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# Clay-Ashland bridge cutoff



**P11**

**-Mayor Richard makes SOS call**

Cutting of Clay-Ashland Bridge



UP Political Leader Mr. Boakai

# VP Boakai desperate for power

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# Continental News

## South African Tavern Shootings Reflect Rising Crime Trends

Mass killings are rare in South Africa, although gun violence is not. Tim Thema, a leader in the informal settlement, said there's been multiple deadly shootings in the area over the past year. "Everybody's got a gun in Soweto," he said. "Whether you're a foreign national, you

violence was not isolated. Another four people were killed by gunmen in Pietermaritzburg, a city in the eastern province of KwaZulu-Natal. While two people have been arrested in connection with that shooting, the assailants from the Soweto tragedy remain at large. Government authorities said the events are not linked.

Bheki Cele, South Africa's police minister, spoke to reporters while visiting grieving residents in Soweto Monday.

"They were about plus-130 empty cartridges of AK-47, which means those people that were there really meant business of killing," Cele said. "We don't believe it was terrorism. So, it's a group of people we believe we will get the motive as soon as we find them."

Crime has overall been on the rise in the country.

The first quarter of this year saw over 6,000 murders – the highest rate for any quarter in the last five years, according to police statistics. Crime experts say gun control campaigns in the 1990s and early 2000s to confiscate and destroy illegal

weapons resulted in a decline in violence.

But in the last decade, the progress has reversed.

Lizette Lancaster is the manager of the crime hub at the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria.

"We have seen problems in policing and law enforcement where corruption has become quite rife, especially at places like the central firearms registries, where destruction of firearms were not – or often resulted in guns being sold back into the hands of criminals," she said. Lancaster said there are signs of improvement, with

efforts to tackle corruption bringing in new, more qualified people into leading law enforcement positions.

But curtailing gun violence isn't just about policing, she added. The country's socioeconomic issues also need to be a priority. "Poverty doesn't make you a criminal. There needs to be other factors. And the growing inequality is one of that, but also just the proliferation of these organized groups are stoking the fires simply by having more people that are willing to engage in organized crime in order to feed their family."

Soweto residents fearful of future attacks say these solutions can't come fast enough. VOA

In the aftermath of two weekend tavern shootings in South Africa that left 19 people dead, communities are asking what needs to be done.



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa joins mourners gathered in the coastal city of East London to grieve the still-mysterious deaths of 21 teenagers in a tavern

At an informal settlement in Soweto, a township in Johannesburg, hundreds of people are trying to make sense of the brutal killing of 15 people at a tavern this weekend.

are a citizen of this country, all of them, they've got guns and you ask yourself, what kind of country is this? We cannot live in a society where everybody's just got guns and do wherever he pleases. "This weekend's

## Cameroon chaos amid torrential rains



Torrential rains that have hit Cameroon over the last few days have left misery and chaos in their wake, with people trying to cope with flooding, landslides and road chaos. For many in the South-West region it is the worst rainy season in living memory. "I have lived in Tiko for more than 30 years but I have not witnessed this kind of rain," a food vendor in the town told the BBC. Over the weekend, at least one child died in Tiko when their family home collapsed.

The floods were triggered on Saturday by a sudden storm that swept through

areas by the main road linking the towns of Likomba and Mutengene, which passes through Tiko.

Accompanied by wild winds, the rains knocked down trees and walls at the police college in Mutengene. Tiko resident Vincent Njume said: "I saw the Likomba River overflowing its banks, flooding with woods and household stuffs. Trees were falling." Rocks and pebbles were cascading down the gentle slopping road linking Tiko and Mutengene, both towns at the foot of Mount Cameroon. The road then turned into a fast flowing river, disrupted traffic for hours, leaving drivers of heavy duty trucks and passengers in taxis trapped. BBC

## Mali mercenary row: Mistrust and misunderstandings

News of the arrest of 49 Ivorian soldiers at Bamako airport started to spread on Sunday on social media, with some accusing them of arriving in Mali to carry out a coup. The Malian authorities have since announced they are considered mercenaries.

The nervousness about the rumours was understandable - it happened on the day after Malians celebrated Eid, bringing to mind events a year ago when junta leader Col Assimi Goïta was attacked, though unharmed, by a man with a knife while celebrating the Muslim holiday in Bamako's Grand Mosque.

Government spokesman Colonel Abdoulaye Maïga went on state TV to explain that amongst those arrested were about 30 men "in possession of weapons and munitions of war without a mission order or authorisation" and indicated prosecutions could follow.

The UN mission (Minusma) then became involved, tweeting that the soldiers

were part of a logistical support group that had been helping one of its peacekeeping contingents for several years.

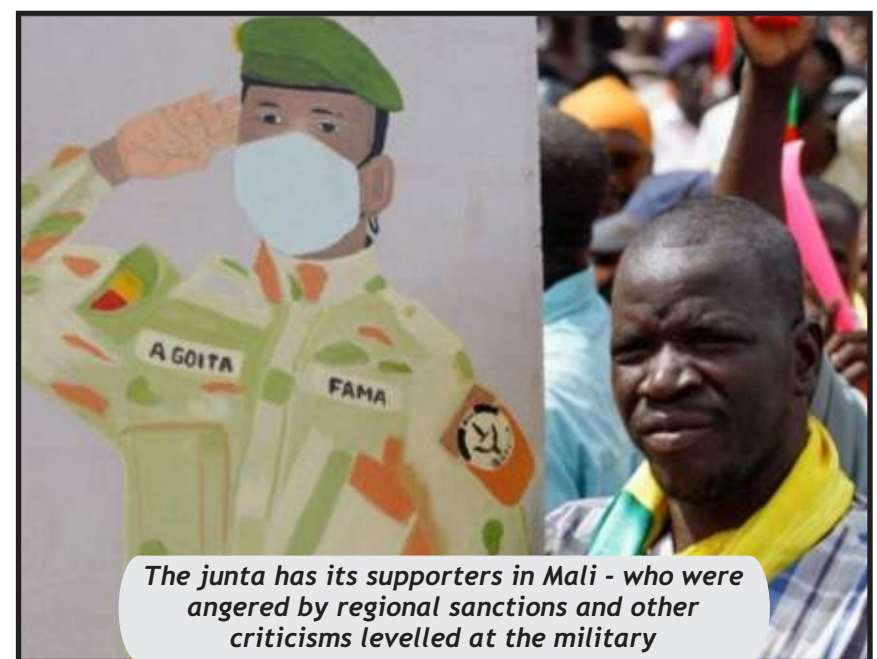
It added that it understood the soldiers were being rotated in to relieve another detachment, something the Mali authorities would have been told.

Some observers think the junta is using the incident to further express its discontent with the UN peacekeeping mission, which was first

deployed in the 2013 to help the country deal with Islamist militants and insecurity.

When its mandate was recently renewed for another year, Bamako warned it was not happy about certain provisos - especially relating to UN investigations into human rights.

Abidjan has not yet officially reacted to what looks like a misunderstanding, however the arrests are likely to strain diplomatic relations between Mali and Ivory Coast, whose President Alassane Ouattara



The junta has its supporters in Mali - who were angered by regional sanctions and other criticisms levelled at the military

is a close ally of France. This will win the Ivorian leader no admirers in the Malian junta, which has fallen out with France leading to the former colonial power pulling out its anti-terror troops from the West African nation.

Mr Ouattara is also said to have used his influence to get economic and financial

sanctions imposed on Mali in January after the junta announced a four-year transitional delay in elections scheduled for February.

Even though sanctions are now lifted, for many, this exposes the mistrust between Mali and the regional bloc Ecowas as it tries to get the junta to handover to civilian rule. 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 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 Raghuram G. Rajan

## Just Say No to "Friend-Shoring"

**C**HICAGO - In an important speech to the Atlantic Council in April, US Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen issued a welcome call for revitalizing the world economic order. But she also generated headlines with a single sentence advocating what she called "friend-shoring": that is, limiting the trade of key inputs to trusted countries in order to reduce risks to the supply chains on which the United States and its partners rely.

This should worry us. Today's global supply chains - made possible by reductions in tariffs and lower transportation and communication costs - have transformed production by allowing firms to manufacture goods wherever it is cheapest to do so. This has generally meant that while high-value-added inputs (such as research and development, design, advertising, and finance) are sourced in advanced economies, manufacturing moves to emerging markets and developing countries.

The benefits are obvious. Final products are significantly less expensive, so even the poorest people in rich countries can buy them.

