il a également affirmé avoir été emmené dans un lieu secret, où il aurait été agressé physiquement pendant des heures avant qu'un document pré-rédigé ne lui soit présenté, qu'il a refusé de signer.

Réponse du gouvernement Le ministre de l'Information, Jerolinmek Mathew Piah, a catégoriquement nié ces allégations, réaffirmant l'engagement du gouvernement à respecter et protéger les droits humains.

« Le gouvernement tient à déclarer clairement qu'il ne cautionnera jamais la torture ni aucun traitement cruel, inhumain ou dégradant envers les

détenus placés sous la garde de nos forces de sécurité », a déclaré M. Piah. Il a rejeté les accusations portées contre la Police nationale libérienne et a affirmé que les agents impliqués avaient agi dans le strict respect de la loi. Le ministre a également annoncé que le gouvernement était disposé à coopérer avec une enquête indépendante et impartiale. « Nous accueillons favorablement toute enquête menée par des organisations nationales, des journalistes ou des partenaires privés. Les enquêteurs auront un accès total aux installations de l'État et au personnel concerné », a-t-il ajouté. Contexte et appel à la transparence L'incendie du bâtiment du Capitole, survenu au début du mois, a suscité une vive indignation dans tout le pays,

entraînant des appels à la transparence et à la responsabilité dans l'enquête en cours. Alors que plusieurs représentants ont été interrogés par la Police nationale libérienne dans le cadre de l'enquête, les accusations de torture formulées par M. Etheridge ont amplifié les tensions, poussant de nombreux citoyens et organisations de la société civile à exiger des réponses claires et une investigation impartiale. M. Piah a assuré que le gouvernement restait ouvert à toute collaboration avec les organisations de la société civile et les médias pour faire la lumière sur ces accusations et garantir la protection des droits fondamentaux de tous les citoyens.



Thomas Etheridge

Boakai promet l'électrification de Grand Bassa

Le président Boakai lance la mise en œuvre de son ambitieux plan de développement, en annonçant le rétablissement de l'électricité dans la ville portuaire de Buchanan, dans le comté de Grand Bassa.

Buchanan, Libéria, 16 janvier 2025 – La ville portuaire de Buchanan, située dans le comté de Grand Bassa, au sud-est du Libéria, verra l'arrivée de l'électricité dans le cadre du Plan national de développement quinquennal du gouvernement, l'Agenda ARREST pour un Développement Inclusif (AAID), ainsi que des Agendas de Développement des Comtés (CDAs). Lors du lancement officiel de ce plan, le mercredi 15 janvier 2025, le président Joseph Nyumah Boakai a annoncé avoir été informé du manque d'électricité dans la région et a pris l'engagement de prioriser son électrification.

« Je viens d'être informé que Buchanan n'a pas d'électricité. C'est une question à laquelle nous devons répondre de toute urgence », a souligné le président Boakai, insistant sur l'importance de moderniser les infrastructures pour remédier à ce manque crucial. Le président a salué l'initiative du comté de Grand Bassa, qui a aligné son propre plan de développement avec les objectifs nationaux visant à stimuler la croissance et résoudre les défis majeurs du pays.

« Aujourd'hui, nous ouvrons un nouveau chapitre de l'histoire du Libéria avec le lancement de l'Agenda ARREST et des Agendas de Développement des Comtés », a-t-il ajouté.

L'Agenda ARREST, en collaboration avec les CDAs, a pour ambition de réduire la pauvreté sous toutes ses formes, de favoriser une croissance inclusive et d'améliorer la qualité de vie des Libériens.

Un levier pour le développement économique L'électrification du comté de Grand Bassa, selon les autorités, devrait stimuler le développement économique local et améliorer les conditions de vie des habitants.



Cette initiative fait partie d'un engagement global du gouvernement visant à garantir que les 15 comtés du Libéria bénéficient des projets de développement sur les cinq prochaines années.

