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# The New Dawn

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# Continental News

## Atiku Abubakar woos Nigerians with a reminder of the good times

giving some of it away to charity. But the highest office in the land has eluded him, and in February 2023 he goes again, offering his credentials as a seasoned political operator and serial entrepreneur as the remedy for Nigeria's ills.

Africa's most populous country is facing soaring unemployment, widespread

built on his success as vice-president between 1999 and 2007, where as head of the government's economic team he oversaw successful reforms in the telecommunications, pensions and banking sectors that led to jobs and GDP growth.

However, his critics point to accusations of financial impropriety against him which they say make him unsuitable for the top office in a country where corruption is a huge challenge.

He is accused of cronyism, especially when he oversaw the privatization of key government assets. He denies any wrongdoing and says the charges are politically motivated.

Mr Abubakar will be hoping to unite the fractured opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), where cracks have emerged since his victory at the primary in June.

Some influential southern governors begrudge his emergence, saying it was the turn of the south to produce Nigeria's next president after eight years of President Muhammadu Buhari, a

northerner like Mr Abubakar. His choice of a running mate has also stirred an open rebellion within the party, with many believing that the snub of the highly influential governor of Rivers state, Nyesom Wike, might prove costly.

A popular figure within the party, Mr Wike was considered the overwhelming favourite, having lost out in the presidential primary, but Mr Abubakar instead chose Delta state governor Ifeanyi Okowa.

Outside his party, Mr Abubakar faces a formidable opponent in Bola Tinubu, the candidate of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), and a burgeoning youth-driven campaign led by the Labour Party's Peter Obi who

is targeting votes in traditional PDP areas in southern Nigeria.

There is also the challenge of convincing young Nigerians that he is a suitable choice, given his age, and that he is a break from the political class many have lost confidence in.

An affable, enterprising figure, Mr Abubakar moves adroitly between the worlds of commerce and politics - qualities that, his supporters say, will help him unite the country and revive the economy.

He has been involved in Nigerian elections for decades and has recently fluctuated between the two dominant parties, the APC and PDP - where he was a founding member, seeking a shot at the presidency.

His first exit from the PDP, in 2006, coincided with an investigation into his record as vice-president, when he was accused of having diverted \$125m (£95m) worth of public funds towards his business interests. BBC

Atiku Abubakar is hoping it will be sixth-time lucky in his quest to be Nigeria's next president having fallen short on five previous attempts, the first in 1992.

The 75-year-old has circled the summits of public



Many consider this Mr Abubakar's last shot at the presidency

life for most of his career as a top civil servant, a vice-president, and a prominent businessman, making his fortune in the oil sector and

insecurity, high inflation, and a sluggish economy heavily dependent on fluctuating oil revenues.

Mr Abubakar's campaign is

## Paul Kagame to seek fourth term as president of Rwanda

Rwanda's leader, who has been in power for two decades, has said he would consider remaining in office for another 20 years.

Paul Kagame told a French TV channel he would stand for president again at the next election in 2024.

In 2015 he changed the constitution, allowing him to stay until 2034.

In the last presidential election five years ago, official figures showed he won 99% of the vote, which many outside the country dismissed as a sham.

Asked if he would seek re-election, Mr Kagame, who is 64, said: "I would consider running for another 20 years. I have no problem with that. Elections are about people choosing."

Human Rights Watch's Central Africa Director Lewis Mudge told the BBC "what comes as a surprise is that some people are indeed surprised." "Rwanda is a country where it's very, very dangerous to oppose the

government, let alone to be a political opponent... and this authoritarian system is going to be the system for the foreseeable future," he said.

One prominent Rwandan critic has even stronger words.

"If he continues for another 20 years Rwanda will be real hell," Charles Kambanda, a lawyer and university lecturer now based in the US, tells the BBC.

Mr Kambanda says Rwandans already live in a climate of fear, and alleges that more than one minister has told him that they

remain in government because they fear being assassinated if they leave.

President Kagame however has fiercely defended Rwanda's record on human rights, most recently at a Commonwealth summit in the capital Kigali in June.

Months earlier, in April, the UK announced controversial plans to send some asylum seekers who reach its shores to Rwanda for processing and potential asylum there instead.



Paul Kagame hosted Commonwealth leaders last month

## South Africa: Fifteen shot dead in Soweto township bar



At least 15 people have been shot dead in a bar in the South African township of Soweto, police say.

Police said gunmen entered the Orlando East tavern in the early hours of Sunday morning and started firing randomly at a group of young people.

They then fled the scene in a white minibus. No motive for the attack has been established, police said.

Several more people are in a critical condition in hospital, the BBC's Nomsa Maseko reports.

The victims are believed to be between 19 and 35 years old.

"Bodies were on top of

each other with blood all over. We were looking for our loved ones, we had to jump over bodies looking for our brothers," said local resident Ntombikayise Meji.

Gauteng province's head of police, Lt-Gen Elias Mawela, told the BBC the shooting appears to have been "a cold-blooded attack on innocent tavern patrons".

A press statement released by his office said the gunmen had been armed with rifles and 9mm pistols when they entered the bar.

Police are searching for the suspects, whose identities remain unknown, it said.

Thaban Moloi, a community leader in Soweto, was angered by the amount of time it took police to arrive at the scene.

"It's terrible, I'm telling you. People don't know what to do. BBC

That was condemned by the UN who likened it to "trading commodities", but the British prime minister's office has vowed to press ahead with the policy despite Boris Johnson's departure.

Mr Kagame himself came

to power in 1994 after his rebel forces helped end the genocide.

Since then he has positioned himself as a champion of development, but his critics say he maintains a tight grip over what is an authoritarian regime. BBC



# EDITORIAL

## The management of LPRC must speak now

**THE MANAGEMENT OF** the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company is saying very little, if anything at all, about the reported disappearance of 1.5 million gallons of petroleum products valued at US\$6 million from storage tanks under its watch. One of the major importers of petroleum into country, Petrol Trade, raised the alarm recently after it shockingly observed that its stock at the LPRC had depleted without having any knowledge how it occurred.

**THE ONLY EXPLANATION** said to be coming from the LPRC management, according to Petrol Trade is that Aminata, a sister importer, has 400,000 gallons of the said mission petroleum products, while another sister importer, NEXIUM has 300,000 gallons.

**BUT HOW THEY** gained possession of products that do not belong to them in the first place, remains the 60-million-dollar question. Did the LPRC credit the Petrol Trade products to them? Is there an established policy at the LPRC of allowing an importer to take another importer's product without its consent and approval?

**WE BELIEVE IF** this were the case, the Management of Petrol Trade wouldn't have alarmed to the public the public the in the manner it did. In fact, the public learnt of the incident after Petrol Trade resulted to legal action.

**PETROL TRADE, THRU** the Heritage Law Firm, recently wrote the Management of LPRC, inquiring the whereabouts of 1.5 million gallons of fuel that were kept under its watch in storage tanks at the state-owned company.

**BESIDES THE EARLIER** explanations provided by the LPRC Management as quoted by Petrol Trade, the Government of Liberia is yet to provide succinct clarity or explanation on the situation that has the propensity to erode public trust and portray a very negative image about both the government and the country.

**THE LPRC MANAGEMENT** has adapted a posture of saying very little is felling disinformation and misinformation on a matter that is first time in history.

**ARE THERE GAMES** being played here? Good business practices required transparency and accountability, two important values that are necessary in remaining in business.

**BUT IT SEEMS** that the Weah administration cares less about any such thing about image and credibility. All we see daily is that beat goes on, ranging from widespread corruption, mismanagement, arbitrary killings by state security forces with daylight impunity.

**WE CALL ON** the Management of LPRC to provide full clarity on the reported missing 1.5 million gallons of petroleum under its watch in order to redeem its image, as a credible public entity in Liberia. Working behind the scene without coming public could leave an irreparable damage that may not be good both for this government and could pose future embarrassment for the country.

