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LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

DATE	BUYING	SELLING
FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 2023	LS160.9712/US\$1.00	LS163.0494US\$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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Census fiasco looms



Flashback: Census enumerators on strike

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--with just 6 months to election



Mr. Boakai

Bassa to reject Boakai

--If Nyonblee is not running mate



Sen. Karnga-Lawrence

P10

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Continental News

Harris Enters the Fray Over Democracy With Visit to Tanzania

DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA — U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris on Thursday encouraged Tanzania's fragile progress

though she came to power as a member of the ruling party. "The United States will continue to work alongside democratic governments in

between the two female leaders was "another milestone," saying that it would be an "inspiration and a testimony to Tanzanian young girls."

Hassan is finishing out the term of President John Magufuli, who earned a reputation for stamping out dissent, arresting critics and forcing them into exile, before he died in office. Hard-liners have been uncomfortable with some of Hassan's changes, however, which could cost her in the next election two years from now.

Yet the meeting between Hassan and Harris, the first woman to serve as U.S. vice president, was a noteworthy show of support from Washington as the United States deepens its outreach to Africa. Harris announced \$560 million in U.S. assistance for Tanzania, some of which will require congressional approval. The money is intended to expand the two countries' trade relationship, as well as encourage democratic governance.

The encounter with Hassan will provide Harris with another opportunity to highlight women's issues in Africa, something she's done repeatedly over the course of her trip. During her previous stop in Ghana, Harris met with female entrepreneurs and said women need leadership opportunities. VOA



U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris talks with Tanzania's Vice President Philip Mpango

toward a more inclusive government as she stepped onto the front lines of America's push to strengthen democracy in Africa.

Standing alongside Samia Suluhu Hassan, Tanzania's first female president, Harris cited recent decisions from Tanzania such as lifting a ban on opposition rallies and encouraging more press freedom as "important and meaningful steps" toward democratic reforms in the country. Hassan has undone some of Tanzania's more oppressive policies even

support of democratic aspiration and the democratic aspirations in particular of the people of this continent," Harris said.

The two leaders planned to discuss matters of good government, long-term economic growth in Tanzania and the climate crisis.

Hassan noted Tanzania's participation in a virtual summit on democracy hosted by the White House this week, saying it "sends a clear message that the fathers of democracy recognize our efforts in building a democratic nation."

She added that the meeting

Hope Fades for Rescuing Missing Malawi Cyclone Victims

BLANTYRE, MALAWI — Officials in Malawi say hope has all but disappeared for finding some 500 people who are still missing two weeks after Cyclone Freddy hit the country. Disaster management officials said Wednesday that the country will now focus on rebuilding infrastructure destroyed by the cyclone.

Charles Kalemba, commissioner for the Department of Disaster Management Affairs, told reporters that the search and rescue team has ended operations in some districts, including Chiradzulu, where the government used excavators to sift through the muddy rubble.

However, Kalemba said the search team comprising police and military is still working in two other mudslide-hit districts, Phalombe and Mulanje.

"At this point ... the work that they have done, even using

the sniffing dogs, the chances of them being found are very slim," Kalemba said. "But we have a process that would be followed where we would declare the missing [people] to have been passed on."

The storm killed at least 676 people and displaced more than 650,000 others in southern Malawi. The cyclone, which also hit Mozambique and Madagascar, destroyed many bridges and roads in Malawi, making many areas only reachable by boats and

aircraft.

Kalemba said the country has started working on road reconstruction, using military engineers from Malawi and Tanzania.

Major General Saiford Kalisha, chief of military operations and training for the Malawi defense force, told reporters that areas that are cut off are expected to be accessible by road in about four weeks.

The cyclone has also raised fears of an imminent food shortage in affected areas. VOA



A road connecting the cities of Blantyre and Lilongwe is seen damaged caused by Tropical Cyclone Freddy

Freed 'Hotel Rwanda' Hero Rusesabagina Arrives in US

HOUSTON, TEXAS — The man who inspired the film "Hotel Rwanda" and was freed by Rwanda last week from a terrorism sentence returned Wednesday to the United States, where he will reunite with his family after being held for more than two years.

Paul Rusesabagina's arrival back in the United States was announced Wednesday by White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan, who wrote in a tweet that "we're glad to have him back on U.S. soil."

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told journalists on Monday that Rusesabagina was in Doha, Qatar, and would be returning to the U.S.

Rusesabagina's plane touched down in Houston in the afternoon and the 68-year-

and appeared days later in Rwanda in handcuffs. His family alleged he was kidnapped and taken to Rwanda against his will to stand trial.

In 2021, he was sentenced to 25 years in prison after being convicted in Rwanda on eight charges, including membership in a terrorist group, murder and abduction, following the widely criticized trial.

Last week, Rwanda's government commuted his sentence after diplomatic intervention on his behalf by the United States.

Rusesabagina had been accused of supporting the armed wing of his opposition political platform, the Rwandan Movement for Democratic Change. The armed group claimed some responsibility for attacks in 2018 and 2019 in southern Rwanda in which nine Rwandans died.

Rusesabagina testified at trial that he helped to form the armed group to assist refugees but said he never supported violence — and sought to distance himself from its



Paul Rusesabagina, hailed as a hero in a Hollywood movie about Rwanda's 1994 genocide

old was to travel next to a military hospital in San Antonio, according to a person familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal planning. The person said Rusesabagina was on the ground and in a car heading to reunite with his family.

"We're glad to have him back on U.S. soil & reunited with his family & friends who've long waited for this day to come," Sullivan wrote. "I'm grateful to those we worked closely with in the Rwandan Government to make this possible."

Rusesabagina, a U.S. legal resident and Belgian citizen, was credited with sheltering more than 1,000 ethnic Tutsis at the hotel he managed during Rwanda's 1994 genocide, in which over 800,000 Tutsis and Hutus who tried to protect them were killed. He received the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom for his efforts.

Vanished in Dubai Rusesabagina disappeared in 2020 during a visit to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates

deadly attacks.

Rusesabagina has asserted that his arrest was in response to his criticism of longtime President Paul Kagame over alleged human rights abuses. Kagame's government has repeatedly denied targeting dissenting voices with arrests and extrajudicial killings.

Rusesabagina became a public critic of Kagame and left Rwanda in 1996, first living in Belgium and then the U.S.

His arrest was a source of friction with the U.S. and others at a time when Rwanda's government has also been under pressure over tensions with neighboring Congo and Britain's plan to deport asylum-seekers to the small east African nation.

Rights activists and others had been urging Rwandan authorities to free him, saying his health was failing.

In October, the ailing Rusesabagina signed a letter to Kagame that was posted on the justice ministry's website, saying that if he was granted pardon and released to live in the U.S., he would hold no personal or political ambitions and "I will leave questions regarding Rwandan politics behind me."

VOA

EDITORIAL

Welcoming assurance from NEC

THE LIBERIANS seem to have concluded outcome of the ongoing biometric voter registration being conducted by the National Elections Commission even before the exercise kicked off on March 20, regrettably casting doubt on the Commission's ability. Some even perceived that the BVR process is meant for NEC to cheat. How absurd!

FOR STRANGE reasons, we Liberians appear to be obsessed with distrust or cynicism just about everything about ourselves. We believe wrongly so that only a process that is driven by people from outside is credible. If we continuously nurture such perception, then there is no need for us to exist as a people, because we don't believe that anything good can come from us.

DUE TO such negative thought, the National Elections Commission is constrained to reassure skeptics that the BVR system is designed to detect would-be fraudsters contemplating on engaging in double registration for political gain.

"THE BIOMETRIC registration system is designed in a way that any duplicate registration will be detected during the biometric adjudication process through the Central Management System and the voter information of registrants involved will be deactivated", the Commission has assured in a statement.

THE NEC explains that the objective for moving from the Optical Mark Recognition system previously used to the BVR, is to ensure a credible voter roll, void of duplicate registration by recording unique human physical characteristics, including thump or finger prints and facial features.

WHAT MORE should the Commission do to win and maintain public trust, amidst serious challenges, some of them, beyond its control that seem to be ignored?

IT'S ABOUT time Liberians believe in themselves and their country, for no matter what goodwill that comes from outside, only we can do it for ourselves. This is about a mindset that we must change, if this nation should progress.

LEST WE are misconstrued, this does not mean where there are problems, they should not be brought to the attention of the Commission for prompt redress. But to insinuate that the five commissioners at NEC, including Chairperson Davidetta Brown Lansana, are figure heads, who do not know what they are doing, is unfair.

SOME EVEN go to the extent of accusing the commission of deliberately denying citizens opportunity to register on the basis of names. But let's know this that it is within the purview of the commission to investigate suspicious identity in concert with the security, including the Liberia Immigration Service. It behooves bearer of such credential to prove citizenship with the help of community leaders and elders.