At the same time, developing countries participate in the production process, using their most valuable resource: low-cost labor. As their workers gain skills, their own manufacturers move to more sophisticated production processes, climbing the value chain. As workers' incomes rise, they buy more rich-country products.

By 2017, for example, China had more iPhone users than any other country. Knowledge workers in rich countries then earn higher incomes as the market for high-value products grows.

Of course, even though trade yields net benefits, the distribution of gains and losses matters. Trade is not simply "win-win." Hollowed-out small towns in the American Midwest attest to the downside of offshoring production.

It has ever been thus: Across the advanced economies, today's rust-belt towns and cities initially grew by putting traditional craft workers elsewhere out of work. With the right policy support, however, trade need not leave people or communities behind. In Scandinavia, firms constantly focus on upgrading their workers' skills so that they are ready for change.

These are the basic, Economics 101 arguments in support of free and fair trade. But in recent years, global supply chains have displayed new vulnerabilities. In their desire to maximize efficiency, companies have sometimes overlooked resilience. Climate disasters (including floods, droughts, and wildfires) and shocks like the pandemic-induced lockdowns have highlighted "just-in-time" supply chains' many chokepoints.

As a result, firms are now considering whether they should increase their inventories as an additional buffer. They are also looking for ways to reduce chokepoints by diversifying production locations across countries, and to increase flexibility by making inputs more substitutable. Such private-sector responses can preserve the viability of global supply chains.

But resurgent protectionism - cloaked and augmented by new geopolitical rivalries - constitutes a more dangerous threat. The tit-for-tat tariffs between the US and China during Donald Trump's presidency were the opening salvos. The West's subsequent restrictions on the Chinese telecom giant Huawei's sales, and China's restrictions on Australian imports, added more policy uncertainty to the mix. Now, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has introduced the possibility of an angry public broadening official

sanctions beyond what policymakers intend.

If all that is not sufficient to make corporate CEOs rethink the value of their global supply chains, government advocacy of friend-shoring certainly will. True, national security can never be taken lightly. It is legitimate for a country to ensure that goods and services essential to its national defense are produced domestically or by friendly neighbors. The problem is that "essential" is often broadened by protectionist interests to include even widely produced commodities like steel or aluminum.

If any forthcoming friend-shoring mandates were to apply such a broad categorization, they would have devastating effects on international trade. After all, friend-shoring will typically mean trading with countries that have similar values and institutions; and that, in practice, will mean transacting only with countries at similar levels of development.

The benefits of a global supply chain stem precisely from the fact that it involves countries with very different income levels, allowing each to bring its comparative advantage to the production process - PhD researchers from one, for example, and unskilled assembly-line workers from another. Friend-shoring would tend to eliminate this dynamic, thereby increasing production costs and consumer prices. While some labor unions would welcome the reduced competition, the rest of us would regret it.

Moreover, it is not even clear that on-shoring or near-shoring production helps to increase resilience or the reliability of supply. In the US, baby formula is supplied by a government-supported oligopoly of four domestic firms that are protected from foreign competition by high tariffs. But, at this moment, there is no baby formula to be had in some US states, owing to problems in just one facility. So much for building resilience through domestic production!

By the same token, concentrating production within a gated community of advanced economies would not necessarily increase the security of the community. As Brexit showed, friends do not always stay friends. Even countries as close in temperament as the US and Canada had serious disagreements during Trump's presidency.

Even more to the point, existing economic interdependencies can make geostrategic rivals more reluctant to launch missiles at one another. Many observers have noted that China will think twice before invading Taiwan now that it has seen the damage that sanctions are doing to Russia.

But if China were to prepare for an invasion, it would start by reducing its reliance on Western economies, a process that Western friend-shoring would inadvertently advance. Economic entanglements may be messy, but they help keep the peace.

Finally, friend-shoring would tend to exclude the poor countries that most need global trade in order to become richer and more democratic. It will increase the risks that these countries become failed states, fertile grounds to nurture and export terrorism. The tragedy of mass emigration will become more likely as chaotic violence increases.

Friend-shoring is an understandable policy if it is strictly limited to specific items directly affecting national security. Unfortunately, the term's public reception already suggests that it will be used to cover much else.

Raghuram G. Rajan, former governor of the Reserve Bank of India, is Professor of Finance at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business and the author, most recently, of *The Third Pillar: How Markets and the State Leave the Community Behind* (Penguin, 2020).



O-PED

By Jayati Ghosh

# Achieving Earth for All

**N**EW DELHI - In 1972, the United Nations held its first-ever environmental summit in Stockholm. In the run-up to the event, a group of scientists wrote *The Limits to Growth*, a report for the Club of Rome that became an unlikely bestseller. The authors argued that Earth's finite natural resources could not support ever-increasing consumption, and warned of likely ecological overshoot and societal collapse if the world did not recognize the environmental costs of human activity. Failure to change course would mean declines in per capita food and energy supplies, increasing pollution, lower standards of living, and the possibility of dramatic population collapses by the middle of the twenty-first century.

In the decades that followed, the report's startling conclusions were probably more criticized than commended. Many brushed them aside as a Doomsday scenario that human ingenuity and technological progress would render moot. But *The Limits to Growth* did not provide a single forecast. Rather, the authors explored several alternative paths based on different human strategies, and recent research by Gaya Herrington has shown that three of the four scenarios they outlined align quite closely with empirical data.

This is deeply worrying, because two of these three scenarios suggest a major collapse by mid-century while the third entails a smaller decline. Herrington argues that "humanity is on a path to having limits to growth imposed on itself rather than consciously choosing its own."

But all is not lost: The fourth scenario, which involved significant economic and social transformations, allows for widespread increases in human welfare within Earth's natural boundaries. This is the motivation behind *Earth for All*, a new report produced by the Club of Rome's Transformational Economics Commission (of which I am a member) and a team of computer modelers.

The report's authors argue that achieving well-being for all on a (relatively) stable planet is still possible, but will require major changes in economic organization. In particular, it calls for five major initiatives to eliminate poverty, reduce inequality, empower women, transform food systems, and overhaul energy systems by "electrifying everything."

To flesh out these aspirations, the report advocates specific and interlinked strategies for achieving each one. Of course, this will require significant new investments, led by massive increases in public spending. Higher taxation, especially of the extremely wealthy and of large firms, must therefore be an important part of the agenda. Restricting the wealth and consumption of the super-rich is also important for limiting carbon dioxide emissions and unnecessarily wasteful consumption.

In addition, creating global liquidity (such as by issuing more special drawing rights, the International Monetary Fund's reserve asset) and dealing with the sovereign-debt overhang would give developing-country governments more fiscal space.

Global food systems are clearly broken. They currently create unhealthy and unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, as well as enormous waste, and must be upgraded accordingly. Regulation of markets for the public good will be critical in this process. More systematic and effective regulation is necessary not only with respect to food, but also in markets for goods and services, finance, labor, and land, and to those connected to nature and the environment.

The regulation we need demands democratization of knowledge and wider access to new technologies, as well as recognition and dissemination of traditional knowledge. Giving women and workers more power is essential, not only for making societies happier, healthier, and more just, but also for stabilizing population numbers.

Furthermore, the *Earth for All* report contains the results of a global modeling exercise that focuses specifically on two scenarios. The first, "Too Little Too Late," is our current trajectory, in which governments and international institutions talk a lot about sustainability and climate change, but produce little transformative action.

This scenario points to growing inequalities and declining social trust, as people and countries turn against one another in competing for resources. Without sufficient collective action to limit the immense pressure on nature, Earth's life-supporting systems (such as climate, water, soil, and forests) will keep deteriorating, and some regions will come close to or even cross irreversible tipping points. For many people already living in poverty and for many other species, what is effectively hell on Earth awaits.

But in the second scenario - "The Giant Leap" - policymakers seek to implement the five major shifts and do a much better job of increasing well-being. That means ensuring dignity (so that everyone has the means to live in security, health, and safety); nature (a restored and safe environment for all forms of life); and connection (a sense of belonging and institutions that serve the common good). It also means ensuring fairness (providing justice in all its dimensions, with much-reduced gaps between richest and poorest) and participation (actively engaged citizens in rooted communities and economies).

Achieving all this will not be easy, of course. Widespread, sustainable gains in well-being necessarily require active governments that are willing to reshape markets and pursue long-term visions for societies. This in turn requires both political will and a sea change in governments' perceptions - and the latter is unlikely without significant public pressure and mass mobilization. But, given our proximity to so many tipping points, the default option is terrifying: environmental devastation, extreme economic disparities and fragilities, and potentially unbearable social and political tensions.

