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MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES
LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

DATE	BUYING	SELLING
MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2023	LS162.1565/US\$1.00	LS164.2923/US\$1.00

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

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'Forgive Boakai'

Sen. Johnson **Former Pres. Sirleaf** **Former VP Boakai**

PYJ pleads with former President Sirleaf



ExxonMobil eyes four offshore blocks in Liberia

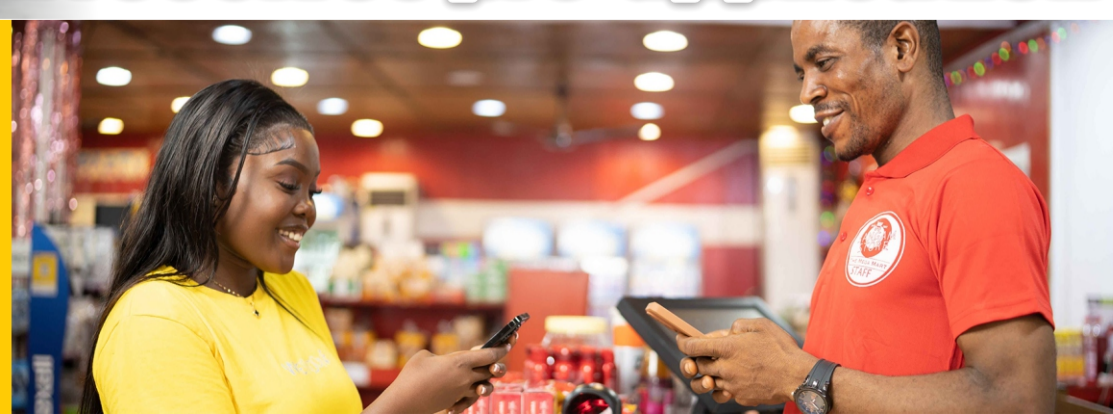
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Continental News

Sudan fighting: Diplomats and foreign nationals evacuated

Several countries have evacuated diplomats and citizens from Sudan's capital as fierce fighting continues to rage in Khartoum.

The US and UK announced on Sunday they had flown

is now closed, and a tweet on its official feed says it is not safe enough for the government to evacuate private US citizens.

The UK government managed to airlift British diplomats and their families out of the country in what was described as a "complex

evening

Germany is in the process of evacuating its nationals, with its first military plane landing in Khartoum on Sunday afternoon

Italy's evacuation operation has also begun, according to local media

Other countries successfully evacuated people on Saturday. More than 150 people, mostly citizens of Gulf countries, as well as Egypt, Pakistan and Canada were evacuated by sea to the Saudi Arabian port of Jeddah.

Meanwhile, there are reports that internet connectivity has almost totally collapsed in Sudan, which could seriously hinder the coordination of help for those trapped in Khartoum and other cities.

The power struggle has seen heavy bombardment in the capital city, with hundreds killed and thousands more injured.

There have been desperate calls for help from many foreign students - from Africa, Asia and the Middle East - who are also stuck in Khartoum, a city of some six million people.

The near-constant shooting and bombing in Khartoum and elsewhere has cut electricity and safe access to food and water for much of the population.

Several ceasefires that had seemingly been agreed by both sides were ignored, including a three-day pause to mark the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr, which started on Friday. BBC



A convoy was seen on Sunday thought to be evacuating UN staff from Sudan

diplomats out of the country.

France, Germany and Italy are among other countries also organising evacuations, starting on Sunday.

A vicious power struggle between the regular army and a powerful paramilitary force has led to violence across the country.

US authorities said they had airlifted fewer than 100 people with three Chinook helicopters on Sunday morning in a "fast and clean" operation.

The US embassy in Khartoum

and rapid" operation. Foreign Minister James Cleverly said options to evacuate the remaining British nationals in Sudan were "severely limited".

Several other countries were conducting evacuation operations on Sunday:

France has evacuated around 100 people by air, according to French media. Some were nationals of other countries including the UK and Germany

A handful of Dutch citizens left Khartoum on the French plane, and the Netherlands hopes to airlift more citizens out on Sunday

21 bodies found in investigation into 'starvation cult'

Kenyan police have exhumed 21 bodies near the coastal town of Malindi, as they investigate a preacher said to have told followers to starve to death.

Dead children were among those exhumed, and police said they expected to find even more bodies.

The shallow graves are in Shakahola forest, where 15 members of the Good News International Church were rescued last week.

Preacher Paul Mackenzie Nthenge is in custody, pending a court appearance.

State broadcaster KBC described him as a "cult leader", and reported that 58 graves have so far been identified.

One of the graves is believed to contain the

bodies of five members of the same family - three children and their parents.

Mr Mackenzie has denied wrongdoing, but has been refused bail. He insists that he shut down his church in 2019.

He allegedly told followers to starve themselves in order to "meet Jesus".

The Kenyan daily The Standard said pathologists will take DNA samples and conduct tests to determine whether the victims died of starvation.

Police arrested Mr Mackenzie on 15 April after discovering the bodies of four people suspected of having starved themselves to death.

BBC



Police stepped up the exhumations on Saturday in Shakahola forest

Forbes Africa '30 Under 30' Features Solutions-Orientated Innovators

JOHANNESBURG – The magazine calls the ninth annual edition its "30 Under 30" list "Tomorrow's Titans," spotlighting of twenty-somethings who are doing "amazing" work, from health to technology to fashion.

The 2023 class list includes young achievers who built "solutions-orientated" businesses from scratch, representing Botswana, Rwanda, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Mauritius, Tanzania, Cameroon, Namibia, and Lesotho.

A few years ago, when Dr. Wedu Somolekae announced she was opening in Gaborone Botswana's first medical aesthetics practice – a field aimed at altering patients' cosmetic appearance – few in the southern African nation knew what she was talking

youth with the tech skills they need to build their own businesses and to get jobs.

"So far, we've trained 132-thousand people and placed thousands in jobs," said Abeng. "Most of the people who were responding and saying congratulations also felt like the life they want is possible and has inspired them to take courses... We currently have a cybersecurity scholarship in partnership with Cisco and the application for that has really soared."

Lesotho's Koale Manoheng, director of Khantsa Energy, founded a company that provides solar power to rural communities throughout the tiny mountain kingdom, giving them electricity which they otherwise would not usually have.

Manoheng says the Forbes award is unexpected, but very welcome.

"This really gives us an opportunity to spotlight the plight of energy poverty in Lesotho and energy access," he said, "and work



An undated screenshot of Forbes Africa 30 Under 30 2023 class announcement video as seen on YouTube/ForbesAfrica.

about.

