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MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES
LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

DATE	BUYING	SELLING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 01, 2023	LS157.0501/US\$1.00	LS159.0054US\$1.00

These are indicative rates based on results of daily surveys of foreign exchange market in Monrovia and selected cities of Liberia. These rates are collected from the Central bank, commercial banks, parallel market and the license forex bureaux. The rates are not set by the Central Bank of Liberia.
Source: Research, Policy and Planning Department, CBL.

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VOL. 13 NO. 027 WEDNESDAY, MARCH 01, 2023 PRICE LD\$40.00

P11 **Bong County: 9 grabbed for murder**



The suspects

The decease

P11 **Liberia is Safe - Minister Rennie**



Min. Ledgerhood Julius Rennie



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Continental News

Death Toll in Equatorial Guinea Marburg Outbreak Rises to 11

Two more people in Equatorial Guinea have died of Marburg hemorrhagic fever, a cousin of the Ebola virus, bringing the toll of fatalities to 11, the

of whom have developed symptoms, and three who have been quarantined in hospital," it added. The Marburg virus is a rare but highly dangerous pathogen that causes severe

declared a health alert in the remote northeastern province of Kie-Ntem province and in the neighboring district of Mongomo, which are located on the border with Cameroon and Gabon. Measures include a lockdown plan implemented in collaboration with the WHO.

In their statement of February 13, the authorities had reported only three cases of infection in addition to the fatalities -- individuals who were being isolated with "mild symptoms" in hospital. The natural host of the Marburg virus is the African fruit bat, which carries the virus but does not fall sick from it.

But the animals can pass the virus to primates in close proximity, including humans, and human-to-human transmission then occurs through contact with blood or other bodily fluids.

Fatality rates in confirmed cases have ranged from 24 percent to 88 percent in previous outbreaks, depending on the virus strain and case management, according to the WHO. There are currently no approved vaccines or antiviral treatments.

Potential treatments, including blood products, immune therapies and drug therapies, as well as early candidate vaccines are being

fever, often accompanied by bleeding and organ failure.

It is part of the so-called filovirus family that also includes the Ebola virus, which has wreaked havoc in several previous outbreaks in Africa. The central African state announced on February 13 that nine people had died from Marburg between January 7 and February 7. The U.N.'s World Health Organization (WHO) held an emergency session the following day.

The national authorities have

authorities say. "Two days ago, the monitoring system recorded eight notifications, including the deaths of two people with symptoms of the disease," Health Minister Mitoha Ondo'o Ayekaba said in a statement issued late Tuesday.

Work is underway "to strengthen assessment of the spread of the epidemic," said the statement, read on national television.

"Forty-eight contact cases have been documented, four

US: 25 Million Lives Saved by AIDS Program

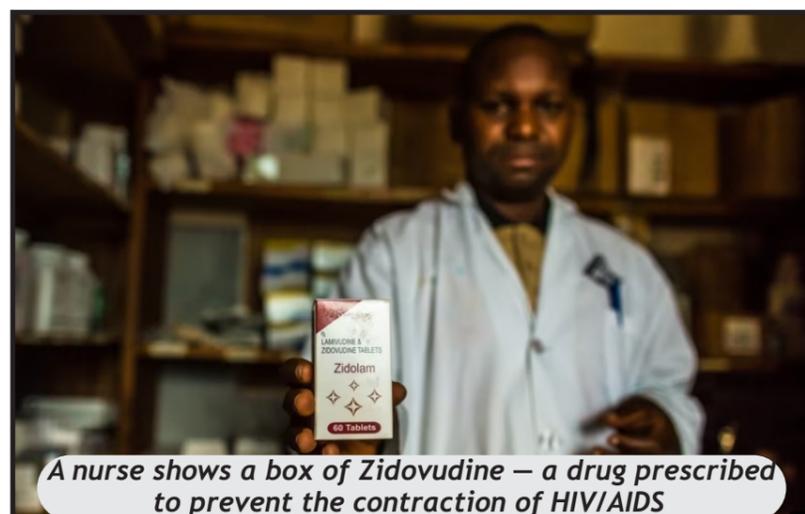
The head of a U.S. government program to fight AIDS, Dr. John Nkengasong, says that in its 20 years of existence the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, has saved 25 million lives. PEPFAR, set up in 2003 under the administration of former U.S. president George W. Bush, has transformed the trajectory of HIV/AIDS, Nkengasong told reporters Tuesday while visiting South Africa. "Twenty-five million lives have been saved, 5.5 million children have been born free of HIV/AIDS, health systems have been strengthened in a remarkable way," he said.

Nkengasong, who comes from Cameroon, said there was once a "sense of hopelessness" in Africa, the continent worst-hit by HIV/AIDS, but since then countries' economies have increased and life expectancy has improved. Some 95% of the

total \$110 billion spent through PEPFAR was spent on Africa as it bore the brunt of the disease, he said. "Before PEPFAR only 50,000 people, 50,000 people on the continent of Africa who were infected, were on treatment, 50,000. Today over 20 million people are receiving life-saving anti-retroviral therapy," he said.

Nkengasong said the infrastructure rolled out across Africa as part of the U.S.

government program was also useful during the COVID-19 pandemic. The AIDS official said he was also "very positive" about the tools in the pipeline to combat HIV, including the roll out of pre-exposure prophylactics for HIV negative people that can be injected every three months and will stop the spread of new infections. VOA



A nurse shows a box of Zidovudine – a drug prescribed to prevent the contraction of HIV/AIDS

Opposition calls for Nigeria poll to be scrapped

Opposition parties in Nigeria have called for the presidential election to be scrapped, describing it as a sham. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the Labour Party said results had been manipulated, and they wanted a new election to be organised.

Governing party candidate Bola Tinubu is currently in the lead with just over 44% of the vote, official figures released so far show.

The commission has not yet commented on the opposition's demand. Mr Tinubu's campaign team condemned the opposition parties.

"If you're not prepared to accept the shock of defeat, you have no moral rights to enjoy the fruits of victory," its spokesman Dele Alake

the capital, Abuja. "Everything happening there is all lies, all lies, lies... they are cooking up results," one man told the BBC.

Another group held a counter-protest, urging the electoral commission to "complete your job" and calling on "Nigerians to stand up for democracy". On Monday, Mr Abubakar's and Mr Obi's parties walked out of the venue in Abuja where results were being announced.

They said there was a lack of transparency with the new electronic voter system. The governing All Progressives Congress (APC) said those dissatisfied with the results should go to court, and that the parties should first let the process run its course.

This was the first national election where an electronic device had been used to accredit voters.

The electoral commission denied the opposition parties' complaints.

Its chairman Mahmood Yakubu



Nearly 90 million people were eligible to vote in the election

said. The opposition parties were critical of the Independent National Electoral Commission (Inec) and its handling of the electronic voting system. "I demand that this sham of an election be cancelled and we call on Inec to conduct fresh elections within the window period provided by the electoral act," said Julius Abure, chairman of the Labour Party. The small African Democratic Congress (ADC) has also backed the call by Labour and the PDP, which is the main opposition party. The PDP's Atiku Abubakar and Labour's Peter Obi were the main opposition presidential candidates in the elections held on Saturday.

With official results released from 14 of the Nigeria's 36 states, Mr Abubakar is in second place, with around 33% of the vote. Mr Obi is third, with 18%. A group of angry protesters denounced the electoral commission outside the national collation centre in

said the announcement of results would continue. European Union observers said the electoral body's poor planning and communication undermined trust in the process. The APC and PDP have dominated Nigeria since the end of military rule in 1999. Mr Obi ran for president for the first time, promising to challenge the two-party system. He has the support of many young people, who make up a third of registered voters. There are 15 other candidates. From the results announced so far Mr Tinubu has won the most votes in six states, Mr Abubakar five and Mr Obi three. Provisional results show Mr Obi has also won in Abuja, but the result has not yet been officially confirmed.

On Monday, he was declared the winner of the biggest city, Lagos, which was seen as a stronghold of Mr Tinubu.

A candidate needs to have the most votes nationwide and at least a quarter of ballots cast in 25 of the 36 states plus Abuja to be declared the winner. If those thresholds are not reached then there will be a second round run-off between the top two candidates. BBC

EDITORIAL

Time for deep reflection as Liberians prepared for 2023 elections

NEARLY SIX YEARS ago in 2018 Liberians went to a runoff Presidential election and voted current President George Manneh Weah and his Coalition for Democratic Change with the campaign slogan, "Change for Hope", relegating the former Unity Party headed by former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai. Clearly, that was the majority will of voters dominated by youth, who saw themselves in Mr. Weah.

SIX YEARS LATER, the youth are walloping in drug addiction and other deviant activities with ghettos springing up in every community across the country, while Liberia goes down in history for the importation or smuggling of cocaine valued at US\$100 million. Today, youth consumed by dangerous substances have been branded as "At Risk Youth".

EVEN MORE REGRETTABLE and disappointing is that state security institutions like the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency, including immigration border guards, are directly facilitating and escorting people smuggling contraband across our borders, while the government pays lip service to the issue of drugs.

SIX YEARS AGO, Liberians were promised that they would no longer be spectators in their own economy. Today, the reality is totally different. Liberians are nowhere near activities of the economy least to talk of watching its interplay. Instead, foreigners dictate what happens in the economy, and they are in full control. Not even the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has a say in what goes on in the economy with Liberian entrepreneurs at a disadvantage.

SIX YEARS AFTER, salary of public workers has been drastically reduced, particularly within the Civil Service with civil servants, the least paid, practically left with nothing to take home to their families amid increases in prices of food and other basic commodities, including petroleum.

SIX YEARS AFTER, many parents can hardly afford to send their children to school and maintain them there due to increases in tuition and fees. The government brags about tuition-free public universities but standards and quality have fallen significantly with instructors and lecturers striking for pay and students protesting poor learning environments.

