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CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA		
MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR		
DATE	BUYING	SELLING
THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2022	L\$151.4247/US\$1.00	L\$153.1266/US\$1.00

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

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# Continental News

## Durban floods: South Africa floods kill more than 250

The death toll in the South African province of KwaZulu-Natal has reached more than 250, after devastating floods wreaked havoc in the area. Local authorities are calling for a state of disaster to be declared, after some areas saw months worth of rain fall in one day. Officials have called it "one of the worst weather

storms in the history of our country". Mudslides have trapped people under buildings, with more floods expected. There are reports that the rescue effort is being hampered by poor visibility as a helicopter continues to bring people back to safety. On Tuesday the BBC witnessed one such search operation for a 10-year-old girl who was part of a family of four swept away on a flooded bridge. Community volunteers waded into the muddy river, taking turns to hack away at the branches using machetes and removing debris and rubbish that had washed downstream. Jomba Phiri, who lives in the region's main city, Durban, said his house had been swept away in the floods. "I don't know where we're going to sleep now," he told Reuters news agency. Parts of the crucial N3 highway which connects Durban to the economic heartland of Gauteng province have been blocked. President Cyril Ramaphosa has visited the area and pledged to help. "Even though your hearts are in pain, we're here for you," the Reuters news agency quotes him as saying. He also described the disaster as a force of nature, which some have disagreed with. They blame poor drainage and badly built houses in low-lying areas for the high death toll. Durban Mayor Mxolisi Kaunda denied that poor drainage was to blame, saying the scale of the

flood was unexpected. Scenes of destruction are still evident throughout the area. Some of the roads to the port of Durban are impassable after the swollen river washed mud and debris onto the roads. Operations at the port have now been suspended. A shipping container warehouse near a busy highway was severely flooded, and hundreds of containers were washed away. In an industrial area called the Bluff, which forms part of the port, the BBC witnessed cars overturned on the road, or crushed by debris. Companies are using water pumps to drain the water from their premises. There is also a hunt for crocodiles that were washed away during the floods. Crocodile Creek Farm, about 40km (25 miles) north of Durban in Tongaat, says 12 crocodiles were swept away after torrential rain hit the area. Ron Naidoo, a community pastor in the town of Tongaat, told the BBC he had been kept awake through the night by the rising floodwaters and had seen police drag a car out of the river with a body inside. BBC



Many Durban streets remain underwater

## East African Oil Pipeline Hits the Headwinds

Climate activists are urging more banks and insurers not to back the controversial \$5 billion East African Crude Oil Pipeline that is primed to transport oil from the Hoima oilfields in Uganda to the Tanzanian coastal city of Tanga. Influential climate activists Vanessa Nakate and Hilda Nakabuye have lent their support to opponents of the pipeline citing the need for Africa to stay away from fossil fuels. The unrelenting pressure mounted by environmental groups, under the banner #StopEACOP, has led to a growing list of banks and insurers quitting the oil pipeline project. Just this week the project suffered another major setback after insurer Allianz Group pulled out of the project. It joins 15 banks and seven insurance companies – including HSBC, BNP Paribas and Swiss Re – who have denied financially backing the pipeline in response to the campaign waged by numerous

environmental organizations, led by the international group 350.org. The 897-mile (1,443 kilometer) oil pipeline is billed as the longest heated pipeline in the world. The China National Oil Corporation and French energy conglomerate TotalEnergies, alongside the Uganda National Oil Company and the Tanzania Petroleum Development Cooperation, have remained firm in pushing ahead with the pipeline project which is expected to start transporting oil in 2025. Johnson Nderi a financial analyst in Nairobi supports the oil pipeline, saying "Africa needs cheap stable power as that afforded by oil and coal, to grow its manufacturing sector." Construction of the pipeline will displace thousands of families and threaten water resources in the Lake Victoria and River Nile basins, according to



Leah Namugerwa (L) and Hilda Flavia Nakabuye coordinator of 'Fridays for Future' lead Ugandan students

## Swiss to Unfreeze \$430M as Egypt Money Laundering Probe Ends



Alaa Mubarak, son of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, attends the Christmas Eve Mass at the Coptic cathedral in Cairo. Swiss prosecutors will not file any charges after concluding a decade-long investigation into alleged money laundering and organized crime linked to late former President Hosni Mubarak's circles in Egypt, and will release some 400 million Swiss francs (\$430 million) frozen in Swiss banks. The office of the Swiss attorney general said Wednesday that information received as part of cooperation with Egyptian authorities wasn't sufficient to back up the claims that emerged in the wake of Arab Spring uprisings in 2011 that felled Mubarak's three-decade rule. A Swiss investigation into claims that banks in Switzerland were used to squirrel away ill-gotten funds had originally targeted 14 people, including Mubarak's two sons, as well as dozens of other individuals and entities that had assets totaling some 600 million francs frozen. More than 210 million francs were already released in an earlier phase of the case, which also could not substantiate the allegations, and Wednesday's announcement means about 400 million more will be "released and returned to their beneficial owners," the attorney-general's office said. VOA

350.org. The environmental group goes on to say that the crude pipeline will generate some 37 million tons (34 million metric tonnes) of carbon dioxide emissions annually, fueling climate change. "TotalEnergies is putting profits over people and it shows. Communities in Uganda and Tanzania have been fighting tirelessly

against the planned pipeline and the trail of destruction it is already leaving in its wake," Omar Elmawi, the coordinator of the #StopEACOP campaign, said. "At a time when scientists call for the phasing out of fossil fuel projects, to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, it is ill-advised and irresponsible to go ahead with this project, while ignoring the cries of those most affected." VOA



# EDITORIAL

## National Aids Commission lied on the media

A GLOBAL FUND Investigative Report debunks claim by the Program Manager for the National Aids Control Program at the Ministry of Health that four payments totaling US\$23,285 were made to the Liberian media for radio advertisement, public relations and events in February 2019.

GLOBAL FUND ESTABLISHES that all four payments exhibit evidence of fraudulent practices, including conflict of interest, as shareholder also served as Director of Communications at the Ministry of Health.

IT NOTES IN March 2020, a MoH Internal Audit review found that awarding the contract constituted a conflict of interest, as there was no Request for Quotations and evidence of a competitive bidding process, noting that only two contained quotations from other bidders, which were dated after contract was signed with entities that did not physically exist.

THE FINDINGS ARE just a tip of the iceberg of how institutions here, both public and private siphon funds budgeted for media activities, subjecting media houses and the Liberian press generally to poverty thus, forcing them out of business.

PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS, NGOS, government ministries and agencies annually budget funds for publicity activities that never reach the media, but they give performance reports that said monies were expended on the media.

DIVERTING AND MISAPPROPRIATING media funds is tantamount to suffocating the Liberian media to death, which is pure wickedness. Yet these same entities expect the media to cover their publicity-seeking programs and activities.

SOME CRUEL INSTITUTIONS even go further by placing advertisements in the media without making payment even after services are provided, leaving struggling media entities in debts and inability to pay taxes, staff, rental and other commitments.

OFTEN, THE MEDIA is referred to as watchdog and Fourth Estate, but treatments meted are deliberately meant to undermine its potency both professionally and financially.

IN THE CASE involving the National Aids Control Program, Global Fund further reveals that additional 19 payments were made purportedly for advertisements

TOTALING US\$32,918 WITHOUT any evidence of scripts or audio files of the radio messages developed, or adverts delivered to radio stations, or aired, noting that such lack of evidence of delivery of services was also noted by MoH internal audit.

THIS IS NOT only criminal, but discourages donors from supporting major development programs that directly benefit ordinary Liberians, particularly critical health issue such as HIV and Aids.

IT IS NOT only saddening, but a big disgrace that both the NACP and the Ministry of Health, that should tread on accountability and transparency in handling donors' funds are caught right-handed in corruption and broad day theft against the media that these institutions rely on to propagate their programs and policies.



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+231-775407211 Managing Editor: Othello B. Garblah; Editor-In-Chief:

# COMMENTARY

By Jayati Ghosh

## Putin's War Is Damaging the Developing World

**N**EW DELHI - It is difficult to see any winners in the ongoing war caused by Russia's irrational and devastating invasion of Ukraine. But the losers extend far beyond the people of Ukraine, who are being attacked, and the people of Russia, who did not choose this war but now must endure an economy being dismantled by trade and financial sanctions. The economic impact of the conflict will be felt around the world, including in many developing countries that are already struggling to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

One immediate concern is the effect of rising oil prices. The price of benchmark Brent crude recently jumped by 20% to more than \$139 per barrel, its highest level since 2008 - probably in response to news that the United States and its European allies were discussing a possible ban on imports of Russian oil, which had so far been exempt from Western sanctions. (On March 8, the US announced a ban on imports of Russian energy products, while the United Kingdom pledged to phase out imports of Russian oil and oil products by the end of 2022.)