Procedures that Somolekae and her team at Medi-Glow Aesthetics do include removing scars, wrinkles, moles, excess fat and unwanted hair. Africans usually have to travel to developed countries for cosmetic surgery, but Somolekae's service now means they are able to receive it at home.

"Aesthetic medicine is a relatively new industry in Botswana especially, but even on the continent," she said. "So getting the recognition will spark a lot of curiosity in people and hopefully get them interested in the kind of services we offer."

In Nigeria, Blessing Abeng's company, Ingressive for Good, is equipping West African

we've been doing when it comes to other focus areas such as climate change awareness, bringing it into the social dialogue, closer to people who don't understand what we're dealing with here."

Abeng's advice to young African innovators is to start businesses slowly, and with humility.

"Most times we overestimate what we can do in a day, and underestimate what we can do in a year," he said. "Do one thing every day to be better and bring you closer to your goals....Ask for help when you need it, and when you find a problem that's worth solving, go ahead and solve it. The only way you learn is by experimenting."

All three entrepreneurs say they had to make many mistakes before they found a recipe for success. As Manoheng puts it, "it takes bravery to bounce back from failure." VOA

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EDITORIAL

The Buchanan retreat should produce tangibles

PRESIDENT GEORGE Manneh Weah chairs a three-day cabinet retreat this week (24 -26 April) in the coastal city, Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, perhaps the last or second to the last by this administration before presidential and general elections in October. This retreat of the cabinet is very important because it provides an opportunity for the Weah Administration to not only measure performance but to outline actual deliverables since its inception in 2018.

IT ALSO sets a platform for the government to carry out some real public relations as it seeks re-election in October amid barrage of criticisms about ineptitude, accountability, corruption, mismanagement, economic hardship, gross constitutional violation and insecurity, among others.

THE GOVERNMENT has a development roadmap dubbed, Pro-poor Agenda for Development and Prosperity (PAPD). Such forum provides an opportunity to take down partisan lenses, and objectively identify weak links and how to improve them.

THE FLAGSHIP priority for the first six years has been roads that it is still battling with even as it seeks re-election. Some of those road projects were already signed by its predecessor and are being implemented, while it has its own road connectivity programs that are ongoing simultaneously.

BUT THERE are weaknesses in some sectors such as agriculture, education security, health, rule of law that need critical assessment with open mind. For instance, in the draft FY2023 National Budget Agriculture was allotted US\$5.42 million, representing 0.70 percent in a country that 100 percent relies on rice importation, its staple and other food.

EDUCATION AND Health both received a greater chunk of the budget by far than Agriculture but performance leaves much to be desired. President Weah announced all public universities tuition-free. However, state universities and colleges across the country are in financial crisis, leaving lecturers to go on strike or students protesting. The President pays WASSCE fees for 12th graders annually, but Liberia's performance on the subregional exams is nothing to write home about, as announced here recently by the Head of WAEC Monrovia Office Dai Gbotoe.

DESPITE A projected budget of US\$75.52 million or 9.71 percent for Health, health institutions across the country are barely functioning because of lack of drugs, tools and logistics. This also raises performance questions.

SECURITY AND Rule of Law were allotted a big chunk of US\$96.87 million or 12.45 percent in the 2023 draft budget, but the justice system, starting with the Police, correction, and other arms are operating below public expectations, leading to breach of confidence.

AS THE cabinet meets this week in Buchanan City under the watch of President Weah, we believe these are but few of the critical areas that need urgent attention, especially security, as the nation goes to election.

THE RETREAT is necessary and should be given the attention it deserves because it is from there government honestly measures its performance of the task it has been entrusted by the electorate.

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COMMENTARY

By Jayati Ghosh

Schizophrenia at the IMF

NEW DELHI - It has taken far too long, but it seems that the International Monetary Fund has finally internalized some hard truths about sovereign-debt reduction. Chief among them is that growing economies have an easier time repaying. As such, fiscal consolidation - the organization's favored strategy - undermines efforts to reduce debt-to-GDP ratios because it inhibits economic growth.

To be sure, this is hardly a new insight. John Maynard Keynes emphasized it nearly a century ago, and many have reiterated it ever since. It was certainly known to the negotiators who crafted the London Debt Agreement of 1953, which dramatically reduced West Germany's burden of public debt. The agreement between Germany and 20 of its external creditors provided favorable repayment terms linked to the country's future exports, creating the conditions for its postwar economic boom.

Still, better late than never. The IMF's latest World Economic Outlook presents the results of its own investigation into various debt-reduction programs undertaken by 33 emerging-market economies and 21 developed economies between 1980 and 2019. "On average," the authors note, "consolidations do not lead to a statistically significant effect on the debt ratio." Instead, they find that higher GDP growth - "as captured by positive demand and supply shocks together" - is "an important force" responsible for roughly one-third of the observed debt reduction during that period. The analysis even recognizes that fiscal expansion improved debt ratios in several cases, largely due to its positive effect on GDP growth.

Fiscal consolidation, the authors note, is more likely to reduce debt in a growing economy, under favorable financial conditions. But, given that such conditions may not always exist, and because retrenchment tends to impede GDP growth, austerity has rarely led to positive outcomes in debt-distressed countries.

As the IMF report notes, "unanticipated transfers" to state-owned enterprises and unexpected exchange-rate depreciations could undermine debt-reduction efforts. What the report does not mention, however, is that these developments are often an unintended consequence of the IMF's own programs, which tend to require indebted countries to shift to market-determined exchange rates, raise interest rates, and cut state subsidies, thereby driving up business costs. By contrast, the report finds that debt-restructuring efforts have been more successful when they helped countries restore growth and avoid economic decline.

While this will not come as a shock to anyone who has tracked growth trajectories over the past half-century, the IMF's influence over countries' macroeconomic policies, and the growing number of governments in need of debt restructuring, makes the Fund's change of

heart highly consequential. For decades, IMF programs have assumed that cutting public spending was the only way to deal with debt distress. Now, the Fund seems to be acknowledging its past mistakes.

But it is unclear whether this welcome (albeit late) volte-face will extend beyond the IMF's research department and how it might affect the Fund's lending activities. Early indications are not promising. IMF leadership has repeatedly called for faster and more effective sovereign-debt restructuring, and, to its credit, has recently set up a roundtable of public and private creditors to hasten the process. But the response so far has been slow, cumbersome, inadequate, and mostly ineffective. Countries that have sought help under the G20's Common Framework for addressing debt distress in the developing world have faced inordinate delays, geopolitical wrangling, and unresponsive creditors.

