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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.

# The New Dawn

French Version Inside

TRULY INDEPENDENT

VOL. 15 NO. 105      WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025      PRICE LD\$50.00

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# Continental News

## Children killed in 'appalling' Sudan hospital attack - WHO head

“Another appalling attack” on a hospital in Sudan has seen more than 40 people killed, many of them children and medics, the head of the World Health Organization

April 2023, the scale of suffering is so vast that the UN has labelled it the world's worst humanitarian crisis. In addition to allegations of genocide in Darfur, the murder of

care of civilians as opposed to soldiers, according to the Emergency Lawyers group, which documents abuses by both the RSF and the army. Both the Sudan Doctors Network and the Emergency Lawyers group say the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) were to blame for the attack on Saturday.

But the doctors' body says the reason for the attack was that the army was trying to kill RSF fighters "stationed inside" al-Mujlad Hospital. The RSF has not commented on that claim, nor has the army.

On Monday, the head of the UN children's agency, Unicef, warned of a "worsening crisis" for children caused by Sudan's civil war and said the aid response lacked two-thirds of the funding needed.

Visiting refugees in neighbouring Chad, Catherine Russell said "hundreds of thousands of the most vulnerable children are bearing the brunt of both the war in Sudan and a lack of essential services for those who have fled to Chad". Many children are "malnourished, out of school, and at serious risk of exploitation and disease", she added.

Among the most harrowing accounts to come out of Sudan's war is the evidence that armed men are raping and sexually assaulting children as young as one. Some children have tried to end their own lives as a result.

## Police officers charged with murder of Kenyan blogger

Three police officers in Kenya have been charged with the murder of a 31-year-old blogger who died in police custody earlier this month. Albert Ojwang's death has sparked outrage in Kenya with protests held to demand justice.

Mr Ojwang was arrested after Kenya's deputy police chief Eliud Lagat filed a complaint, accusing the blogger of defaming him on social media.

Mr Lagat stepped aside last week pending the outcome of investigations into Ojwang's death. He has denied any wrongdoing. The three police officers - Samson Kiprotich, Talaam Kimani - were charged along with three civilians.

All six appeared in court on Monday, but have not yet pleaded. Police initially said that Mr Ojwang died of self-inflicted wounds, but were

against an increases in taxes.

During last Tuesday's protests, Mr Kariuki was holding a packet of face masks when he was caught up in a confrontation with two officers in Nairobi as hundreds of protesters clashed with police.

One officer, who had concealed his face with a mask, was filmed shooting him in the head as he walked away.

"Watching that video of Boniface being shot was heart-breaking. He was just selling masks. How could anyone hurt someone who hadn't done anything wrong? It made me fearful," Jonah Kariuki, the vendor's father, told the BBC.

Mr Kariuki senior, who is also a hawker, said his son was the family's bread-winner and called for the prosecution of the police officers involved, if they are found guilty of shooting him.

"I was so shocked because my son was not armed with stones or clubs like other protesters who were seen armed. They found him doing his work. It pained me because my son has never stolen



Many hospitals in Sudan - like this one in the capital - have been destroyed by the war

(WHO) has said. "We cannot say this louder," wrote Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on X on Tuesday, "attacks on health must stop everywhere!" Al-Mujlad Hospital was struck on Saturday, and is located in West Kordofan state, close to one of the frontlines where Sudan's warring parties are fighting in the conflict that is now in its third year.

The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) blames its opponents the Sudanese army for attacking the hospital, as do two prominent civil society groups, but the army itself has yet to comment on the allegation. Since Sudan's civil war began in

many thousands of civilians across the country, plus the displacement of millions more, both sides in this conflict have been accused of carrying out war crimes on medical facilities and staff, according to evidence seen by BBC News Arabic. Al-Mujlad Hospital, in the town of Muglad, was "the only functioning healthcare facility in the area", according to the Sudan Doctors Network.

Of the more than 40 people killed, six of them were children and five were health workers, the WHO's office in Sudan said on Sunday. Dozens of other people were injured too, it added.

Crucially, the hospital ran a dialysis unit and focused on the

## Mali signs trade deal with Russia as ties strengthen

Mali and Russia have signed a series of agreements aimed at expanding mutual trade and strengthening economic ties. Among them is a pledge for greater cooperation on nuclear energy, according to details released by the Kremlin.

The announcement of the deals came during a visit by Mali's junta leader Col Assimi Goïta to Moscow, which included two hours' of talks with President Vladimir Putin, Russian state media report.

Goïta has boosted relations with Russia since seizing power in 2021, while reducing ties with former colonial power France. This reflects a broader regional trend, with neighbouring Burkina Faso and Niger also pivoting towards Russia after the overthrow of civilian leaders. Speaking on Monday, Putin said that while trade ties with Mali were "modest" there was an upward

trend and future areas of cooperation would be in "geological exploration, energy, logistics and the humanitarian field". Mali and Russia have previously discussed the construction of a Russian-designed nuclear power plant as a strategic energy project for Mali. "This official visit will contribute to further deepening our relationship in a spirit of mutual trust and respect for sovereignty," Col Goïta said, according to a statement by the

Malian presidency.

Goïta expressed gratitude for Russia's "warm welcome" and affirmed Mali's willingness to strengthen the cooperation, which he said "covers many sectors". Military cooperation remains a key element of the Russia-Mali alliance. Russian mercenary forces have supported Col Goïta's government since French and UN troops were expelled after years of counterinsurgency operations.



President Vladimir Putin (L) and Col Assimi Goïta held talks in the Kremlin



Protesters have been holding demonstrations in Nairobi to demand justice for the blogger

forced to retract the anything," said Susan Njeri, the statement after an autopsy victim's mother.

found that he was likely to Boniface Kariuki is being treated have died from assault at Kenyatta National Hospital, wounds. Kenya's largest referral facility,

A street vendor was shot where he remains in critical during a demonstration last condition.

week in the capital, Nairobi, "Boniface cannot talk. He cannot over Mr Ojwang's death, hear as well. He cannot see us. To sparking renewed outrage be sincere, he can't survive from Kenyans who accuse without life support," Emily police of using excessive Wanjiru, the family force against protesters. spokesperson, told the BBC.

Boniface Kariuki was The case has attracted reportedly selling masks widespread condemnation, with when a uniformed police demonstrators demanding officer fired a bullet at close accountability for both the range, critically injuring vendor's shooting and Mr him. Activists have called Ojwang's earlier death.

for a "total shutdown" of the Foreign embassies and rights economy on Wednesday as organisations have urged the they step up protests government to ensure against police brutality, and transparency in the mark a year since the investigations and to hold those security forces opened fire responsible to account.

on crowds protesting



# EDITORIAL

## In hunt of value for money: The yellow machines may be in sight

A Liberian government delegation headed by Vice President Jeremiah Kpan Koung has been touring Chinese manufacturing companies in the past week in search of yellow machines for road construction programs across the country.

The trip is in fulfilment of the Boakai Administration’s campaign promise and commitment to connect the entire country with desperately needed roads that would promote trade internally thru movement of people, goods and services.

Everywhere they went last week in China, Vice President Koung presented one request to the Chinese: “We need value for money.” The Liberian government has set a ceiling of US\$22 Million for 285 pieces of yellow machines.

The current endeavor indicates a strong commitment from the current administration to deliver on its promise to the people to pave Liberia with quality roads that have eluded the country for centuries despite successive governments since independence in 1847.

Lack of roads in the country has impeded development and stifle socio-economic life, while seriously undermining health care delivery and education.

The Liberian government under President Joseph Boakai wants to reverse this ugly and grime picture with a great relief for its citizens.

President Boakai said recently that he is no longer a race car packed in the garage, when he served as Vice President then, but is now in the race track, as President. This means that he is focus on and in full control of his agenda, ready to deliver.

The government’s initial step with the yellow machines quest had received public criticism and outrage surrounding transparency and evasion of procurement policy. It seems to now have all stakeholders inboard this time around, as indicated by composition of the current delegation in China that includes head of the Public Procurement and Concession Commission, the Minister of Public Works, representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and the General Service Agency, among others, headed by Vice President Koung.

The Liberian government wants the machines as soonest as yesterday. But it would not trade quantity for quality, and this is what VP Koung has emphasized. “Our aim”, the Vice President said to one of the Chinese companies, Sany Group in Changsha, “is to get value for money. Our aim is to get a fair market value for the money to avoid ambiguity in price.”