But global energy prices had already been soaring, following a period of dramatic volatility during the pandemic. The price of Brent crude, which had fallen to as low as \$9 per barrel in April 2020 at the height of the pandemic's first wave, rose above \$90 per barrel in January 2022. Since then, the Ukraine war has put further upward pressure on oil and gas prices.

Western media have focused on the impact of rising energy prices in Europe, which relies heavily on natural gas imports from Russia. But most of the world's oil and gas importers are much poorer. Many of these countries were unable to mount fiscal responses to the pandemic on the scale of those in the US and other advanced economies, and have since experienced much weaker recoveries in output and employment. This latest oil-price spike is a blow they can ill afford, as it is likely to generate balance-of-payments problems and domestic inflationary pressures that will be tough to combat in the current uncertain context.

Of course, the additional inflationary pressures from the Ukraine war are also complicating the challenge that policymakers in rich Western economies face in tackling rising prices without causing a hard economic landing. Oil is a universal intermediary good, which influences the costs of commodities and services, as well as transport costs, in multiple ways.

Oil-price increases can thus be a significant driver of cost-push inflation even at the best of times. But inflation in rich countries was already at levels they had almost forgotten. Policymakers also appear to consider only the most simplistic weapons against inflation, like raising interest rates and tightening liquidity, which do little to address cost-push pressure and could cause a real economic downturn.

But the challenges are greater still in the

developing world, leaving policymakers with even less wiggle room. The dramatic recent increase in oil prices obviously affects oil-importing countries directly, and will feed into all other prices through rising input and transport costs.

The tragedy playing out in Ukraine is also increasing global food prices, creating even more pain in developing countries where hunger had already increased dramatically during the pandemic. Before the war, Ukraine was the world's fifth-largest wheat exporter, and also a major exporter of barley, corn, rapeseed, and sunflower oil. The prices of these commodities in global trade have risen significantly, adding to recent increases in crop prices generally.

Now there is a further danger: Financial investors who had been betting on speculative asset markets will need to find other places to park their money, and food futures could emerge as a favored destination. In the first five days of March, the price of wheat futures at the Chicago Board of Trade increased by 40%, putting it on track for its largest weekly increase since 1959.

Crop production in developing countries could also be hit by fertilizer shortages. Russia, the world's largest wheat exporter, is also a major fertilizer producer, and disruptions to these exports will push global food prices even higher.

We previously saw parts of this movie in otherwise peaceful times, just before the global financial crisis, and it was a dark and depressing story even then. The food crisis that resulted from financial-market speculation in 2007-08 led to massive increases in hunger and devastated the lives of hundreds of millions of people in developing countries. That crisis occurred even though global supply and demand of food items did not change much. But now, with real reductions in global food supply almost inevitable, the price rises could be greater and longer-lasting. If speculative pressure increases, already fragile economies will be damaged even more.

It may not be surprising that the G7 (whose recent track record as a self-appointed leader of the global economy is hardly distinguished) is not expressing much concern about these real and pressing dangers. But multilateral organizations surely need to step up in this time of crisis, at the very least by providing compensatory financing to help the developing world cope with multiple price shocks, and suggesting and enabling regulations to prevent speculation in essential markets.

Without such efforts, Russia's war against Ukraine will wreak much more damage on the global economy - and poorer countries will be among the hardest hit.

*Jayati Ghosh, Executive Secretary of International Development Economics Associates, is Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a member of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.*



O-PED

By Jayati Ghosh &  
Debamanyu Das

# Hidden Carbon Subsidies Will Destroy Us

**N**EW DELHI - The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change should terrify policymakers and ordinary people around the world. The IPCC warns that some disastrous climate outcomes are now likely to occur not in the distant future, but within the next 15 years, or even the next decade.

But instead of waking up to the threat and responding quickly, policymakers remain focused on Russia's horrific war against Ukraine and its immediate consequences. While this may be understandable, the Ukraine crisis has also exposed the excessively short-term policy orientation of Western governments. Many have quickly reneged on even the relatively meager and obviously inadequate climate pledges they made only a few months ago at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow.

The invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent Western-led sanctions against Russia triggered a dramatic increase in fuel prices, when the energy market was already heating up because of the economic recovery in the United States and Europe. Yet, instead of seeing this price spike as an opportunity to hasten the shift away from fossil fuels, governments in advanced economies have tried to reduce the pain by keeping domestic energy prices low, for short-term political reasons.

US President Joe Biden's administration, after unsuccessfully imploring Saudi Arabia to increase oil production, has promised to release one million barrels a day from the US government's strategic reserves for the next six months. In Europe, which has been hit much harder by the fallout from the war because of its heavy reliance on Russian natural gas, the talk is not just of more nuclear energy but also of reviving coal-based power. Coal is by far the "dirtiest" fossil fuel, and rich countries routinely pillory India and China for using it.

Only those who previously swallowed Western governments' insincere green rhetoric, rather than examining the reality, should be surprised by this turn of events. These governments have been heavily subsidizing their own fossil-fuel industries even as they exhorted much poorer countries to do more to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions. But the full extent of these subsidies has been hidden by the methods used to measure them.

The standard way to measure government support for fossil-fuel production or consumption is to look at direct budgetary transfers and subsidies, as well as tax breaks for the sector. Using this method, the OECD and the International Energy Agency estimate that governments across 52 advanced and emerging economies - accounting for about 90% of global fossil-fuel energy supply - provided fossil-fuel subsidies worth an average of \$555 billion per year from 2017 to 2019.

This support declined to \$345 billion in 2020, mainly because of the collapse in fuel prices and drop in consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic. But, even before the Ukraine war, there were fears that rebounding fuel prices could push up subsidies as the global economy recovered.

Those fears were more than borne out. It turned out that the bleakest estimates massively understated the actual fossil-fuel subsidies that governments provide. In a recent study, the

International Monetary Fund devised a more comprehensive measure that includes both explicit subsidies, or undercharging for supply costs, and implicit subsidies, or undercharging for environmental costs and foregone consumption taxes.

The IMF estimated that global fossil-fuel subsidies in 2020 totaled \$5.9 trillion, more than ten times the OECD-IEA estimate. That is not surprising: Implicit subsidies accounted for 92% of the total.

Under both methodologies, India is a heavy subsidizer of fossil fuels - although lower-income countries can be partly excused, given the high cost of the green-energy transition. But other countries' rankings change in interesting ways when implicit subsidies are considered. Russia was the largest provider of explicit fossil-fuel subsidies, but the US - with an estimated \$662 billion of implicit subsidies in 2020 and nearly \$800 billion in 2021 - extends significantly more subsidies overall. China provided the largest implicit subsidies in 2020, totaling an estimated \$2.2 trillion.

These important numbers highlight the extent to which government intervention is skewing prices, and therefore market incentives, in favor of fossil fuels, rather than against them. While governments were supporting the fossil-fuel industry to the tune of \$5.9 trillion in 2020, the IPCC estimates that global climate finance from both public and private sources totaled only about \$640 billion that year.

Given this huge disparity, no one should be shocked at the fossil-fuel industry's continued resilience. The world is rapidly running out of time to limit global warming to 1.5° Celsius and avert a climate catastrophe. But the global economic system and many governments appear unable to take the threat seriously.

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OPINION

By Diane Coyle

# Is Competition Always Good?

**C**AMBRIDGE - Ask any economist whether competition is always a good thing, and the answer will be a resounding yes. After all, competition powers what the late William Baumol termed the "innovation machine" of the modern market economy.

Through competition, businesses spur each other to increase sales by serving customers better, whether by cutting prices, improving service, or offering innovative products. Innovation has driven the extraordinary improvements in health and quality of life over the past two centuries. And the world will need further creativity to solve pressing challenges such as providing low-carbon energy and transport or developing new vaccines and medicines to tackle the next pandemic or wave of anti-microbial resistance.

Competition is not the only driver of innovation, of course: publicly funded research and government regulation also are essential. But the contest among businesses is how brilliant ideas serving society are diffused at scale. There is ample evidence that strong competition is associated with higher productivity. Less encouragingly, studies also suggest that competition has diminished over time in the United States and other advanced economies.

Yet, among the wider public, "competition" has recently become something of a derogatory term, with some commentators claiming that it has enabled the emergence of dominant players in the digital domain and sectors ranging from food to finance. Adverse consequences include a loss of individual privacy resulting from digital surveillance and rising prices for over-processed foods.

To an economist, this criticism sounds paradoxical: If a market is dominated by a single firm or a small handful of companies, then by definition it is not competitive. So, what explains the newfound aversion to competition among some non-economists?

One likely explanation is that many people take the word "competition" to be a synonym for "business," and regard pro-competition statements as indicating a market-oriented ideological stance. This interpretation runs through *Competition Overdose*, a recent book by the legal scholars Ariel Ezrachi of the University of Oxford and Maurice Stucke of the University of Tennessee. For Ezrachi and Stucke, "competition" means a race to the bottom in terms of safety or quality standards, or price gouging, in the interests of increasing corporate profits.