Worse, the IMF's staff seems to be unaware of its latest report or has chosen to ignore it. The Fund's recent financing programs include onerous conditions that will most likely have extremely damaging effects on developing countries' populations and economies.

For example, the recent agreement between the IMF and Sri Lanka emphasizes fiscal consolidation, requiring the government to achieve a budget surplus within two years. It also conditions its funding on increases in energy tariffs, flexible exchange rates that will likely lead to currency devaluation, and higher interest rates. The program (unrealistically) projects higher revenues without imposing wealth taxes or restricting illicit financial flows. All this will reduce demand in a country already reeling from 53.6% inflation, causing the economy to contract further. A similar focus on fiscal balance is evident in other proposed IMF programs in Ghana and Zambia.

The IMF is not alone in this. As Isabel Ortiz and Matthew Cummins point out, a new wave of austerity is building as governments scale back public spending. With the world facing a confluence of economic and political crises, the return of austerity could have dire consequences, and not just for economic activity. It could also imperil global health at a time when future public-health threats are increasingly likely, in addition to hampering our ability to address climate change.

This is not just unnecessary - it is willfully harmful. When certain "solutions" have been shown to fail, or make the problem worse, they must be abandoned. While it is undoubtedly a step in the right direction that IMF researchers have finally acknowledged the obvious, it is not enough. After decades of causing avoidable misery, it is time for the IMF to put its money where its mouth is.

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

OP-ED

By Steffi Lemke

The Wisdom of Germany's Nuclear Phase-Out

BERLIN - With the shutdown of its last three nuclear power plants, Germany has completed its phase-out of nuclear power. As the minister responsible for nuclear safety in Germany, I believe that this was an excellent - indeed, visionary - move. There are many important justifications, but five are especially compelling.

First, phasing out nuclear power makes Germany safer. No nuclear power plant in the world is so secure that a catastrophic accident can be ruled out. Such an accident could be caused by human error (as in Chernobyl in 1986) or a natural disaster (as in Fukushima, Japan, in 2011). It could be caused by a terrorist attack, plane crash, or simply an overlooked weakness in our safety strategies. Or, in the worst case, it could arise from a military attack, like those Russia has carried out in Ukraine.

Whatever the cause, an accident in a nuclear power plant can be catastrophic, causing devastation on a scale that no other form of energy generation could match. No insurance policy covers this risk, in Germany or anywhere else. The Environment Ministry, the country's highest nuclear-safety authority, has spent decades ensuring that power plants adhere to the highest standards. But no matter how hard we work, there is no absolute safety with nuclear power, which is why the phase-out is a relief for me.

A second reason to welcome Germany's nuclear-power phase-out is that we will no longer be producing highly radioactive nuclear waste. Nuclear power has provided electricity for three generations, but its legacy of radioactive waste will be a burden for the next 30,000. How a technology with such long-lasting consequences could be classified as sustainable is a mystery to me.

In fact, despite the phase-out, the legacy of waste means that Germany still has a long road ahead on ensuring nuclear safety. There is currently no final repository to store spent fuel rods safely in operation anywhere in the world, and finding a site for one is hugely difficult and costly.

Third, despite what advocates claim, nuclear power is neither climate-friendly nor particularly reliable. Even if it contributes less to the climate crisis than coal or gas, it is clearly bad for the climate, not least because reactors must be cooled with large amounts of water. This puts significant pressure on local rivers, which are already under stress from climate change. France had to import considerable amounts of electricity from Germany last year, owing to technical problems with its reactors and a lack of sufficient water to cool them. In some cases, rivers became so overheated that water for cooling reactors could be neither withdrawn nor discharged.

As temperatures rise and droughts proliferate, limitations on the use of river water for cooling nuclear reactors will intensify. We need a resilient energy supply that not only avoids contributing to climate change, but also can withstand the unavoidable effects of higher temperatures. In this sense, nuclear power is not fit for the future.

The fourth point worth highlighting is that nuclear power is not cheap, especially when one accounts for the costs of uranium extraction, waste management, and insurance. In the United States, 12 nuclear power plants were taken off the grid between 2009 and 2021, because they were not economically viable.

New nuclear projects are not worthwhile without significant government subsidies. The Flamanville-3 project in northern France is running 12 years behind schedule, and will cost well over €10 billion (\$11 billion) more than originally planned. The costs of nuclear power are also exploding in the United Kingdom and Finland. And if Europe wants to end its dependence on Russian energy imports, it will have to end imports of uranium and nuclear-fuel elements as well.

The final reason to welcome the shutdown of Germany's remaining nuclear plants is that we simply do not need nuclear power. There are better alternatives. Solar and wind power are now much cheaper to generate. They are also safer, more sustainable, and more climate-friendly. With the right standards in place, they are also compatible with nature conservation.

This helps to explain why nuclear power's share of total global primary energy consumption has been falling since 2000, accounting for only 5% in 2019. In contrast, renewable energy has been on the rise for years. Production costs are falling, and installed capacity is growing - including in Germany since the current government took office.

Recognizing the critical importance of a safe and affordable energy supply, particularly for a country whose prosperity is also based on energy-intensive industries, from mechanical engineering to automobile manufacturing, German policymakers are making large-scale investments in renewable energy. We are also investing in green hydrogen, storage technologies, energy efficiency, and energy savings.

The expansion of renewable energy is undoubtedly challenging, and we must admit that we are not yet as far along as we would like. At the same time, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has forced us to return temporarily to coal and liquefied natural gas. But none of this amounts to a convincing argument in favor of keeping, let alone expanding, nuclear power.

Successive German governments, all of our country's democratic parties, and even the operators of the nuclear power plants agreed to phase out nuclear power, persuaded by the same compelling logic that drove countless citizens, farmers, winegrowers, and mayors to spend decades advocating for a phase-out. It would be truly irresponsible to turn our backs on this broad societal consensus.

OPINION

By Richard Haass

What Northern Ireland Teaches Us About Ending the Ukraine War

NEW YORK - There are many reasons to celebrate the recent 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement. Reached in 1998, it has provided a political framework that has dramatically reduced violence in a part of the United Kingdom that experienced something very close to civil war for the preceding three decades.

Some of what explains the accord's success is specific to Northern Ireland. But other factors have broader relevance, providing guidance for approaching conflicts elsewhere, even the war between Russia and Ukraine.

