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These are indicative rates based on results of daily surveys of foreign exchange market in Monrovia and selected cities of Liberia. These rates are collected from the Central bank, commercial banks, parallel market and the license forex bureaux. The rates are not set by the Central Bank of Liberia. Source: Research, Policy and Planning Department, CBL.

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**Cllr. Tiawan Saye Gongloe**

# Gongloe takes Koung to task

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**VP Koung**





# MCSS students protest over teachers' absence





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# Continental News

## South Africa envoy expelled from US 'has no regrets'

The South African ambassador who was expelled from the US after a row with Donald Trump's government has said he has "no regrets". Ebrahim Rasool arrived back home on Sunday and was welcomed by hundreds of

minority.Rasool defended his comments on Sunday morning after touching down in Cape Town.

The remarks, made during a webinar organised by a South African think tank, were meant to "alert" South African intellectuals and political

rare move by the US - lower-ranking diplomats are sometimes expelled, but it is highly unusual for it to happen to a more senior official.But ties with South Africa have been deteriorating for months.In January, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa signed into law a bill allowing the state to seize land without compensation, provided it was in the "public interest".

The move followed years of calls for land reform, with activists and politicians seeking to redistribute farmland from the white minority.In response to the law, Washington cut aid to South Africa. An executive order cited "unjust racial discrimination" against white Afrikaners - descendants of mainly Dutch settlers who first arrived in the 17th Century.South Africa has strongly denied this claim.

On Sunday, Rasool lamented that he had not been able to challenge the Trump administration's views.

He was appointed as ambassador to the US just last year, because of his experience and extensive network of Washington contacts.He had previously served as US ambassador from 2010 to 2015.

, when Barack Obama was president.BBC

## US cuts to HIV aid will cost millions of lives - UNAids chief

US funding cuts will lead to an additional 2,000 new HIV infections each day and over six million further deaths over the next four years, the UNAids chief has warned.

It would mark a stark reversal in the global fight against HIV, which has seen the number of deaths from the disease decrease from more than two million in 2004 to 600,000 in 2023, the most recent year for which figures are available.

UNAids Executive Director Winnie Byanyima said the US government's decision to pause foreign aid - which included funding for HIV programmes - was already having devastating consequences.

She called on the US to reverse the cuts immediately, warning women and girls were being hit particularly hard.US President Donald Trump announced the pause on foreign aid, for an initial 90 days, on his first day in office in January as part of a review into government spending.

its funding - over time", but said the "sudden withdrawal of lifesaving support [was] having a devastating impact".

There has been no sign that Washington is listening to appeals to change course.

Traditional aid donors in Europe also plan funding cuts, and UNAids - the joint UN agency which combats HIV - has had no indication that other countries might step in to fill the gap left by the US.Speaking in Geneva on Monday, Ms Byanyima described the case of Juliana, a young woman in Kenya living with HIV. She worked for a US-funded programme that supported new mothers to access treatment to ensure their babies did not develop the disease.

With the programme suspended, Ms Byanyima said Juliana was not only out of work but, because she was still breastfeeding her youngest child, she also feared losing the treatment she needed.

Previously, the World Health Organization (WHO) said eight countries - Nigeria, Kenya, Lesotho, South Sudan, Burkina Faso, Mali, Haiti and Ukraine - could soon run out of HIV drugs after the US

raucous supporters at Cape Town International Airport.Tensions between South Africa and the US have been on a downward spiral since Trump came into office in January.

Rasool, 62, was declared unwelcome in the US after Secretary of State Marco Rubio called him a "race-baiting politician who hates America". It followed a statement by the ambassador that Trump was "mobilising a supremacism" as the States' white population faced becoming a

leaders "to a change of the way we live, to a change of the way we are positioned in the United States, that the old way of doing business with the US was not a good one", Rasool said.While waiting for Rasool to arrive at the airport, members of the African National Congress, South African Communist Party and trade unionists sang and danced.

Some held placards reading "Ebrahim Rasool, you have served our country with honour!!!"

Rasool's expulsion marked a

## Six Kenyan police personnel killed in ambush near Somalia

Six police personnel in north-east Kenya have been killed after assailants attacked a base near the border with Somalia, a regional official said.

No group has claimed responsibility, but Garissa County Commissioner Mohamed Mwabudzo told the BBC the style of the attack followed a pattern of raids by Somali-based Islamist militant group al-Shabab.He said the officers were ambushed on Sunday at 05:30 local time (02:30 GMT), while they were preparing for their morning prayers.In addition to the six officers who died, four officers were taken to hospital with injuries.Al-Shabab frequently mounts cross-border attacks in the area, targeting both the Kenyan military and civilian populations.

Mr Mwabudzo said the "guerrilla-style" nature of the attack aligns

with al-Shabab's "pattern of cross-border raids aimed at destabilising the region".

"The suspected militia used assorted weapons to overrun the camp," he added.

The camp targeted in the assault was housing reservists - local volunteers who assist the

regular police in securing remote areas.

Al-Shabab - affiliated to al-Qaeda - controls large parts of southern and central Somalia.

The group has waged a brutal insurgency against Somalia's government for nearly 20 years.BBC



Al-Shabab frequently attacks areas in Kenya near the Somali border



The majority of the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) programmes have since been terminated.

Many US-financed HIV treatment and prevention programmes received stop work orders, leading to the closure of mother and baby clinics in Africa, and severe shortages of life saving anti-retroviral (ARV) medicines.Ms Byanyima said she feared a return to the 1990s, when HIV medication was scarcely available in poorer countries, and infections and deaths soared.

The US has for years been the single biggest funder of HIV treatment and prevention, and Ms Byanima thanked Washington for its generosity and humanity.

She added it was "reasonable" for the US "to want to reduce

funding pause.WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned that disruption to HIV programmes "could undo 20 years of progress".In February, South Africa's leading Aids lobby group, the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), warned the country could see a return to when HIV patients struggled to access necessary services for their treatment.

"We can't afford to die, we can't afford to go back to those years where we were suffering with access to services, especially for people living with HIV treatment," said TAC chair Sibongile Tshabalala. Ms Byanyima also proposed a deal to the Trump administration, offering an opportunity to market a new US-developed ARV to millions of people.Lenacapavir, made by US company Gilead, is given by injection every six months, with UNAids believing 10 million people could benefit from it.BBC



# EDITORIAL

## The Sethi incident: Government should share some blames too

It is hardly believable that a huge steel manufacturing company like Sethi Steel Factory would operate in Liberia without license and other requisite operational documents. Sethi also faces concerns over safety issues that its employees have protested against for time in memorial.

The glaring deficiencies came to public attention when an Oxygen explosion at the factory killed an employee on Monday, February 19, 2025, with reports of injuries, though the company says there was no injury besides the death of an employee, Saah Samukai.

Perhaps what is even more disappointing and disgusting about the incident is disclosure by the Environmental Protection Agency that Sethi that enjoys a monopoly on building materials such as steel, zinc, nails and others, has been operating in the country without license.

“This is a serious matter, because a Liberian’s life has been taken away, so my team of the EPA has come to observe and find out exactly how the accident took place.

And we have gathered in our preliminary findings a bit of safety concerns; there are several things: some are good and some are bad, and we must take the bad ones very seriously”, EPA Executive Director, Dr. Emmanuel Urey Yarkpawolo, told reporters last week.

But how come that the EPA, under the watch of Dr. Emmanuel Urey Yarkpawolo did not know that Sethi Steel Factory has been operating in the country without license and safety gears for its workforce, most of whom are Liberians, who do the physical labor-intensive aspect of the job.

We are getting to know now that it took Dr. Yarkpawolo and the EPA more than a year since he took office in 2024 to visit Sethi Steel Factor which is less than an hour’s drive from central Monrovia to Japan Freeway in Gardersville to know that the company has been operating outside of Liberian law.

“The first thing, when we heard about the accident, our team came immediately and shut down the factory; another thing, we have observed Sethi Ferro has been operating without license, and we are going through the investigation for a stringent action”, he added.

The Government of Liberia has reportedly fined the company US\$5,000 and shut it down, for operating without license and standard safety policies. However, it took the death of a fellow Liberian to have Dr. Yarkpawolo and his team at the EPA do their job of proper monitoring and enforcement of required safety regulations.

We wonder how many companies out there across Liberia that are having their way, violating the laws of the country and endangering public lives, especially Liberians that work in those places just to earn a living at the expense of their lives.

We are hearing that the House of Representatives has summoned the Ministers of Labor, Commerce, Bureau of Concession, Environmental Protection Agency and Serthi Ferro Fabrik Steel Factory to appear before it this Tuesday, 25 February to address the oxygen explosion at the factory that led to the death of an employee.

Plenary took the decision last Thursday, 20 February based on a communication from Rep. Ivar K. Jones of Electoral District 2, Margibi County.