“We don’t want cheap items but quality with affordable prices. The country is considering the processes and middlemen/ agents in getting the product to Liberia, which might increase the price. We understand businesspeople aim are to make profit, however, we don’t want to buy and don’t have a real market value,” Mr. Koung underscored. Ordinary Liberians cannot wait, but to see the machines here to create jobs across the country, as the bargaining include training opportunities and long- time benefits for the country.

# COMMENTARY

By Charles A. Kupchan

## Only Diplomacy Can End the Iranian Nuclear Threat

WASHINGTON, DC - Neither Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu nor US President Donald Trump has shown himself to be a prudent and levelheaded actor on the world stage. Both regularly indulge reckless impulses and approach statecraft as a matter of political opportunism. Nonetheless, the joint military campaign they have launched against Iran is reasoned and reasonable. Israel was justified in attacking Iran’s nuclear installations, and the United States was right to join the fight, using its bunker-buster bombs to hit Fordow (Iran’s deeply buried uranium enrichment plant), as well as two other nuclear facilities.

But now that Israel and the US have demonstrated their overwhelming military power, they should set their sights on a diplomatic, not a military, endgame. Airstrikes may be able to take out Iran’s existing nuclear facilities, but they also give Iran an even greater incentive to rebuild those facilities in pursuit of a nuclear deterrent. Accordingly, Israel and the US should use their joint military campaign as a tool of coercive diplomacy. Military action must lead to a deal at the negotiating table to permanently neutralize the threat that Iran poses to Israel and the region.

Prior to the start of Israel’s military campaign on June 13, Iran had been stockpiling near-weapons-grade uranium. In May, the International Atomic Energy Agency determined that it would take only three weeks for the Fordow plant to turn the current stockpile into enough weapons-grade uranium for nine nuclear weapons. While Iran would need additional time to master the process of building such weapons, the fact that highly enriched uranium has no civilian uses - combined with evidence of Iran’s past efforts to build nuclear weapons - was cause for not just grave concern but military action.

Before Israel’s initial strikes on Iran, this grave concern had led both the Biden and Trump administrations to try to neutralize the looming Iranian nuclear threat at the negotiating table. But the Islamic Republic refused to make a deal.

Iran has also been quite transparent about its malign strategic intentions. It has spent years building up its military, openly calling for Israel’s destruction, and actively supporting Hamas, Hezbollah, and other extremist groups. Iran’s own military capabilities, as well as those of its proxies, pose a direct and active threat to US interests in the region - including US bases and troops, international shipping, the flow of oil and gas, and the security of America’s partners in the Gulf. Under these circumstances, it would have been foolhardy to stand by as Iran’s nuclear program continued to advance.

But while Israel and the US have sound reasons for seeking to destroy Iran’s nuclear facilities, military force alone will not bring about a lasting resolution. Iran’s nuclear program may end up being only partly damaged, and even if it has been set back substantially, it can still be reconstituted, perhaps more stealthily. Moreover, if Iran

has no diplomatic offramp, and if its theocratic regime fears for its survival, it will likely expand the war out of desperation, potentially leading to a region-wide conflict.

Now that the US has entered the war, it should try again to arrive at a diplomatic endgame. Iran has strong incentives to make a deal and accept stringent constraints on its nuclear program, as well as intrusive inspections. Iran’s regional proxies have been devastated, and its own military leadership and infrastructure are facing withering attacks. With Israel and the US effectively controlling the country’s airspace, Iran’s ability to fight back will diminish by the day. Simply put, Iran’s hand is uniquely weak, making this the perfect moment to extract concessions at the negotiating table.

Trump also has strong incentives to return to diplomacy. Although he decided to enter the war, he faces strong pushback from the broad cadre of neo-isolationists in his own political base. Even if Israel wants to continue the campaign (perhaps aiming to bring down the Iranian regime), Trump has no interest in another Middle East quagmire. His game is to show strength, and then to be the dealmaker who brings peace to the Middle East.

Aiming at regime change may be tempting, but taking down the Islamic Republic by force would be a cardinal mistake. It is impossible to predict what kind of government would come next, let alone to contain the regional spillover that might accompany political chaos in Iran. Given the unstable neighborhood, regime collapse in Iran could easily radiate sectarian and ethnic violence far afield.

The US has already learned this lesson the hard way. Its interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria cost trillions of dollars and produced little good. Whatever happens in Iran, one thing is certain: Trump should not, and will not, engage in any nation-building. If Iran falls apart, the Trump administration is certainly not coming to the country’s rescue.

To be sure, most of Iran’s population has had enough of this theocratic government, which has presided over economic collapse, social repression, and violent crackdowns against protests and dissent. But the current war has also rallied Iranians around the flag, and the regime’s brutal security apparatus has kept it secure and intact, at least for now.

After almost a half-century, the regime may be nearing its end. But if it does fall, change needs to come from within, not be imposed from outside. The best way to facilitate this objective is to end the war at the negotiating table. Then, it would be up to Iran’s citizens to remove a leadership that has failed on every front. This outcome - though far from assured - might then produce a moderate government that could clear the way for the broader regional peace that Trump is so hungry to claim credit for.

Charles A. Kupchan is Professor of International Affairs at Georgetown University and Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.



OP-ED

By Stephen S. Roach

War and Tariffs Are a Double Shock to the World Economy

NEW HAVEN - The outbreak of a new war in the Middle East, together with a destructive tariff war, makes for a lethal combination in a sluggish world economy. Notwithstanding the possibility of a tentative ceasefire, the odds of imminent global recession have increased sharply.

One shock was bad enough. US President Donald Trump’s tariffs, wherever they eventually settle, imply downside risks to global growth. But the potential for a second shock - a war between Israel and Iran that has now ensnared the United States - compounds the problems for an increasingly vulnerable world economy. It fits with my theory of cyclical risk: it doesn’t take much to tip an economy nearing “stall speed” into outright recession.

This simple rule has worked remarkably well in predicting global recessions over the past 45 years. Unlike a recession in an individual economy, which generally reflects a contraction of real output, one at the global level typically involves about half the world’s economies contracting while the remainder continue to expand. As a result, a worldwide recession is usually associated with global GDP growth slowing to the still positive 2-2.5% range - a shortfall of 0.8 to 1.3 percentage points from the post-1980 trend of 3.3%. The exceptions were in 2009 and 2020, when the global financial crisis and the pandemic, respectively, caused outright contractions in global output.

The stall speed holds the key to cyclical risk assessment. It can be thought of as a zone of vulnerability, measured by significant downside deviations from trend growth. Looking back over the past 45 years, I would place the global economy’s stall speed in the 2.5-3% range: when in this zone, the world lacks the resilience needed to withstand a shock. That is what happened in each of the past four global recessions.

Fast-forward to today. According to the International Monetary Fund’s latest World Economic Outlook, global GDP growth is expected to slow to 2.8% in 2025 - right in the middle of the stall-speed zone. Whereas recent global recessions were the result of single shocks, today the world economy could be hit by two: a tariff war and a kinetic war in the Middle East. The possibility of a double-shock combination only increases the odds of global recession; in forecasting circles, it’s as close to a smoking gun as you can get.

As always, the devil is in the details - in this case, the specific transmission effects of the two shocks to global growth. The trade war, by now, is old news. My assumption is that the Trump tariff package that eventually emerges from ongoing legal disputes will feature something close to a 10% global tariff, a considerably higher tariff rate for China, and steeper product-specific tariffs aimed at protecting America’s legacy industries, such as motor vehicles and parts, steel, and aluminum.

The 10% global tariff represents a roughly five-fold increase from the 1.9% average effective tariff rate during the 30 years before Trump’s “Liberation Day” back in early April - a shock by any standards. That creates downside risks for the still export-dependent Chinese economy and major uncertainty for the US economy, almost surely leading to pullbacks in capital spending and hiring, both of which are dependent on businesses’ stable expectations of the future. With the US and Chinese economies collectively accounting for a little more than 40% of cumulative global GDP growth since 2010, one should not underestimate a tariff war’s potential damage to the world economy.

