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# The New Dawn

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# Continental News

## Anger at treatment of Africans fleeing Ukraine

Nigeria's government has condemned reports that its citizens, and those of other African countries, have been stopped from leaving war-torn Ukraine.

Isaac, a Nigerian man trying to get into Poland, said border staff told him they were "not tending to Africans".

"We've been chased back, we've been hit with police armed with sticks," he told the BBC.

South African foreign office official Clayson Monyela also said students had been "badly treated" at the border.

There have also been numerous reports of Ukrainian security officials preventing Africans from catching buses and trains going to the border.

Osemen, from Nigeria, told the BBC he had tried to get on a train in Lviv to take him to the Polish border but was told only Ukrainians would be allowed on board. Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari said there were about 4,000 Nigerians in Ukraine, mostly students.

He said one group had repeatedly been refused entry to Poland so they travelled back into Ukraine to head for Hungary instead.

"All who flee a conflict situation have the same right to safe passage under the UN Convention, and the colour of their passport or their skin should make no difference," Mr Buhari said in a tweet.

More than 350,000 Ukrainians have managed to flee the

Russian invasion so far. University student Ruqqaya, from Nigeria, was studying medicine in Kharkiv in the east of the country when the city was attacked. She walked for 11 hours overnight before she arrived at the Medyka crossing with Poland.

"When I came here there were black people sleeping on the street," she told the BBC.

She says she was told by

armed guards to wait as Ukrainians had to be let through first. She watched busloads of people, whom she described as white, being allowed through the border while only a handful of Africans were selected from the queue. After waiting for many hours, she was finally allowed to cross and made her way to Warsaw to fly back to Nigeria.

Asya, a medical student from Somalia studying in Kyiv, had a similar account. When she finally reached Poland, she said she was told "accommodation at the hotel was only for Ukrainians".

The Polish border force told the BBC that everyone fleeing conflict in Ukraine was being welcomed into Poland regardless of nationality. The

BBC has tried to contact the Ukrainian border force but has yet to receive a response. Nigeria's Foreign Minister Geoffrey Onyeama said he had spoken with his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba and had been assured that Ukrainian border guards had been given an order to allow all foreigners leaving Ukraine to pass without restrictions.

Nigeria's ministry of foreign affairs has now advised its citizens leaving Ukraine to head for Hungary or Romania, rather than trying to enter Poland.

The Nigerian ambassador to Romania has told the BBC that so far about 200 Nigerians - mostly students - have arrived in the capital Bucharest from Ukraine. Safiya Nuhu said many more were still arriving. BBC



Before the conflict there were several thousand African students in Ukraine

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## Russia forged closer ties with Africa

Russia has been expanding its influence in Africa in recent years and after the invasion of Ukraine, it will be expecting its new-found allies to provide support, or at least remain neutral, in international bodies such as the UN. From Libya to Mali, Sudan, the Central African

Republic (CAR), Mozambique and elsewhere, Russia has been getting more involved - often militarily with help fighting rebels or jihadist militants.

At the UN Security Council, Kenya, currently a non-permanent member, made its opposition to Russian action in Ukraine very clear.

But there has not yet been a

loud chorus from other countries backing Kenya's position. The continental body, the African Union, expressed "extreme concern" about what was going on, but was muted in its criticism of Russia.

South Africa, which is a partner of Russia in the Brics group, has called on the country to withdraw its forces from Ukraine but said it still held out hope for a negotiated solution.

On the other hand, CAR President Faustin-Archange Touadéra has been reported as backing Russia's decision to recognise the Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk as independent states.

And on Wednesday the deputy leader of the Sudanese junta, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, led a delegation to Moscow in a sign of closer ties between the two countries. One of the clearest examples of how alliances have been shifting in Africa came just a week before Russia's attack on Ukraine

with the ending of French involvement in fighting jihadists in Mali.

Mali's Prime Minister Choguel Maiga confirmed, in an interview with France24, that his country has signed military cooperation agreements with Russia. But he denied that the controversial Russian private military company, the Wagner Group, was involved.

This Russian help in Mali, along with a reported offer to the military government in Burkina Faso, fits a pattern over the past five years where Russia has intensified steps to increase its influence in Africa, both official and informal.

As the renewed Russia-Africa engagement gained momentum, a 2019 summit in the southern Russian city of Sochi was attended by delegates from over 50 African countries, including 43 heads of state.

President Vladimir Putin addressed the leaders, appealing to a history of backing liberation movements and pledging to boost trade and investment. But there has also been another kind of presence:

the opaque provision of security to governments in a number of African countries, in the form of training, intelligence and equipment, as well as involvement of Russian mercenaries in local conflicts.

As Mr Putin indicated, there are historic ties stretching back to the days of the USSR, Russia's predecessor, when Africa was one of several spheres of competition between it and the US. aid Irina Abramova, director of the Africa Institute at the Russian National Academy of Sciences. But it was more than markets that Russia was after - it also wanted increased global influence.

In 2014 it got involved in Syria's civil war, backing President Bashar al-Assad in part to highlight the mess the West was making and show how Russia could fix it.

From Syria it later moved on to the African continent.

Irina Filatova, an honorary professor of the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, says Russia's key task in Africa was to discredit Western influence, in much the same way as in Syria. BBC



Malians waved the Russian flag during anti-French protests in May last year



# EDITORIAL

## We differ with VP Taylor on this one

VICE PRESIDENT JEWEL Howard Taylor is suggesting operation of traditional schools across the country to teach traditional values in the wake of suspension of the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) for three years in Liberia.

CUSTOMARILY, FGM OR cutting of the clitoris of girls and women are carried out in the bush school for females, known here as Sande, while its counterpart, Poro, is meat for boys.

BUT THE BRUTAL practice in the Sande is often characterized by excessive bleeding that causes the death of many girls some as young as three, and leaves others with life-time health complications, including less excitement for sex.

OPERATORS OF THESE institutions influence parents to take their children out of academic schools to enroll them in the bush school to go thru these rituals. Besides cutting, other lessons taught range from farming, home-care, rearing children and service to husband, for females, and brushing, hunting and family protection for boys, respectively.

THE GOVERNMENT OF Liberia, working with partners recently suspended the practice of FGM for there years in the country.

BUT VICE PRESIDENT Tylor is suggesting that traditional values should continuously be taught despite the suspension of FGM, which is an integral part of the Sende education.

THE TRUTH OF the matter is, there is a thin line here because the Sende education is never complete without girls going thru FGM that prepares them for marriage upon graduation.

MRS. TAYLOR ACKNOWLEDGES that FGM plays a major part in traditional practices in Liberia, so it has created a different kind of focus on the way Liberians see their traditions, adding "Because of FGM being a part of our tradition my mother didn't go to the Sande and she didn't send me either and I am surely not going to send my children."

IT IS FROM these concerns raised by the Vice President about the practice that we draw our apprehension about her proposal for a separate traditional school that would exclusively teach values outside of FGM that has been a customary practice for centuries, not only in Liberia, but in most part of Africa with dangerous and life-threatening consequences.

WE DON'T NEED an extra school to teach helpful cultural values to our children, as VP Taylor wants us to believe. Instead, cultural values should be integrated in our social studies curriculum for schools. It is already being taught as an integrated course at the University of Liberia dubbed as Social Science under a four-discipline course that covers, Government, History, Economics and Cultural values.

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# COMMENTARY

By Melvyn B. Krauss

## The ECB's Savvy Gradualism

**S**TANFORD - This month, the world's major central banks shifted gears and announced plans to tighten monetary policy. But there was one notable exception: the European Central Bank, which says it does not intend to raise interest rates in 2022, even though it is well aware of today's inflation risks.

By contrast, the US Federal Reserve now expects to raise its policy rate three times in 2022, and the Bank of England has already increased its main policy rate by 15 basis points. Moreover, to keep an earlier promise that it would not raise rates until it had unwound its balance sheet, the Fed will accelerate the wind-down of its monthly asset purchases.

Does this mean that the ECB is "soft on inflation," occupying a dovish outlier position among the world's major central banks? Is Germany's bestselling tabloid, Bild, justified in bestowing on ECB President Christine Lagarde the mocking sobriquet "Madame Inflation"?

No and no. While Bild may accurately reflect the traditional German view that inflation counts for everything in ECB monetary policy, that perspective is hopelessly outdated in the Europe of 2022.

Lagarde understands that withdrawing monetary stimulus after a crisis can be a fraught task. Raising interest rates too fast could tear apart the currency union by pushing up borrowing costs and stifling the recoveries of heavily indebted member states like Italy, Spain, and Greece. Economists call this "fragmentation risk." Fragmentation of the currency area is a chronic issue for the eurozone, because, unlike the Fed and the BOE, which both are backed by a single fiscal authority, the ECB operates with 19 independent fiscal authorities.