In his communication, Rep. Jones cites Article 8 of the 1986 Constitution, which guarantees just and humane working conditions for all citizens, stressing that the government must ensure that factories operating in Liberia adhere to strict safety standards.

"When people leave their homes in the morning to go to work, their families expect them to return safely. If safety measures are not enforced, and these investors continue to operate without regard for human life, then this is a concern for all of us", he emphasized.

However, it is glaring that both the Legislature and the Executive are paying lip-service when it comes to safety and enforcement of laws on the book, leaving the citizenry vulnerable. The two important branches of government are preoccupied with achieving their selfish desires at the detriment of the people they claim to serve.

# COMMENTARY

By Julie McCarthy

## Central Banks Must Stem the Nature Crisis

NEW YORK - The ten most expensive climate disasters of 2024 - the hottest year on record - cost more than \$229 billion, while extreme weather events have left fewer and fewer countries unscathed. Deadly floods in China, Germany, and Kenya, scorching heat waves in India, prolonged droughts in Brazil, and, most recently, major wildfires in the United States and Ghana highlight the increasingly severe ripple effects of nature degradation and climate change on economies and societies.

The global economy depends on a stable climate and reliable ecosystem services, including the provision of fresh water, healthy air, erosion and flood control, pollination, climate regulation, and carbon sequestration. According to the European Central Bank, nearly 75% of all eurozone bank loans are provided to firms that are highly dependent on at least one these ecosystem services.

The economic implications of this dependence are profound. In the United Kingdom, environmental degradation could cause a 12% contraction in GDP - worse than the hit caused by COVID-19 - if left unaddressed. An analysis of nature-related risks in Hungary found that in the absence of adequate mitigation strategies, severe drought could double the volume of non-performing loans, increase sovereign debt, and reduce economic output by 4-7% in a single year. And a World Bank analysis of 20 emerging markets found that 55% of bank loans, on average, are exposed to activities that are highly or very highly dependent on at least one ecosystem service. It turns out that a stable financial system is highly dependent on nature, and nature is increasingly in crisis.

Although these risks are increasingly well understood by central banks, businesses and financial institutions are not required or incentivized to invest in protecting nature. In fact, nearly \$7 trillion of public and private finance per year supports activities that damage forests, pollute water sources, and destroy biodiversity - 35 times the amount of investment in nature-positive initiatives.

Central banks and financial supervisors are well placed to change this trajectory and chart a new course toward a more resilient global economy. These authorities must start adapting their risk assessments and transition plans to the new climate reality and use their ability to influence the financial system through monetary policy, supervision, and regulation. Importantly, as ECB executive board member Frank Elderson has pointed out, preventing macroeconomic instability requires central banks and supervisors to consider climate- and nature-related risks together. The science is increasingly clear that failure to do so will lead to an increase in food insecurity, forced displacement, and overlapping shocks.

These outcomes are already a daily reality in many parts of the world. In 2024, global cocoa prices reached an all-time high, partly owing to adverse climate conditions in Ghana, the world’s second-largest producer. As it becomes harder to earn a livelihood from agriculture, many farmers in Ghana are selling their land to galamsey (illegal or informal small-scale mining) operators, or are becoming illegal miners themselves, further eroding local ecosystems.

A recent report from NatureFinance (of which I am CEO), the ECB, the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, and the University of Minnesota shows that focusing only on climate policies heightens both economic and environmental risks. For example, large-scale, land-based carbon-sequestration measures, such as monoculture afforestation projects, can lead to lower species diversity and significant biodiversity loss. The subsequent loss of pollinators can then affect crop yields, undermining the long-term sustainability of global food production for both farmers and consumers. Ultimately, this means that well-intentioned but narrowly conceived policies to reduce carbon emissions can inadvertently undermine biodiversity and ultimately worsen rather than mitigate the climate crisis.

Integrating climate and nature policies, alternatively, can help stabilize the agriculture sector, curb biodiversity loss, and limit temperature increases. Though far from a silver bullet, such an approach would go a long way toward breaking what has become a vicious cycle of nature loss and accelerated climate impacts.

Unfortunately, the growing body of evidence concerning how nature degradation and climate change are linked to price stability and the financial system is at odds with the current political zeitgeist. Donald Trump’s return to the White House has further accelerated an already growing backlash against environmental, social, and governance (ESG) efforts in the US and Europe. The Federal Reserve recently withdrew from the Network for Greening the Financial System, a group of more than 100 central banks and supervisors working to improve climate-risk management in the financial sector. Ahead of Trump’s inauguration, major commercial banks and asset managers quit climate-action networks, while Texas and other states sued prominent money managers, arguing that they conspired against coal markets by integrating environmental risk into their investment strategies.

The rise of climate denialism on both sides of the Atlantic has pushed ambitious action to protect the financial system from nature- and climate-related shocks off the agenda for now. But central banks and supervisors still have many powerful tools at their disposal to guard against the devastating consequences of environmental disruption. They can require commercial banks and insurers to assess, report on, and stress-test their portfolios for nature- and climate-related risks and dependencies.

They can set limits on investment exposure to assets or sectors that are particularly vulnerable to such risks. And they can give preferential treatment to more resilient and adaptive green assets and sectoral strategies in their collateralization frameworks and targeted refinancing operations.

Even as business, financial, and political leaders willfully ignore the overwhelming scientific and economic consensus in their decision-making, central banks can still move us toward an economy that is better protected against the mounting shocks of the nature and climate crisis. All they need to do is fulfill their financial-stability mandate.



# OP-ED

By Bertrand Badré,  
Thomas Crampton

## Sustainability in an Unstable World

PARIS - As the world becomes increasingly unstable, with the security that many people took for granted called into question, climate change, once viewed as the defining challenge of our time, has been sidelined by geopolitics, which has brought issues such as rearmament and the race for AI supremacy to the fore. But rising seas, protracted heatwaves, and devastating storms are not just risks; they are realities. The threat posed by climate change is obviously growing, but many corporations and even climate innovators have gone silent.

The rise of “greenhushing” - when companies downplay environmental goals for financial or political reasons - reflects not just changing communications strategies, but rising tensions between competing priorities. Amid new geopolitical conflicts and economic pressures, some argue that sustainability has become an unaffordable luxury. But one should not assume a trade-off between sustainability and security. On the contrary, if we frame climate change, security risks, and economic needs as competing priorities, we risk losing on all fronts.

To be sure, competition over resources, territory, and technology appears to be monopolizing financial and intellectual resources at the expense of efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Yet these issues are deeply intertwined. The scramble for rare-earth minerals, the expansion of data infrastructure, and the need for energy-efficient AI all show that geopolitics and climate policy are part of the same equation.

Faced with limited capital and constraints on cross-border financial flows, many businesses and governments feel paralyzed. For decades, we have missed opportunities to invest in long-term resilience - even after the threat of climate change was fully known. But wallowing in regret will not help now. Instead, we should acknowledge our short-sightedness and act immediately to change course.

The era of “peace dividends” and low interest rates is behind us. The task now is to adapt to an era of capital scarcity and geopolitical fragmentation. We can no longer ask whether climate action is important, but how it can be integrated into a rapidly changing global landscape. That means abandoning outdated approaches and forging a cohesive strategy that combines security, innovation, and sustainability.

In today’s political climate, many will see greenhushing as a reasonable strategy. Like US corporate managers’ back-pedaling on DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) and other issues that have been consumed by the culture war, keeping a low profile on environmental matters might seem pragmatic. But, by creating the illusion that sustainability is less urgent or feasible than it really is, greenhushing carries significant risks.

For starters, de-emphasizing sustainability threatens to slow green innovation just when it is needed most. Greenhushing could erode consumer trust and sap momentum in industries that have already started to build a carbon-neutral future. In time, this will prove far costlier - both economically and environmentally - than any risks associated with remaining committed to mitigation and adaptation.

Worse, there could be a “lemming” effect across industries. If everyone assumes that sustainability is being abandoned, then everyone will abandon sustainability. The peer pressure that has been driving private-sector progress on this issue will vanish.

Despite these hurdles, there is still hope. The shift toward a more sustainable economy has begun, even in the United States. While the pace of progress may slow, the direction of travel need not change. In adjusting to new realities, the ultimate goal should be to stay the course.

Sustainability is a strategic imperative. Many companies - large and small, across every continent - already recognize this, and have developed business models that combine profitability and environmental responsibility. Their success shows that adapting to this new era does not mean abandoning long-term goals. Instead, it means identifying new sources of value, investing in eco-efficient infrastructure, and aligning sustainability measures with cost-savings and resilience.

But public-private cooperation is also essential. Markets alone cannot deliver when priorities are constantly and abruptly shifting (say, from sustainability to AI to defense). Governments must step in to help stabilize expectations, and they can do so through public-private initiatives that tie sustainability to national security. For example, publicly supported investments in clean energy and resilient supply chains can reduce reliance on fossil fuels, which in turn will strengthen economic resilience and diminish the importance of geopolitical competition.