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# COMMENTARY

By Jayati Ghosh

## Fiddling While India's Workers Burn

**N**EW DELHI - Kim Stanley Robinson's prescient science-fiction novel *The Ministry for the Future* begins with a stark description of a major heat wave in a northern Indian city that kills millions of people. The novel is set some decades in the future. But, with people across northern and central India and Pakistan suffering an unprecedented heat wave since late March, it seems terrifyingly current.

In April, usually a time of late spring weather with average maximum temperatures of at most 35° Celsius (95° Fahrenheit), daytime temperatures in New Delhi exceeded 46°C. Temperatures in many places in the region have hovered around 45°C for two months, reaching 49°C in Jacobabad, Pakistan, on April 30, and 47.2°C in Banda in central India. This was the hottest April weather in at least 120 years.

Although the heat has abated slightly since the start of May, the region's hot season has barely begun. Meteorologists are already predicting that, partly owing to less rainfall than usual in this period, temperatures will rise above 50°C across much of South Asia as summer sets in. The effects can be lethal, because the combination of extreme heat and high humidity can prevent sweat from evaporating, reducing the body's ability to cool down.

This is why the so-called "wet-bulb" temperature, which accounts for both heat and humidity, is significant. When this temperature is around 32°C, outdoor activity becomes difficult and enervating. If it exceeds 35°C, then spending even a few hours outside in the shade with no physical activity can lead to death. Several Indian cities have recently experienced wet-bulb temperatures of close to 30°C. These could increase in coming heat waves and kill people, in exactly the way Robinson describes in his novel.

But this evidence that climate change is outpacing even some of the most pessimistic scientific predictions does not seem to be generating any official urgency to change economic strategies, in India or elsewhere. Like too many other governments around the world, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration has shown no appetite for undertaking the policy changes and public spending required to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and cut pollution, which are essential to avert a climate disaster.

In fact, the government is not even doing the absolute minimum necessary to help India's predominantly poor population cope with the climate changes already affecting them. Modi has asked state governments to take measures to prevent deaths due to heat waves and fire incidents, but how exactly are they to do this? The National Action Plan on Heat-Related Illnesses does not focus on protecting people from heat exposure, but rather outlines relatively minor strategies for dealing with the consequences, and is really intended to be used by government

health departments and private health-care facilities.

That will do nothing for the nine out of ten employed people in India who are engaged in informal activities with no legal or social protection. These workers have virtually no fallback option if they do not go out to earn their living, no matter how terrible the weather. An International Labour Organization (ILO) report on heat stress and work identified agriculture and construction - the two largest employers in India - as the sectors that will be worst-affected in terms of deteriorating conditions and working-time losses as the planet warms. Other at-risk occupations like refuse collection also are dominated by very poor and low-paid informal workers.

These are the activities most likely to lead to serious health problems, and even death, if performed in extreme heat and humidity. But the hundreds of millions of Indians who work such jobs typically have no choice but to keep doing them.

One aspect of heat stress at work that even the ILO ignored concerns the unpaid work of hundreds of millions of women and girls in India who fetch water for daily household use. Scorching heat dries up existing surface water sources and reduces ground water supplies, forcing women and girls to walk longer distances and spend even more hours collecting and carrying water. It also makes these tasks more arduous and potentially life-threatening.

The ILO emphasizes that governments have to be the main drivers of adaptation to higher temperatures with respect to heat stress at work, including by providing universal social protection and ensuring occupational safety even for informal work. But the Indian government's public pronouncements and stated policies contain nothing of the kind, even as more intense and frequent heat waves are poised to become bigger killers in the subcontinent than the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The government is essentially leaving people to fend for themselves in a foreseeable tragedy. And it envisages continued investment in fossil fuels for decades to come.

"Mother Nature is just chemistry, biology, and physics. That's all she is," the environmentalist Robert Watson has said. "Mother Nature always bats last, and she always bats 1.000."

Governments must recognize that fundamental truth. But if record heat waves cannot persuade them, it is not easy to see what will.

*Jayati Ghosh, Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, is a member of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism.*



## O-PED

By Mariana Mazzucato and  
Alan Donnelly

## How the G7 Could Help the Debt-Distressed

**L**ONDON - This month, G7 leaders will gather in Germany to discuss a litany of overlapping global crises, including the war in Ukraine, food insecurity, inflation, backlogged global supply chains, the pandemic response, and climate change. These challenges have a common denominator: All are falling hardest on low- and middle-income countries that are already facing an escalating debt crisis.

When COVID-19 arrived two and a half years ago, nearly 60% of the poorest countries were already in or at high risk of debt distress. Since then, the pandemic has pushed this cohort's total indebtedness to a 50-year high, leaving more than two dozen countries at risk of defaulting in 2022 (with Sri Lanka becoming the first casualty last month).

Most of these countries are still struggling to recover from the pandemic, and now a tsunami of negative shocks is threatening their prospects further. On top of soaring prices for staples like energy, wheat, and fertilizer, interest-rate hikes in the United States and other major economies are driving up borrowing costs globally.

Moreover, because many of the lowest-income countries do not even have credit ratings, they remain entirely reliant on development finance to make up revenue shortfalls and meet basic needs. The World Bank projects that nearly 100 million more people may fall into extreme poverty in 2022.

G7 members - Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the US, and the European Union - are uniquely positioned to help low-income countries manage deteriorating macroeconomic conditions. Besides China, they are the largest source of development finance globally. They are also among the largest shareholders of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and they are power players in key forums like the Paris Club of sovereign creditors and the G20, where most of today's debt-relief and debt-renegotiation agreements are shaped.

Despite this small, wealthy group's outsize power, it has not fully used the tools at its disposal to help poorer countries. The first tool is the IMF's special drawing rights (SDRs), an international fiat currency that G7 countries can urge the IMF to issue to help poorer countries manage their mounting debts and the effects of inflation.

We know that this tool works because the IMF's \$650 billion SDR allocation in August 2021 helped numerous low- and middle-income countries avoid fiscal crises and defaults while still maintaining essential public services. Now, a new allocation is needed to help avert a human and economic catastrophe as hunger crises and inflationary pressures intensify in the coming months. G7 countries should also urge the US to "recycle" its own unused SDR allocation to support countries in need. All the other G7 members have already done this through pledges to the IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Trust.

The second tool is conditional debt relief. At this month's summit, G7 leaders should urge fellow G20 countries immediately to extend the Debt Service and Suspension Initiative through 2023. They also need to shore up the faltering G20 Common Framework, which is the current "go-to" forum for sovereign-debt restructuring. Here, it is important to find ways to engage constructively with China and private creditors. Failing that, the mechanism should be abandoned so that a more functional, truly multilateral framework for debt restructuring can be developed.

In either case, the G7 should explore the idea of debt-for-health or debt-for-climate swaps, whereby sovereign debt is forgiven in exchange for a country's commitment to use the freed-up funds to invest in health systems, clean energy, and so forth. The Global Fund has already used this mechanism (at a smaller scale) to mobilize financing for the fight against HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria. Now, the same approach should be applied more broadly to strengthen health systems and pandemic preparedness and response (PPR).

Given that the annual PPR funding gap is estimated to be around \$10.5 billion, and that the G20's financial intermediary fund for PPR has raised less than \$1 billion to date, we clearly need to find more effective ways to help low- and middle-income countries finance investments in their health systems. Targeted debt relief is an essential first step.

The third tool is the IMF loan regime - but only if it can be reformed. Since the start of the pandemic, the IMF has provided more than 150 country loans, ostensibly to help low- and middle-income countries create fiscal space with which to manage a public-health and economic crisis. But most of these agreements contain counterproductive provisions requiring recipient governments to cut their public wage bills or reduce their debt-to-GDP ratios. The IMF's own research department has found that these conditions tend to undermine state capacity, jeopardize essential services, and increase inequality in the medium to long term.

G7 leaders should use their substantial influence at the IMF to push for a new operating model, so that the money it lends to support public investment in essential services does not end up gutting those countries' capacity to provide those services.