This may have been uppermost in Lagarde's mind at her December press conference, where she explained that gradualism is necessary to avoid a "brutal transition" to a more restrictive monetary policy. Not surprisingly, that statement provoked a churlish response from the traditionally hawkish outgoing Bundesbank president, Jens Weidmann. Similarly, Christian Lindner, the new German finance minister, says there are growing fears in Berlin that the ECB's sensitivity to heavily indebted member states' borrowing costs would lead it to withdraw stimulus too slowly.

In a way, Lindner is right. Lagarde indeed is in no rush to tighten monetary policy, because of her concern for keeping the currency union intact as the stimulus is scaled down. Like a responsible medical professional, she does not want to rush the process of weaning an addict off a powerful drug. And make no mistake, the ECB's stimulus policies have had a potent effect on the economy, which in turn has become dependent on them.

Always politically savvy, Lagarde understands that in a region that has created a €750 billion (\$850 billion) recovery fund to keep the currency union together, a monetary policy that threatens to split the union would not sit well with the public. A "cold turkey" approach would be as reckless politically as it would be economically.

The biggest potential source of fragmentation risk today is Italy, with its €2.6 trillion in public debt and a long history of political instability. Managing these conditions requires very careful handling. So far, investors seem pleased with Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi's leadership. But they fear that political instability will return if Draghi chooses to pursue the presidency (generally a more ceremonial role) following Sergio Mattarella's imminent departure from that office.

Financial markets already quaked after Draghi's end-of-year press conference earlier this month, when he suggested that his stay in office might be ending soon. But investors should relax, because there is only a small chance of Draghi becoming Italy's next president. Most likely, his hint at the press conference was a tactic to gainsay two of Italy's largest trade unions, the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL) and the Italian Labor Union (UIL), following their call for a general strike just days ahead of a parliamentary vote to approve a crucial budget law. The wily former ECB president-turned-politician knows that sometimes there is nothing like threatening to quit to get one's way.

It should go without saying that Lagarde's effort to manage the eurozone's fragmentation risk will be a lot easier if her predecessor at the helm of the ECB remains in his current post until his term expires in 2023. In my view, he will do just that. But some additional encouragement from Brussels and Berlin could go a long way toward ensuring that Draghi remains in his post - and that the European recovery stays on track.



## O-PED

By James K. Galbraith

## America's Democratic Future

Notwithstanding the lasting shock of the January 6, 2021, attack of the US Capitol, the Democratic Party can take comfort in the broader demographic trends. Not only was the 2020 presidential election an administrative triumph; record-high turnout showed that the real problem has always been barriers to voting.

**A**USTIN - With the anniversary of the January 6 riot now over, let's focus on the big picture.

The great anomaly of the 2020 US presidential election was that Joe Biden won the national popular vote by seven million votes, yet came within 43,000 (in three close states) of losing the Electoral College, and thus the election. In California alone, Biden had five million more votes than he needed, and in New York, another two million.

So far this century, only Barack Obama has won decisive victories in both the popular vote and the Electoral College. In 2000 and 2016, the popular-vote winner lost the election. In 2004, the result turned on a single state: Ohio. This anomaly is not only persistent but constitutional, which makes it practically unsolvable.

Nevertheless, the 2020 election was a triumph for democracy. Turnout, as a proportion of eligible voters, was higher than in any election since 1900 (when the franchise was limited to males, almost all white). The COVID-19 pandemic forced local election administrators to innovate, and they did so with expanded voting by mail, early-voting days, 24-hour voting, and drive-in voting. More than 100 million ballots were cast before Election Day. In the end, Donald Trump's final count was 11 million higher than it was in 2016, and Biden's exceeded Hillary Clinton's 2016 total by 15 million.

Low turnout in America is usually blamed on voter apathy, but 2020 proved that the real problem has always been barriers to voting. In previous elections, polling places were scarce, the ballots long and complex, and the whole process a slow one, with queues often stretching for hours. Many people lack the time, the patience, or the physical stamina to wait.

The system also discouraged any change in voting patterns, because local election boards allocated machines and poll workers according to past turnout. So there were never enough machines for new voters whenever turnout surged, anywhere at all, for any reason. The 2020 election was thus a great unintended experiment in blowing up the barriers to voting - and it worked.

Those now crying fraud cite the vast increase in turnout as evidence. In fact, the growth in turnout in so-called swing states was no greater than in states where the outcome was not in question. One exception was Arizona, where turnout grew by 30%. But once you adjust for Arizona's rapid population growth, the proportionate increase is similar to California, where turnout fraud would have been pointless. In any event, the Arizona vote was administered by Republican officials.

Nor do the vote counts look suspicious. Votes are recorded and reported by county, and not merely at the state level. Any tampering with vote counts would have had to happen in specific counties. And because the 2020 election had a close precedent in 2016, strange changes in county voting patterns should be easy to spot.

An analysis of the county-by-county results by me and three colleagues compared the five swing states (Georgia, Arizona, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Michigan) to five states that were foregone conclusions - California, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and Texas. We did notice a few oddities. Along the Mexican border in Texas, for example, there was a sharp swing in outcomes toward Trump, clearly due to the prosperity brought by federal spending on the border. But these few counties are extremely small. Elsewhere in Texas, two large counties showed strong swings toward Biden, and the same was true of two large counties in Georgia. Those outcomes can be traced to voter mobilization and demographic change. Otherwise, the analysis shows that swing-state and non-swing-state shifts, in either direction, are not distinguishable in the data.

Why did Biden win? The simple answer can be found in the polling data. Compared to 2016, Trump did better with women, Blacks, and Hispanics, but he lost ground with white men, who shifted about five percentage points toward Biden. This shift was driven mainly by men who had voted for Obama in 2008 and 2012 but chose Trump over Clinton in 2016. Their return made the difference in three close states - Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin - that had been decisive in 2016. Apart from being close, the swing states weren't special; the overall shift to Biden was a bit larger in other states, including California, Texas, and New Jersey.

There is a great irony in how US presidential elections now play out. The states with the greatest growth in income inequality since the early 1990s - including California, New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Massachusetts - invariably vote Democratic. And the states where inequality has grown less largely (though not entirely) vote Republican. This pattern has been clear for decades, and it grows stronger with each presidential election.

What explains it? It is not about attitudes toward inequality - most people don't know (or care) about inequality levels in their home state (which we computed for our study). Rather, it is that the Democratic Party has become a coalition of two major groups representing the tails of the distribution: high-income urban professionals and low-income minorities. The Republican strongholds are in exurbs, small towns, and the countryside, in the middle of the income scale. Republicans thus dominate where inequality is lower, and Democrats where it is higher. It is a simple, consistent, and compelling pattern.

The implications of this pattern are unfolding across the South and Southwest, where minority populations (especially Hispanics) are growing rapidly, and where cities are gradually coming into a controlling position against the towns and countryside. That is why Arizona and Georgia flipped in 2020, and why Nevada went to the Democrats a few years back.

In Texas, with 38 Electoral College votes - more than Pennsylvania and Michigan together - there has been an inexorable three-point swing toward the Democrats every four years: Obama got 40% in 2012, Clinton got 43% in 2016, and Biden got 46% in 2020.

Republican legislatures, especially in southern and southwestern states, have done the math and are terrified. That is why they have worked to reverse the great ballot-access experiments of 2020. The GOP's unspoken watchword is: Get American voters back into long lines (without drinking water)! The point is to discourage as many as possible from voting at all.

## OPINION

By Katharina Pistor

## From Shock Therapy to Putin's War

**N**EW YORK - As Russian tanks battle through Ukraine on the orders of an authoritarian president, it is worth noting that Ukrainians are not the only ones who crave democracy. Russians, too, have taken to the streets - at great personal risk - to protest Vladimir Putin's outrageous act of aggression. But they are fighting an uphill battle in a country that has never been given a chance to become democratic.

When such an opportunity was available, it was subverted not by Putin and his kleptocratic milieu, but by the West. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union 30 years ago, American economic advisers convinced Russia's leaders to focus on economic reforms and put democracy on the backburner - where Putin could easily extinguish it when the time came.

This is no trivial historical contingency. Had Russia become a democracy, there would have been no need to talk about NATO and its eastward expansion, no invasion of Ukraine, and no debates about whether the West owes Russia's civilization greater respect. (As a German, I recoil at that last proposition, which has clear echoes of Hitler and his self-proclaimed leadership over a "civilization.")

Let us recount the sequence of events. In November 1991, the Russian Supreme Soviet (parliament) gave then-Russian President Boris Yeltsin extraordinary powers and a 13-month-long mandate to launch reforms. Then, in December 1991, the Soviet Union was officially dissolved by the Belovezh Accords, which created the Commonwealth of Independent States. Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine declared respect for one another's independence.

Surrounded by a small group of Russian reformers and Western advisers, Yeltsin used this unique historical moment to launch an unprecedented program of economic "shock therapy." Prices were liberalized, borders were opened, and rapid privatization began - all by presidential decree. Nobody in Yeltsin's circle bothered to ask whether this was what Russia's citizens wanted. And nobody paused to consider that Russians might first want a chance to develop a sound constitutional foundation for their country, or to express through an election their preference for who should govern them.