While a coordinated, global approach would be ideal, regional, local, and sector-specific initiatives are probably more likely to succeed in today’s fragmented political landscape. The key is to align financial incentives with sustainability goals to ensure that climate action is not sidelined in favor of short-term gains.

The collective project that all countries embarked on ten years ago - with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris climate agreement - must remain our North Star, even if pragmatism demands strategic tacking along the way. This is no time for cynicism or despair. Any blame that should be assigned would be best directed toward those who are cynically exploiting the situation to reap short-term gains. Any company making a good-faith effort to recalibrate its strategy deserves support.

We must remain pragmatic yet resolute. We had a chance to act when times were easier, but that window has closed. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and biodiversity loss are not distant threats; they are here, and they are compounding geopolitical tensions. Greenhushing may feel like a convenient response to today’s challenges, but it is not a sustainable one. Silence will not save us.

We need the opposite of greenhushing: bold, united action that weaves climate priorities into our economic and geopolitical strategies. Business leaders who do not speak up now will later regret it.

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# OPINION

By Gordon Brown

## The Internal Challenge to Afghanistan’s Ban on Girls’ Secondary Education

EDINBURGH - With Gaza in ruins, the war in Ukraine at a critical juncture, and millions of Africans facing starvation, global attention has understandably shifted away from the plight of Afghan girls denied their right to an education. Yet, amid the prevailing gloom over the state of the world’s most troubled regions, the Taliban’s ban on girls’ secondary education could be facing its biggest internal challenge yet.

Nowhere is the fight for the rights of girls and women more urgent than in Afghanistan, where the Taliban’s return to power in 2021 has led to egregious human rights violations, including the exclusion of girls from secondary education. Now, after yet another Afghan school year has begun without girls beyond sixth grade, a rift within the regime offers hope that the ban may be reversed in the near future.

Despite the Taliban’s efforts to project unity, tensions among its leadership ranks surfaced last month when Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai was forced to flee to Dubai. He was reportedly facing arrest for criticizing the ban on girls’ education and the conduct of Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada, the regime’s supreme leader. With the interior and defense ministers also rumored to support easing the education ban, Akhundzada has deployed soldiers to Kabul airport to prevent other cabinet members from seeking asylum abroad.

At the root of the Taliban’s leadership crisis is a series of failed efforts to overturn Afghanistan’s anti-women policies. Immediately after reclaiming power three and half years ago, Akhundzada and his Kandahar-based hard-line faction reneged on the Taliban’s promises that girls would be allowed to attend secondary school and that women would be permitted to work “within the framework of Islam.” As late as the start of the 2022 school year, the Taliban was still assuring the public that girls would be allowed to resume their education, only to reverse course within hours, citing the need for an “appropriate Islamic environment.”

A wave of increasingly repressive edicts targeting Afghan girls and women soon followed. Women were barred from almost all forms of employment, excluded from almost all public spaces, and prohibited from traveling anywhere without a male chaperone. The Taliban’s draconian dress code required women to wear burqas covering them from head to toe.

By 2024, these restrictions had become even more extreme. Women - already banned from speaking in public - were now prohibited from praying aloud or reciting the Quran, even in the presence of other women.

For a while, dissent within the Taliban remained muted. Then, at a graduation ceremony in the southeastern Khost province last month, Stanikzai openly condemned the regime’s policies. “The restrictions imposed on women are the personal wish of some Taliban elders and are un-Islamic,” he declared. The regime, he added, was being “unjust to 20 million people. There is no justification for this - not now or in the future.” Citing religious justifications for girls’ education, Stanikzai reminded the audience: “During the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the doors of knowledge were open for both men and women. There were such remarkable women that if I were to elaborate on their contributions, it would take considerable time.”

Stanikzai’s remarks followed similar criticism from Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani, who - in one of the first public breaches of Taliban unity - also denounced the ban on girls’ education and the regime’s refusal to engage with the international community on women’s rights. Refugee Minister Khalil Rahman Haqqani had also been pushing for girls and women to attend secondary schools and universities at the time of his death in a December suicide attack in Kabul.

Against this backdrop, Afghanistan is grappling with deepening economic and humanitarian crises that have pushed more than 25 million people - over half the population - into poverty. The exclusion of women and girls from the workforce has exacerbated these economic challenges, fueling the growing rebellion against Akhundzada’s extremist policies.

The apparent split within the Taliban comes at an opportune time. United Nations human rights officials are considering classifying gender apartheid, defined as “inhumane acts committed within the context of an institutionalized regime of systematic discrimination, oppression, and domination by one group over another or others, based on gender, and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime,” as a crime against humanity. Such a move would represent a milestone in the fight against the systemic oppression of women in Afghanistan and beyond.

Meanwhile, Afghan girls - many of whom were already in school when the Taliban returned to power - continue to fight for their education, defying the regime’s restrictions to pursue their dreams of becoming doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, and entrepreneurs. At great risk to themselves and their families, some attend underground schools, join local homeschooling initiatives, or seek remote-learning opportunities. A few have even managed to leave the country to study abroad.

But although the bravery of Afghan girls is undeniable, their efforts alone will not be enough to close the gap between the number of girls entitled to an education under international law and those who actually receive one. With the Taliban in disarray, the international community - especially Muslim-majority countries - must capitalize on internal divisions to pressure the regime to reverse the ban on girls’ education.

Nowhere in the Quran or Islamic teachings is there any justification for denying girls the right to attend school. Now, there is a real chance that even the Taliban may finally heed this lesson.

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Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SAPZ) Project

CONSULTANCY SERVICE FOR “FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS  
(ISO 22000) AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (ISO 9001)  
CERTIFICATION TRAINING”

Sector: Agriculture/Industry  
Financing Agreement Reference: 2100150042703  
Project ID: P-LR-AA0-009

1. BACKGROUND

The Government of Liberia (GoL), through the National Investment Commission (NIC), has secured funding from the African Development Bank (AfDB) to prepare and implement the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SAPZ) Project within the Buchanan Special Economic Zone. This project aims to stimulate economic growth, foster sustainable agricultural development, and ultimately reduce poverty in Liberia. The project's specific objectives include reducing unemployment, decreasing reliance on imported staple foods, and establishing essential infrastructure and a favorable economic environment to attract private sector investment in agriculture and agro-industry.

The project development objectives are to:

- i) Create a better business environment for increased investment in the agro-industrial sector,
- ii) Create opportunities for investments at the industrial level and coordinate the integration of smallholder farms and agro-processing industry into sustained agro value chains and,
- iii) Improve capacities and skills to benefit from new agribusiness employment and value chain opportunities.

The project is structured around three related components, including:

- a) Support the development of Climate-resilient Infrastructure to attract investments into Agricultural Value addition/industrialization,
- b) Support Business Competitiveness, enable skills and climate-smart agricultural value chain development and strengthen farmer coordination and,
- c) Strengthen Institutional Capacity, Project Coordination & Management.

The SAPZ Project in Liberia aims to strengthen the agricultural sector by providing smallholder farmers, MSMEs, and youth with essential skills in business management, farming practices, and entrepreneurship. The SAPZ will enhance local capacities to produce high-quality, competitive agricultural products through structured training. This empowers Liberia's agribusiness sector to reduce its reliance on food imports and positions it to contribute to regional food security and economic integration within the West African market.

On an international scale, the project aligns Liberia with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) goals, making the country an attractive destination for investment in agribusiness. The SAPZ Project also encourages youth engagement in agriculture, creating employment opportunities and fostering a generation of Agri Entrepreneurs. This transformation builds a foundation for Liberia to become a competitive regional agribusiness hub, ultimately contributing to a self-sufficient, interconnected African agricultural economy. Furthermore, adopting international standards in food safety and quality management across SAPZ operations is essential. This requires training in ISO 22000 (Food Safety Management Systems) to ensure food safety standards are consistently met and ISO 9001 (Quality Management Systems) to standardize the quality process and increase efficiency. Both certifications will help meet the global market requirement, enhancing the competitiveness of its agricultural products and attracting private sector investment aligning with SAPZ Project's broader economic and development goals.

The SAPZ Project seeks to engage a qualified training firm with the required certification to provide comprehensive training and guidance on the implementation and certification process of both ISO 22000 and ISO 9001 standards.

2. Objectives of the Assignment

This training program aims to equip participants with the knowledge and practical skills necessary to implement, manage, and maintain Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) according to ISO 22000 standards and Quality Management Systems (QMS) according to ISO 9001 standards. By the end of the training, participants will:

- 1. Understand the requirements and principles of ISO 22000 and ISO 9001.
- 2. Be capable of developing and implementing systems that ensure food safety and quality control in their respective organizations.
- 3. Be prepared for the certification process for ISO 22000 and ISO 9001.
- 4. Understand how to monitor, audit, and improve these management systems.