As for the Middle East, the macroeconomic impact of wars is typically measured through oil prices. Following Israel’s launch of strikes against Iran on June 13, oil prices initially soared, but from three-year lows, and remained well below post-2022 averages. Then, in the immediate aftermath of Trump’s June 23 ceasefire announcement, oil prices retraced much of the war-related run-up. If hostilities continue - always a possibility in the Middle East - there will be significant upside risks to energy and other commodity prices as markets start to worry about Iran’s options for retaliation, which could include disruption of oil production and distribution, as well as of shipping lanes. On balance, the US bombing of Iranian nuclear enrichment facilities on June 21 has injected a new element of uncertainty into an already hyper-volatile world.

It is far too early to foretell how US entry into Israel’s war against Iran will affect global energy prices. But in one sense, the situation is reminiscent of Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, which led to a doubling of oil prices within three months. Significantly, the world economy was already slowing toward a 2.5% stall speed in 1991, and the war-related energy shock led to a mild global recession in 1992-93.

The key to the near-term outlook is not US tariffs or the Iran war, but their geopolitical interplay. These shocks have the potential to feed on each other, threatening a vulnerable world economy that is already at risk of stalling out. Cyclical calls are never a sure thing. But this year’s twin shocks make a global recession look increasingly likely.

Stephen S. Roach, a faculty member at Yale University and former chairman of Morgan Stanley Asia, is the author of Unbalanced: The Codependency of America and China (Yale University Press, 2014) and Accidental Conflict: America, China, and the Clash of False Narratives (Yale University Press, 2022).

OPINION

By Peter Singer

The Ethics of Carbon Pricing

MELBOURNE - In 2009, US President Barack Obama appointed Harvard Law School Professor Cass Sunstein to be the administrator of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA). Sunstein was the co-author, with the Nobel laureate economist Richard Thaler, of Nudge, a widely acclaimed bestseller showing that small changes in how choices are put to people increase the likelihood that they will make healthy, prudent, or socially beneficial choices.

Under Sunstein’s leadership, OIRA sought to change government regulations in ways that would acknowledge the reality of global warming and seek to minimize the harm it would cause. To make these changes consistent across the government, it was essential to assess policies affecting greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions - for example, closing coal-fired power stations, or subsidizing electric cars - on the basis of an agreed price for a ton of carbon. Only then could the social cost of GHG emissions be reflected in assessments of the costs and benefits of regulations.

Once a price is put on carbon, other emissions that contribute to climate change, like methane, can be priced in terms of their equivalent impact. That is why Sunstein has called the price of carbon “the most important number you have never heard of.”

Before Obama came to the White House, no US government had ever tried to put a price on carbon. To determine what that price should be is no easy task. It requires complex estimates of the effect of GHG emissions on average temperatures, extreme weather events, changes in rainfall patterns, rising sea levels, and many other factors on which the livability of our planet depends. When that is done, one needs to put a price on the impact of these changes on the well-being of those whose interests the US was willing to consider.

The first of these tasks, estimating the physical effects of GHG emissions, was for scientists, who had models for calculating the answers. The second task, determining the impact of these effects on well-being, is not only a matter of economic calculation. It also raised a crucial ethical question: is the US willing to consider the well-being of those who live outside its borders, and of those yet to be born?

The Obama administration priced a ton of carbon at \$42. That was cut to \$5 during President Donald Trump’s first term, and under Joe Biden, it jumped to \$190. One can debate what the price should be, but it cannot be seriously questioned that CO2 emissions do have a cost, even if we consider only the costs to US residents. Unless the US sets that price centrally, policies issued by different departments and agencies will lack coherence, incurring unnecessary expense in reducing emissions which could have been reduced more cheaply by policies issued by a different department.

Notwithstanding the facts and logic behind putting a price on carbon, last month Jeffrey B. Clark, the acting administrator of OIRA, issued a memo stating: “[I]t is no longer federal government policy to maintain a uniform estimate of the monetized impacts of greenhouse gas emissions.” Clark’s memo referred to “supposed changes in the climate,” as if there were still doubts about whether the climate is changing, and also to doubts about whether human GHG emissions are contributing to those changes.

Even if it is still possible to harbor doubts about the role of human emissions in global warming, to act on those doubts is to ignore the views of the vast majority of climate scientists, as expressed in the thoroughly referenced reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Clark and the president he serves are gambling with the future of our planet.

After Sunstein left his position in the Obama administration, he continued to think about the ethical questions raised by climate change. His thoughts on that topic have now been published in Climate Justice: What Rich Nations Owe the World - and the Future. (Sunstein has compared the timing - three weeks after Trump’s second inauguration - to publishing a book about folk music the week after Bob Dylan went electric.)

On the key question of whose interests the US should consider when calculating the cost of carbon, Sunstein defends the view that he says is in accordance with both the utilitarianism of John Stuart Mill and the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth: The US should set a carbon price that reflects, as closely as possible, the net costs emissions impose on everyone they affect or will affect, now and in the future. In addition, Sunstein writes, justice requires wealthy countries to compensate the poor for the damage that climate change causes them.

In addition to those moral claims, however, Sunstein insists that it is in our own strategic interests to care for others: “If the world is to solve the climate problem, each country needs to consider the interests of people who live in other countries.”

I believe Sunstein’s moral arguments are completely sound. Yet to seek to implement them fully and immediately would, in many affluent countries, open a path to power for populist politicians who deny either the science or the moral arguments. Until that changes, it may be sound strategy for politicians to make the case for reducing emissions on the basis of the damage that climate change is already doing to their citizens, and the more severe damage it is likely to bring in the future.

Peter Singer, co-host of the podcast Lives Well Lived, is Emeritus Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University and V.K. Rajah Visiting Professor at the Centre for Biomedical Ethics at the National University of Singapore. His books include Animal Liberation, Practical Ethics, The Life You Can Save, and Ethics in the Real World.



FEATURE

ARTICLE

# The Impact of Illicit Mining on the Liberian Economy

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## Introduction

Liberia is a country richly endowed with a variety of mineral resources, including gold, diamonds, iron ore, and bauxite. These resources have historically formed the backbone of Liberia’s economy, dating as far back as the 1950s, when iron ore exports contributed significantly to the national GDP and foreign exchange earnings. Mining, both large-scale and artisanal, has long been seen as a promising pathway for economic recovery and transformation particularly in a post-war context where the government seeks to diversify income streams, reduce poverty, and generate employment.

However, over the past two decades, Liberia has witnessed an alarming surge in illicit mining activities, particularly artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) operations that operate outside of the legal framework. These unauthorized and largely unregulated activities are concentrated in resource-rich counties such as Gbarpolu, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Grand Cape Mount, Rivercess, Sinoe, and Nimba, where limited state presence and weak enforcement have allowed informal mining networks to thrive. While these operations provide short-term income for thousands of impoverished Liberians, the long-term economic, environmental, and governance costs are devastating.

Illicit mining has emerged as one of the most pressing threats to Liberia’s economic integrity. The Liberian government, through institutions such as the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI), has reported that although the country earned over US\$1.63 billion from its legal extractive sector between 2009 and 2021, a substantial portion of the country’s actual mineral output is never taxed or recorded. For instance, as much as 90% of Liberia’s gold production is believed to be smuggled out of the country, contributing to annual revenue losses estimated between US\$150 million to US\$450 million. These losses deprive the government of critical resources needed to fund public infrastructure, health services, and education, and they severely constrain national development planning (LEITI 2022).

Beyond revenue loss, illicit mining contributes to currency instability by fueling informal trade networks that operate outside the central banking system. The proliferation of such underground economies undermines the country’s macroeconomic framework, pushes inflation trends, and reduces investor confidence. International donors and responsible investors are increasingly concerned about the implications of weak governance and the lack of accountability in Liberia’s natural resource management. The environmental degradation caused by illicit mining is equally severe. Unauthorized miners frequently clear forests, divert rivers, and use harmful chemicals such as mercury and cyanide—actions that lead to deforestation, water pollution, soil erosion, and the destruction of habitats in some of Liberia’s most ecologically sensitive areas, including Sapo National Park. These practices threaten not only biodiversity and food security but also the livelihoods of local communities who rely on the land for farming, fishing, and hunting. At the community level, illicit mining brings about widespread social disruption, including the breakdown of traditional authority structures, the displacement of families, increased conflict, and the rise of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in unregulated mining camps. Vulnerable populations particularly women and children face exploitation, trafficking, and abuse, while the lack of formal employment opportunities drives many into dangerous and unsustainable work conditions. Moreover, illicit mining is now closely tied to illicit financial flows (IFFs), with

proceeds from untaxed mineral exports being laundered through criminal networks. These unregulated financial transactions further erode the government’s tax base and facilitate corruption, weakening Liberia’s institutional capacity to manage its resource wealth responsibly.