So, *Earth for All* is not just a report - it is a call to action. Because the necessary changes are so big, they require determined social movements with broad participation. History shows that inertia and defeatism can become self-fulfilling. But it also shows that governments ultimately must respond to popular pressure or be replaced by it.

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.

OPINION

by Laura Tyson

# A Requiem for Women's Rights in America

**B**ERKELEY - The US Supreme Court's elimination of the right to abortion is a devastating setback for American women. Never in its history has the Court rescinded an individual right. For those of us who have fought for women's social and economic equality throughout our entire professional lives, the ruling is personal.

I was 25 when *Roe v. Wade* established a constitutional right to abortion. For almost 50 years, *Roe* gave women reproductive freedom - and, with it, a new and rightful place in the economy and society. It was that freedom that enabled my colleagues and me to make the same kind of family and career choices as our male counterparts. It is horrifying to think that my two young granddaughters will lack the same freedom.

The *Dobbs* decision was based on a narrow interpretation of the Constitution, a document that - for all its brilliance - was written 236 years ago by a small group of wealthy men (many of them slave owners). Women did not participate in the drafting and are not mentioned in the text. Not until 1919 was the Constitution amended to grant women the right to vote. But, more to the point, the constitutional arguments justifying the *Dobbs* decision are a fig leaf. The Supreme Court's conservative majority overturned *Roe* not because the Constitution demanded it but simply because it could.

Having grown up Catholic, I am intimately familiar with the shrouded religious beliefs motivating the *Dobbs* decision, which also lays the groundwork for the Court to revisit other settled issues such as contraception and same-sex marriage. A linchpin of Catholic doctrine is that sexual relations are permissible only among married heterosexual couples, and only for the purpose of procreation. Most practicing Catholics in the United States do not adhere to these views; but several Supreme Court justices apparently do. For them, abortion (and contraception) is immoral.

In basing its decision on these minority-held religious beliefs, the Court simply disregarded all the evidence showing that overturning *Roe* would have far-reaching adverse economic effects on women. Decades of research (I have worked on much of it) shows that reproductive rights and health care determine women's participation and advancement in economic life. Some of the most distinguished labor economists in the US submitted an amicus brief in *Dobbs* summarizing much of this evidence for the justices.

During the past half-century, the right to abortion has had a significant impact on women's labor-force participation, wages, and educational attainment. It has reduced teen pregnancies, the number of children in single-family households living in poverty, and the incidence of child neglect and abuse. It is well known that there is a significant professional penalty (in terms of wages and career advancement) associated with motherhood.

Male and female earnings evolve similarly until parenthood, after which a mother's expected earnings fall by 15% for every child she has, while fathers' earnings remain largely unaffected.

In the US and around the world, large gender gaps in unpaid work and care severely limit economic opportunities for women, who continue to bear a disproportionate share of such work in and out of the home. The COVID-19 pandemic widened these gaps, because it forced many women to leave their jobs and careers to care for children and the elderly. The fallout from this period will be long-lasting. Even a temporary hiatus in employment can have permanent effects on wages and careers.

The *Dobbs* decision is silent about the responsibilities of men, who may walk away from unwanted pregnancies they cause while women have no such choice. The decision extends the gender gap in care and the resulting gender gaps in economic opportunities to the moment of conception. As part of the broader response to *Dobbs*, women should mount court cases to reduce the rights and increase the responsibilities of men who cause unwanted pregnancies. Men must be held accountable.

Federalism is at the heart of the *Dobbs* decision, which leaves it to the states to decide where to draw the line on abortion. Not surprisingly, there is a large and growing divergence between states committed to eliminating these rights and states committed to protecting or expanding them. Together with Oregon and Washington, for example, California has launched a new multistate initiative to provide access to reproductive care for all women, not just those who reside in their states.

Acknowledging the constitutional right to interstate travel, Justice Brett Kavanaugh conceded in his concurring opinion in *Dobbs* that the states outlawing abortion are not allowed to bar residents from traveling to other states to get them. But since low-income women account for 75% of those who seek abortions, many in states that are eliminating access will not have the resources to pay for interstate travel. It thus will fall to nonprofit organizations to cover the costs and provide information about where to find abortion providers and how to get abortion pills (which now account for more than half of all US abortions).

The *Dobbs* ruling has created new responsibilities for companies as well. Some large companies with significant employment in states that will restrict abortion have already committed to cover abortion-related travel costs for their employees, despite the legal and political risks (including threats of criminal liability). Many more businesses are likely to implement new measures to address their employees' needs by making appropriate changes in their employee benefits packages. Such changes are likely to be made quietly to avoid political backlash.

The Supreme Court had an ignoble term. The same justices who stripped women of their right to choose abortion also weakened the wall separating church and state - a pillar of democracy in the US dating back to President Thomas Jefferson. I fear that America faces a future where a small group of religious conservatives will dictate the lives of the majority who do not share their beliefs. It will be a country where the rule of law succumbs to minority rule by a handful of activists in robes - with dire social and economic consequences for women.







# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## UL enlists students for USAID-sponsored Camp-xSEL

As a means of motivating students across the country to develop interest in Sciences upon completion of high school, the state-run University of Liberia College of Health Sciences (ULCHS), in partnership with the

Liberia) that aims at equipping incoming students with the learning tools for their journeys into pre-medical and pre-clinical studies at the UL. Speaking to reporters during the recruitment process at different locations in Grand

motivating children to love science education," Sydell said.

Upon conclusion of the recruitment process, the UL official noted that the four-weekend intensive camp, which runs from August 1-27 at the Fendall Campus of the

completing on the 11th of July and we are completing today. So, it is based on which region you are. Following the recruitment, the campaign will run from August 1-27," said Madam Goll.

During the one-month camp, she said the students are taught English, Math, Biology, and Physics and have common interactions with others to harness their leadership ability.

Madam Goll described the ongoing recruitment process exciting on grounds that kids are zealous about the program and are scoring good marks; however, she indicated that the process is being hugely challenged as well due to the low number of students that are to be recruited.

But with mechanism being put in place, Sydell sees a brighter future for Liberian kids endeavoring to do science courses upon completion from high school. Mr. Elijah G. Freeman, County Education Officer (CEO) of Grand Cape Mount County, describes Camp xSEL as a way of making kids to learn in time instead of overstaying after completion from high school.

Freeman expressed great depth of gratitude to the recruitment team in his county, noting that the process was free, fair, open and competitive.

"It is good to assess them to know their own articulation before taking them to the camp. The project is good because most of our students don't like science courses because there are more quantitative works in the

science area. Even to have science teachers in the classroom is difficult so, I think this program is going to help us to have more students going into the field of science at that level. This is highly motivating," the Liberian educator stated.

He then called the administration of the UL and its partner(s) to restructure the program to enroll more students.

Meanwhile, several of the students interviewed expressed great delight over the program and thanked the UL for the innovation that tends to capture students from rural counties to form part of the learning process.

Steven Kieh of the Bo Community Elementary, Junior and Senior High School believes that Science is a way of life for society to grow and as such, he wants to do science as a major following his completion of high school. "I like science because it's good for the society. I want to study Science to help my family, my community and my country. I want to become a doctor," he noted.

Philip Tarplah and Faith Kulu of the Robertsport Government High School are glad to be part of the recruitment as they aim to pursue their dreams to become radiologist and aquaculturist respectively.

"I am so excited for being selected among the many students to be called for an interview. I think it's a plus for me and my family. Being part of Camp xSEL is a wish come true because I love Science," Faith explained with beaming smiles.

Editing by Jonathan Browne



A cross section of High School Students across different counties recruited for Camp xSEL

United States-based partner universities Yale and Vanderbilt, is involved in recruitment for the second batch of students Camp xSEL (Excellence in Science Education for Liberia).

Camp xSEL is a project under the auspices of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bringing Research to Impact for Development and Global Engagement - Utilization (BRIDGE-U

Cape Mount County recently, the Senior Coordinator for Faculty and Students Learning at the ULCHS Bridge-U Project, Madam Sydell P. Goll, disclosed the project takes in students from 11th to 12th grades across the country.

"It is the beginning of exposing the kids to the field of Science and to show them light that we, as policymakers, need to do more when it comes to

University of Liberia, will inspire the recruits (students) to develop interest and do Sciences, especially those aspiring to take up career in the medical area (medical doctor, nurse and midwives).