Such an interpretation has some validity. I recently attended a conference hosted by a right-wing think tank at which a free-market Conservative politician began his speech by saying, "Much as my free-market instincts want me to turn a blind eye to monopolies..." Telling this tale makes my economist colleagues roar with laughter, but it reflects a common disconnect between economics and everyday language.

UK Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries also has the pro-business interpretation of competition in mind when she argues that her controversial proposal to privatize the public-service broadcaster Channel 4 will strengthen its ability to compete against global streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime. In fact, Channel 4 - which is publicly owned but commercially funded - is already competing against them very effectively and is profitable.

For Dorries, competition means boosting another large private-sector media firm that might buy Channel 4, such as Disney. But such a tie-up would reduce competition in supplier markets, such as television advertising and independent production. Privatizing Channel 4 is another example of policymakers favoring big global businesses, enabling them to become even more dominant under the rubric of "competition."

Perhaps economists have simply done a bad job explaining what they mean by competition. But part of the reason for the gap in understanding is highlighted by the proposal to sell Channel 4. When considering a merger or a market with a few dominant players, competition authorities have been reluctant to adjudicate on the basis of business models rather than traditional antitrust criteria such as prices. This stance is becoming untenable.

For example, the winner-take-all nature of digital markets means that dominant firms charging a zero price to consumers can maintain large-scale loss-making operations for many years. This makes it difficult, if not impossible, for start-ups with other business models, such as one based on subscriptions, to grow to sustainable scale.

The same issues arise in the United Kingdom's retail banking sector. All the high-street banks are trapped in a model of charge-free current accounts, which they must cross-subsidize by overcharging for other services such as overdrafts. UK competition regulators have never plucked up the resolve to insist on a different business model, and no single bank dares to diverge from it.

Asimilar monoculture is at the heart of the UK authorities' concerns about price comparison websites, which force all players in markets such as energy and telecoms to offer low headline prices and impose a loyalty penalty on customers who do not switch. Agnosticism about business models results in corporate arms races and competition along a single dimension, and makes economies of scale - a barrier to market entry - essential.

Policymakers must now acknowledge that healthy markets require competition between business models, as well as along traditional dimensions such as price, quality, and innovation. Achieving this will require either more active enforcement or regulatory intervention. Economists such as Kaushik Basu, for example, advocate direct public provision of an alternative business model.

For the past 20 years, competition authorities have presided over increasing concentration in many markets, along with the disappearance of alternative models. Having a public option can help markets to work better and may restore competition's good name.

*Diane Coyle, Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, is the author, most recently, of *Cogs and Monsters: What Economics Is, and What It Should Be* (Princeton University Press, 2021).*



## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

### Regulators review progress of the implementation of the ECOWAS regulation on roaming

The Regulation on Roaming on Public Mobile Communications Networks in the ECOWAS Space was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 16th December 2017 with the aim to reduce the prices paid by ECOWAS citizens for the use of

sector in Member States.

In a bid to assess the progress made in the implementation by mobile operators in the region, focal points from the NRAs, under the coordination of the Regulatory Authority for Telecommunications/ICT of Cote d'Ivoire (ARTCI) held a

establishment of a regional mechanism for addressing fraud within the framework of implementation of the Regulation and the outcomes of tests conducted to verify the tariffs being applied for roaming services.

In his address to the meeting, Dr. Raphael Koffi, Acting Director for Digital



communication services while roaming within the community. Amongst the stakeholders tasked with obligations towards the implementation of the Regulation are the National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) of the Telecommunications/ICT

workshop in Accra, Ghana on 7th and 8th April 2022. Specifically, the workshop aimed to validate the status of tasks assigned by the Director Generals and Presidents of the NRAs, namely, on proposals for the standardisation of roaming tariffs across the region, the

Economy and Post at the ECOWAS Commission, welcomed the focal points to the meeting and congratulated them for the efforts thus far in ensuring the practical application of the

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

### Army Wives Association gets US\$125, 000 vocational complex

The First Lady of Liberia, Madam Clar M. Weah, has made good her promise to the Army Wives Association by dedicating and turning over to the group a Vocational School worth over US\$125, 000.

A press release issued by the Ministry of Defense in Monrovia Wednesday, 13 April 2022 said the construction of the school came as a result of a visit made by the First Lady

in February 2020, following a request from the Army Wives Association.

Speaking at the dedication ceremony held at the Edward Binyah Kesselly Barracks along the Robertsfield Highway, Madam Weah expressed joy in the fulfillment of her promise, stressing that the empowerment of women is a key component of national development.

"Today, I have returned to

fulfill my promise. And, in the fulfillment of this promise, we desire to move our Army Wives from the valley of despair to a buoyancy of new hope," she said.

"Hope that will remind them that they are an integral part of who we are as Liberians and that their support to their spouses, our Men in Arms is much appreciated," she further emphasized.

"Women are the roots of a nation, and when they are empowered, they can spread their roots which help them live independent lives," she said.

According to the Ministry of Defense, the Liberian First Lady admonished the soldier's wives to remain focused and use the facilities for their upliftment and benefits.

The First Lady then pledged an additional Ten Thousand United States Dollars to purchase additional equipment for the school.

Speaking for the Ministry of National Defense, the Deputy Minister for Administration, Tibli Olandrus Dickson, lauded the Liberian First Lady for the



### Minister Ziankahn, Major General Johnson make history

-Inducted into US Army Prestigious International Hall Of Fame



Liberia's Defense Minister, Maj. Gen. Daniel Ziankahn, (Retired), Class of 2011, and Liberia's Army Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Prince Johnson, Class of 2012, were among four senior Military leaders inducted into the CGSC International Hall of Fame (IHOF) at the Lewis and Clark Center, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, on 12 April 2022.

Their inductions came as a result of rising to the top military positions in Liberia.

They were inducted along with Lt. Gen. Martin Wijnen, Commander of the Royal Netherlands Army, Class of 2001; and Lt. Gen. Carlos Alberto Tejada Murcia, Chief of the Joint Staff of the Salvadoran Armed Force, Class of 2005.

Mounting the podium, Liberia's Defense Minister and former Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia, Daniel D. Ziankahn, said "My induction is an honor which I owe to this very institution that has helped made me to be who I am today."

"Surely, I am proud of my CGSC pedigree. I deeply value the learning climate here. For me, the cross-cultural experiences and exposure to the American way of academic and social life will always be treasured."

He became the Liberian

Defense Minister on 22 January 2018. From 11 February 2014- 6 February 2018, he served as Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia.

He has served in all types of appointments available in the Army- Platoon Leader, Executive Officer (XO), Brigade Commander, Military Assistant (MA) to the Minister of National Defense, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations (ACOS J-3); The Chief of Staff, Armed Forces of Liberia and Chairman of the Committee of Chiefs of Defense Staff, ECOWAS.

Ziankahn has a BBA in Business Management from the A.M.E. Zion University College, Liberia, and Master of Military Art and Science (MMAS) from the United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, USA.

He is also a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government (Harvard University), where he acquired Executive Education in Senior Managers in Government and Senior Leaders in National and International Security.

Reminiscing about his time at Leavenworth in 2011-2012, Ziankahn said "I will forever be grateful to the BEST MILITARY IN THE WORLD, the United States

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

gesture, adding that "The wives of the soldiers play a pivotal role in the lives of the soldiers who are usually on a mission."

Deputy Minister Dickson said the construction of the Vocational School will further enhance the capacity of the soldiers' wives, and urged them to make use of the facilities for their personal growth and development.

He said the support the soldiers get from their wives makes them mission-ready, adding that "The soldiers' wives are not beggars, but are entrepreneurs."

In remakes, the President of the Army Wives Association, Josephine Kowo, said the completion of the vocational school was a dream come true

for the soldier's wives, adding that the school will help in making them independent by the skills they will acquire.

The facility comprises the main training building with classrooms, an office building, a meeting hall, and a reservoir for safe running water to the facility.

In addition, the First Lady has provided a refrigerator, freezer, 15kva generator, a commercial oven for baking, office furniture, and several chairs among many other essentials for the facility to further enhance the practical aspects of the training program for the Army Wives.

The dedication ceremony was attended by the President of Liberia, George M. Weah, and other officials of government.



## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

### ECOWAS holds a technical meeting on the harmonization of mathematics curricula

The ECOWAS Commission through its Education Sector has commenced a technical meeting of experts/resource persons for the harmonization of Mathematics curricula in the education system in the ECOWAS region. The

Jean Kassi BROU, who is very supportive and passionate about the harmonisation of education systems in the ECOWAS region. He reiterated that the Mission of the ECOWAS Education Sector is to ensure access to quality education and training through the harmonisation of policies

fruitful deliberations.