If the G7 wants to see low- and middle-income countries invest more in "health for all," decarbonization, and other United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, it needs to do everything in its power to help create the right external conditions. By supporting a new SDR allocation, offering conditional debt relief, and ending the IMF's fixation on austerity, G7 leaders can help give poorer countries a fighting chance.

*Mariana Mazzucato, Founding Director of the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, is Chair of the World Health Organization's Council on the Economics of Health for All. Alan Donnelly, a former member of the European Parliament, is Founder and Convenor of the G20 Health and Development Partnership.*

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## OPINION

By Antara Haldar

## Trump's Lessons for Defending the Rule of Law

**C**AMBRIDGE - A new show currently airing gives fresh meaning to the term reality TV. Call it American Democracy: Clear and Present Danger. It should be required viewing.

Almost 18 months after the January 6, 2021, storming of the US Capitol, a House of Representatives select committee is publicizing the findings of its detailed investigation into the event. The committee has interviewed over 1,000 witnesses and examined 125,000 documents. It has held six hearings so far in June, with a view to trying to bring former President Donald Trump to justice.

Vice Chair Liz Cheney, the committee's senior Republican (and one of only two GOP representatives willing to serve on it), summed up the panel's conclusion: "President Trump summoned the mob, assembled the mob, and lit the flame of this attack." Showcasing evidence implicating the former president more directly in the insurrection than was previously known, the committee has documented his failure to call in National Guard units or additional police officers to help at the Capitol, and that he ignored his advisers' pleas to ask his supporters to stand down. Trump appeared to be directly encouraging violence. The picture the committee paints is one of a premeditated attack on democracy, rather than a spontaneous crowd combustion.

Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani and John Eastman, a conservative lawyer and academic, appear to have been the "brains" behind the attempted coup (cooking up a plot that Trump knew to be illegal), while the far-right Proud Boys and Oath Keepers provided much of the brawn. The focus of their efforts was to pressure then-Vice President Mike Pence to refuse to certify the 2020 presidential election, which Trump lost to Joe Biden. There is also evidence of ongoing attempts to coerce officials in some states to reverse the result. A shocking revelation from the hearings this week indicates that Trump, himself, sought to join the mob.

Several former Trump loyalists have testified against him. Former Attorney General Bill Barr dismissed Trump's election lies as "bullshit." Trump's daughter, Ivanka, and his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, effectively stated that they accepted the result (prompting a vitriolic rant from Trump). Capitol police officer Caroline Edwards' description of "carnage" and "slipping in people's blood" was a chilling reminder that five people died and 140 law-enforcement officers were injured in the attack.

The conservative federal judge Michael Luttig warned that Trump is "a clear and present danger" to American democracy - a plea addressed to the Republican Party, which continues to close ranks around the former president. House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy is boycotting the hearings; most Republicans are ignoring them and stonewalling. Trump remains the GOP's central figure, retains the support of a majority of the party's base, and may well run for the presidency again in 2024.

Trump's political modus operandi contains a lesson about the power of emotional engagement. Back in 2016, many pundits were skeptical about Trump's electoral prospects, given his lack of a strategy that they could recognize. They searched in vain for logic and facts in his incoherent speeches, but missed the emotional thread in his messages that bound voters to him.

The psychologist Paul Ekman identifies six basic emotions: fear, anger, sadness, joy, disgust, and surprise. Trump is to one of those - anger - what Mozart was to G Minor. And he seems to have an innate capacity to transmit his anger to his supporters. That was Trump's masterstroke in 2016: substituting feelings for facts.

The debate about the primacy of "feeling" versus "thinking," including a heated and high-profile exchange between the social psychologist Robert Zajonc and the psychologist Richard Lazarus, was central to psychology in the 1980s. Zajonc made a compelling case for "affective primacy," establishing that, in many cases, including in decision-making, affect (roughly speaking, emotion) appears to precede cognition, with justifications often being produced ex post.

More recently, the psychologist Jonathan Haidt of New York University has argued that "moral action covaries with moral emotion more than with moral reasoning" - or, as he famously put it, the emotional dog wags its rational tail. For many Americans, Trump has all but put this dog on a leash. By contrast, and despite growing evidence, most American liberals remain determined to bury emotion and focus on the rational. That's like bringing a knife to a gunfight.

Emotional responses are, by design, quick, automatic, and pervasive - and tend to overpower conflicting judgments. In his seminal 1872 work, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, Charles Darwin argued that our affective responses are on a continuum from nonhuman animals and derive from split-second reactions that emerged as existential requirements of survival (for example, to escape a predator). As psychologists currently understand it, "organisms had reflex-like responses that allowed them to respond to environmental threats ... and emotional expressions were residues of these responses." It is this survival instinct to which Trump appeals.

But our nonhuman ancestral inheritance does not condemn us to be ruled by our baser instincts. The philosopher David Hume argued that moral sentiment was a better guide than reason alone. We may know that a particular action might harm many people, but unless we care about those people or about human well-being, that awareness does not guide our action.

With both interest in the Capitol riot and perceptions of Trump's culpability declining, the January 6 Committee faces an uphill task. But by taking a leaf out of Trump's book and courting public opinion, the panel has got its priorities right. The production value of the hearings has been excellent, and instead of relying solely on logical arguments, the committee is creating a compelling narrative in a multi-part docudrama that is more likely to elicit moral engagement.

About 20 million Americans tuned in for the first hearing, similar to the number that watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on TV and well above the 4.6 million to 7.6 million who saw the season finale of Trump's *The Apprentice*. At the moment, the score looks like Trump: 0, Rule of Law: 1. But the key to this all-important drama's success will be keeping viewers hooked.

*Antara Haldar is Associate Professor of Empirical Legal Studies at the University of Cambridge.*

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# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Sen. Judiciary Committee wants Election Law reformed

By Ethel A Tweh

The Committee on Judiciary, Human Rights, Claims and Petition of the Liberian Senate over the weekend concluded a two - day retreat on the proposed amendments to the Elections Law.

Elections Commission (NEC). The various groups provided their inputs on the amendments for possible considerations by the Plenary of the Liberia Senate.

Among issues considered during the retreat was the amendment of Section 7.3 (2) of the current election

talks about hearing and determination of complaints.

The retreat also considered an amendment to allow Stipendiary Magistrates as hearing officers to hear complaints arising from elections instead of a hearing officer in the employ of the NEC.

Further, the two days' retreat also considered that the appointment of Commissioners of the National Elections Commission should not be left with the President alone.

It was suggested that such an appointment should be done from a list scrutinized by a vetting committee submitted to the President.

They also took into account that all appointees within the Executive wishing to contest in pending elections resign one year, instead of two and three years as required in the Code of Conduct.

Meanwhile, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, Human Rights, Claims and Petition, Senator Cllr. Varney Sherman has commended the experts, civil society actors and representatives of political parties, and the NEC for their inputs and suggestions during the retreat.

The committee is expected to report its findings and recommendations to the Senate Plenary shortly for subsequent action. --*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

## Comptroller General takes public financial management awareness to Bomi

As part of ongoing efforts to create more awareness on the Public Financial Management Act of 2009, Liberia's Comptroller and Accountant General, Mr. Janka A. Kowo over the weekend, engaged cross section of students, administrative staff including other citizens of the Bomi Community College on the PFM processes.

Kowo engagement with the people is aimed at informing them on ways the government collect and spent public resources, and whether the expenditure of these resources are in the right direction for development purposes.

Held under the theme: "Public Financial Management &

for public use. When public money is collected and spent on citizens, it is called Public Financial Management in Actions. When the government provides free tuition, electricity, health and education for the benefit of all, it is called PFM in actions" Kowo explains.

In 2018, the President of Liberia declared a tuition free program for all public Universities and colleges across the country, it is called Public Financial Management in actions. Doctors and medical personnel were also sent to specialize in various medical disciplines, it is PFM in action, Kowo added.

The financial expert explained that going forward, the government will be more



The retreat was chaired by Grand Cape Mount County Senator, Cllr. Varney Sherman.