The most fundamental lesson is that diplomacy can succeed only where and when other tools cannot. Successive British prime ministers - Margaret Thatcher, John Major, and Tony Blair - created a context that by the late 1990s gave diplomacy a chance. This required two things: First, the UK introduced sufficient security forces so that those in Northern Ireland who sought to shoot their way to power could not succeed. Violence could not be prevented from disrupting lives, but it was not allowed to create political facts.

At the same time, British authorities combined their tough stance against violence with an openness to political dialogue. While no party in Northern Ireland achieved everything it wanted during these negotiations, every faction could realize some of what it sought - and more than any could hope to accomplish through fighting. Getting the protagonists to this point, to where they accepted (no matter how reluctantly) the inevitability of compromise, was essential to move the conflict toward resolution.

In addition, British, Irish, and American officials, above all former US Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, who chaired the negotiations, were modest in what they sought. They did not aim to resolve the entire Northern Ireland problem. To the contrary, they mostly avoided "final status" issues, above all the question of whether Northern Ireland would remain in the UK or one day become part of a united Ireland. The accords went only so far as to establish the ground rules for a process which could lead to a united Ireland. The same willingness to avoid difficult questions of Taiwan's status and its relationship to China has allowed the United States and China to normalize relations and has helped preserve peace in the Taiwan Strait for a half-century.

This highlights a larger point: Peacemaking must often accept goals less than full peace. Sometimes, aiming for a state of non-belligerence is sufficiently ambitious. Twenty-five years later, Northern Ireland remains divided politically and socially. Yet political violence is largely absent. This is not everything, but it is a lot. Nor is such a situation unique. On both the Korean Peninsula and the island of Cyprus, full peace has never been achieved, but the parties have lived next to each other relatively peacefully for decades.

It is also worth noting that UK, Irish, and American diplomats allowed individuals and groups that had authorized or carried out acts of violence to participate in the political process. This was a difficult but necessary concession, as it turned out that those who had demonstrated military strength were the same who had the requisite political strength to make a deal. As then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin noted, "You don't make peace with friends. You make it with very unsavory enemies."

Lastly, authorities kept preconditions, or steps that needed to be taken before negotiations could begin, to a minimum. In Northern Ireland, the principal requirement for participating in the peace process was a cessation of violence. Participants were not asked to give up their arms. This step, known as decommissioning, became one focus of my work years later when I served as US envoy to the dispute.

Each of these lessons may well be relevant for the world's most dangerous conflict today: the war between Russia and Ukraine. A cessation of hostilities will be possible only if, and when, the parties become convinced that more war will not bring them closer to their goals. This realization could come as a result of further costly fighting that leads to little change in who controls what territory.

As this happens, possibly later this year, a diplomatic process must be established, possibly modeled on the "two plus four" process that helped end the Cold War. One can imagine here a venue involving only Ukraine and Russia, and a second in which NATO and Russia discuss larger questions of European security.

It is essential that any diplomatic path does not ask the parties to abandon their ultimate goals or give up their arms. Ukraine has every right to insist on the full return of its territory going back to its independence in 1991, while Russian President Vladimir Putin is sure to insist that the Ukrainian territories he has illegally annexed are part of Russia. It may well take decades (and new leadership in Moscow) to resolve these differences. So be it. The immediate goal of a cease-fire should not be contingent on reconciling what cannot be reconciled now or for the foreseeable future.

As distasteful as it might be, those responsible for the war and for war crimes, including Putin, will need to be able to participate directly or indirectly in the diplomatic process if it is to have any chance of success. The top priority now must be to end the violence; the quest for justice ultimately must be pursued, but it should be postponed.

Admittedly, the diplomatic approach to ending the Ukraine war suggested here is far from ideal. But it might just be possible, and it certainly would be better than more of the same. This is the ultimate lesson to be learned from Northern Ireland.

ON 2ND THOUGHTS



with Othello B. Garblah

The Call for elected and public officials to undergo drug test

Last week, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia Major General Price C. Johnson III made headlines when he suggested that all elected and appointed government officials undergo narcotics substance tests to help minimize or eradicate the proliferation of narcotics such as Kush and others across Liberia.

His call for both elected and appointed state officials to undergo tests for narcotics and other contrite banned substances in the country has raised more questions, particularly so when he claimed that this will help reduce or eradicate the flow of drugs in the country.

Narcotics substance such as cocaine, kush, and marijuana are said to be prevalent in the Liberian market. The recent arrest of a combined total of US\$131 million worth of cocaine in two successive bursts points to how traffickers have taken advantage of the country's weak system over time.

Kush, for example, is said to be a very bad drug because once consumed, it makes you feel like you are in the next world and miserable at the same time. And if you don't have good resistance, it can easily kill you. This particular type of drug is alleged to be imported by foreigners mainly Nigerians.

Come to think of it, Liberia recently amended its drug law which makes illegal drug cultivation, manufacture, transportation, and trafficking a first-degree felony offense that is not subject to bail and carries a mandatory 10 to 20-year prison term.

The Controlled Drugs and Substances Act of 2014 was passed into law on November 10, 2022, after the Senate concurred with the House of Representatives.

But according to General Johnson, the latest recommendation should be one of the requirements set forth for appointment in government as well as those wanting to occupy positions either at the Liberian Presidency or National Legislature

However, to suggest that those expected to enforce such laws and protect the country from the insecurity which comes with the proliferation of dangerous drugs on the market also points to the kind of leaders now running the country.

Come to think of the Army Chief's recommendation, it makes one wonder whether some of the bad leadership decisions being experienced in this country are because of leaders making these decisions after taking in these substances.

The recent University of Liberia riot involving some elected officials could have also been linked to their intake of these drugs like Kush.

The proliferation of narcotic drugs in any society brings about insecurity and this is evidenced by the rising army of Zogoes around the country.

The recommendation by the Army Chief was echoed by opposition Presidential Hopeful Tiawan Ginglee.

Gongloe also took the drug test debate to another level suggesting that President George Manneh Weah should be subjected to drug tests as well.

"They cannot be destroying our country when their children are not living here. And I highly suspect him of being involved in this narcotic, so he should also be subjected. Let him not avoid the drug test as he did with ... Covid-19," said Gongloe.

But whatever level this debate is being taken to, one thing is crystal clear the proliferation of drugs is hurting the country. And to suggest that those at the helm of decision-making in the country are participants only tells us the direction in which our country is moving.