While presenting the concept note for the meeting, the Ag. Principal Programme Officer for Education, Mrs Aisha USMAN stated that one of the core objectives of the ECOWAS Education Sector is to implement the provisions of the ECOWAS Protocol on Education and Training, and the Convention on Recognition and Equivalence of Certificates. She stated that the need for harmonization of Mathematics curricula in the ECOWAS region becomes imperative to ensure equivalence and recognition of certificates, contents taught entry qualification and duration of study in Mathematics.

The Ag. PPO emphasized that the main goal of the meeting is to develop working documents and guidelines for the harmonization of mathematics curricula in the ECOWAS region, most especially the criteria/benchmark for the study of mathematics across various levels of education in the Region.

The one-week meeting which commenced on Monday 11th April 2022 will be concluded on Friday 15th April 2022. The resource persons and other participants from the ECOWAS Commission are expected to produce a comprehensive report of the technical meeting for the harmonization of mathematics curricula for the ECOWAS region.



technical meeting held at the Commission's Headquarters at Asokoro, Abuja has experts on Mathematics and Harmonization of Education Systems drawn from higher institutions and Mathematical centres within the ECOWAS region.

The meeting was declared open by the ECOWAS Commissioner in charge of Education, Science and Culture, Dr Mamadou JAO. In his opening address, the Commissioner ESC conveyed the wishes of the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Mr

and programs of education to strengthen Human Capital and promote academic mobility and labour in West Africa.

The Commissioner further highlighted that the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education in the world today cannot be overemphasized. He stated that Mathematics plays a pivotal role in scientific discoveries and technological innovation. He concluded by wishing the experts and participants

### Sub-Saharan African Growth Slows Amid Ongoing and New Economic Shocks

As the Sub-Saharan African economy struggles to recover from the 2020 recession induced by the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, the

region now faces new economic growth challenges, compounded by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The World Bank's latest

Africa's Pulse, a biannual analysis of the near-term regional macroeconomic outlook, estimates growth at 3.6 percent in 2022, down from 4 percent in 2021 as the region continues to deal with new COVID-19 variants, global inflation, supply disruptions and climate shocks. Adding to the region's growth challenges are rising global commodity prices, which are increasing at a faster pace since the onset of the conflict between Russia and the Ukraine.

As top world exporters of food staples, Russia—the world's largest exporter of fertilizers—and Ukraine account for a substantial share of wheat, corn and seed oil imports, all of which may be halted if the conflict persists. While Sub-Saharan economies are also likely to be impacted



### All set for 3rd edition of Pennoh Bestman memorial tournament



Liberia Black Star will this Saturday, April 16, 2022, hold a four-team tournament in honor of its former president, Mr. Pennoh W. Bestman.

The annual tournament, which was inaugurated following the death of Mr. Bestman, will be played at the Willie D. Knuckles Memorial Sport Stadium in Zubah Town, Paynesville, Montserrado County.

The tournament is expected to feature four teams, namely: defending champions Central Bank of Liberia (CBL), Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC), Sports Writers Association of Liberia (SWAL), and host Liberia Black Star FC.

It can be recalled that during the 2nd Edition of the Pennoh W. Bestman Memorial Football Tournament, Central Bank of Liberia defeated Liberia Black Star FC to clinch the 2021 PWB Championship with a 2-1 victory.

According to the organizing committee, there will also be two exciting exhibition matches on the same day, which feature Alpha Old-timers 50 & Above against Paynesville Oldtimers Sport Association (POSA) Legends in football and in kickball, Gardnersville Oldtimers Kickball Association will take Girls of Black Star.

"The one-day sport event is in recognition of Mr. Bestman's passion, commitment and leadership in promoting football among youth in communities. The winner of the tournament will receive a large trophy; all participating teams

to receive certificates," said a statement from the organizing committee.

Accordingly, the PWB Memorial Football Tournament will be graced by the Minister of Youth and Sports, Mr. D. Zeogar Wilson, Mrs. Agnes Bestman, other dignitaries, family and friends.

Black Star's notable accomplishments are consequent of Pennoh W. Bestman's result-oriented administration, providing exceptional leadership to the club during its heyday.

From 1992 to 2020, Mr. Bestman provided sponsorship, technical guidance, and alms to players and their families.

He developed strategic partnerships locally and internationally while providing opportunities to young athletes.

Liberia Black Star was founded on March 15, 1980, in the South Beach Community, Central Monrovia, Liberia.

Under the leadership of Pennoh W. Bestman, Black Star won three championships in one year (LFA National League, LFA Knock-out Championship, and The President's Cup), becoming LFA Triple Champions in 2007.

The following year, Black Star represented Liberia at the Confederation of African Football (CAF) Club Championship.

Liberia Black Star has an enviable track record. In the LFA 1st Division, the club produced players who have had huge impact on Liberian football, including Kelvin Sebwe, Thomas Kojo, Oliver Makor, Alex Browne, and Dionysius Sebwe. The players were also part of the famous George Weah Eleven.

by tightening of global conditions and reduced foreign financial flows into the region, the analysis notes that the high fuel and food prices will translate into higher inflation across African countries, hurting poor and vulnerable citizens, especially those living in urban areas. One point of concern is the increased

likelihood of civil strife as a result of food and energy-fueled inflation, particularly in this current environment of heightened political instability.

"As African countries face continued uncertainty, supply disruptions and soaring food and fertilizer prices, trade policy can potentially play a key role by ensuring the free flow of food.



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military, whose mentorship and training have rebranded the Liberian Military which has provided us the platform to develop to our full potentials to contribute in a most meaningful way to the post war development of Liberia.”

“What an honor to be considered for induction into the US Army Command and General Staff College International Hall of Fame, Leavenworth Kansas,” Major General Prince Charles Johnson, III, said.

He stated the commitment of the Armed forces of Liberia in working with other militaries in the sub region to combat the growing wave of terrorism, maritime crimes and coups.

Johnson graduated from CGSC in 2012. He became the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia on 6 February 2018.

He has served in all types of appointments available in the Army-Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS); Commanding General / 23rd Infantry Brigade Commander; Chief of Operations, HQ AFL (ACOS J3); Deputy Assistant Chief of Operations HQ AFL (Dy ACOS J3); Chief of Logistics HQ AFL (ACOS J4); Military Assistant (MA) to the Minister of National Defense; Assistant Brigade Operations Officer, S3; 2nd Battalion Executive Officer (XO); Company Commander and Platoon Commander.

Maj/ Gen Johnson, III, holds a Master of Arts Degree in Peace Studies (MAPS) from the Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation (KAICT), University of Liberia; Post Graduate Certificate in Public Sector Management from the Institute for Public Administration and

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Regulation, while noting that more tangible results have been recorded in the implementation in the eighteen months since the Technical Committee of focal points was established by the NRA, than in the entire period since the adoption of the Regulation. He noted the recent trends towards easing of movement and border restrictions imposed due to the covid-19 pandemic, with the expectation of increase in cross-border movements and intra-regional travel to pre-pandemic levels. With this development, he said, free roaming is bound to have considerable economic impact on citizens and operators. He therefore admonished the focal points to step up current efforts in addressing and eliminating

# Minister Ziankahn, Major General

Management (IPAM) - University of Sierra Leone, Freetown; a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree in Accounting from the United Methodist University.

Also, he has completed the Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education for Senior Executives in National and International Security, Harvard University, and both African Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) Seminars in Senior Military leadership and managing Security Resources in Africa, all in the USA. He is married with two sons.

“It is an honor and a reminder to us all that the future holds a lot for us all if we prepare and work diligently,” Maj/Gen. Johnson told his audience.

It can be recalled that in August of 1973, Lieutenant General Abraham C. Jackson (Class of 1961), Lieutenant General Henry Korboi Johnson (Class of 1963) and Lieutenant General George Toe Washington (Class of 1964) were three Liberian military personnel inducted into the CGSC Allied Officer of Hall of Fame (now the CGSC International Hall of Fame).

Some notable foreign alumni and recipients (IHOF) are: President Paul Kagame; General Carlos Prats (Commander-in-Chief of the Army: Interior and Defense Minister; Vice President of the Republic of Chile); Minister of State General Mohammed F. Abo Sak of Saudi Arabia; and Prime Minister and General Kringsak Chamanan of Thailand.

Others are Prime Minister and Brigadier General Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore; President Gaafar Nimeiry of Sudan, among others.

Liberia’s defense sector under the Pro- poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) is making headway internationally for its

professional services to the people of Liberia.

This is happening under the command and control of Minister Ziankahn and General Johnson.

The United States Army’s latest move to include its Liberian counterpart as part of this prestigious ceremony is a welcoming development.

The CGSC International Hall of Fame was established by the college, the Greater Kansas City Chapter of the Military Order of the World Wars and the CGSC Foundation in 1973.

To be considered for the International Hall of Fame an officer must be a graduate of CGSC and have attained, by merit, the position of leader of his or her country’s army or defense forces.

In addition to being inducted into the Hall of Fame, inductees are presented a CGSC certificate of honor by the Military Order of the World Wars and a Life Constituent Certificate by the Foundation.