It was intended to inform members of the Judiciary committee on the proposed amendments.

The retreat brought together a number of experts including representatives from political parties and civil society organizations, including the National

law to have the current registration fees for candidates increased.

They also discussed Section 4.5 (1d) of the election law to have a mandatory clause in the law for gender representation of political parties submitting a list of candidates in general elections.

The retreat also took into consideration the amendment to Section 5.12(3) of the law which

## Weah makes donation at Ganta Inland Children Ministry Church

President George Manneh Weah has donated U.S.\$10,000 and a substantial quantity of building materials to the Children Inland Church Ministry in Ganta, Nimba County.

The President, along with an array of Government Officials, who are in Ganta to participate in a Cabinet retreat, visited the Church to worship with its mostly indigenous Nimba congregation on Sunday, July 10, 2022.

At the ceremony, he thanked the people of Nimba and Liberians in general for keeping the peace. Without peace, he said, there will be no road, and "we will not be here for this retreat and worship with the Church."

Mr. Weah also reminded the congregation of the need for genuine reconciliation as the country prepares to celebrate its 175th independence anniversary.

At the ceremony, the church leaders announced an

ongoing project to build a children's ministry, to which the President made his contribution. "Thank you for having the children at heart by initiating a project for them", he said.

Continuing, he said, "my Cabinet here will help raise the needed funds for our children". He pledged five

Hundred (500) pieces of steel rods, and One Thousand (1000) bags of Cement.

Before visiting the Church on Sunday, President Weah joined in the celebration of the 70th birth anniversary of Senator Prince Johnson on arrival in Ganta on Saturday, June 9, 2022.



You " the event took place at the auditorium of Bomi Community College (BCC).

Speaking at the opening, Kowo reaffirmed government's commitment through the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development, revealing that public money will be spent in the right interest of all Liberian by providing resources in all sectors of the economy.

According to him, Public Financial Management is basically about government's money, how the government generate and how the government spend it in the right interest of the country. " PFM is basically about government money, how the government generate and how the government spend it in the right interest of the country" he added.

" I think it is about time we engage the public and inform all citizens across the fifteen counties on how government money is generated and spent

robust by reaching out to citizens across the 15 counties through public information and the ongoing Public Financial Management outreach to explain how the government collects resources and spends those resources in the right interest of all.

" Going forward the government will be more robust by reaching out to citizens across the fifteen counties through public information and the ongoing public financial management outreach to explain how the government collects resources and spends those resources in the right interest of all" he says.

The Comptroller and Accountants General believes that when public information is spread out to citizens on how the government collects national resources and how they are spending, citizens will be more informed about ongoing development across the country.



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Liberian committed maritime security

July 8, 2022, Berlin, Germany: The Liberia Maritime Authority Commissioner and CEO Lenn Eugene Nagbe says Liberia is heavily involved in all efforts to maintain

criminal activities in the Gulf of Guinea.

According to him, this can be successfully mitigated and contained if stronger laws and policies are crafted to punish pirates and those

Germany 05th -06th focused on current challenges regarding maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea and discussed ways to support African-led ideas and approaches.

The G7++ FoGG aims to connect African coastal states, G7 countries, private actors, civil society as well as regional and international stakeholders in their efforts to strengthen cooperation on maritime security as well as to advance the implementation of the 2013 Yaoundé Architecture.

The FoGG is hosted under the Co-Chair of Germany and Côte d'Ivoire, with participants from G7++ FoGG countries including those in West and Central Africa, international organizations and industry intend to pursue the following strategic priorities during their co-chairmanship:

1. Supporting Resilience and the Rule of Law in the Context of Maritime Security
2. Protecting Marine Resources and Biodiversity
3. Boosting Coordinated Regional Responses and Aligning International Initiatives with Regional Needs and Plans

involved in illegal activities. Liberia currently has the world's second-largest merchant fleet with over 4,800 vessels at 210 million total gross tons, which equates to over 13% of the world's fleet.

The working meeting which was held in Berlin,



maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Participating in the G7++ Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (G7++ FoGG) first plenary meeting, Commissioner Nagbe stressed the need for collective involvement to curtail piracy and general

## Lonestar Cell MTN MoMo Waysay-Wasa puts smile on several faces

By Lincoln G. Peters

Lonestar Cell MTN through its mega promo initiative "MoMo Waysay-Wasa" Version 2, over the weekend gave away over US\$5,000 cash prizes and items to lucky customers and agents in several parts of Liberia.

The prizes were given during the second raffle draw since the program was launched. It was conducted at the Lonestar Cell MTN branch in Redlight, Paynesville, in the presence of representatives of the National Lottery Authority (NLA).

In an overview, Bobby S. Lekpyee, Operations Manager, Lonestar Cell MTN Mobile Money, told the gathering that it was a great day for Lonestar Cell MTN customers and agents.

He said it was another raffle draw for customers and agents to again walk away with cash prizes or items.

"That is what Lonestar Cell MTN MoMo Waysaywasa is all about. Anything you win from Lonestar MTN MoMo Waysaywasa 2, you don't have to pay anything for it," he said.

"When you win from MoMo Waysaywasa, we will call you on 0886500000", Mr. Lekpyee added.

In a brief remark, NLA Monitor, Odicious B. Massaquoi said the MoMo Waysaywasa campaign is so interesting that people continue to express their smiles.

He said the presence of the NLA was to make sure that the winners receive their prizes.

He noted that the MoMo Waysaywasa is not about 419 and cautioned people to answer when they are called.

"Please, when you are selected, answer your calls. Lonestar MTN does not want money from you, the only value thing you bring is your identification card to collect your prize," he said.

During the raffle draw, 60 customers won cash prizes of US\$ 50 dollars each. It included 10 customers from each of the six selected counties including Montserrado, Bomi, Grand Gedeh, Cape Mount, Maryland and Lofa Counties totaling US\$3,000.

Besides, two customers in Montserrado County each won a smart 43' TV set.



## Weah chairs cabinet retreat in Ganta

By Emmanuel wise Jipoh

President George Manneh Weah and members of his cabinet on Saturday July 9, 2022, kicked off a week-long visit to Nimba County, northeastern Liberia for a National Cabinet Retreat from 9-13th July 2022 under the theme, "Pushing forward for a better Liberia."

First of its kind this year, and third under the incumbency of President George Manneh Weah since the CDC- led government took state power in 2018, the retreat began with a stopover in Kakata, Margibi County, where President Weah dedicated a "One Stop Shop Service Center" refurbished by the Ministry of Transport with support from the World Bank.

President Weah, received a resounding welcome from Margibians and commended them for working with his government and partners in the realization of such a success, including demonstration of strong commitment to realizing

Bong County, and praised them for their dedicated support to the government.

Onward to Ganta, Nimba County, before reaching Gompa City, the President had a brief stop in Paw-Paw Village, near Gbain, where he also dedicated separate housing units.

On his arrival in Gompa City, President Weah along with members of the cabinet received huge ovations from citizens and resounded support towards his second term bid for the Country's top seat ahead of the 2023 General and Presidential Elections.

President Weah urged Nimbians to put Liberia first in their social and political involvement, reminding them that Liberia is bigger than anyone's political desires, and that working together is far greater than undermining its development.

He said Liberia is the only country that Liberians have therefore, each citizen must strive for peace and harmony.



the service center.

"We have come a long way and still need to do more", the President noted, as he urged the people of Margibi County to take ownership and feel a part of the progress made collectively together with the government.

He thanked the Ministry of Transport for the initiative, which he noted, aligned with the government's decentralization agenda.

President Weah further said the erection of the Service Center is one of several proofs that his government's unfeigned commitment to working in the interest of the Liberian people.

Enroute to Ganta, Nimba County along with a throng of cabinet members, for the cabinet retreat that is aimed at repositioning government's development priorities, President Weah, received heroic welcome from citizens of

Meanwhile, the four days Cabinet Retreat is intended to align the Cabinet with Government's priorities, develop an agenda from there to drive the administration. It will also feature discussions and presentations on the implementation status of the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), zooming specifically on the National Economy, Revenue Generation, Aid Management and Coordination, and the President's 2022 Legislative Agenda.

