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Cllr. Bornor M. Varmah

# Dangerous precedent

**-National Bar disagrees with Supreme Court's ruling**

# Govt. warns against war drum



Min. Jerolimick Mathew Piah

**-Information Minister responds to VP Taylor**

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# Continental News

## Husband of late Nigerian gospel singer sentenced to death

The widower of the music artist, which popular Nigerian gospel singer death. A judge convicted Osinachi Nwachukwu has him of 23 charges, been sentenced to death including culpable



Osinachi Nwachukwu's death sparked outrage online and has drawn attention to concerns over domestic violence.

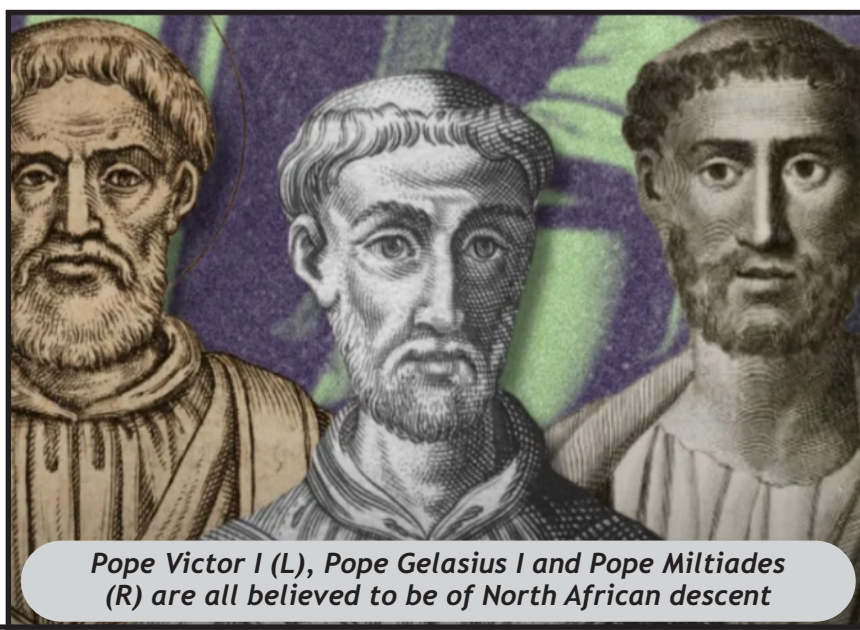
by hanging in connection with her death three years ago. The 42-year-old singer was initially said to have died of throat cancer, before her family went public with allegations of domestic violence. They accused her husband, Peter Nwachukwu, of abusing homicide, and gave him the maximum sentence for the crime. It is unclear if Peter Nwachukwu, who denied the charges, will be executed, as the authorities rarely implement the death sentence. He has the right to appeal. The case, held in the High Court in the capital, Abuja, has drawn

much attention in Nigeria because of the musician's prominence, and widespread concern about domestic violence. The late singer, who is survived by four children, was featured on the 2017 hit gospel song Ekwueme, which has more than 136 million YouTube views. Peter Nwachukwu, who was arrested in 2022, was also charged with emotional, verbal and psychological abuse, cruelty to children and criminal intimidation of them. Seventeen people, including two of the couple's children, were called by the prosecution as witnesses during the trial. Justice Njideka Nwosu-Iheme found the widower guilty of all the charges, saying the prosecution had proven its case beyond reasonable doubt. BBC

## How African popes changed Christianity - and gave us Valentine's Day

Now predominantly Muslim, North Africa was once a Christian heartland, producing Catholic popes who left their mark on the Church to this day. Their papacies were in the era of the Roman Empire, which stretched across modern-day Tunisia, the north-east of Algeria and the coast of western Libya. "North Africa was the Bible Belt of ancient Christianity," says Prof Christopher Bellitto, a historian at Kean University in the US. Many Catholics in Africa are hoping that the papacy will return to the continent for the first time in more than 1,500 years, as a successor to Pope Francis is chosen. Here, we look at the three previous African popes - and how they got Christians to celebrate Easter Sunday and St Valentine's Day. All three have been recognised in the Church as saints. Thought to be of Berber origin, Pope Victor I was in charge of the Catholic Church at a time when Christians were sometimes being persecuted by Roman officials for refusing to worship Roman gods. He is perhaps best known for ensuring

an extremely contentious issue. The "Easter controversy" was symbolic of larger conflicts between East and West, and whether or not Christians should follow Jewish practices. Victor I called the very first Roman Synod - a gathering of Church leaders - to resolve the impasse. He did this by threatening to excommunicate from the Church those bishops who refused to comply with his wishes. "He was a rather forceful voice for getting everyone on literally the same page," Prof Bellitto told the BBC.



Pope Victor I (L), Pope Gelasius I and Pope Miltiades (R) are all believed to be of North African descent

## Pressure mounts to probe Kenya police and army after BBC exposé

Leading human rights organisations have renewed calls for investigations into the killing of protesters by Kenya's security forces during demonstrations against a rise in taxes last June. It follows a BBC Africa Eye investigation, exposing members of the security forces who shot dead three protesters at Kenya's parliament, igniting public outrage and demands for justice. Amnesty International and the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) said the officers identified in the documentary should "face the law". Kenya's government spokesman has responded by saying "every life is important", the police watchdog is conducting an investigation and criticised the BBC documentary for being "one-sided".

young people... You can't stop the media," Odhiambo said. In response to the documentary before it was aired, the police service said the force could not investigate itself, adding that Kenya's Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) was responsible for investigating alleged misconduct. The Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF) told the BBC the IPOA had not forwarded any request to look into any of its personnel involved in the operations at parliament. BBC Africa Eye's Blood Parliament documentary revealed how security forces brutally responded to youthful protesters who breached Kenya's parliament on 25 June 2024, the day lawmakers voted to approve the proposed tax hikes. The controversial finance bill was aimed at raising \$2.7bn (£2bn) the government said it needed to cut its reliance on external borrowing - but had sparked widespread. Using open-source data and user-generated content, the BBC's analysis of more than 5,000 images



More than 100,000 people took to the streets of the capital, Nairobi, on 25 June 2024 calling on MPs not to pass the controversial finance bill

"Those who did the documentary should have sought government opinion... so that they can be fair and balanced," Isaac Mwaura said. "For example, they show the parliament being burnt, but they don't show who is doing it; they seem to minimise the vandalism that happened in parliament." He admitted the protesters had legitimate concerns about the finance bill but said: "We cannot have a country that also is led through anarchy and mayhem." The BBC had asked the government to take part in the documentary. It was briefly discussed in Kenya's parliament on Tuesday when MP John Kiarie accused the BBC of "pushing a foreign agenda", while another MP, Millie Odhiambo, said the government and parliament should deal with the aftermath of the protests "soberly", without gagging the media. "The BBC documentary has created more anger among

identified uniformed security personnel - a policeman and soldier - who opened fire killing three unarmed protesters at parliament. The wider clampdown by the security forces on a series of protests against the finance bill left at least 65 people dead, resulted in the forcible disappearance of 89 others and the arrest of thousands, according to Amnesty International. The Kenyan government put the death toll at 42. On Monday, the BBC said it had cancelled a private screening of the documentary in Kenya's capital Nairobi "due to pressure from the authorities". "We are very disappointed not to have been able to share the documentary and panel discussion as planned," a BBC spokesperson said. "In the meantime, audiences can watch the film on BBC Africa's YouTube channel," the spokesperson added. Amnesty said the documentary corroborated the group's earlier report that "unnecessary and excessive lethal force was used against protesters". It called on the police and the army to "publicly state the actions being taken with regard

# EDITORIAL

## Legal or political path: Which way is expedient for peace?

Despite acknowledging the Supreme Court Ruling on the leadership impasse in the House of Representatives, President Joseph Boakai says his government would seek a political resolution to the impasse.