LEST WE BE misconstrued or perceived as doomsayers. The government has been endeavoring in the last six years to build some roads and housing units in several counties, including hospitals and market buildings, but the state of the economy and poor governance marred by widespread corruption in the public sector has drawn attention of bilateral partners leading the United States Government, leading it to sanction some officials, are drawbacks against whatever gains made.

IT IS TIME that Liberians take sober reflection and think whether six years under the Weah administration brought improvement in their living condition, or they find themselves retrogressing, falling behind the poverty line.

IT'S TIME TO reflect and project what another six years under President Weah would deliver that will change the tide in a significant way in terms of better education and healthcare, a vibrant economy, and a better image for the country, as our diplomatic passports are being placed in the hands of criminals, who are now making concessions, expressing willingness to call names in government that are part of such syndicate.

EQUALLY SO, LIBERIANS need to look attentively and evaluate those presenting themselves as alternatives for leadership in order to make a better choice in October, or else, this country may risk falling from the frying pan into the fire that could spell more hardship with unimaginable consequences. It's time to rise and put on the thinking cap to avoid being consumed again by the political speeches and campaign promises, because after polling day on October 10, and a winner is declared by the National Elections Commission, the euphoria will evaporate, and we are left to face the consequences of our decision.

COMMENTARY

By Håvard Halland,
Jessica Lovering

Development Banks Must Embrace Nuclear Energy

PARIS/SANTA BARBARA - Multilateral development banks (MDBs) have historically been reluctant to invest in nuclear energy, and the World Bank has not financed a nuclear power plant since 1959. In the absence of MDB funds, the majority of international financing for such projects has come from state banks in Russia and China, establishing Russian and Chinese companies as the primary suppliers of nuclear technology to low- and middle-income countries.

While this approach has allowed MDBs to avoid controversy, they must acknowledge that the world has changed. The urgent need to curb greenhouse-gas emissions, together with Russia's war in Ukraine and subsequent surge in oil and gas prices, has increased global demand for nuclear power. With the 2011 Fukushima disaster fading in the rearview mirror, even Japan is planning to restart its reactors. France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom have all announced plans to build new nuclear power plants, Sweden is considering it, and the European Union now allows nuclear energy to be labeled as a green investment. In the United States, the federal government is expected to pump about \$40 billion into the sector over the coming decade, and private investment in nuclear energy is surging.

This change in sentiment coincides with rapid technological advances. The development of smaller and safer reactors has made nuclear power cheaper, faster to deploy, and easier to maintain. Whereas the construction of traditional nuclear power plants has historically been a major national undertaking, with costs frequently running into the dozens of billions of dollars, so-called small modular reactors allow for a more tailored approach and more manageable financing packages.

This is particularly important for developing countries, which must figure out how to expand their power supply while curtailing greenhouse-gas emissions as they become increasingly industrialized and urbanized. The International Energy Agency estimates that demand for energy in Africa will jump by one-third by the end of the decade, owing to population and income growth, as well as improved access.

While increased MDB support for renewable energy has helped put developing economies on the path toward carbon neutrality, most countries still rely on coal-fired power plants and natural gas for baseload electricity production. To complete the shift away from fossil fuels, governments must complement wind and solar energy with low-carbon sources that are not dependent on weather conditions.

But without nuclear power (or hydroelectricity, but not all countries have that option), governments will find it difficult to replace their fossil-fuel baseload. While it may be possible to achieve this by combining renewable energy with utility-scale battery storage, the costs are prohibitive, and modern batteries come with their own sustainability issues. Geothermal energy could also play this role, but currently it is limited to areas where geothermal heat is available close to the Earth's surface. New technologies could expand access to geothermal power, but they are costly.

By abandoning their reticence about nuclear power, MDBs could help scale up low-carbon energy supply while enhancing global security. Western countries' withdrawal from nuclear energy over the past few decades has enabled Russia to establish itself as the leading international provider of reactors, services, and financing for nuclear-power projects. At a time of heightened geopolitical tensions, it is in the interest of MDBs' democratic shareholding governments to establish an alternative for emerging countries interested in nuclear power but hesitant to make their energy security dependent on Russia. Simultaneously, MDBs would promote better safety and sustainability standards.

Given that international development agencies tend to follow MDBs' lead, and that private financing of energy infrastructure projects in developing countries often depends on multilateral lenders' risk-mitigation policies, MDBs should reverse their position on nuclear power. Otherwise, Russia and China will remain the world's primary suppliers of such projects.

To be sure, MDBs must carefully assess proposed nuclear energy projects to ensure that they meet appropriate technological and sustainability standards. While some under-resourced countries with weak institutions might not be ready to pursue nuclear power, MDBs are uniquely positioned to support emerging economies seeking alternatives to Russian and Chinese technologies and financing.

The climate crisis, too, has created unprecedented momentum for reform. The US, Germany, a G20 expert panel, and Barbadian Prime Minister Mia Mottley have all called for strengthening MDBs' capacity to support developing countries in mitigating and adapting to climate change and in mobilizing private financing for this purpose. Meanwhile, the World Bank recently published an "evolution roadmap" that aims to increase its capacity to respond to climate change.

Reforming MDBs' financing structures and energy policies is crucial to supporting developing countries in mitigating the worst effects of climate change. Moreover, Russia's war against Ukraine has revealed the critical role of the multilateral financial system as a bulwark against tyranny. Since the start of the war, the World Bank has disbursed \$16 billion in financial support to Ukraine, with other multilateral finance institutions providing comparable amounts. By explicitly permitting MDBs to finance nuclear power, their shareholding governments could weaken Russia's still-considerable influence in emerging countries.

The momentum generated by nuclear energy's renaissance, the geostrategic imperative to reduce Russia's role as the dominant international provider of nuclear energy infrastructure, and the looming climate crisis, has presented MDBs with a unique opportunity to update their nuclear energy policy. To fight climate change and achieve a safer, more sustainable future, they must seize it.

The opinions and arguments expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the OECD or its member countries.

OP-ED

By James A. Goldston

Ukraine and the Rebirth of Human Rights

NEW YORK - As democracy has receded in many parts of the world, “human rights” - and the language, institutions, and framework of laws to which the concept has given rise over the past 75 years - have increasingly attracted criticism.

Of course, realities on the ground have always fallen short of the lofty aspirations enshrined in our patchwork global human-rights system, from the first initiatives under the League of Nations to the 1945 United Nations Charter and the treaties subsequently adopted by UN members. But defenders of human rights can hardly be blamed for the rise of populist authoritarianism. Autocrats are on the rise not because the human-rights regime has failed, but because power dynamics in many countries stifle economic opportunity and block political alternatives, enabling authoritarian strongmen to flout democratic rules.

But while rights and their legal underpinnings have been eroded in recent years, the past 12 months have created an impetus for their resurrection. Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine and the mass atrocities that followed have reminded us that human rights - and the international legal architecture that gives them substance - still matter. In fact, the war underscores three fundamental lessons about the state of human rights today.

First, Russian aggression and atrocities have reminded us that rights, justice, and democracy are not empty rhetoric. They have concrete meaning and value. But only when they are on the verge of being lost do we come to appreciate just how important and vulnerable they are. Before January 6, 2021, many of us in the United States could not have imagined that our own Capitol - the seat of American democracy - would come under physical assault, or that an incumbent president would refuse to recognize the results of a free and fair election and seek to remain in office through lies and deception.

Similarly, before February 24, 2022, many people saw the dictates of international law - the inviolability of borders, the right of people to choose their own rulers, the prohibitions against abusive conduct even during armed conflict - as mere platitudes that are not worth much in the real world of hard power. But the Russian invasion and its brutal targeting of civilians and their infrastructure have reminded us why we created these legal norms - and why we no longer can take them for granted. Russia is literally showing us what a world without international law and human rights would look like, and it is not pretty.

The second lesson of the war follows from the first: it is not enough to proclaim human rights in print; they also must be recognized, defended, and expanded through struggle. The millions of Ukrainians fighting for their lives and demanding full accountability for those most responsible for the war understand this all too well. As Ukrainians mobilize on the battlefield to preserve their freedom and democracy, they are also pushing for what Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky calls a “just peace.” By that he means an end to the conflict based not only on the return of Ukraine’s occupied territory but also on accountability for Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Ukrainians and the rest of the world have learned that it was a mistake not to punish Putin for his prior acts of aggression in Crimea and eastern Ukraine - not to mention his troops’ earlier crimes in Georgia and Syria. A settlement that lacks prosecutions for the senior perpetrators of the violence will not bring an enduring peace. As the Ukrainian Prosecutor General and the International Criminal Court proceed with their investigations into war crimes and crimes against humanity, the UN General Assembly must create a new tribunal to try Russia’s leadership for the singular crime of aggression.

Finally, this war has taught us that what is happening in Ukraine is of universal concern. If we want to deter future dictators from launching an aggressive war, it is not enough to prosecute Russia’s current rulers. We also must make clear that, like atrocity crimes, aggression will be punished whenever and wherever it occurs.

Obviously, Ukrainians are the ones suffering most directly from the heinous acts committed in Bucha, Mariupol, and countless other towns that have been laid to waste. But these are also crimes against all humanity. In defending its own democracy, Ukraine is fighting to preserve an international rules-based order on which we all depend. In this sense, Ukraine’s cause really is the world’s cause.

While the global spotlight is rightfully aimed at Ukraine for now, we must not forget the other human-rights crises that also deserve international attention and resources - from Myanmar and Ethiopia to Afghanistan and Palestine. Holding Putin and his henchmen to account is essential; but our task will not be complete until we bring the law to bear on the perpetrators of other grave crimes, too.

The very notion of international justice demands that it be administered impartially and equally. Anything less is not worthy of the name.