3. Scope of Work

The consulting or/training firm will be responsible for:

Training Design and Development

- Identify and Map SMEs, Farming Cooperatives, Processors, and Aggregators in Agribusinesses in the value chain of the selected commodities (rice, cassava, oil palm, coffee, cocoa, rubber, fruits and vegetables, and aquaculture).
- Conduct needs assessment and capacity gap of the SMEs, Farming Cooperatives, Processors, and Aggregators, which will serve as inputs into the development of the training modules
- Develop a comprehensive training plan covering all essential components of ISO 22000 and ISO 9001.
- Prepare training materials, including presentations, case studies, manuals, and practical exercises.

Training Delivery

- Conduct interactive training sessions, providing both theoretical and practical knowledge.
- Deliver the training in two modules:
- Module 1: ISO 22000 – Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS)
- Module 2: ISO 9001 – Quality Management Systems (QMS)
- Tailor the sessions to the specific needs of the participants and their industry contexts.

Certification Preparation

- Guide the organization through the ISO certification process.
- Offer insights into compliance audits, gap assessments, and readiness checks.
- Provide recommendations on engaging certification bodies.

4. Training Approach and Methodology

The training methodology should focus on a mix of lectures, group discussions, practical exercises, case studies, and real-world examples. The approach should be interactive and participatory to foster a deep understanding of the key principles and processes of ISO 22000 and ISO 9001. The methodology should include:

- identification and mapping of the primary stakeholders and needs assessment
- Workshops: Hands-on sessions where participants can practice applying ISO requirements.
- Case Studies: Analysis of real-life scenarios to identify risks, opportunities, and solutions.
- Mock Audits: Simulated audits to help participants experience audit processes and requirements.
- Q&A Sessions: Allow participants to ask questions specific to their organizational needs.

The National Investment Commission invites eligible consulting firm (s) to indicate their interest in providing these services. Interested consulting firm (s) must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services, (i) information detailing the company’s existence and areas of expertise (ii) a list of similar assignments and experience in similar conditions with evidence of past performance, (iii) list of overall permanent and temporary staff in fields related to the assignment (**Business Development/ Agricultural Economist/ Development Planning Expert, Certified Lead Auditor or Trainer for ISO 22000 & ISO 9001 standards and Food Scientist/ Expert**), and (iv) any other relevant information that might be useful. Qualification will be considered from one of two perspectives: a. firm’s qualification/experiences and b. staff and consultants' qualifications/experiences. Consulting firms may constitute joint ventures to enhance their chances of qualification.

Eligibility criteria, the establishment of the short-list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank’s “***Procurement Policy and Methodology for Bank Group Funded Operations***” (BPM), dated October 2015”, which is available on the Bank’s website at <http://www.afdb.org>.

Interested consulting firms may obtain further information at the address below during office hours 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM Monrovia Time.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in hardcopy or by email to the address below and clearly marked “**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (ISO 22000) AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (ISO 9001) CERTIFICATION TRAINING**” on or before 3:00 pm Local time Thursday, April 17, 2025.

All communication shall be addressed to:

Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone Project

Mr. Andrew Anderson  
Project Coordinator  
National Investment Commission  
M&E Professional Building  
Sekou Touré Ave. UN Drive Tel: +231 886 976983/ 0770120493  
Email: [aanderson2024@gmail.com](mailto:aanderson2024@gmail.com) or [aanderson@investliberia.gov.lr](mailto:aanderson@investliberia.gov.lr)  
Monrovia, Liberia

Copy:

Mr. Boimah Gibson  
Procurement Officer  
National Investment Commission  
M&E Professional Building  
Email: [boimahgibson@gmail.com](mailto:boimahgibson@gmail.com)



## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

### NPA Management presents Performance Report and Strategic Plans to Pres. Boakai

President Joseph Nyuma Boakai has commended the Management of the National Port Authority (NPA) for their proactive approach in Port Operations in Liberia and reaffirmed government's support for initiatives that drive infrastructural development, improve governance, and promote sustainable economic growth.

Monrovia, March 25, 2025: President Boakai was speaking at a meeting with the NPA leadership on leadership for the level of progress being achieved at the National Port Authority over the past 14 months. He said the NPA being the

Authority's achievements, challenges, and financial performance over the past year.

Additionally, they presented detailed plans for the renovation and upgrading of all ports across Liberia, ensuring they meet international standards and support the country's economic growth.

Speaking at the meeting, NPA Managing Director Dukuly reiterated the NPA's dedication to transparency, accountability, and operational excellence, emphasizing that the proposed reforms will strengthen Liberia's maritime sector and contribute to the government's broader economic agenda.

Mr. Dukuly said his leadership team is currently focusing on the Infrastructure Development of all ports, which is a strategic rollout plan for the rehabilitation and modernization of port facilities to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and improve service delivery for port users.



Pres. Boakai with NPA boss Dukuly

Monday, March 24, at the Executive Mansion when the team presented a 14-month performance report that outline key strategic initiatives aimed at modernizing Liberia's port infrastructure and improving operational efficiency. President Boakai lauded the NPA gateway to the Liberian economy will be given the fullest support that will put it on par with ports in west Africa, emphasizing the importance the NPA plays in the viability of the Liberia's economy. During the meeting, the NPA leadership headed by Mr. Sekou A. M. Dukuly submitted a comprehensive review of the

### Cllr. Teh condemns land violence in Rivergee

**- Call for peaceful resolution**

Cllr. Kunkunyon Wleh Teh, an eminent citizen and a lawyer from River Gee County has condemned recent out break of violence in the county which led to the death of two persons.

River Gee March 25, 2025: Cllr. Teh noted that the violence outbreak between the communities of Glaro and Katiabo, which escalation not only endangers lives but also undermines the principles of coexistence and mutual respect was regrettable.

On March 18, 2025, violent erupted between the Glaro and Katiabo, over a disputed land, prompting River Gee County Superintendent Mike T. Swengbe to lead a team of Joint Security forces, including soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia to Kiteabo and Glarro to restore peace.

Cllr. Teh, in his statement condemning the incident said there is no justification for harming individuals or communities in the pursuit of

land claims. Cllr. Teh recognized that land is a vital resource, and disputes over it can be both complex and deeply rooted in historical contexts. However, noted that violence is never the answer.

He urged both communities to engage in constructive dialogue and seek peaceful resolutions to their

differences. It is imperative that we prioritize negotiation and understanding over conflict. Cllr. Teh calls on local leaders, community members, and relevant authorities to come together, facilitate discussions, and explore mediation avenues that honor the rights and needs of both parties.

In addition, Cllr. Teh encouraged the involvement of neutral third-party organizations that can assist in resolving these disputes in a fair and equitable manner.



Cllr. Teh pictured in the middle

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### Police investigate 4 murder suspects in Harper

Four persons accused of flogging a middle-aged man to death on suspicion of his involvement of witchcraft activities undergoing police interrogation in Harper City, Maryland County.

By: Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

Harper, Liberia, March 25, 2025- The Liberia National Police in Harper City, Maryland County has forwarded four suspects to Harper Magisterial Court for alleged murder.

The suspects were charged with multiple crimes and forwarded to court for pretrial.

According to police charge sheet, defendants Sabastine Wilson, Joseph Y. Wilson, Joseph D. Wilson, and Francis M. Harris were charged with Murder, Criminal Facilitation, Criminal Solicitation, Criminal Conspiracy in accordance with the Penal Code of the Republic of Liberia (section 14.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4).

The police charge sheet indicates that on 17 March

Crime Services Department CSD for investigation.

The charge sheet further details that the eight suspects were acquainted with their constitutional rights to a legal representation.

Though they earlier denied wrongdoing, but with testimonies of Witnesses Samuel Appleton, 19; Alpha Wilson, age 16; Gabriel M. Walker, 19 and John Bolen, 21, in the presence of Police, allegedly agreed and admitted to beating the victim, resulting to his death, adding that the deceased was accused of being a wizard and they were driving him from the town.

Following the ordeal, they were later charged with murder, criminal facilitation, criminal solicitation, criminal conspiracy, which constitute



2025, at about 15:13hours, they received a call via phone from Mr. George Appleton of Rock Town, Township Commissioner, who complained that a man identified as Himmie Freeman, a Liberian and a resident of Middle Town, in Harper District was seen unconscious along the road close to one of the villages leading from Middle Town to Rock Town at about 11:00 am. Police say upon receiving the information, a team of Joint Security headed by Superintendent Frederick T. Smith, Jr., Chief Investigator of the Crime Services department of the Liberia National Police Maryland chapter visited the crime scene to gather facts surrounding the incident.

Following arrival of the Joint Security on the scene, the information provided by the Commissioner was proven, with eight persons arrested and turned over to the Police

sections (14.1, 10.2, 10.3, and 10.4) of the Penal code of the Republic of Liberia.

Meanwhile, the alleged act was committed to prevent the deceased, Himmie Freeman, who was believed to be in his early 50s from initiating innocent children into witchcraft activities.