This supposes that despite the ruling from the High Court being as crystal clear as daylight that Representative Richard Koon is not Speaker, the Executive seems even more determined to remain on its current path of political maneuvering in having its way in the House of Representatives.

On the other hand, the leader of the majority bloc in the House of Representatives, Richard Nagbe, has run to the Supreme Court, praying for re-argument of the Bill of Information from Speaker J. Fonati Koffa, which is a paradox, because while President Boakai is talking of pursuing a political approach than implementing the Supreme Court Ruling, Rep. Koon is returning to court. Which way does the UP-led government want to proceed in this matter?

“We are a country governed by laws, not by mobs or self-serving ambition. Those who undermine peace, violate the law, or seek to disrupt national harmony will face the full force of the law and justice”, President Boakai said in his address to the nation last week, a day after the ruling by the Supreme Court, upholding Speaker Koffa's Bill of Information.

Instead of enforcing the ruling from the Supreme Court of Liberia, the President says his government has already initiated broad consultations with relevant national stakeholders to determine the most appropriate and constitutionally sound path forward. “We have actively involved our traditional and other national leaders in addressing this matter”, Mr. Boakai adds.

We wonder what other path is “most appropriate and constitutionally sound” in the words of the President, other than the Supreme Court Ruling on the impasse.

The President's position clearly brings him in conflict with the Highest Court and final arbiter of justice in the land. The Executive that has been funding the illegal removal of Speaker Koffa, says it is consulting with traditional and other national leaders in addressing what is clearly a matter of law. This is quite unfortunate for the practice of the rule of law in Liberia.

This is a sad moment in our country that ruling of the Supreme Court is no longer respected by the highest office in the land that should set example on adherence to the rule of law. What message does this send to incoming generations? Are we truly a country of law or men, where might and influence make right.

Koon is convinced by his conscience that he is not Speaker of the 55<sup>th</sup> Legislature. This is why he addressed himself as Representative Koon in his petition to the Supreme Court. Yet, the Executive is maneuvering all out to have him imposed as Speaker, contrary to what the Constitution says about removal of the Speaker.

It is unfortunate that a government that campaigned on a promise of rescuing Liberia would embark on path that leaves much to be desired.

Published by the Searchlight Communications Inc.,  
UN Drive, P.O. Box 1266 Opposite National Investment Commission.  
Monrovia-Liberia. Tel: +231-06484201, +231-77007529, +231-0555422200 /  
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# COMMENTARY

By Ngaire Woods

## Treading the Trump Tightrope at the IMF and the World Bank

OXFORD - The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are in a difficult position. Established to uphold global rules and support development, they are now caught between an aggressively nationalist America - their largest shareholder - and the rest of the world. If their leaders speak truth to power, they risk US President Donald Trump’s wrath. If they don’t, they risk their own legitimacy.

The challenge of walking this tightrope was evident at last week’s Spring Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank. The IMF’s mandate is to stand guard over countries’ exchange rates and policies that affect global financial stability. This involves “calling out” those whose actions will impoverish their neighbors. So far, the Fund has not named the United States as its main rule-breaker. But ahead of the Spring Meetings, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva responded to the Trump administration’s unpredictable behavior by acknowledging the “off the charts” uncertainty caused by US tariffs, reiterating the need for central-bank independence, and urging countries to avoid “self-inflicted injuries.”

In early April, World Bank President Ajay Banga emphasized the Bank’s focus on its core mandate: driving development and reducing poverty. For several decades, the World Bank has supported efforts - particularly infrastructure investments - to lift millions of people out of poverty. But Trump’s dismantling of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) has decimated programs that enabled the Bank’s work. Instead of addressing this issue at the Spring Meetings, Banga focused on job creation amid rising unemployment worldwide. The Bank has also begun promoting nuclear and technology-agnostic energy solutions to appeal to a US administration that is allergic to climate action.

How the IMF and the World Bank approach the Trump administration will determine their effectiveness. The first 100 days of Trump’s second term offer insights into the strategy they should pursue.

First, they could be targeted and should plan accordingly. Trump’s takeover of Washington’s John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts shows that no organization is safe - some of America’s largest NGOs and philanthropies are already preparing for funding cuts. Moreover, the IMF and the World Bank are mentioned in Project 2025, the conservative blueprint for Trump’s second presidency published by the Heritage Foundation, and included in the 180-day review of US involvement in international organizations that Trump ordered on February 4. True, the team overseeing the review has been dismissed, throwing the process into disarray. But that may not be an obstacle, given the administration’s propensity to act without restraint.

Second, policymakers must bat away non-credible threats. When Mark Carney became Canadian prime minister in March, after Justin Trudeau stepped down, he insisted in his first conversation with Trump that the US president recognize Canada’s sovereignty (Trump also addressed Carney as “Prime Minister,” whereas he had often referred to Trudeau as “Governor”). It helped that Trump’s bluster about annexing Canada lacked political backing in Washington, much less a feasible plan.

The situation is somewhat murkier for the IMF and the World Bank. At the Spring Meetings, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent criticized both institutions, but said the US would maintain its leadership role and expand its global influence. Other countries must now decide the extent to which they are prepared to let one shareholder unilaterally determine the future of institutions that rely on their financial contributions and participation.

Third, no institution is alone. Whether and how the IMF and the World Bank accede to Trump’s demands will affect the ecosystem in which they operate. US law firms that capitulated to Trump, who wielded the threat of illegal executive orders, may have ensured their own survival, but they have eroded the US legal system’s legitimacy. The same goes for Columbia University, whose acquiescence to government oversight has undermined academic freedom.

The IMF’s ability to achieve its objectives depends on the confidence of central bankers and policymakers worldwide, and maintaining it requires accurate reporting on the global economy. The World Bank, for its part, relies on thousands of firms and community organizations throughout the developing world, and its approach to infrastructure and energy projects sets standards for others to follow.

Fourth, as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky discovered, Trump puts a premium on personal relationships. But the right response is not capitulation. Both Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer have been able to maintain a working relationship with Trump by employing flattery and avoiding concrete commitments. This is new terrain for the IMF and World Bank, whose leaders are used to working with the US Departments of State and the Treasury, as well as Congress. Now, the IMF’s managing director and the Bank’s president must take a much more active role in relationship management with the White House.

Beyond the Trump administration, the IMF and the World Bank must remember their other stakeholders in the US: the American people. For example, support by religious organizations for debt relief for the poorest countries in the 1990s enabled the IMF and the World Bank to act on the issue.

The Trump administration shut down USAID despite agency officials’ warnings that one million children will go untreated for severe malnutrition, up to 166,000 people will die from malaria, and 200,000 more children will be paralyzed by polio over the next decade. But many Americans support foreign aid, and more than half give to charity each year, often to help the poorest in other countries. Moreover, one-quarter take the time to volunteer, and some 240,000 have served in the Peace Corps since 1961.

As the heads of the IMF and the World Bank steer these institutions into the future, they must strike a delicate balance between confronting and conceding to the White House. But staying on Trump’s good side is not enough to pursue their missions: they must also be mindful of the world within and outside of America.

# OP-ED

By Mu Sochua

## Silencing Radio Free Asia Is a Strategic Own-Goal

PARIS - Many Americans have never heard of the US Agency for Global Media. But, for decades, hundreds of millions of people around the world have relied on the outlets that USAGM funds - including Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, and Radio Free Asia (RFA) - for accurate, unbiased news. That changed in March, when US President Donald Trump signed an executive order reducing the agency’s operations to the legal minimum as part of a supposed cost-cutting effort. USAGM, in turn, terminated grants and contracts for all the international broadcasters under its umbrella, citing the order.

Thousands of journalists stand to lose their jobs, and access to verifiable reporting in some of the world’s most politically repressive countries is at risk. This blow to American soft power has created an information void that authoritarian regimes are keen to exploit. The Chinese and Cambodian governments, for example, have celebrated the dismantling of USAGM as an end to “biased propaganda poison” and “fake news,” underscoring the agency’s role in combating misinformation.