OPINION

By Ricardo Hausmann

The Left’s Capital Punishment

CAMBRIDGE - In the traditional (and somewhat outdated) distinction between left and right, left-wing parties represent workers, while right-wing parties represent the owners of capital. When the left is in charge, according to this view, it tends to use its power to reduce the share of national income that goes to capital, either through raising corporate taxes or taxing personal capital gains.

Some left-wing politicians, however, attempt to minimize capital’s share by regulating or nationalizing capital-intensive industries, such as electricity and infrastructure. For example, Colombian President Gustavo Petro recently announced that he would default on the terms of road concessions and freeze tolls. Yet, given the terms of the contract, this forced the finance ministry to compensate investors, and left future investors on notice. Petro also announced his intention to take responsibility for setting household utility bills away from the independent regulator, so he can personally cut electricity costs.

In Mexico, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (widely known as AMLO), has launched an overhaul of the electricity market that would cement the monopoly of the state-run Comisión Federal de Electricidad (CFE) and effectively roll back previous pro-market reforms enacted by his predecessor, Enrique Peña Nieto. As a consequence, private investment in the Mexican energy sector has collapsed.

Petro and AMLO should heed the lessons of South Africa and Venezuela, where the attempt to cement the state electricity monopoly has led to collapsing grids and massive power outages. To overcome the disaster, made more challenging by the need to shift to clean energy, both countries will need to reverse course and regain investors’ trust.

The inefficiency of South Africa’s state monopoly in electricity became obvious in 2007, when insufficient capacity led to widespread blackouts and forced the government to start rationing electricity. Ideological resistance, together with rampant corruption within President Jacob Zuma’s administration and at the state-owned utility Eskom, prevented the government from liberalizing electricity generation until seven months ago, when it was already too late to prevent catastrophe. On February 10, President Cyril Ramaphosa declared a national state of disaster, announcing a R254 billion (\$13.9 billion) bailout of Eskom and vowing to accelerate new private energy projects.

In Venezuela, Hugo Chávez’s decision to nationalize the electricity sector in 2007 led to frequent outages and sharply reduced electricity generation by 2009, culminating in a week-long national blackout in March 2019. In spite of massive public capital transfers, the country’s power generation is still below its 2007 levels.

Electricity, roads, battery storage, and solar and wind energy are capital-intensive industries, which means that businesses must spend heavily on fixed assets and then recoup their investment over long periods of time. This gives governments an incentive to make unrealistic promises to entice investors and then try to expropriate their assets or their positive cash flows through nationalization or price controls. Under these conditions, investors will demand higher returns on capital in order to protect themselves, but this will just give governments even more incentive to expropriate. Markets cannot function well under these conditions.

But as South Africa and Venezuela show, relying on state-owned monopolies can lead to energy crises of historic proportions. Government control gives the illusion of lower prices, but at the cost of leaving companies without the financial resources necessary to modernize and expand their networks or raise new capital, leading to chronic shortages and the need for fiscal bailouts. Moreover, state-owned utilities tend to be hotbeds of corruption.

This conundrum can be solved by enabling private companies to increase their share of electricity generation and empowering independent regulators to oversee them. Entrusting pricing power and regulatory oversight to an independent board, rather than elected officials, improves accountability and leads to better long-term outcomes.

The economic rationale is similar to the one underlying central-bank independence. When investors purchase long-term government bonds, they part with money today, expecting to get their money back over time with interest. But that gives governments an incentive to erode the value of future payments through higher inflation. In anticipation of this, markets will demand higher interest rates, raising inflation expectations and rendering the market inefficient. But by empowering independent central banks, governments hope to gain the market’s trust, thus obtaining price stability and lower borrowing costs.

Combining private electricity providers and independent regulatory oversight has helped Chile, Colombia, and Peru overcome previous energy crises. By convincing markets that the risk of expropriation was low, Colombia secured massive investments and cheaper electricity. But now, Petro is threatening to reverse the progress made by his predecessors.

Part of the problem is that many on the left are still ideologically opposed to markets. Because they see capital as abusive, they view political power as the means to constrain it. But left-wing politicians like Petro and AMLO fail to understand that this logic will inevitably backfire. Since new investments are forward-looking, expectations of government coercion will make capital scarcer and more expensive. To ensure that they can adequately meet their economies’ electricity needs in the context of the energy transition, many countries, including Argentina, Colombia, and Mexico, have much to gain from opening up to private investment in energy generation and restoring their credibility by setting clear rules of the game and empowering independent regulators to enforce them.

Unfortunately, as the Indian economist Montek Singh Ahluwalia once observed, credibility grows as slowly as a coconut tree and falls as fast as a coconut. Until leftist governments adopt a more capital-friendly approach, as Uruguay has done, capital markets will continue to punish them.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Liberia's 2023 Budget of Misplaced Priorities

By S. Karweaye

Liberians heaved a sigh of relief in December 2022 when the deputy minister for budget and development planning, Tanneh Geraldine Brunson finally submitted the 2023 budget to the national legislature, after a two-month delay in its submission by the Executive, a violation of the Public Financial Management (PFM) Law, which calls for the submission of the budget at least two months before its passage.

In the course of the budget analyses, we would see if like previous budgets, this budget does anything to put Liberia's battered economy on the path of growth or sustained development. What provisions does it offer the millions of unemployed Liberians with no hope of a better future? What are its provisions for rescuing the 64% of Liberians currently living below the poverty line, of whom 1.3 million live in extreme poverty?

Less than one out of every four dollars budgeted in 2023 would be invested in education, healthcare, roads, and electricity. Whichever way one looks at these figures, they confirm surely that this budget is likely to be a failure on arrival. For instance, with all the rhetoric that the cost of governance is reducing, one would expect figures that are closer to 25% as is the internationally accepted standard for recurrent expenditure, but no, the recurrent budget is about 80.21% (US\$623.95 million) more than quadruple the capital expenditure provisions.

Let us look at the performance of the previous budgets for an idea of the possible results of the 2023 budget, considering that the economic team is unchanged and contrary to expectations, the time of commencement of execution of the 2022 budget would most likely replicate that of the previous budgets. By the midyear executive report of the 2020 year, the finance ministry report pegged implementation at 44%. Since the 2020 budget, mid-year performance the Weah administration has failed in reporting budget performance.

Looking at the above picture, it is clear that unless something drastic is done by the government, the 2023 budget implementation will remain at similar levels to that of previous budget performance and the nation's infrastructure deficit will continue to widen. There is a need to put in place checks and balances to ensure that Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) provide services with capital funds that have been budgeted and released to them.

The health sector across Liberia reveals an area of national life that is in dire need of rescue through new policies, regulations, and strengthened institutions. Across the country, treatable diseases like malaria and cholera are still killers, and infant and maternal mortality rates are amongst the worst in the world. The Liberian government has greater responsibility for healthcare than any other tier, being in charge of primary and secondary healthcare. We had hoped that our government budget would be more effective and higher in both quantity and quality. Sadly, that is not the reality of the 2023 proposed budget. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that 15% of national budgets be allocated to healthcare. In the 2023 proposed budget, 9.71% (US\$75.52 million) is budgeted for the health sector; about the entire sum is devoted to recurrent expenditure.

According to the WHO, malaria is endemic in Liberia with a prevalence rate of up to 60% in some regions, and it has been a major cause of death in children under 5 years of age. Our current doctor-to-patient ratio is 1 to 20,000 people and this miserable capital allocation at the tertiary level is not sufficient to adequately address the challenges facing this sector. How does a forward-thinking government justify allocating 9.71% of its budget to the health sector? With the widespread dysfunctions in governance that we are experiencing as a country, the under-budgeting for the sector is worsened by the fact that actual releases are usually far

less than the amounts allocated. Additionally, effective utilization of the little that gets released is hindered by the corruption and incompetence that exist in public sector agencies.

Given the contribution of education to development, the United Nations (UN) recommends that countries allocate 26 percent of their resources to education. In the 2023 proposed budget, Liberia won't meet this budgetary target. The Liberian government allocates only 12.43 percent (US\$96.71 million) of its budget to the education sector, which is lower than comparable African countries such as Kenya (26%), Ethiopia (24%), Sierra Leone (22%), Namibia (20%). Problem is, like health, the major chunk of its allocations are misdirected; US\$51.1 million is allocated to compensation of employees while US\$9.2 million is for goods and services.

Agriculture ought to be the business of the government, but the intervention in the sector has been confused, with mixed results at best. Agriculture is apportioned US\$5.42 million (0.70%) in the 2023 budget. This allocation is not adequate for targeted intervention in a sector, especially with food insecurity in Liberia. The decision to allocate US\$5.42 on the compensation of employees and repairing maintenance of the warehouse, etc instead of



improved seedlings, agrochemicals, fertilizers, extension services, and farm-to-market infrastructure, is indicative of the spend-without-results symptomatic of virtually all Weahian programs since 2017.

Ironically, if you look at the Ministry of States for Presidential Affairs' budget of US\$15 million, you would see that all talk about transparency and accountability is just that, talk. There is a US\$4.3 million provision for the office of the president, while US\$819,600 is allocated to Public Procurement and Concession; US\$2.3 million for Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission, 403,627 for Liberia Extractive Industry Transparency and only US\$2.34 million is allocated to the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission. Worse still, there is a paltry allocation of about US\$718,120 to the National Disaster Management Agency of Liberia; it is not therefore surprising that the agency is incapable of responding timely to emergencies, and when they do so, often too little, too late.

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 2021 and 2022 national budgets of US\$30,000 for each Senator and Representative in the name of the so-called Legislative Engagement Fund totaling US\$3.6 million. Sadly, 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 2023 proposed national Legislature budget, a total sum of US\$ 43 million was allocated to the national legislature. US\$24 million was for salary costs for the House of Representatives, while US\$14 million was set aside for the salary cost of the Senate. Substantial additional perks of the office come in the form of allowances to cover a range of costs including fuel and lubricants for vehicle vehicles (US\$5 million), other compensation (US\$2 million), constituency visit (US\$980,121), and legislative committee hearings (US\$3million). The number of funding received differs across ranks, with the Speaker (US \$2 million), Deputy Speaker (US \$1.2 million), and Senate Pro Tempore (US \$2 million), receiving substantially more.