WE MUST allow the NEC to perform its statutory functions rather than damning and damning! It does not demonstrate patriotism and love for country. If the NEC succeeds, Liberia succeeds and if it fails, we fail as a nation.

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

www.thenewdawnliberia.com; Email: info@thenewdawnliberia.com

COMMENTARY

By Daron Acemoglu & Cihat Tokgöz

To Reconstruct Turkey, Rebuild Its Democracy

BOSTON - The devastating earthquakes that killed more than 50,000 people in Turkey (and at least 7,000 in northern Syria) in February have exposed deep-rooted problems in the run-up to potentially epochal presidential and parliamentary elections on May 14. Turkey, it is now clear, needs more than a change of government; it needs a fundamental transformation of its politics and economy. That means confronting the hugely powerful construction lobby and attempting to rebuild the country's flailing democracy.

Though the earthquakes were acts of nature, the devastation they caused was the result of corruption within the construction industry and beyond. But this did not stop Turkey's strongman president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, from blaming the huge death toll on nature, even as he admitted that the authorities were caught off guard. The Turkish people have been asked to believe that everything is now under control, and that Erdoğan should be trusted with the post-disaster reconstruction.

Yet it is worth recalling that when Turkey suffered a major earthquake (7.6 on the Richter scale) in 1999, near the city of İzmit, the large death toll at the time (around 18,000) was rightly attributed to shoddy construction and poor urban planning. The government responded by adopting state-of-the-art building codes and regulations to prevent new construction in the highest-risk areas.

So why, then, did the latest earthquakes destroy more than 18,000 buildings and fatally damage another 280,000? The short answer is that building codes were not followed. Many of the recently decimated buildings were erected after 1999, but they were still unsafe (with weak foundations that did not use the minimum required amount of cement), because municipal governments and inspectors had given developers a pass.

Corruption is just one facet in the broader rise of Turkey's construction lobby over the last two decades. The construction industry now accounts for over 40% of total fixed-capital investment, and its political influence is even greater than these numbers would suggest. Construction companies are among the leading donors to all major political parties, and they maintain inappropriately close links with all municipal governments, regardless of which party is in control.

While construction-industry corruption is a major problem in many other countries as well, it is particularly pernicious in Turkey. Not only is the industry disproportionately large relative to the economy, but it is exploiting democratic institutions that have been severely weakened after two decades of Erdoğan's autocratic rule.

The Erdoğan government's bizarre 2018 "building amnesty" illustrates the construction lobby's power. The amnesty allowed owners to avoid having to demolish or retrofit buildings that were not up to code simply by paying an additional tax, even in the case of structures that had been erected along fault lines, wetlands, basins, and other high-risk areas.

In the ten provinces that suffered the worst devastation in the recent earthquakes, a staggering 294,000 buildings had received amnesty. While there currently are no definitive data with which to assess the lethality of amnesty, it is safe to assume that many of these buildings were among those that collapsed and killed their inhabitants. Turkey's 1999 "earthquake tax," which was increased by presidential decree in 2021, was supposed to finance improvements to strengthen buildings' resilience against seismic events. But there is considerable uncertainty

about where these funds went.

With such a staggering death toll and hundreds of thousands left homeless, one might expect Turkish voters to turn out en masse against the government on May 14. But so far, at least, there is little evidence that the media and civil society are eager to hold national and municipal politicians accountable. Unlike in 1999, when most media outlets described the damage from the earthquake as a failure of governance, the near-total consensus in Turkish media today is that it was an "act of God," implying that Erdoğan and his government are blameless.

This type of coverage is no surprise, given that Erdoğan has gradually assumed almost direct control over all national media outlets, including TV channels and high-circulation newspapers. Open dissent has become increasingly dangerous: journalists are routinely jailed for critical reporting, and websites and social-media platforms have been closed for challenging Erdoğan.

Mounting repression had unintended consequences in February. Four months earlier, in October 2022, the parliament enacted a "censorship law" that significantly deepened online censorship. Using the new law, the government blocked access to social-media sites in the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes - inadvertently complicating rescue efforts.

This astonishing level of media control - and the polarization it has engendered - has left opposition parties and politicians struggling to get their message out to voters, especially when they try to highlight endemic corruption and government incompetence.

But even if a coalition of opposition parties can win, replacing the government will not fix Turkey's problems. The country's institutions need to be rebuilt, and that process cannot be completed unless the construction lobby is cut down to size.

While the odds of achieving transformational change may appear low, Erdoğan's control over the media and state institutions does not guarantee his re-election. There is a palpable desire for change among the electorate, even if it is not reflected in the media. One place to find it is in soccer stadiums. At recent matches for two of the country's most widely followed teams, thousands of fans chanted, "Lies, cheating, it's been 20 years, resign."

Of course, this story was underplayed by Turkish media, and pro-Erdoğan officials and journalists have tried to smear such dissent as terrorism. The clubs themselves have faced fines, and many of their fans have been barred from attending away games. Nonetheless, these views are not going away, and they could well be echoed widely at the ballot box.

Demands for political change can emerge from unexpected places, and when they do, they can offer hope to millions of others. That, more than a new government, is what true change requires. To rebuild Turkish democracy, Turks will need to remove Erdoğan, confront the construction lobby, and then get to work restoring essential institutions - perhaps starting with the news media.

Daron Acemoglu, Professor of Economics at MIT, is a co-author (with Simon Johnson) of the forthcoming *Power and Progress: Our Thousand-Year Struggle Over Technology and Prosperity* (PublicAffairs, May 2023). Cihat Tokgöz, a former senior investment banker in global financial institutions, is an author and analyst on Turkish economy and financial markets.



Lord, this population growth is everybody's concern

Dear Father:

Hmm, this huge population growth in the Southeast is concerning ooh. I mean, how the people can be recognized for being the region that is religiously taking contraceptive (doing family planning) yet their population increased by 90%. You say whatin?

Father, da na me talky ooh, that Uncle Sam's Cousin from that Nautic Village ooh. The man wor smiling from ear to ear the other day talking nay doing the time the people announced our village population oo.

The people said our brother them from the Southeast who never used to like plenty borning bisnay na start borning plenty oo.

But Uncle Sam's Cousin wor praising the people after LISGIS announced their population. He said our brother them from the Southeast are noted for religiously taking Family Planning medicines. The thing has been confusing me since. Wait ooh, my son den that wah kinna family planning they been taking na?

Father, me, myself here I don't know oo. I think they need to bring that particularly family planning medicine in town here so the people who want to get pregnant can start taking it too. Because if the people in the Southeast are taking it and are borning plenty then they need to bring some in the city for the people who wan to born ooh. -Phew!

Phew again seh. You can see da God beating all lor them so. How can people be taking family planning and be borning plenty? I think they wan tell us that since their man chopped president all they are doing is jolly, jolly and have either forgotten to take their pills, even though they still collecting them (pills) but something na adding up here.

Maybe like somebody said, since their son chopped president job they all decided to run back to their villages and leave the city alone. But again, me I na too sure because the last time I visited Kru town there was no space to park my car. Let them be there, da God beating all lor them so. Anyway, how is Kasepreko doing these days?

Hmm, the man is on fire. The way the man firing at his own people self it leh he na leaving any room for coming back oo. The man bitter more than bitter leave. Any bad thin you wan to hear about the County Giant and him people just listen to him-the man is tearing everybody apart.

Bor my son, da na this same man who used to fire all over the place for the people?

Father, the man wor only doing him job, bor most of those things he wor saying wor na true. How do I know, because from the way him talking mean da all the good, good thin then him used to talk were so, so lies.

Hmm, have you heard about the Wide Mouth pekin and the Sleepy Oldman?

They say the Sleepy Oldman wan to carry the Wide Mouth pekin who can be cussing everybody as him running mate ooh.

Puah, leh them be there they will all balance when the Footballer kick them around leh plastic bag. They say if you cook yourself in tomato cup, they will dish you out with broom stick. Leh them be there all lor them na know wah they wan.

OP-ED

By Ricardo Hausmann

Dodgy Climate Finance

CAMBRIDGE - Suppose you wanted to impress the entire world with your generosity. Donating a ton of gold to charity would certainly attract a lot of attention. But suppose you had only a kilogram of gold. How would you achieve the same effect? After all, a ton sounds much better - a thousand times better, actually - than a kilogram. In that case, you could say you are donating a ton of gold and sugar and remain vague about the proportions.

This is precisely the tactic now playing out in the world of climate finance. During November's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt, South Africa launched its Just Energy Transition Investment Plan, based on \$8.5 billion in grants and loans from the United States, the European Union, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. A week later, the US, Japan, the EU, and several other governments pledged \$20 billion to accelerate Indonesia's transition from coal to clean energy.