The reformers and their Western advisers simply decided - and then insisted - that market reforms should precede constitutional reforms. Democratic niceties would delay or even undermine economic policymaking. Only by moving fast - cutting the dog's tail with one blow of the ax - would Russia be put on a path to economic prosperity and the Communists be kept out of power for good. With radical market reforms, the Russian people would see tangible returns and become enamored with democracy automatically.

It was not to be. The Yeltsin presidency turned out to be an unmitigated disaster - economically, socially, legally, and politically. Overhauling a Soviet-style centrally planned economy in the space of just 13 months proved to be impossible. Price and trade liberalization on their own did not create markets. That would have required legal institutions, but there was no time to establish them. Yes, extreme shortages disappeared and street markets sprang up everywhere. But that is a far cry from nurturing the kind of markets needed to facilitate the allocation of resources on which companies and households rely.

Moreover, the shock therapy unleashed such severe and sudden social and economic disruptions that it turned the public against the reforms and the reformers. The Supreme Soviet refused to extend Yeltsin's extraordinary powers, and what happened next would set the stage for the rise of authoritarian presidentialism in Russia.

Yeltsin and his allies refused to give up. They declared the existing Russian constitution of 1977 illegitimate, and Yeltsin proceeded to assume power unilaterally, while calling for a referendum to legitimize the move. But the constitutional court and the parliament refused to budge, and a deep political crisis ensued. In the end, the standoff was resolved by tanks, which Yeltsin called in to dissolve the Russian parliament in October 1993, leaving 147 people dead.

To be sure, many members of parliament were opponents of Yeltsin and his team, and perhaps wanted to turn back the clock. But it was Yeltsin who set a dangerous new precedent for how disputes over the country's future would be resolved. Tanks, not votes, would decide. And Yeltsin and his team didn't stop there. They also rammed through a constitution that enshrined a powerful president with strong decree and veto powers, and with no serious checks and balances.

I still recall a revealing conversation that I, a student of Russia's reforms at the time, had with Dmitry Vasiliev, a top member of Yeltsin's privatization team. When I pointed out the shortcomings of the draft constitution, he said they would simply fix it if the wrong person ascended to power. They never did, of course - nor could they have. Vasiliev's statement fully encapsulated how the economic reformers thought about constitutional democracy.

In December 1993, the new constitution was adopted through a referendum, which was held jointly with elections to the new parliament. Yeltsin's candidates suffered a stunning defeat; but with the president's new constitutional powers secured, the economic reforms continued. Yeltsin was then "re-elected" in 1996 through a manipulated process that had been planned in Davos and orchestrated by the newly minted Russian oligarchs. Three years later, Yeltsin made Putin prime minister and anointed him as his successor.

Democratizing Russia may always have been a long shot, given the country's history of centralized power. But it would have been worth a try. The ill-advised prioritization of economic goals over democratic processes holds lessons well beyond Russia. By choosing capitalism over democracy as the foundation for the post-Cold War world, the West jeopardized stability, prosperity, and, as we now see again in Ukraine, peace and democracy - and not only in Eastern Europe.



## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# Liberia Abandons Agricultural Transformation to NGOs: Hundreds of millions spent, but farm productivity falling, and farmers' losses and food insecurity rising

BY: AMBULAH MAMEY, International Agricultural Development Practitioner

## Key Messages:

1. Liberia still produces less than half (0.2) cup of rice per Liberian, per day after spending hundreds of millions on projects to be self-sufficient in rice production.
2. Almost half of a billion (437.02 million USD) accounts for financial flow to Liberia's agriculture sector- specifically the crop-subsector between 2018 and 2022.
3. The African Union has consistently ranked Liberia "NOT ON TRACK" to transforming its agricultural sector. Liberia failed 22 of 24 progress indicators in AU latest report.
4. 96% of farmers in Liberia relied on informal market as the main source of seeds, fertilizers and other inputs because agricultural market is not functional. The World Bank says Liberia is the worst place for farmers to operate their business.
5. Cocoa, farmers in Liberia received 69.79% less average yield/hectare than farmers in Cote' d'Ivoire, 69.22% less than farmers in Guinea, 65.6% less than farmers in Sierra Leone and 66.6% less than farmers in Ghana. Rice farmers are experiencing almost the same.
6. No poor country in the world has ever reduced poverty without increasing agricultural productivity. If Liberia should move out of poverty, it must prioritize the transformation of its agriculture sector and improve agricultural productivity!!
7. Liberians must sit up, shine their eyes, and begin to demand real sustainable results from stakeholders in the agricultural sector- especially NGOs and the Government.

Liberia produces less than half (0.2) cup of rice (its staple food) per Liberian, per day. But on average, a Liberian need a little over 1cup of rice per day. The rice per capita deficit is happening after decades of multiple donor and government projects- costing hundreds of millions of United States Dollars- that promise to make the country self-sufficient in rice production. Most recently, from 2018 to 2022, almost half of a billion (437.02 million USD) accounts for financial flow to Liberia's agriculture sector- specifically the crop-subsector. This amount does not include financial flow to other subsectors including a 40 million committed to the fishery subsector and several other millions spent on "improving" Liberia's agricultural sector by an army of NGOs deployed across the country. Of the 437.02 million, 145.9 million (33%) was committed before 2018, but only 18.6million was spent before 2018; leaving the remaining 127.2 million available for the current Administration to spend. The 437.02 million is in the form of grants 172,118,287.9 (39%), FAO's projects 7.84M (2%), Government of Liberia's budgetary support to agriculture 19.01M (4.35%), loans that Liberia will repay with interest, 185.6 M (42%) and 52.4 M (12%) from other sources including beneficiary and private sector contribution to donor projects, and the Government of Liberia's indirect support that includes tax waivers.

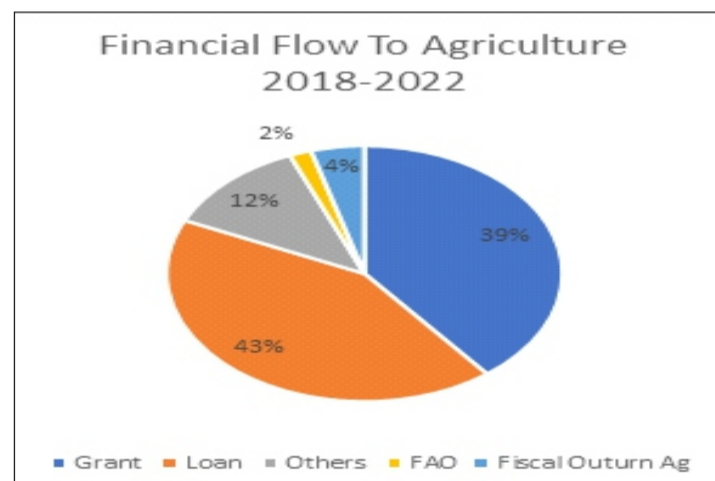
Data are scarce in Liberia, and when they are available, they tend to be incomplete. Hence, the data collated and presented above- may not be the most accurate but present a good picture of agricultural spending and commitment between 2018 and 2022. Anecdotal estimate has it that- before 2018- over a billion was spent to make Liberia self-sufficient in rice production. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), World Bank, African Development Bank (AFDB), USAID, and FAO were and are currently the major donors or lenders. There is also an "army" of agricultural NGOs working to improve Liberia's agriculture sector.

Except three of the current projects that are

scheduled to last for 4-6 years, funds from these organizations are spread across short-term (2-3yrs) projects, implemented in piecemeal across Liberia. The projects are designed a bit differently with unique acronyms to match, but all project work practically towards the same goals: to enable smallholder farmers improve productivity and increase production and to improve agricultural markets. The projects also seek to increase farmers' income, reduce poverty, and food import and improve food security and nutrition.

For example, the AFDB and the Global Agriculture and Food and Security Program (GAFSP) say their "Smallholder Agricultural Productivity Enhancement and Commercialization Project" and "Smallholder Agriculture Development for Food and Nutrition Security (SADFONS) are being implemented to "Increase farmers' income through crop intensification, value addition and market development and to improve food and nutrition security and reduce poverty; respectively. The World Bank says its "Rural Economic Transformation Project (RETRAP)" is aimed at "increasing productivity and market access for farmers and agri-enterprises" while IFAD's Tree Crop Extension Projects have been seeking to improve the incomes and climate change resilience of smallholder cocoa producers.

Short-term agricultural loans, grants, and projects promising pathways to food self-sufficiency, and poverty alleviation have old footprints and not new in Liberia. The AfDB's first agricultural project was implemented in Liberia in 1968 and it sought to increase rice production. Later in 1977 the FAO entered Liberia and has been working to revitalize the agriculture sector. IFAD came in 1981 with its first smallholder rice seed project to increase rice



production and has not left- except during the war. But previous and current interventions- costing billions of dollars- have not been able to transform Liberia's agriculture to deliver what the country desperately needs and what its agricultural sector holds the key to provide: strong economic growth, food, and nutrition security and sustained rural poverty reduction and jobs for urban youths.