Officers from 73 countries have been inducted into the hall. Fifteen International Hall of Fame members have gone on to be heads of state or heads of government in their countries.

International military student participation in cooperative military studies in the United States originated at Fort Leavenworth with the arrival of Swiss Lieutenant Henri Le Comte in 1894.

Since then, international students, representing 165 countries, have become an integral part of the Fort Leavenworth experience. These talented military officers contribute to a rich professional and cultural exchange environment.--

Press release

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of the True Whig Party; James A. A. Pierre, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; Joseph J. Chesson, Sr., Minister of Justice; Cecil Dennis, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Cyril Bright, former Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs, and John W. Sherman, Assistant Minister of Commerce and Trade, respectively.

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such as rape, as well as the submission of the Board’s recommendations to the Inspector General of Police for review, decision, and action, undermines and impugns legal standards set, as well as national gains made in the fight against rape in Liberia.

The Commission recalls that in September 2021, President George Manneh Weah declared rape a national emergency in Liberia, and that before the declaration, accountability for rape had be legislated within the confines of very high standards under the laws of Liberia.

It says specifically, Section 25.3(a) of the Act Establishing Criminal Court E (Sexual Offense Cour) provides limited jurisdiction for the Magisterial Courts in rape cases to charging an offense and issuing an arrest warrant for persons charge, not preliminary examination.

The Commission opines that the parity of reasoning that stops a Magistrate from conducting a preliminary examination in cases of rape at the level of the magisterial court, is an overwhelming basis for which the Police Professional Standards Board cannot, and should not, conduct a preliminary examination in the allegation of rape brought against the senior police officer”, the INCHR argues.

It says similarly, it is also a basis for which the

the National Regulatory Authorities.

At the end of the meeting, the focal points validated a report on the global status of the implementation of roaming services in line with the regulation. Twelve (12) Member States, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, have commenced implementation of the Regulation and twenty-four (24) mobile operators in these Member States have declared compliance with one or more provisions of the regulation, which include the application

# Tolbert family

The rest were James T. Phillips, former Minister of Finance; former Minister of Agriculture; David Franklin Neal, former Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs; Charles T. O. King, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, and Frank J. Stewart, Sr., Director of the Budget.

Others who accompanied Dr. Tolbert to the memorial triangle were Stephen Tolbert and the son of AB Tolbert. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

# Investigate Police

Director of Police cannot sit as judge and jury to accept, modify or reject recommendations emanating from the Professional Standards Board, observing that this wide flexibility and leverage of police authority raise serious rights concerns as it has the propensity to undermine access to justice for rape and other forms of sexual offenses. “This latitude to first conduct preliminary hearings in rape cases also puts police officers accused of rape in a different category, than other individuals accused of rape.”

The INCHR further informs that the peculiar nature of this case makes it more compelling and expedient to apply the highest of standards under Liberian law, noting that both the complainant and the accused are officers, and that the act is alleged to have taken place on the premise of the Liberia National Police is of grave concern.

It recalls that on June 20, 2020, an officer of the LNP was accused of raping a fifteen-year-old girl at a police sub-station in Monrovia, after the victim was placed in police custody in response to an attempted rape incident against the said individual.

The victim, it says reported that while in police custody later the same night, an on-duty night officer forcibly had sex with her, noting that this past incident underscores the need for the LNP to allow the law to take its course, as a police station should be one of the safest places in Monrovia.

Meanwhile, the Commission is calling on the Ministry of Justice to act on the allegations of rape brought against the senior police officer, and recognizes that the essence of prosecution is not limited to establishing guilt, but also to ensure that justice is served.

# Regulators review progress

persistent bottlenecks towards increasing the rate of implementation of the regulation for the benefit of the travelling public.

Mr. Anthony Omoshie, representing the Executive Secretary of the West African Telecommunications Regulators Assembly (WATRA), invited the Regulators to definitively translate the aspirations for roaming in the region into reality so as to allow citizens benefit from this impactful initiative for the development of telecommunications in West Africa. He added that the gradual reduction of roaming charges will lower barriers to trade, and also to promote creativity and innovation.

In opening the meeting, Mr. Joe Anokye, Director-General of National Communications Authority of Ghana expressed

appreciation to the focal points for their efforts thus far in contributing to make roaming more affordable within the region. He reiterated the commitment of Ghana to the implementation of the Regulation on Roaming, pointing out that such commitment has been demonstrated by the amendment of Ghana’s communications law to waive the surcharge on international incoming traffic from intra-regional roaming traffic in line with the Regulation. He concluded his remarks by expressing the expectation that the focal points will make progress in coming up with concrete proposals to address the persistent issues for consideration by the Heads of

of tariffs for voice, SMS and data services while roaming in line with tariff ceilings published by the ECOWAS Commission and the free reception of calls for a maximum of thirty (30) days while roaming. This progress represents an achievement rate of 34% of the global services implementation. The focal points agreed on a schedule for coordinated testing to verify these declarations by the operators and also reviewed a proposed framework for combating fraud in the provision of roaming services. Recommendations were also made to address the persistent bottlenecks hindering the full implementation by all operators within the region.



# Français

## Plusieurs millions de dollars américains des donateurs détournés au ministère de la santé

Des millions de dollars américains, l'argent des subventions du Fonds mondial, se sont évaporés au ministère de la Santé (MoH) qui est en proie à des vols systémiques et des pratiques abusives de la part de ses responsables, a révélé un rapport d'enquête du Fonds.

Le rapport qui a été publié

le 8 avril 2022 et couvre les activités de 2018 à 2022, indique que les autorités sanitaires, sous l'œil attentif de la ministre de la Santé, la Dr Wilhelmina Jallah, ont frauduleusement procédé à l'approvisionnement et à la dissimulation du paiement des taxes sur le carburant et gaspillé ou détourné le fonds de subventions destiné au secteur de la santé libérien.

Le rapport :

« Il y a eu une fraude systématique et un détournement par le personnel du ministère de la Santé (MoH), un récipiendaire principal des subventions du Fonds mondial au Libéria. Notre enquête a révélé des dépenses non conformes et/ou divers types d'actes répréhensibles dans 91 % des dépenses examinées.

Les dépenses non conformes ont totalisé 1,1 million de dollars US, dont nous recommandons le recouvrement de 0,99 million de dollars US.

Le personnel du Programme national de lutte contre le sida a procédé à des achats frauduleux de services de réparation de véhicules et de services publicitaires, pour lesquels il n'existe aucune assurance raisonnable de livraison. Aucune assurance n'a pu être fournie quant à l'exécution du programme dans 75 % des activités de terrain du ministère de la

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Sénatoriale partielle de Lofa : L'UP met en garde la commission électorale

Un nouveau gouvernement est attendu pour la semaine prochaine. Ce remaniement ministériel était attendu et avait été évoqué depuis le début de l'année 2022.

Lors du Conseil des ministres, le président Alassane Ouattara a déclaré accepter la démission de son chef de gouvernement. Il a annoncé la formation d'un nouveau gouvernement avec un nouveau Premier ministre pour la semaine prochaine. Cette équipe gouvernementale sera moins importante que la dernière, a prévenu le président.

« En vue de renforcer l'efficacité de l'action du gouvernement et pour tenir compte de la conjoncture économique mondiale actuelle, j'ai décidé de la réduction du nombre de ministres du gouvernement », a ajouté le chef de l'État. Alassane Ouattara a indiqué qu'il entendait réorienter l'action du gouvernement vers la résilience sociale et la sécurité.

Le gouvernement sortant compte 41 membres, 37 ministres et 6 secrétaires d'État. Le prochain sera donc

réduit. Quelques questions demeurent posées : qui sera le prochain Premier ministre ? Patrick Achi sera-t-il reconduit ? Sinon qui le remplacera, et quelle sera la nouvelle fonction du chef du gouvernement sortant ?

On attend de nombreuses réponses dès mardi, puisque Alassane Ouattara doit s'exprimer à Yamoussoukro dans sa traditionnelle adresse devant le Parlement réuni en Congrès.

En attendant, le président Ouattara a rendu hommage à son équipe gouvernementale et plus particulièrement à son Premier ministre démissionnaire. « Tout au long de l'année écoulée, en

dépité des conditions particulières liées à la pandémie (de Covid-19) et d'un contexte sécuritaire régional complexe, vous avez fait preuve d'engagement et de détermination. ».

Depuis plusieurs mois, les rumeurs de remaniement allaient bon train à Abidjan. Patrick Achi était arrivé à ce poste en février 2021. Il a d'abord effectué l'intérim d'Hamed Bakayoko lorsque ce dernier se faisait soigner en France et en Allemagne. Patrick Achi avait été titularisé à la tête du gouvernement ivoirien le 26 mars 2021.