While RFE/RL’s funding has been restored following a federal judge’s temporary ruling, RFA’s annual budget of \$60.8 million remains in jeopardy. The Asian broadcaster won a court ruling ordering the funds to be disbursed, though that has not happened yet.

This would have far-reaching consequences. Despite its relatively limited budget, RFA has long served as a vital source of uncensored news for its 60 million weekly readers and listeners. Operating in environments where press freedom is absent or under siege, RFA is also often the only broadcaster exposing the realities of life under authoritarian rule. From providing early evidence of China’s mass internment of Uighurs in Xinjiang to reporting on the civil war in Myanmar, RFA has consistently brought international attention to abuses that might otherwise have remained hidden.

Nowhere is RFA’s impact more evident than in Cambodia, where the government has severely curtailed press freedom. For decades, outlets like RFA and VOA have symbolized hope, and today they are among the few trusted news sources for Cambodians at home and abroad. In recent years, their operations have become more essential than ever, against a backdrop of democratic deterioration: the Cambodian government has shuttered independent media, dissolved opposition parties, and jailed dissenters.

The arrest of award-winning Cambodian journalist Mech Dara, known for his courageous reporting, and the blacklisting of British journalist Gerald Flynn, for appearing in a climate documentary that the regime accused of spreading false information, are emblematic of this trend. But through it all, RFA has continued to publish investigative reporting on everything from official corruption and cybercrime to the erosion of civil liberties.

The gutting of RFA is not simply a media story; it is also a geopolitical one. Across Southeast Asia, regimes with close ties to China increasingly rely on state-controlled narratives to suppress dissent. In Myanmar, where a 2021 military coup ushered in an era of violence and repression, RFA has provided crucial on-the-ground reporting that counters misinformation spread by the ruling junta. In the absence of such coverage, the atrocities being committed in Myanmar - and in other countries - would be concealed from view, both domestically and globally. Authorities would be able to act with impunity and pursue ever-more repressive tactics to enforce their rule.

Also at stake is America’s ability to project democratic values and its credibility in doing so. RFA, much like the BBC World Service or Deutsche Welle, has long functioned as a strategic instrument of soft power, supporting the free flow of information. This tool has arguably never been more important, as China expands its state media apparatus, including outlets like CGTN and Xinhua, into countries where US influence is waning in order to promote its worldview.

Cambodia’s increasing reliance on China - which accounts for nearly half of foreign direct investment in the country - underscores the shifting landscape of influence. Chinese-backed infrastructure projects, coupled with growing diplomatic alignment, have made Cambodia an increasingly loyal partner, while China has gained a naval base at Ream that could threaten regional security. Chinese President Xi Jinping’s recent visit to Phnom Penh further cemented the relationship. For the US to abandon RFA would be tantamount to ceding yet another front in the global contest of ideas.

Congress must act to prevent that outcome. Judicial freezes on Trump’s executive order targeting USAGM are certainly welcome, but are only a temporary reprieve. Restoring RFA and funding it beyond the current fiscal year are much more important, especially for foreign-policy objectives. US policymakers should also explore long-term independent funding mechanisms that could insulate RFA from political interference and ensure its durability.

Ultimately, the decision to sustain RFA is about more than budget lines. It is about whether the US remains committed to defending press freedom and supporting the journalists who risk their lives to expose corruption and abuse. At least two RFA Khmer journalists are facing deportation when their US visas expire. For them, returning to Cambodia will mean certain imprisonment. Equally important, America must not abandon the millions of people who rely on RFA for accurate reporting in an era of heightened mistrust and upheaval.

Mu Sochua, a former Cambodian politician and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, is President of the Khmer Movement for Democracy.

# OPINION

By Diane Coyle

## Europe Needs Its Own AI Infrastructure

CAMBRIDGE - The succession of global shocks over the past two decades - including the 2008 global financial crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia’s invasions of Ukraine, and rising inflation - has fueled a resurgence of industrial policy across Europe. But the added shock of Donald Trump’s return to the White House has underscored the urgency of bolstering domestic economic resilience and integrating national and regional security priorities into economic policymaking.

For the European Union and the United Kingdom - which are now facing an openly hostile US administration - the digital economy must become a central focus. Former European Central Bank President Mario Draghi’s report on EU competitiveness and the UK’s AI Opportunities Action Plan both highlight digital and AI technologies as potential engines of future innovation and growth.

The challenge, however, lies in reducing Europe’s heavy reliance on major US tech firms. Whereas President Joe Biden’s administration took a confrontational approach toward Big Tech, the Trump administration has signaled that any future trade agreement will hinge on the EU scaling back its push for new digital regulations and taxes.

For Europe, business as usual is no longer an option. Policymakers must develop a coherent and strategic alternative to reliance on American technology. If this sounds like a quixotic endeavor, consider the creation of Airbus, which started as Europe’s answer to Boeing. An “Airbus for AI” - a publicly funded, commercially operated alternative to US-based platforms - is both feasible and necessary.

Recent experience has exposed the vulnerability of Europe’s public services and private sector to the whims of US tech executives whose top priority is to remain on good terms with their own government. Elon Musk’s willingness to breach Starlink contracts with European governments has fueled concerns about the reliability of American platforms, as have efforts by other US firms to exploit trade tensions to lobby against European tech regulations like the EU’s Digital Markets Act and the UK’s Online Safety Act.

Consequently, even if the Trump administration were to reverse its protectionist policies tomorrow, doubts about the trustworthiness of US tech companies would persist. And since Chinese tech platforms are equally problematic, it is increasingly evident that European governments must begin developing an independent digital and AI ecosystem.

Politicians often shy away from necessary decisions that seem too difficult or costly. Yet in a new policy brief, Joshua Tan, Brandon Jackson, and I argue that a public-private commercial model for building large-scale European AI systems - known as foundation models - is technically and financially viable, and could be launched quickly.

While European research laboratories and institutes already collaborate, they still lack a coordinated product strategy and a clear pathway from innovation to market. Airbus should serve as a blueprint. The company was established in 1970, when European governments recognized that their national aviation firms were too fragmented to compete with Boeing. France and Germany - later joined by the UK and Spain - formed a consortium that pooled expertise, resources, and funding to develop cutting-edge, innovative aircraft.

Although the Airbus project emphasized commercial viability from the outset, it was also supported by public financing and industrial-policy tools such as advance purchase commitments, research investment, and technical training. Domestic political imperatives were addressed by distributing the benefits among participating countries through supply-chain specialization.

The Airbus project achieved a major breakthrough with the A300, demonstrating the potential of aligning scientific research with market needs. Developing a twenty-first-century AI equivalent will require similarly large infrastructure investments and sustained political commitment.

Fortunately, the building blocks for such a model are already in place and could be mobilized quickly by a select group of European governments. Many are already investing in national public computing facilities, and several leading European labs - such as those participating in LLMs4Europe - have begun releasing cutting-edge foundation models that push the boundaries of AI research.

Coordinating these efforts will be essential to achieving the necessary scale. In addition to creating value for taxpayers, this will help European alternatives differentiate themselves from dominant US tech firms - a key condition for commercial viability. Private companies like France’s Mistral show that a robust European market could be catalyzed and given a defensive moat through coordinated strategic action. Singapore has also demonstrated the potential for effective public-private partnerships - though not yet at scale - and other successful models have emerged in the semiconductor sectors of Japan and the US.