The Retreat will place particular focus on issues of accountability and transparency in government, while Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions (MACs) will report to the President on their achievements and plans. President Weah is also expected to hold separate meetings with MACs, beginning today, Monday. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



# Français

## Weah présente le plan de transformation du Libéria

Dans le cadre de son plan de transformation, le Libéria va désormais se concentrer sur la santé, l'éducation, l'agriculture, l'économie numérique, l'autonomisation des jeunes et des femmes, les routes et les ports, l'énergie et le genre, c'est plutôt ce qu'a révélé le président George Weah.

« Notre politique de transformation pendant la période de reconstitution des ressources se concentrera sur la santé, l'éducation, l'agriculture, l'économie numérique, l'autonomisation des jeunes et des femmes, les routes et les ports, l'énergie et le genre », a révélé jeudi le président Weah au Sommet des chefs d'État et de gouvernement organisé sous les auspices de l'Association internationale de développement (IDA) de la Banque mondiale pour l'Afrique à Dakar, Sénégal.

Les dirigeants africains sont actuellement à Dakar, la capitale sénégalaise, pour appeler à un bon démarrage de la mise en œuvre d'IDA20,

qui met l'accent sur une reprise robuste et résiliente pour l'Afrique. Cela est devenu nécessaire, car le continent a été durement touché par de multiples crises mondiales liées au climat et de la COVID-19, des niveaux croissants d'insécurité alimentaire et par l'impact de la guerre en Ukraine.

Le programme IDA20 devrait soutenir une reprise résiliente après ces crises et aider le continent à poursuivre sa transformation économique.

Dans son discours, le

président Weah a reconnu l'impact dévastateur de la guerre russo-ukrainienne en plus de l'Ebola et de la Covid-19 sur l'économie libérienne.

Il a dit au cours du sommet que l'économie libérienne, qui dépend essentiellement des importations des produits de première nécessité, dont la nourriture et le pétrole, est actuellement confrontée à la hausse des prix en raison de la guerre en Ukraine, et que même les pays membres de

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Gongloe attire le soutien des Libériens basés aux États-Unis

Le juriste Tiawan Saye Gongloe bénéficierait d'un énorme soutien des Libériens vivant aux États-Unis. Candidat à la présidentielle prochaine. Me Gongloe est actuellement en visite aux États-Unis.

Une dépêche en provenance des États-Unis indique que le message du juriste Gongloe d'une approche globale de régénération économique et de développement national

grâce à des politiques prudentes et à l'intégrité culturelle est bien reçu par les Libériens de la diaspora.

Depuis son arrivée aux États-Unis il y a près de deux mois, ses activités se sont principalement concentrées sur la côte et la région du centre et un peu au sud.

Les membres du mouvement Gongloe's BETTER LIBERIA usent de leur créativité pour faire connaître et faire la promotion de leur futur candidat à la prochaine présidentielle à

travers une série d'événements et d'autres médias sociaux.

Le lundi 4 juillet 2022, les membres et les responsables de la section californienne des "Friends of Gongloe Global" ont profité de la célébration du 246<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'indépendance des États-Unis d'Amérique à Antioche pour défilé et partager des affiches portant son portrait.

Plusieurs photos publiées sur certaines plateformes de médias sociaux montrent plusieurs Libériens et même des non-Libériens qui exhibaient les photos de Me Gongloe.

Le Dr Tuwe Mehn, l'un des organisateurs, a déclaré que Me Gongloe a eu à rencontrer quelques Libériens à Antioche, San Francisco, San Jose, Oakland et Sacramento et d'autres villes au cours de sa tournée du 9 au 13 juillet. Il devrait également organiser des tables rondes avec certains dirigeants d'entreprises locales et des élus de la région.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Éditorial

### La désinformation lors des élections est dangereuse

Les partis politiques du Libéria sont en train de tolérer un précédent mauvais et très laid lors des élections. Ils ont la manie de diffuser la désinformation, annonçant la victoire de leur candidat avant la Commission électorale qui est investie du pouvoir de proclamer des résultats officiels.

L'élection partielle sénatoriale qui vient de se terminer dans le comté de Lofa en un exemple. Le Parti de l'Unité et la Coalition au pouvoir ont mobilisé leurs partisans respectifs dans la rue du comté pour célébrer la soi-disant victoire de leur candidat alors que la NEC n'avait pas encore entamé l'annonce des résultats officiels.

Quoique les bulletins de vote comptés soient affichés dans les bureaux de vote à la fin des scrutins, cela ne signifie pas qu'ils ont une valeur officielle. La désinformation est une recette pour le chaos et la violence.

À en croire des informations en provenance du district de Foya à Lofa après l'élection partielle, il y a eu des affrontements sanglants entre des partisans rivaux de la CDC et de l'UP, avant que les forces de sécurité conjointes n'interviennent et dispersent les groupes rivaux.

Un acte similaire s'était produit après les élections sénatoriales spéciales du 8 décembre 2020, en particulier dans le comté de Montserrado entre le sénateur Abraham Darius Dillon et le représentant Thomas Fallah du CDC, lorsqu'une station de radio pro-CDC a diffusé ses propres résultats, présentant le représentant Fallah comme vainqueur de l'élection, en donnant des résultats totalement différents de ce que la NEC a affiché dans les bureaux de vote du comté.

Lorsque cette malhonnêteté délibérée se produit, les dirigeants du parti concerné ferment les yeux. Ce qui est encore plus préoccupant, c'est que la NEC qui préside le scrutin ne réprimande pas les personnes impliquées ou ne leur dit pas d'arrêter immédiatement.

Remarquez, ce ne sont que des exemples d'élections sénatoriales, et ils envoient un signal de ce à quoi s'attendre aux élections présidentielles et générales en 2023. De telles pratiques négatives et antidémocratiques ne devraient pas non plus avoir leur place dans nos processus électoraux, ni maintenant, ni dans le futur.

Nous appelons le gouvernement et la Commission électorale nationale non seulement à condamner ceux qui tentent de renverser nos processus démocratiques par une campagne de désinformation, mais à veiller à ce qu'ils soient traduits en justice pour faire face à la loi. Il est important que la NEC émette une mise en garde sérieuse avant, pendant et après une élection.

Il est important que nous, en tant que nation, fassions tout pour que nos élections soient exemptes de violence et d'actes qui jetteraient une ombre noire sur l'ensemble du processus uniquement pour des intérêts politiques égoïstes au détriment du bien commun. L'élection est un exercice démocratique et la démocratie devrait permettre de suivre son cours plutôt que de tricher ou de tromper les autres pour obtenir un avantage indu qui laisse place à des conséquences inimaginables.



# Français

## Weah présente le plan

l'union du fleuve Mano ne sont pas épargnés.

Cependant, face à ces défis, son gouvernement a déjà élaboré une politique de transformation pour sa période de reconstitution des ressources. Cette politique, a-t-il expliqué, se concentrera sur la santé, l'éducation, l'agriculture, l'économie numérique, l'autonomisation des jeunes et des femmes, les routes et les ports, l'énergie et le genre.

Il a ajouté que les secteurs nommés dans la politique de transformation sont essentiels au plan de développement national du Libéria, l'Agenda en faveur des pauvres pour la prospérité et le développement, qui est un programme national échelonné sur 5 ans (de 2018 à 2023).

« En ce qui concerne le secteur de la santé, nous avons utilisé efficacement l'expérience acquise dans la lutte contre Ebola pour contrôler et éliminer la COVID-19, et nous améliorons nos programmes en vue de futures pandémies. Nous amélioreront également notre système de prestation de soins de santé.

Nous avons également accru l'accès aux services scolaires, en fournissant des colis nutritionnels aux élèves et en renforçant les capacités des enseignants, ainsi qu'en créant des centres pour renforcer la recherche.