## Éditorial

### Ils ne font que parler de l'agriculture des bouts de lèvres

A en croire nos informations, l'administration Weah serait sur le point de préparer un budget supplémentaire pour allouer 12 millions de dollars américains aux importateurs de riz. Alors que le budget total du pays pour l'agriculture est d'environ 6 millions de dollars américains, si cette information est avérée, cela montrera clairement combien cette administration ne fait pas preuve de volonté politique dans le cadre de l'auto-suffisance alimentaire.

Ce quotidien a appris de sources dignes de foi que les 12 millions de dollars américains, qui seraient sous forme d'une subvention, sont destinés à compenser les coûts supplémentaires encourus lors de l'importation de sorte que aucun frais supplémentaire ne soit imposé aux consommateurs. Cela peut sembler politiquement opportun à court terme, mais ce n'est ni durable ni financièrement prudent.

La production de riz devrait accompagner le pays vers l'autosuffisance alimentaire. Mais hélas, avec les élections qui sont prévues pour 2023 et pour des intérêts politiques personnels, le président Weah et son gouvernement sont en train de sacrifier clairement l'agriculture, soumettant ainsi une population affamée à la politique du riz.

Il est tout à faire incompréhensible qu'un gouvernement doté d'un budget annuel de 5 561 226 dollars américains pour l'agriculture prévoit un budget supplémentaire pour allouer 12 millions de dollars américains pour subventionner l'importation de riz alors que ce pays dispose de terres fertiles et bénéficie d'un climat propice à l'agriculture.

Quel message le gouvernement envoie-t-il aux partenaires internationaux et aux gouvernements amis lorsque la subvention accordée à l'importation du riz est largement supérieure au budget du programme agricole national. Notre enviable forêt tant fertile devrait-elle continuer à rester intacte pendant que nous nous tournons vers l'Inde, le Pakistan, la Malaisie et la Chine pour nous nourrir ? Avons-nous perdu la fierté en tant que nation ou est-ce de la pure paresse ?

Fondamentalement, cette administration n'a pas réussi à procéder correctement par le fait de débloquer 12 millions de dollars américains comme une solution rapide et immédiate, au lieu de s'attaquer plutôt au problème clé, à savoir le manque d'une politique agricole claire et tangible.

Au lieu de donner l'exemple en créant un champ « présidentiel », comme le président assassiné Samuel K. Doe, ce qui qui encouragerait ou motiverait son cabinet et les deux autres pouvoirs de l'Etat à investir dans le sol, le président Weah estime que détourner des ressources rares pour subventionner l'importation de riz stabilisera le prix du riz et assurera un approvisionnement ininterrompu.

Mais rien ne garantit que les aliments produits dans d'autres pays qui peuvent également faire face à des défis imprévisibles tels que les changements climatiques, les bouleversements politiques ou les catastrophes naturelles serviront toujours notre demande nationale.

Si le gouvernement dirigé par Weah avait de bonnes intentions pour le peuple libérien, il proposerait une politique agricole nationale viable qui encouragerait les citoyens à retourner à la terre pour cultiver du riz, l'aliment de base du pays. Il ne conclurait pas simplement un accord avec des importateurs qui ne sont motivés que par leurs intérêts.



# Français

## Plusieurs millions de dollars

Santé que nous avons examinées.

Le ministère de la Santé a également surfacturé le Fonds mondial pour les indemnités journalières de subsistance et détourné les fonds de subvention en fournissant des indemnités et des frais de restauration incorrects. L'investissement de 0,25 million de dollars US du Fonds mondial dans le programme mère-pair pour le diagnostic précoce du nourrisson a produit un petit nombre de rapports inadéquats qui n'ont pas été utilisés.

Contrairement à la réglementation sur les subventions, le ministère de la Santé a utilisé les fonds de la subvention pour payer les taxes sur le carburant et a sciemment dénaturé le statut d'exonération fiscale des subventions auprès du Fonds mondial.

Le rapport a poursuivi que les contrôles, les politiques et la surveillance du ministère de la Santé pour atténuer la fraude et le détournement étaient soit insuffisants, soit inexistants. Il disait que là où ils existaient, ils étaient ignorés.

Le Fonds mondial a noté qu'il a mis en place plusieurs contrôles internes pour résoudre ce problème, et que d'autres contrôles seront mis en place à la suite de cette enquête.

Le Fonds a expliqué que son agent financier a pris connaissance des actes répréhensibles identifiés dans cette enquête en 2015, mais a continué d'approuver les dépenses du ministère de la Santé et n'a pas suffisamment atténué le risque de fraude.

Il a en outre reconnu que l'agent financier du Fonds s'était également livré à des conflits d'intérêts et à des détournements de fonds, notamment en acceptant des fonds de subvention pour des indemnités journalières de subsistance et des coupons de carburant pour des activités qui n'avaient pas eu lieu. Un nouvel agent fiscal a été nommé en 2022.

Le rapport d'enquête a noté que le Secrétariat du Fonds mondial était au courant des signaux d'alarme de fraude et d'autres actes répréhensibles dans les subventions gérées par le ministère de la Santé à partir de 2015, mais n'a pas signalé les questions en cause dans cette enquête au Bureau de l'Inspecteur général.

Genèse et portée

Les enquêteurs ont déclaré qu'en janvier 2020, le Bureau de l'Inspecteur général du Fonds mondial (BIG) avait reçu des informations faisant état de soupçons de fraude et d'autres actes répréhensibles au Programme national de lutte contre le sida (NACP), un organisme de mise en œuvre des subventions du Fonds mondial relevant du ministère de la Santé.

Les enquêteurs continuent qu'en réponse, le BIG a ouvert une enquête, entreprenant une mission sur le terrain au Libéria en novembre 2020.

« Le BIG a obtenu des copies numériques des bons de paiement et d'autres documents et vérifié les fournisseurs. En raison des restrictions de voyage liées à la pandémie, le BIG a mené des entretiens avec le personnel du ministère de la Santé par vidéoconférence. Au cours de l'enquête, l'équipe de pays du Fonds mondial au Libéria et le ministère de la Santé ont signalé des soupçons supplémentaires de documents frauduleux identifiés par l'agent fiscal. La portée de l'enquête du BIG a été élargie pour inclure un examen de ces documents.

Résultats

Le rapport explique que les enquêteurs ont identifié des pratiques interdites et des contrôles inadéquats, notamment :

- **F r a u d e** à l'approvisionnement d'un montant total de 0,19 million de dollars pour des réparations de véhicules et des services de publicité
- Aucune assurance de la prestation du programme dans 75 % des cas examinés
- 0,52 million de dollars US de fonds de subvention ont été gaspillés ou détournés pour le programme mère-pair et les frais de voyage
- Le ministère de la Santé a dissimulé des paiements abusifs de taxes sur les carburants d'au moins 0,16 million de dollars américains
- La surveillance de l'ancien agent financier était inefficace et son personnel s'est livré à des conflits d'intérêts et à des détournements de fonds de subvention

Le contexte

Le Libéria est classé par la Banque mondiale comme un pays à faible revenu.

Au cours de la dernière décennie, la guerre civile et l'importante épidémie d'Ebola ont causé d'importantes pertes en vies humaines et des perturbations socio-économiques. Depuis 2004, le Fonds mondial a signé des subventions de 309 millions de dollars et a déboursé plus de 248 millions de dollars au pays.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Jayati Ghosh

## La guerre de Poutine fragilise le monde en développement

**N**EW DELHI - Il est difficile de voir qui seraient les gagnants de la guerre actuellement causée par l'invasion irrationnelle et destructrice de l'Ukraine. Mais les perdants vont bien au-delà des habitants de l'Ukraine, qui sont attaqués, et de ceux de la Russie, qui n'ont pas choisi cette guerre mais doivent maintenant subir une économie que sont en train de démanteler les sanctions commerciales et financières. Les conséquences économiques du conflit seront ressenties dans le monde entier, y compris dans nombre de pays en développement qui ont déjà des difficultés à se rétablir de la pandémie de Covid-19.

Le premier sujet d'inquiétude tient aux effets de la hausse des prix du pétrole. Le prix du Brent, le brut de référence, a récemment augmenté de 20 %, à plus de 139 dollars le baril, son plus haut niveau depuis 2008 - en réaction, probablement, à l'annonce que les États-Unis et leurs alliés européens envisageaient une interdiction des importations de pétrole russe, lequel avait été jusqu'alors exempté des sanctions occidentales. (Le 8 mars, les États-Unis déclaraient qu'ils interdisaient les importations de produits énergétiques russes, tandis que le Royaume-Uni s'engageait à cesser progressivement ses importations de pétrole et de produits dérivés du pétrole russes d'ici la fin de 2022.)

Mais les prix mondiaux de l'énergie flambaient déjà, après une période de volatilité spectaculaire durant la pandémie. Le prix du Brent brut, qui était tombé à 9 dollars le baril en avril 2020, au beau milieu de la première vague de la pandémie, remontait en janvier 2022 au-dessus de 90 dollars le baril. Depuis, la guerre en Ukraine a encore augmenté la pression à la hausse sur les prix du pétrole et du gaz.