The goal of these financing packages is to enable an inclusive net-zero transition. Indonesia and South Africa still rely primarily on coal-fired power plants that can produce cheap electricity for many years to come but also emit massive amounts of greenhouse gases. Having accumulated significant debts building these plants, the national power companies (and the governments that would be tasked with bailing them out) depend on earnings from cheap electricity production to manage debt-servicing costs. To reduce emissions, wealthy countries are seeking to encourage Indonesia and South Africa to invest in renewables so that dirty plants can be decommissioned sooner.

This is a laudable goal. But the announcements misrepresent the amount of assistance being provided. While it may seem that South Africa and Indonesia have been given billions of dollars, wealthy countries are effectively promising to provide gold and sugar while deliberately trying to hide the fact that they are actually offering mostly sugar.

Announcements of new Just Energy Transition Partnerships typically speak of an indeterminate blend of grants, concessional and ordinary commercial loans, World Bank loans and guarantees, and private-sector equity. But these forms of financing could not be more different from one another.

Suppose, for example, that the billions of dollars mentioned in one of these announcements were given to Indonesia or South Africa as a grant. In that case, after the money has been disbursed and used to build new clean-energy generation capacity, the recipient country would be left with an old coal-fired plant it does not use, a new plant for which it owes nothing, and the old, coal-related debt it must service.

By contrast, if the country receives a commercial loan, it will be left with both the old and new debts but with just one plant to generate the revenue needed to repay them. To be sure, Indonesia and South Africa can access financial markets independently. But to self-fund decarbonization, they would have to keep a lid on the total amount of debt that they take on and cut back on other borrowing. For this reason, including grants and commercial loans in the same package is akin to adding sugar to gold.

Concessional loans are a bit different. While the recipient country would be left with two loans and just one operating plant, the debt is less onerous because it is cheaper than what the government could have obtained on its own. Such loans are typically counted in terms of the net present value of the implicit subsidy, which is a function of the loan's maturity and the difference between the market rate and the concessional rate (none of which are public).

Guarantees are somewhat similar. For example, if a country or a multilateral institution such as the World Bank guarantees a loan, the recipient government obtains a benefit equal to the difference in the interest rate at which it can borrow on its own and that of the guarantor. In the case of Indonesia, for example, this difference is barely 153 basis points vis-à-vis the US, meaning that the subsidy component is a small fraction of the guarantee's face value.

Like commercial loans, equity investments should not be counted at all, even if the investors have signed on to the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero initiative. While equity investors take on more risk, they also expect higher returns. That would force recipient countries to service their old coal debts and pay high dividends to make the equity investment viable.

Lastly, while World Bank loans are slightly cheaper than what South Africa could get independently, there is presumably a limit to how much it could borrow. Just Energy Transition programs must be accompanied by increased World Bank lending to recipient countries. Otherwise, these countries would need to refrain from making critical investments in water, education, and infrastructure. This would not help them reduce their net-zero transition costs.

In sum, announcements of Just Energy Transition Partnerships use economically meaningless amounts that merely sound big. Unless this practice is stopped, future programs will contain less gold and more sugar. Just as the world has improved carbon accounting, it must do better at determining the efficacy of climate finance.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Firestone rejects Bong Rubber Farmers claim

Firestone Liberia has categorically rejected claims that it entered into an agreement with farmers in Bong County to purchase rubber and failed to honor its legal obligations.

in Bong County expressed frustration in the failure of Firestone Liberia to purchase their rubber even though it entered into agreement with them, the company denied the existence of any such

it did purchase rubber from farmers across the country including farmers in Bong County through the months of November and December 2022, exceeding its storage and factory capacity.

“More importantly, Liberian law promotes freedom of association, so the farmers are free to sell their rubber to any buyer of their choice including Firestone,” Firestone said in its response adding, “Firestone Liberia rubber buying is based on the factory production plan and holding at least one month of storage.

The factory is conducting annual maintenance, which takes place every year, and results in a temporary reduction in the amount of rubber purchased. Prior to shipment, farmers are required to get a booking confirmation from Firestone Liberia’s rubber purchasing department.

The company stated that the process is designed to ensure an efficient process for the rubber to be received. Firestone Liberia continues to engage farmers with updates on the buying plan.”



In response to an article (Bong: Rubber Farmers Angry with Firestone Liberia) published in the New Dawn newspaper in which farmers

agreement. Firestone also stated that contrary to assertion that it has not purchased rubber from the farmers since November 2022,

ECOWAS experiences at The Hague

A delegation comprising members of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council at Ambassadorial Level, ECOWAS Parliamentarians and Resident Representatives of the President of the ECOWAS Commission in Member

2023, aimed to enhance synergy and sharpen negotiation as well as regional conflict resolution capacity of the High-Level delegation to deal with the growing peace and security challenges in the region.

Beyond providing a compact understanding of negotiation and mediation concepts, tools

Participants at the brainstorming sessions also identified gaps and the lessons learnt and thereafter made recommendations for improved future interventions in ECOWAS peace-making efforts.

The program at the renowned International Relations Institute was



States, received high-level training at the Clingendael Institute, The Hague, Netherlands while also sharing valuable experiences, towards strengthening the capacity of ECOWAS Institutions in dialogue, negotiation and mediation.

The 5-day program which began on the 27th of March

and skills, the program offered the delegation a rare opportunity for collective reflections, experience-sharing and in-depth analysis on previous and ongoing ECOWAS’ peace-making efforts against the backdrop of the Four by Four Strategic Objective of the current ECOWAS Management.

organized within the framework of the long-standing partnership between the ECOWAS Department for Political Affairs, Peace and Security and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under the “Clingendael Peace Negotiation Programme” which began in 2015.

UL, IAGP hold conference on Gender Mainstreaming in security sector

The University of Liberia (UL) and Nigerian-based International Academy for Gender and Peace (IAGP) have begun a two-day West Africa Regional Conference on mainstreaming gender in the security sector in Africa.

Held in the Auditorium of UL’s Capitol Hill campus, the conference runs from March 30 to 31, 2023.

It brings together regional and national security and government officials, academic administrators, faculty, staff and students, and members of the public, among others.

Issues affecting women in the security sector, strengthening gender equality in the security sector, and promoting women’s

and human resources. However, he accused the Westerners of causing a confusion so that they will continue to feast on Africa’s resources.

Additionally, he said African leaders have not been able to realize this and they don’t have the power to do much because of the collaboration that exists between them and the Western leaders.

The University of Liberia Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Moses Zinnah said at the end of the conference, UL and IAGP will sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to begin the process of developing curricula.

He added that practically, they will attempt to sign the MOU that will be approved by the Senate to establish a training program that is



participation in key leadership roles in the security service are part of discussions at the conference.

Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps Commandant General, Dr. Ahmed Abubakar Audi delivered the keynote address on the first day of the conference Thursday, March 30, 2023.

Dr. Audi explained that the developmental wreckage in West Africa as a result of conflicts cannot be over-emphasized due to its devastating nature.

He said the raison d’etat of most conflicts in West Africa is the absence of a standard means of measuring qualitative well-being which contributed to the failures of some states in the past.

He detailed that the outcome of the past and causes of the present crisis in West Africa have revealed that human insecurity and developmental crises can switch places.

“Both are human centered with the ability to cause conflicts and can alternate with the other to be effective in solving humanitarian concerns,” he said.

He argued that the West is aware that Africa is a region that is endowed with both natural

demand-driven in the areas of Gender, Peace, and Security.

Dr. Zinnah said within less than a year after the signing of the MOU, it is hoped that they will make this a practical initiative.

Representing UL President Prof. Dr. Julius J.S. Nelson, Dr. Zinnah disclosed that the UL President and the University in general, place a lot of premium on the conference, and the education of law enforcement personnel in various units.

“We want to make sure that coming out of this conference will be some practical steps to [make] this happen,” he said.

“We are taking advantage of bringing to bed demand-driven programs that the state, the country, the sub-region, and of course, the global community will require,” said Dr. Zinnah.

Earlier, UL Associate Prof. Weade Konnah-Boley, Chairperson of the conference planning committee, said the conference is a collaborative endeavor by UL and IAGP.

Prof. Boley said UL is extremely proud to host this conference which brings together participants from the security sector, civil society, and academia.

She said participants will deliberate on strengthening the

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President Weah Congratulates Vietnamese President-Elect, Vo Van Thuong

President George Manneh Weah has on behalf of the government and people of Liberia, congratulated H.E.

According to a Foreign Ministry release, President Weah indicated that his government has no doubt that the victory of President Thuong

achievements. The Liberian Leader told his Vietnamese counterpart that the people of Liberia command the gallant people of Vietnam for the peaceful and orderly transition which demonstrates Vietnam's maturity in the promotion of democracy and good governance.

President George Manneh Weah further expressed confidence that, under his administration, the cordial relations which are so happily subsisting between the two countries will be further strengthened for the mutual benefit of their two peoples.