However, several residents, Civil Society actors and the National Independent Commission on Human Rights in Maryland County have condemned the act.

They pointed out that the recent mob violence against citizens shouldn't be tolerated in the county, advising citizens to seek redress through legal means, instead of taking the law into their own hands.

The four defendants were forwarded to the Harper City Court and later sent to the Harper Central Prison, pending trial. Editing by Jonathan Browne



## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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### NPA Management presents Performance

According to him, the NPA's thorough assessment of existing contracts and concessions with prime emphasis on the APM-Terminals Concession is intended to ensure transparency, competitiveness, and alignment with the government's goal of fostering a business-friendly environment. The meeting was attended by NPA board Chairman J. Luther Tarpeh, Deputy Managing

Director of Administration James Barnard amongst others. The National Port Authority says it remains committed to serving the Liberian people and ensuring that the country's ports operate with international best practices, facilitating trade and fostering national development. - Press release

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### Cllr. Teh condemns land

He said "it is crucial that we work towards solutions that foster harmony and collaboration, rather than division and hostility."

"Let us remember that our strength lies in our unity and our ability to resolve conflicts peacefully. We stand together in our commitment to fostering an environment of

understanding, respect, and cooperation." He calls upon all stakeholders to join us in this effort for peace and to ensure that the safety and well-being of all community members remain a top priority.

He adds "together, let us build a future based on dialogue, understanding, and mutual respect." - Edited by Othello B. Garblah.

From Back Page

### AML approves Third Amendment in MDA

infrastructure development, rather than risks deterring investors with policies that favor external operators at the expense of established investors.

Despite recent discussions about transporting Guinean ore through Liberia, ArcelorMittal says the reality is that Guinea has resisted such proposals for more than four decades, and that now that the country has completed the Trans-Guinea Railway infrastructure, there is little reason to believe it will allow its resources to be exported through Liberia instead.

Given this backdrop, AML questions why any company would invest in Liberia's railway and port infrastructure if the government intends to take control and hand management over to a third-party operator. The company argues that Liberia must learn from Guinea's example by ensuring a sustainable, investor-friendly environment, while securing long-term economic benefits from its

natural resources.

As Liberia moves forward with discussions on rail management, the company notes that key question is: Will the government embrace a model that attracts investment and fosters growth, or will it pursue policies that could deter future infrastructure development?

Notwithstanding, ArcelorMittal Liberia (AML) says it is making major upgrades to the government-owned railway infrastructure as part of its expansion efforts, despite persistent misconceptions about its stance on shared rail usage.

The company recently granted more than two dozen journalists access to its facility for a rail tour to observe what it calls "real-time improvements" along the railway line.

The tour also highlighted construction of a new railway station in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County and installation of a digital monitoring system to track movement of locomotives to and from

the port city.

The topic of railway use has sparked ongoing debate in Liberia, with accusations that AML is attempting to monopolize the rail corridor.

However, the company clarifies that it has consistently expressed its willingness to allow other mining firms to use the railway through a structured agreement that benefits the Liberian government and ensures fair business practices.

In 2021, the House of Representatives rejected an amended Mineral Development Agreement (MDA) with AML, citing concerns that the agreement was monopolistic.

However, AML says it explicitly included a clause in the MDA, stating that if it were found to be sabotaging other companies' access to the railway, the government could immediately remove it as the operator.

Investigation establishes that AML has not objected to any company using the railway, and Management maintains that stalling of a third-party rail use cannot be attributed to any form of blockade by AML.

ArcelorMittal Liberia remains that it has historically aligned with the Liberian government's vision of developing a fully functional, multi-user railway system along the Buchanan Corridor, and has already invested more than \$800 million in the rail infrastructure, significantly increasing its operational capacity. Editing by Jonathan Browne

### Police interrogate man for alleged human trafficking

*The Liberian National Police in Pleebo, Maryland County has detained a man for allegedly attempting to sell his 11-year-old son.*

By: Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

PLEEBO, Liberia, March 25, 2025 - A 38-year-old man, Joshua Odarbeh, has been arrested and detained at the Pleebo Police cell for allegedly attempting to sell his 11-year-old son, Prosperous Odarbeh.

Odarbeh was placed behind bar over the weekend after he allegedly arranged to sell his 11-year-old son to businessman and musician, Abraham Weah, commonly known as DJ Cassava Leaf.

According to reports, Odarbeh contacted Weah via text messages, informing

described as "Satanic attack."

Asked whether he had have previous dealings with Weah, he admitted to knowing him since 2020 and purchasing phones from his shop in 2023.

But the suspect denied any past involvement in human trafficking, saying, "I only decided to get in touch with him to see if he is interested."

Police have launched a full investigation into the matter. Suspect Odarbeh remains in Police custody in Pleebo, while 'DJ Cassava Leaf' has also been invited for questioning to clarify any



Mr. Joshua Odarbeh

him that he wanted to sell his child. Rather than ignoring the message, Weah responded strategically, stating that human trade was not a phone discussion and suggested they meet in person.

He further offered to cover Odarbeh's transportation costs from Grand Kru to Maryland County.

Upon Odarbeh's arrival at Cassava Leaf's business center, Weah immediately contacted the Police, leading to the suspect's swift arrest.

Speaking to reporters following his arrest, Odarbeh said his actions were driven by what he

prior interactions with the suspect.

This worrisome case raises concerns about deeper societal issues in Maryland County and Liberia as a whole.

While Odarbeh's claim of being under "Satanic attack" may not hold legal weight, it highlights potential underlying causes, including economic desperation, mental health struggles, or possible involvement in a larger criminal network.

The police have invited the child's mother's for further explanation, as the suspect remains behind bar in the county. Editing by Jonathan Browne

  
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# Français

## AMP Terminal accepte de revoir l'accord de concession de 25 ans

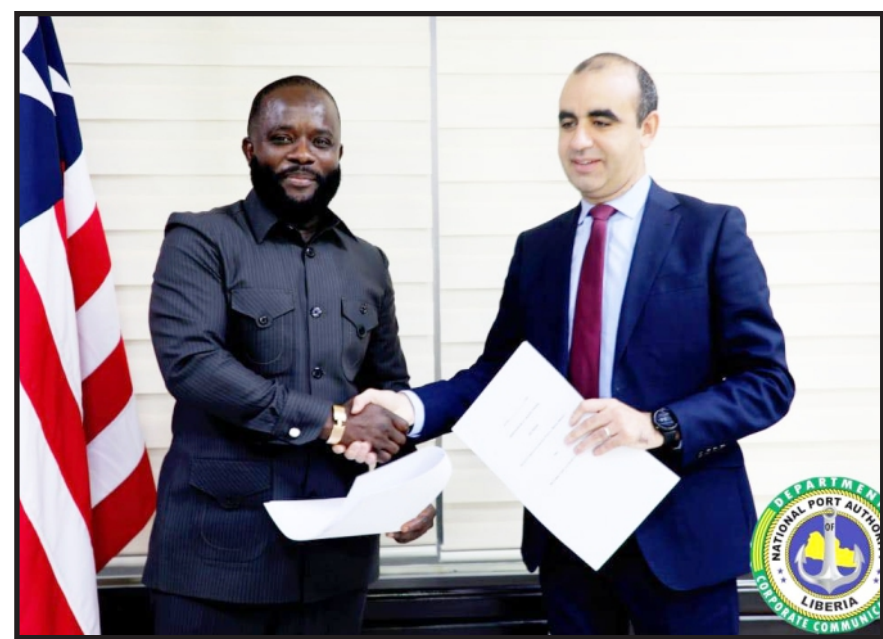
Monrovia - Pour la première fois, APM Terminals a accepté de revoir son accord de concession de 25 ans avec le Libéria, marquant ainsi un tournant majeur après des années de tentatives infructueuses par les

avec les meilleures pratiques internationales et les autres accords de concession au Libéria. Les efforts pour renégocier l'accord, notamment en 2021 sous l'administration de l'ex-président George Weah, n'ont pas abouti.

Liberia, dirigée par Clay Crain. Ces négociations ont abouti à une rencontre avec le président Joseph Nyumah Boakai, au cours de laquelle ce dernier a insisté pour qu'une révision ait lieu, une demande à laquelle APM Terminals a donné son accord. Les experts considèrent cet accord comme une réalisation importante, alors que le pays cherche à réajuster les concessions à long terme signées sous des conditions économiques différentes pour mieux répondre aux besoins actuels et futurs du Libéria.