By Jones Mallay

LIBERIA POLITICAL HOT-FIRE

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Prince Johnson 2017: "Hosanna, Hosanna," in 2023: "Crucify Him, Crucify Him"

In the Holy book of Psalm 118:25-26, when Jesus arrived in Jerusalem on the back of a Donkey (Onsager), Jesus was met upon arrival by a cheering crowd who waved palm branches and lay cloaks on the ground to honor him and the crowd uttered: "Hosanna, Hosanna" "our King, save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give success!

So, it is in the days of Sen Prince Yormie Johnson, a former warlord (INPFL), founder and standard bearer of the Movement for Democracy and Reconstruction (MDR), and President George Weah, former footballer, head of CDC ruling coalition government.

November 7, 2017, during the round-off election between Ambassador Boakia and incumbent Pres. Weah, Prince Johnson openly sounded "Hosanna, Hosanna" to incumbent Pres. Weah. Sen. Johnson later called on all oppositions to reject Ambassador Baokai, a culmination of factors that led to UP's sudden defeat in 2017.

Sen. Johnson, is today in 2023 proclaiming: "crucify Pres. Weah, crucify Pres. Weah", and no sooner calling on all the oppositions again to rally against the removal of Pres. Weah roughly seventh month to the general and presidential elections. Today the Senator is again proclaiming: "Hosanna, Hosanna," on the former VP Baokia who was once crucified in 2017 by Sen. Johnson in this election circle.

Sen. Johnson's stance was wrapped in numerous social and economic political accusations and counter-accusations ranging from human rights abuses to poor governance. Ironically, Sen. Johnson's proclamation, which contained some distasteful political flavors and that may have attracted undue attention in some political circles, cannot be taken seriously for an array of reasons.

But little did the Senator know that he was directly submerged in his utterances concerning past gruesome human rights abuses, extra-judicial killings of innocent Liberians, destruction of properties, raped, and many more, a stanch pillar upon which the US Government may have positioned an endless sanctioned him.

The Senator's political utterances did not matter in the past, and it doesn't matter now. The former warlord is inherently a super political and military chameleon who changes according to the prevailing political circumstances in Liberia, hence, every Liberian ought to be very circumspect in these political seasons, especially the former VP Baokia.

Former VP Boakai should be very cautious with the Senator for six reasons: First, the Senator is widening his troubled net so that he alone will not be crucified shortly for his crimes in the then Liberian civil wars, he is on recruitment mission. Second, the US may sanction all those associating themselves with the former warlord.

Third, VP Baokia's hard-earned image will soon be tinted and/or destroyed by Senator Johnson's close affiliation with him very soon. Fourth, according to sources, the US has taken keen notes and records tracking the former war lord's associates and his connections in building a case in the future starting with their sanctions placed on his nick.

Fifth, it is dangerous for Liberians to associate themselves with any former warlord in Liberia, Prince Johnson included. Sixth, the more VP Boakia developed closer ties with former Rebel leader Johnson, the more some of his staunch supporters would back-off from him VP Baokia's. The VP must distance himself from Se, Johnson in all form or manner.

Yes, the former warlord Johnson may have huge followers. He may have a political party, Church, University, estates, farms, and many other luxuries, that would not exempt him from war crime and crime against humanity, nor will his accumulation set him free from war crime no matter what he does or does not do. Enjoy your day Sen. Johnson, one source lamented!

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Weah & cabinet brainstorm in Buchanan

-Ahead of crucial election

By Emmanuel Wise Jipoh

President George Manneh Weah and his cabinet ministers will on Monday, 24 April 2023 to Wednesday 26 April 2023, brainstorm in what is expected to be a major cabinet retreat, ahead of the 10 October presidential and

legislative elections. agencies, and commissions, ministries, agencies and commissions (MACs), are expected to form part of the high-level meeting.

They are expected to report on progress in the performance targets set aside by the highest office, which comes at the backdrop of the last Cabinet Retreat held at the Peace-Empire- Hotel, in Gompa City, Nimba County last July.

and Coordination, and the President's 2022 Legislative Agenda.

While placing specific emphasis on accountability and transparency issues in government, this year's retreat comes at time when Liberia heads to the crucial Presidential and Legislative elections.

The Weah-led administration has been accused of alleged corruption, economic problems, ritualistic killings, high cost of living, among others, which the opposition has used as a campaign against the administration.

Mr. Weah, this time is expected to come hard on his cabinet ministers, while encouraging all hands-on desks, ahead of the crucial election.

President Weah has told the gathering of cabinet ministers that there would be no room for mistakes.

Not only the Buchanan meeting will take stock of gains made since that mid-2022 Retreat but will also highlight and specifically focus on President Weah's strategic governance strides in the next 173 days.

The cabinet will focus on affordability and the economy, job creation, youth empowerment, health care, as they aim at convincing the electorate ahead of the crucial period.

Chief Imam warns against elections fraud

By Lincoln G. Peters

Liberia's Chief Imam Ali Krayee has warned the National Elections Commission (NEC) against elections fraud, reminding the electoral house that fraudulent elections in 1985 led to 250, 000 deaths and dragged the country backward.

Imam Krayee warned the NEC to be mindful that election fraud in 1985 produced the hell that Liberia endured for 14 years.

His warning to the NEC came in his Ramadan message at the Benson Street Mosque in Monrovia when Muslims climaxed a month-long fasting Friday, 21 April 2023.

"So we pray that Allah will guide the men and women of the National Elections Commission and all elections workers across the country so that they will put their country first and their personal interest last and do what is necessary for the holding of peaceful and transparent elections in the country," he stressed.

Further, Imam Krayee urged the NEC officials to remember that if they create any hell in this country, they will not escape the hell they help to create.

He added that if it doesn't affect them now, it will affect their children because Liberia has bled for too long and this nation can not endure another round of chaos.

"National Elections Commission,



Pres. Weah

legislative elections.

Mr. Weah will play host to ministers, directors, as well as executive directors, among other high-ranking officials of his administration in their three-day stay in that part of Liberia.

Accordingly, heads of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), autonomous

It is likely to be more interactive than the previous retreat in Ganta City. It features discussions and presentations on the implementation status of the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), zooming specifically on the National Economy, Revenue Generation, Aid Management

Speaker Chambers challenges developed nations for Africa's development

The Speaker of the House of Representatives is challenging developed nations of the world to ensure that African Countries have access to credit facilities to develop the African Continent.

Speaker Bhofal Chambers said accessing huge credit facilities is one of the surest ways to develop Africa and take millions out of poverty.

He said developed nations can play a critical role in ensuring that credit facilities aimed at developing the African continent are made available. "One way they can do this is through development aid and grants to African countries, which can be used to establish credit facilities or support existing ones. Additionally, developed nations can provide technical assistance and capacity-building programs to help African nations develop their own credit infrastructure".