He then looks forward to working more closely with President-Elect Thuong to expand the volume of cooperation between Liberia and Vietnam.

He also wished for President Thuong's personal good health and happiness as he leads his country to noble heights.



Pres. Weah

Vo Van Thuong, on the occasion marking his election as President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

is a clear manifestation of the confidence his compatriots have in his leadership ability and his excellent record of

2023 elections top lawyers' agenda

--At General Assembly
By Lincoln G. Peters

The Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA) kicks off its Annual General Assembly in Monrovia today, 31 March 2023, with the 2023 presidential and legislative elections topping its agenda.

The Annual General Assembly is held under the theme: "Beyond Rhetoric and Impunity: Law, Governance and 2023 Elections- the basis for Democratic Necessity in Liberia."

The General Assembly is in keeping with the LNBA's Constitution, beginning Friday, 31 March through Saturday, 1 April 2023 at the EJS Ministerial Complex in Congo Town.

The program is expected to be graced by several distinguished personalities, including members of the diplomatic corps, and civil society organizations.

The keynote speaker for this year's event is Christine N. Umutoni, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Liberia.

According to a press release dated 30 March 2023, the General Assembly will kick off with an opening statement by LNBA President Cllr. Sylvester D. Rennie.

The statement under the signature of LNBA Secretary General Cllr. Bornor M. Varmah disclosed that the program will also have a special statement from the Supreme Court of Liberia to

be delivered by Chief Justice Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh.

Following the keynote address, members of the LNBA will participate in several continuing legal education (CLE) sessions during the two days of the Assembly.

"On the first day, Friday, March 31, there will be two CLE sessions on topics ranging from election dispute, filing, hearing, and adjudication," the release said.

"This will be delivered by former Associate Justice Micah Wilkins Wright and Cllr. Arthur Tamba Johnson.

Accordingly, trends and outlook of the Supreme Court in the adjudication of elections

joined by the LNBA executives, judges, magistrates, lawyers, and law students to parade from Tubman Boulevard to the Ministerial Complex.

The LNBA explained that following the parade, the lawyers will also attend another CLE session on the topics, constitutional and statutory steps preparatory to the conduct of elections.

It will be delivered by former Associate Justice Kabineh M. Ja'neh.

The Statement indicated that there will be a business session where lawyers will deliberate on pertinent issues affecting the legal profession.

Following that, they will



Cllr. Rennie

matters will be delivered by former Minister of Justice Cllr. Benedict Sannoh.

Meanwhile, the LNBA pointed out that on the last day, Saturday, April 1, there will be a parade from the Kailondo Gas Station opposite the SOS Clinic in Congo Town.

The Chief Justice and associate justices will be

carve out a practical resolution for adherence to the rule of law in Liberia.

"The Assembly will be climaxed by sporting activities at the Voker Mission Sports Pitch around the Paynesville Town Hall," the release said.

Lawyers will engage in football and kickball exercises.

Muslims Council goes to the Poll today

By: Emmanuel Wise Jipoh

Members of the National Muslims Council of Liberia, will Friday, 31st March 2023, go to the poll to elect- new corps of officers to stir the affairs of the council for the next three years.

The election is part of a weeklong National Convention currently convening at the Council's headquarters on the Old Road, in Monrovia.

According to the Board Chairman of the National Muslims Council electoral committee, Cllr. David M. Kolleh Jr, the National Convention is aimed at galvanizing Muslims across Liberia's 15 political sub-divisions to identify with the

interim leadership heading to the Friday Poll.

At least 276 Muslims delegates from across Liberia are expected to participate in in the Friday's poll.

Those vying for elected positions include Abraham Fumbah Sheriff, unopposed for the position of National Chairman to replace interim Chairman Sheikh Oumar A. Kamara.

Mohammed M. Konneh is vying for the position of Vice Chairman for Administration; Abdulraman Ibrahim Sow, Vice Chairman for Operations and Reeves A.F. Kuku, Secretary-General.

Other vacancies up for grabs include the deputy secretary-general contested by Vannie S. Momolu and Alhassane V. Dukuly.



Members of the Muslim Council of Liberia

Council to also elect new corps of officers.

Cllr. Kolleh explained that the last time the National Muslims Council had an election was over a decade ago. When the late Sheikh Kafumba Konneh, served as the legitimate Chairperson of the Council before his demise.

He said the leadership tenure of that group of officers expired since 2018 ushering in an interim team that have been leading the Council.

Cllr. Kolleh Jr. said it's about time the Council have an election to replace the late Sheikh Kafumba Konneh.

The late Sheikh Kafumba Konneh took the helm of power as Chairperson of the National Muslims Council back in the 1980s, before he sadly passed off in 2018, and was replaced by his deputy Sheikh Oumar A. Kamara, who spearheaded an

The rest are Haha Anna V. Sheriff, who will also go unopposed as Vice Chair for Women's Affairs, and Cllr. Alhaji Swaliho A. Sisay, Chairman of the Board of Governors.

The council's National Elections Committee in a statement said the election promises to be free, fair, and transparent.

It added that only qualified delegates will be eligible to cast their votes in an open ballot process closely monitored by a few observers and members of the National Elections Commission (NEC).

According to them, delegates must be a part of the National Muslim Council of Liberia before being eligible to vote.

Members of the council are to pay a monthly due for a period of 12 months and US\$5 as a fee for an identification card before being a delegate.

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

WHO to celebrate 75 years of existence

By Ethel A Tweh

2024.

The World Health Organization is poised to launch a yearlong campaign in Liberia in celebration of its

Dr. Peter also noted that the 75th World Health Day will be celebrated in collaboration with the Ministry of Health on Thursday, April 6, 2023 with the theme "Health for all".

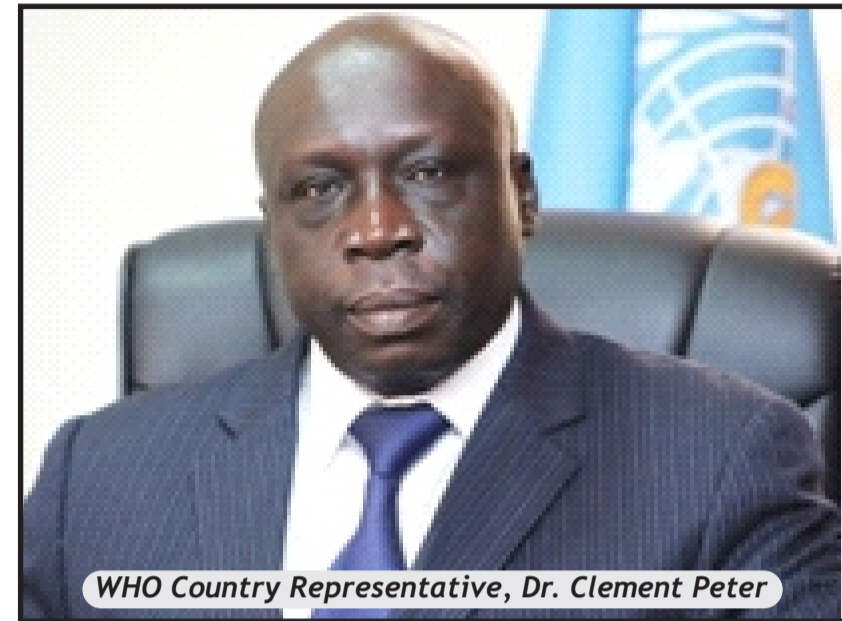
stakeholders, including the public, of how Liberia's health has improved over the years in a number of areas.

According to him, it also focuses on the role that health authorities, communities, and the WHO have played in reaching key public health milestones.

Dr. Peter revealed that since 1958, the World Health Organization has been operational in Liberia, adding that the 75th anniversary also aims to strengthen the WHO brand and reinforce the power of science, solutions, and solidarity.

He indicated that the World Health Day here will begin with a walk from the Ministry of Health to the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Ministerial Complex in Congo Town, where official indoor program will be held.

The event will be attended by the United Nations family, including WHO staff, medical students, government officials, including the Ministry of Health, health partners and the public. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



WHO Country Representative, Dr. Clement Peter

achievements in the 75 years of its existence.

In a news conference here Thursday at One UN House in Monrovia, WHO Liberia Representative, Dr. Clement Peter, said the campaign will run from April 2023 to April

The WHO boss however said the Liberian campaign, which will join the global campaign, aims to tell WHO's history and the role Liberia played in the organization's inception.

He noted that the campaign also aims at reminding

District#6 residents mourn accident victims

By: Emmanuel Wise Jipoh

Residents of electoral district #6 in Paynesville, Montserrado county were subdued by grief Wednesday, 29 March as they memorialize the recent death of seven (7) of their colleagues, some of them, school children in a tragic motor accident.