« Politiquement, la révision de l'accord avec APM Terminals est bénéfique pour le président Boakai car c'était une promesse phare de sa campagne, mais économiquement, elle est encore plus importante car elle permettra d'aligner la concession sur les réalités commerciales et socio-économiques actuelles », a

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



administrations précédentes. Cet accord, signé en octobre 2010 et devant expirer en 2035, ne comporte aucune clause formelle de révision, une omission incompatible

Cette avancée ce mois-ci intervient après plusieurs mois de discussions entre la direction de l'Autorité Portuaire Nationale (APN), dirigée par le directeur général Sekou H. Dukuly, et APM Terminals

## L'Ambassadeur des États-Unis visite les opérations d'ArcelorMittal à Nimba

L'Ambassadeur des États-Unis au Libéria, Mark Toner, a visité les installations d'ArcelorMittal Libéria, exprimant une impression positive concernant les investissements significatifs réalisés par l'entreprise dans le comté, qu'il considère comme essentiels pour le développement humain et économique à long terme du Libéria.

Lors de sa visite et de la visite du concentrateur, l'Ambassadeur Toner a qualifié l'investissement d'ArcelorMittal Libéria (AML) de « significatif pour l'économie libérienne ». En tant que plus grand investissement à ce jour, il estime que cet investissement aidera le pays à résoudre les problèmes liés à l'éducation et au chômage. L'ambassadeur a également souligné la nécessité pour le gouvernement libérien d'attirer de nouvelles sources d'investissements étrangers importants, compte tenu du potentiel

que le Libéria offre dans des secteurs tels que l'exploitation minière et le tourisme.

L'Ambassadeur et sa délégation ont été accueillis sur place par le Responsable des Finances des Mines d'ArcelorMittal, R.C. Saraf, le Directeur Général, Joseph Mathews, le Directeur Général d'ArcelorMittal Libéria, Michiel Van Der Merwe, le Directeur des Opérations, Anthony Kocken, ainsi que les responsables des départements tels que Marcus Wleh de la durabilité et des relations extérieures, Rebecca Kwabo-Buegar, des Ressources humaines et du développement

organisationnel, et Mme Charlesetta Peters, responsable des services sociaux, entre autres.

M. Kocken a mis en avant les contributions et l'impact positif d'AML au Libéria dans des domaines tels que l'emploi et le renforcement des capacités. Le groupe a visité l'Académie de formation d'ArcelorMittal Libéria, où des Libériens locaux sont formés pour devenir des artisans, et leur emploi ultérieur constitue un exemple important d'un investissement majeur qui

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## Éditorial

### Comment le Bloc Majoritaire a couvert le Liberia de honte

Par Raghuram Rajan

Dans leur quête égoïste et à courte vue du pouvoir, les membres du Bloc Majoritaire de la Chambre des représentants, sous la direction du « Président du Régime » Richard Nagbe Koon, ont exposé l'image du Liberia à l'opprobre international en adressant une demande à l'Assemblée parlementaire de la CEDEAO visant au retrait de trois parlementaires libériens de cette institution régionale.

Cette requête a été formulée malgré l'avis préalable du sénateur Edwin Melvin Snowe, président de la Commission sur la sécurité régionale de l'Assemblée parlementaire de la CEDEAO, qui avait clairement indiqué que cette démarche était impossible.

Ignorant cet avertissement et aveuglés par leur obsession du pouvoir, les membres du Bloc Majoritaire dirigé par Koon ont tout de même écrit à l'Assemblée parlementaire de la CEDEAO pour rappeler les représentants libériens Samuel R. Enders, Sr., Moima Briggs-Mensah et Taa Z. Wongbe. Leur initiative s'est soldée par un rejet catégorique de la part de l'institution régionale, infligeant ainsi un camouflet retentissant à la majorité parlementaire libérienne.

Dans sa réponse officielle adressée à la 55<sup>e</sup> législature libérienne, et plus particulièrement à la Chambre des représentants, l'Assemblée parlementaire de la CEDEAO a rappelé que, conformément à l'article 18.1 et 18.2 de l'Acte additionnel relatif au renforcement des pouvoirs du Parlement de la CEDEAO, le mandat des parlementaires communautaires est fixé pour une durée de quatre ans.

L'Assemblée a précisé sans équivoque qu'une fois les représentants des États membres investis, ils ne peuvent être révoqués ni remplacés avant l'expiration de leur mandat, sauf dans les cas suivants : non-réélection au niveau national, décès ou démission notifiée par écrit au président du Parlement de la CEDEAO.

Elle a en outre souligné que, sauf en cas d'incapacité mentale ou physique certifiée, de démission pour incompatibilité ou de révocation par l'Assemblée parlementaire pour faute grave, aucun Parlement national ne peut exiger le retrait de ses représentants une fois ceux-ci nommés.

Ainsi, l'institution régionale a affirmé que les députés Samuel R. Enders, Sr., Moima Briggs-Mensah et Taa Z. Wongbe ne se trouvent dans aucune de ces situations et ne peuvent donc être remplacés. Par conséquent, ils poursuivront leur mandat jusqu'à son terme, conformément aux engagements internationaux du Liberia.

C'est là que réside l'embarras et l'humiliation internationale : l'Assemblée parlementaire de la CEDEAO rappelle que sa décision s'aligne sur les obligations internationales du Liberia, obligations dont le « Président du Régime » Koon et son Bloc Majoritaire semblent ignorer l'existence. Leur action imprudente met en cause non seulement leur leadership, mais aussi leur compréhension des responsabilités parlementaires du pays.

Cependant, cette situation n'étonne guère. Les membres du Bloc Majoritaire ont déjà violé la Constitution du Liberia ainsi que leurs propres règlements internes en destituant illégalement le président de la Chambre et en élisant de manière contestée le représentant Richard Nagbe Koon, qui s'auto-proclame « Président du Régime », en dépit de la présence d'un président élu constitutionnellement, J. Fonati Koffa. Ils sont même allés jusqu'à forcer l'accès au bureau du président Koffa pour le faire occuper par Koon.

Ce même mépris des règles et cette brutalité institutionnelle ont été projetés sur la scène régionale lorsque le Bloc Majoritaire a tenté de retirer les représentants libériens de l'Assemblée parlementaire de la CEDEAO, en dépit de l'avertissement clair du sénateur Edwin Melvin Snowe sur l'impossibilité d'une telle action. Le rejet catégorique de leur demande constitue une réponse cinglante à leur ignorance et à leur ambition démesurée, plongeant une fois de plus le Liberia dans l'embarras sur la scène internationale.



# Français

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## AMP Terminal accepte de revoir

déclaré Ambulah Mamey, praticien en développement international. Suite à l'engagement d'APM Terminals de revoir l'accord, le président Boakai a constitué un comité de révision conjointe d'APMT, présidé par le directeur général de l'APN et coprésidé par le directeur général d'APMT Liberia. Les membres du comité incluent le ministère de la Justice, la Commission Nationale des Investissements du Libéria, Morley P. Kamara, conseiller économique du président Boakai, ainsi qu'un représentant du siège d'APMT. La semaine dernière, le comité s'est réuni pour finaliser les termes de référence du processus de renégociation et pour démarrer la révision. Le rôle d'APM Terminals au Libéria : APM Terminals, une filiale du géant danois du transport maritime Maersk, gère le terminal à conteneurs du port de Freeport de Monrovia. En vertu de son accord de concession, l'entreprise assure la gestion de la manutention des cargaisons, des opérations portuaires et de la logistique, jouant ainsi un rôle crucial dans l'infrastructure commerciale du Libéria. Depuis 2010, APM Terminals a investi dans la modernisation du port, y compris l'équipement de manutention des conteneurs, l'extension du terminal et l'automatisation numérique, améliorant ainsi l'efficacité et la collecte des recettes fiscales par le gouvernement. Bien que ces investissements aient amélioré les opérations portuaires et facilité le commerce, des préoccupations ont été exprimées concernant les coûts élevés des services, les conditions de partage des recettes et les opportunités d'emploi pour les Libériens. L'un des critiques les plus véhéments de l'accord est le vice-président Jeremiah Koung, qui, lorsqu'il était sénateur, avait dénoncé l'accord pour avoir accordé des droits excessifs à APM Terminals.

« La loi donne trop de pouvoir à APM Terminals. Elle leur permet de modifier les tarifs à tout moment et, pire encore, cet accord ne peut être modifié qu'après 25 ans. S'il existe un moyen de modifier cette loi, faisons-le maintenant », avait déclaré Koung à l'époque. En décembre 2020, l'Association Nationale des Courtiers en Douane du Libéria (NCBAL) avait également exprimé des préoccupations concernant les inefficacités opérationnelles, appelant à une intervention gouvernementale pour résoudre les « retards permanents dans le dédouanement et le traitement des conteneurs au port ». Ces problèmes devraient être au cœur de la révision à venir, selon le directeur général de l'APN. « Le mandat du président Boakai à l'APN est clair : revoir les concessions portuaires pour garantir que le Libéria obtienne sa juste part. Jusqu'à présent, nous avons réussi à remplir ce mandat grâce à notre engagement inébranlable, au soutien technique d'autres ministères et agences gouvernementales, et à la coopération de nos partenaires du secteur privé », a déclaré le directeur général de l'APN. Renégociation des accords GMTS/CTN et Marine Services au port : Au-delà d'APM Terminals, l'APN—sous la direction du président Boakai et avec le soutien technique du ministère des Finances, de l'Autorité des Recettes du Libéria et du ministère de la Justice—a renégocié l'Accord de Services Maritimes et le contrat de Solutions Globales de Suivi et Maritimes (GTMS). Ces révisions ont permis d'augmenter les recettes du gouvernement, de réduire les coûts pour les utilisateurs du port et de mettre en place un plan structuré pour que les Libériens prennent progressivement en charge la fourniture de ces services.