This article titled: The Impact of Illicit Mining on the Liberian Economy provides a comprehensive analysis of how an illicit mining activity is offering short-term economic relief to marginalized populations thereby eroding the very foundations of Liberia’s economic progress. Drawing on government data, international reports, academic research, and field evidence, it explores the economic ramifications of illicit mining across five major dimensions: revenue loss, environmental degradation, community disruption, illicit financial flows, and policy failure. In doing so, it aims to offer a clear picture of the stakes involved and to contribute to the urgent national and international conversation about responsible resource governance in Liberia.

## Economic Ramifications: Revenue Loss

One of the most significant and measurable impacts of illicit mining on the Liberian economy is the enormous revenue loss sustained by the government due to the circumvention of formal legal and tax structures. Liberia, a resource-rich country, particularly in gold, diamonds, iron ore, and other minerals, continues to struggle with translating its natural resource wealth into sustained national development. This struggle is exacerbated by the pervasive presence of unregulated and illegal mining operations that operate outside of the state’s fiscal and regulatory control. According to the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI), from 2009 to 2021, the Liberian government officially accrued approximately US\$1.63 billion in revenue from its extractive sector. This figure represents taxes, royalties, surface rental fees, and other payments from large-scale mining companies that operate under legal concessions. However, this official amount only reflects a fraction of what could have been realized had Liberia successfully regulated and formalized the entire mining landscape including artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM), which accounts for a significant share of the country’s mineral output.

The LEITI and the Ministry of Mines and Energy have consistently reported that a large volume of minerals particularly gold and diamonds are produced informally and smuggled out of Liberia without any documentation, valuation, or taxation. Industry experts and international studies estimate that as much as 70 to 90 percent of gold produced in Liberia annually is not recorded in official export statistics. In monetary terms, the smuggled gold alone may represent a loss of between US\$150 million to US\$450 million per year, depriving the government of millions of dollars in taxes, royalties, and fees that should otherwise be invested in infrastructure, health, education, and social development (LEITI 2022, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Liberia 2023). Moreover, the absence of proper documentation and export permits means that these minerals are often undervalued, or not valued at all, when leaving the country. They enter the international market through informal channels, often fetching premium prices that benefit foreign buyers and smugglers while leaving local communities impoverished and the government empty-handed.

This chronic revenue leakage has broader macroeconomic implications. Liberia continues to experience budget shortfalls, with the national budget consistently failing to meet developmental demands. In FY2022/2023, for instance, the government projected revenue of around US\$786 million, with a significant portion expected from the extractive industries. However, the persistent failure to capture revenues from illicit mining undermines these projections and forces the government to either cut essential services or increase borrowing, which leads to higher public debt (MoFD 2023). Additionally, the economic distortion caused by illicit mining weakens investor confidence in the formal mining sector. Multinational companies that operate legally in Liberia often complain about unfair competition from illicit operators who do not bear the same regulatory or fiscal burdens. This environment creates a disincentive for legitimate foreign direct investment, limiting the potential for job creation, technology transfer, and infrastructural development that could otherwise come from a well-regulated mining industry.

Furthermore, revenue loss from illicit mining erodes the government’s ability to invest in regulatory enforcement and environmental protection. The Ministry of Mines and Energy, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), are often under-resourced, making it difficult to monitor and control the vast network of informal mining sites scattered across the country from the dense forests of Grand Cape Mount to the mountainous regions of Nimba and the riverbanks of Rivercess, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Gbarpolu, and Sinoe Counties. In summary, the economic cost of illicit mining to the Liberian economy extends beyond simple figures on lost revenue. It affects national development planning, macroeconomic stability, fiscal policy, governance, and public service delivery. The longer these leaks persist, the greater the cumulative setback to Liberia’s quest for economic independence and sustainable development (EPA 2021). Illicit Financial Flows: A Drain on Liberia’s Economic Sovereignty One of the most damaging yet less visible consequences of illicit mining in Liberia is the surge in illicit financial flows (IFFs), particularly through the artisanal and

Continue on page 11



## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Court reserves ruling in Koffa, others' bond

**- Amid heated argument**

*The Presiding Magistrate of the Monrovia City Court, L. Ben Bacon after listening to argument on both sides in the Capitol Building arson case, reserved ruling and announced that a final decision on the bond's validity will be delivered by midday on Thursday, June 26, 2025.*

**By Lincoln G. Peters**

The Monrovia City Court on Tuesday, June 24, 2025, justify their bond... Otherwise, heard evidence in the the bond will be set aside and



much-anticipated bond the defendants will be justification proceedings involving former House Speaker Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa and Representatives Dixon W. Seboe, Abu B. Kamara, and Jacob C. Debee, following a mandate from Criminal Court "A" to determine the sufficiency of their US\$2.24 million bail.

The hearing follows the Monrovia City Court order issued on Monday, June 23, for the former Speaker Koffa and his Co-defendants to justify the validity of their US\$2.24 million bail bond or risk immediate rearrest. "The

bond-backed by sureties Jonda Janet Koffa and Marjan Mona Koffa—and a US\$1.8 million property bond. The City Court accepted the bond and released the lawmakers without a formal hearing on its adequacy

But prosecutors filed exceptions to the bond, claiming it was insufficient, while questioning the legitimacy of the sureties. However, instead of hearing arguments, the City Court transferred the matter to Criminal Court "A," which has now remanded the case back to Magistrate Barco for determination

Meanwhile, during the surety hearing, Magistrate Barco granted the defense's motion to proceed with the qualification of sureties listed in the original bond.

The court immediately qualified the first witness, Ms. Jonda Janet Koffa, who appeared on the stand and testified under oath. She identified herself as the General Manager at United Command Inc., residing in Sinkor's 7th Street community. Ms. Koffa confirmed that she served as one of the sureties and disclosed that she is the elder sister of co-surety Marjan Mona Koffa.

During her testimony, Ms. Koffa also confirmed that she is personally acquainted with

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

# Liberian Swedish Feeder Roads Project launches major roadworks in Lofa, Nimba, and Bong Counties

**By: Edwin N Khakie**

A significant rural infrastructure project has been launched across three key Liberian counties—Lofa, Nimba, and Bong—under the Liberian Swedish Feeder Roads Project, aimed at improving connectivity and driving local economic growth.

In Lofa County, 45 kilometers of new feeder roads will be constructed, while 90 kilometers will be developed in Nimba County. The initiative also includes the rehabilitation of 71.7 kilometers of existing roads in Salayea, Zorzor, Voinjama, and Quardu Bundi Districts in Lofa, and 92.7 kilometers in Doe, Boe-Quilla, Kparblee, and Gbehlay-Geh Districts in Nimba.

The project, part of the Liberian-Swedish Access Driven Rural Development Program, is designed to ease transportation, improve access to services, and enhance the livelihoods of farmers and residents in rural communities.

Targeted areas in Lofa include Zorzor, Voinjama, Kolahun, and Foyah Districts, while in Nimba, the focus will be on Bain-Gah,

Doe, Sanniquellie-Mahn, Superintendent Massaquoi Gbehlay, Zoe-Gbor, and Gbao stated.

Dignitaries attending the event At the official launch in Lofa, included Hon. Alber Toukolon, County Superintendent J. Assistant Minister for Lavelah Massaquoi extended Community Services at the thanks to the Government of Ministry of Public Works, and Liberia under President Joseph Mr. Carl-Henrik Jacobson, Nyuma Boakai and to the Program Officer for Inclusive Swedish Government for their Economic Development at the steadfast support of rural Swedish Embassy in Liberia.

Meanwhile, Bong County is set "We are grateful for this to benefit from the partnership, which will not only construction of 60 kilometers of enhance road access but also feeder roads under the same strengthen local agriculture initiative—part of a \$5 million and commerce,"

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



# NCHE Shuts Down 31 Unaccredited Institutions in Liberia

**By; Kruah Thompson**

The Government of Liberia, through the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE), has officially shut down 31 institutions across the country for operating without its knowledge and approval. According to the NCHE, these institutions were offering various academic and professional programs without meeting the required standards or receiving proper accreditation from the Commission.