District#6 Representative, Rev. Samuel Reeves Enders, who joined residents in a memorial service, broke down in tears, as he memorialized the victims that suffered a gruesome death when a truck ram into a tricycle they were riding in and burst into flames in the ELWA community Paynesville.

The tragedy happened late Monday, March 20. The speeding Renault truck, belonging to UNIDO of One UN House, Pan African Plaza, lost control and collided with 13 moving objects, including: 5 cars, 5 tricycles and 3 motorcycles. One of the tricycles stuck under the truck and gutted by fire, leading both to burn, Police report said.

The victims included a 10th grade student of the African Dream Academy in Paynesville Lucky Smart, a tricycle taxi (Keke) rider Elijah Jallah, an officer of the Liberia National Police (LNP) Emmanuel Gbowee, a motorcyclist Michael S. Doe, and others yet to be

identified. However, Student Victoria Sackie of the African Dream Academy survived.

The memorial was attended by hundreds of grieving residents, among them parents, relatives and friends, who paid tributes.

A female resident, Kebbeh Lama, in tears said it was disheartening to see such an accident, as she consoled bereaved families.

Students of the African Dream Academy, trooped in huge number to remember

She described the late Student Lucky Smart as someone who was very keen on her studies, diligent and obedient.

In his tribute, Rep. Enders, who before handling the microphone to speak, broke down in tears, said it was so sad, describing the tragedy as a shock and a memorable lost that will never be forgotten.

He said the memorial organized by the African Dream Academy and the entire district was a way of remembering those who lost



their falling colleague, Lucky Smart.

Short of words, the elder sister of the victim, Student Victoria Sackie, who was pushed out of the tricycle taxi by her late sister as a way of saving her life, also broke down in tears.

their lives.

Meanwhile, since the casualty, the Liberia National Police (LNP) has charged vehicle operator identified as Sam Morris with reckless driving, resulting to deaths, injuries and property damage. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

'Liberia at the Red Sea'

-Opposition says

By Lincoln G. Peters

A Liberian opposition leader has suggested that the country is at the 'Red Sea,' citing ritualistic killings, corruption, abuse of power, and illicit drug trafficking under President George Manneh Weah's rule.

From Biblical history, Israelites safely crossed the Red Sea when Moses stretched his hands and divided the waters, but the water engulfed the Egyptian army who were in pursuit of the Israelites.

In an exclusive video chat with this paper from the United States Thursday, 30 March 2023,

and as a humble servant of the good Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I hasten to say we are at the Red Sea. We can't go back to Egypt," he continued.

He said by the grace and mercy of God, a new Liberia is coming, and it starts with Liberians registering to vote.

Kwateh called on Liberians to take advantage of the voter registration process, reminding them that their vote is their power.

"If all goes well, the 2023 Voter's Registration process is the beginning of the change we yearned for. I understand there are some serious challenges with the ongoing process," he said.



All Liberian Destiny Party (ALDP) political leader Mr. Jacob Seyon Kwateh alleged that Liberia is on the verge of collapse under Mr. Weah's administration.

Under the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) regime, Kwateh claimed that Liberians can't afford to go back to Egypt.

"The Egyptians of mysterious and ritual killings, corruption, abuse of power, using Liberia as a gateway for illicit drug trafficking, taking advantage of the poor, I can assure you, that [what] we see today, we will see them no more once we all register and vote," he stated.

Kwateh believes that Liberians can't afford to go back to Egypt by giving President Weah and his government a second presidential term.

"Trust me, deliverance is here. Using the biblical analogy,

Kwateh cited a challenge of people being reportedly trucked from one community to another to register.

The ALDP political leader alleged that he is informed that the voter registration process is so slow that people are standing in long lines for hours and yet, are not able to register. He described the voter registration process as confusing.

Despite the challenges, Mr. Kwateh encouraged Liberians to take advantage of the opportunity and partake in the ongoing voter registration exercise.

He stated that elections are the best viable means to alter the course of things in Liberia, saying citizens should do their best to avoid distractions.

"Deliverance is here. Love, unity, and accountability are on the way. Justice will be served. May God bless you all and may He bless Liberia. Much love," he noted.

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Français

Le président ne veut pas se prononcer sur sa visite du siège de la CIA

Le président George Manneh Weah refuse de communiquer sur la nature de sa visite au siège de la Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) à Langley, aux États-Unis d'Amérique.

Les journalistes étaient impatients de savoir pourquoi M. Weah avait été invité par le service de renseignement.

l'homme et meurtres mystérieux au Libéria sous son régime.

M. Weah a déclaré que sa visite de la CIA n'a rien de différent par rapport à tous les autres voyages officiels qu'il a effectués depuis qu'il a pris le pouvoir.

Mais il est resté discret sur la nature de sa visite, déclarant aux journalistes qu'en tant que président, il représente le pays et

l'établissement du Commandement central de l'Agence au Libéria pour surveiller les crimes internationaux en Afrique subsaharienne.

Mais Weah n'a abordé aucune de ces spéculations. Au cours du voyage, le président Weah s'est rendu aux États-Unis d'Amérique et aux Émirats arabes unis (EAU) dans le cadre d'engagements internationaux.

A son retour dans le pays, il atterrit vers 12h04 à l'aéroport international Roberts dans le comté de Margibi, où il fut accueilli par un détachement de la Brigade des gardes des forces armées du Libéria (AFL).

Le président Weah a exprimé son optimisme quant à ses visites dans les deux pays, les décrivant comme fructueuses et bénéfiques pour les progrès du Libéria.

Il a dit qu'avec la biodiversité et la réserve forestière, le pays bénéficiera du soutien international lié à la forêt et aux autres ressources naturelles.

"Il existe un fonds forestier, et nous avons besoin d'y puiser", a-t-il déclaré.

"Comme vous le savez, nous sommes allés à la COP 26 (Conférence des Parties 26) et à la COP 27, le Libéria a une diversité de problèmes comme l'atténuation du changement climatique. Nous essayons de puiser dans les financements du changement climatique afin que nous puissions sauver notre forêt", a-t-il dit.



Ils avaient voulu qu'il leur réponde lorsqu'il est retourné dans le pays le mardi 28 mars 2023.

Selon une rumeur répandue dans certains milieux et sur les réseaux sociaux, M. Weah ferait l'objet d'une enquête de la CIA. D'aucuns estiment qu'il a été interrogé pour mauvaise gouvernance, corruption, violations des droits de

que c'était l'une de ses réunions aux États-Unis et à Dubaï.

"En tant que président, je représente le pays et c'est l'une de mes réunions auxquelles j'ai assisté aux États-Unis et à Dubaï", a-t-il déclaré à l'aéroport international Roberts (RIA) le mardi après-midi 28 mars 2023.

D'autres ont émis l'hypothèse selon laquelle M. Weah s'était rendu au bureau de la CIA pour signer un accord pour

Les commerçantes s'engagent à soutenir Cummings

Des centaines de commerçantes au marché Omega / Gorbachop à Paynesville se sont dites négligées pendant des années par le gouvernement et ont promis de soutenir la candidature de M. Alexander Cummings à la prochaine présidentielle.

L'Association des commerçantes du marché Omega à Gobachop, en collaboration avec un autre groupe, Friends of Teresa Cummings (FOTC), a déploré leurs conditions de travail et la situation économique difficile qui prévaut.

Ils ont dit que la combinaison de ces choses a rendu la vie insupportable.

Dans des déclarations de solidarité séparées, les femmes se sont engagées à galvaniser des centaines de commerçantes pour soutenir la candidature de M. Cummings à la prochaine présidentielle.

M. Cummings, porte-drapeau de la Collaboration des partis politiques (CPP) et son épouse, ont été invités par les deux groupes lors d'une cérémonie conjointe de soutien, le mercredi 29 mars.

Accompagnés des piliers de la CPP, les commerçants d'Omega et FOTC ont profité de l'occasion pour informer M. Cummings de l'état déplorable des lieux où ils vendent quotidiennement sous le soleil et

la pluie, sans abri.

Le porte-drapeau de la CPP et son entourage ont été chaleureusement accueillis, avec des chants traditionnels Grebo, Kpelleh, Bassa, Gio et Mano, représentant les femmes des différents comtés d'origine.

Pour les femmes, la vie est devenue insupportable. Elles se sont dites incapables de pourvoir à leurs familles parce que leurs maris et leurs



Éditorial

Il faut avoir confiance en soi

Les Libériens semblent avoir conclu le résultat de enrôlement biométrique des électeurs dirigé par la Commission électorale nationale avant même le début de l'opération le 20 mars. Ils jettent malheureusement le doute sur la capacité de la Commission de faire preuve de transparence. Certains ont même perçu que le processus est conçu pour frauder les prochaines élections. Quelle absurdité !