Speaker Chambers asserts. House Speaker Chambers averred that another way developed nations can support access to credit facilities in Africa is through trade and



Speaker Chambers

investment. "By investing in African countries, developed nations can help spur economic growth and create jobs, which can in turn lead to increased demand for credit facilities". He asserts.

He stressed that developed nations can also facilitate trade agreements that open up new markets for African goods and services, providing a boost to local economies and encouraging the growth of

domestic credit markets. Speaker Chambers said, unlike other developed nations of the world, African countries are still struggling to access financial resources to enhance their development agenda.



Chief Imam Krayee

The Liberian Chief Imam noted that the country is at a crossroads of making a critical decision for its democracy during the upcoming 10 October 2023 presidential and legislative elections.

He challenged the commission to be more mindful of free, fair, and transparent elections because it is only through this that Liberia's peace can be secured.

"We want to tell members of the National Elections Commission that the country is watching, the international community is watching as well," he said.

Krayee continued that if the 2020 midterm Special Senatorial Election is anything to go by, then Liberians have many reasons to worry.

"The manner in which some aspects of the results of the 2020 Senatorial Election were handled by NEC and the Judiciary if that is the way the 2023 elections will be handled, then I say woe unto Liberia," the Chief Imam said.

we must warn you strongly that these elections have to be free, fair, and transparent," he continued.

Speaking of the BVR process, he said it must be carried out in a manner that will be satisfactory to all the participants in these elections.

He added that after all when elections are held, the collation of the results is very important.

As such, he urged that the process must be transparent so that there will be no need for any serious court action.

Meanwhile, Imam Krayee has called on the NEC and political parties to watch out for fake polling centers that do not exist but produce results.

"We want political parties to be vigilant when it comes to these fake polling centers," he pointed out.

He called on the NEC to warn its staff not to create fake polling centers because it is a recipe for chaos.

In another development, Imam Krayee said some of the utterances

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

“US Remains a Strong Ally of Liberia”: US Ambassador to UN Assures

The Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, H.E. Ambassador Linda Thomas Greenfield, says the United States remains a strong ally of the Permanent Missions of the United States and Liberia can further strengthen existing relations to promote shared values and interests in addressing global issues at the United Nations.

the world is closely watching the electoral process.

In response, Ambassador Fyneah assured that H.E. Dr. George Manneh Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia, was committed to ensuring a peaceful, democratic, and violent-free election, citing the Farmington Declaration as an example. “The Declaration signifies political parties’ commitment and readiness to pursue the path of peaceful, free, fair, transparent, inclusive and credible democratic elections.” Amb. Fyneah emphasized.

Noting the challenge of funding and other resources, the Liberian Envoy stressed the need for tangible support from friendly countries toward the national electoral process, the first since the official withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Liberia.

Ambassador Fyneah also spoke of Liberia’s quest to vie for positions in the international system and informed of candidatures to the International Maritime Organization Category A and UNESCO Executive Board in 2023 and the non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the term 2026-2027. She expressed the hope that the United States would support Liberia’s candidatures.

Responding to the request, Ambassador Greenfield expressed optimism over Africa’s endorsement of Liberia’s candidature for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council and again assured that the United States will remain an ally to Liberia in the process.



Ambassadors Fyneah and Greenfield

Liberia and stands ready to further enhance the collaboration with Liberia, especially at the United Nations.

Ambassador Greenfield gave the assurance on Wednesday, April 18, 2023, during a courtesy meeting with H.E. Ambassador Sarah Safyn Fyneah, Permanent Representative of Liberia to the United Nations.

Ambassador Greenfield expressed the hope that the

She used the meeting to thank Liberia for its position on the war in Ukraine, and its statement and support during the recent vote on United Nations General Assembly resolution commemorating one year since Russia invaded Ukraine.

On the upcoming national elections in Liberia, Ambassador Greenfield alluded to the crucial nature of the presidential and legislative elections and cautioned that

‘Liberia is going down the drain’

- PYJ

By Ethel A Tweh

Nimba county Senator Prince Y. Johnson says Liberia is going down the drain.

Speaking on Spoon Talk recently, Senator Johnson suggested that the opposition here needs to unite to get the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)-led government from power.

“We put the country first, and we are not anxious for position. We have problems and those problems are massive corruption, ritualism, among others,” said Senator Johnson.

The Nimba Senator said any opposition candidate who goes for second round against President Weah would be supported. He believes that the aim of the opposition is to

get President Weah out of power and make him a one-term president.

According to him, the Movement for Democracy and Reconstruction (MDR) is working with the Unity Party, and whosoever Joseph Boakai chooses to be his runningmate will receive the support of the

MDR.

He noted that the MDR is willing to support presidential hopeful Alexander Cummings if he goes for second round with President Weah.

Additionally, he said the MDR is willing to support former Vice President

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



Sen. Johnson

Conflicting views emerge over sodomized woman’s death

-As family members grieve

Grieving family members of a 25-year-old mother of five identified as Princess Winny, who was reportedly sodomized to death last week allegedly by her boyfriend await police forensic report amidst conflicting views as to what may have killed her.

The lifeless body of Princess was discovered last week amid reports that she was sodomized by a man believed to be her boyfriend-one Price Kesselly, a wheelbarrow operator.

Princess, the mother of four girls, and one boy; “Patience, Ruth, Helen, Nathaline, and Michael with different fathers reportedly succumbed to death, in Weh Town, old Gobachop Community in Red light, just few steps away from a Poultry, where she was said to have lied down while experiencing severe pains before her demise.

or contrite banned substance). But I don’t know how she died. All I can tell you [is that] it is sorrowful,” Ansu explained.

“We woke up and heard the news she has died, and the wheelbarrow nigger had sex [with her] in her anus”, Gaye noted.

Massa, a friend of the deceased, mournfully told this paper that her buddy had complained of stomach pain after having sex with a nigga, who she described as Princess’ preferred right-hand costumer or boyfriend “(Prince)”.

Massa explained that as friends, they have advised Peter to take Princess to hospital after she had complained of stomach pains which may have started a week before her death, but he declined to heed their advice.

She alleged that he informed them that he was looking for money but denied having anus sex



Lifeless body of Princess Winny

The deceased was alleged to be a commercial sex worker, according to some residents in the area. Some told the New Dawn newspaper in a follow-up to what may have caused her death that the late Princess was excessively drinking and taking in narcotic substances as well.