Grand Bassa, un comté stratégique du Libéria Le comté de Grand Bassa, l'un des plus anciens du Libéria, est situé dans la région sud-centre du pays. Il est bordé par les comtés de Margibi au nord-ouest, de River Cess à l'est, de Bong au nord et par l'océan Atlantique au sud. Sa capitale, Buchanan, est un port majeur et un centre économique stratégique.

Ce comté possède un patrimoine historique significatif, étant l'un des trois comtés fondateurs du Libéria en 1847, avec Buchanan qui a joué un rôle central dans les premières étapes du développement du pays.

La population de Grand Bassa est principalement composée du groupe ethnique Bassa, l'un des plus grands groupes indigènes du Libéria, don't l'influence culturelle continue de marquer la région.

L'économie de Grand Bassa repose sur des secteurs clés tels que l'agriculture, la pêche et l'exploitation minière. La production de caoutchouc et l'agriculture de subsistance sont des activités économiques importantes, tandis que Buchanan abrite un port maritime de grande envergure qui facilite l'exportation de minerai de fer, de caoutchouc et d'autres produits.

Grand Bassa est également réputé pour ses paysages pittoresques, comprenant des plages vierges, des forêts luxuriantes et des rivières, ce qui offre un potentiel considérable pour le développement du tourisme.

Défis d'infrastructures et de développement Malgré ses ressources naturelles abondantes, telles que le minerai de fer, le bois et des terres agricoles fertiles, Grand Bassa fait face à des défis majeurs en matière d'infrastructures. La région manque d'accès à l'électricité et souffre d'un système de santé et d'éducation encore sous-développé.

L'électrification de Buchanan et des autres zones du comté devrait non seulement améliorer le quotidien des habitants, mais aussi relancer les activités économiques et favoriser un développement durable.

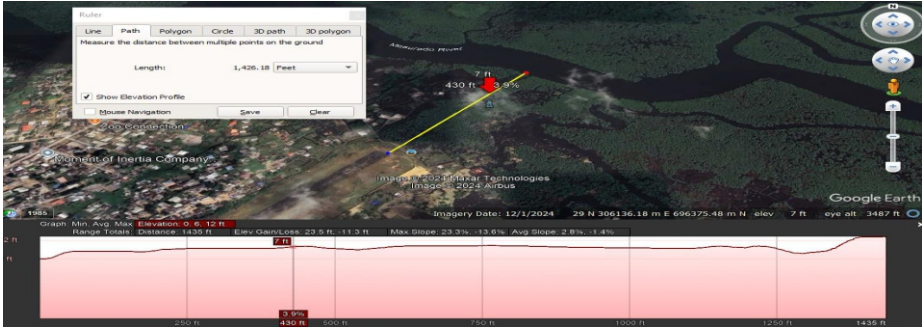
Selon le dernier recensement de l'Institut libérien des Statistiques et des Services Géographiques (LISGIS), la population du comté de Grand Bassa est estimée à environ 250 000 habitants, comprenant une diversité de groupes indigènes, don't les Bassa et les Kru, ainsi que d'autres Libériens établis dans la région.

Article édité par Jonathan Browne

ARTICLEARTICLE

Bel

Traffic Problems Along Tubman Blvd to ELWA JunctionNovember 30, 2024



3. **Reconstructing Congo Town Old Road**
Reconstruction of the Congo Town Old Road to move vehicular traffic to Tubman Boulevard.