NOT ON TRACK to Agricultural Transformation: 15 years of Poor Agricultural Productivity, Low Production, Increased Rice Import, and Poor Nutrition Outcome

After decades of spending billions to transform Liberia's agriculture, the following facts ought to make Liberians sit up, pay attention, and begin to demand accountability from NGOs and the government. Since 2017 (the year the African Union began tracking its members' progress towards a transformed agricultural sector) Liberia has been consistently ranked "NOT ON TRACK" to transforming its agricultural sector. On the AU's latest scorecard, Liberia failed 22 of the 24 indicators of progress; including, 0 out of 3 points for its capacity to engage in evidence-based agricultural intervention, 1.3 out of 8.25 points for farmers' access to fertilizers, seeds, and other inputs, 0.58 out of 10 points for farmers' access to finance and 2.38 out of 10 points for public expenditure on agriculture and 1.69 points out of 3 points for food security and nutrition.

The "NOT ON TRACK" is consistent with many situations in Liberia and the following highlights of the agricultural input market- especially for seeds and fertilizers- are revealing. Agricultural Input Markets are among the first set of structures required to ensure the adequate supply of

improved inputs (seeds, fertilizers, insecticide, and technology) to farmers, to boost productivity on their farms and increase production. But in Liberia, the market remains largely informal, disorganized, and hence, continuously failing to provide the quality and quantity of farm inputs the farmers need.

Up to 2017, about 96% of farmers in Liberia relied on the informal and unregulated market as the primary source of inputs. This informal market features traders from neighboring countries who supply mostly counterfeit/uncertified seeds, and fertilizers that contribute to low production quantity and poor quality that has kept many farmers in recurrent financial losses, and food deficit after months of hard labor. The number of farmers that use certified seeds in Liberia for the major crops (including rice and cassava) is just 8,137 (4%) of the approximately 203,442 farmers because the input market is nonfunctional and there is less attention directed to developing and enforcing policies that increase confidence for private investment. The dire situation with Liberia's agricultural market is further explained in the "Enabling The Business for Agriculture (EBA)", a World Bank study that examines to what extent governments make it easier or harder for farmers to operate their businesses. The EBA ranks Liberia the worst (101 out of 101 countries studied) in its overall 2019 ranking; revealing that fragile countries, including Haiti, Mali, Sudan, and Iraq, scored better than Liberia in the overall ranking for enabling agricultural business.

On a scale of 0 to 100 for registering fertilizers and supplying seeds, Liberia scored 0 for registering fertilizers and 7.4 for seed supply. Something very disturbing about the World Bank's EBA report is that Liberia's miserable performance is reported after another unit of the World Bank, USAID, AFDB, the Swedish Government and other NGOs have spent at least 200 million on no less than six projects (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) that are focused- in a significant part or whole- on "developing agricultural market", "reforming agricultural markets", "improving market access for farmers and agri-enterprises".

These poor outcomes are furthered revealed in the trend and status of the productivity and production of major crops in Liberia, food imports and its attendant cost, and nutrition outcome -especially food related non-communicable diseases. For the past 15 years (2006- 2020) the average yield per hectare for rice, cassava, and cocoa farmers in Liberia were significantly lower than their counterparts in neighboring countries (See Figure-2).

Figure-2: Source- Computed using FAO Data

Cocoa, farmers in Liberia received 69.79% less average yield/hectare than farmers in Cote' d'Ivoire, 69.22% less than farmers in Guinea, 65.6% less than farmers in Sierra Leone and 66.6% less than farmers in Ghana. Rice farmers in Liberia received 50.2% less average yield/hectare than farmers in Cote' d'Ivoire received; 13.1% less than farmers in Guinea, 20.2% less than farmers in Sierra Leone and 45.8% less than farmers in Ghana. Rice is Liberia's staple food, and almost every past and current leader in Liberia (President, Senator, Representative)- has promised to make Liberia self-sufficient in rice production. But after 15years of uninterrupted peace and spending billions to increase rice production, Liberia remains a food deficit country with a 15 years (2006-2020) average rice (milled) production of 181,411.13 metric tons; 568,588.87 metric tons or 68.17% less than the 750 thousand metric tons Liberians demand every year. At the current average production (181,411.13 MTH) and the current population of 5.058 million, Liberia's rice value chain provides less than half (0.2) cup of rice per Liberian per day. On average, a Liberian consumes over 1cup of rice per day. Instead of taking bold but evidence-baked action to increase rice production and address the per capita rice deficit, Liberia finds comfort in importing rice. As the population grows, the rice deficit increases, and the import quantity and cost to import rice grows. Over the last 15years, rice import has gone north: from 210 thousands metric tons in 2006 to approximately 400 thousand metric tons in 2020; costing Liberia at least 200 million on average.



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# Lecturers go slow at Tubman University

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

Members of the faculty association of the William V.S. Tubman University in Harper City, Maryland County, southeast Liberia have staged an indefinite go-slow over alleged administrative

Monrovia, Fendell, and Grand Cape Mount County, respectively.

Addressing a press conference on the campus of the Tubman University on Monday, February 28, 2022, The President of the TU Faculty Association

Mr. Francis Fukah, frowned at

the December 20, 2021, they have been engaging the administration on campus to provide redress to issues affecting faculty members.

He notes that it's saddening that the administration chose to go the path of ignoring their concerns despite the faculty given them two weeks of prior warning of an imminent go-slow.

He says Dr. Wreh-Wilson has opted to remain in Monrovia while his caretakers proxy issues press releases and appears on radio talk show to address members of TUFA.

"What kind of president tells lecturers and professors that they don't have brains, that they are useless if they drank more than a bottle of beer a week; what kind of president tells his faculty members they are "bloody liars", that he spent US\$4,000 to dig his late

wife's grave whereas we just do our own anyhow here in Liberia; what kind of president goes on record to dissolve the board of a university? What kind of president calls his employees enemies? What kind of president tells you whom to befriend? What kind of president calls students dogs? WE WILL NOT WORK WITH SUCH A PRESIDENT", the faculty announced via a press

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



management and other excesses, calling for the replacement of the University's President, Dr. D. Elloitt Wreh-Wilson.

Tubman University is the second public university in Liberia next to the University of Liberia that situates in

the university administration for allegedly boycotting their induction ceremony, which he said sends a clear message that enough is enough from constant insults and intransigence of the administration.

Mr. Fukah recounts that since

# Man jailed for allegedly sodomizing, cutting victim's tongue

By Lincoln G. Peters

Police have jailed defendant Darius P. Siryon, 25, at the Monrovia Central Prison for allegedly sodomizing and cutting the tongue of a 17 years old victim.

The suspect is said to be a resident of the Out Land Community, Paynesville.

Defendant Siryon was charged with the crimes criminal attempt to commit murder and aggravated assault in violation of Chapter 10 Section 10.1 and Chapter 14 Section 14. 20 of the Revised Penal Code of Liberia.

Police investigation revealed that the victim along with his parents were living in Out Land Community, Paynesville and defendant Darius Siryon also lived in the same community with John

W. Tokpah.

During a wake keeping of a lady only identified as Ma. Fumbah, police said defendant

Siryon took the victim to a nearby old security boot that is within a fence and used his teeth to cut the victim's



# Finance boosts MCSSTA capacity

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning through the Liberia Macroeconomic Policy Analysis Center (LIMPAC) has donated an assortment of office supplies and equipment to the Monrovia Consolidated School System Teachers Association (MCSSTA).

Making the donation on behalf of Minister Samuel D. Tweah, Jr., LIMPAC Executive Director, Del-Francis Wreh expressed Minister Tweah's gratitude to the leadership of

laptop, a printer, printer cartridges, several ream of sheets, markers, and white board, among others, represents initial donation and support from LIMPAC to the MCSSTA.

The LIMPAC Executive Director also promised that in addition to the materials donation, LIMPAC as the version of Minister Tweah will collaborate with MCSSTA in the area of capacity building for teachers, especially training in data analysis using Microsoft Excel, and other data analysis



the Monrovia Consolidated School System Teachers Association for their dedicated commitment to ensuring the students across the MCSS are properly trained despite the challenges within Liberia.

Director Wreh also thanked the leadership of the MCSSTA for their cordial working relationship with the Administration of the MCSS and also their frank and open engagement with Government of Liberia for resolving problems for teachers and students within the system.

The donation which costs over 3,000 United States Dollars includes an i6 Lenovo

software.

Receiving the donation, the President of the Monrovia Consolidated School System Teachers Association (MCSSTA), Augustine N. Nyormui thanked the Government through the Minister of Finance for identifying with MCSSTA and supplying the critical materials that the MCSSTA actually needed.

He also expressed appreciation to the Administration of MCSS for the cordiality and promised to remain engaged with MCSS administration and the Government of Liberia.--Press release

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tongue from his mouth.

Police said a portion of the victim's tongue was discovered in the grass, hours after the victim was taken to ELWA hospital for medical treatment by his mother Angeline Peabody.