Some say the intake of hard liquor and narcotic substances may have been the cause of the illness which eventually led to her death.

Ansu Gaye, a disadvantaged youth in the area who took charge of Princess’ remains while awaiting the deceased’s family’s arrival told the NewDawn newspaper that he knew the deceased as a sex- worker.

He claimed that she used to hustle, leaving her Soul Clinic residence for Red-light in search of survival.

Speaking in a Liberian parlance Gaye narrated: “You know, Princess that woman who used to come hustle here and all of us used to get charged (a Liberia way of saying to get drunk through liquor

with the deceased.

Massa recalled that the late Princess started complaining of stomach pain on April 16th, 2023. According to Massa, Princess had informed them that Prince has had anus sex with her a night before the pains started.

“It was early on the morning of April 21st, when her condition got worse, that how they decided to pressure Prince to cater to their friend. At the time, he started to spin around for money to attend to her, and out of sudden, she died”, a friend added.

According to the Chairman of the Weh Town, old-Gobachop Community, Mr. Cyrus M. Sayeh, the late Princess Winny, was a street girl, who frequently used to visit the community.

He said it was almost like she was residing in the area, because there she has most of her friends, and they were all engaged in alcoholic drinking most often, especially King-juice (unrefined gem).

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Français

Cummings promet de soutenir Boakai s'il arrive au second tour de l'élection présidentielle

Le « porte-drapeau » de la Collaboration des partis politiques (CPP), M. Alexander B. Cummings, a promis de soutenir l'ancien vice-président Joseph Boakai si ce dernier atteint le second tour de l'élection

travailler avec lui une fois qu'il reviendra », a déclaré M. Cummings jeudi lors d'une réunion à la mairie de New Kru Town.

Il a poursuivi : "Cependant, j'ai dit que lorsque nous irons au deuxième tour, et que je n'arrive pas au deuxième tour, je soutiendrai Boakai parce que je

deuxième tour, nous soutiendrons celui qui atteindra le deuxième tour car il sera meilleur", a souligné M. Cummings.

Entre-temps, il a souligné que si la CPP travaille plus dur et s'étend sur toute la longueur et la largeur du Libéria, le parti pourra se qualifier pour le second tour, espérant qu'à ce stade, l'opposition sera également en mesure de le soutenir.

M. Cummings, lors de sa réunion à l'hôtel de ville jeudi, a démenti les affirmations selon lesquelles l'opposition libérienne est faible. Il a déclaré que peu importe ce que beaucoup pensent de l'opposition, ils veilleront à ce que le Libéria obtienne le meilleur en 2023.

Il a déclaré que le pays est en marche arrière sous l'administration actuelle, ajoutant que la pauvreté dans le pays a atteint son zénith par rapport à il y a 5 ans.

Il accuse le pouvoir actuel d'avoir mal géré, détourné et volé les ressources énormes dont dispose le pays. C'est ce qu'il a promis de changer et d'établir des normes.

Les Libériens se rendront aux urnes en octobre à l'élection présidentielle qui opposera le président sortant Weah à des candidats de

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 09



présidentielle de cette année.

« Je n'ai rien contre l'ancien vice-président Joseph Nyumah Boakai. En fait, c'est nous qui avons appelé à l'unité de l'opposition. De plus, ce n'est pas moi qui ai quitté la CPP, c'est Boakai. Et donc, nous sommes ouverts et disposés à

crois qu'il fera mieux que le président George Weah. C'est mon avis, et je vais dire à tous mes militants que si je n'arrive pas au second tour, je soutiendrai le candidat de l'opposition", a dit M. Cummings.

"Moi, Alexander B. Cummings, leader politique de la CPP et de l'ANC, dans le cas probable où nous n'atteindrons pas le

La CEDEAO signe un accord de subvention de 1,3 million d'euros

Dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du Programme Agroécologie de la CEDEAO cofinancé par l'Union Européenne et l'Agence Française de Développement, le Président de la Commission de la CEDEAO, S.E. le Dr Omar Alieu Touray a signé

des accords de subvention avec 15 centres de formation pour renforcer les capacités en agroécologie dans les États membres. Le budget total des conventions de subvention financées par l'Union européenne est de 1 320 784,43 € représentant environ 88 000 € par centre et pour une durée moyenne de 18 mois visant à

former 12 000 jeunes de la Région.

Le but de chaque subvention est d'établir le cadre de collaboration entre la CEDEAO et le Centre bénéficiaire pour la mise en œuvre des activités du Programme en Afrique de

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 09



Éditorial

L'augmentation des cas d'avortement au Libéria est inquiétante

L'avortement est illégal au Libéria, mais selon une étude, près de 40 000 avortements ont lieu dans le pays par an, détruisant des vies innocentes. Cette tendance devrait attirer immédiatement l'attention du gouvernement, des militants des droits et des institutions religieuses, car ce sont des meurtres qui se commettent.

Selon l'étude nationale sur l'avortement au Libéria, en moyenne 38 779 avortements ont lieu au Libéria chaque année, c'est-à-dire 30 femmes âgées de 15 à 45 ans sur 1 000 avorte chaque année.

« Le taux d'avortement n'est pas homogène. Il varie selon les régions. Le centre-nord du pays a le taux d'avortement le plus bas (6,6 sur 1000), tandis que le centre-sud a le taux le plus élevé (49,7/1000). En outre, 14 555 femmes ont reçu des soins pour des complications liées à l'avortement dans les établissements. 67% ont eu lieu dans des établissements publics et 74% dans des établissements de niveau primaire », indique le rapport.

L'étude conclut que l'avortement provoqué est courant dans le pays, la plupart des cas étant liés à des grossesses non désirées.

Quelque chose semble manquer ici. Il semble y avoir une éducation limitée sur les rapports sexuels précoces et les risques associés. Les écoles, les églises et les mosquées et les maisons, sans oublier les hôpitaux et les établissements de santé ne semblent pas jouer leur rôle.

La science reproductive doit être enseignée dans les écoles et les institutions religieuses à travers le pays pour résoudre le problème des grossesses non désirées qui, selon le rapport, est à l'origine de la prévalence des avortements dans la société.

Le rapport met l'accent sur la diffusion et la mise en œuvre complètes de la loi révisée sur la santé publique du Libéria dans toutes les communautés, les centres de santé avec la participation des décideurs politiques pour assurer l'éducation et la sensibilisation de la communauté sur le danger de l'avortement à risque, tout en tenant compte du statut juridique existant de l'avortement et du point d'accès actuel.