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## L'Ambassadeur des États-Unis visite

entraînera des avantages économiques et sociaux à long terme pour les Libériens. Le COO d'AML a également évoqué la relation solide entre l'entreprise et les communautés locales, dans lesquelles les résidents non qualifiés sont prioritaires pour les travaux généraux ne nécessitant pas de compétences techniques. Il a en outre détaillé le soutien de l'entreprise à des projets communautaires, tels que l'agriculture, permettant aux agriculteurs des communautés locales de recevoir des subventions dans le cadre du programme de biodiversité et de conservation d'AML. À l'Académie de formation d'ArcelorMittal Libéria (AMLTA), Victor Loubser, directeur par intérim de l'académie, a également informé l'Ambassadeur américain sur la qualité de la formation dispensée par l'institution et les opportunités d'emploi qui suivent l'obtention du diplôme. Il a précisé que l'académie de formation a intégré tous ses diplômés, garantissant ainsi un emploi total pour tous les stagiaires. Le Directeur des opérations, Anthony Kocken, a également informé l'Ambassadeur et sa délégation au cours de la visite du projet de concentrateur, en notant que ce dernier a la capacité de produire 15 millions

de tonnes de concentré de minerai par an, dont la production débutera en juillet 2025, offrant un produit à valeur ajoutée en forte demande dans l'industrie sidérurgique. La direction d'AML a également profité de l'occasion pour informer l'Ambassadeur du plein soutien de l'entreprise à la politique ferroviaire à utilisateurs multiples du gouvernement. M. Mathews a indiqué qu'avec l'expansion en cours, ArcelorMittal Libéria a augmenté la capacité ferroviaire et que, bien que d'autres entreprises puissent utiliser la capacité excédentaire temporairement, elles devront également l'étendre pour leurs propres besoins. La visite de l'Ambassadeur des États-Unis a souligné un engagement fort en faveur du renforcement du partenariat dans des secteurs clés comme l'éducation, les soins de santé et les infrastructures communautaires, à mesure que le Libéria continue d'élargir son rôle dans l'économie régionale et mondiale. Cette visite a également confirmé l'engagement commun du gouvernement des États-Unis et d'AML à soutenir la vision du Président Boakai de créer un système ferroviaire à utilisateurs multiples. — Communiqué de presse

## Le Vice-président Koung accusé de raviver la politique tribale divisive à l'approche de l'élection sénatoriale partielle de Nimba

Le vice-président du Libéria, Jérémiah Kpan Koung, est accusé de raviver la politique tribale divisive instaurée par le feu sénateur Prince Yormi Johnson dans le comté de Nimba. Dans ses récentes déclarations, Koung a appelé les membres de l'ethnie Mah (Manor) et toutes les autres tribus à voter pour le candidat sénatorial, le représentant Samuel Kogar, issu de l'ethnie Gio (Dan), en rejetant les autres candidats, qu'il qualifie de « gaspillage de vote » lors de l'élection partielle sénatoriale à venir. Lors d'un entretien téléphonique dans le comté, le vice-président a expliqué que, selon lui, il était injuste qu'une seule tribu occupe les deux sièges sénatoriaux du comté. Il a donc lancé un appel aux Mah et à toutes les autres tribus de Nimba pour qu'ils laissent la place aux Gio afin de maintenir un leadership « pacifique et équilibré » dans le comté. « Il n'est pas juste qu'une seule tribu occupe les deux sièges. C'est pourquoi, lorsque j'ai quitté mon siège, j'ai estimé qu'il était injuste qu'une tribu en occupe les deux. Je lance un appel aux Mah et à toutes les autres tribus de Nimba pour qu'elles permettent aux Dan (Gio) de participer à cette élection. Je supplie les Mah de laisser cette élection aux Dan, car nous avons déjà un sénateur Mah. Maintenons l'équilibre pour la stabilité du comté. Gardons notre pays uni, cela sera dans notre intérêt », a déclaré Koung. Le feu sénateur Prince Yormi Johnson, surnommé le « parrain » de la politique de Nimba et créateur de l'influence politique locale, appartenait à l'ethnie Gio. La tribu Gio, à laquelle appartient également le vice-président Koung, estime que la vacance sénatoriale doit être comblée par un membre de cette tribu pour succéder à Johnson. Le représentant Samuel Kogar, candidat sénatorial pour le



Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Reconstruction (MDR), est l'héritier politique de Johnson. Le MDR, aujourd'hui dirigé par le vice-président Koung, soutient fermement sa candidature. La Commission nationale des élections a fixé au 22 avril 2025 la date de l'élection partielle sénatoriale de Nimba, avec dix-neuf candidats en lice. Cette élection partielle fait suite au décès de l'ancien sénateur Prince Yormi Johnson, fondateur du MDR et figure centrale de la politique du comté. Si Samuel Kogar est élu sénateur de Nimba, un autre scrutin partiel sera organisé pour le district #5 de Nimba, un siège qu'il occupe actuellement à la Chambre des représentants, ce qui entraînera une vacance supplémentaire au sein du législatif libérien. Dans le cadre de son soutien à la candidature de Kogar, le vice-président Koung a déclaré : « Je soutiens la candidature sénatoriale de Samuel Kogar et j'appelle tout le monde à voter pour lui. Le feu sénateur Johnson était un stratège. Kogar est la personne à pousser, il sera une voix importante à la capitale. Quand il parle, tout le monde sait que Nimba a parlé, tandis que le sénateur Nyan apportera la touche diplomatique », a-t-il ajouté. Il a ensuite averti que tout vote en faveur d'un autre candidat que Kogar serait « un gaspillage de vote », tout en qualifiant Kogar de personne audacieuse et déterminée. « Maintenant, je ne perds pas de temps avec vous, les Dan. Si vous ne voulez pas du mouton, vous gâchez le vote. Tout vote autre que celui en faveur de Kogar est un gaspillage. Donnez votre vote à Kogar en toute confiance. Aux Mah, je vous supplie. Venez soutenir cette cause. Quand j'ai appelé les Dan, ils sont venus dans votre cour. S'il vous plaît, soutenez le candidat Dan pour que nous puissions maintenir l'équilibre dans le comté », a supplié le vice-président Koung.



# LIBERIANS DEBATE

Topic: VP Koung's divisive politics in Nimba

By Naneka Hoffman

Vice President Jeremiah Koung's recent call for the Nimba people to elect a Gio-speaking candidate in the upcoming Senatorial By-election receives widespread criticism here, as you may read in a NEW DAWN's random sampling below.



John B. Mulbah

"The statement from VP Jeremiah Koung is wrong. In my

opinion, election should be based on the most suitable candidate for the position. It shouldn't be based on tribal level, because tribalism brought war. It brings bad feelings, so we shouldn't be discussing tribalism; it should be based on qualification, and when you have passion to serve the people of Nimba. If you are serving Nimba, you are serving Liberia, because you will be making laws in the interest of Liberia and Liberians at large."

"In my mind and wisdom, it is a harmful statement, because the second man in command will come up with such a statement. It is also a dangerous statement that could cause chaos because the past regime when Madam Taylor served as VP, she never made such a statement in her county; she united the people as one. Unity Party is the ruling party now; we're expecting something of standard from them, not something that will bring chaos in the country and to



Akoi Kessellie

the body politics of Liberia."



Abraham B.C Jones

"VP Jeremiah Koung wants to divide Nimba County; this is the slogan he is preaching to divide the Mano and Gio people. In

their dialect, Kudo means ONE. So, if he will be saying the Gio people should vote for the Gio people and the Mano people should vote the Mano people, it means he is contradicting himself because Nimba County will never be divided. See this thing the late Prince Johnson put us into; see the statement from VP Jeremiah Koung. Jeremiah Koung wants to become president for us. When Jeremiah Koung becomes president of this country, it will be only Gio people that will get job in the country."



Archie Williams

"You see that statement alone from VP Jeremiah Koung is divisive and the VP should know that he is the second person in command of the entire nation, so that statement is in appropriate from a leader of a nation. Jeremiah Koung divided himself by saying Mano people should vote for Mano and Gio people should vote for Gio. He divides himself in his county that voted for him. When they were voting for him, there was no tribe business; all of them came and voted for him. So, when it comes to this level when he has nothing to say, he should play low and leave it with other Nimbainas,

"VP Jeremiah Koung's statement is right. I agreed with his statement, for the development of Nimba."