According to police, the patient didn't consent for a thorough physical exam.

The victim was transferred on February 18, 2022 to the 14 Military hospital and has been undergoing medical treatment.



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# Man found guilty in murder trial

**-Victim's mother celebrates justice system here**

*By Lincoln G. Peters*  
 A 19-year-old man identified as defendant Chris Karpeh has been found guilty of murdering victim Shadrack George Weah, 19, following a murder trial at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia.  
 The indictment says defendant Karpeh knowingly and intentionally struck his nephew Shadrack George

after being declared wanted by police authorities.  
 During the trial, defendant Karpeh filed a guilty plea with the court to the charge of murder and also appealed for mercy.  
 In the indictment, grand jurors said the act by defendant Karpeh was in contravention of Title 26, Section 14.1 A and B, Section 50.51 (1) (a) and Section 51.3 (1) against the peace and

verdict was brought down, Madam Christian Karpeh said the court has restored great joy to her because she feels very bad and hurt most times seeing other people's children while her son is no more.  
 The indictment further revealed that the criminal act to kill the deceased started on 19 July 2021 when the defendant and the deceased were involved into bitter confusion that resulted into a



Weah's head with an ax on 4 August 2021 in the New Kru Town community on Bushrod Island under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of human life. Following the accident, investigators say defendant Weah ran away for three weeks, but he was later arrested in Grand Gedeh County, southeast Liberia,

dignity of the Republic of Liberia. The trial jurors have found the accused guilty of the crime of murder. Following the jury's verdict, the mother of 19 years old Shadrack George Weah expressed overwhelming joy and happiness over the justice system of Liberia for granting her justice in the murder case.  
 Speaking in an interview with judicial reporters after the

fist fight. According to Madam Karpeh, before coming to the court for the case, she has been hearing a lot of negative information even from the defendants family that nothing would have come out of the case.  
 She claimed that the defendant's family had vowed to make sure that their son is prevented from going to jail.

# Hippo FC down Shaita Angels 3-1

*By Naneka Hoffman*

Hippo FC have crushed Shaita Angels 3-1 at the Nancy B. Doe Sports Stadium in Kakata, Margibi County, earning them three points.  
 The Hippopotamus Girls' three points have enabled them to sit 5th place on the orange women's league table, thanks to Tonia Freeman's brace coupled with Priscilla Harris's goal that earned them the victory.  
 In total, the team has played 12 games with one pending, bagging 17 points at 5th place in the women's league.

remain in 8th place from 13 matches in the ongoing orange women's league, while DC Shooters FC are in 9th place from 13 games.  
 Meanwhile, at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Practice Pitch in Paynesville, Determined Girls FC dumped World Girls FC 6-2 to collected all three points.  
 Determined Girls FC maintain their first-place spot on the table with 39 points from 13 games.  
 Bountou Sylla, who is the top scorer and hat trick giant in the LFA/Orange women's league increased her goals to 41, while



At the same time City Football Academy have defeated Soccer Ambassadors 3-1 to continue their win in the ongoing orange women's league, as Mabinty Camara, Boh Saran Kourouma and Soccer Ambassadors' own goal that gave the City Girls all three points at Tusa Field in Gardnersville. City Football Academy sits third place on the log with 28 points from 13 matches. Still at Tusa Field in Barnesville Earth Angels FC flogged Blanco FC 2-0.  
 A goal from Melissa Gebah and Adamasay Sesay were enough to give the Angels hope to move 8th place in the relegation zone.  
 The Angels and DC Shooters have 9 points. Earth Angels

Paulinho Agbotsu got a brace as well to complete the club's victory over the weekend.  
 Somewhere outside Montserrado County at the George Weah Technical Center Ambassador FC settled to a goalless draw with DC Shooters.  
 Ambassador FC sits second place at the top of the table with 28 points from 12 games with an outstanding game.  
 To climax the weekend, World Girls FC remain in fourth place on the log with 24 points from 13 games, while Shiatta Angels FC are at the bottom of the league with 3 points from 13 games. And Soccer Ambassador sits 6th place with 16 points from 13 games. Meanwhile, Blanco FC sit 7th place in the league with 10 points from 13 matches.

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# Français

## Élection sénatoriale partielle : la NEC présente un budget de 1,9 million

La Commission électorale nationale (NEC) a soumis un budget de près de deux millions (1. 934, 720. 80) à l'Assemblée législative nationale pour l'organisation de l'élection partielle de Lofa.

Ce budget fait suite à l'information que la NEC a reçue du sénat comme quoi l'un des sièges du comté de Lofa est vacant.

Le siège a été déclaré vacant par le Sénat après que son vainqueur aux élections du 8 décembre 2020, l'ancien ministre de la Défense Brownie Samukai, s'est vu refuser de siéger en raison de batailles juridiques.

Il fut condamné le 24 mars 2020 pour avoir détourné environ 1, 15 millions de dollars US, un fonds pour la pension des soldats. Le détournement aurait eu lieu quand il était ministre de la Défense de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.

Le 27 janvier 2022, la Cour suprême du Libéria a révoqué la suspension de la peine de

deux ans d'emprisonnement du sénateur élu du comté de Lofa, Samukai, et de ses deux adjoints, pour n'avoir pas, dit-on, respecté collectivement l'injonction de la Cour suprême, qui consistait à payer la moitié de la somme détournée, soit un montant de 573 828 dollars américains, dans un délai de six mois.

Samukai, et ses deux

adjoints, Joseph Johnson et James Nyuman Ndokor ont été jugés et reconnus coupables de vol de biens, association de malfaiteurs, détournement de deniers publics et blanchiment d'argent.

L'argent en question provenait des fonds de pension des soldats. Il a été utilisé par l'ancien ministre

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## Le Solliciteur General du Libéria se dit victime de diffamations et de dénigrements

Solliciteur général du Libéria Me Saymah Syrenius Cephass s'est plaint verbalement devant le tribunal d'être l'objet présumé d'insultes et de toutes formes de déclarations dégradantes de la part de Me Lafayette Gould, un avocat rival représentant le chef de l'opposition et leader politique du Congrès national

alternatif (ANC), Alexander B. Cummings, dans un procès pénal.

Lors des auditions du procès au cours du week-end, Me Cephass a pris un certain temps pour se plaindre au magistrat du tribunal de la ville de Monrovia, Jomah Jallah, qu'il avait fait l'objet d'insultes et de toutes formes de déclarations dégradantes de la part Me Gould pour avoir demandé au tribunal

de déclarer M. Cummings un témoin hostile.

Me Cephass a en outre affirmé qu'il avait été aussi accusé par Me Gould de chercher à remplacer Me Frank Musa Dean en tant que ministre de la Justice du Libéria.

« Premièrement, désigner le témoin comme hostile n'est pas une raison suffisante pour Me Gould de dire que j'ai besoin et je cherche le poste de ministre de la Justice du Libéria ou un autre poste supérieur », s'est plaint Cephass.

« Je veux attirer votre attention, Votre Honneur, et l'attention de ce tribunal sur la déclaration menaçante, insultante et dégradante faite par Me Gould contre moi. Au cours de mes 20 années de pratique, j'ai appris à travailler avec la police, les tribunaux et des collègues pour réussir », a déclaré Cephass.

Me Cephass a raconté que lorsqu'il a prié le tribunal de déclarer M. Cummings un témoin hostile, Me Gould, au cours d'une audience publique, l'aurait menacé «

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## Éditorial

### Le Président Boakai nous a trop déçus

Aucun Libérien patriote n'aurait jamais pensé que l'ancien vice-président Joseph Nyumah Boakai, capitaine de la Collaboration des Partis politiques (CPP), aurait sauté du bateau pendant que ce dernier traverse des eaux troubles, abandonnant les partisans et les sympathisants de la CPP dans un état de désespoir et de négligence.

Beaucoup ont été choqués par le fait que l'ancien vice-président et porte-drapeau du Parti de l'unité, à peine quatre mois après le début de sa présidence de 2 ans à la tête de la CPP, se retire de la coalition alors qu'on s'attendait à ce qu'il conduise la dite coalition aux prochaines élections.

M. Boakai a cité entre autres, les querelles internes incessantes au sein de la CPP sous sa direction qui, selon lui, ont détourné les quatre partis membres de leurs responsabilités envers le peuple libérien. A cela, il faut ajouter la pression de son propre parti.

Un haut responsable du parti a même fait part de son opposition à son geste. L'ancien sénateur John Ballout a décrit la décision de son porte-drapeau comme une erreur émotionnelle et espère que le président Boakai pourra revenir sur sa décision et réunir la Collaboration.

M. Ballout estime que les arguments présentés par son porte-drapeau contredisent clairement les efforts qui visent à unir la CPP, et que M. Boakai n'a fait que cataloguer une pléthore de problèmes mais, il n'a pas apporté de solutions. Alors, où ce leadership que le leader politique de l'UP veut si désespérément proposer au pays doit-il être testé, s'il est incapable de conduire quatre partis aux élections ?