Pour des raisons étranges, nous Libériens, semblons obsédés par la méfiance ou le cynisme à peu près dans tout ce qui nous concerne. Nous croyons à tort que seules les personnes qui ne sont pas des nôtres sont crédibles. Si nous cultivons continuellement une telle perception, alors nous n'avons pas besoin d'exister en tant que peuple, car nous ne croyons pas que quelque chose de bon puisse venir de nous.

À cause de cette façon de penser négativement, la Commission électorale nationale est contrainte de rassurer les sceptiques en expliquant que l'opération d'enrôlement est conçue pour détecter les fraudeurs potentiels qui veulent se faire enrôler plus d'une fois. "Le système d'enrôlement biométrique est conçu de manière que les enrôlements doubles soient détectés lors du processus d'arbitrage biométrique à travers le système de gestion central. Les informations des électeurs doublement inscrits seront désactivées", a dit la NEC.

Des rumeurs font état d'enrôlements doubles. Mais la Commission a expliqué qu'à la fin de la première phase du processus, toutes les données des 1 065 centres d'enrôlement des électeurs dans les comtés de Bomi, Gbarpolu, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Margibi et Montserrado seront synchronisées par les serveurs biométriques où le processus de déduplication commencera.

«Le système est très efficace pour comparer des millions d'échantillons biométriques, ce qui facilitera la détection de toutes les doublures dans la base de données. Toute personne qui se fera enrôler deux fois ou plus doit régler ses problèmes avec la Commission avant que ses informations puissent être incluses dans la liste des électeurs», a dit la Commission dans un communiqué.

Selon la NEC, se faire enrôler plus d'une fois est un crime. Se faire enrôler plus d'une fois est un risque inutile, car le système biométrique va détecter les coupables qui seront poursuivis en justice.

La Commission a indiqué en outre qu'elle a adopté le système biométrique pour disposer d'une liste électorale crédible, dépourvue de doublure. « C'est pourquoi nous prenons les empreintes digitales et l'image du visage », a-t-elle dit.

Que devrait faire de plus la Commission pour gagner et conserver la confiance du public, face aux défis sérieux ?

Il est temps que les Libériens croient en eux-mêmes et en leur pays, car quelle que soit la bonne volonté qui vient de l'extérieur, nous seuls pouvons le faire pour nous-mêmes. Il s'agit d'un état d'esprit que nous devons changer, si cette nation doit progresser.

Cela ne signifie pas que là où il y a des problèmes, ils ne doivent pas être portés à l'attention de la Commission pour une réparation rapide. Mais insinuer que les cinq commissaires de la NEC, dont la présidente Davidetta Brown Lansana, ne savent pas ce qu'ils font, est injuste.

Certains vont même jusqu'à accuser la commission de refuser délibérément aux citoyens la possibilité de s'enregistrer sur la base de leurs noms. Mais sachez qu'il est du ressort de la commission d'enquêter sur les identités suspectes de concert avec la sécurité, y compris le service d'immigration du Libéria. Il appartient au porteur d'une telle accréditation de prouver sa citoyenneté avec l'aide des dirigeants de la communauté et des anciens.

Il faut permettre à la NEC d'exercer ses fonctions statutaires plutôt que d'accabler et d'accabler ! Cela n'est pas du patriotisme et de l'amour du pays. Si la NEC réussit, le Libéria réussit et s'il échoue, nous échouons en tant que nation.

Français

Les commerçantes s'engagent

partenaires sont sans emploi. Elles ont parlé avec confiance de l'intégrité, de la compétence et des réalisations du porte-drapeau de la CPP, et de son engagement sincère à instituer de véritables changements qui amélioreront la vie des masses souffrantes.

Répondant aux femmes qui ont promis leur soutien, M. Cummings a promis de les soulager s'il est élu président du Libéria.

Cummings a déclaré qu'un changement de direction nationale avec des dirigeants compétents, qualifiés et énergiques permettra de résoudre de manière permanente les problèmes séculaires du Libéria, qui ont retardé le développement national et privé le peuple d'une vie meilleure.

Le porte-drapeau de la CPP a déclaré que le Libéria est doté de ressources naturelles abondantes, car la grande majorité de la population vit dans une pauvreté abjecte, en raison d'une mauvaise gestion flagrante et de la corruption systémique des fonctionnaires.

Il a promis de rétablir la bonne gouvernance et de lutter contre la corruption, s'il est élu.

Plus tôt, Mme Teresa Cummings a exprimé sa gratitude à l'Association des femmes d'Omega Market pour la formation de FOTC et s'est engagée à soutenir la candidature de son mari.

Elle a dit aux femmes du Libéria que, dès que son mari assumera la présidence, elles bénéficieront de l'attention et du soutien qu'elles méritent.

M. et Mme Cummings ont ensuite exhorté les commerçants de tout le pays à rassembler le courage de s'inscrire et de voter en masse pour changer les choses.

Sénégal : l'opposant Ousmane Sonko condamné à 2 mois de prison avec sursis pour diffamation

L'opposant a également été condamné ce jeudi 30 mars à 200 millions de francs CFA de dommages et intérêts. Cette condamnation fait suite à une plainte déposée par le ministre du Tourisme, Mame Mbaye Niang.

Après trois reports, le procès d'Ousmane Sonko

Des avocats d'Ousmane Sonko dénoncent une violation des droits de la défense

Des avocats d'Ousmane Sonko qui avaient quitté la salle d'audience avant le jugement. Ils ont notamment dénoncé une violation des droits de la défense, avec la suspension d'un des leurs par l'ordre des avocats et le refoulement, la nuit dernière, de l'avocat français Me Juan Branco



s'est finalement tenu en son absence. Les avocats du ministre du Tourisme Mame Mbaye Niang qualifient le jugement de « victoire ». Et c'est aussi une « décision mesurée », un « verdict d'apaisement », estime l'un d'eux, Me Pierre Olivier Sur, car Ousmane Sonko « ne perd pas ses droits civils et politiques ». La condamnation ne l'empêche donc pas d'être candidat à la présidentielle, ce que confirme un avocat de la défense.

à l'aéroport de Dakar. Aucun motif officiel n'a été avancé à ce stade.

Le jugement a été rendu dans un tribunal et une capitale placée sous très haute sécurité. Dakar a tourné au ralenti, avec commerces et écoles fermées, transports suspendus, ou encore interdiction de circuler pour les motos par crainte de troubles.

Une autre procédure judiciaire vise Ousmane Sonko pour des accusations de viols. Aucune date n'a été fixée pour un procès dans ce dossier.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Daron Acemoglu et Cihat Tokgöz

Pour reconstruire la Turquie, il faut restaurer sa démocratie

BOSTON - Les séismes dévastateurs qui ont tué plus de 50.000 personnes en Turquie (et au moins 7000 personnes dans le nord de la Syrie) en février dernier ont mis en lumière des problèmes profondément enracinés, à l'approche des élections présidentielle et législatives du 14 mai prochain, qui pourraient faire date. Il est désormais clair que la Turquie, plus qu'un changement de gouvernement, a besoin d'une refonte de ses systèmes politique et économique. Cela implique d'affronter la tout-puissante industrie du bâtiment et de s'efforcer de rétablir la démocratie chancelante du pays.

Bien que les séismes aient été un phénomène naturel, les immenses dégâts qu'ils ont provoqués sont le résultat de la corruption qui sévit dans l'industrie du bâtiment et au-delà. Cela n'a toutefois pas empêché le président autoritaire de la Turquie, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, de rendre la nature responsable du terrible bilan humain, tout en admettant que les autorités ont été prises au dépourvu. La population turque a été invitée à croire que tout était dorénavant sous contrôle et qu'elle devait faire confiance à Erdogan pour ce qui est de la reconstruction consécutive à la catastrophe.

Il importe toutefois de relever que lorsque la Turquie a été frappée par un puissant séisme (7,6 sur l'échelle de Richter) en 1999, près de la ville d'Izmit, le grand nombre de décès (près de 18.000) avait à juste titre été attribué à des constructions de mauvaise qualité et des plans d'urbanisation déficients. Le gouvernement avait réagi en adoptant des normes antisismiques strictes et un cadre législatif destiné à prévenir de nouvelles constructions dans les zones jugées le plus à risque.

Pourquoi donc les derniers tremblements de terre ont-ils complètement détruit plus de 18.000 bâtiments et fatalement endommagé 280.000 autres ? En bref, la réponse est que les normes de construction n'ont pas été respectées. Bien qu'une grande partie des bâtiments détruits cette année ont été construits après 1999, ils n'étaient pas sûrs (avec des fondations fragiles qui ne comprenaient pas la quantité requise de ciment), parce que les autorités municipales et les contrôleurs ont conclu des ententes avec les entrepreneurs et les promoteurs immobiliers.