Given US incumbents’ first-mover advantage, any European initiative will require significant public support. But such support doesn’t have to come solely through direct funding. It can also take the form of access to public computing resources, tax advantages tied to public-interest commitments, preferential access to government datasets unavailable to US firms, and purchasing commitments from public

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# Gbarnga marketers decry soaring U.S. rate

**By Edwin N Khakie**

Gbarnga, Bong County - April 28, 2025: Marketers at the Gbarnga Central Market have voiced their growing frustrations over the sharp increment in the US dollar exchange rate and the ongoing political crisis at the House of Representatives, calling on the Boakai-Kroon administration to act swiftly and uphold the rule of law. In interviews conducted over the weekend, several traders lamented the soaring exchange rate, which they say is strangling their businesses and worsening their already difficult living conditions. Goods imported using US dollars are now priced beyond the reach of many ordinary Liberians, causing a significant drop in market activity. "We are suffering. Every day the rate goes up, and we cannot even buy our goods anymore. Customers cannot afford our prices," said Martha Kollie, a vendor who sells dry goods at the market. "We want the government to stabilize the economy before we all go out of business." The marketers also expressed deep concern over the ongoing leadership crisis in the House of Representatives, which has led to political uncertainty and legislative paralysis. They believe the crisis is contributing to the country's economic instability and eroding public trust in governance. "The lawmakers should be thinking about how to help the people, not fighting among themselves," said Moses T. K. Bility, another trader at the market. "Their confusion is making our situation worse."

The group called on President Joseph Boakai and Vice President Jeremiah Kroon to immediately respect the recent Supreme Court ruling regarding the disputed leadership at the House. They warned that failure to uphold the decision of the country's highest court could further plunge the nation into political chaos and economic hardship. "We voted for change, not for confusion," said trader Sarah Mulbah. "The Supreme Court has spoken, and the government must obey. If they don't, it will only bring more suffering to the Liberian people."

As frustrations mount across Gbarnga and beyond, citizens are hoping for swift government action to restore confidence, stabilize the economy, and preserve the rule of law.



# 79-year-old woman killed in 72nd Community

**By: Emmanuel Wise Jipoh**

Paynesville, Liberia, April 29, 2025 - Tragedy has struck 72nd Community again, specifically Army Camp Football Field, Paynesville, leaving a 79-year-old woman, Hawa Flomo, gruesomely killed. The suspect has been identified as a 22-year-old drug addict, alias 'Kezo'. Eyewitnesses narrate that 'Kezo' allegedly smashed the head of his victim with a rock, after dragging her out of the house in front of the porch. Information gathered by The NEW DAWN indicates that the mysterious incident happened around 10 pm, Saturday, April 26, 2025, when everyone, including neighbors had gone to watch a soccer match in a video club between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid, in the Spanish Copa del Rey-grand- final played in Serville, Spain. Residents explained that the suspect came late evening, Another witness, Aaron Smith, recounted how Suspect Kesselly had been involved in consumption and sale of drugs in the yard, and the daughter of the deceased had complained him to the community chairman identified as Sensee Sesay, to stop him from selling and taking drugs in the yard. Aaron suspects that the complaint to the community leader might had angered Kesselly to get rid of those who had complained him to the community chairman, on fears that he might be taken to prison. "Kezo had been in the yard complaining that Diamonwa had taken his name to the Chairman how he is selling and taking in drugs the whole day, and it was with that anger, "I suggest might has sparked his anger to harm everyone, who might complain about his involvement in drugs." "When he and I were lying down in my room, sleepy and didn't hear any sound, but I think he



A composite photo of the deceased and Suspect Kesselly Fokpa

# LLA Sends Saturday Gbar David to Court

**-For Criminal Conveyance and Forgery**

**By Edwin N. Khakie**

Margibi County – In adherence to its statutory duties under Article 8.1© of the Liberia Land Authority (LLA) Act of 2016 and Section 2(a) of the Act Against Criminal Conveyance of Land of 2014, the Liberia Land Authority, in collaboration with the Liberia National Police, has apprehended and forwarded suspect Saturday Gbar David to the Smell-No-Taste Magisterial Court for criminal conveyance and forgery. The LLA's action follows a four-month investigation by its Land Dispute Resolution Section into a complaint filed by Papin Daniels, representing the Lord's Pentecostal Church International, against private citizen Kadiatu Kaba. The case involved allegations of encroachment on a property located along the RIA Highway in Kpaye Town, Lower Margibi County. Investigations revealed that Saturday Gbar David falsely presented himself as the owner and administrator of the property. He criminally sold three lots of land to Madam Kadiatu Kaba for nine thousand United States dollars (USD 9,000.00). To facilitate the fraudulent sale, the suspect allegedly forged an administrator's deed and fabricated documents bearing fake seals and stamps from the Liberia Land Authority (LLA), the Center for National Documents, Records, and Archives (CNDRA), and the signatures of past officials from both institutions, as well as from the Probate Court. Under the Criminal Conveyance Law of 2014, criminal conveyance is classified as a second-degree felony. The law states that a person is guilty if they sell, gift, mortgage, or lease land to which they have no legal title derived from a lawful source traceable to the Republic of Liberia. Following the investigation, led by Mr. Edward Gworlekaju and supervised by Director Julius B. Kawa and the LLA Legal Office, suspect Saturday Gbar David was officially charged and forwarded to court for the unlawful sale of land and forgery of official documents.



around 9 pm, when everyone might have come for Diamonwa, had gone to watch the game, when everyone had gone to and gruesomely murdered the old woman, who was left alone in the day. I overheard him, in the house by her complaining of how someone had children. Investigation revealed that the suspect had been for taking drugs and it was involved in gangsterism, and Diamonwa", Aaron added. The consumption of narcotics. An eyewitness only identified as "Cold Storage", said he heard a loud sound from a neighbor yard, indicating something known the suspect recently, busting and decided to check- when he came to fetch water in in. "Cold Storage" explained her yard. "I had only known him that upon arrival in the scene, recently. For years, I have served he met Suspect Kesselly, with a in this community, but when I saw rock in his hand, so he chased him, he had always appeared like him with an iron that he was someone who is out of his mind, apparently using to kill the on drugs", she said. woman, when everyone was in According to the chairlady, prior the video club. "I was in my to the incident, the suspect's room, fixing the bathroom, girlfriend only identified as because I'm masoner; when I "Alima" had complained of a heard someone knocking a tussle between 'Kezo' and a something, I came outside and I neighbor's girl name withheld saw Kezo over the woman, and that he allegedly sold button that was how he threw a rock at phone to for 500 LD, and the girl me when I decided to go closer. complained that the battery in The iron that was in his hand, he the phone was not working, and hit me and that's how he started they both had engaged in a to chase me, and I began to run; fight. Meanwhile, Police have he had an iron. I couldn't face arrested Suspect Kesselly and he him", Cold Storage narrated. is facing interrogation.

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# No more potholes in Monrovia by December

**-Deputy Works Minister Dunnoh is upbeat**

The Government of Liberia says it will close all potholes in Monrovia before December this year, to ease traffic across the capital.

By: Ramsey N Singbeh Jr in Margibi  
Margibi, Liberia, April 30, 2025 - The Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Public Works promised here that before December, 2025, Monrovia will

Agenda for Inclusive Development (AAID) especially in relation to road connectivity in the country, beating his chest that before December, there will be no potholes in Monrovia. "In Monrovia City Center,

Benson Street and other traditional streets in Monrovia.

He also disclosed that funding has been secured for the Gabriel Tucker- Freeport Road from the Japanese, who are expected in September to start work.

The pavement of roads from Freeport to St. Paul Bridge on Bushrod Island is in progress with speed, he added.

He mention many other roads across Liberia, stating that the government is now engaged with about 445.5 kilometers of road.

A citizen of Margibi himself, he said the county is currently benefiting from 65.7 kilometers of road under the ARREST Agenda of President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr.

He explained that government is providing rigid or cement pavement which will last longer than asphalt pavement promised by the past administration.