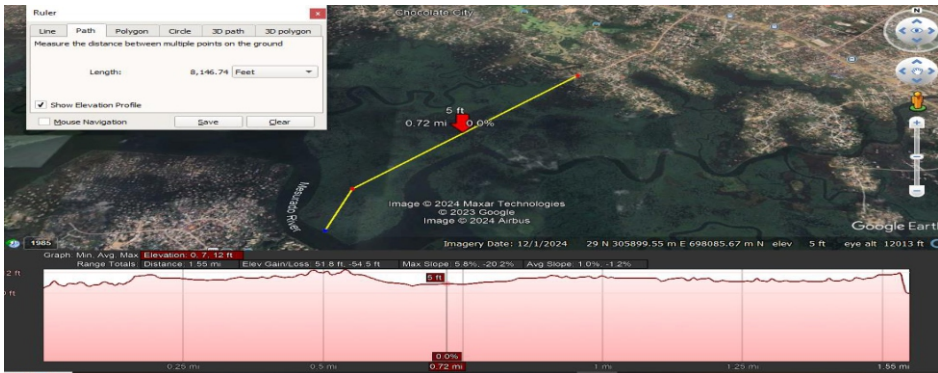


4. **Proposed Crossing Construction across the Montserrado Basin**
Create a crossing across the Montserrado Basin to Somalia Drive to ease traffic towards Paynesville.
Most of the Montserrado Basin is made of organic materials that can be treated with a road bridge constructed to move goods and people across it. Most of the materials to achieve this treatment are local to Liberia. The human capacity

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is available and will be much cheaper than bringing foreigners. Hundreds of Liberian engineers from our universities can be put to work when the resources are available.



Rumor has it that the Chinese government has committed US \$30 million to the bridge construction project. Our concern is, is it a cost-effective way of spending that money? We have laid out other options that address the traffic congestion along Tubman Boulevard and improve the movement of goods and services and Liberians around metropolitan Monrovia.

We do not believe widening or spot-widening critical areas along the corridor was ever considered. Were any cost comparisons for each option to determine the most effective benefit for the US \$30 million? It looks more like a political decision than an engineering one.

Though US \$30 million can address the traffic congestion problems along Tubman Boulevard as proposed, our country has more pressing financial needs. Should we please someone's ego? Should we address our national problems by performing stringy cost analysis with value engineering and utilizing our local resources to carry out national projects that will spur development, create jobs, and spur economic activities?

The way we decide to use our national funds is very disappointing. The question is, who is carrying out these engineering projections? Are the Ministry of Public Works engineers deeply involved in these concept designs, analysis, and costing? If they are not involved, then I have a problem with how we plan and execute projects. I want to ask, won't a forty thousand United States dollar vehicle serve the same purpose as a sixty, seventy, or ninety thousand dollar vehicle? Won't the difference between the selected vehicle and the forty thousand dollars vehicle for

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each vehicle be sufficient to put many Liberians to work? It is time for our government to take some austerity measures to address our national problems. Our government's strategy should be to create jobs for Liberians. How many professional Liberians will be involved in this project? Will their skills be developed without involvement in projects like this from inception to completion? Liberians must be utilized to develop their skills, which will be in the long-term best interest of nation-building.

The fact that a Chinese entity has already done the engineering for this project raises these questions:

1. What role did Liberian engineering professionals play?
2. Who did the cost estimates?
3. What role did the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) play?
4. Did MPW prioritize local engineers' involvement in building their skills, which will spur national development and job creation?

I doubt it because our government officials are in the business of falsely discrediting professional Liberian engineers. As a result, their input is not sought, nor do they collaborate with professional Liberians on nation-building issues. Liberians with many years of experience are around to make contributions to these critical national decisions. This is done to cover up their ineptness and the fear of being opposed. Experienced Liberian engineers are left out who could be used to incorporate the many young engineers lavishing helpless around our country. I know this because I have taught many at the College of Engineering, University of Liberia.

We fail to realize that our own are left behind in this business because of our flawed policies. I have been home officially since 2009, and I have experienced it. If engineers out of our universities are not challenged and allowed to develop their experience, who are we expecting to develop them? Our local engineers have the potential to make a significant impact if given the opportunity. I know this because of my more than thirty years of educational and working experience in the United States of America.

Liberia has the resources needed to achieve this task except for equipment. Why is our government so dependent on others to address our problems, ignoring our own, who will require hands-on training in a competitive environment to contribute to their country? With the right leadership, many university graduates could be used to address our problems in many phases of national development.

In conclusion, this treatment along Tubman Blvd., the extension of Cheeseman Avenue, the Reconstruction of Congo Town Old Road, and the proposed crossing across the Montserrado Basin will eliminate the need for the proposed Overhead bridge. Moreover, Boimah Engineering Inc. strongly believes the Overhead Bridge will briefly address our traffic problems for the short term, plus it will create other problems under the bridge, like crimes and environmental issues.