"The recruitment process is being divided into four regions, with the final region which happens to be the southeastern region, concluded by July 13. Those that are in the Nimba and Lofa belt are going to be

## Minister Cooper on commercialization of agriculture

By Emmanuel wise Jipoh

Agriculture Minister Jeanine Milly Cooper says a key to commercialization of the agriculture is key to transforming the sector in Liberia. Speaking at the ongoing cabinet retreat in Ganta (Gomba City) Nimba County, Minister Cooper notes that despite challenge of access to finance, the Ministry of Agriculture has expanded cultivation of crops and livestock from small holdings to commercial scale to boost the sector.

She calls for exportation of cash crops as primary commodities but stresses a need for industrialization to add value in transforming agriculture. She points to Nimba Rubber Company exporting processed rubber from Liberia and the current construction of a rubber processing plant in Margibi County by Indian businessman Jeety will see the

manufacturing of rubber tires in Liberia in the next few years and Firestone Liberia opening one of West Africa's largest Ribbed smoked sheets plant in the country this year as some achievements by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Still on progress, Minister Cooper discloses that with the support of primary egg

importing company - UIC from Bomi County, 100 percent of eggs Liberians will consume at the end of 2022 will be produced in the country, while by early August, 27,000 layers will be flying in from the



### JUDICIAL BRANCH REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

Justice's chambers  
Judicial circuit court  
Law Court  
Montserrat, Republic of Liberia



SITTING IN ITS MARCH A.D. 2022 TERM  
BEFORE HIS HONOR: SCHEAPLOR R. DUNBAR, ASSIGNED CIRCUIT JUDGE PRESIDING  
THE PETITION OF GEORGIA S. WESLEY OF THE CITY OF MONROVIA, COUNTY OF MONTERRADO, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA, PETITIONER, PRAYING THIS HONORABLE COURT FOR A DECREE OF CHANGE OF NAME TO BE ISSUED IN HER FAVOR AND TO BE KNOWN, REGARDED AND CALLED AS "GEORGIA SALINA WASHINGTON WESLY" WHO WAS BORN ON SEPTEMBER 14, 1950, IN LEXINGTON, SINCE COUNTY, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA.

#### COURT'S DECREE OF CHANGE OF NAME:

00009249

WHEREAS, Petitioner Petitioned this Court by and through her counsel, in the above entitled cause of Action, having filed a Petition with an Affidavit attached thereto, requesting an Order from this Honorable Court to have her name formally change from "GEORGIA S. WESLEY to GEORGIA SALINA WASHINGTON WESLY";

During the hearing, the Petitioner testified that the change of name requesting for from this Honorable Court is intended to reflect her true family name and honor her identity more explicit and absolute.

After conducting the necessary interrogations required by law in these proceedings, the Court reserved that the intention is just and legal and that there is no objection to the change of name requested by her that the Petitioner having shown with justification and satisfaction that she was born in the Republic of Liberia and that she was born on September 14, 1950, by Mr. Uriah Washington, father and Madam Edith Turner Roberts' mother, all of the Republic of Liberia and that the change of her name will substantially promote her interest in all of the understanding and help to establish just identity more firmly, and being satisfied that she had met all legal requirements for the change of her name in this jurisdiction.

#### NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS DIRECTED, ORDERED AND DECREED AS FOLLOWS:

That the Petitioner's Petition is hereby granted and the name of the aforesaid Petitioner is now formally and legally changed from "GEORGIA S. WESLEY to GEORGIA SALINA WASHINGTON WESLY" and that all previous records and or documents bearing her former name are to be considered valid.

#### THIS ORDER SHALL TAKE EFFECT AS OF THE DATE OF ISSUANCE OF THIS DECREE:

This Order shall be registered in the Office of the REGISTRAR OF DEEDS for Montserrat County, Republic of Liberia and shall be published twice in any recognized newspaper operating in the Republic of Liberia within twenty (20) days as of today's date. AND IT IS HEREBY SO ORDERED.

COURT'S SEAL:

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF COURT THIS 5<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MAY A.D. 2022

Scheaplor R. Dunbar  
JUDGE, PRESIDING, CIVIL LAW COURT  
SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

De-2022 PAGE (S) 00009249

Netherlands.

"We have also set up a field mill at the Free Port of Monrovia to provide poultry and livestock fields to Liberian farmers in order for them to subsequently supply the rest of the country with eggs and chickens."

The agriculture boss continues that Liberia now has the largest palm mill in the sub-region, Golden Sifca, which operates in

Maryland County.

Moreover, she says J-Palm that produces fresh Liberian honey is expanding across the country.

However, she did not report on production of Liberia's staple, rice and other food crops such as cassava, eddoes, among others. Farmers in Liberia practice subsistence farming, which does not meet commercial demand.

Editing by Jonathan Browne



**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

# Nyonblee's meeting is mere bluff

## -LP Chairman Bility

By Kruah Thompson

The chairman of the opposition Liberty Party (LP) Musa Bility has described the meeting called by Senator Nyonblee Karnga Lawrence

are called by the chairman therefore, he declared the meeting null and void.

"When people go to court, it is the court that makes the decision and for us, the court has made their

faction led by Senator Karnga Lawrence as Political Leader, going to court to place prohibition on Chairman Bility after she accused him of allegedly altering the party constitution and wrongly proceeding with Farmington document, but the court dismissed the claims and called on the both factions to resolve their differences at a roundtable.

Chairman Bility explained that after the court's decision, the party was attempting to make a gesture of reconciliation, but Nyonblee has abused that effort by calling for meeting on the grounds of the Temple of Justice something, he said, was wrong.

"Attend what meeting, to do what? And to agree on what?" He asked, adding that the courtroom at the Temple of Justice is not a conference center nor a peace center.

According to him, when cases are carried to court and the judge looks into them and says there are no issues, it means the matter is done with. In a conversation with OK FM in Monrovia Tuesday, July 12, he said the issue raised by Senator Nyonblee and her

decision that is why the issue raised by Senator Nyonblee and her people are not justifiable, therefore, court has denied them any writ", he further argued.

The Liberty Party has been split in two with a

on Monday, July 11, 2022 a mere bluff because she lacks authority to preside over executive committee meeting of the party.

Mr. Bility argued that all executive committee meetings of the Liberty Party



'people' was thrown out of court because they were unable to justify their claims against him and the LP secretary-general Martin Kollah.

"If Senator Jonathan Lambert Kaipay of Grand Bassa County says the judge made a proposition to revisit and do some correction to the agreement and the constitution by extension then the senator is

lying to himself least to say the Liberian people."

Meanwhile, it can be recalled that in February, Senator Lawrence filed a lawsuit against Mr. Bility and secretary-general Martin Kollah over the alleged altering of the LP's constitution.

However, Supreme Court Justice-In-Chambers Sien-Nye Yuoh, denied the petition filed due to lack sufficient evidence.

## House extends 5th Regular Session



Members of the House of Representatives have signed a certificate of Extension of the House's Fifth Regular Session by one week. The House of Representatives' decision to extend its 5th regular session is due to several issues that centered on integrity, transparency and accountability which demand the urgent attention of members that August Body to affix their signatures.

The extension is pursuant to Article 32 (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia.

The provision states that the President shall, on his own initiative or upon receipt of a certificate signed by at least one-fourth of the total membership of each House, and by proclamation, extend a regular session of the Legislature beyond the date for

adjournment. It also gives the power to call a special or extraordinary session of that body to discuss or act upon matters of national emergency and concern.

The provision notes that when the extension or call is at the request of the Legislature, the proclamation shall be issued not later than 48 hours after receipt of the certificate by the President.

The House was due to close for its July 26 Independence Day break, but upon the issuance of the Proclamation by the President, it will remain in session for another week.

The purpose is to address several legislations of time-sensitive nature and others that border on integrity, transparency and accountability.

The extension of the 5th regular session will commence from 16 July to 22 July 2022.--  
*Press release*

# Educator cautions Liberian youths against drugs

The Proprietress of the International Learning Institute has cautioned Liberian youths against substance abuse because they have the propensity to impede their roles as future leaders.

Mrs. Mildred Dean said high rate of drug abuse among young people is scarring and something must be done to curb this menace.

Speaking at the induction of newly elected leaders of the Greater Monrovia Omega Leo Club in Congo Town over the weekend, Mrs. Dean said, "I have seen a great number of our youths subjected themselves to abuse of banned substances of all sorts, losing and damaging their talents and future by their habits."

She said Liberians should not allow the habits of drug abuse to continue to damage their children, noting that very single day, there is a youth somewhere subjecting himself or herself to dangerous drugs and some

are out of their minds.

In his induction speech, newly inducted President of the Greater Monrovia Omega Leo Club, Emmanuel Doe, observed there is leadership gap in communities when it comes to helping the needy.