He bragged that dust in Kakaka City will soon become history in a period of two years, detailing 8.7 kilometers of road currently ongoing in Kakaka will impact BWI to Vai Town, VIP Road, Old and New 14th Roads,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7



Deputy Minister A. Samuka Dunnoh speaking at Kakaka Intellectual Forum

experience no potholes. Deputy Public Works Minister for Administration, A. Samuka Dunnoh, made the promise when he was invited by the Kakaka Intellectual Forum or KAIF recently to speak on the topic: "The workings of the Ministry of Public Works in alignment with the agenda of the Unity Party."

we're going to make sure before we reach December this year, there will not be potholes in Monrovia. If some of you can follow the media, I just signed the first contract to this gone Friday. I signed the contract, we start patching", he said.

Minister Dunnoh explained that from Paynesville, the road rehabilitation work will continue to Newport Street,

# We are here to deliver

**-LACRA Director Sankolo responds to critics**

The Director General of the Liberia Agricultural Commodity Regulatory Authority (LACRA), Christopher D. Sankolo, says he remains committed to serving the interest of the public despite criticism against his administration.

By: Emmanuel Wise Jipoh

Monrovia, Liberia, April 30, 2025 - The Director General of the Liberia Agricultural Commodity Regulatory Authority (LACRA), Christopher D. Sankolo, responds to critics, saying he is here to serve his country with commitment and in the interest of the people.

Speaking at the program marking unveiling and dedication of several projects, including a new security booth, two brand new 22- seated Coastal Buses, worth US\$78,000, 11 Yamaha Motorbikes, valued 10 million Liberian dollars, Toyota Land Cruiser Jeep, and a 100 kilowatt LEC Transformer,

Director Sankolo said he's least bothered by detractors that oppose his administration, maintaining that is committed to improving the Liberia Agricultural Commodity Regulatory Authority (LACRA).

According to him, the

dedication of these projects, is important to efficiencies and productivity of the entity, adding that providing theses necessary logistics and support is key to transformation.

"I'm not here to dismiss anyone; I'm here to deliver and to convince others to join the Unity Party for the work we are doing to improve the economy.

These logistics provided are key to transformation and we at LACRA, must play a pivotal role to contributing towards the ARREST AgendaP, he uregs.

Sanko

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7



# Margibi caucus rejects exclusive seats for women

**-Margibi Legislative Caucus opposes women's affirmative action**

Ramsey N. Singbeh, Jr., in Margibi

Margibi, Liberia, April 30, 2025 - Two members of the Margibi County Legislative Caucus, electoral district#2 Representative, Ivar Kokulo Jones, and Senator Nathaniel Falo McGill, have strongly rejected call by Margibi Coordinator of the National Civil Society Council of Liberia, Friday Edwin Cruiser for two of electoral seats of Margibi to be exclusively set aside for women during elections.

Friday made the recommendation at Kakaka Philadelphia Church in Kakata on Saturday April 26, 2025, while making remark on behalf of the council during induction of Margibi Women Alliance for Peace and

According to him, he was encouraged by the two senators at the program, who spoke and emphasized the need for support and partnership with women in the county.

Earlier before Friday's comments, Senator Nuquay, who delivered the keynote address, championed the cause for women's leadership.

It was based on Nuquay's position that the Civil Society Coordinator thinks Margibi should set an example for other counties to follow.

He disclosed that he went to observe elections in Sierra Leone and saw the country has risen from 14.5 percent women representation in parliament to 30.4 in the last election in 2023.

He believes that this is possible in Liberia if the Liberian



(L-R) Sen. McGill, Friday Cruiser and Rep. Jones

Development or MARWAPD.

The program, which was also attended by Senators James Emmanuel Nuquay and Nathaniel Falo McGill, County

Legislative Caucus Chair, Ivar Kokulo Jones and his wife, District# 5 Representative Clarence G Gahr, former Senator David Mentongar, and Superintendent Victoria Wolobah Duncan, among others.

Officials of the Margibi Women Alliance for Peace and Development were inducted by Mrs. Vivian McGill, wife of Senator McGill.

In the presence of the lawmakers, Mr. Cruiser said: "We get five districts, senators, honorable, can we give two to our women and say each time we having elections we get two districts given to them and they can go there, whatever happens that's it? So when we start, that gender parity bill ever since that died, people can learn from Margibi County."

Legislature resolved to give specific districts for only women's representations and leave others open for both men and women.

But this recommendation seemed not to have been received by Representative Jones and Senator McGill, who quickly rejected said proposition.

Senator McGill, a for minister of state for presidential affairs under Ex-president George Manneh Weah, stated that the Constitution of Liberia does not say so, therefore; everyone has to fight for himself or herself.

He was responding to an inquiry about his thought regarding the recommendation. McGill noted: "That is difficult because Liberia Constitution does not provide for that, everybody got to fight for themselves."

He said what he can assure anyone is that they are having conversation about increasing

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7



## Les tensions entre investisseurs miniers ravivent les inquiétudes sur la souveraineté économique du Liberia

Les négociations à huis clos autour de l'exploitation du chemin de fer stratégique reliant Yekepa à Buchanan suscitent de vives inquiétudes quant à l'avenir économique du Liberia. Ce différend dépasse

analystes et responsables politiques. Au cœur de la controverse : le refus de High Power Exploration (HPX), par l'intermédiaire de sa filiale Ivanhoe Liberia, de reconnaître ArcelorMittal Liberia (AML) comme exploitant légitime du chemin de fer. HPX exige la

mise en place par le gouvernement pour favoriser un accès élargi aux infrastructures ferroviaires et portuaires, avait initialement recueilli un large consensus. Elle visait à diversifier les sources de revenus et à stimuler l'économie nationale.

AML, gestionnaire du réseau ferroviaire depuis près de deux décennies, soutient publiquement cette politique et accepte l'idée d'un usage partagé avec d'autres sociétés minières. Toutefois, des voix au sein de l'administration et du secteur économique dénoncent l'attitude de HPX, estimant que ses revendications porteraient préjudice à AML, pourtant protégé par son Mineral Development Agreement (MDA). Depuis 2005, ArcelorMittal a investi plus de 800 millions de

dollars pour réhabiliter et moderniser les 243 kilomètres de voie ferrée, en la portant aux normes

nomination d'un opérateur indépendant de son choix, contestant ainsi les droits contractuels d'AML.

Pourtant, la politique nationale de gestion multi-utilisateurs,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9

## Boakai sous pression face à l'impasse à la Chambre des représentants

Le président libérien Joseph Nyuma Boakai fait face à une pression croissante pour mettre en œuvre la décision de la Cour suprême du Libéria en reconnaissant J. Fonati Koffa comme président légitime de la Chambre des représentants. Trois partis politiques d'opposition appellent le chef de l'État à prendre les mesures nécessaires pour résoudre l'impasse persistante au sein de la 55e Législature.

Les partis concernés - le Liberia People's Democratic Party (LPDP), le National Patriotic Party (NPP) et le People's Unification Party (PUP) - ont exprimé lundi 28 avril leurs vives inquiétudes face à la crise prolongée autour du leadership de la Chambre, malgré l'intervention de la plus haute juridiction du pays.

Lors d'une conférence de presse à Monrovia, les leaders des partis ont dénoncé les menaces de désordre proférées par certains acteurs politiques, les qualifiant de dangereuses pour la stabilité nationale. Ils ont exhorté le président Boakai à jouer un rôle de médiateur pour rétablir le fonctionnement

régulier de l'organe législatif.

« Nous sommes particulièrement préoccupés par les déclarations de certains partis politiques qui semblent inciter à la discorde. Il convient de leur rappeler que les Libériens ont payé un lourd tribut à la guerre. À ceux qui prônent l'instabilité, nous disons ceci : vous n'êtes pas seuls à vivre au Libéria. Nous vous combattons, et la patrie prévaudra », a déclaré le président du LPDP, M. Kollie. S'exprimant au nom des trois partis, le secrétaire général du LPDP, M. L. Moses Kiyeen Kwehai, a insisté sur l'importance de l'implication du président Boakai pour mettre un terme à la crise institutionnelle.