It is highly recommended that Tubman Boulevard be spot-widened in critical areas and that other recommended treatments be performed using a completely different strategy.

OFFICE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF

WAR AND ECONOMIC CRIMES COURT FOR LIBERIA (OWECC-L)

North Gibson Street (Old CID Road)

Mamba Point – Monrovia, Liberia

Cell #: (+231) 888-000-221/779-000-221 | Email: weccliberia2024@gmail.com

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Office for the Establishment of War and Economic Crimes Court for Liberia was created by Executive Order 131 to oversee the setting up of a War and Economic Crimes Court and an Anti-Corruption Court.

The OWECC-L, when established, will hold people accountable for the atrocities they committed during Liberia's long years of war in which war crimes and crimes against humanity were committed.

Inclusion in executing our mandate is one of our core values, and in support of said value, the Office is launching a competition for high school students to derive a **national logo** and **motto** to be used by the OWECC-L.

The first winner in each category will be awarded a laptop, while the second runner-up will be rewarded an iPad each. Below are the criteria:

- Must be an enrolled high school student.
- Work should connect the value of justice accountability and anti-corruption.
- The design and motto should communicate a clear message on transitional justice.
- All submissions must be manually done – no computer product is accepted.

A panel of judges consisting of graphic artists, legal professionals and civic leaders will evaluate entries and announce winners during an award ceremony. Interested students can submit their applications to the following address: Office for the Establishment of War and Economic Crimes Court for Liberia.

North Gibson Street Old CID Road, Mamba Point, Monrovia or

Email: weccliberia2024@gmail.com

For more information, please Call: 0888000221 or visit our office.

Starts from Back pageCatholic Archdiocese begs for pardon

Monrovia, in its first sympathy visit to the Bereaved Family, on Thursday, January 16, 2024, rendered an appeal to abandon legal process and sought pardon, but the Family refused.

The coordinator of the Catholic Health Secretariat, Ms. Yah Wynn-Gausi, on behalf of the Archdiocese, admitted there was medical error that led to Isaiah's death, while pleading with the Family.

“We have come to see the Family and sympathize with them; let them know we are with them in this difficult time”, Ms Gausi says.

She continues, “We are deeply sorry that it happened and our intent was to save him, and not let a life lost, because there was other hospitals, medical facilities that the family could have taken him to, but she chose us, above all and we ourselves are saddened.”

In her plead, the Coordinator of the Catholic Health Secretariat notes that anesthesia by a nurse might have caused the tragedy. She explains that procedure the patient went thru was medical assessments, rather than surgery, while reiterating there was never an operation done.

“We have come to say sorry, but what I want to make clear is that the doctor or surgeon that was to operate on him, did not touch him”, she clarifies.

According to her, before a surgeon or doctor perform a surgery, perhaps touch any patient in all Catholic medical facilities across the

country, there must be an assessment and evaluation.

“There was not a surgery done, and in our facility before doctors perform a surgery, there must be evaluation and it is not the doctor but the surgeon, that usually does it, and I must admit he might have died from the anesthesia, and there are three types of anesthesia, and the one that was given, he reacted on it.”

The Family rejects the plea from the Archdiocese, noting that they are waiting on results from the Liberia Medical and Dental Council investigation to pursue justice.

“We know there was a serious procedural error that took place; we know what happened; there is nothing new that somebody will tell us we don't know. Therefore, we are disappointed and that was not our expectation”, laments Mohamed Fofana, uncle of the deceased.

“We hear your, but we are still waiting for the report from the Dental Council, and we believe they will do us justice and give us the right that we deserve”, he added.

Also Speaking, Blamah S. Dorleh, describes the Catholic Archdiocese's visit as belated, saying, “We don't need such visit, because since two weeks, my brother, there was no sympathy and we are now awaiting the Dental Council's results.” *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Govt. to deploys security at PYJ's grave

The Government of Liberia taking all necessary precautionary measures, including deployment of armed security personnel at the burial site of the late Senator Prince Yormie Johnson amid rumors of a plan by unidentified persons to remove the senator's corpse from his grave.