La sortie de Boakai de la Collaboration a livré la CPP aux mains du parti au pouvoir avant même que la bataille politique ne puisse commencer en 2023.

Un général qui ne parvient pas à mobiliser ses troupes et à prendre en charge ses hommes ne peut pas diriger convenablement. On ne doit par conséquent lui confier la magistrature suprême de l'État.

Dans un premier temps, les dirigeants de la CPP étaient convaincus qu'affronter le président sortant George Manneh Weah aux urnes à 2023 en rangs dispersés serait une peine perdue d'autant plus qu'il serait quasi impossible d'avoir les résultats souhaités, d'où la nécessité de s'unir en un formidable bloc d'opposition.

Maintenant, le président Boakai a jeté la baignoire avec le bébé, tout en dispersant et affaiblissant les partis d'opposition qui doivent pourtant mener une lutte acharnée contre le président Weah, tout en faisant croire aux Libériens qu'il y a encore de l'espoir. Mais comme l'ancien sénateur Ballout, nous aussi ne sommes pas d'accord. L'opposition dispersée ne peut pas donner d'espoir.

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# Français

## Élection sénatoriale partielle : la NEC

sans le consentement des militaires.

Mais, le président Weah a suspendu la peine de deux ans de prison de Samukai et a ordonné au ministère des Finances de restructurer le paiement du montant quelques jours après que le Sénat a déclaré le siège du Lofa vacant.

Dans une déclaration publiée par la NEC le vendredi 25 février, la Commission a également présenté l'organigramme de l'organisation de l'élection sénatoriale partielle dans le comté de Lofa. Le jour du scrutin est fixé au 10 mai 2022.

La Commission a fait savoir qu'elle agit à la suite de la notification du Sénat qui fait état d'une vacance au sein de l'institution. Cela est conforme à l'article 37 qui stipule « qu'en cas de

vacance à l'Assemblée législative, causée par un décès, une démission, une expulsion ou autre, le président doit, dans les 30 jours, en aviser la Commission électorale nationale. La Commission électorale nationale doit, au plus tard 90 jours après, organiser une élection partielle. Cependant, si une telle vacance survient dans les 90 jours précédant la tenue d'élections générales, la vacance doit être comblée lors de ces élections générales ».

Entre-temps, un comité directeur pour l'élection partielle sénatoriale de Lofa a été mis en place pour coordonner les activités de cette élection partielle.

La commissaire Ernestine Morgan Awar est chargée de diriger le comité directeur de l'élection partielle sénatoriale de Lofa, à en croire le communiqué de la Commission Electorale Nationale.

## Le Solliciteur General du Libéria se dit

d'exposer ses fesses », une manière libérienne de menacer d'exposer les actes malicieux de quelqu'un.

Le solliciteur général a indiqué que l'avocat Gould a en outre déclaré qu'il entrerait dans l'histoire du Libéria comme le pire Solliciteur General que ce pays n'ait jamais eu.

Il a déploré le fait que Gould a affirmé que lui Cephass a combattu le premier solliciteur général (nommé par le président George Manneh Weah) et pris son poste, tout en jurant qu'il n'obtiendrait jamais le poste de ministre de la Justice pour lequel il se battrait prétendument.

« Aujourd'hui, je suis contre lui mais demain nous pourrions être du même côté, donc, s'il vous plaît, conseillez-lui de s'abstenir de faire de telles déclarations infondées contre moi », a plaidé Me Cephass.

Interrogé par le magistrat Jomah Jallah concernant l'allégation, Me Gould a répondu qu'il avait un grand respect pour Me Céphass et qu'à aucun moment il n'a fait une telle déclaration contre lui, et qu'il ne le fera jamais parce qu'ils ont parcouru tous deux un long chemin ensemble pour en arriver là.

Cependant, conseillant les deux avocats, le magistrat Jallah leur a demandé de s'abstenir de faire de telles déclarations les uns contre les autres parce qu'ils sont tous membres de la société

de la robe noire.

Le magistrat Jallah a exhorté les avocats à exclure l'émotion de leur travail en tant qu'avocats car après les procès, ils se réunissent en tant que membres du barreau et auront toujours la possibilité de servir un jour du même côté.

Me Cephass représente le gouvernement du Libéria tandis que Gould représente Cummings dans le procès en cours où le chef de l'opposition fait face à des accusations criminelles de faux et de complot criminel devant le tribunal municipal de Monrovia.

Cummings est accusé par son collègue M. Benoni Urey du All Liberian Party (ALP) d'avoir altéré l'accord-cadre de la Collaboration des partis politiques et adjoint criminellement sa signature à une version photocopiée.

Cummings nie tout acte répréhensible et a également contesté l'affirmation des procureurs selon laquelle il existe un accord-cadre original de la CPP autre que ce que ses accusateurs prétendent être une version photocopiée. Il les a plutôt mis au défi de produire l'original.

Mais lorsque le président de l'opposition All Liberian Party, M. Theodore Momo, a témoigné dans l'affaire la semaine dernière, il a allégué que la version originale de l'accord-cadre de la CPP que réclame l'accusation existait bel et bien.

Momo a affirmé que chacun des quatre chefs des partis membres de la CPP et la Commission électorale nationale (NEC) en avaient une copie.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Melvyn B. Krauss

## La BCE et le retour à l'orthodoxie monétaire

**S**TANFORD - En décembre, les principales banques centrales ont annoncé qu'elles allaient mettre fin au relâchement monétaire. Mais il y a une exception, la BCE (Banque centrale européenne) qui n'envisage pas d'augmenter les taux d'intérêt en 2022, et ceci malgré le risque inflationniste.

Par contre la Fed (la Réserve fédérale américaine) prévoit de relever son taux directeur à trois reprises cette année, tandis que la Banque d'Angleterre a déjà augmenté son principal taux directeur de 15 points de base. Par ailleurs, pour rester fidèle à sa promesse de ne pas augmenter ses taux avant d'avoir redressé son bilan, la Fed va accélérer la réduction progressive de ses achats d'actifs.

Pour autant, la BCE est-elle laxiste face à l'inflation et joue-t-elle le rôle de la colombe parmi les principales banques centrales du monde ? Le plus grand tabloïd allemand, Bild, a-t-il raison de se moquer de Christine Lagarde, la présidente de la BCE, en la surnommant "Madame Inflation" ?

Non, trois fois non ! Bild reflète l'opinion allemande traditionnelle selon laquelle la BCE doit se préoccuper quasi exclusivement de l'inflation, mais ce point de vue est totalement dépassé dans l'Europe de 2022.

Lagarde sait que l'arrêt des mesures de relance monétaire après une crise est une opération délicate. Faisant grimper le coût du crédit et étouffant la reprise des pays membres surendettés comme l'Italie, l'Espagne et la Grèce, une hausse trop rapide des taux d'intérêt pourrait entraîner l'éclatement de la zone euro. Les économistes parlent de "risque de fragmentation". Cette fragmentation est un problème chronique pour la zone euro, car contrairement à la Fed et à la Banque d'Angleterre qui sont toutes deux soutenues par une autorité budgétaire unique, la BCE fonctionne avec 19 autorités budgétaires indépendantes.

C'est peut-être ce à quoi pensait Lagarde lors de sa conférence de presse de décembre, quand elle a expliqué qu'il fallait avancer graduellement vers une politique monétaire plus resserrée pour éviter une "transition brutale". Il n'est pas surprenant que cette déclaration ait provoqué une réponse glaciale du président sortant de la Bundesbank, Jens Weidmann, un partisan résolu de l'orthodoxie budgétaire. Le nouveau ministre allemand des Finances, Christian Lindner, penche dans le même sens. Il estime que la sensibilité de la BCE au coût des prêts aux pays membres surendettés pourrait la conduire à une lenteur excessive pour mettre fin aux mesures de relance.

D'une certaine manière Lindner a raison. Lagarde n'est pas pressée de resserrer la politique monétaire, car elle tient à préserver l'intégrité de l'union monétaire lors de la réduction des mesures de relance. Comme un médecin consciencieux, elle ne veut pas précipiter le sevrage d'un toxicomane accroché à un produit fortement addictif. Il ne faut pas s'y tromper, les mesures de relance de la BCE ont eu un effet majeur sur l'économie - au point qu'elle en est devenue dépendante.

Toujours avisée sur le plan politique, Lagarde sait que l'opinion publique ne régirait pas favorablement à une politique monétaire qui menace de fracturer la zone euro alors qu'elle a créé un fonds de relance de 750 milliards d'euros pour maintenir sa cohésion. Un arrêt trop brutal de la politique de relâchement monétaire serait dangereux tant sur le plan économique que politique.

La plus grande fragmentation vient aujourd'hui de l'Italie, avec ses 2600 milliards d'euros de dette publique et une longue histoire d'instabilité politique. Cette situation appelle à la plus grande prudence. Jusqu'à présent les investisseurs semblent satisfaits du leadership de Mario Draghi, le Premier ministre italien. Mais ils craignent un retour de l'instabilité politique si ce dernier démissionne pour viser la présidence (essentiellement une fonction de représentation) après le départ imminent de Sergio Mattarella, le président actuel.