Making the disclosure Tuesday at MICAT weekly press briefing NCHE Director General Dr. Edward L. Wonkeryor, revealed that the closure is part of efforts to regulate the higher education sector and protect students from unrecognized institutions.

The affected schools, located mainly in Montserrado and Nimba Counties, include nursing schools, theological colleges, vocational institutes, and unaccredited universities

and Tourism located Gurley and Front Streets. Other institutions affected include Elizabeth Medical Institute of Health Sciences in Mount Barclay, Humanity First Ahmadiyya Vocational College in Sinkor, and the Professional Journalism School of Liberia in Paynesville. In December 2024, the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) announced the launch of a comprehensive National Quality Assurance Inspection Exercise targeting higher education institutions across Liberia. Since the announcement, the Commission has been conducting assessments to determine whether the services provided by these institutions align with both national and global standards.

The inspection focused on several critical areas including institutional governance and



NCHE Director General Dr. Edward L. Wonkeryor

offering certificates, diplomas, and even bachelor's degrees. Among the closed institutions are: Gonet Academy located S.D. Cooper Road, Paynesville, Mertu Institute of Health and Laboratory Sciences located 72nd Junction, Paynesville, Christ Laborers School System located Pipeline Road, Paynesville, Liberia Institute of Medical Arts located Jacob's Town, Paynesville, Faith College of Professional Studies located Jacob's Town, Paynesville, Great Commission Christian University located Pipeline Road, Paynesville, Monrovia Open Bible College located Old Road, Sinkor, Liberty Theological Seminary located 15th & 16th Streets, Sinkor, The Royal Institute for Secretarial Science located Ashmun and Newport Streets, and Sabegna School of Travel

administration, academic programs and curricula, faculty and staff qualifications, facilities and infrastructure, student services and support, research and community engagement, as well as financial management and sustainability.

The inspection team was composed of senior management members of the NCHE along with hired consultants specifically engaged for the exercise.

Following the assessment, the team discovered that many higher education institutions across the country were operating under challenging conditions and lacked several key requirements.

The exercise revealed major

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

### Boakai & Nyonblee lead array of officials to sign Book of Condolence

**-For Late President Doe, and wife**

By Lincoln G. Peters

2025, President Boakai

President Joseph N. Boakai described the late President and Senate Pro-Tempore Doe as “a central figure in Nyonblee Kangar-Liberia’s complex history,” and Lawrence led an array of government officials at the on the country’s past as a way



Pres. Boakai

remain open for the public throughout the week, allowing citizens and dignitaries alike to pay tribute to the late president. It can recalled, the late President Doe rose to power in a 1980 military coup that ended decades of Americo-Liberian political dominance. He became Liberia’s 21st president and served until 1990, when he was captured and killed during the first Liberian civil war.

The Doe family expressed gratitude for the President’s gesture, describing it as a step toward healing and n a t i o n a l acknowledgment. Meanwhile, Senate Pro Tempore Sen. Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence also on Tuesday led a host of Senators to the Centennial Pavilion to sign the book of condolence for the late former President Samuel K. Doe.

The book of condolence signing is part of planned activities organized by the government and the Doe family to give the fallen President a befitting burial in his home County, Grand Gedeh.

The Ceremony was also attended by President Joseph N. Boakai who also led a host of cabinet ministers to sign the book of condolence.

official signing of the book of to strengthen peace and condolences for the late former reconciliation. President Samuel Kanyon Doe According to him, “Today, we and former first lady, Nancy B. remember a man who, Doe, at the Centennial regardless of the controversies Memorial Pavilion in of his time, played a Monrovia. President Boakai significant role in shaping the arrived at the Pavilion mid- course of our nation’s political morning, accompanied by an history,” Boakai said. official delegation, to pay his “We honor his memory and respects to the former Head of express our deepest State who was butchered in condolences to his family,” 1990 during the height of Boakai added. Liberia’s civil conflict. The signing comes amid somber ceremony was renewed efforts by the Boakai attended by members of the administration to promote Doe family, government national unity and officials, and other reconciliation, nearly 35 years sympathizers. Speaking briefly after the tragic chapter that with journalists after the led to Doe’s death. signing ceremony on June 24, The book of condolence will

### Gov’t Questions Leymah Gbowee’s Role as Peace Ambassador

By: Kruah Thompson

The Government of Liberia has questioned the legacy and impact of 2011 Nobel Peace Prize laureate Leymah Gbowee during her time as Peace Ambassador, following her recent remarks comparing past and current Liberian administrations. Speaking to reporters, Deputy Minister for Press and Public Affairs at the Ministry of Information, Daniel Sanoe, said Gbowee did little to promote national peace and reconciliation when she was appointed by former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to lead the Peace and Reconciliation Initiative of the country “When Madam Gbowee was given the opportunity to lead on national peacebuilding efforts, she made no significant impact and eventually resigned for

reasons best known to herself,” Sanoe said. “She later became a vocal critic of the same Sirleaf administration she is now calling a ‘diamond.’” The government’s reaction comes a day after Gbowee publicly stated that former President Sirleaf’s government was better than that of former President George Weah and current President Joseph Boakai,

describing Sirleaf’s administration as shining “like a diamond” in comparison.

In her interview, she listed several achievements made under the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf administration, including the systems and structures established at JFK for teen mothers and young girls who were giving birth. She noted that these programs ultimately helped

▶ CONT’D ON PAGE 10



### Citizens question role of Gender Ministry

**-Over the removal of children from the Streets**

By: Kruah Thompson

Several marketers in the Fiamah Community, Sinkor, have expressed dissatisfaction with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection’s recent effort to Remove Children engaged in street selling. They believe that now is not the right time to remove children from the street, as schools are closed and the children need to help their parents prepare for the upcoming academic year. The ministry’s initiative is part of the national “Support A Child, Save The Future” flagship program, launched in August 2024 by President Joseph Nyuma Boakai.

The five-year plan aims to remove over 7,000 vulnerable children from the streets and reintegrate them through education, healthcare, psychosocial support, and family reunification.

On Tuesday, a team from the Gender Ministry visited the Fiamah Market to gather information on children selling in the streets during school

have closed for vacation.

“Now is not the time to come after our children,” she said. “When school is open and a child is not in school, that’s when the ministry should come to assess the situation. But right now, many children are on vacation and helping us sell to raise money for the next school term.”

Josephine stressed that most parents who are marketers themselves also rely on their children to sell during the break to save money for school fees.

“We’re not saying they shouldn’t remove children from the streets,” she added. “But they’re not helping us with school fees or providing scholarships. So when the children are on break and helping us, it should not be a problem.”

While appreciating the government’s effort to protect children, she urged the Ministry of Gender to consider the country’s current economic hardship and to time their intervention appropriately.



hours.

According to a representative from the team, their role was limited to collecting basic details of the children such as the child’s name, date of birth, parent or guardian contacts information, and whether they live with their biological parents.

The ministry is expected to handle the next phase of the project after all the data are collected nationwide.

However, some local marketers are unhappy with the approach, speaking to our reporters Tuesday June 24, 2025, a market woman only identified as Madame Josephine argued that the timing of the assessment is inappropriate, as most schools

They are calling for a more practical and inclusive approach to child protection, rather than just targeting children during the school break.

Meanwhile, the ‘Support A Child, Save The Future’ initiative was designed to address the vulnerabilities of street children caused by poverty, abuse, neglect, and other socio economic challenges. The project operates through a multi-stakeholder approach, with key implementing partners including “UNICEF, Street Child of Liberia, GiveDirectly, SOS Children’s Villages, Save the Children, the Chinese Embassy, and Christ Embassy Church.”



## Medtech & LRA : Pas de traces pour 6,7 millions de dollars de redevances gouvernementales

Un bras de fer oppose l'Autorité fiscale du Liberia (LRA) et le Sénat libérien concernant la somme de 6,7 millions de dollars américains issue

Commission des comptes publics et d'audit du Sénat a tenu une audience publique sur les accords liant le gouvernement aux entreprises CTN et Medtech, mettant

Garswa Jackson Sr., a révélé qu'un audit de conformité mené auprès de la LRA et de Medtech Scientific a mis au jour plusieurs irrégularités, notamment des violations de la Loi sur la gestion des finances publiques (PFMA) et des règles de la Commission des marchés publics (PPCC).

Selon l'audit, Medtech aurait collecté des frais d'inspection à destination (DI) dont 6,7 millions USD représentant les 20 % dus au gouvernement, ont été transférés à la LRA. Cependant, ces fonds ont été utilisés par la LRA pour ses propres opérations, ce que la GAC considère comme une violation flagrante de la PFMA.