Over the years, the public infrastructure deficit in Liberia has become an issue of major concern, The gap includes a lack of good roads and a railway network that can drive economic activities, poor and in some instances, non-existent power generation, transmission and distribution systems, decaying public educational facilities, dilapidated government-owned hospitals (including tertiary healthcare facilities) and even airports amongst others. Generally, infrastructure is the foundation on which economic activities thrive, as poor infrastructure impacts economic growth. According to the World Bank. Liberia has a huge infrastructural deficit (roads, housing, electricity and " a funding gap between US\$250 million and 500 million per year, it will need a combination of increased finance, improved efficiency, and cost-reducing innovations to reach its infrastructure targets in a reasonable time. Without these, Liberians may have to wait for up to 40 years to achieve the targets." Putting this into perspective, the government of Liberia would need to spend the entire 2023 budget of US\$777.94 million, continuously over the next 40 years on capital expenditure to meet the target. The fact that less than US\$71. 4 million was appropriated for capital expenditure reflecting the urgency to increase infrastructure spending.

Rather than being a budget of hope, Weah's 2023 proposal is a budget of despair. It won't significantly change the tempo of the economy. Nor will it reduce the country's high unemployment, poverty, and inflation rates. In fact, it could worsen Liberia's cycle of deficits and debts, without the possibility of fostering structural transformation, diversifying the economy, promoting sustainable economic growth, and reducing unemployment and poverty. The budget is consistent with previous Weah administration budgets. Most importantly, it doesn't address structural deficiencies in the Liberia economy. These include the lack of diversification of sources of revenue. These have been responsible for the country's cycle of high budget deficits and government debts.

The first and second quarters of 2023 will be dominated by elections and political transitions. This may have the effect of disrupting economic activities and fuelling uncertainties, especially among domestic and foreign investors. The economy may therefore fall short of the 5.3% growth rate assumed in the budget parameters, which would subsequently result in lower revenues and additional borrowings.

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CBL retains 15% Monetary Policy Rate

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), proxied by the Board of Governors of the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL), during its first

implementation of these monetary policy measures, which were prompted by global and domestic macroeconomic developments, will foster

of Liberia's major export commodities, i.e., palm oil, iron ore, rubber, gold, and round logs, during the last quarter of 2022 were of grave concern to the MPC. The MPC's concerns were, however, eased by the sustained decline in global crude oil prices, which had the effect of lowering the pump prices of fuel in the domestic economy and hopefully reversing inflation.

The MPC noted positive domestic economic developments, with an estimated 5.9% quarterly growth in Real Gross Domestic Product (RGDP) in the last quarter of 2022, due mainly to growth in the mining sector, especially in gold production, although growth in the mining sector in 2022, at 14.0%, was less than robust as compared to 2021, which was 17.6%.

The Committee was concerned about the rise in the inflation rate to 9.3% from 6.9% in the third quarter of 2022, and the widening trade deficit to 6.7% of GDP in the fourth quarter of 2022, compared to 5.5% of GDP in the previous quarter, which was attributed to a 13.6% rise in import payments and a 2.4% decline in exports receipts.

The Committee noted the net remittance inflow through the banking system in the fourth quarter of 2022, rising from US\$62.5 million in quarter three of 2022 to US\$68.5 million in the fourth quarter of the same period. Notwithstanding this

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Gov't commits to institutionalizing ADR as core component of Liberia's Justice System

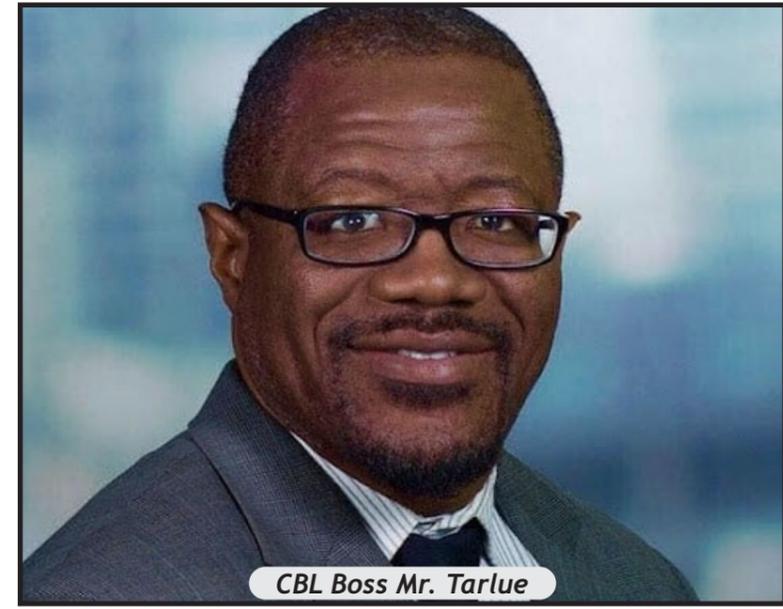
The Minister of Justice Counsellor Frank Musa Dean Jr. has pledged the government's commitment to ensuring that Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is institutionalized and formalized as a core component of ensuring access to justice especially for the poor in Liberia. Counselor Dean said that ADR contributes to building an inclusive society, with a strong focus on promoting human rights, peace and security while addressing the critical justice needs and interests of the country and its citizens.

The Minister of Justice of Liberia was speaking at a one-day dialogue on the official

improving access to justice for the general population, especially the poor and vulnerable. The Minister also encouraged more partners to come onboard and support the development of the legislation.

Also speaking at the event, UNDP Liberia Resident Representative Stephen Rodrigues applauded the strides of the government in pursuing legislative reforms as reflected in the enactment of key legislations whose development were supported by UNDP's Rule of Law Programme.

He said progress towards achieving the national objective of mainstreaming ADR in Liberia through a fully enacted legislation will resolve some of the key



CBL Boss Mr. Tarlue

quarterly meeting of 2023 held on 16 February 2023, retained the monetary policy rate (MPR) at 15% and upheld the Liberian dollar and US dollar reserve requirement ratios at 25% and 10%, respectively.

The MPC further decided for the CBL to issue the fortnightly CBL bills exclusively to commercial banks, while the monthly and quarterly CBL Bills are offered to both commercial banks and retail investors. The CBL bills are part of the monetary policy instruments of the CBL which are conducted through open market operations (OMO).

The MPC is confident that

domestic macroeconomic stability.

The declining global economic growth rate from 6.2% in 2021 to 3.4% in 2022, as well as the rise in the global headline inflation to 8.8% in advanced countries and 14.4% within member countries of the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ), informed the policy decisions of the MPC. It was observed that the policy rates in several advanced economies had risen, as was the case in WAMZ countries, aimed at curbing rising inflationary pressures as a result of the heightened inflation risk in the global economy.

Declines in the global prices



Platform guests

launch of a national consultation and sensitization on a proposed ADR legislation on 24, February 2023 in Monrovia and attended by high level personalities including the Minister of Internal Affairs, Varney Sirleaf. "Not only do we as a nation join the rest of the world to commit to providing access to justice for all citizens but are fully aware that access to justice is a key indicator of peace and the building of inclusive societies. One way to ensure access to justice by citizens is to put at their disposal functioning mechanisms capable of resolving disputes that may arise from the day-to-day interactions of citizens, particularly the poor and vulnerable population. As such, the formalization and institutionalization of ADR as a core component of our justice system through a policy and legal framework is one of the best ways to ensure access to justice" said Justice Minister Dean. He recognized support from international development partners, particularly, UNDP with funding from the Irish Aid, Carter Center, IDLO, Prison Fellowship Liberia, Medica Liberia, Action Aid and so many others to an inclusive and participatory processes of

challenges in the justice system especially overcrowded court dockets and prolonged pre-trial detention.

Rodrigues however, urged the Government to fast track the implementation of these legislative measures, stressing that commitments to supporting and promoting the rule of law should be matched with investments and action.

"At the core of the rule of law are ideals and aspirations, towards which members of the society must continuously and actively work. While we put in place legislative reforms to decongest the court system and reduce prisons overcrowding, we should also note that time is of the essence. The problem of prisons overcrowding has taken alarming proportions," said UNDP Liberia Resident Representative.

He wants the Legislature to enact the Legal Aid Bill, which was submitted in 2022, another key legislation which will help to reduce prisons overcrowding and pre-trial detention by establishing a comprehensive framework to provide legal aid to Liberians. "I am happy to say that the development of this legislation was also supported by UNDP."

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

NEC welcomes S/Leone delegation

Monrovia, 28 February (NEC): A two-man technical delegation from the Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone (ECSL) is in Liberia to share experience with the National Elections Commission (NEC) and provide technical support on the Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) system.

sharing templates and other information useful for the smooth implementation of the NEC BVR system.

Mr. Swaray said ECSL is glad to support Liberia's migration from Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) to BVR, which, he noted, is a more globally accepted and modern electoral system.

The NEC statement issued on

Tuesday said, the delegation, which will be in Liberia for five days, also includes Aiah Quiwa, Assistant Director for Administration of ECSL.

The Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone has successfully used the Biometric Voter Registration in the 2012, 2018 and, 2022 elections.



NEC, through Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah, requested the assistance from the Chairman of ECSL, under the Economic Commission of Network of Elections Commissions of West Africa (ECONEC) Information Sharing Agreement, in preparation for the roll out of the 2023 BVR exercise on 20 March.

According to a NEC statement, Mr. Jusufu Henry Swaray, Director of Data Management and Voters Roll of ECSL, the delegation will mainly be engaged with the Data Center and will be

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Justice Minister risks contempt

By Bridgett Milton

The House of Representatives has ordered Justice Minister Frank Musa Dean to justify why lawmakers should not hold him in contempt after he failed to

counsel and answer why he should not be held in contempt.