Les marchés financiers ont déjà tremblé à l'issue de la conférence de presse de fin d'année de Draghi en décembre, quand il a laissé entendre qu'il pourrait démissionner prochainement. Pourtant les investisseurs ne devraient pas s'inquiéter, car il est peu probable que Draghi devienne le prochain président italien. Sa petite phrase était sans doute une tactique pour faire face à deux des plus grands syndicats italiens, la Confédération générale du travail (CGIL) et l'Union italienne du travail (UIL) qui appellent à une grève générale qui devrait avoir lieu quelques jours avant le vote d'une loi budgétaire cruciale par le Parlement. Politicien malin, l'ancien président de la BCE sait que parfois il n'y a rien de mieux que menacer de démissionner pour parvenir à ses fins.

Le risque de fragmentation de la zone euro sera beaucoup plus facile à gérer pour Lagarde si son prédécesseur à la tête de la BCE reste à son poste jusqu'au terme de son mandat en 2023. A mon avis c'est ce qu'il va faire. Des pressions supplémentaires de Bruxelles et de Berlin en ce sens pourraient inciter Draghi à rester à son poste - et permettre à l'Europe de rester sur la trajectoire du redressement.



Starts from page 6

# Lecturers go slow

including housing allowances for faculty members, better offices for teachers, improved laboratories and faculty development program, among others.

Mr. Fukah points out that many of them have spent more than 10 years of their youthful lives, working at the University and are now aging with little or no prospect for a graceful or dignified retirement in sight.

"We get sick with limited options for advanced medical care but thank God for J.J. Dossen Hospital and PIH - otherwise, only God knows how many of us would still be standing here today", he says.

"Coming here to teach is a great sacrifice. You deny yourself the relative luxury of the city, family time, recreation, advanced medical care. And if you do have kids, options for early childhood educational facilities are very few. We deserve better!"

He discloses that Dr. Wreh-Wilson had used the library, and most recently the classroom as prison which violates the University's handbook.

He continues that a trained accountant was few months ago transferred to the classroom after his audit reports showed that one of the vice presidents of the university had stolen more than one million Liberian Dollars from the university bus fund.

"Recently, this president unilaterally transferred a Bachelor Degree holder to the classroom and assigned the person in question the rank of an Assistant Professor. What university president does that?" The TUFU President asks. He says despite communication(s) from government, instructing TU to effect 3%, 5%, 7.5% and 10% deductions respectively from employees' salaries during the salary harmonization exercise, there are still disparities across divisions and "we request the matrix used in harmonizing salaries of employees in order to understand before and after salaries as affected by harmonization."

Meanwhile, TUFU is among others, demanding salary increment for its members to reflect current economic realities especially, in that part of the country; adjustment of employment from contractual basis to full employment after probational period, retribute of deductions made from employees' salaries for a forced insurance program (Saar Insurance) and cease the transfer of administrative/support staff to the classroom as a punitive measure. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

release.

Mr. Fukah continues that the administration of Dr. Wreh-Wilson has allegedly denied the faculty privileges ascribed to them and rather, constantly rant insults and disrespect them both in public and private.

He alleges that Dr. Wreh-Wilson and his cabinet apportion unto themselves moneys that could otherwise be used for the betterment of the entire university.

According to him, besides his salary, Dr. Wreh-Wilson pays himself and members of his cabinet an annual research allowance totaling US\$97,200.

Mr. Fukah questions what such of research are they doing and discloses that one of the beneficiaries of the research allowance has admitting to using portion of his allowance to give "Tips" and to also provide lunch for the people he meets in offices in Monrovia.

He laments that currently, a computer class of 31 students has only six computers in the classroom, noting that such huge amount of Ninety-seven thousand, two hundred United States dollars could go towards buying more computers to boost the computer science program at the university,

# In The Mbayo's Trial: investigator denies going on the crime scene

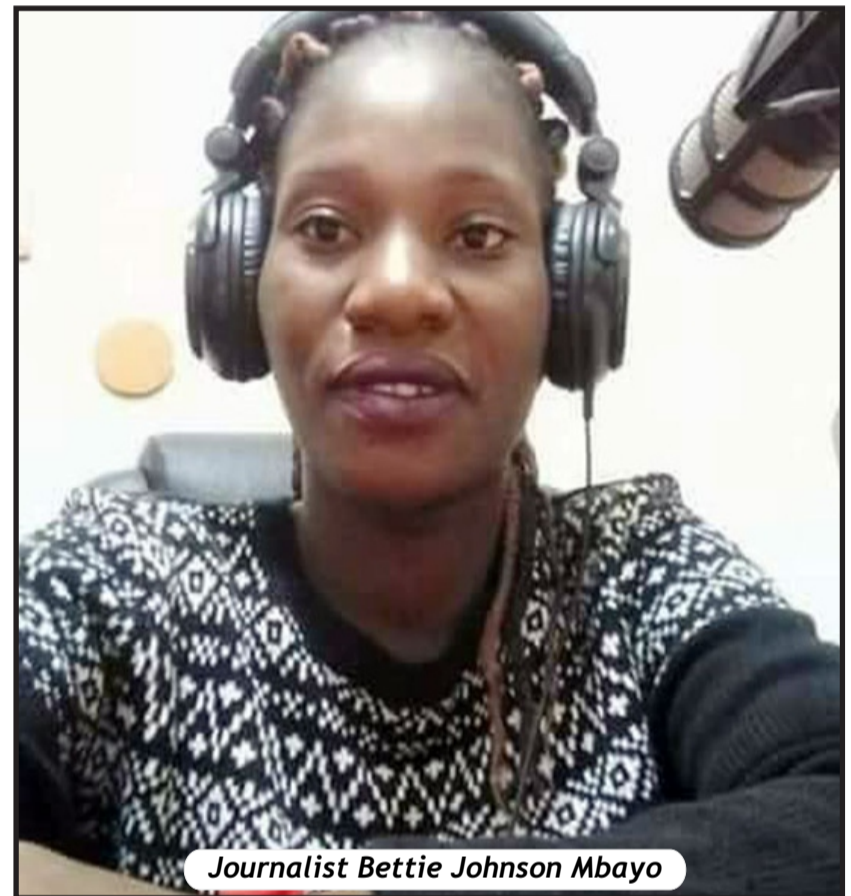
The Administrative Officer of the Zone Five Base in Joe Bar says he did not visit the scene of the incident, but yet charged journalist Bettie Johnson Mbayo, her husband Dr. Moses Mbayo and a relative with Felonious Restrain, Disorderly Conduct and Terroristic Threats.

He was subpoena by the Paynesville magisterial court on February 24, 2022 due to a plea made by the prosecution team to appear and testified to

charged the defendants with the above crimes.

According to him, the defendants were charged with terroristic threat because one of the defendants in person of Johnson Kerkukah admitted removing his waist belt during the incident, but said it was not intended for the lawmaker, but because same being a deadly weapon possess threat to Representative Melvin Cole.

On the crime of felonious restrain, he said it was established that the defendants vehicle was



Journalist Bettie Johnson Mbayo

Starts from page 6

# Coach Robert Lartey flies

Kwado FC suffered another defeat at the hands of LISCR FC in Sanniquellie, Nimba County. The defeat is the club's fourth of the season.

Kwado that lost to Oilers in their previous game suffered another 1-0 home defeat to the shipping boys.

Striker Sam Jackson's 55th-minute spot kick gave the shipping boys all three points.

LISCR sit third on the log with 26 points, while Nimba Kwado FC are in 4th place with 23 points.

Mighty Barrolle FC continue their winning adventure since the ascendancy of Matthew Julutweh as head coach.

The Rollers won their last three league games straight in row, increasing their tally to 20 points.

Barrolle remain at seventh spot on the log, while Heaven Eleven dropped at the bottom of the league log with 11 points.

Sandi FC got a little bit of relief from being elevated from relegation zone after they won Monrovia Club Breweries 2-

1.Thanks to Aaron Hali and Emmanuel Kaplee for scoring the club two goals.

Invincible Eleven came from a two-goal headache and settled to a two-all draw with Bea Mountain FC.

The Sun Shines Yellow boys did a good fight to collect a point that pushed them second to bottom on the log.

I.E., have 11 points and sit 11th place, while Bea Mountain FC are still stationed at 6th place with 22 points

the multiple offenses as contained in his charge against the defendants.

But taking the stand during the last trial on Friday, he struggle to justified how he derived at charging the defendants with the crimes of felonious restrain, disorderly conduct and terroristic threat when in fact he did not visited the scene during the day of the incident.

"I did not go on the scene. I was called by inspector Flomo that night that there were distributes in the Harmon Field Community and that Representative Marvin Cole had called, but we all did not go on the scene," he told the court when cross-examined by the defendants counsels.

According to him, he only get to know about the case at the level of the police station after he had been called by a junior officer (Inspector Flomo) who arrested the case.