« Selon la Réglementation B de la Loi sur la gestion des finances publiques, les institutions autorisées à collecter des fonds pour le compte de l'État ne peuvent les utiliser que si une loi le

particulièrement l'accent sur la part de 20 % que Medtech devait reverser à l'État. Cette affaire suscite une vive controverse.

Lors de l'audience, l'Auditeur général de la Commission générale d'audit (GAC), M. P.



des redevances de 20 % dues par Medtech Scientific au gouvernement, mais dont la trace demeure introuvable.

Mardi 24 juin, la

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9

## Procès pour incendie au Capitole : l'opposition dénonce des manipulations de témoins et un traitement judiciaire partial

Plusieurs partis politiques d'opposition, dont l'ancienne coalition au pouvoir Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC), le Congress National Alternatif (ANC), et le Mouvement Citoyen pour le Changement (CMC), dénoncent des dérives judiciaires dans le procès en cours de l'ancien président de la Chambre des représentants, Me Jonathan Fonati Koffa, et de trois autres accusés dans l'affaire d'incendie criminel du Capitole. Dans une déclaration conjointe rendue publique ce mardi, les partis d'opposition ont qualifié les procédures judiciaires de « gravement entachées d'irrégularités ». Ils alertent sur des cas de manipulation de témoins, de traitements discriminatoires, ainsi que d'abus de la part de la police et des services de sécurité, et appellent à la nomination urgente d'un procureur spécial.

« L'enquête a été marquée par des événements troublants qui, si aucune mesure n'est prise, risquent de conduire à la condamnation de personnes innocentes - ce qui constituerait une grave erreur judiciaire. Nous attirons l'attention du peuple libérien et de nos partenaires internationaux sur des faits préoccupants concernant l'enquête et l'arrestation de certains parlementaires et citoyens libériens dans l'affaire de l'incendie du Capitole, qualifié d'acte criminel par la police », ont écrit les partis. Accusations de torture et pressions sur les témoins

Le communiqué pointe du doigt des cas précis, notamment le traitement infligé à Thomas Etheridge, l'un des co-accusés. Selon les partis, le 9 janvier 2025, Etheridge s'est volontairement présenté à la Police nationale libérienne (LNP) pour un interrogatoire, accompagné de son avocat comme le prévoit la Constitution. Cependant, après que les autorités ont décidé de le maintenir en détention pour complément d'enquête, son avocat a quitté les lieux. Toujours selon la déclaration, M. Etheridge aurait ensuite été transféré

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## Éditorial

Par Jayati Ghosh

### La Conférence sur le financement du développement a-t-elle des chances de succès ?

NEW DELHI – Le pessimisme est aujourd'hui compréhensible en ce qui concerne le multilatéralisme. Les récents rassemblements internationaux – Sommet de 2023 sur les Objectifs de développement durable, Sommet de l'avenir 2024, ainsi que les multiples Conférences des Nations Unies sur les changements climatiques – n'ont en effet donné lieu qu'à des promesses non tenues. Le président américain Donald Trump abandonnant actuellement les engagements internationaux des États-Unis, et rejetant les initiatives multilatérales tout en semant le désordre et la confusion dans le commerce mondial, la Conférence sur le financement du développement (FfD4) qui se tiendra à la fin du mois pourra-t-elle produire de meilleurs résultats ?

Certes, il faut s'attendre à ce que les États-Unis jouent les trouble-fête à Séville, ou à ce qu'ils se montrent indifférents aux accords conclus. Cela ne signifiera pas pour autant l'échec de cette conférence. En effet, le retrait des États-Unis de l'accord de Paris 2015 sur le climat durant le premier mandat de Trump – quelques mois seulement après l'entrée en vigueur du texte – n'a pas conduit à sa disparition. Bien que l'action climatique demeure limitée, presque tous les protagonistes admettent que le changement climatique se produirait encore plus rapidement si cet accord n'avait pas été conclu.

Les États-Unis se sont par ailleurs [retraités](#) en avril des négociations sur la décarbonation du transport maritime menées au sein de l'Organisation maritime internationale (OMI) des Nations Unies, menaçant de prendre des « mesures réciproques » si de nouvelles taxes étaient imposées aux navires américains pour leur consommation de carburant. Or, l'OMI est malgré tout [parvenue](#) à convaincre 108 États – qui représentent 97 % de la flotte marchande mondiale en termes de tonnage – d'approuver une nouvelle norme obligatoire concernant le carburant des navires, ainsi qu'un mécanisme mondial de tarification des émissions, dont les recettes sont destinées à soutenir notamment le développement d'infrastructures dans les économies en voie de développement.

Il est clairement possible pour le monde de progresser sans les États-Unis face à des défis communs. Le manque d'implication des États-Unis dans la FfD4 pourrait même s'avérer avantageux, compte tenu de leur tendance habituelle consistant à obtenir des compromis favorables à leurs propres multinationales, pour ensuite refuser de signer ou d'appliquer quelque accord que ce soit – comme l'illustrent les négociations relatives à l'accord fiscal mondial de l'OCDE, finalisé en 2021.

Pour que la FfD4 soit une réussite, il faudra néanmoins que d'autres États viennent combler le manque de leadership mondial, et qu'ils démontrent un engagement crédible en faveur de la coopération multilatérale, qui est essentielle à notre survie. Fort heureusement, la [première version](#) du document final de la FfD4 reconnaît cet impératif, et formule de nombreuses propositions politiques utiles et pratiques, dont plusieurs sont issues du [rapport final](#) de la Commission internationale d'experts sur le financement du développement (dont j'étais membre).

L'un des points clés du document consiste à permettre une plus grande mobilisation des ressources nationales. Un système fiscal international obsolète et des contrôles insuffisants des flux financiers illicites pèsent lourdement sur les budgets des pays à revenu faible et intermédiaire. Des réformes dans ces domaines contribueraient grandement à réduire les inégalités de revenus et d'actifs, ainsi qu'à faire croître des recettes fiscales indispensables pour financer les investissements dans la santé, l'éducation, l'atténuation et l'adaptation au changement climatique.

Il est plus largement nécessaire que les participants au sommet de Séville s'efforcent de remédier à l'absence de filet de sécurité financière mondiale. Une première étape pourrait consister à mettre en place des allocations régulières de droits de tirage spéciaux, l'actif de réserve du Fonds monétaire international. Pour renforcer l'impact de cette démarche, les DTS pourraient être distribués en fonction des besoins – en rupture avec l'approche actuelle, qui alloue les DTS proportionnellement aux quotas du FMI, ce qui signifie que les parts les plus importantes reviennent aux États qui en ont le moins besoin. Le FMI pourrait également introduire des swaps de DTS afin de répondre aux besoins de liquidités immédiats des économies qui ne bénéficient pas des swaps de liquidités de la Réserve fédérale américaine.



# Français

Starts from page 8

## Medtech & LRA : Pas de traces pour 6,7 millions

prévoit expressément. En l’occurrence, aucune disposition ne permettait à la LRA d’utiliser ces fonds », a expliqué l’Auditeur général Jackson.

Il a ajouté que la LRA a tenté de requalifier ces montants en « frais liés aux douanes » afin de justifier leur utilisation dans le renforcement des capacités douanières. Pourtant, un examen du budget annuel de la LRA ne fait mention nulle part de ces 6,7 millions USD.

« L’audit recommande que la LRA justifie l’usage de ces fonds et, à l’avenir, veille à ce que toute somme collectée au nom du gouvernement soit intégralement versée dans le compte consolidé de l’État », a-t-il insisté.

Autre point soulevé : le compte transitoire censé recueillir les recettes issues des services de Medtech n’a jamais été créé, en dépit des dispositions contractuelles.

« Les fonds ont été directement encaissés et conservés par Medtech jusqu’en juin 2024. La LRA sollicitait ensuite des décaissements auprès de la société pour financer ses activités douanières. Cette situation doit cesser et le compte transitoire doit être ouvert immédiatement », a conclu Jackson.

Par ailleurs, l’audit a révélé que Medtech ne respectait pas la grille tarifaire approuvée dans le contrat, percevant jusqu’à 100 000 USD de frais supplémentaires sans qu’aucun centime ne revienne à l’État. Aucune preuve d’un avenant contractuel n’a pu être fournie.