La création de l'environnement pour la mise en œuvre de la loi sur la sécurité alimentaire, la loi sur les engrais et la validation

de la loi sur le développement du riz sont quelques-unes des mesures que mon gouvernement met en œuvre pour assurer la production et la sécurité alimentaires.

Sur le plan économique, la promotion des paiements électroniques et de la numérisation de l'économie libérienne, en collaboration avec certains de nos principaux partenaires au développement, est un impératif urgent et primordial. En outre, l'augmentation du crédit au secteur privé et la garantie de la stabilité du système financier sont des initiatives nécessaires qui sont bien engagées.

Conscients que les infrastructures sont le fondement du développement national, nous tenons à la connectivité routière dans tout le pays, ce qui facilitera la circulation et l'accès aux produits et services, ainsi que le développement et la modernisation de nos ports maritimes et aéroports. Nous nous concentrons également sur l'augmentation de la production, du transport et de la distribution d'électricité dans les zones urbaines et rurales », a dit le Chef de l'État.

Parallèlement, le sommet devrait également approuver le travail et la pertinence de l'IDA en tant que partenaire de choix dans la région africaine. L'IDA est l'une des principales sources de financement de la lutte contre l'extrême pauvreté dans les pays les plus pauvres du monde. L'Afrique est le plus grand bénéficiaire de l'IDA avec 39 pays. Elle a fait des progrès significatifs dans l'amélioration des indicateurs de développement au cours de six décennies de partenariat avec la Banque mondiale.

## Gongloe attire le soutien

Depuis qu'il a déclaré le 4 décembre 2021 son intention de se présenter à l'élection présidentielle de 2023, le féroce message anti-corruption de Me Gongloe, symbolisé par son balai emblématique, avec lequel il entend balayer métaphoriquement les ordures de la corruption omniprésente dans l'administration libérienne, résonne de plus en plus fort chez beaucoup de Libériens et même des non-Libériens qui aiment vraiment le Libéria.

L'éminent avocat des droits de l'homme a promis que sous son administration, « les salaires et avantages du président et de tous les fonctionnaires d'État seront rendus publics dans les

principaux journaux du Libéria ». Il propose également « un audit trimestriel du style de vie du président, de tous les cadres supérieurs et d'autres personnes, comme défini par la section 10.1 du code de conduite de 2014 ».

Ce sont ces propositions tournées vers l'avenir, ainsi que son principe selon lequel la fonction publique sert à servir sa patrie, et non à voler, qui attirent des électeurs potentiels vers lui.

Depuis son arrivée dans le pays le 14 mai 2022, il a rencontré des responsables gouvernementaux fédéraux, étatiques et locaux, des chefs d'entreprise ainsi que des citoyens privés, en plus de ses rencontres riches en couleurs avec des Libériens à travers les États-Unis.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Jayati Ghosh

## En Inde, les travailleurs meurent de chaud et le gouvernement ne fait rien

**N**EW DELHI - Le roman de science-fiction prémonitoire de Kim Stanley Robinson, *The Ministry for the Future* (non traduit en français), commence par la description saisissante d'une énorme vague de chaleur dans une ville du nord de l'Inde qui tue des millions de personnes. Bien que les événements du roman se déroulent quelques décennies dans le futur, ils semblent d'une actualité terrifiante dans le contexte de la vague de chaleur sans précédent qui frappe le centre et le nord de l'Inde et le Pakistan depuis la fin mars.

Au mois d'avril, période normalement marquée par un temps printanier tardif avec des températures maximales moyennes ne dépassant pas 35°C, les températures diurnes ont dépassé 46°C à New Delhi. Dans plusieurs endroits de la région, les températures ont oscillé autour de 45°C pendant deux mois, avec un pic de 49°C à Jacobabad au Pakistan le 30 avril, et de 47,2°C à Banda dans le centre de l'Inde. Il s'agit du mois d'avril le plus chaud enregistré depuis le début des relevés météo en Inde, soit depuis 122 ans.

Bien que la chaleur soit légèrement retombée depuis début mai, la saison chaude ne fait que commencer dans la région. Les météorologues indiens prédisent déjà qu'en partie à cause du déficit pluviométrique par rapport à la normale, les températures dépasseront 50°C dans une grande partie de l'Asie du Sud avec l'arrivée de la période estivale. Ces conditions climatiques peuvent s'avérer mortelles parce que la combinaison d'une chaleur extrême et d'une humidité élevée empêche l'évaporation de la sueur, réduisant ainsi la capacité du corps à se refroidir.

C'est la raison pour laquelle la température du thermomètre mouillé (Tw), ou la température humide, qui tient à la fois compte de la chaleur et de l'humidité de l'air, est importante. Lorsque cette température avoisine 32°C, les activités extérieures deviennent difficiles et éprouvantes. Si elle dépasse 35°C, passer quelques heures à l'ombre, même sans activité physique, peut entraîner la mort. Plusieurs villes indiennes ont récemment connu des températures de près de 30°C Tw. Ces températures pourraient augmenter lors des prochaines canicules et être fatales pour les êtres humains, exactement comme le décrit Robinson dans son roman.

Pourtant, les preuves factuelles indiquant que le changement climatique se produit plus rapidement que les prévisions scientifiques les plus pessimistes ne semblent pas inciter les pouvoirs publics à infléchir de toute urgence les orientations économiques, que ce soit en Inde ou ailleurs dans le monde. Comme trop d'autres gouvernements, l'administration du Premier ministre indien Narendra Modi se montre peu encline à mettre en œuvre les changements politiques et à consacrer les ressources budgétaires nécessaires pour réduire les émissions de dioxyde de carbone et diminuer la pollution, des mesures pourtant essentielles pour éviter une catastrophe climatique.

En réalité, le gouvernement ne fait même pas le strict minimum pour aider la population indienne, majoritairement pauvre, à faire face aux changements climatiques qui l'affectent déjà. Modi a demandé aux gouvernements des États indiens de prendre des mesures pour prévenir les décès dus aux vagues de chaleur et aux incendies, mais comment doivent-ils s'y prendre exactement? Le Plan national d'action contre les maladies liées à la chaleur ne prévoit pas de protéger les personnes contre l'exposition aux chaleurs extrêmes,

seulement des stratégies limitées pour atténuer leurs conséquences, et il s'adresse avant tout aux services de santé publique et aux établissements de soins privés.

Il n'est d'aucune utilité pour les neuf personnes sur dix en Inde qui travaillent dans l'économie informelle, sans protection juridique ou sociale. Ces travailleurs n'ont pas d'autre option qu'une activité à l'extérieur, aussi terribles que puissent être les conditions climatiques. Un rapport de l'Organisation internationale du travail (OIT) sur le stress thermique au travail définit l'agriculture et la construction - les deux principaux employeurs en Inde - comme les secteurs qui seront les plus directement concernés par la dégradation des conditions de travail et les pertes de productivité liées au réchauffement de la planète. Les emplois dans d'autres secteurs particulièrement exposés, comme le ramassage des ordures, sont aussi majoritairement occupés par des travailleurs informels très pauvres et peu rémunérés.

Ces activités en extérieur sont les plus susceptibles d'entraîner de graves problèmes de santé, voire la mort, si elles sont effectuées dans des conditions de chaleur et d'humidité extrêmes. Mais les centaines de millions d'Indiens qui occupent ces emplois n'ont généralement pas d'autre choix que de continuer à les exercer.

L'un des aspects du stress thermique au travail que même l'OIT n'aborde pas est celui du travail non rémunéré des centaines de millions de femmes et de filles en Inde qui vont chaque jour chercher de l'eau pour les besoins du foyer. Les canicules assèchent les eaux de surface et abaissent le niveau des nappes phréatiques, ce qui oblige les femmes et les filles à parcourir des distances toujours plus longues et à consacrer toujours plus de temps à la collecte et au transport de l'eau, rendant cette tâche plus pénible et potentiellement mortelle.