La corruption n'est que l'une des facettes de la croissance phénoménale de l'industrie de la construction en Turquie au cours des deux dernières décennies. Elle représente aujourd'hui plus de 40 pour cent de l'investissement en capital fixe, et son influence politique est encore plus importante que ce chiffre ne le laisse supposer. Les grandes entreprises du BTP figurent parmi les principaux donateurs à tous les grands partis politiques et elles maintiennent des liens étroits et répréhensibles avec toutes les autorités municipales, quelle que soit leur appartenance politique.

Si la corruption dans le secteur du bâtiment est un problème majeur dans de nombreux autres pays, elle est particulièrement pernicieuse en Turquie. Non seulement le poids du secteur est disproportionné par rapport à l'économie, il exploite également les failles des institutions démocratiques, gravement affaiblies après deux décennies du régime autocratique d'Erdogan.

L'étrange « loi d'amnistie » de zonage, adoptée par le gouvernement Erdogan en 2018, illustre le pouvoir de l'industrie de la construction. Cette loi permet aux promoteurs immobiliers et aux

propriétaires d'éviter d'avoir à démolir ou rénover des immeubles non-conformes en payant simplement des droits d'enregistrement pour être en règle, y compris dans le cas de bâtiments construits sur des failles sismiques, des zones humides, bassins hydrographiques et autres zones à haut risque.

Dans les dix provinces les plus fortement touchées par les derniers séismes, le chiffre stupéfiant de 294.000 bâtiments ont bénéficié de la loi d'amnistie. Bien qu'il n'existe pas à l'heure actuelle de données définitives permettant d'évaluer les conséquences létales de cette loi, on peut présumer sans risque de se tromper qu'une grande partie de ces immeubles sont ceux qui se sont effondrés en ensevelissant leurs habitants. La taxe antisismique de 1999, dont la portée a été élargie par décret présidentiel en 2021, était censée être utilisée pour financer des projets de renforcement des bâtiments et préparer les villes à mieux faire face aux tremblements de terre. Mais la destination de ces fonds fait l'objet de nombreuses interrogations.

Avec un bilan aussi lourd et des centaines de milliers de personnes qui se retrouvent sans logement, on pourrait s'attendre à ce que les électeurs turcs se prononcent massivement contre le gouvernement et le président sortant le 14 mai. Mais jusqu'à présent, rien n'indique que les médias et la société civile soient désireux de demander des comptes aux responsables politiques nationaux et municipaux. Contrairement à 1999, où la plupart des médias avaient décrit les dégâts causés par le tremblement de terre comme un échec de gouvernance, le consensus quasi total dans les médias turcs aujourd'hui est qu'il s'agit d'un « acte de Dieu », impliquant qu'Erdogan et son gouvernement n'ont rien à se reprocher.

La position des médias n'a toutefois rien d'étonnant, étant donné qu'Erdogan a progressivement pris le contrôle quasi direct de tous les médias nationaux, y compris des chaînes de télévision et des journaux à fort tirage. La contestation ouverte est devenue de plus en plus risquée : les journalistes sont régulièrement emprisonnés pour des prises de position critiques et des sites web et des plateformes de réseaux sociaux ont été bloqués pour avoir mis Erdogan en cause.

La répression croissante a eu des conséquences inattendues en février dernier. Quatre mois plus tôt, en octobre 2022, le Parlement turc avait adopté une loi sur la désinformation, appelée « loi de censure » par l'opposition, qui renforçait considérablement la censure sur internet. S'appuyant sur cette nouvelle loi, le gouvernement a bloqué l'accès à certains sites de médias sociaux immédiatement après les séismes, compliquant involontairement les opérations de sauvetage.

Ce niveau confondant de contrôle des médias - et la polarisation qui en découle - a fait que les partis et les hommes politiques de l'opposition se retrouvent dans l'incapacité de faire passer leur message aux électeurs, en particulier lorsqu'ils tentent de mettre en évidence la corruption endémique et l'incurie du gouvernement.

Mais même si une coalition des partis de l'opposition remporte les élections, le changement de gouvernement ne résoudra pas les problèmes de la Turquie. Les institutions du pays doivent être reconstruites et ce processus ne pourra être mené à bien que si l'industrie de la construction est ramenée à de justes proportions.

Daron Acemoglu, professeur d'économie au MIT, est le co-auteur (avec Simon Johnson) de l'ouvrage à paraître Power and Progress: Our Thousand-Year Struggle Over Technology and Prosperity (Public Affairs, mai 2023 - non traduit). Cihat Tokgöz, ancien banquier d'investissement au sein d'institutions financières internationales, est analyste et chroniqueur des marchés économiques et financiers turcs.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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Census fiasco looms

Liberia goes to reapportion constituencies election in October based on the new population with a provisional figures, but this has not national census result that has already been discredited happened. even before its final outcome due to gross ineptitude and In their petition to the Legislature, the opposition political parties rejected the

Bassa to reject Boakai

with a vast experience. Bearded argued that Senator Karnga-Lawrence is serving her second term at the Liberian Senate, saying it is expedient Amb. Boakai chose her as his running mate. He alleged that Amb. Boakai is denying the people of Bassa the glorious opportunity to serve their country, warning that if that happens, Unity Party should not think about campaigning in Grand Bassa County.



discrepancy that characterized the exercise. Provisional results released by the Liberia Institute and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) put the country's population at 5.2 million, from 3.5 in 2008, registering an increase of 1.7 million or 50.4 percent. But abrupt increase in population of well-known spatially populated counties concentrated in the southeast of Liberia, where President Weah hails from is being disputed and rejected by political parties and in other quarters, raising key credibility questions. Ten opposition political parties here jointly petitioned the Liberian Legislature on March 9 not to use the figures released by LISGIS to set threshold for constituencies and reapportion electoral boundaries. A key opposition party, the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) filed a prohibition to the Supreme Court recently, praying the High Court to halt the current biometric voter registration being conducted by the National Elections Commission until new constituencies or electoral districts are set as constitutionally required. Article 80 (e) of the Liberian constitution requires that immediately after a national census is conducted and prior to the next elections, the NEC shall preliminary census result, and asked that august body and the NEC not to use said figures to set threshold for constituencies and reapportion new electoral boundaries. However, LISGIS has announced that full census results are expected in May, and it remains to be seen whether figures coming up would be used to address constitutional issues being raised, including political parties' concerns. The imbroglia could affect outcome of the pending elections with results disputed. A former employee of the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) Mr. Alex Williams days after the launched of the provisional result of the 2022 national housing and population census described same as completely erroneous, institutionally unethical, inadequate, and lacking basic scientific statistics test. Mr. Williams said the primary source for LISGIS population growth is coming from the United Nations, which he termed as completely erroneous. Appearing on the Spoon FM mid-night conversation on the weekend of February 25, 2023, Mr. Williams explained that 2022 Census provisional results are those numbers that the National Statistics office presented to international organizations because they are required to report on an annual or semi-annual basis those

numbers to the United Nations. He said by reporting such data Liberia has become a laughingstock to both local and international bodies because the census that was conducted ethically and professionally is erroneous. "I read the release from LISGIS and even listen to LISGIS's acting boss talking about the provisional result indicating 97% coverage of the population. I was like sitting and wondering what are they saying. That is scientifically erroneous and institutionally unethical" he explained. Mr. Williams disclosed that if LISGIS insists that there is 97% coverage of the population as indicated in their release, they are doing a comparative analysis of the country's population. "The reason why LISGIS is using that as a reliance to say that the population is 5.2 million is because professionally if you want to be lazy, you want to get the number that is closely related to other international organization projection. But what they need to understand is that the fundamentals source that they are using is the United Nations and the UN relies on the National Statistics Office, for data" Mr. Williams noted. He further explained that those numbers that are reported to the United Nations through LISGIS is what they are going to use to do a projection and on the basis of those projections, they are going to neutralize them to project the country's population. "The fundamental source of those data is coming from



Margibi over a son of Bassa, former Senate President Pro-tempore Gbehzohngar Findley. "In the same year, he also denied access to deceased Cllr Charles Walker Brumskine and Amb. Toga Gayewea McIntosh, [other sons] of Grand Bassa County," said Bearded. He lamented that the Unity Party standard bearer denied three persons from the Bassa belt in the 2017 presidential and legislative elections. He said Koug from Nimba County has now appeared, reminding Amb. Boakai that Senator Karnga-Lawrence comes mates is unacceptable. He noted that Bassa is putting a cent on the table because it deserves the slot. He warned Amb. Boakai that the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) supported Senator Koug's senatorial bid in Nimba and he won. He emphasized that Koug was a CDC candidate in the 2020 senatorial election against the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) ticket. He wondered how then can people think that Senator Koug can be discussed in an arrangement of opposition political parties.

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Census fiasco looms

LISGIS themselves. I already have a problem with the UN and if you go to those

are saying then that is erroneous because they did no groundwork survey.

population of our country, we need birth records, death, immigration and migration variables. In Liberia, the entire civil and vital registration system is fragile” Mr. Williams lamented.