« Le Libéria a besoin de réconciliation. Nous appelons le

gouvernement Boakai à prêter une oreille attentive aux inquiétudes liées à la situation actuelle au sein de la législature », a renchéri Me George S. Mulbah, président national du NPP.

Le NPP, parti de l'ancienne vice-présidente Jewel Howard Taylor, s'est récemment dissocié de la Coalition pour le Changement Démocratique (CDC), tout comme le LPDP.

Par ailleurs, plus de vingt partis d'opposition, rejoints par le parti au pouvoir, le Unity Party, ont fermement condamné les menaces de violence lors de conférences de presse tenues séparément à Monrovia.



## Éditorial

### La décision de la Cour suprême doit inverser la tendance chaotique au Liberia

Par Raghuram Rajan

La Cour suprême du Liberia a récemment qualifié la crise de leadership en cours à la Chambre des représentants de “tendance chaotique” qui doit être corrigée. Nous ne saurions être plus en accord avec cette déclaration de la plus haute juridiction du pays.

Malgré la présence d'un président légitime à la Chambre, un groupe de députés se faisant appeler le “Bloc majoritaire” s'est réuni et a élu Richard Nagbe Koon, représentant du district #11 de Montserrado et membre du parti au pouvoir, l'Unity Party, comme président de la Chambre. Cette démarche a été menée en dehors du cadre constitutionnel du Liberia.

Bien que cette action soit illégale, elle a bénéficié du soutien de l'exécutif, qui a interprété à son avantage un avis précédent de la Cour suprême. Cet avis indiquait que les décisions prises à la Chambre étaient “ultra vires”, c'est-à-dire prises sans autorité légale. Cependant, au lieu de corriger cette situation, l'exécutif a permis l'induction du représentant Koon en tant que président de la Chambre, en dépit de la présence du président contesté J. Fonati Koffa.

Le président Koffa a contesté son limogeage illégal à deux reprises devant la Cour suprême, la plus récente étant une requête en information. Lors de cette audience, la Cour a mis en garde contre la “tendance chaotique” qui affecte le système de gouvernance du pays.

La Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO), à travers son organe parlementaire, a tenté par deux fois d'intervenir pour résoudre cette impasse. Cependant, ces efforts ont échoué en grande partie en raison de l'attitude non coopérative des membres du soi-disant “Bloc majoritaire”.

Dans leur quête du pouvoir, ces députés sont allés jusqu'à demander au Parlement de la CEDEAO le retrait de trois représentants libériens désignés sous la direction de Koffa. Toutefois, cette demande a été rejetée car contraire aux règlements de l'institution.

Nous sommes convaincus qu'aucune institution, en dehors de la Cour suprême, ne peut régler cette violation flagrante de la Constitution du Liberia. En tant que seule instance habilitée à interpréter les lois du pays, elle doit user de son autorité pour clarifier la situation sans ambiguïté et rétablir l'ordre constitutionnel.

Lors de sa dernière prise de parole sur cette affaire, la Cour suprême a laissé le public dans l'incertitude, une situation qui a été exploitée par l'exécutif pour justifier ses actions.

Cette fois-ci, nous exhortons la plus haute juridiction du pays à se prononcer avec fermeté et clarté sur cette affaire, en se fondant uniquement sur le droit. Il est essentiel que la Cour détermine de manière décisive quelle partie est dans son tort, afin que le peuple libérien puisse comprendre la loi et agir en conséquence.

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# Français

Starts from page 8

## Les tensions entre investisseurs

américaines pour le transport de minerais lourds. L'infrastructure est vitale pour l'exportation de minerais et pour l'économie minière du Liberia.

Les investissements incluent le remplacement des traverses en bois par des traverses métalliques, la réhabilitation des ponts, l'acquisition de neuf locomotives GE et de 500 wagons équipés par Progress Rail. En 2025, la ligne doit permettre la circulation de cinq trains minéraliers par jour, chacun comptant jusqu'à 120 wagons. Tous les boucles ferroviaires sont en cours d'extension, et un système de contrôle moderne fourni par Wabtec est en cours d'installation pour renforcer la sécurité et l'efficacité.

AML a également financé la construction de voies d'évitement, de passages à niveau, ainsi que le renforcement du terminal ferroviaire de Buchanan à l'aide de remblais rocheux.

En revanche, HPX n'a à ce jour consenti aucun investissement dans les infrastructures ferroviaires du pays. Son principal objectif reste d'acheminer du minerai extrait en Guinée vers le port de Buchanan. Or, la société ne dispose pas encore de toutes les autorisations nécessaires de la part des autorités guinéennes, qui investissent actuellement plus de 18 milliards de dollars dans leur propre réseau ferroviaire intérieur. L'attitude de HPX, dénuée de contribution locale tangible, est de plus en plus perçue comme économiquement risquée et politiquement contestable.

Des hauts responsables libériens impliqués dans les négociations estiment que remplacer AML nuirait gravement aux intérêts nationaux. Ils soulignent l'engagement constant de l'entreprise en faveur de l'accès équitable aux infrastructures, la création de plus de 7 000 emplois, ses contributions fiscales significatives et ses investissements dans les communautés affectées par l'exploitation minière.

« Il serait irresponsable d'imposer à l'État le coût d'un opérateur ferroviaire indépendant onéreux, uniquement pour satisfaire une entreprise dont l'unique ambition est de transporter du minerai étranger », a déclaré sous anonymat un haut fonctionnaire du ministère des Finances.

Un économiste local renchérit : « Dans un contexte de réduction de l'aide américaine et de contraintes budgétaires, le Liberia doit privilégier des choix économiques durables, non la commodité d'intérêts étrangers. »

Le recours à un nouvel opérateur soulève aussi des préoccupations sur le plan des coûts et de l'efficacité. L'exemple des APM Terminals, où une gestion indépendante du port a généré des recettes inférieures aux prévisions, est souvent cité. Un scénario similaire pour le chemin de fer pourrait sérieusement nuire aux finances nationales.

Il convient de rappeler que la politique d'accès multi-utilisateurs ne date pas d'hier : elle figure dans le MDA d'AML depuis 2006 et a été ratifiée par le Parlement en 2007, preuve d'une vision nationale de long terme.

Contrairement aux accusations portées, AML a fait preuve d'ouverture. En 2010, l'entreprise avait entamé des discussions avec BHP Billiton, ancien propriétaire de SMFG, aujourd'hui sous le contrôle de HPX, pour une exploitation transfrontalière, mais celles-ci ont échoué en raison de désaccords sur les conditions d'évaluation et du choix de la Guinée de collaborer avec Rio Tinto sur le projet ferroviaire transguinéen.

Une autre tentative avec Sable Mining en 2013 a également échoué. Malgré des débuts prometteurs, l'entreprise n'a pas satisfait aux exigences techniques. S'en sont suivis un scandale de corruption, l'épidémie d'Ebola et la chute des prix du fer, des facteurs ayant interrompu les négociations sans lien direct avec AML.

En 2019, une entente limitée a permis à HPX de transporter jusqu'à 5 millions de tonnes de minerai par an via le Liberia, un accord bien en deçà de ce qui aurait pu générer un impact national significatif.

Durant toutes ces années, AML est resté fidèle à son engagement envers la transparence, le respect des autorités et l'accès équitable pour les tiers, tout en défendant fermement ses droits contractuels sur l'infrastructure qu'elle a reconstruite.

Les enjeux sont considérables. Confier l'exploitation à un nouvel opérateur induirait des coûts supplémentaires, compliquerait la logistique et pourrait décourager de futurs investisseurs. Pire encore, cela affaiblirait l'une des sources de revenus les plus fiables du pays.