Le Commissaire général de la LRA, M. James Dorbor Jallah, a rejeté certaines conclusions du rapport de la GAC au cours de la même audience, en répondant aux interrogations

des sénateurs.

Les sénateurs ont soulevé des questions cruciales : pourquoi les 20 % dus n’apparaissent pas dans le budget 2024 ? Pourquoi l’État n’a-t-il pas renégocié l’accord afin d’alléger la charge sur les citoyens ?

Depuis 2021, Medtech n’a pas reversé sa part de 20 % sur le compte transitoire, rendant impossible le transfert au compte consolidé par la LRA, comme le prévoit le contrat.

« Nous parlons ici de 6,7 millions USD non versés dans le compte du gouvernement uniquement parce que le compte transitoire n’a jamais été mis en place. Au total, c’est plus de 33 millions USD qui pourraient être en jeu », ont affirmé les sénateurs, exigeant des explications claires de la part de Medtech et de la LRA.

Ces fonds constituent un revenu extra-budgétaire non déclaré, alors qu’ils pourraient contribuer à atténuer les besoins budgétaires que la LRA évoque régulièrement pour obtenir des hausses d’allocation.

Réagissant aux accusations, le patron de la LRA a indiqué que le contrat avec Medtech était en place bien avant l’arrivée de l’actuelle administration. Il a aussi souligné que le Code des recettes de 1822 accorde à la LRA le droit de percevoir les frais douaniers et de les utiliser pour le renforcement des capacités douanières, renvoyant la responsabilité au Parlement.

Concernant les 20 % dus à l’État, M. Jallah a expliqué que des conflits internes au sein de Medtech avaient conduit la Cour suprême à geler ses comptes bancaires, empêchant ainsi le transfert des fonds.

## Boakai et Nyonblee conduisent une délégation officielle à la signature du livre de condoléances

Le président de la République, Joseph Nyuma Boakai, accompagné de la présidente du Sénat par intérim, Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence, a dirigé une importante délégation gouvernementale à la signature officielle du livre de condoléances en mémoire de l’ancien président Samuel Kanyon Doe et de son épouse, l’ex-première dame Nancy B. Doe.

La cérémonie solennelle s’est tenue ce mardi matin au Centennial Memorial Pavilion à Monrovia, en présence des membres de la famille Doe, de hauts responsables de l’État et de nombreux sympathisants venus rendre hommage à l’ancien chef d’État, tué en 1990 au plus fort de la guerre civile libérienne.

S’exprimant brièvement devant la presse après la cérémonie, le président Boakai a salué la mémoire du défunt président, qu’il a qualifié de « figure centrale de l’histoire complexe du Liberia ». Il a appelé à une réflexion nationale sur les leçons du passé en vue de renforcer la paix et la réconciliation.

« Aujourd’hui, nous nous souvenons d’un homme qui, malgré les controverses de son époque, a joué un rôle déterminant dans l’évolution politique de notre pays », a déclaré le président Boakai.

« Nous honorons sa mémoire et exprimons nos plus sincères condoléances à sa famille. »



Cette initiative s’inscrit dans un contexte de renouvellement des efforts de réconciliation nationale engagés par l’administration Boakai, près de 35 ans après la mort tragique de Samuel Doe, premier président issu d’un coup d’État militaire en 1980.

Le livre de condoléances restera ouvert au public toute la semaine, offrant à l’ensemble des citoyens et aux personnalités publiques l’occasion de rendre un dernier hommage.

Pour rappel, le président Doe avait pris le pouvoir le 12 avril 1980 à la suite d’un coup d’État militaire qui mit fin à plus d’un siècle de domination politique américano-libérienne. Il devint le 21e président du Liberia et gouverna jusqu’à sa capture et son exécution en 1990, pendant la première guerre civile.

La famille Doe s’est dite reconnaissante pour ce geste du chef de l’État, qu’elle considère comme un pas important vers la reconnaissance nationale et la guérison collective.

Par ailleurs, la présidente par intérim du Sénat, Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence, a également conduit mardi une délégation de sénateurs au Pavillon du Centenaire pour signer le livre de condoléances au nom de l’institution législative.

Cette signature s’inscrit dans une série d’activités officielles conjointement organisées par le gouvernement et la famille Doe en vue d’accorder à l’ancien président des funérailles dignes dans son comté natal de Grand Gedeh.

Starts from page 8

## Procès pour incendie au Capitole : l’opposition dénonce des

de nuit au siège de l’Agence nationale de sécurité (NSA) à White Plains, où il aurait subi plusieurs formes de torture et d’intimidation pendant plusieurs jours.

« Il lui a été demandé d’incriminer son supérieur hiérarchique, l’ancien président de la Chambre, à travers une déclaration pré-rédigée. Il a refusé de signer ce document, et a été reconduit à la police, avant d’être officiellement inculpé d’incendie criminel », dénonce l’opposition. Traitement inégal et détention arbitraire

Le communiqué cite également le cas de deux autres accusés, Andrew Lawson et Albert Weah, arrêtés par l’unité anti-vol à main armée de la police le 4 janvier 2025. Tous deux auraient été détenus pendant huit jours au siège de la NSA et y auraient également été soumis à des actes de torture.

Les partis rappellent que le Code pénal libérien, aux articles 12.40 et 12.41, criminalise toute tentative de manipulation de témoins, d’altération d’informations ou d’entrave à une enquête. Ils appellent à une enquête indépendante pour faire toute la lumière sur ces accusations, estimant que l’intégrité du système judiciaire est en jeu. Biais politique dans le traitement des députés inculpés

Les partis d’opposition critiquent également

une application discriminatoire de la justice à l’encontre de certains élus.

« Les cinq députés ont été inculpés sous le même chef d’accusation dans le même mandat d’arrêt. Pourtant, leur traitement a différé selon leur affiliation politique : quatre députés de l’opposition ont été placés en détention dans des conditions oppressives, tandis que le seul député affilié à l’alliance au pouvoir Rescue Alliance a été libéré sur la base d’une simple reconnaissance personnelle », ont-ils dénoncé.

Ils estiment que cette disparité soulève de sérieuses questions sur l’impartialité de la Police nationale libérienne, et rappellent que l’Article 21(i) de la Constitution de 1986 garantit à tout accusé la possibilité d’être libéré sous caution, sauf dans le cas de crimes capitaux ou passibles de la réclusion à perpétuité.

« Nous demandons que lumière soit faite, dans le respect du droit, afin d’éviter que cette affaire ne devienne un précédent dangereux pour notre démocratie », concluent les partis.



## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Gov't Questions Leymah Gbowee's

“Many of you wanted Weah to stay despite his poor leadership. But now that there is a government trying to fix what was broken, you must not reduce the national conversation to random criticism,” he added. He concluded by advising Gbowee to rise above political commentary, further noting that “When you reach a certain status in society, your words should unite and inspire, not divide,” Sanoe said.

Prosecutors, however, sharply stressing the constitutional

frustration. Civil society groups and lawmakers are now calling for the program to be suspended after widespread

The inspection further found Agenda. public, especially students numerous cases of In view of the inspection and parents, to verify the noncompliance with outcomes, Dr. Wonkeryor accreditation status of any regulatory requirements, said, “the institutions have institution before which includes the failure to been placed into four enrollment. pay annual registration fees categories: including He also warned that and the unauthorized Category A: Accredited and operating unaccredited introduction of new academic chartered institutions with institutions is illegal and programs, which is a minor challenges, Category undermines the quality of violations of NCHE policies. B: Accredited or licensed Liberia’s educational Presenting the findings to the institutions with significant system, and that any press on Tuesday, June 24, challenges, and Category C: institution fund violating will 2025, NCHE Director General Institutions recommended face legal penalties. Dr. Edward L. Wonkeryor for suspension or

"All five lawmakers were charged under the same writ with identical offenses, yet the treatment meted out to them varied based on perceived political affiliation: four opposition lawmakers were detained at the Central Police Station under oppressive conditions, while the lone lawmaker affiliated with the Rescue Alliance was released on personal recognizance. This unequal treatment raises serious questions about political bias within the Liberia

National Police. Furthermore, Article 21(l) of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia provides that: "All accused persons shall be bailable upon their personal recognizance or by sufficient sureties, depending on the gravity of the crime and the probability of the accused appearing for trial, except for capital offenses or offenses punishable by life imprisonment." they concluded.