Les médias occidentaux se sont surtout intéressés aux conséquences de la hausse des prix de l'énergie dans une Europe très dépendante de ses importations de gaz russe. Mais, pour la plupart, les importateurs de pétrole et de gaz dans le monde sont bien plus pauvres. Nombre de ces pays n'ont pu, par manque de moyens, mettre en œuvre des réponses budgétaires à la pandémie comparables à celles des États-Unis et des autres économies avancées, et la relance y est depuis beaucoup plus faible, tant en termes de production que d'emploi. Cette dernière flambée des prix du pétrole est un coup qu'il leur est difficile de supporter, source probable de nouveaux problèmes affectant leur balance des paiements ainsi que de pressions inflationnistes intérieures, auxquelles il sera compliqué de résister étant donné les incertitudes du contexte actuel.

Certes, les pressions inflationnistes supplémentaires exercées par la guerre en Ukraine embarrassent aussi les responsables politiques des pays riches en Occident, qui tentent de faire face à la hausse des prix sans pour autant provoquer un atterrissage trop brutal de l'économie. Le pétrole est un bien intermédiaire universel, qui exerce, de maintes façons, son influence sur les coûts des denrées et des services, tout comme sur ceux des transports.

Une augmentation des prix du pétrole peut donc avoir sur une inflation poussée par les coûts des effets non négligeables, même dans la meilleure des conjonctures. Mais l'inflation dans les pays riches atteignait déjà, avant la guerre, des niveaux dont on avait presque perdu la mémoire. Et les responsables politiques semblent ne considérer que les armes les plus rudimentaires contre l'inflation, comme la hausse des taux d'intérêt et le resserrement de la liquidité, qui sont d'une efficacité limitée pour alléger la pression des coûts et pourraient se solder par un réel ralentissement économique.

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La tâche est pourtant plus dure dans les pays en développement, où la marge de manœuvre des responsables est encore plus étroite. La hausse brutale récemment enregistrée par les prix du pétrole frappe directement, c'est une évidence, les pays importateurs et s'y répercutera sur toute la chaîne des prix en raison de la hausse de ceux des facteurs de production et des transports.

La tragédie qui se déroule en Ukraine augmente aussi les prix mondiaux de l'alimentation, créant plus de souffrance encore dans les pays en développement où la faim a déjà connu durant la pandémie une terrible recrudescence. Avant la guerre, l'Ukraine était le cinquième exportateur de blé mondial, et l'un des principaux exportateurs d'orge, de maïs, de colza et d'huile de tournesol. Les prix de ces denrées sur les marchés mondiaux ont significativement augmenté, alors même que les prix agricoles en général étaient récemment repartis à la hausse.

Désormais se présente un nouveau danger : les investisseurs qui avaient parié sur les marchés des actifs à risque devront trouver de nouveaux placements, et les contrats à terme sur les marchés alimentaires pourraient offrir une destination privilégiée. Dans les cinq premiers jours de mars, les prix des contrats à terme sur le blé à la Bourse de Chicago ont enregistré une hausse de 40 %, un mouvement qui rappelle la hausse hebdomadaire la plus spectaculaire de l'histoire, en 1959.

La production de céréales dans les pays en développement pourrait aussi souffrir d'une pénurie d'engrais. La Russie, premier exportateur de blé mondial est aussi l'un des principaux producteurs d'engrais, et des perturbations sur ses exportations pousseraient plus encore à la hausse les prix alimentaires mondiaux.

Ce film s'est déjà joué, en partie, dans des périodes plus pacifiques, juste avant la crise financière mondiale, et même alors, ce fut une sombre et triste histoire. La crise alimentaire provoquée par la spéculation sur les marchés financiers en 2007-2008 a entraîné une recrudescence de la faim dans le monde et saccagé la vie de centaines de millions de personnes dans les pays en développement. Cette crise survenait pourtant dans un contexte de relative stabilité de l'offre et de la demande mondiales de denrées alimentaires, tandis qu'aujourd'hui, puisque des réductions réelles de l'offre alimentaire mondiale sont presque inévitables, les hausses de prix pourraient être plus importantes et durer plus longtemps. Si la pression spéculative augmente, les économies déjà fragiles souffriront encore plus.

Peut-être n'est-il pas surprenant que le G7 (dont le bilan récent de leader autoproclamé de l'économie mondiale n'est guère brillant) n'exprime que peu d'inquiétude sur ces périls pourtant bien réels et pressants. Mais les organisations multilatérales doivent sans aucun doute redoubler d'efforts en ces temps de crise, en fournissant une aide financière compensatoire, c'est le moins, afin d'aider les pays en développement à surmonter ces multiples chocs de prix, en proposant et en soutenant des règles pour prévenir la spéculation sur les marchés des denrées essentielles.

Faute de telles initiatives, la guerre menée par la Russie contre l'Ukraine provoquera dans l'économie mondiale beaucoup plus de ravages - et les pays pauvres seront parmi les plus durement frappés.

Traduit de l'anglais par François Boisivon

Jayati Ghosh, secrétaire générale d'International Development Economics Associates, est professeure d'économie à l'université du Massachusetts à Amherst et membre de la Commission indépendante pour la réforme de la fiscalité internationale des entreprises.



## LIBERIANS

## DEBATE

**M**ysterious deaths in Monrovia and parts adjacent have left residents gripped by panic with many fighting daily to get home as early as 6 or 7pm. Government's response is found wanting especially when most investigations seem inconclusive. In this random interview, The New Dawn seeks views of some residents in the capital about the situation that is breeding citizens' distrust in the government.

By Naneka Hoffman



**Titus Siakor**

"Mysterious death is a very serious situation that every citizen is in worry, because no one knows who's next. Mysterious death is really causing problem among the public because everybody is afraid, people want to go home soon, nobody trusts anybody anymore even whenever people are riding on motorbikes or cars, they are careful.

The Government needs to set up speedy investigations because more often they delay in investigating and other tactics cause the public to lose hope or confidence. The security system is not really active especially, at night, the security people say they don't have logistics and the criminals are more equipped; this

is the reason at night we cannot see security in the streets. Criminals harass people in the street broad day and walk away with impunity so, this is just a culture whenever criminal harasses someone in the street, people just standby and look.

The Government needs to deploy more security in the streets at night and observe cars with tainted windshield. The authorities should put restriction on motorbikes because motorbikes are the main instruments being used to carry out criminal activities in the country, so Government needs to set deadline for motorbikes to stop transporting passengers at night."



**Mark Allison**

"Mysterious death in the country is saddening news for us young people because when we look around every day, we see dead bodies lying in the streets and we see dead body news on the internet; people are dying mysteriously, there is no accountability, so we are in a country that doesn't have security.

It's binding on the Government of Liberia to provide security for the citizens, I think they are in power and that is their responsibility to provide security for their citizens. But I think they are failing on this."

"Actually, mysterious death is not welcoming, but it happens to every country and that is not strange to Liberia. Government is minimizing it through frantic effort but as a citizen, you cannot read everybody's heart; some people are very wicked, they want to damage the reputation of the country or the government."



**Mohammed M. Sedibey**



**Stephen Koryon, Jr.**

"Mysterious death is happening in the country every day, but the government is not doing anything towards it.

As you can see every day, family members are grieving all over the community, so we really need the Government of Liberia to intervene to see how best mysterious death rate can be minimized in the country.

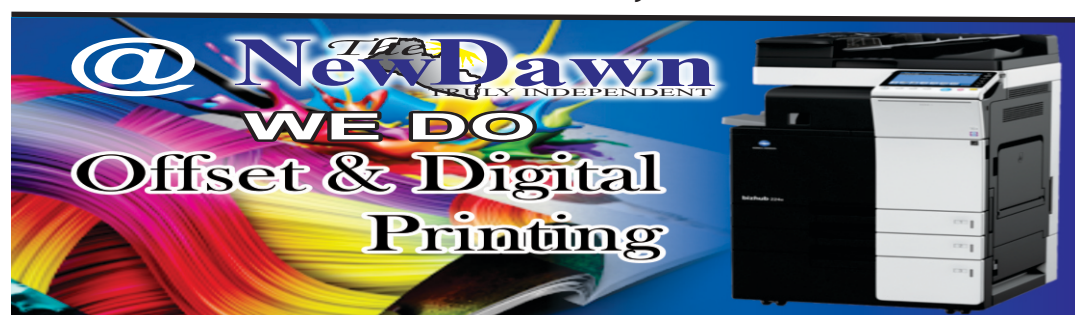
I think what the Government of Liberia needs to do to help us the citizens is to provide more security forces to see how best they can protect citizens' lives."