He stressed a need for young people to fill the leadership vacuum prevailing in their

communities by addressing problems of sick, hungry people and orphans.

Mr. Doe said Liberia is in dire need of young leaders to fill the gaps that will be created by the retirement of the present generation.

Others inducted were Duke McIntosh, Vice President; Clarence Oray-Worjolah, Secretary and Faith Gray, Treasurer, among others.

*Editing by Jonathan Browne*



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# Français

## Ayant refusé la création d'un tribunal pour les crimes de guerre, le parti au pouvoir s'explique

Deux hauts responsables de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC), la coalition au pouvoir, ont publiquement défendu le refus de l'État du Libéria d'établir un tribunal des crimes de guerre et des crimes économiques au Libéria.

Samuel D. Tweh et Saymah Syrenius Cephus, respectivement ministre des Finances et de la Planification du développement, et solliciteur général du Libéria, ont cité au cours du week-end la peur et de graves violations constitutionnelles comme étant certaines des raisons pour lesquelles le régime de Weah refuse d'établir le tribunal.

Les deux cadres ont pris la parole lors de la cérémonie du lancement officiel du livre de Me Arthur Tamba Johnson, avocat libérien. Le ministre Tweh accuse ceux qui défendent l'établissement d'un tribunal des crimes de guerre de vouloir renverser le gouvernement du président George Manneh Weah.

C'est la même raison, selon eux, pour laquelle le régime de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf a refusé d'établir le tribunal.

Lorsqu'il était à l'opposition, le Congrès pour Changement Démocratique (CDC), le parti du président Weah, avait demandé à la l'ancienne présidente Sirleaf d'établir un tribunal des crimes de guerre et des crimes économiques au Libéria pour poursuivre les auteurs présumés des crimes de guerre et des crimes économiques.

Le 8 juillet 2022, le conseiller Arthur T. Johnson a officiellement lancé son livre intitulé : "Examining The Consequences Of The Government of Liberia's Failure to Establish Economic and War Crimes Court to Prosecute War Criminals" (Examiner les conséquences du refus du gouvernement d'établir un tribunal des crimes de guerre pour juger les criminels de guerre).

Mais le ministre Tweh estime

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Mali: 49 soldats ivoiriens arrêtés à Bamako

Les soldats ivoiriens ont été arrêtés, dimanche 10 juillet 2022 en début d'après-midi, à l'aéroport de Bamako. Depuis, les messages alarmistes et même complotistes circulent sur les réseaux sociaux, les présentant comme des mercenaires lourdement armés venus déstabiliser le pays. Ces soldats appartiennent, en réalité, à l'armée régulière ivoirienne. Ils devaient sécuriser, selon l'armée ivoirienne, des sites

de la Minusma, la Mission des Nations unies.

Ils appartiennent au 8e détachement du NSE (National Support Element). C'est un cadre de l'état-major ivoirien qui le précise : ces 49 soldats sont arrivés à Bamako dimanche à la mi-journée, à bord du même avion qui avait ramené à Abidjan, le matin même, le précédent détachement. Deux avions même, pour être précis, l'un transportant les hommes, l'autre le matériel. « C'est une incompréhension malheureuse »,

explique ce haut gradé de l'armée ivoirienne, qui assure que tout était en règle pour leur arrivée.

Selon l'armée ivoirienne, ce sont pourtant des problèmes administratifs qui sont invoqués par les autorités maliennes. « D'abord, ils ont dit que l'avion n'était pas sur la liste des appareils autorisés à atterrir. Ce problème a été vite levé, poursuit cette source, mais maintenant, ils disent que nos soldats n'avaient pas de lettre de mission conforme. » Sollicités par RFI, ni l'armée malienne ni le ministère malien de la Défense n'ont souhaité répondre. Les 49 soldats ivoiriens ont passé la nuit en détention. Le problème n'est toujours pas réglé.

Selon les explications de l'armée ivoirienne, ces soldats sont là dans le cadre de la contribution ivoirienne à la Minusma. Ils sont détachés auprès d'une entreprise privée, SAS, Sahel Aviation Service, elle-même sous-traitante de la mission onusienne. Dirigée par un Allemand, cette entreprise travaille habituellement dans

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9

## Éditorial

### Que la direction de la LPRC s'explique

La direction de la Liberia Petroleum Refining Company ne dit presque rien sur la disparition présumée de 1,5 million de gallons de produits pétroliers d'une valeur de 6 millions de dollars américains de ses réservoirs de stockage. L'un des principaux importateurs de pétrole dans le pays, Petrol Trade, a récemment sonné l'alarme après avoir observé de manière choquante que son stock qui est à la LPRC a considérablement diminué sans savoir comment cela s'est produit.

La seule explication que la direction de la LPRC a donnée jusque-là est que la société Aminata possède 400 000 gallons de produits pétroliers et la société NEXIUM 300 000 gallons, selon la société Petrol Trade.

Mais comment ont-ils acquis des produits qui ne leur appartiennent pas en premier lieu. La LPRC leur a-t-elle donné ces produits ? Existe-t-il une politique établie à la LPRC qui permet à un importateur de prendre le produit d'un autre importateur sans son consentement et son approbation ?

Nous pensons que si c'était le cas, la direction de Petrol Trade n'aurait pas alarmé le public. En fait, le public a appris l'incident après que Petrol Trade a intenté une action en justice.

Petrol Trade, par l'intermédiaire du cabinet d'avocats Heritage, a récemment écrit à la direction de la LPRC pour lui demander où se trouvent ses 1,5 million de gallons de carburant qui lui avaient été confiés et mis dans ses réservoirs de stockage.

Outre les explications antérieures fournies par la direction de la LPRC, citées par Petrol Trade, le gouvernement du Libéria n'a pas encore donné de clarté ou d'explication sur la situation qui a tendance à éroder la confiance du public et à donner une image très négative du gouvernement et du pays.

La direction de la LPRC a adopté une posture consistant à dire très peu sur une situation qui est une première de son genre dans l'histoire du Libéria.

Y a-t-il des jeux qui se jouent ici ? Les bonnes pratiques commerciales exigent la transparence et la responsabilité, deux valeurs importantes qui sont nécessaires pour rester en affaires.

Mais il semble que l'administration Weah se soucie moins de l'image et de la crédibilité. Tout ce que nous voyons quotidiennement, c'est que le rythme continue, allant de la corruption généralisée à la mauvaise gestion, en passant par les assassinats arbitraires par les forces de sécurité en toute impunité.

Nous appelons la direction de la LPRC de fournir toute la clarté sur les 1,5 million de gallons de pétrole qui sont portés disparus sous sa surveillance afin de racheter son image, en tant qu'entité publique crédible du Libéria. Travailler dans l'ombre pourrait causer des dommages irréparables et négatifs pour ce gouvernement et provoquer un embarras pour le pays dans le futur.





# Français

## Ayant refusé la création d'un tribunal pour les

que la défense de l'établissement d'un tribunal des crimes de guerre au Libéria n'est rien d'autre qu'un jeu politique dont l'objectif réel est de renverser le pouvoir du président George Manneh Weah.

"Maintenant que Morlue est président du parti au pouvoir, ceux qui ont fermé les yeux sur son plaidoyer disent maintenant qu'il est temps d'établir le tribunal ou d'en assumer les coûts", a déclaré Tweah.

« Alors maintenant, la peur est l'objectif pour établir le tribunal. Nous devons rétablir le sens de la peur », a dit le ministre Tweah.

Il a en outre indiqué que la création du tribunal des crimes de guerre et des crimes économiques au Libéria sera un risque et que ceux qui le réclament jouent à un jeu.

Le ministre Tweah a fait valoir que si on explique l'impact social et économique du tribunal des crimes de guerre et économiques au Libéria,

ceux qui plaident pour sa création s'en retireront.

Pendant ce temps, le ministre Tweah a acheté plus de 1 000 exemplaires du livre et a promis de s'assurer qu'ils sont accessibles à tous les étudiants.

Il a aussi dit qu'il veillerait également à ce que le livre parvienne à tous les membres du Congrès américain pour leur donner une compréhension claire de l'impact de la création d'un tribunal des crimes de guerre et économiques au Libéria.

Pour sa part, Me Syrenius Cephus a déclaré que le gouvernement du Libéria n'est pas responsable de la création du tribunal des crimes de guerre et économiques car il s'agit d'une question constitutionnelle grave. Il a soutenu que le président Weah n'a pas le pouvoir d'établir le tribunal comme d'autres le souhaitent.