Nimba, Liberia, January 17, 2025 - Report from Ganta, Nimba County says the Government of Liberia is considering plan to deploy armed security officers at the grave of the late Senator Prince Yormie Johnson after his burial this Saturday, 18 January.

The government's decision followed allegation that there are plans by some individuals to remove the late Senator's remains from his grave after interment.

The NEW DAWN gathered that those unidentified persons planning to carry out such alleged act are arguing that slain President Samuel K. Doe, who the late Sen. PYJ captured at the Freeport of Monrovia and subsequently tortured to death during the Liberian Civil War, don't have a grave, so they will not allow the leader of the disbanded INPFL to have a grave or a memorial site.

The late PYJ led his INPFL rebels from his then base in Caldwell to the Free Zone Authority adjacent the Freeport of Monrovia where the first batch of regional peacekeeping force, ECOMOG had stationed after its arrival in Liberia in 1990, and attacked the late President who had gone to welcome the peacekeepers.

Doe lost his body guards in the attack and he was captured and tortured to death after which his body was put on public display at Island Clinic on Bushrod Island, a scene well documented with video footage.

However, PYJ's Caldwell base was later over run by Charles Taylor's NPFL rebels and the late Field marshal ran to ECOMOG for rescue and was taken into exile in Nigeria where he turned from after the civil war and entered politics.

His body arrived in Ganta on Thursday

afternoon after lying in state at the Capitol Building where officials of government, including fellow senators paid tribute led by Vice President Jeremiah Kpan Koung.

President Boakai and former president George Weah had signed the Book of Condolence for the fallen senator on Wednesday.

A native of Nimba County, remains of the late PYJ were received Thursday by thousands of kinsmen, who had gathered to pay last respect to man they consider as their hero, for standing up against Doe, who hunted many Nimbaians to death on suspicion that they were against his regime.

Local officials are expected to take the body on a tour of several parts of the county including, Sanniquellie, Karnplay, Bahn and Saclepea respectively before interment at his residence in LPRC Community, Ganta, Saturday.

However, public health workers in Nimba have raised concern against burying a dead person at home for public health and other reasons, but the government seems resolved in meeting family wish to have the fallen senator buried at his residence in Ganta that also contains has his PYJ Polytechnic University and a mineral water facility.

This paper observes that since the body arrived in the county, there has been huge presence of state security, including the Armed Forces of Liberia. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



Govt. issues 72-hr ultimatum to Metech Scientific

The Financial Intelligence Agency (FIA) has issued a 72- hour ultimatum to Metech Scientific here, regarding the company's failure to provide necessary operational information.

Despite earlier questioning the FIA's authority to request such information, Metech Scientific has recently acknowledged the Agency's legitimacy. However, the company remains hesitant to comply with the FIA's demands.

This likely standoff has prompted the FIA to issue a 72-hour ultimatum, demanding that Metech justifies its failure to submit critical documents and data related to its operations in Liberia for the year 2024

According to a release from the Financial Intelligence Agency (FIA), Metech Scientific failed to meet the deadline of December 13, 2024, to provide crucial information and documents regarding its operations in Liberia for the period January to December, 2024.

The release notes that Metech Scientific also refused to honor a January 7, 2025, deadline, as outlined in the FIA's communication to the company on December 18, 2024. This continued non-compliance has prompted the FIA to take a firmer stance, issuing a 72-hour ultimatum for the company to provide the requested information or face potential sanctions.

Meanwhile, the FIA has described the company's actions as a defiant and willful disregard of its statutory powers, specifically, referencing Section 67, Subsection 3.1 of the Financial Intelligence Act of 2021.

This section grants the FIA the authority to request and receive information to fulfill its functions. The Agency views Metech Scientific's failure to comply with these requests as a violation of this legal framework, prompting the ultimatum for the company to justify its non-compliance.