Last week, members of the House of Representatives unanimously summoned 10 petroleum importers and authorities of the Liberia

why Mr. Musa Bility, Chairman of petroleum firm Srimex, shouldn't be held in contempt for not appearing before Plenary during previous sitting to respond to debts in taxation.

Mr. Bility quickly mounted the podium with apology to that august body and said his absence was not intentional, but he was not in country when the House invited him.

During the House's regular session on Tuesday, 31 January 2023, Nimba County Electoral District #2 Representative Prince O. S. Tokpah explained to his colleagues through a communication about why the National Road Fund was established by an Act of the Legislature in 2006. He said this was done to ensure among other things that road assets are sustained and that sufficient funds for both periodic and routine maintenance are allocated for that purpose.

He added that the National Road Fund was intended to ensure that national, sub-national and feeder roads have sufficient share of the total funds such that these roads can operate as an integrated network.

It said it was meant to ensure that the needs of the road users and those impacted

Revenue Authority (LRA). They also summoned authorities of the National Road Fund (NRF) for allegedly renegeing of taxation on petroleum products collected or taxation being withheld by petroleum importers in the tune of millions of dollars.

House Speaker Bhofal Chambers discharged West Oil and MOTC for reportedly being in compliance.

However, Chambers asked



Justice Minister Frank Musa Dean

update them about some petroleum dealers' debts.

The House has summoned Minister Dean to appear before its Plenary at 10:00 A.M. prompt on Thursday, 2 March 2023, to show cause why he should not be held in contempt. During the lawmakers' sitting Tuesday, 28 February, members of the House of Representatives voted for the Justice Minister to come along with his legal

House invites NEC

By Bridgett Milton

The House of Representatives has invited the National Elections Commission (NEC) to explain the basis on which the pending voter registration will be conducted for the 2023 elections.

NEC chairperson Madam Davidetta Browne-Lansanh and the NEC Board of Commissioners have been ordered to appear before the House Plenary on Thursday, 2 March 2023.

The Plenary's decision came from a communication it received from Nimba County Electoral District #8 Representative Larry P. Younquoi. According to Rep. Younquoi, Article 80 (d) & (e) of the 1986 Constitution states how results of the National Population Census can be used to establish a representation threshold following the conduct of a census.

He said his concern stems from the fact that the Legislature has not set an electoral threshold as enshrined in the Constitution.

Yet, he said, the NEC is

poised to commence a nationwide voter registration exercise during the latter part of March 2023.

The Nimba County lawmaker added that in the wake of these

11 May.

According to NEC, voter registration will be done in two phases. It said phase one is for residents of Bomi, Gbarpolu, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape



NEC Boss Davidetta Browne-Lansanh

unanswered questions, he is asking the House to kindly invite the NEC Chairperson and the entire Board to address the plenary on the subject matter. It can be recalled that the National Elections Commission wrote the House of Representatives informing it about the start of Voter Registration which is slated for 20 March 2023 and will end on

Mount, Margibi, and Montserrado Counties. They will register from 20 March to 9 April 2023.

The NEC added that phase two is for residents in Bong, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, River Cess, River Gee, and Sinoe Counties. It noted that they will register from 21 April to 11 May 2023.

"Gov't didn't abandon Beach and Water Ways Projects"

-Mayor Bedell Fahn Disclose

By Lewis S Teh

The Mayor of Brewerville Mr. Bedell Fahn has refuted information circulating in the public that the CDC-led government has abandoned or is playing lip service with the beach and waterways projects across Montserrado and its environs.

"I really don't think that the government is playing lip service with the issues regarding the beach and water ways projects between now to next month good news will come up about the project."

Mayor Fahn made the statement here recently at a one-day peace tournament organized by the Liberia Maritime Authority or LiMA through its volunteer workers of the beach and waterways projects in Brewerville electoral

Africa facility which was abandoned is being given a facelift, something he said needs full support from relevant authorities to help ease the burden from the shoulders of the government.

"As we speak, we are calling on prominent individuals within the district to see reason in buttressing our efforts to galvanize tools for these young people who were cleaning our streets during the festive season and I think it's time that we give them the necessary support," he adds.

At the same time, the beach and waterways Project Coordinator George A. Young said the peace tournament was organized to promote unity among workers of the beach and waterways projects.

According to him, over the years there has been some division within the leadership thereby affecting



District 17. He said that no major work is said to be going on due to few reasons, but there are plans by the government to begin the beach and waterways projects across Montserrado and its environs shortly.

The Brewerville mayor told reporters that at no time did the government abandon the project as widely speculated.

"My concerned is about the young people who are unskilled, this project has been providing a livelihood for them."

Today, we all gather here to support our young people who are involved with the beach and waterways projects through a sports day," he adds. I'm passionate about this project because of our brothers and sisters who are unskilled. This beach and waterways cleaning have been giving them a livelihood that's why there's a need for the government to immediately begin the project," Mayor Fahn continued.

He said once the unskilled young people are involved in something positive, the issues of crime will eventually reduce.

the project. He said the workers were divided; some were in favor of the CDC government, while others were against. And this he said has affected the project over time." As we gear towards the conduct of the October 10 presidential and legislative elections, we want to give party leaders the opportunity to campaign for the second term bid of President Weah," Young said.

"You can't be supported by this government than you against them, we are there to support any sitting government that put bread on our table." For his part, the Commissioner of the township of Virginia, Mr. Tye S. Weah extolled the government through the LiMA for reawakening the beach and waterways projects across the district. According to Commissioner Weah, the young people of the district took it upon themselves to volunteer by cleaning up the various communities across the district. He said that is helping to give Brewerville township a decent facelift.

"I like to recommend to the government through the LiMA that those responsible for the beach and

Français

L'ancienne juge en chef Scott pleure sa fille assassinée par dans sa maison

C'est avec un cœur rempli de douleur que l'ancienne juge en chef du Libéria a fait le récit de l'agression brutale dont sa maisonnée a été victime et au cours de laquelle sa fille a été sauvagement tuée par les

Dans la nuit du mercredi 22 février 2023, des criminels ont pris d'assaut la résidence de Mme Scott's à Brewerville et ont horriblement assassiné sa fille Charloe.

Sa maison avait déjà été attaquée deux fois de suite, mais le gouvernement n'a pas levé le

pour faire des travaux dans sa maison pourrait avoir perpétré l'attaque.

« Indiquons clairement que lorsque les deux attaques précédentes ont eu lieu, il n'y avait pas de travailleurs et, fait intéressant, les assaillants n'ont pris aucun objet de valeur », a déclaré Me Scott.

Le jeudi 23 février 2023, moins de 24 heures après l'agression, la Police nationale libérienne (LNP) a publié une déclaration indiquant que l'assassin serait peut-être un travailleur.

Mais Me Scott a insisté sur le fait qu'il y avait eu deux attaques initiales les 8 et 9 février 2023, deux nuits de suite, qui ont été signalées à la police. Elle a déclaré que les assaillants ont fouillé tous les documents sur lesquels ils pouvaient mettre la main, lui donnant des raisons de croire que les attaques qui ont entraîné la mort de sa fille visaient également à récupérer certains documents qu'ils percevaient ou qu'ils pensaient avoir en sa possession.

« Ils ont également désactivé certains systèmes de la voiture de l'ancien juge en chef, ce qui, de toute évidence, semblait avoir été un autre moyen de mettre à exécution leur plan criminel », indique le communiqué.

Pour que les attaques ressemblent à un cambriolage,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



agresseurs.

« Nous sommes également déconcertés par ce qui semble redondant, le déploiement de la police après avoir été forcés dans une situation que nous ne pourrions jamais oublier », regrette Mme Gloria Musu-Scott, dans un communiqué publié le samedi 25 février 2023.

petit doigt pour empêcher la troisième attaque.

Selon elle, le gouvernement, le procureur général et le ministre de la justice de la République du Libéria avaient été dûment informés et après les première et deuxième attaques, mais rien n'a été fait.

Elle a également rejeté le récit de la police selon lequel l'un des travailleurs qu'elle a embauchés

L'entrepreneuriat est indispensable à la croissance du secteur privé, selon Cummings

L'entrepreneuriat est indispensable à la croissance du secteur privé, sans lequel le Libéria ne parviendra pas à un développement économique significatif, a déclaré M. Alexander Cummings, fondateur de la Cummings Africa Foundation.

Cummings a également souligné la nécessité d'un soutien gouvernemental aux entrepreneurs de sorte à avoir accès au financement pour croître et développer leurs entreprises en tant que moteur du développement économique.

Il a déclaré qu'outre l'accès aux finances, les entrepreneurs devront être cohérents, insistants, concentrés, déterminés, avec des objectifs réalisables et des objectifs fixes, en utilisant la technologie pour améliorer la croissance de l'entreprise.

Le porte-drapeau de la Collaboration des partis politiques (CPP) a fait cette déclaration lorsqu'il a pris la parole lors du programme de

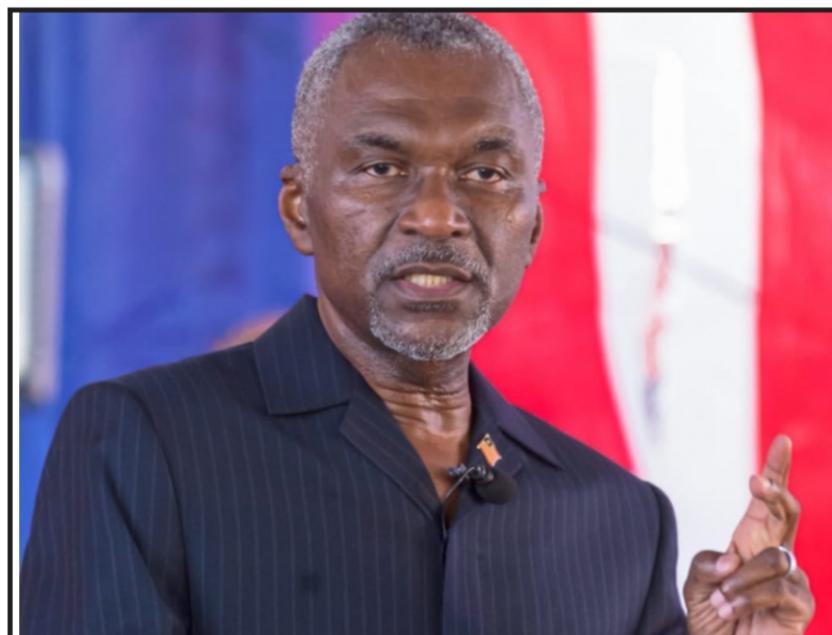
remise des diplômes de l'académie des entrepreneurs le vendredi 24 février 2023.