Me Cephus a également fait valoir que les articles 2 et 4 de la Constitution du Libéria empêchent le président parce qu'un arrangement constitutionnel supplémentaire est nécessaire pour établir la cour.

## Mali: 49 soldats ivoiriens

la sous-région pour des ONG, des groupes miniers ou encore, donc, pour les Nations unies. C'est en tout cas ce que précise son site internet puisque, jointe par RFI, l'entreprise SAS a confirmé être mobilisée sur le cas des militaires ivoiriens, mais n'a souhaité apporter aucune précision.

Selon l'armée ivoirienne, les soldats arrêtés à Bamako sont censés sécuriser des sites de la Minusma, notamment à l'aéroport de

Bamako, mais aussi dans des « entrepôts logistiques ». La Mission onusienne n'a, elle non plus, pas souhaité faire de commentaire à ce stade. Cette affaire rappelle celle des militaires danois : en janvier dernier, ils étaient arrivés au Mali dans le cadre de la force Takuba, en suivant les procédures habituelles. Les autorités maliennes avaient estimé que ces procédures ne suffisaient plus à garantir leur « consentement » et les avaient contraints à rentrer chez eux.

## Togo: au moins sept enfants morts dans une ou plusieurs explosions dans l'extrême nord du pays

Sept enfants sont décédés et deux autres grièvement blessés dans la nuit du 9 au 10 juillet dans la région des savanes, à la frontière du Bénin et du Burkina Faso, pas loin du parc de Pendjari et de la réserve de Pama. Dans cette région, des groupes armés attaquent régulièrement, côté burkinabè et béninois, et ces dernières semaines, côté togolais, il y a eu des attaques armées. Ces enfants ont-ils été victimes d'un acte terroriste ou d'une bavure ? Pour le moment, on ne sait vraiment pas ce qui s'est passé.

e confusion règne encore autour de la mort de ces enfants âgés de 10 à 15 ans. Plusieurs témoins de la localité attestent avoir entendu deux explosions dans la nuit, ce qui pourrait s'apparenter à des mines antipersonnel. Quand ils se sont rendus sur les lieux, des corps d'enfants difficilement reconnaissables gisaient au sol.

D'autres sources contactées affirment que les enfants ont été touchés par des tirs venant d'engins volants.

Explosion d'engin improvisé ou tir à partir de drone, impossible pour le moment de savoir ce qui s'est réellement passé cette nuit. Mais le chef d'état-major général des Armées indique dans un communiqué qu'une enquête est ouverte pour élucider les circonstances de cette explosion et identifier les auteurs.

## COMMENTAIRE

par Raghuram G. Rajan

## Non à la restriction du commerce aux pays amis !

**C**HICAGO - Lors d'un discours important devant l'Atlantic Council [un groupe de réflexion américain], la secrétaire au Trésor, Janet Yellen, a appelé à juste titre à revitaliser l'ordre économique mondial. Une phrase a particulièrement attiré l'attention, celle dans laquelle elle appelait à limiter le commerce des principaux intrants aux pays dignes de confiance, les pays amis ("friend-shoring"), ceci afin de réduire les risques encourus par les chaînes d'approvisionnement utilisées par les USA et leurs partenaires.

Cela devrait nous inquiéter. Aujourd'hui, les chaînes d'approvisionnement mondiales (qui existent grâce à la baisse des taxes douanières, du coût du transport et des communications) ont transformé la production en permettant aux entreprises de fabriquer des biens là où le coût de production est le plus faible. Autrement dit, les intrants à grande valeur ajoutée (par exemple en recherche et développement, dans la conception, la publicité et la finance) proviennent des pays avancés, tandis que la fabrication est délocalisée vers les pays émergents ou en développement.

Les avantages sont évidents. Les produits finaux sont nettement moins chers, de sorte que même les pauvres des pays riches peuvent les acheter. Et le revenu des travailleurs du savoir de ces pays augmente, car le marché des produits à forte valeur ajoutée se développe.

De leur côté, les pays en développement participent au processus de production en utilisant leur ressource la plus précieuse : une main-d'œuvre à faible coût. Au fur et à mesure que leurs travailleurs acquièrent des compétences, leurs propres fabricants adoptent des processus de production plus sophistiqués et remontent dans la chaîne de valeur. Les revenus des travailleurs augmentant, ils achètent davantage de produits des pays riches. C'est le cas pour la Chine qui comptait en 2017 plus d'utilisateurs d'iPhone que tout autre pays.

Certes le commerce génère des bénéfices, mais ce n'est pas simplement un échange gagnant-gagnant car il ne faut pas oublier la répartition des gains et des pertes. Les petites villes exsangues du Midwest américain témoignent des inconvénients de la délocalisation de la production.

Il en a toujours été ainsi : dans les pays avancés, les villes de la "ceinture de rouille" [les zones anciennement industrialisées] se sont développées en mettant au chômage les artisans traditionnels. Toutefois avec un soutien politique approprié, le commerce ne laisse pas nécessairement des personnes ou des groupes sur le bord du chemin. Ainsi en Scandinavie, les entreprises s'efforcent constamment d'améliorer les compétences de leurs travailleurs afin qu'ils soient prêts au changement.

Tels sont les arguments de base en faveur d'un commerce libre et équitable ; on peut les trouver dans les cours d'économie pour débutant. Néanmoins au cours des dernières années, de nouvelles vulnérabilités sont apparues dans les chaînes d'approvisionnement mondiales. Au nom de l'efficacité maximale, les entreprises ont parfois négligé la résilience. Les catastrophes climatiques (notamment les inondations, les sécheresses et les incendies de forêt) et les crises (par exemple le confinement lié au COVID-19) ont mis en évidence les nombreux goulets d'étranglement des chaînes d'approvisionnement à flux tendu.

C'est pourquoi les entreprises se demandent aujourd'hui si elles doivent augmenter leurs stocks à titre de précaution supplémentaire. Elles cherchent aussi à réduire les goulets d'étranglement en répartissant les sites de production dans différents pays et veulent accroître la flexibilité en rendant les intrants plus faciles à remplacer les uns par les autres. Le secteur privé vise ainsi à maintenir la continuité des chaînes d'approvisionnement mondiales.

Mais la résurgence du protectionnisme, masquée et

renforcée par les nouvelles rivalités géopolitiques, constitue une menace plus dangereuse que les problèmes des chaînes d'approvisionnement. La bagarre du type œil pour œil, dent pour dent autour des taxes douanières entre les USA et la Chine pendant la présidence de Trump n'ont été qu'une première salve. Les restrictions ultérieures imposées par les pays occidentaux aux produits vendus par Huawei, le géant chinois des télécommunications et celles imposées par la Chine aux importations australiennes ont encore aggravé les incertitudes politiques. Et aujourd'hui, en raison de la pression de l'opinion publique liée à la guerre en Ukraine, les sanctions contre la Russie pourraient s'étendre au-delà de ce que souhaitent les décideurs politiques.

Si tout cela ne suffit pas à inciter les entreprises à repenser la valeur de leurs chaînes d'approvisionnement mondiales, le plaidoyer des gouvernements en faveur de la restriction du commerce aux pays amis le fera certainement. Il est vrai que la sécurité nationale ne doit pas être prise à la légère. Il est légitime pour un pays de s'assurer que les biens et services essentiels à sa défense nationale sont produits sur son territoire ou par des pays amis voisins. Cependant les intérêts protectionnistes élargissent souvent le mot "essentiel" aux produits courants (par exemple l'acier et l'aluminium).

Si dans l'avenir la restriction des échanges aux pays amis devait englober ces produits, cela aura un effet dévastateur pour le commerce international. Dans le cadre de cette politique, on limite généralement les échanges aux pays qui ont des valeurs et des institutions similaires - en pratique, des pays qui ont un niveau de développement similaire.

L'intérêt des chaînes d'approvisionnement mondiales tient au fait qu'elles impliquent des pays aux niveaux de revenu très différents, ce qui permet à chacun d'apporter son avantage comparatif au processus de production (par exemple les chercheurs titulaires d'un doctorat dans un pays, les ouvriers non qualifiés travaillant à la chaîne dans un autre). Or les restrictions commerciales envisagées affecteront cette dynamique, ce qui se traduira par une augmentation des coûts de production et des prix à la consommation. Certains syndicats se réjouiront de voir la concurrence réduite, mais la plupart d'entre nous la regretterons.