Le gouvernement libérien se trouve aujourd'hui à un tournant crucial : préserver un partenariat stratégique avec l'entreprise qui a restauré ses infrastructures post-conflit, ou prendre le risque de céder aux exigences d'un acteur étranger sans ancrage ni investissement local.

## Jeety célèbre son anniversaire avec les détenus de la prison centrale de Monrovia

À l'occasion de son anniversaire, l'homme d'affaires indien Upjit Singh Sachdeva, plus connu sous le nom de Jeety, a choisi de célébrer cette journée spéciale en compagnie des détenus de la prison centrale de Monrovia, leur offrant des repas chauds et des paroles d'encouragement.

Dans un geste empreint d'humanité, désormais emblématique de son engagement social, Jeety et son équipe ont visité l'établissement pénitentiaire afin de servir des repas nutritifs à des centaines de détenus. Cette initiative s'inscrivait dans une série d'activités organisées pour marquer son anniversaire par des actions de solidarité en faveur des plus démunis.

« Aujourd'hui est un jour particulier pour moi, et je ne vois pas de meilleure manière de le célébrer qu'en



partageant amour et bienveillance avec mes frères et sœurs ici présents », a déclaré Jeety. « Chaque personne mérite une seconde chance et le respect de sa dignité, peu importe sa situation actuelle. »

Au-delà des murs de la prison, Jeety a également profité de cette journée pour apporter son soutien à des jeunes défavorisés dans plusieurs quartiers de Monrovia. Il y a distribué des vivres, du matériel scolaire et d'autres articles essentiels, réaffirmant ainsi son engagement en faveur de l'autonomisation des jeunes et du développement communautaire.

Le surintendant de la prison centrale de Monrovia, le colonel Roosevelt Varney, a salué cette initiative, soulignant que le soutien constant de Jeety apporte espoir et humanité à une population souvent marginalisée.

Dans le cadre de cette action humanitaire d'anniversaire, une opération similaire a été menée à la prison centrale de Kakata, où 154 détenus ont également reçu des repas chauds.

Par ailleurs, plus de 2 500 employés de Jeety Rubber LLC et de sa filiale, la Salala Rubber Corporation (SRC), ainsi que des commerçants locaux, des écoliers et des conducteurs de moto-taxi ont également bénéficié de repas et de diverses formes de soutien.

Rien qu'à la prison centrale de Monrovia, ce sont 1 549 détenus qui ont été servis, soulignant l'ampleur de l'action sociale menée par l'homme d'affaires.

Très respecté au Libéria, Jeety est reconnu non seulement pour ses succès dans le monde des affaires, mais aussi pour son engagement indéfectible en faveur des causes sociales. Cette célébration d'anniversaire témoigne une fois de plus du pouvoir de la générosité et de l'impact qu'un individu peut avoir grâce à la compassion et à la constance.

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ARTICLEARTICLE

# “Strength in Safety”: ArcelorMittal Mining Global CEO Silva Champions Culture Beyond Compliance

By: Wremongar B Joe II

Yekepa, Liberia - Kleber Silva, Executive Vice President and CEO of ArcelorMittal Mining, has returned to Liberia with a strong message focused on health, safety, and the future of Liberia’s workforce. The Brazilian mining executive, known across the global mining industry for his strategic leadership

operational efficiency and safety.

ArcelorMittal has also acquired nine new GE locomotives and 500 additional wagons equipped with undercarriages. New sidings and level crossings have been constructed, and the entire railway has been reinforced with rocks, including the expansion of the Buchanan yard to handle increased traffic and logistics demands.

love, for our families, for ourselves, for God, for everything that is most valuable in our lives, let’s work very, very strong—all of us,” he said.

He stressed that safety must be lived and practiced continuously—“24/7”—not only at work but at home as well. “Let’s celebrate each day we can go home safe,” Silva said. “If we work together, we construct this every single day.”

As ArcelorMittal moves into a transformative phase in Liberia, the role of leaders like Silva becomes even more pronounced. His dual emphasis on growth and care on expansion and safety embodies the company’s vision of building a world-class mining operation anchored in local development, skills transfer, and long-term partnership with Liberia.

“I’m sure we’ll be extremely proud to say that we Liberia, our mine, our railroad, our plant, our port—achieved zero [harm] forever,” he said. “And we can continue to operate in this beautiful mine and beautiful country forever, without any incident.”

Silva’s latest visit has once again reminded employees, partners, and the broader Liberian public that ArcelorMittal’s success is not only measured in tons of ore shipped, but in the lives it empowers, protects, and uplifts.

During a landmark visit to Liberia in 2024, ArcelorMittal Executive Chairman Lakshmi Mittal committed an additional US\$1.4 billion investment which brought the company’s total commitment in Liberia by then to over US\$3 billion as part of its transformative Phase Two Expansion Project, now under the determined leadership of ArcelorMittal Mining CEO Kleber Silva.

Beyond its operational scope, the project has already created more than 3000 new jobs, would increase tax fees and royalties, as well as enhance



and technical expertise, visited ArcelorMittal Liberia’s Yekepa operations on Tuesday for the company’s annual Health and Safety Day celebration.

His visit comes just weeks after he joined employees and executives in marking ArcelorMittal Liberia’s 20th anniversary, a milestone celebration that included the onboarding of a new batch of employees of over 230 young Liberians as artisans and process operators under a renewed drive for local employment and skills development in Liberia.

Silva’s presence in Liberia is widely viewed within the company as a signal of strategic importance. Staff often associate his visits with major developments in ArcelorMittal’s operations, at least, the company’s ambitious Phase II expansion project. The multi-billion-dollar expansion includes a new ore concentrator (first in Liberia) on the verge of commissioning and expanded rail and port facilities, expected to increase production capacity largely while also creating thousands of direct and indirect jobs for Liberia. Under Klaber, ArcelorMittal is the largest out-of-government employer with more than seven thousand direct and direct jobs occupied at 98% by Liberians.

Under the leadership of Klaber, ArcelorMittal has invested \$800 million to upgrade the 243-kilometer heavy haul railway, originally built to U.S. heavy haul standards, to support the daily operation of five ore trains, each carrying 120 wagons.

As part of this massive infrastructure enhancement, the company has completed the full replacement of wooden ties with steel sleepers across the entire rail line. Additionally, all nine rail loops are being extended to accommodate longer trains, and the WabTec rail control system is being upgraded to improve

But in his latest return, Silva’s message was not just about growth or production. Standing before dozens of workers in Yekepa on Tuesday morning, he sounded a clarion call for vigilance, responsibility, and shared accountability in health and safety. “Please, let’s be very, very strong,” Silva urged. “A mine of safety, where the best does not appear, where we correct the

best, where we work preventively, and we are safe.”

A seasoned mining engineer with more than three decades of industry experience including senior roles at mining giants Vale and Anglo American Silva has long championed the integration of safety and sustainability into large-scale mining operations. Since joining ArcelorMittal in 2017, he has helped steer the company’s global mining strategy, with a consistent emphasis on improving operational standards and cultivating a culture of zero harm.

In Yekepa, his voice carried not only the weight of his corporate title but the conviction of someone deeply invested in the welfare of workers and communities that are impacted by ArcelorMittal mining in Liberia.

“There’s nothing more precious than this,” he said, referring to the safety of workers. “We think about it all the time in order to have preventive actions, in order to create an environment where incidents do not happen anymore.”

Silva cited ArcelorMittal’s Tarso Amitar site as a global benchmark, which he said has achieved 34 consecutive years without a lost-time accident, a feat he believes is entirely possible for Liberia as well. “We are building that here in Liberia,” he said with conviction.

With more than 10,000 people currently working across ArcelorMittal Liberia’s operations, including the mines, rail, and port facilities, Silva emphasized the shared responsibility that each employee carries to maintain a safe and healthy work environment. “For the people we



county social development funds, and provide critical skills training both locally and internationally, especially when the 3rd Amended Mineral Development Agreement is concluded. The expansion strengthens ArcelorMittal Liberia’s position as Liberia’s largest private investor and a long-term development partner.