L'académie, créée en 2016, est une organisation dirigée par des jeunes qui s'engage à préparer les jeunes et à leur donner les moyens de construire un avenir meilleur et plus durable.

L'organisation fournit également un soutien aux élèves du primaire et du secondaire pour améliorer leurs compétences en

lecture et en expression orale.

Cummings a déclaré qu'à moins que le gouvernement n'aide à développer le secteur privé, le Libéria ne fera aucun progrès significatif en terme de création d'emplois. Selon lui, si la CPP est élue, elle investira massivement dans l'entrepreneuriat et veillera à ce que les Libériens soient davantage impliqués dans les marchés publics.



Éditorial

Les rumeurs d'un front commun de l'opposition ravivent l'espoir

Des rumeurs selon lesquelles l'opposition a entrepris des pourparlers politiques frénétiques en vue de raviver la Collaboration des partis politiques (CPP), une coalition politique de l'opposition désintégré, ont saturé l'air tant dans le pays qu'à l'étranger, en prélude aux élections d'octobre.

Des discussions auraient été organisées par des parties et des individus dont l'intention est de ramener les deux principaux dirigeants de l'opposition, M. Alexander B. Cummings du Congrès national alternatif et l'ancien vice-président Joseph Nyumah Boakai du Parti de l'unité et d'autres opposants partageant les mêmes idées autour d'une table pour former un front commun contre le président sortant George Manneh Weah.

Si ces rumeurs sont avérées, nous ne ferons qu'espérer que cette fois-ci, toutes les parties viendront à la table ronde avec une intention claire. En fait, il serait dangereux, très dangereux, si à huit mois des élections des judas s'infiltraient au milieu des gens bien intentionnés sous prétexte de former un front commun alors qu'ils ont une arrière-pensée.

Certains individus de l'opposition sont bien responsables de l'effondrement de la CPP. Et ils sont toujours là. Encore faut-il qu'ils soient surveillés avec des yeux d'aigle pendant que l'on entreprend ce dernier effort pour créer un front d'opposition uni. Ces gens seront plus que perfides pour faire avancer leurs motivations, d'autant plus que la Coalition pour le changement démocratique au pouvoir est prête à faire un effort supplémentaire pour fragmenter et affaiblir l'opposition avant les élections.

Nous nous souvenons de la déclaration de Ganta faite à l'issue de la rencontre où des gens comme le sénateur Prince Yormie Johnson, l'homme d'affaires Benoni W. Urey, Alexander B. Cummings, Joseph Nyumah Boakai et feu Me Charles Walker Brumskine, se sont réunis contre M. Weah et son CDC en 2017. Mais le mariage s'est effondré avant même le premier tour du scrutin.

L'opposition a intérêt à ne pas prendre pour argent comptant le désaccord apparent entre le sénateur Prince Yormie Johnson et le président George Weah, car l'homme PYJ n'est pas un poisson-chat dans l'eau. Il est glissant et difficile à cerner. En d'autres termes, il est hautement imprévisible et peu fiable. Il a laissé tomber le CDC en 2011 avant de finalement apporter son soutien au président Weah en 2017.

Ces discussions qui ont été engagées dans les coulisses en ce moment ne sont pas nouvelles. En tout cas les interlocuteurs s'y connaissent déjà. Ils y étaient allés et avaient réussi, comme en ont témoigné les résultats de l'élection sénatoriale spéciale du 8 décembre 2021 qu'a perdues le parti au pouvoir dans le comté de Montserrado, son fief d'antan, au profit de l'opposition.

Nous sommes encouragés par les derniers efforts visant à réunir l'opposition, car il est bon de le faire afin que l'électorat puisse avoir une meilleure opportunité de choisir des dirigeants qui représenteront leurs intérêts.

Réduire le nombre de candidats à la présidentielle et de partis politiques rend la démocratie plus forte et compétitive. Nous exhortons les acteurs clés à enterrer leur ego et à placer le Libéria au-dessus de tous les autres intérêts dans ces discussions.

Si la CPP est véritablement révisée et renforcée avant le début de l'opération d'enrôlement des électeurs et de la campagne, nous croyons fermement que l'objectif de chasser le président Weah du pour aura déjà été atteint.

Français

L'ancienne juge en chef Scott pleure

Les criminels auraient emporté un sac de riz de 25 kg.

« Il est important de noter que depuis la troisième attaque, où il y a eu meurtre horrible et prise des ordinateurs portables et des téléphones personnels, qui a de nouveau été signalée à la police mercredi entre 22h et 23h, aucune arrestation n'a été effectuée », a dit le communiqué.

Me Scott a poursuivi que lorsque la police est arrivée sur les lieux, elle a emmené les deux agents de la sécurité privée et un certain Oncle Chumu.

Après les deux dernières attaques, a-t-elle dit, Oncle Chumu, voyant que le gouvernement n'avait pas levé le petit doigt pour lui fournir une quelconque protection, avait décidé de passer la nuit avec elle pour la surveiller. « Ces trois hommes, à notre

politiques, ou leur religion. La fille assassinée était étudiante à Starz University College.

« Nous appelons fermement le gouvernement à enquêter sur ce meurtre et sur d'autres et à traduire les auteurs en justice. Nous n'hésiterons pas à demander l'aide de la communauté internationale par le biais des missions diplomatiques pour veiller à ce que cela ne soit pas balayé sous le tapis », indique le communiqué.

Dans leur chagrin, la famille de l'ancienne Juge en chef a exprimé ses remerciements et sa gratitude au Dieu Tout-Puissant et au peuple du Libéria pour la démonstration massive de soutien, de solidarité et les prières.

« En tant que famille, même dans les pires moments, nous restons toujours reconnaissants à Dieu. La famille apprécie particulièrement le rôle des médias libériens qui ont signalé cette affaire dès les premières et deuxièmes attaques contre nous, même si aucune mesure n'a été



connaissance, sont toujours en garde à vue », a-t-elle dit.

Vendredi, a-t-elle dit, la police a passé plusieurs heures avec « notre fils » Godson Kollie à sa résidence de la 16e rue.

Après leurs nombreuses heures d'entretien avec Godson, elle a dit que c'est alors qu'ils ont demandé aux électriciens qui s'étaient rendus à la 16e rue pour recevoir leur salaire de les accompagner au siège de la police nationale.

« La plus grande question de notre famille est : Qu'est-ce que l'ancien juge en chef Scott et la famille Musu ont fait pour justifier tout cela? »

« Nous sommes enclins à croire que si les locaux d'un autre responsable gouvernemental avaient été attaqués deux fois, le gouvernement aurait pris des mesures pour éviter ce qui nous est arrivé », a-t-elle dit.

« Mais c'est au public de juger cela et d'autres meurtres qui se sont produits dans notre pays. » L'État et la police doivent protéger tous les citoyens, peu importe leurs couches sociales, leurs affiliations ou convictions

prise jusqu'à ce que le pire nous soit arrivé », a déclaré la famille.

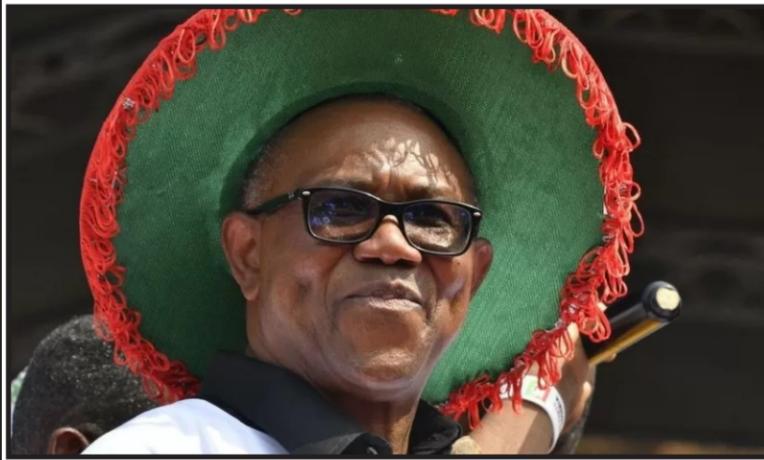
Ils se sont dits reconnaissants envers les dizaines de citoyens, amis, sympathisants, collègues professionnels, organisations et fonctionnaires, missions gouvernementales et diplomatiques d'ici et à l'extérieur des frontières libériennes qui les ont visités, les ont appelés, leur ont envoyé des textos ou ont condamnés publiquement l'acte.

La famille Musu a remercié le juge en chef Sie-A-Nyene Gyapay Yuoh, les juges, juges et magistrats associés et la vice-présidente libérienne Jewel Howard-Taylor.

Ils ont également remercié le président de la Chambre, Bhofal Chambers, les membres de la Chambre des représentants, les sénateurs Steve Amadu Zargo, Abraham Darius Dillon, Jonathan Boye Charles Sogbie, Commany Wesseh et le caucus législatif du comté de Maryland et les citoyens pour leur soutien.