The release, issued on January 15, 2025, and

signed by Officer-In-Charge, Mohammed A. Nasser, states: "You are hereby given 72 hours from the receipt of this communication to provide your response justifying why you should not be sanctioned. Failure to adhere to this communication, the FIA will exercise the most stringent administrative sanctions available per Section 15.3.29 of the Act of 2021."

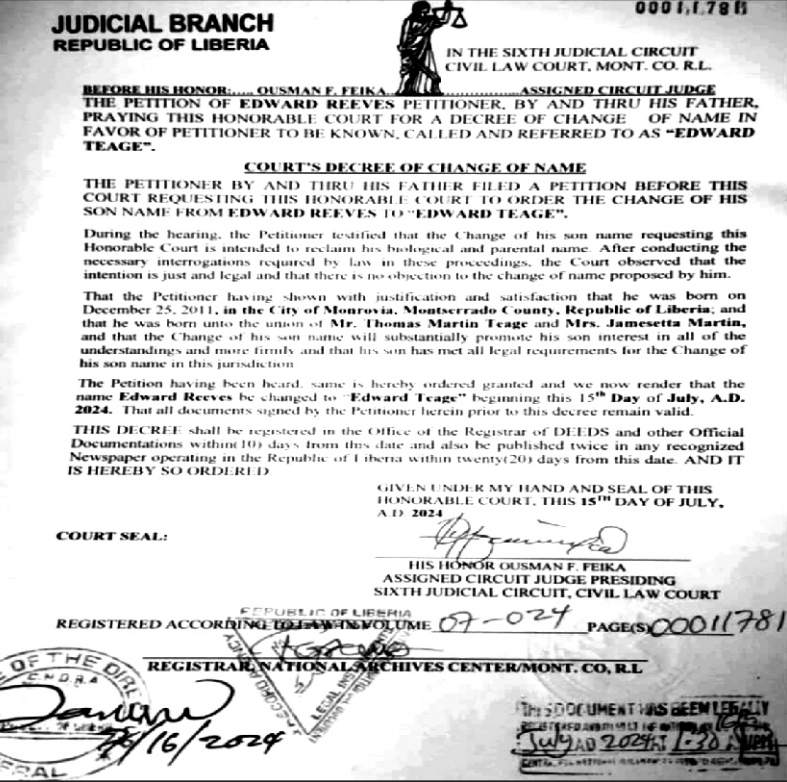
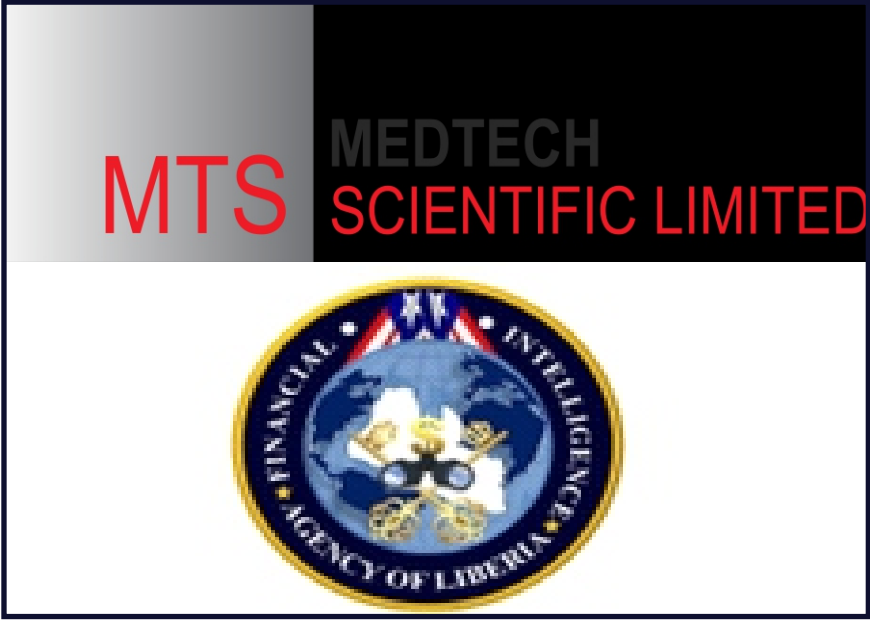
This ultimatum underscores the severity of the situation and the potential consequences for Metech Scientific, if they did not comply.