"I only get to know about the case when both the complainant and the defendants appear before me at the police station."

With this, the defendants counsels believes that the officer acted on 'hear say' and what he was told hance, he

parked in the drive way right in front the fence of Cole, restraining his movement and depriving him of his privacy.

Of the six persons statement taken, he also told the court that only four persons were charged while the other two to include Cole's wife and security were release as they only arrived on the scene after the incident.

At the same time, Press union of Liberia Vice President Daniel Nyakonah says the police officer is not a credible witness to because he did not appear on the scene of crime to gather information to correspond with the arresting officer.

Nyakonah further that the zone five head officer discharged the initial officer who investigated the case and analyze to the point of making conclusion that the lawmaker was never assaulted evidence by his clean white shirt.

"Being so conflicted at that point discredit him from making independent analysis as a police officer in this matter," PUL Executive says.

He further: "in the absence of making independent analysis I think he was just purchased by the lawmaker to come and provide wrong explanation."



# Eat money, wear T-shirts But...

By Lewis S Teh

The leader of the opposition Alternative National Congress (ANC) Mr. Alexander B Cummings tells scores of first-time voters here to eat any money that will be dashed around by the ruling government or any other politician, but vote the right candidate that will change the country.

"Ehn your know elections coming; the government and other people will bring money, and T-shirts but I tell y'all to eat their Money, wear their T-shirts and vote the right people that will change this country", he says.

Speaking over the

elections.

Mr. Cummings, who faces criminal charges in court along with two of his party executives for allegedly tempering with framework document of the now disintegrated CPP, notes that the Judicial System of Liberia needs to be improved, pointing that prosecution of rape and sexual violence cases need to be improved, observing "Our legal system lacks the capacity to do it."

He has denied the charges brought against him by the leader of the All Liberian Party businessman Benoni W. Urey.

He says shame is on Liberian men for engaging in rape and violence, noting that statistics across the country shows these are things that need to be changed. "I promise with your support and when I get to serve

Cummings explains that under said program, his government will make sure young people and women are properly catered for, noting that women are the foundation of the country but to achieve such a dream depends on how Liberians will cast their ballots.

The ANC leader is demonstrating an unwavering quest to rally supporters across Liberia, despite being tied up in a legal proceeding, which many of his supporters and sympathizers is politically motivated, intended to keep him off-track from his political goal.

Cummings seems to be more vigored on what he calls his mission to create a real change in Liberia, following his recent trip to western Liberia precisely, Bomi and Grand Cape Mount counties where he visited towns

# 3 versions of CPP document out



By Lincoln G. Peters

Opposition All Liberian Party (ALP) Chairman Mr. Theodore Momo says there exists three versions of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) framework document that are currently in circulation in the public.

Mr. Momo has been on the witness stand on the side of the prosecution team since last week in the trial of the opposition Alternative National Congress (ANC) political leader Alexander B. Cummings who faces charges of forgery and criminal facilitation.

He reaffirmed Monday, 28 February 2022 that there exists the original copies of the CPP framework agreement which are being requested by prosecutors, claiming that the defendant, Mr. Cummings and other CPP political leaders have copies.

During the hearing, prosecutors presented documents to Mr. Momo and he identified them to be the three versions of the CPP document he had mentioned.

He testified that the first document is the amended CPP framework document dated April 23, 2020 which was reviewed by the teams of lawyers with recommendation to the Executive Committee for action.

The next document he testified to and confirmed was the document bearing the notarized certificate of July 14, 2020 with caption CPP Framework May 19, 2020 with the parties' logos appearing at the bottom, saying it was the document that was filed with the National Elections Commission by Mr. Alexander Cummings and others.

Chairman Momo added that the document was never approved, validated and was never accepted by the parties when it was filed with the NEC by Mr. Cummings and his team.

He said the original of those documents notarized on July 14, 2020 was never served to any of the parties before and after filing and is currently still with Mr. Cummings and his co-defendants.

According to him, a document captioned: "CPP Framework Document," is the last document that is in circulation in the public.

"The document with the parties' logos placed in the upper part of the front page captioned: "CPP Framework Document" is the last document which makes the version three," he said.

ALP chairman explained that since the lawyers presented the amended copies to former CPP Chairman Cummings, to the best of his knowledge, they had no contact or engagement with the document.

He further indicated that the amended document which also forms part of the CPP investigative report and finding was referred to the lawyers for advice.

Momo indicated that the lawyers through Cllr. Benedict Sarnnoh wrote in response to a letter to Senator Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence, former chair of the CPP, indicating that as of the date and time of the presentation of the report, they have had no acquaintance, engagement, and contact with the amended document since it was presented to Cummings.

"The ALP, UP and LP learn that a framework document



weekend in the township of Caldwell on Bushord Island when he met with scores of first-time voters in a rally, Mr. Cummings continued, "All of you first-time voters, if you don't vote these people out, your suffering will continue; if you must change your life, you need to register and vote."

He vows to work with the young people, promising "We will not let you down, and we will not disappoint you as long you willingly decide to support us."

This is the ANC leader's first public engagement with first time voters ahead of the 2023

you, we will change them."

He says it's unfortunate that Liberia is endowed with so much natural resources such as diamond and gold, yet its people are still struggling in adject poverty.

"We are determined to work with the Liberian people particularly the young people, who make about 65 percent of the country's population", he further vows.

Cummings says all of his advocacy is to benefit the youthful population, saying "All of the people who're fighting us, are fighting you."

However, he says an ANC government under his presidency will establish a national youth service program to engage young people.

and villages in Sewn Mecca District, Bomi County, Bea Mountain in Kinjor.

During his visit, Cummings said there is no reason why Liberia should remain the same years after years, adding that the country can only change around when government manages the resources well.

"I pray that we as a country can get pave roads, good schools and our people can eat three meals a day. But this can work, if people who lead cannot put money from our resources in their pocket, that is why we need a new kind of leader who can make this work," he says, further calling for change of leadership in Liberia.

*Editing by Jonathan Browne*



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## Coach Robert Larthey flies Watanga FC high



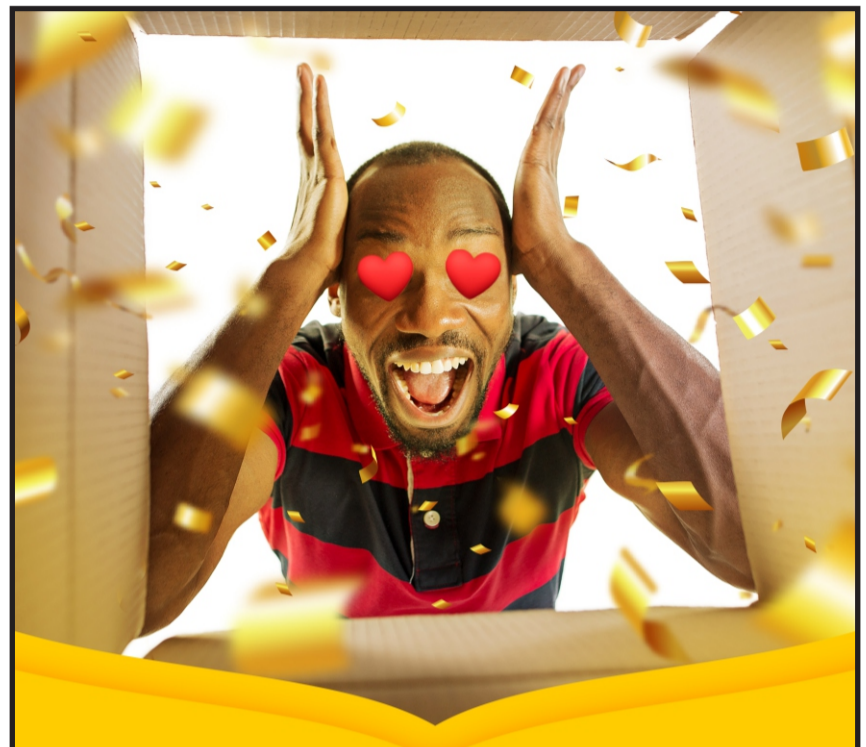
By Naneka Hoffman

Watanga FC Coach Robert Larthey leads his club to winning spree here with a 1-0 victory against LPRC Oilers. The win has led Watanga to mount pressure

on the league leader Freeport FC. Coach Larthey's boys defeated reigning league champions LPRC Oilers 1-0 with Striker Chauncy Freeman scoring the club's lone goal in the first half.

The win is Watanga FC's eighth of the season as they maintain their second-place position with 27 points from 15 league games. Oilers remain in fifth-place on the log with 23 points from the same number of games. Meanwhile, the Freeport boys still maintain their three-point gap on the league log. They continue to maintain their lead atop of the log with seven more games left to end the season. The 'go green boys' whipped Nimba United 3-1 in matchday 15 of the league to maintain their three-point gap on the log. Freeport FC sit atop with 30 points, three points above second-place Watanga FC. As for Nimba United, they sit in 9th place with 16 points on the log. At the same time Nimba

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



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