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# Medtech & LRA again!

# "Marred by troubling events"

By Lincoln G. Peters

Authorities at the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) and the Liberian Senate are locked up in a blame game over US\$6.7million Medtech Scientific 20% remittance to the Liberia government, which remained unaccounted for. On Tuesday, June 24, 2025, the

the LRA termed the fees as custom related fees, which gives them the authority to use the funds for custom capacity building. The Auditor General also stated that a review of the LRA's annual budget shows no sign of existence of the remitted 20% government

debunked some of the findings of the GAC, at the same hearing, while proving clarification regarding the Liberian senate inquiries.

During the hearing, Senators raised critical questions regarding the government 20% remittance, whether the money was declared by the LRA in the 2024 budget and what has prevented the government of Liberia from renegotiating the agreement to bring relief to the Liberian people.

Since 2021, Meditech has failed to provide the government of Liberia's 20% remittance in its transitory account for onward deposit into the consolidated account by the LRA as mandated by the contract."We are talking about US\$6.7million that was not deposited into the government of Liberia consolidated account only because the transistor account was not created, which is a fact. Also, when you do all of the calculation, we will be talking about a whopping US\$33 million, which the GAC report unearthed. Now, Medtech, did you do reconciliation or full disclosure regarding the funds to LRA? Now, can you account for this fund?" The senate questions. The Liberian senate said that the money is an extral revenue that is not captured in the budget, neither reported for which they believe will address some of the challenges the LRA usually advocate on for increase budgetary allotment. Responding to the General Auditing Commission audit report, and the Liberian Senate inquiries, Liberia Revenue Authority boss said that the Medtech contract was long existing before the UP-government arrivals, adding that these issues existed long before they came to power.

Accordingly, he noted that the legislature in its Revenue Code of 1822, grants the LRA the right to collect these customs services fees and used them for customs capacity building and operation, therefore, the senate is best suited to address the concern.

Speaking on the government of Liberia 20%, he said that when the government took over, LRA was unable to receive the money from Meditech due to the internal conflict in the company which lead to the Supreme Court placing a band or freezing the company account.

Several opposition political parties have described the legal trial of former House Speaker Cllr. Jonathan Fonati Koffa and three others implicated in the Capitol Building arson case as a litigation marred by troubling events, while alarming over witness tempering and other judicial malpractice and police misconduct.

By Lincoln G. Peters

The opposition political parties, including former ruling Coalition for Democratic Change, Alternative National Congress and newly formed Citizen Movement for Change in a joint press statement called for a special prosecutor to investigate alleged police misconduct in the Capitol Building fire incident.

"However, the investigation has been marred by troubling events that, if proper care is not taken, could lead to the conviction of innocent persons, a grave miscarriage of justice. We are concerned and wish to bring to the attention of the Liberian public and our international partners issues of grave concern regarding the investigation and arrest of certain lawmakers and other Liberian citizens on account of the fire at the Capitol which was initially declared arson and which the police have been investigating as such. Based on the facts and in accordance with the law set forth below, we request the appointment of

consequently, his lawyer left him in police custody.

However, the parties bemoaned that Mr. Etheridge, informed them that he was taken to the headquarters of the National Security Agency at White Plains at about 8:00 pm and was subjected to several forms of torture and coercion over the course of several days. "He was told to implicate his boss, the former Speaker, and was given a prepared statement to sign indicating as much. He refused and was later handed back to the police after several days at the NSA headquarters, and he was subsequently charged with arson" they alleged.

Similarly, the parties further indicated that defendants Andrew Lawson and Albert Weah were arrested by the anti-Robbery Unit of the Liberian National Police on January 4, 2025, and transferred to the National Security Agency headquarters for eight days following their arrest, both men reported that they were tortured.

"Section 12.40 of the Penal



Liberian Senate through its Public Accounts and Audits Committee held a public hearing on CTN and MedTechs Agreements, particularly the government of Liberia 20% remittance which has raised controversy.At that hearing, the General Auditing Commission, Auditor General, P. Garswa Jackson, Sr., revealed that a GAC compliance finding conducted at LRA and Midtech Scientific unearthed a breach in the Public Financial Management Act (PFA), the Public Procurement Concession Commission (PPCC) among others. According to AG Jackson, out of the total DI inspection fees collected from performance destination inspection activities by Medtech, about US\$6.7 million was remitted to the Liberia Revenue Authority as a result of the 20% fees.

What was more striking about their findings was that LRA used the remitted 20% for its operations, something the GAC described as breach of the Public Financial Management Act and Associate regulations. "If you look at Regulation"B", one of the Financial Management Act, it provides that Public Financial Management institutions that are allowed to collect funds on behalf of the government should retain those funds, except where a legislation mandates that institution to utilize the funds. In this case, there was no such regulations that mandated the Liberia Revenue Authority to utilize the funds from the DI inspection," AG Jackson explained.

Auditor General further explained that at some point,

share of revenue provided by Medtech." So, we indicated in the audit that the LRA should have accounted for the US\$6.7 million that was utilize for its own operation. Also, we cautioned that going forward the LRA should facilitate full remittance of the money collected on behalf of the government to the consolidated account" he concluded. AG Jackson also explained that the transitory account which was ordered created to ensure that all funds collected for BF services be remitted there was never created.

" We observed during the audit that the transistor account was never created. That the funds was exclusively collected by Midtech and retain by the company until up to June 2024. Also, the LRA was requesting funds from the company for custom capacity building services and other operational uses. Now, the LRA should ensure the transistor account " he stated."We also saw noncompliance with the approval fees structure by Meditech. The contract approval has an approved fee structure that was put in place and signed by all authorities. Now, we attempted to validate the compliance, but we observed that this was not applied. We further requested if there was an amendment, but nothing was done. The money collected by the company up to a hundred thousand extra fees, the government was not entitled to a dime" he concluded.

However, LRA Commissioner General James Dorbor Jallah



a special prosecutor to investigate and, where necessary, prosecute proven instances of witness tampering by certain members of the Liberian security forces," the parties wrote.

Meanwhile, providing instances, the opposition parties in their joint statement alarmed and accused the government of allegedly tampering with defendant Thomas Etheridge.

According to them, on January 9, 2025, Thomas Etheridge was taken voluntarily to the Liberian National Police for questioning in the presence of his lawyer, as required by the Constitution of the of Liberia, but the police, in keeping with the law, decided to detain him for additional questioning,

Code makes it a crime for anyone to tamper with a witness by offering bribes or other forms of inducement to get a witness to change his testimony. Section 12.41 makes it a crime to tamper with information, hinder an investigation, or attempt to deceive. The facts as alleged by the persons named herein create a presumption that must be investigated, lest we risk tainting our entire judicial system and undermining our democracy." They disclosed.

Speaking on the issue of disparate statements, the political parties said that they are also compelled to raise concerns regarding discriminatory enforcement.



## ***-Government suspends exercise***

**By Stephen G. Fellajuah**

(CBL) and the NIR, all commercial banks have been instructed to relax enforcement of the National ID requirement for banking transactions. Public service providers are also directed to comply with this policy shift.

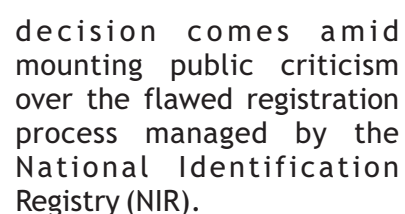
Identification Cards is hereby suspended with immediate effect for administrative reasons. The public will be informed of the date for the resumption of mass enrolment," the statement reads.

The NIR's ID program, initially launched to streamline service delivery and strengthen national security, has instead been marred by controversy. Citizens across the country have reported persistent challenges, including delays and frequent system breakdowns at registration centers

Also among the challenges are widespread allegations of bribery and backdoor processing. Poor accessibility for rural and low-income citizens. A \$5 registration fee considered unaffordable by many, as well as lack of transparency in processing name changes, renewals, and replacements

Public dissatisfaction grew even louder following President Joseph Boakai's Executive Order, mandating the use of the National ID for access to key public and financial services. The enforcement of the order, amid a broken system,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



In a joint directive issued by the Central Bank of Liberia

A press statement signed by Acting Minister of Information, Culture Affairs & Tourism, Johnny S. Tarkpah, released on Monday, June 22, 2025, confirmed the suspension. "The issuance of the National