Ils ont également apprécié l'ancien juge en chef Francis S. Korkpor, le président de l'Association nationale du barreau du Libéria Me Sylvester D. Rennie, et les membres de son Barreau et tous ceux qui ont de loin ou de près compati à leur douleur.

Élections au Nigeria : la Commission électorale reprend son décompte ce lundi matin



Les dépouillements se sont achevés, dimanche 26 février au soir, au Nigeria. Désormais, les résultats doivent être collectés dans tous les bureaux localement et transmis à la Commission électorale à Abuja. Cette collecte au niveau national va reprendre ce lundi à 11h00 et il va falloir s'armer de patience avant d'obtenir des résultats clairs.

Une fois de plus, la Commission électorale a pris du retard, beaucoup de retard, ce dimanche. Les premiers résultats nationaux devaient être annoncés dès midi - mais l'INEC a finalement repoussé le début de l'exercice à la fin d'après-midi dimanche. Finalement, les résultats d'un seul État sur les 36 que compte le Nigeria ont été dévoilés avant la suspension de la collecte qui reprendra ce lundi matin : l'un des plus petits que compte leur immense pays. L'État d'Ekiti, dans le sud-ouest. En termes de masse électorale, cela représente à peine plus de 1% des électeurs inscrits. Selon la Commission électorale, dans ce territoire yoruba, le candidat du parti au pouvoir, l'APC, Bola Tinubu, lui-même yoruba, arrive en tête devant l'opposant Atiku Abubakar du PDP et Peter Obi du Labour Party, le parti travailliste. En quatrième position, Rabiu Kwankwaso, du NNPP. L'opposant Atiku Abubakar, dont c'est la sixième participation à une élection présidentielle, a appelé la Commission électorale à publier les résultats au plus vite, estimant que des gouverneurs essayaient de compromettre le processus au niveau local. Quant au parti travailliste de Peter Obi, il a accusé l'INEC de refuser de faire remonter les résultats de l'État de Lagos et du Delta,

évoquant des pressions du parti au pouvoir.

« Peter Obi ne dit pas ça pour faire plaisir à sa base, ni pour en tirer un quelconque avantage politique, il dit ce qui s'est passé sur le terrain, analyse Nnamdi Anekwe-Chive, chercheur au CHIVE GPS, un bureau d'intelligence et de sécurité basé à Lagos, joint par Christina Okello de la rédaction Afrique de RFI. Car, si les agents électoraux avaient téléchargé les résultats en temps et en heure, de nombreux États auraient comptabilisé leurs résultats et seraient déjà en route vers la capitale fédérale d'Abuja pour les déposer au centre national de compilation. Mais ils ne l'ont pas fait. Ça crée de la frustration, notamment dans le sud du Nigeria et chez les jeunes. Ils ont le sentiment que cette élection est truquée pour favoriser le parti au pouvoir. À Port-Harcourt et à Lagos, il y a eu des actes de violence contre des électeurs et le système biométrique a été manipulé par endroits. Peter Obi pourrait tenter de contester certains aspects de l'élection afin de renforcer le processus démocratique, mais le pouvoir judiciaire n'a pas été en mesure de rendre un jugement majeur sur une élection présidentielle au Nigeria depuis 1999, et en général la justice n'est pas très juste avec les gens qui se présentent devant elle. »

Le Burkina Faso et le Mali réaffirment leur volonté d'alliance durable

La visite du Premier ministre malien Choguel Maïga au Burkina Faso s'est terminée dimanche 26 février. Participation à la cérémonie d'ouverture du Fespaco, conseil conjoint de gouvernement, audience avec le président de la transition, rencontres sectorielles entre les différents ministres... Le calendrier de la délégation fut chargé. Ont notamment été abordés la sécurité et la lutte contre le terrorisme, l'humanitaire, la santé, la coopération régionale et les sanctions contre les deux pays.

Choguel Maïga, le Premier ministre malien, et Apollinaire Kyelem de Tambela, le Premier ministre burkinabè, ont appelé à une synergie d'actions pour lutter efficacement contre le terrorisme, en conjuguant les efforts avec d'autres pays de la sous-région. Durant la visite du premier au pays des hommes intègres, le Burkina Faso et le Mali ont signé un accord de coopération dans ce sens. Les deux Premiers ministres ont surtout déploré le maintien et le durcissement des sanctions de la Cédéao (Communauté



économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest) contre leurs deux pays, malgré leur plaidoyer. Ils estiment que ces sanctions ne tiennent pas compte des réalités profondes de leur pays et font souffrir les populations. Le Burkina Faso et le Mali ont, par ailleurs, convenu d'approfondir les réflexions sur le projet de fédération entre eux et la Guinée. Une idée qui avait été lancée par le chef du gouvernement burkinabè le 1er février lors de son déplacement dans la capitale malienne. Les deux délégations ont convenu de renforcer l'axe Bamako-Ouagadougou, afin d'en faire un modèle de réussite d'intégration et de coopération sud-sud. Choguel Maïga et Apollinaire Kyelem de Tambela ont d'ailleurs souhaité que le conseil conjoint de gouvernement se tienne tous les six mois et de façon alternée.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Feeder road project hits second phase in Maryland.

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

The feeder road rehabilitation company operating in Maryland County regional engineer has pronounced to

Fish town, Harper District and the road leading to old Sodoken, Pleebo Sodoken District.

According to him, the first face of the projects has been completed and they're both on what he called maintenance

The feeder roads rehabilitation Southeastern Engineer specified that the current contract which he named "Aforok" is expected to last for two months, February to March, 2023.

He disclosed that the feeder road rehabilitation is a program which focuses the reconditioning of federal Roads in all rural parts of Liberia and it's been supported by the Swedish government through the Ministry of Public Works.

He maintained that the County two roads, namely; the Fish Town road in Harper District and the Old Sodoken to Golobo road in Sodoken District are been tacked by the company.

The regional engineer urged citizens of the County, especially those towns in helping the government in terms of maintenance.

In response, the district development Superintendent of Pleebo Sodoken district, has landed the company and the Swedish government through the ministry of public works. Superintendent Emmanuel Quaih maintained that the roads rehabilitation will serve as a total relief to residents of the town.

processes.

Engineer Sammy however noted that the roads' maintenance process have been offered as contracts to dwellers of the various local towns along the roads who have been train to do the job.

He stressed, it's another way of empowering rural community dwellers most especially young men and women residing in the areas.



team of reporters over the weekend that the first face of the process has officially ended.

Addressing team of reporters in the County, the regional engineer of the federal roads rehabilitation company operating in Maryland County Mason Sammy said, the projects target feedal road rehabilitation within Haper

Cummings arrives in Ganta amidst rousing welcome

-Cummings arrived in Nimba

The Standard Bearer of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), Mr. Alexander B. Cummings, arrived this evening in Nimba County amidst rousing welcome from hundreds of citizens and supporters.

Mr. Cummings, accompanied by a high-power delegation of CPP officials and stalwarts is in the county to hold consultations with major

stakeholders, County officials, supporters, partisans, and regular citizens.

Along the route, the CPP Standard Bearer made brief stops at Sokopa Town where he was welcomed by hundreds of supporters, along with traditional and cultural dancers.

In Gbahn Town, Mr. Cummings and party were also greeted by hundreds of supporters and partisans bearing banners of the

Standard Bearer image who sang and chanted slogans, mainly "We like you oh Papay!"

Motorcyclists in the hundreds sounded their horns and cheered the CPP Standard Bearer as his long convoy drove through Sokopa, Gbahn Town, Ganta and to Saclepea.

The CPP Standard Bearer and delegation is expected to be in Nimba for about a week, to hold talks and consultations on critical major issues leading to the general and presidential elections slated October 10, this year.



Liberia is Safe- Minister Rennie

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score political goals.

He said as the country heads towards Election, rhetoric's will come to draws attention.

The information minister said the Government of Liberia has been tolerant, amidst persistent protests by Individuals, trying to destabilize the Peace of the Country, in name of Seeking redress to their grievances.

Minister Rennie, cited instances, in which the Government has been accused of cases from political actors to

draw public attention, but the truth was later revealed, making specific reference to the death of the late Journalist Tyron Brown, of Super FM 95.5.

The late Liberian Journalist Tyron Brown was uncovered dead on Duport road on April 16, 2018, when he had visited a friend and was said to be stabbed multiple times leading to his death, at the time, Police investigation linked Defendant Jonathan William and others to the crime of Murder, who later faced Justice.

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CBL retains 15% Monetary Policy Rate

positive development, the Liberian dollar was projected to depreciate by 7.3% in the first quarter of 2023.

Background: The Monetary Policy Rate (MPR) is the main policy tool used by central banks to influence inflation rate, exchange rates, and credit policy in an economy.

An increase in the policy rate helps to contain or reduce inflation, strengthen the value of the domestic currency, and contain excessive credit growth, while a reduction in the policy rate would reduce or lower lending rate, thereby boosting economic activity through credit expansion, and

moderate or weaken the value of the domestic currency, and boost external demand for the export commodities of a country. Reserve Requirements are segments of commercial banks deposits that central banks hold in reserve. It is a tool used by central banks to increase or decrease liquidity or money supply in an economy. Open Market Operations (OMO) involves the purchase and sale of securities in the open market by a central bank. Real Gross Domestic Product (RGDP) is a measure of the changes in the value of all goods and services produced by an economy, while taking into consideration changes in prices.

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Gov't commits the government

The UNDP Liberia Resident Representative further stated: "Today's dialogue which sets to kick start the legislative process and the follow up national consultations and awareness are critical for two reasons. First, legislative processes require that citizens are active, fully informed and participate in the creation of laws which regulate their behavior and protects human rights. Second, laws must represent the values and wishes of society."

The First Secretary, of the Embassy of Ireland Simon Mc'Cormack also emphasized that the proposed legislation on ADR has the potential to make significant impact on promoting greater inclusion of those who are most vulnerable or marginalized.