L'OIT souligne que les gouvernements doivent mettre en œuvre des politiques d'adaptation aux températures plus élevées pour atténuer le stress thermique au travail, notamment en assurant une protection sociale universelle et en garantissant la sécurité au travail, même pour les emplois informels. Mais les déclarations publiques et les politiques affichées du gouvernement indien ne contiennent rien de tel, alors même que des vagues de chaleur plus intenses et plus fréquentes sont sur le point de devenir plus meurtrières dans le sous-continent que la pandémie du Covid-19.

Le gouvernement indien laisse essentiellement la population se débrouiller seule face à une tragédie prévisible. Et il envisage de continuer à investir dans les combustibles fossiles pour les décennies à venir.

Comme l'a dit Sir Robert Watson, ancien président de la Plate-forme intergouvernementale scientifique et politique sur la biodiversité et les services écosystémiques (IPBES), « Mère Nature fait simplement ce que lui dictent la chimie, la biologie et la physique. Mère Nature a toujours le dernier mot et elle gagne toujours ».

Les gouvernements doivent admettre cette vérité fondamentale. Si les vagues de chaleur sans précédent ne parviennent pas à les convaincre, on voit mal ce qui le pourrait.

*Jayati Ghosh, professeure d'économie à l'université du Massachusetts à Amherst, est membre du Conseil consultatif de haut niveau sur un multilatéralisme efficace du secrétaire général des Nations unies.*



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Weah dedicates 'One Stop Service Center in Margibi

By Emmanuel Wise Jipoh

President George Manneh Weah has reaffirmed government's commitment to the decentralization process in the country, as he dedicates a 'One Stop Shop Service Center' in Kakata City, Margibi County.

way, but we still have to do more", President Weah said.

He acknowledged the enormous progress already made by government, but indicated that more work needs to be done in the decentralization and de-concentration processes throughout Liberia.

Mr. Weah thanked

to take ownership and feel a part of the progress made collectively together with the government.

Meanwhile, the newly established service center, well furnished with support from the UNDP including national government will provide services to citizens in Margibi County and beyond.

He tested the new automatic system with internet connections whilst taking photos and touring the facility.

The President commended local leaders in the county, including the Ministry Transport for effort to fully implement the government's decentralization goal.

Earlier, Margibi County Superintendent, Jerry Varney, described the Center as a "landmark development" by the Weah administration and assured Margibians' continued commitment to supporting government in its decentralization process.

In brief remark, Transport Minister Samuel A. Wlue said the Margibi County Transport Service Center will make it easier for the people of Margibi County to remain in the country in order to access quality services provided by the State.

Minister Wlue said service delivery, which is meant to reduce cost faced by citizens traveling from Margibi to Monrovia just obtain a driver's license.

He appealed to members of the public to help protect the facility for their own interest.

partners, particularly the United Nations, local authorities and citizens for their support and commitment.

He also lauded citizens of Margibi County for working with government and partners in the realization of such a success, including demonstration of strong commitment to realizing this important achievement.

"We have come a long way and still need to do more", he urged and rally the people of Margibi County

## US\$250,000 empowerment project for people with disabilities

By Emmanuel Wise Jipoh

Persons with disabilities continue to face barriers in finding and keeping employment, and many are unable to participate fully in the society and the economy thus, prompting the Government of Liberia (GOL) through the National Commission on Disability to launch a US\$250,000 empowerment project for people living with disabilities in the country.

The chairperson of the National Commission on Disability (NCD) Amb. Daintown Domah Paybee said the empowerment project is intended to improve the livelihood of members and Liberians living with disabilities generally.

She stressed that the project will also scale up their ventures through access to technical assistance, education and mentorship, something she said, will take several Liberians with disabilities off the streets

nation at large.

She reaffirmed the NDC's commitment to improving livelihood of persons living with disabilities, explaining that implementation of policy programs that will move the government to improving and empowering persons with disabilities.

She said the empowerment project, which kickstarted in Montserrado County, looks to expand to other counties, something that will help improve the livelihood of the disabilities.

For his part, Fallah Boima-Symboanoh, deputy chairperson for administration, applauds government's efforts to providing additional resources to help people living with disabilities.

He noted that most persons with disabilities in Liberia tend to be unseen, unheard, uncounted and unrepresented and that they faced discrimination and barriers in many spheres and stages of life, adding that in their day-to-day lives, persons with disabilities



The Service Center is among other initiatives under the decentralization platform intended to bring services closer to the people with a vision for a new Liberia that responds to the needs of its people thru inclusive governance.

It is a one-stop shop where documentation-related services including permits, licenses and certifications are offered, reflecting the same value and cost in Monrovia.

"We have come a long



to sustainable livelihood. Amb. Pay-bayee said government has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting citizens with disabilities, and by this, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) has allocated \$250,000 to the overall budget of the NCD for empowerment of its members.

Speaking during the project launch on Friday, July 8, 2022, in Congo Town, she urged people living with disabilities not to limit themselves, just begging but to put themselves in the capacity of being productive citizens that can contribute to the group and the

were often excluded from access to the physical environment, information and social networks.

Symboanoh urged people living with disabilities to make every use of the opportunities giving them to empower themselves and do away with depending on others to help them.

The program brought together over 500 persons living with disabilities, officials from the Ministry of Labor, foreign dignitaries and partners working with people living with disabilities in the country.

Editing by Jonathan Browne

## Works Minister outlines major road

By: Kruah Thompson

The Ministry of Public Works says ongoing primary road projects across the country is 4,526, including Gbarnga to Salayea road, 51km, Ganta to Saclepea 39km, Ganta to Sehkepa 66km, Fish Town to Kalokean 80kms, Sanniquellie- to- Loguataoua 47.1km, and Mardina to Robertsports, 12.1kms, respectively.

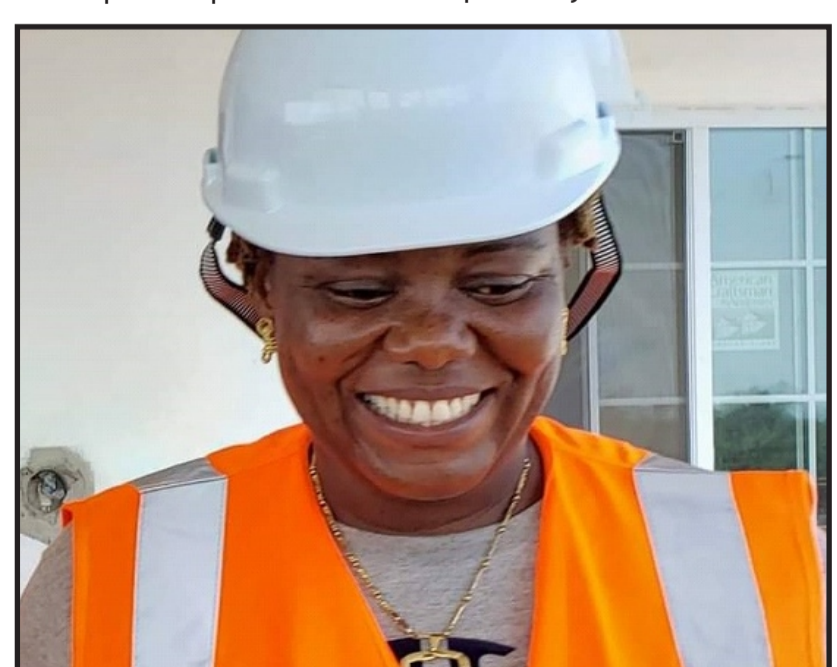
Minister Ruth Coker Collins did not give details of total road construction across the entire country, yet she confirmed ongoing primary road projects and emphasized the need to rehabilitate secondary community and public buildings, bridges, and other infrastructural projects across the country.

Minister Collins told the media that her priority is to expand counties connection through primary feeder

roads, while she keeping focus on achieving the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development into the five years National Development plans covering the period from July 2018 to June 2023.