"Mysterious death is something that undermines the peace and tranquility that we enjoy because it creates a sense in which people take onto the streets to protest for justice. If governments around the globe and the Government of Liberia are not careful, it creates a scene in which it jumps to chaotic situation. But then people will say it's not strange to our country. They can have this situation fairly investigated to ensure that victims or those who have committed such acts (perpetrators) are brought to book through means of justice. But one thing I will say to Government is that to minimize mysterious deaths, let's give life for life, I will say so because a



**Christian Nyanti**

person who takes away another person's life and is being culpable deserves to die. Nobody kills a person in a tragic situation and leaves family in pains and tears then you want to walk away."



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# U.S. records killings, corruption and media suppression

The 2021 Human Rights Report on Liberia released by the United States Department of State records significant human rights issues in the country, including arbitrary killings, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by police.

The report also records harsh and life-threatening prison conditions across the country, including arbitrary arrest or detention; serious problems with the independence of the judiciary; restrictions on freedom of the press as well as violence, intimidation and threats against journalists resulting in self-censorship and unjustified arrests.

It says while the law of Liberia provides criminal penalties for bribery, abuse of office, economic

pockets of public officials through direct payments, indirect payments, or backdoor deals.

The State Department also points to widespread corruption in the Liberian judiciary, in the form of bribery and extortion to obtain favorable decisions, including direct government influence over judicial decisions.

It records that on September 6, Criminal Court “C” Judge Ousman Feika dismissed a five-million-dollar case of economic sabotage, theft of property, forgery, and criminal conspiracy against Secretary of the Liberian Senate J. Nanborlor F. Singbeh Sr., who allegedly used his position to obtain a government investment incentive package that he used unlawfully to import vehicles and equipment for personal gain, and 12 codefendants.

Judge Feika, the report notes, dismissed the case on grounds that the private prosecutor for the government, Hans Armstrong, was also indicted for the crimes of theft of property

iron ore and palm oil through Buchanan seaport in Grand Bassa County, and subsequently agents of the National Security Agency reportedly arrested the men.

In a press release, the port authority confirmed the pair were suspended without pay for alleged financial impropriety, and that after interrogation by the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission and the National Security Agency, Gull and Kamara conceded to diverting port funds.

But following that interrogation, Gull fled the country and subsequently provided substantial documentation, which was published by local media, that appeared to demonstrate the managing director of the National Port Authority, Bill Twehway, and other officials had colluded to illicitly award the loading contract for the port to a company they secretly co-owned via family members, Creative Developer Incorporated.

The State Department report on corruption continues that Gull claimed he had confessed in



sabotage, and other corruption-related offenses committed by officials, the government here failed to implement the law effectively amidst numerous reports of government corruption during the year.

“Officials frequently engaged in corrupt practices with impunity. Corruption was a fact of daily life for citizens and businesses alike”, the report continues.

It notes that the Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia State of Corruption Report last September revealed that 90 percent of citizens thought corruption was high in the country and 76 percent had witnessed corruption. The report also labeled the national budget as a tool for corruption in which public resources end up in the

and forgery in the Nimba County Court, including some of the same crimes that were part of the indictment against Singbeh and his codefendants.

It further details that on August 9, Assistant Minister for Litigation at the Ministry of Justice Wesseh Alphonsus Wesseh requested that Senate President Pro Tempore Albert Tugbe Chie relieve Singbeh of his duty on grounds that he was criminally indicted, but the Senate did not grant the request, while on July 16, the manager of the Port of Buchanan, Charles MacArthur D. Gull, and his chief statistician, Amara Kamara, were suspended for alleged financial impropriety amounting to more than \$200,000. The two officials were allegedly involved in diverting monies intended for the government into their personal accounts both in the country and abroad.

According to reports, the funds were remittances paid by ArcelorMittal and Equatorial Palm Oil for the exportation of

order to avoid physical harm and said his arrest was meant to make him a scapegoat for diversion of port funds by Twehway.

Director Twehway is said to be an uncle of President Weah.

It further records that on August 30, the LACC and other officials announced that its vice chairperson Kanio Bai Gbala was under investigation for his alleged involvement as a beneficial co-owner of Creative Developer Incorporated, while, President George Weah on August 23, suspended Presidential Special Projects Coordinator Makenneh L. Keita for allegedly soliciting five million dollars from a businessman who was exploring investment opportunities.

“Keita was asked to report to the office of the Legal Advisor to the President for investigation. At year’s end the outcome of the investigation by the Office of the Legal Advisor was not made publicly known”, the State Department says.

The Liberian government is yet to comment on the report.

# Tolbert family calls for decent burial

Family of slain President Dr. William R. Tolbert, Jr, who was assassinated 42 years in a bloody military coup on April 12, 1980 and children of officials of the former True Whig Party-led government have reiterated call here for the late President and others to receive a befitting burial.

The late President Tolbert, then sitting chair of the

military coup,” he recalled.

“Some of those who were killed and buried in the mass grave are General Charles Railey; Commander of the Executive Mansion Guard; an officer of the Special Security Service, Gabriel Moore; and Lieutenant Railroad Vesehley, of the Armed Forces of Liberia and Momoh Tolbert, the son of the late President who ran towards him as he was shot.”

A daughter of the late General



erstwhile Organization of African Unity (O.A.U.) now the African Union (A.U.) was assassinated inside the Executive Mansion early April 12, 1980 by 17 enlisted officers of the Armed Forces of Liberia commanded by Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe. Weeks later, 13 officials of the Tolbert regime were charged for rampant corruption, tried in a military tribunal and executed by firing squad at the Barclay Training Center, the main military barracks in Monrovia.

The spokesperson for the former president’s family and victims of the 1980 military coup, Dr. Richard Tolbert, and the son of former Senate President Pro-Tempore Frank Tolbert, termed the mass grave in which their late parents were buried as a disgrace to the entire nation.

Speaking to reporters shortly after laying wreaths on the Memorial Triangle mass grave at the Palm Grove Cemetery on Center Street in Monrovia on Tuesday, April 12, 2022, Dr. Tolbert emphasized that these statesmen should be remembered because they laid down their lives and sacrificed their blood in order to avoid chaos in Liberia,

He recalled that about 26 persons, including Ex-President Tolbert, who were killed as a result of the April 12, 1980, military bloody coup, were interred in the mass grave.

“We come here every year to at least pay our respect to our fallen President William R Tolbert, former Chairman of the Organization of African Unity and President of the 30 million World Baptist Alliance and others statesmen, who lost their lives during the

Charles Railey, who was Commander of the Executive Guard Battalion, Precious Railey Dennis, narrated how her father was killed.

According to her, the family had returned to the Executive Mansion from a program organized by the Providence Baptist Church in Monrovia, and observed that the entire gate at the Mansion was without any security personnel.

“During the early hours of April 12, 1980, we were awakened by heavy sounds of gunfire, and so my mother crept on her knees and woke me up. When we got up, our daddy General Railey was already up being escorted by some of the soldiers who were believed to be working with him.”

Mrs. Dennis, then 14 years, explained that General Railey was killed by the soldiers when he was shot four times right before their eyes behind the Executive Mansion.

On April 12, 1980, 17 noncommissioned soldiers under the banner of the People’s Redemption Council, announced on state radio that the TWP-led government had been overthrown, declared dusk to dawn curfew and ordered boundaries by air, land and sea closed.

Days later, a military tribunal set by the PRC found some of the officials of the TWP government guilty of corruption, nepotism and abuse of public office and executed 13 of them.

Those executed were Frank E. Tolbert, brother of President Tolbert and President Pro-Tempore of the Senate; Richard A. Henries, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and E. Reginald Townsend, National Chairman of the True Whig Party.

Others were P. Clarence Parker, II, Chairman of the National Investment Council and Treasurer



# Investigate Police officer accused of rape

**-Human Rights Commission urges MOJ**



Police Inspector General Patrick Sudue

The Independent National Commission on Human Rights calls on the Ministry of Justice to act on allegations of rape reported by a female junior officer of the Liberia National Police against a senior police officer.

According to a February 10, 2022 complaint filed with the Commission, the alleged rape occurred on November

25, 2021, when the senior officer summoned the female officer to his office at about 4:45 pm. The report alleges that the formal complaint filed with the Liberia National Police has not been entertained since November, 2021 and that it is still awaiting recommendations from the Professional Standards Department on whether or not the allegation of rape, as

levied by the female junior officer, has sufficient magnitude to warrant a formal charge of rape against the male officer.

The INCHR, in a press statement, notes that while there have been several demands to the Police to turn over the officer to the appropriate authorities to ensure accountability, the LNP authorities have maintained that a preliminary investigation must first be conducted by its Professional Standards Board before any other legal process could follow.

According to the Police, Section 22.91(d) of the 2015 Act Establishing the Liberia National Police provides that "the PSD shall conduct all disciplinary proceedings against all LNP officers below the rank of Deputy Inspector General of Police."

The statement says it is in the context of the Police's internal procedures that the INCHR takes the position that the authority granted to the Professional Standards Board to preliminarily investigate grievous allegations

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