Mc'Cormack said it also provides justice for so many, reduces the costs associated with going to court and would help those involved in disputes without adequate means to use the formal court system especially women and those with disabilities to resolve cases faster and get redress that satisfies both parties. "Improvements in the speed at which justice is dispensed will not just benefit the criminal justice system by freeing up resources to deal with more serious matters but can

positively affect the lives so many people and help to build confidence in the capacity of the state to deliver for its citizens," said Mc'Cormack.

As one of the partners advancing the conversation on the ADR legislation, the Carter Center strongly believes that ADR offers an alternative to the traditional court system which can be slow, expensive, and intimidating for many people, especially those in rural areas. At the launch of the one-day dialogue on the sensitization of the ADR legislation, Carter Center's Country Director Dorbor Jallah emphasized that the ADR provides an opportunity for people to resolve disputes in a way that is fair, efficient, and respectful of their cultural values and customs. "We believe that the ADR legislation is a significant milestone in promoting access to justice, strengthening the rule of law and advancing sustainable development in Liberia," said Jallah.

As part of the massive public awareness, engagement and outreach on Liberia's ADR process, the project will hold stakeholders' consultations, advocacy campaigns, trainings, and develop simplified versions of the ADR policy among others. This will be followed by the drafting of the legislation and training of relevant stakeholders.

Bong County: 9 grabbed for murder

By: Joseph Titus Yekeryan
Nine men, including a chief arrested and charged with the murder of a 21-year-old man

According to Police's account, the decision by the Chief and his men to beat the victim was triggered by an alleged assault carried out by and criminal conspiracy and as I speak, we are immediately sending them to court. Their action against that boy was devilish and inhumane to the



The suspects

in Bong County have been forwarded to court by the County's Police Detachment. The men are accused of murdering 21-year-old Samuel Mulbah, whose lifeless body was discovered in the Jor River

the deceased against one Saturday Kerkulah, another resident of the town. The Defendants told the Police that Saturday was seen unconscious and seriously bleeding from his nose after he was allegedly flogged by Victim

core". They treated him like an animal. Their action reminds me of the war days where rebels used to treat people without fear" CSD Commander Flomo said. Meanwhile, the charged suspects have admitted carrying out the arrest and further tying Victim Mulbah. But denied throwing him in the river. According to them, victim Mulbah voluntarily jumped into the river while crossing him in a wooden ferry.



The decease

Their revelations have brought chills to many residents of Bong and the Liberia National Police; wondering about the possibility of a tied individual jumping into a river.

"For me, I think these people killed that boy. Assuming that the deceased jumped into the river by himself, why didn't the seven men rescue him since they were so eager to take him to the Community Watch Police as they are saying? Are you telling me that they stood there and looked at him to drown or they too were not able to rescue him?" Francis Tamba, a local businessman who had gone to the Police station to see the faces of the defendants added. **Othello B. Garblah**

recently in Saybay, with his both hands tied together. According to our Correspondent, there were also wounds on the face of the victim. Mr. John Kellenso Flomo, Bong County Commander of the Crimes Services Division of the Liberia National Police told a press briefing that the town chief and his deputy gave the order for the deceased to be flogged.

Mulbah for reason yet to be known. Our Bong County Correspondent following the arrest by the Police gathered from some residents in the surrounding communities that the Town Chief and Deputy asked the remaining seven men to cross the river with the victim and hand him over to the Police, but it did not materialize. "We have charged the nine of them with murder

Liberia is Safe- Minister Rennie

Liberia's Information Minister Ledgerhood Julius Rennie has described Liberia as a safe country, amidst growing waves of mysterious deaths, ritualistic killings, and armed robberies in the country.

The Government of Liberia has come under series of criticisms from allies and opposition due to the level of insecurity in the country. This follows recent series of attacks on the home of former Chief Justice Gloria Musu Scott, the last of which left one of her daughters gruesomely murdered and others injured in Brewerville, Virginia outside of Monrovia.

In addition to the attacks on the home of the former Justice Minister, there have been reports of series of mysterious deaths across the country, including the alleged gruesome murder of four auditors of the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA), the alleged killing

were allegedly riding capsized while returning to their respective homes their bodies are yet to be found.

Another 16-year-old boy identified as Gentle Bryant lifeless body was discovered in the Edward Binyan Kesselly (EBK) Military Barracks, in late December 2022, badly bruised.

But Information Minister Ledegerhood Rennie, speaking Tuesday, 28th February 2023, on State Radio, ELBC said the country is completely safe for Liberians and guaranteed for foreigners, contrary to mounting cries from Liberians and the opposition that the country is unsafe, given the circumstances of mysterious deaths, across the country without justice being served.

Minister Renne described as unfair and farfetched for people to grossly label the country as unsafe, because of a single crime



Min. Ledgerhood Julius Rennie

of the late Director General, of the Internal Audit Agency, Emmanuel Barthan Nyeswa, the mysterious disappearance of three boys hired by the Proprietor of the St. Moses Funeral Parlor to undertake a task in Bong County.

The boys, Robert M. Blamo, Jr, 29, Siafa Gbana Boimah, 34, and Bobby S. Gbeanquo, 32, were later reported to have drowned in a river in Fuama District, lower Bong County when a canoe they

or incident that has happened. He said Liberia is safe and the government is capable of providing security for its citizens and foreigners alike, in wake of growing sentiments, regarding the recent attack on the home of the former Chief Justice.

Furthermore, Minister Rennie explained that those spreading lies and falsehoods about the Government are only doing so to

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9

Starts from back page CLSG to reduce Liberia's

instruction has been given to use the high fuel oil (HFO) to supplement the CLSG.

This means that the Liberia Electricity Corporation's supply is quite limited until CLSG restores its full capacity. It said this also means that there will be further load shedding. In reaction to this development, one anonymous ex-

official with vast knowledge in the sector argued that had LEC been visionary to have declared the construction of the St. Paul River hydropower project a national priority over a decade ago, the energy security and export earnings from power would have been assured.

The official suggested that where there's no vision, the people suffer and eventually perish.

Change of Name

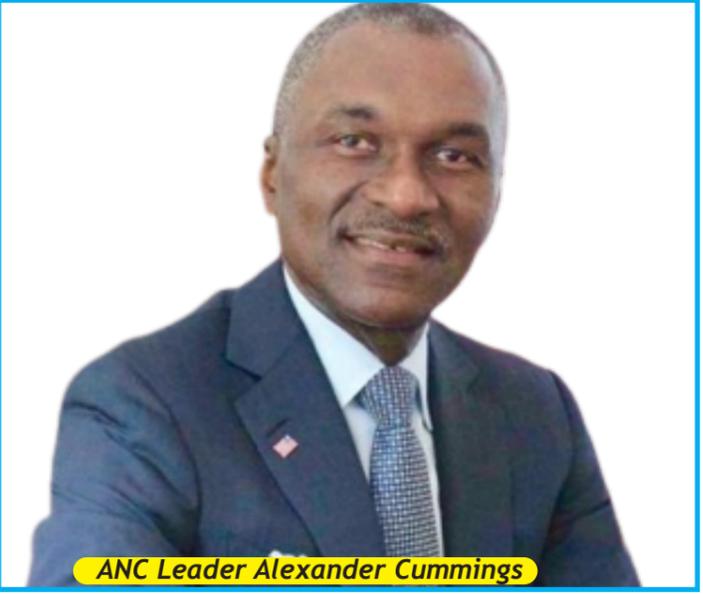


I am changing my name from Rachel Leeway to Rachel Harmon. Beginning the 1st of March A.D. 2023, all documents signed by the petitioner herein prior to this decree remain valid.

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CPP vets for vice running mate

The Standard Bearer of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), Mr. Alexander Cummings, says a special CPP committee is currently vetting for a suitable running



ANC Leader Alexander Cummings

mate to be announced far before the 60 days' timetable set by the National Elections Commission. Cummings said besides

qualifications and competency, other characteristics of a suitable Vice Standard Bearer would be a person with self-confidence and security, an experienced

and an extrovert to complement him since he is an introvert.

The CPP Standard Bearer said his preferred choice would be female, with good integrity, but noted, whoever fits these qualities and is considered suitable by the committee as his running mate will be announced at the party's convention later next month or latest April.

Cummings made the disclosure in response to questions, during an interview with SKTV, an online media, on Sunday, February 26, 2023. On the question of 30 percent women participation in government, Cummings said, as a strong advocate for women, when elected President, he will ensure 40 percent women representation in the cabinet.

He said a Cummings administration will ensure full participation of all Liberians irrespective of political or party affiliations, ethnicity, and religion, noting that inclusion in government will be based solely on qualifications, competence, and good integrity.

team player with background in both public and private sectors, young and energetic with origin from a vote rich county,

CLSG to reduce Liberia's power supply to 15MW

A report that Liberian electricity sector authorities have been informed that neighbouring Ivory Coast's electricity company, CIE is reducing Liberia's electricity supply to 15 megawatts has been doing the rounds in some important media chat rooms here.

The information is that CIE's reduction of electricity supply to 15MW for Liberia is due to a serious problem with the Ivorian power company's high voltage line. In the wake of this report, this paper has sought to authenticate the information by reaching out to Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) Board Chair Mr. Monie R. Captan but did not get him immediately via phone.

In what is making rounds in media chat rooms here, an official appears to inform colleagues in the power sectors that Ivory Coast CIE had informed Liberian

authorities about the reduction of power supply.

The notice issued to the authorities in the electricity sector explained that neighboring Sierra Leone's supply was reduced to 10 megawatts, and Guinea's to five megawatts.

"In total, they will only provide the CLSG [Cote

d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea] countries 30MW," the notice said.

It said CIE cannot commit to a time when it will restore full capacity as it is still assessing its problem.

Moreover, the notice indicated that water levels are very low at the hydro and Liberia can only run one unit for a total of 12 hours.

In the meanwhile, it said,

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