He noted that the Immigration will tell you if you asked them that there are over 144 border points and so people are moving in and around Liberia without sufficient migration data.

Therefore, he maintained that it will be very erroneous for LISGIS to project the variables of the country only based on birth and death.

“Birth and death records in Liberia- there are people still giving birth outside of the clinics and hospitals and they have not been recorded. Many people don’t even report death or have death certificates. And so, you can’t rely on this number that is inadequate and lack basic scientific statistics test,” he added.

He said that the census results are very far from reality.

He said that no international organization is clothed with the authority to do grounds work survey, rather they will rely on the National Statistics Office to validate whatever survey and data that is coming for official use.

” Because Liberia has this issue of not having quality and sufficient data, for example, if we were to project the

websites, you will see that the primary source for those data populations is coming from the UN. And the UN is taking these data from LISGIS” he alleged.

Mr. Williams said that if you are relying on those data to do a comparative analysis of Liberia’s population because this is what other international organizations



websites, you will see that the primary source for those data populations is coming from the UN. And the UN is taking these data from LISGIS” he alleged.

Joint ECOWAS, WAMI & WAMA Mission Holds Strategic Regional Talks With LRA

(Monrovia - Thursday, March 30, 2023): The Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) today held an engagement meeting with a joint sub-regional surveillance mission to Liberia, outlining the country’s progress in domestic resource mobilization.

with the LRA focused on assessing regulatory policies, initiated tax reform programs, and other developments and initiatives the LRA is taking to boost the country’s revenue collection.

LRA Commissioner for Domestic Tax, Darlington Y. Talery highlighted the ongoing automation of Liberia’s tax

He indicated that these initiatives stimulate the collection of the required taxes and accelerate revenue growth.

LRA Deputy Commissioner General for Technical Affairs Gabriel Montgomery expressed gratitude to the joint team for their visit and high level of interest in the LRA. He said the LRA remains committed to its mandate and implementing regional tax reform policies that will boost revenue growth.

The joint regional Mission is holding talks with the government and relevant national stakeholders on fast-tracking the preparation of Liberia’s Macroeconomic Developments and Convergence Report as at December 2022.

The head of the delegation and Director of Multilateral Surveillance and Trade Department of WAMI, Dr. John Kotuku, thanked the LRA Administration for its professional work.

Dr. Kotoku said “Liberia is a modern example of domestic revenue collection through the great work being done at the LRA. We are excited and impressed by the work being done despite the challenges”.

The Mission’s activity is under Article 15 of the statute of the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ), referenced to the multilateral surveillance mechanism of the zone.



Visiting Sub-Regional Surveillance Mission Team & LRA officials following

The Mission comprises representatives from the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI), ECOWAS Commission, and the West African Monetary Agency (WAMA).

Thursday’s engagement

system, the application of Exercise Stamps on alcoholic and tobacco products, real property tax expansion, and the implementation of Liberia’s domestic resource mobilization strategy roadmap as some milestones.

ILO-SIYBA trains 52 vulnerable youths in Nimba

The International Labor Organization (ILO) through the United Nations Human Security Trust Fund Project has begun the training of another fifty-two vulnerable Liberians on business management skills in Saclepia, Nimba County.

A press release says the selected participants are from Bahnand Gbanquoin, Nimba County, as part of the six project communities in the north-central region of Liberia.

They are being trained on several business management skills with a focus on how to start and improve their businesses in their communities.

The training began on Tuesday, 28 March 2023, and will end on

Dollars each to start a small business in their communities as a means of empowerment, and to apply the knowledge acquired to improve their lives.

“We are not just training you and [letting] you go or forget about you. We will give you [a] small amount of money to start a business,” Mr. Massalay encouraged the participants.

He admonished them to take seriously the knowledge being provided to acquire the necessary skills needed to effectively manage and improve their businesses.

He continued that there will be more support for the targeted participants based on their outcome from the start-up capital given to them.

“I encourage all of you to take



Step-Down Training on Start and Improve Your Business in Saclepia, Nimba County

Saturday, 1 April 2023.

ILO Country Coordinator for Liberia, Salif Massalay spoke on behalf of Dr. Vanessa L. Phalaat, ILO Country Director for Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Liaison Office for ECOWAS at the start of the training.

Salif Massalay said the training is part of phase two of the “Start and Improve Your Business” (SIYB) program intended to transform the lives of vulnerable people in rural Liberia, especially in the hard-to-reach areas.

Mr. Massalay explained that the participants will receive start-up capital in the amount of two-hundred United States

the training seriously because when you learn all the things we are teaching you, you will be able to properly use the money we are giving you to grow your business.”

“There will be more benefits for you on this project, but it will only come if you can manage the first one well,” he said.

The training is being conducted by two SIYB consultants including Mr. Alieu L. Kemokai - Lead Consultant and Dr. Moses Zolue of the World Bank in Liberia.

Participants are being trained on topics such as generating business ideas, the characteristics of an entrepreneur, business planning, marketing, and record-keeping, among others.

UL, IAGP hold conference

The University of Liberia (UL) and Nigerian-based International Academy for Gender and Peace (IAGP) have begun a two-day West Africa Regional Conference on mainstreaming gender in the security sector in Africa.

Held in the Auditorium of UL’s Capitol Hill campus, the conference runs from March 30 to 31, 2023.

It brings together regional and national security and government officials, academic administrators, faculty, staff and students, and members of the public, among others.

Issues affecting women in the security sector, strengthening gender equality in the security sector, and promoting women’s

participation in key leadership roles in the security service are part of discussions at the conference.

Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps Commandant General, Dr. Ahmed Abubakar Audi delivered the keynote address on the first day of the conference Thursday, March 30, 2023.

Dr. Audi explained that the developmental wreckage in West Africa as a result of conflicts cannot be over-emphasized due to its devastating nature.

He said the raison d’etat of most conflicts in West Africa is the absence of a standard means of measuring qualitative well-being which contributed to the failures of some states in the past.

He detailed that the outcome of the past and causes of the present

Security measures heightened

--Liberia and Ivory Coast on Border Security

By Emmanuel Wise Jipoh

Liberia and its neighbor Ivory Coast have agreed to heighten border security and surveillance ahead of the former's presidential and

conduct of a peaceful election. Dorley stressed that both countries will closely collaborate to protect the integrity of the borders against external threats.

The LIS official emphasized that a guaranteed election

delegation to the Ivorian Capitol Abidjan to discuss cooperation between Liberia and Ivory Coast.

Liberia is worried about election violence, as the country heads to the polls to elect a president. Incumbent



legislative elections due in October.

Liberia Immigration Service (LIS) Communication Officer Abraham Dorley detailed the plan when he addressed the media Thursday, 30 March 2023.

Mr. Dorley said the two West African states have underscored that border security is crucial for the

requires a border that will protect against threats and other harmful circumstances.

However, Dorley noted that the LIS takes seriously citizens' claims of voter trucking, saying it is working along with the National Elections Commission (NEC) to resolve the issue.

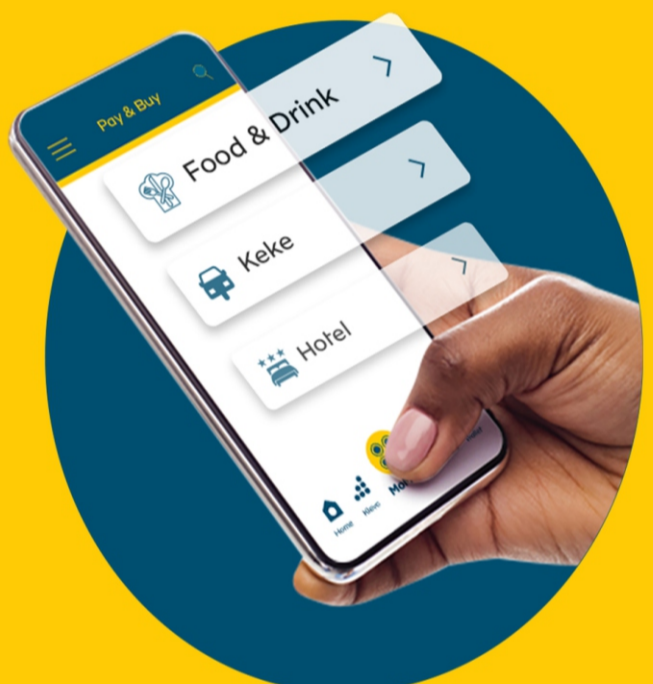
Earlier this year, Liberia's Internal Affairs Minister Varney Sirleaf led a Liberian

President George Manneh Weah and several opposition leaders will battle for the nation's highest office this October.

Former Liberian Vice President Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai, and former Coca-Cola Executive Alexander B. Cummings, are among Mr. Weah's rivals for office.

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