On the other hand, several business groups in Liberia have criticized the 1.2% third-party engagement charge on imported commodities, imposed by Metech Scientific, calling it unfair and an additional financial burden.

These groups, including the Fula Business Association and the National Customs Brokers Association of Liberia, have expressed concerns about the negative impact this charge has on the cost of doing business in the country.

Meanwhile, a 10-year contract signed between the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)-led government of former President George Manneh Weah and Metech Scientific Liberia Limited has been criticized for gross violations of Liberia's Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) and Public Financial Management (PFM) Laws.

These violations are alleged to have led to the unofficial diversion of the country's share of funds that should have been collected under the agreement, raising concerns about transparency and legality of the deal with the former administration. **Press Release**



-In student's death at St. Joseph's Catholic Hospital

incident happened.

Monrovia, Liberia,
January 17, 2025 -
The Catholic
Archdiocese Secretariat of
Liberia is devastated by the

Edward's Catholic School in Monrovia and a candidate for enrolment at Lay Adventists University, Kigali, Rwanda, the Catholic Archdiocese Secretariat of Monrovia is seeking an appeal

Reports revealed that Congolese pediatric and surgeon, Doctor NGOY-MULUME Thadee, was in charge, when the student died from medical errors at the hospital.

Student Williams, who was fresh to depart Liberia for study in Rwanda earlier this month, met his accidental death at St. Joseph's Catholic hospital, where his mother had taken him for surgery to remove a swollen hydroseed he was suffering from.

The late Isaiah Benedicto Williams was admitted at the hospital on January 2, 2024, and died 24 hours later after he was placed in the operation theater to undergo a surgery that did not take place.

According to report, Williams might have died of wrongful injection allegedly administered to him by Doctor Thadee, Chief Pediatric at St. Joseph's Catholic hospital.

Since his demise, the Family alleged wrongful medication and overdose that may have caused his death.

As investigation by the Liberia Medical and Dental Council (LMDC) unfolds, the hospital authority through the Catholic Archdiocese Secretariat of

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



death of a 21-year-old student, Isaiah Benedicto Williams, who died at St. Joseph's Catholic hospital in Monrovia as a result of overdose of drugs and wrongful medical procedure. Engulfed by saddening guilt and headache amid investigation by the Medical Board into the unfortunate demise of Isaiah, who was a graduate of St.

to the Bereaved Family for pardon over the situation.

The Williams Family looks set to issue lawsuit against authority of the St. Joseph's Catholic hospital, after preliminary investigation conducted by the Liberia Medical and Dental Council puts the blame squarely on the institution, unveiling the identity of the doctor in charge of proceeding, when the

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The New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

The logo for 'The New Dawn' features the title in a large, stylized font. The word 'The' is in a script font, and 'New Dawn' is in a bold, serif font. A map of Liberia is integrated into the letter 'D' of 'Dawn'. To the right of the title is a collage of various magazine covers, including one with a green globe and another with a person's face. Below the title, the words 'TRULY INDEPENDENT' are written in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font. Above the title, the website address 'http://www.thenewdawnliberia.com' is displayed.

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PLEASE! KEEP THE DOOR CLOSE

Dawn Sports
Dawns raises red-flag
China's new martial art

New Dawn
Uncertainty hangs over schools
As authorities weigh options over crash by Nephew butchered uncle

A hand holding a pen, about to press a button labeled 'PRESS' on a colorful, abstract background. The background features vibrant, swirling colors like pink, yellow, and blue, suggesting a dynamic and creative environment.

A collage of various New Dawn publications. It includes a newspaper front page with the headline 'New Dawn', a calendar with the title 'New Dawn CALENDAR', a brochure with the title 'New Dawn BROCHURE', and a magazine with the title 'New Dawn' and a large headline 'J\$2.5m for Mont. by-elections'. The publications are arranged in an overlapping, artistic manner against a colorful background.