# Dangerous precedent

*The National Bar here disagrees with ruling handed down by the Supreme Court of Liberia into leadership impasse in the House of Representatives.*

By Stephen G. Fellajuah

Monrovia, Liberia, April 30, 2025 - In what is clearly a dissenting position, the Liberian

clarification thru a Bill of Information, prompting the Court to issue a second opinion on April 23, 2025. That opinion reaffirmed Koffa

that the Constitution provides flexibility in the functioning of the Legislature. Article 33 allows for the conduct of legislative business in the presence of a simple majority, while Article 49 governs the election and removal of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

He also shares that it is not enough for the Speaker to be physically on the Capitol grounds; he must be “properly seated among his colleagues and ready to exercise his constitutional functions” for his presence to be valid. “To assume that his mere presence renders any other session unconstitutional is a gross misinterpretation of legislative practice,” he adds.

While expressing firm disagreement with the Court’s decision, the LNBA stops short of endorsing any form of institutional resistance. Instead, it calls for constructive dialogue among Liberia’s three branches of government to resolve the impasse.

The Bar proposes establishment of an Independent Mediation Committee to help broker peace within the House of Representatives. It suggest that such committee would include former Chief Justices, members of the LNBA leadership, the Interreligious Council, and civil society actors.

“The time has come for responsible mediation,” Cllr. Varmah stresses, saying “This impasse, if left unresolved, could fracture democratic governance. All actors must return to the table in good faith.”

Despite its criticism, the LNBA reaffirms its commitment to upholding the rule of law and protecting Liberia’s democratic institutions.

“We remain committed to supporting the constitutional framework of this nation,” the Bar’s statement concluded. “But we must not allow the judiciary to become a tool for political manipulation. The health of our republic depends on balanced governance, mutual respect, and institutional integrity.” The LNBA’s position sets the stage for further national debate over the proper limits of judicial authority and an urgent need for political consensus to navigate Liberia’s ongoing constitutional challenges.

Editing by Jonathan Browne



Cllr. Bornor M. Varmah

National Bar Association (LNBA) issues a stern warning here against what it describes as a “dangerous precedent” set by the Supreme Court of Liberia in its opinion on the Bill of Information filed by Speaker J. Fonati Koffa. The LNBA says the Court’s April 23, 2025 decision could erode public trust in the country’s governance and potentially paralyze government operations.

Speaking at a press briefing on April 29, 2025 at the LNBA headquarters in Monrovia, National President, Cllr. Bornor M. Varmah, argued that if the Supreme Court does not reconsider its judgment, the 2025 National Budget, passed during sessions held without Speaker Koffa, would be deemed illegal. Accordingly, he notes that all salaries, payments for goods and services, and other disbursements made by the Executive could be nullified, an outcome he likens to a “criminal subversion of the government.” “The Court must act swiftly to reverse this decision,” Cllr. Varmah declares, and warns that “If left to stand, it will not only undermine the stability of the state, but set a precedent that permits judicial overreach into purely political matters.”

The controversy stems from the Supreme Court’s December 6, 2024 ruling, which stated that “Any sitting or actions by members of the legislature not in conformity with the intent of Articles 33 and 49 of the Constitution are ultra vires”, meaning there were done ‘beyond the powers’ of law. Speaker Koffa later sought

as the legitimate presiding officer and declared that legislative sessions held without him, despite his presence and availability, were unconstitutional. However, the LNBA contends that the Supreme Court improperly used the Bill of Information as a procedural mechanism to reopen and rule again on a matter it had already decided. Cllr. Varmah emphasized that a Bill of Information should be limited to clarifying an existing judgment, not serve as a means to introduce new constitutional rulings. The LNBA’s principal concern lies with the Court’s alleged violation of the Political Question Doctrine, a constitutional principle barring the judiciary from intervening in disputes that fall within the exclusive domain of the political branches. According to the Bar, issues related to the internal leadership, procedures, and functioning of the House of Representatives fall squarely within the Legislature’s authority.

“The Supreme Court has overstepped its constitutional bounds,” notes Cllr. Varmah. “This ruling intrudes into legislative territory and risks turning the judiciary into an arbiter of political disputes, an outcome that undermines the doctrine of separation of powers.”

He continues, “For the Court to declare that any sitting of the Legislature without the Speaker is illegal, even when a quorum is present, invites legal absurdities and practical dysfunction.” Cllr. Varmah further argues

# Govt. warns against war drum

By Kruah Thompson

Liberia’s Information Minister Jerolimick Mathew Piah has issued a strong rebuttal to recent remarks made by Former Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor, declaring that the government will not permit any individuals or groups “beating war drums” to destabilize the country or undermine its peace and democratic progress.

Speaking at a press briefing held at the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism on Tuesday, Minister Piah described Taylor’s recent statements as dangerous and unacceptable, emphasizing that Liberia has come too far in its democratic journey to return to its violent past.

“We will not allow those beating the drums of war to have their will,” said Minister Piah. “There is a government in place with the primary responsibility to protect lives and property. Anyone threatening chaos will be met with the full force of the law.”

The remarks came in response to statements made by former Vice President Taylor during a recent political gathering attended by leaders of the opposition, including the Congress for

right to express their opinions on national issues, but no one has the right to threaten national peace and security,” he stressed. “The days of unleashing killers because things aren’t going your way are over.”

Piah further criticized Taylor for what he described as a pattern of benefiting from conflict and government positions. “She has lived on the government payroll for nearly 30 years. Now, just a year out of office, she appears unable to cope and is resorting to inflammatory rhetoric,” he said.

In a strong rebuke, Piah also referenced Taylor’s past, noting her marriage to former President Charles Taylor, who is serving a 50 years prison sentence for war crimes committed during Liberia’s civil war. “Because of your husband, thousands of our people were displaced and many were killed,” he stated. “You cannot distance yourself from that history.”

According to minister piah the former Vice President can’t escape her past just because she was the wife of the main



Min. Jerolimick Mathew Piah

Democratic Change (CDC), Alternative National Congress (ANC), Movement for Economic Empowerment (MOVEE), and the Coalition for the Management of Change (CMC).

During the event, Taylor warned President Joseph Boakai to “respect the rule of law” following the Supreme Court’s ruling affirming Fonati Koffa as the legitimate Speaker of the House of Representatives.

She allegedly hinted that failure to adhere to the court’s decision could lead to unrest. “It has reached a point where this country might become chaotic if President Boakai doesn’t respect the Supreme Court ruling,” she said.

Minister Piah denounced such statements, characterizing them as thinly veiled threats and a call to violence. “Liberians have the

warlord; but rather she play a role by been one of his key advisors.

Also he warned Liberians against being swayed by individuals who, in times of conflict, would flee and leave others to suffer. “Those who are now threatening violence will be the first to board planes and escape if conflict returns. Do not support anything that leads to killing and anarchy,”

He concluded by urging all citizens to remain peaceful and law-abiding, while assuring the public that the government remains committed to upholding law, order, and democracy. And under no condition will they allow those beating war drum to have their will.

Liberia has been chosen to host the 2025 West Africa Logistics Conference for the first time, under auspices of the U.S. Africa Command/AFRICOM. In a statement released in ongoing efforts to strengthen regional collaboration and logistics capabilities across West Africa”, Gen. Dietrich says. He details that the 2025 WALC will focus on enhancing interoperability, for military and civilian leaders to address shared logistics challenges and responding across the spectrum of operations. “Logistics remains the backbone of all operations, and is especially critical in a



"I am thrilled to announce this significant milestone

The U.S. General notes that building on the success of the 2024 WALC in Cameroon, this upcoming conference will serve as a vital platform

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