Par ailleurs, il n'est même pas certain que la délocalisation de la production à l'intérieur des frontières du pays ou dans un pays voisin contribue à accroître la résilience ou la fiabilité de l'approvisionnement. Aux USA, c'est un oligopole de quatre entreprises américaines protégé de la concurrence étrangère par des droits de douane élevés qui produit le lait infantile. Mais, en ce moment certains Etats américains sont en rupture de stock en raison de problèmes dans une seule usine. Voilà pour ce qu'il en est de renforcer la résilience par la production nationale !

De même, la concentration de la production au sein d'un groupe de pays avancés n'améliorera pas nécessairement leur sécurité. Comme l'a montré le Brexit, les amis ne restent pas toujours amis. Même des pays aussi proches par leurs caractéristiques que les USA et le Canada ont eu de sérieux désaccords entre eux lors de la présidence de Trump.

Enfin, ne commercer qu'avec des pays amis tend à exclure des échanges les pays pauvres qui ont le plus à gagner de la mondialisation pour prospérer et se démocratiser. Cela augmente le risque qu'ils deviennent des Etats défaits, un terrain propice au développement du terrorisme et à son exportation. Le chaos et les violences s'intensifient, il pourrait en être de même de l'émigration de masse et des tragédies qui l'accompagnent.

La restriction des échanges aux pays amis est compréhensible si elle s'applique exclusivement aux produits qui touchent directement à la sécurité nationale. Malheureusement, la perception de cette mesure par l'opinion publique montre qu'elle pourrait s'étendre bien au-delà.



## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# Liberia: The National Legislature's Budget and Waste

By S. Karweye

After over 15 years of post-conflict reconstruction and democratic governance, Liberians appear to agree that the country's governance isn't working as it ought to. And at the root of it is the high cost of running the government, which they say unless it is drastically reduced, the developmental dreams of the country would remain a mirage. They point out that even though the country has been borrowing to finance its budget for many years now, a larger percentage of the money goes into recurrent expenditure while the developmental needs of the nation are relegated to the background.

One of the most debated issues about governance in Liberia is arguably the amount being spent to run the country's bicameral legislature. Last year, we were served another national comedy when the national legislature appropriated the 2020/2021 national budget of USD 30,000 for each Senator and Representative in the name of the so-called Legislative Engagement Fund totaling USD 3.6 million.

The Senate in a press statement explained the USD 30,000 received by each Senator and Representative is geared towards the support to their initiatives in their various counties. One of the unintended consequences of the legislature's unilateral action brings to the front-burner questions about the size of government, the excessive cost of governance, and the fraud and corruption in Liberia.

Liberia's lawmakers have a reputation for rent-seeking behavior. They have been considered among the highest-paid parliamentarians in West Africa. According to the 2022 national Legislature budget, the total sum of US\$64.3 million was allocated to the national legislature. USD 37.4 million was to salary costs for the House of Representatives, while USD 21.1 million was set aside for the salary cost of the Senate.

The legislature also set aside USD 3.6 million for the so-called Legislative Engagement and Public Accessibility. Substantial additional perks of the office come in the form of allowances to cover a range of costs including the purchase of new official vehicles (USD 4.6 million), operational expenses (USD 18.7 million), gas for vehicles (USD3.1), legislative committee hearings (729,000), printer, newspaper, foreign travels, allowances, etc. The number of allowances received differs across ranks, with the Speaker (USD 2 million), Deputy Speaker (USD 1.5 million), and Senate Pro Tempore (USD 2.1 million), receiving substantially more.

In Liberia, the legislative budgets have tended to increase over the years. An important hike occurred in 2009 when the total legislature budget rose from USD 9.4 million in 2007 to USD19 million in 2009. By 2011, this budget stood at USD26 million. By 2013, the legislature budget was at USD39 million and by 2015, the budget was at USD54 million. In 2016 and 2017, the budget was reduced to around USD47 million and reduced again to US\$44.6 million in 2020. In 2022, another hike occurred to the tune of US\$64.3 million, the highest in the history of Liberia.

While our legislators can accrue salaries and allowances during their 6 or 9 years in office, important additional benefits can be gathered through the legislators' access to public revenues via the Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The legislators' oversight power over Liberia's

numerous MDAs is commonly used to extract additional revenues from the government. This takes the form of lawmakers cooperating with - or bribing and extorting. Access to government revenue is mainly organized through the legislative committee system.

For instance, current Sinoe County Senator, Milton Teahjay confessed to the FrontPageAfrica newspaper how Senate committee chairs bargain with nominees of the Executive Branch to employ persons of their interest to get their votes to be confirmed. The allocation of civil servant job slots to members of the national legislature also supports the practice of prebendalism.

A closer look at the 2022 legislature budget shows that our elected politicians are not serious about tackling food insecurity in Liberia. When comparing the legislature budget of US\$64.3 million to what is allocated to the agricultural sector, reveals that the combined total allocation of US\$7.3 million (0.9% of the total expenditure) includes the Ministry of



Agriculture (US\$4.6 million), Central Agricultural Research Institute (US\$1.6 million), Liberia Agriculture Commodity Regulatory Authority (US\$ 550,107), Cooperative Development Agency (US\$432,602) and the Rubber Development Fund Incorporated (US\$83,997) is eight and a half (8.5) lesser than the national legislature budget.

Liberians have complained about the agriculture sector budget every year not meeting the benchmark to fight food insecurity in the country.

The 2003 African Union (AU) Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security committed African countries to allocate at least 10 percent of national budgetary resources to agriculture and rural development policy to tackle food insecurity in the continent, yet the National Legislature which houses 103 legislators, and several aides increased their budget by US\$10 million, from 53.9 million to US\$64.3 million.

According to the World Food Program (WFP), agricultural production constitutes the most important livelihood for the average Liberians, involving 67% of the population. The sector contributes 26% of GDP, primarily from exports of rubber, palm oil, cocoa, sugar cane, and coffee, but most of the country's food supply is met by imports due to low overall productivity and limited road access.

The 2021 Global Hunger Index, (GHI) ranked Liberia 110th out of the 116 countries. With a GHI score of 33.3, Liberia's hunger levels are 'serious' and

on the brink of becoming 'alarming.' Liberia does not produce enough food for internal consumption. According to the Food Agriculture Organization (FAO), the 2020 national rice production in Liberia was estimated at 270 000 tonnes, like the five-year average and slightly below the previous year.

The 2020 FAO statistics placed Liberia among the highest importer of rice in the world, as well as wheat, and sugar. Rice for human consumption accounts for over 80 percent of imports, whole wheat and maize account for about 13 percent and 6 percent. Sadly, these are all products that can be grown locally if we properly invest in the agricultural sector.

With all the problems of food insecurity in Liberia, how can the Ministry of Agriculture, the government ministry responsible for the governance, management, and promotion of agriculture be allocated USD 4.6 million, but the national legislature budget includes US 4.6 million for new vehicles purchase, US\$3.1million for vehicle fuel, \$3.6 for the so-called Legislative Engagement and Public Accessibility, etc? This honorarium scale is excessive in a country that is living on loans, a country that is owing pensions, and a country whose educational system, health, agriculture sector, and infrastructures are in shambles. Such funds ought to be meaningfully spent to provide clean water, logistic support for emergency treatment, build classrooms, provide materials, train teachers and pay outstanding workers' salaries.

Liberia has never worked and may never work if we don't rise and confront this system. What do these legislators contribute to be earning so much? What are we paying them for? In the same country, millions are starving, millions are impoverished; unemployment is high and poverty continues to increase! How did we end up putting these guys at the helm of national affairs? How did we put those who keep pushing up waste and spending more? Most of these lawmakers are personal failures in their own system, hence the need to amass wealth by all means possible.

These pretentious politicians, who always claim to have people-oriented and focused leadership qualities, are in fact, the least endowed with the virtues of transparency, probity, and accountability in the running of government business. The end result of all this debauchery is the emergence of a powerful privileged class that has suddenly supplanted the yearnings and aspirations of teeming Liberians with its bloated appetite for opulent and ostentatious lifestyles.

The wasteful spending as evidenced in the nation's legislature budget disproportionately affects the socially and economically vulnerable and pushes them deeper into poverty and deprivation. Liberia is in dire straits financially now, running a deficit budget year in and year out means that we need to save resources by cutting costs as much as we can. So, having the national legislature gulping money from the national purse is wrong.

President Weah had the chance to show that the 2022 budget would not prioritize wasteful spending by the national legislature and the executive over and above urgent national development priorities, and the need to improve Liberians' access to necessities such as interrupted electricity supply, quality education, affordable healthcare, clean water, good roads, as well as pay outstanding workers' salaries across the country, but failed to do so when he signed the budget into law. The spending of public funds by the national legislature suggests that the leadership does not conceive of the national budget as a blueprint for social and economic policy priorities in Liberia.