At the same time she outlined her ninety-day development plan for the

ministry by affirming government's plan on road connectivity, adding that the ministry has also initiated a lot of community roads, including roads linking Tappita to Toe town, Toe town to - Zwedru, Putuken to John David town, Salayea to Konea, Vionjama to Markoma and Barclayville, respectively.



to sustainable livelihood. Amb. Pay-bayee said government has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting citizens with disabilities, and by this, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) has allocated \$250,000 to the overall budget of the NCD for empowerment of its members. Speaking during the project launch on Friday, July 8, 2022, in Congo Town, she urged people living with disabilities not to limit themselves, just begging but to put themselves in the capacity of being productive citizens that can contribute to the group and the

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# Conservation International faces US\$2.5 Million libel suit

The trial of a US\$ 2.5 million “damage for wrong -libel” suit against Conservation International (CI) has been sent for trial.

The case was filed by former employees of the

was prejudiced, it should be given an opportunity to examine the facts and circumstances leading to the communication, the content of the communication, the addressee of the communication and the

their network informing them that the staffs were dismissed from the CBIT project “following a two-month investigation into acts of theft, embezzlement, diversion of funds, bribery and fraud” at the project office.



global environmental organization before the Sixth Judicial Circuit, Civil Law Court at the Temple of Justice.

Lawyers representing the organization has filed a motion requesting the Court to dismiss the case on grounds that the reason for libel had no legal basis for prosecution.

But after entertaining arguments from both sides, Judge YAMIE QUIQUI GBEISAY SR. ruled that “inter-office” communication issued in the aftermath of the dismissal of four employees from the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency Project (CBIT) jointly implemented with the Environmental Protection Agency should be adjudicated in court for jurors to make a determination as to whether or not it constitutes a basis for damages for which the affected employees are seeking the court’s intervention for libel.

In its ruling, Court said “this court says that facts called from the pleading is that the defendants were accused of wrongdoing and investigated by Conservation International which resulted to the inter-office communication. The standard for inter-office communication not to constitute a ground for damage is that such inter-office communication is made in good faith and in normal course of duty.”

The court said to determine whether the communication in question

author of the communication. And this, according to the court can only be achieved at trial. Hence, the motion for disposition was trashed and the case ruled for trial.

This latest development follows speculation that the case of damages for wrong libel has been thrown out due to lack of legal basis.

Meanwhile, lawyers representing Conservation International filed another motion while disposition was being heard, requesting a “Bench Trial” instead of Jury Trial that would allow only the Judge to decide the outcome of the case.

The Court threw out the request on the basis that the previous assigned Judge had ruled that the case should be decided by trial jury against the defendant’s Conservation International request.

It could be recalled that on August 3, 2020, the then Acting Country Director of Conservation International dismissed the employees on claims of acts of theft, embezzlement, diversion of funds, bribery and fraud.

Days after the issuance of the dismissal letters, on August 10, 2020, while the staffs were no longer in their employed, Conservation International Technical Director, George Ilebo, acting on the instructions of the Acting Country Director Peter G. Mulbah sent out an email circular to over 50 employees of Government Ministries and Agencies and each of them forwarded the circular to individuals within

Conservation International also advertised the positions in the local dailies to replace the affected staff of the CBIT project.

It is against this background that the dismissed employees have taken the matter to Civil Law Court for “Damages for Wrong-Libel” for damages done to their characters, person, and professional career.

The affected staff indicated in their petition before the court that the “said email was ill-intent, indeed, recklessly and maliciously maligned, defamed and exposed the plaintiffs to potential injury to their persons, and even death as well as to their professional life.”

The complainants are requesting the court to hold Conservation International liable for damages in the amount of Two Million and Five Hundred Thousand United States Dollars (US\$2.5M).

Since their dismissal, the affected staff are still jobless and their families feeding off begging apparently due to the negative effects of the communication that had gone far and wide.

The case has been assigned to be heard on July 18, 2022, at the Civil Law Court, Temple of Justice, Monrovia.

Conservation International Acting Country Direct Peter Mulbah declined to make any comment on the case when contacted on Sunday by this paper indicating that the story is before the court and he cannot comment on what is already at the court’s disposal.

# CDC defends failure to establish War Crimes Court

By Lincoln G. Peters

Two top government officials of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) have publicly defended the government’s failure to establish a War and Economic Crimes Court in Liberia.

Finance and Development Planning Minister Samuel D. Tweh, Jr. and Liberia’s Solicitor General, Saymah Syrenius Cephus over the weekend cited fear and serious constitutional breaches as part of reasons for the government’s refusal to establish the court.

Their comments came during an event when Liberian lawyer Cllr. Arthur Tamba Johnson officially launched his book.

Minister Tweh claimed that war crimes advocacy is meant to unseat the government of President George Manneh Weah.

Additionally, Tweh and Cllr. Cephus said the same reason that prevented the past government of former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf from establishing the court is the same reason holding the CDC government back.

While in opposition, the CDC had advocated for the Sirleaf government to establish a War and Economic Crimes Court in Liberia to ensure that corrupt government officials and warlords are prosecuted.

On 8 July 2022, Cllr. Arthur T. Johnson officially launched his book titled: “Examining The Consequences Of The Government of Liberia’s Failure to Establish Economic and War Crimes Court to Prosecute War Criminals.”

Officially launching the book,

powerful United States statesman to accomplish this aim, warning that this should not happen.

“Now Morlue is chairman of the governing party, those who turned blind eyes to his advocacy are now saying it’s time to establish the court or pick up the cost,” said Tweh.

“So now fear is [the] objective to [establish] the court. We need to restore the direction of the fear,” Minister Tweh disclosed.

He further indicated that the establishment of the war and economic crimes court in Liberia will be a risk and those who are calling for it are playing political football with it.

Minister Tweh argued that when you explain the social and economic impact of the war and economic crimes court in Liberia, those advocating for its establishment will withdraw from it.

Meanwhile, Minister Tweh has purchased over 1,000 copies of the book and promised to make sure that it is accessible to all university students.

He said he will also ensure that the book reaches all US Congress members to give them a clear understanding of the impact of establishment of a War and Economic Crimes Court in Liberia.

For his part, Cllr. Syrenius Cephus said the Government of Liberia is not responsible for the establishment of the War and Economic Crimes Court because it is a serious constitutional matter.

He contended that President Weah does not have the power to establish the court as others want him to do.



Minister Tweh said war crimes advocacy in Liberia has become a political football game to unseat the government of President George Manneh Weah. He said it is also to use the

Cllr. Cephus also argued that Article 2 and 4 of the Constitution of Liberia prevent the president because an extra constitutional arrangement is needed to establish the court.



## Lofa Women Group swarm ANC Monrovia office



the Liberian society.  
Earlier, ANC Political Officer, Mr. Mulbah Kesselley commanded the Lofa Women United Group for the high turnout to obtain ANC membership and their pledge to support Mr. Cummings Presidential bid in 2023.

Kesselley urged the women group to be unwavering in their support and commitment and go further to encourage other marketers and their family members to join in the fight for genuine change in Liberia comes 2023.

ANC Chairman for Mobilization and Recruitment, Mr. Momo Sambolah expressed gratitude to the Lofa Women United Group for the huge turnout and their strong desires to become registered member of the ANC, the most formidable political party contesting to unseat the corrupt and inept administration of President George Weah.

ANC recruitment has since been ongoing nationwide followed by massive community engagements by the ANC Political Leader and party stalwarts committed to make Mr. Weah, one term President in Liberia.

Ongoing mobilization and recruitment by the Alternative National Congress (ANC), was greeted on Friday, July 8, with massive turnout by the Lofa Women United Group and several marketers in Mount Barclay, Montserrado County.

The Lofa Women group headed by Madam Garmi Zaza said the turnout estimated over 350 including other market women who pledged

support to the ANC Political Leader, Mr. Alexander Cummings ascendency to the Presidency in 2023.

The women made specific reference to the ANC economic empowerment program to lift especially women from extreme poverty and Mr. Cummings expressed commitment to zero tolerance for corruption, which they said has eroded every fabric of

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