Abraham T. Teah

because what he said has propensity to cripple his political ambition."



Varney Prosperous Fahnbulleh

"I see VP Jeremiah Koung's statement as a threat in the nation. A government is like a home; when you are a mother in the home, you must play the motherly role and see how best to restrict and give opportunity

to all the children in the home. You being a VP to make such a statement, knowing that Nimba County doesn't only belong to Mano and Gio alone, and you say only Gio people should have a say in politics, especially when it comes to the senatorial by-election or process in Nimba County. I think he shot himself in the leg, because Nimba isn't only two tribes; there are so many tribes in Nimba. His statement wasn't right; it will not be right today or tomorrow. In my mind, I don't think Koung has a political consultant that he should consult before making statement. And I see Koung falling comes 2029."

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# Gongloe takes Koung to task

Ex-presidential candidate differs with Vice President Jeremaih Koung's recent call to all Nimbaians to elect a Gio-speaking candidate, instead, stressing a need for balance representation from Nimba.

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monrovia, Liberia, March 25, 2025 - Former Presidential Candidate, Cllr. Tiawan Saye Gongloe, also a son of Nimba Couny sharply react to Vice

underscores. He believes that this can be achieved by ensuring they are given a fair chance during legislative elections, adding that Nimba County should be for all Nimbaians; therefore,



President Jeremiah K. Koung's perceived divisive tribal politics here, reminding the Vice President that Nimba County is for all tribes in Nimba, not only the Gio-speaking people in the county. Vice President Koung had warned the Mah-speaking people and other tribes in Nimba gearing up for the pending senatorial by-election to give the by-election to the Gio or Dan group, rather than wasting their votes to someone else in the race. But addressing a news conference on Monday, March 24, 2025, at his Gongloe and Associates Law Office in Monrovia, Cllr. Gongloe noted that the great county of Nimba stands at a pivotal moment. He says as all Nimbaians may be aware, the ruling Unity Party and its alliance, the Movement for Democracy and Reconstruction already have a representation in the Liberian Senate those hails from Nimba, while arguing that for a truly balanced representation of the people, the opposition must also hold a seat in the senate chamber. "Let us send a clear message: Nimba is a county where everyone—regardless of gender, district, or political affiliation—can serve. In this spirit, it is equally vital that the politically-marginalized population of Nimba County—including women, and members of the Krahn, Mandingo, Kpelleh, and Bassa (Gbi and Doru) ethnic groups—be made to feel that they are an inclusive part of Nimba County" Cllr. Gongloe

in light of geographic and gender balance, fiscal responsibility and principled leadership, all Nimbaians should instead, vote for the lone female candidate in the senatorial by-election. "You have seven qualified opposition candidates from whom to choose, but among these, there is a unique candidate, a woman who once served admirably as Superintendent of our county and has come second in three previous senatorial elections. Notably, there is no woman in the Nimba Legislative Caucus. Edith Gongloe-Weh not only hails from Yarwin-Mehnnsonnoh Statutory District—one of the districts yet to produce a senator—but she is also the sole female candidate in this race. I'm urging you to vote for Madam Edith Gongloe Weh. She is our best path to inclusive, balanced, and forward-looking leadership in the Senate", he urges. He notes that historically, all the original districts of Nimba have produced senators, except Yarwin-Mehnnsonnoh and Gbelley Geh, reflecting that in the past, the pattern of Senate representation in Nimba County ensured balance, one senator from upper Nimba and the other from lower Nimba. He recalls that the last election that reflected this pattern was in 1997, which resulted in the election of Senator Margaret Kermah of Tappita, Lower Nimba County, and Senator George Korkor of Gbanquoi, Upper Nimba County. "Presently, a senator from Upper Nimba County is already serving. There is,

therefore, a compelling need for representation from Lower Nimba County. This combination of historical need, geographic balance, and gender inclusiveness makes her the ideal choice to fill the existing Senate vacancy", Cllr. Gongloe continues. Candidate Edith Gongloe Weh is a biological sister of the former presidential contestant, who is currently political leader of the Liberian People's Party, LPP. Cllr. Gongloe also argues that aside from considering national and fiscal importance in the Nimba by-election, the senatorial candidate of the ruling party, Representative Samuel Kogar, is a sitting member of the House of Representatives for district #5, Nimba County. Therefore, if he wins the election, it will trigger yet another by-election which will be the third such election since the 2023 presidential and legislative polls. "These elections are not without cost. At a time when the United States has cut its aid to Liberia and when our nation is being urged to adopt austerity measures, should we really be planning for yet another expensive by-election just two years after the general elections? This is not just about political strategy, it is about responsible governance", he cautions. He warns that Liberia cannot afford to keep spending millions on elections that could be avoided through better foresight and decision-making. "Voting for the ruling party's candidate, in this case, opens the door to unnecessary government expenditure, further burdening our struggling economy. For too long, the women of Nimba have been denied a seat at the legislative table. Our neighbors—Bong, Grand Gedeh, and Grand Bassa Counties—have all elected women to their legislative caucuses. Yet we continue to deny our own mothers and daughters the opportunity to serve. Electing Edith Gongloe Weh would be a meaningful step toward correcting that injustice. It would be a signal that Nimba values the voices of all its citizens", Cllr. Gongloe emphasizes. The National Elections Commission has scheduled the Nimba Senatorial By-election for April 22, 2025. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

# MCSS student protest over teachers' absence

Academic activities at William V.S. Tubman High School on 12th Street, Sinkor, were disrupted on Monday, March 24, as students took to the streets to demand increases in their teachers' salaries.

By Kruah Thompson

Monrovia-Liberia, March 25, 2025: The students were seen holding placards and chanting slogans as they angrily stormed the streets, calling on the government to increase their instructors' salaries, and meet their demands. The protesting students insisted that without increments, their teachers will not return to the classroom. They alleged that their teachers had been absent from the classrooms for over two days, a situation they say threatens their academic progress as they approach their fourth-period test scheduled for next week. However, they warned that if nothing is done to address their teachers' plights to enable them to return to class today, Tuesday, March 25, they will stage a larger protest that might affect the head office of MCSS. On Monday, amid the tension, reports emerged that administrators at J.J. Roberts School, which is just near the Tubman High School, instructed students to return home, fearing disruptions. Parents were advised to keep their children away from school,

on students but insisted it was necessary to pressure the government into acting. In a statement issued last year, the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Augustine Kpehe Ngafuan, informed a group of journalists that the government was considering salary top-ups for employees in essential sectors such as health, education, security, and agriculture. The statement outlined that those earning below the minimum wage would see their salaries increase to at least \$150, with adjustments based on their respective categories. However, the Civil Service Agency (CSA) Director-General Josiah F. Joekai, on Thursday, February 18, 2025, revealed that the Minister of Finance allotted USD \$8.8 million for this process, which will positively impact 5,612 employees in critical sectors, particularly the Ministry of Education. An inside source at the MCSS told this paper that, being a government-run institution under the Ministry of Education (MoE) which operates with some level of administrative independence, the salary top-up exercise did not benefit their teachers. According to the source, during the Weah administration, many people were employed, inflating the payroll, and based on this, the government needed to audit the institution before making further adjustments. Our source, who refused to be mentioned, further said that since this top-up did not benefit the instructors at MCSS, the teachers' association decided to carry out a go-slow strike to draw the government's attention. This single action has affected the student community at MCSS, who took to the streets on Monday March 24, 2025, to call the government's attention. Meanwhile, four police pickup trucks carrying riot officers were seen heading toward Tubman High School to monitor the situation. - **Edited by Othello B. Garblah.**





*ArcelorMittal Liberia says it welcomes User-Operator framework suggested in the Third Amendment to its MDA.*

implemented in neighboring Guinea.  
AML has consented to the Rail System Operating Principles (RSOP) suggested by the Liberian government

es. In this model, mining companies operate the infrastructure they develop for 20 years, while ensuring access for other

AML argues that Liberia should adopt a similar approach to encourage foreign investment in

it has endorsed the User-Operator framework proposed in the Third Amendment to its Mineral Development Agreement (MDA) with the Government of Liberia. This model, which is widely used for bulk commodity transport in Australia, Brazil, and Canada, has also been successfully

that ensures transparent and non-discriminatory rail operations. Under this framework, a newly established Rail Authority will oversee standards, conduct inspections, and monitor compliance among all rail users. These new multi-user principles will take effect immediately.



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A collage of various New Dawn publications, including a letterhead, a calendar, a newspaper front page, and a brochure, all featuring the New Dawn logo and branding.

A photograph of a large industrial paper mill machine, likely a paper press or dryer. The machine is white and features a large horizontal roller assembly. To the left, there is a control panel with a digital display and several buttons. The machine is set against a background of colorful, curved stripes.