# Clay-Ashland bridge cutoff

By Lincoln G. Peters

The bridge connecting Clay - Ashland to other townships in Montserrado County has been cut-off, impeding the movement of people in the area.

Bad road condition in addition to the collapse of the bridge make the situation

to Virginia, Arthington, and Millsburg. The incident was attributed to the heavy downpour in recent times.

Residents of Clay-Ashland are currently living in extreme hardship and difficulties as many people are reported to be stranded. The situation has also posed a serious

challenge to people from two sisterly settlements, Arthington, and Millsburg. routes now will take approximately four times the normal time it took commuters to access the township of Virginia and other places. The bridge had been lying in ruins and dilapidated state for a long time. In 2020 the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Public Works and the Future Builder construction company reportedly signed an agreement for the construction of the bridge.

Clay-Ashland is considered one of the isolated areas in Electoral District #17, Montserrado County.

School kids are reportedly finding it difficult to commute to and fro their respective school campuses because of the bridge's collapse.

Marketers have also complained about the difficulties they face with transporting their goods to market. They have indicated that prices of basic commodities including rice and gasoline continue to rise.

A cup of rice is now sold for L\$100, while the cost for a gallon of gasoline remains huge. Most of the residents of Clay-Ashland, especially women, are engaged in agricultural activities to support their families. They used to transport their produce from Clay-Ashland to Iron Gate, and Virginia for sale.

Mr. Morris G. Richard, City Mayor of Clay-Ashland told this

paper via telephone interview Monday, 11 July 2022 that he was dismayed over the incident. According to him, the bridge collapsed Sunday morning due to a heavy downpour.

Mr. Richard revealed that he has organized a committee that is working on constructing a temporary plank bridge to enable people to do their business and for children to go to school.

"My brother, in 2018 we cried

on the government to help us construct the bridge after the bridge was in bad condition and later collapsed," he explained.

"Finally, in 2020 the government agreed, and they contacted Future Builder construction company to build the bridge," he continued. He said the company took its material to the area, but it has since allegedly refused to construct the bridge. --*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



worse for residents of the area. Normal economic activities have slowed and movement of people to neighbouring townships in that part of Montserrado County has been impeded.

Some residents broke down in tears early Sunday morning, 10 July 2022 when they heard of the collapse of the only bridge that had connected the Clay - Ashland

challenge to people from two sisterly settlements, Arthington, and Millsburg.

The only existing alternative route to get out of Clay-Ashland is through Molton Corner via a place called Kubon Shop. On average, it's a 20-minute drive from Clay-Ashland to Iron Gate, using the route of the bridge which has been cut-off. But using alternative

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## They're celebrating PY!

campaign ahead of the 2023 presidential and legislative elections.

Whapoe referred to the cabinet retreat as a 'social exhibition' taking place in Ganta City, saying he is not surprised at what they are doing in the county. He claimed that the gathering in Nimba was to enjoy the beauty of Nimba County and return without any plan for the Country and its people.

He suggested that the suffering and hardship that the government has allegedly inflicted on the ordinary Liberians will continue after the Ganta retreat.

Whapoe believes that if the gathering in Ganta is a Cabinet retreat, it means everyday there is a cabinet retreat everywhere President Weah dances 'Buga' in Monrovia.

He claimed that "everywhere that President Weah goes to dance his 'Buga' in Monrovia, members of the cabinet are there and they celebrate and dance with him on several occasions.

"When you talk about retreat, it's where you go [and] you have plans and examine your past performance, achievement and policy to ascertain [their] effectiveness, workability and brainstorm as to how the policy can be implemented to better the lives of the people," said Dr. Whapoe.

"Unlike this government, they are not doing anything like that. They are not even serious, that is why they allocated five minutes to each government institution to make a presentation on their program and policy effectiveness and implementation after five years of service," he added.

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# VP Boakai desperate for power

By Lewis S. Teh

Unity Party Standard Bearer, former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai has come under sharp criticism from the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change for demanding a recount of votes cast in the recently held Senatorial By-election in Lofa County that the UP lost. The former government UP narrowly lost the senatorial election to Senator-Elect, Cllr. Joseph K. Jallah, who contested as an Independent Candidate but endorsed by the ruling CDC.

The deputy scribe of the CDC Youth League Hassan Newland said Ambassador Boakai's call for a recount is an act of desperation for power fueled by hatred for the people of Lofa particularly, members of the Gbandi tribe that Senator-elect Jallah hails from.

"Ladies and Gentlemen: the unsubstantiated claim of election malpractices by former Vice President before and during the 2022 Lofa by-election is a classic show of hate for the courageous and cultural people of Lofa particularly, the Gbandi

whose son has unquestionably won the election", Mr. Newland said in a news conference held at the CDC headquarters in Congo Town.

According to him, the former Vice President's call is a clear display of extreme desperation for state power, and a complete deception to the people of Lofa.

He recalled that the former Vice President initially made threatening statements ahead of the by-election, that a denial of the Unity Party that was in court

to field a candidate in the poll would have led the country to chaos.

Newland narrates that in the last four years, the governing CDC has been defeated in several elections, including the two major senatorial elections in Montserrado County, which were won by the opposition in 2019 and 2020, respectively. He said despite President Weah campaigning for candidates, who lost said elections, yet the CDC congratulated the opposition as required by good democratic tenets.

"The Youth League sees the



Unity Party's statement as a deception, considering the fact that it praised the very Elections Commission when the candidate of the opposition was declared winner in Montserrado twice

Former Vice President Boakai's election malpractices claim has unclothed his desperation for power and disrespect for the mandate of the resilient people of Lofa."

He Amb. Boakai and the UP should muster courage to stop threatening the country's fledgling peace and democracy and sowing seeds of discord among the great sons and daughters of Lofa County.

However, the CDC Youth League has extolled the leader of the opposition Alternative National Congress and lone leader of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) Mr. Alexander B. Cummings, for congratulating Senator-election, Joseph Jallah and extolling the people of Lofa for exercising high level of maturity in the senatorial by-election.

Newland noted that Mr. Cummings exhibited high degree of

Maturity by congratulating the winner of the polls despite

the fact that the ANC/CPP did not field a candidate in Lofa. He said the CDC is not surprised that divisiveness of former VP Boakai is treading a conflict-ridden path that clearly portrays his true nature.

He also accused Boakai of undermining former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf whom he served as Vice President for 12 years and being responsible for the disintegration of the CPP that the public had perceived could be a competitive arrangement against the CDC.

Having a competitive arrangement is what the CDC has always fought for years, which has led many of our cadres to prison and martyrdom under the failed Unity Party regime, the CDC deputy scribe added.

He called on the international community to watch statements coming from the former Vice President, noting that VP Boakai's quest for power is valued above the peace of the State, cautioning that such uncontrollable desire for power is a creeping threat, as Liberia moves toward general and presidential elections in 2023.

*Editing by Jonathan Browne*



# Weah, Cabinet on Jolly Jolly, not retreat

## -Dr. Whapoe alleges



Dr. Jeremiah Z. Whapoe

By Lincoln G. Peters  
**O**pposition Vision for Liberia Transformation Party political leader Dr. Jeremiah Z. Whapoe alleges that President George Manneh Weah and his officials are in Nimba County campaigning and celebrating Senator Prince Yormi Johnson's birthday party, but not for a retreat.  
 "As far [as] I am concerned, the government

is not on any cabinet retreat in Nimba County as they are currently calming around here," Dr. Whapoe said in an exclusive interview with this paper on Monday, 11 July 2022.  
 "The government is just on a social exhibition, that is what they are showcasing," he alleged.  
 According to the Vision for Liberia Transformation Party (VOLT) political leader, the

Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) - led government is in Nimba just celebrating the birth anniversary of Nimba Senator Prince Yormie Johnson (PYJ).  
 The ex-war lord is an unpredictable political ally of President Weah and the CDC government, while he also runs his own political party, the Movement for Democracy and Reconstruction (MDR).  
 On Saturday, 9 July 2022, President Weah kicked off a week-long visit to Nimba for a Cabinet Retreat which is expected to climax on 13 July.  
 But Dr. Whapoe contends that the CDC government should not tell the Liberian people that they are on any cabinet retreat. "However, please do not call it a cabinet retreat. It's just another opportunity for [the] CDC government to drink alcohol, campaign and dance 'Buga' around," said Dr. Whapoe.  
 He alleged that what the government calls a cabinet retreat is just the presence of officials in Nimba celebrating the birthday party of Senator Johnson and to

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