Les parents et les tuteurs ont leur part de responsabilité dans cette pratique non autorisée car il semble que la discipline a été jetée par la fenêtre et que les enfants, filles et garçons, sont laissés à eux-mêmes pour expérimenter sexuellement ou pratiquer des relations sexuelles précoces et incontrôlées. N'oubliez pas que la famille est la première cellule de la société, et si la discipline y est compromise, la société perd l'équilibre.

En bref, il nous faut limiter le nombre de grossesses non désirées grâce à une éducation vigoureuse et soutenue dans tous les secteurs de la société afin d'inverser la tendance.

Cela nécessite le soutien du gouvernement, en collaboration avec des partenaires. Plus tôt nous commencerons, mieux ce sera pour notre population, car le rapport n'a pas révélé le nombre de décès survenus lors de ces avortements.

Français

Cummings promet de soutenir Boakai

l'opposition bien aguerris dont l'ancien vice-président Boakai et l'ancien directeur de Coca-Cola pour l'Afrique Cummings et plusieurs autres candidats.

Les appels à une opposition unie pour battre le parti au pouvoir dirigé par l'icône du football George Weah se multiplient. L'on veut que Boakai et Cummings se mettent ensemble pour présenter un front commun, un seul ticket à la prochaine présidentielle. Les deux hommes faisaient partie de la Collaboration des partis

politiques, une coalition de l'opposition. Ils sont tombés en disgrâce dans une affaire de falsification des textes de la coalition.

Le fossé entre les deux s'élargit lorsque l'ancien vice-président a témoigné à charge contre M. Cummings lors du procès dans la même affaire, qui a été par la suite abandonnée pour manque de preuves suffisantes.

L'affaire est née d'une allégation déposée l'homme d'affaires Benoni Urey accusant M. Cummings d'avoir falsifié sa signature sur un document-cadre de la CPP.

La CEDEAO signe un accord

L'Ouest avec l'objectif général de construire le système des ressources humaines et respectueux de l'environnement qui soutiendra et augmentera la productivité agricole et créera une société rurale résiliente. Un centre de formation a été sélectionné dans chacun des 15 États membres de la CEDEAO à l'issue d'un processus de consultation et d'évaluation.

En soutenant les centres à travers les accords, la CEDEAO cherche à améliorer la qualité de la formation et le développement des capacités des centres sur des questions d'actualité liées à l'agroécologie et à augmenter le nombre annuel de personnes formées en agroécologie. L'objectif du Programme est de former environ 12000 jeunes d'ici 2024 en agroécologie dans la région.

Plus spécifiquement, l'objectif de l'appui est de contribuer au renforcement des capacités de formation des centres dans (i) la promotion de systèmes de formation de qualité intégrant l'application d'enseignements théoriques et pratiques sur les techniques agroécologiques et les bonnes pratiques en fonction du milieu, (ii) l'augmentation du nombre de jeunes formés, notamment ruraux, et (iii) leur mise en réseau dans la durée, (iv) faciliter leur mise en relation avec des organismes d'accompagnement/parten

aires pour un éventuel financement dans la mise à l'échelle des pratiques agroécologiques.

L'appui de la CEDEAO aux centres de formation s'inscrit dans l'objectif du Programme de faciliter la mise en réseau et la diffusion des expériences pilotes et des approches prometteuses en agroécologie (avec le Centre Songhaï au Bénin et le Centre CIDAP au Togo comme centres de référence) dans les autres pays de la sous-région, notamment au Sahel.

Pour rappel, le Programme Agroécologie de la CEDEAO vise à stimuler le développement de pratiques innovantes optimisant la mobilisation des processus écologiques dans le domaine des productions agro-sylvo-pastorales et halieutiques de l'espace CEDEAO en accompagnant les exploitations familiales vers une transition agroécologique qui leur permette de concilier performance économique, sécurité alimentaire, préservation de l'environnement et santé des populations.

Doté d'un budget total de 16,2 millions d'euros, il est composé de deux projets, à savoir le Projet d'Appui à la Transition Agroécologique en Afrique de l'Ouest (PATAE), financé par l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD) à hauteur de 8 millions d'euros et le Projet d'Appui à la Diffusion et Mise en œuvre des Bonnes Pratiques d'Intensification Agricole Durable (PAIAD) financé par l'Union Européenne à hauteur de 8,2 millions d'euros. Il couvre les 15 États membres de la CEDEAO et devrait se terminer en 2024.

Sénégal: Macky Sall et Idrissa Seck s'expriment en marge de la fête de la Korité



Le Sénégal fête la Korité, la fin du ramadan. Deux figures centrales de la politique sénégalaise se sont exprimées en marge des festivités : le président Macky Sall dans une interview à la radio et son désormais ancien allié Idrissa Seck. Ce dernier a confirmé sa rupture politique avec le président. Interrogé sur la question d'un troisième mandat, Macky Sall a une nouvelle fois refusé de trancher. « Je comprends l'inquiétude des Sénégalais, mais le moment viendra, c'est pour bientôt », a-t-il affirmé dans une interview sur la radio privée RFM. Il a évoqué beaucoup de sujets économiques : coût de la vie, souveraineté alimentaire, exploitation du gaz et du pétrole qui doit commencer en fin d'année...

Le président est aussi revenu sur le contexte politique du moment. Interrogé sur les restrictions de libertés dénoncées par plusieurs ONG, il a répondu : « Il n'y a pas de détenus politiques au Sénégal ». Selon lui, les personnes emprisonnées ont enfreint les règles ou commis des actes de violence. Sur le sujet des accusations d'ingérence dans la justice pour écarter des rivaux politiques, Macky Sall a assuré que les pouvoirs restaient bien séparés.

De son côté, le président du Conseil économique, social et environnemental, Idrissa Seck a officialisé la fin de son alliance avec le président de la République lors d'une

conférence de presse cet après-midi. Il a aussi confirmé sa candidature à l'élection présidentielle de 2024. Il quitte donc officiellement la coalition au pouvoir Benno Bokk Yakaar ainsi que son poste au Conseil économique, social et environnemental.

Les ministres de son parti Rewmi, aux sports et à l'élevage, devraient, eux aussi, démissionner. L'ancien opposant, arrivé 2e à l'élection de 2019, avait rejoint le camp du président Macky Sall, en 2020. Idrissa Seck est désormais vent debout contre un troisième mandat de son ancien allié.

Les vœux de Karim Wade et d'Ousmane Sonko

L'opposant en exil Karim Wade, fils de l'ancien président Abdoulaye Wade, a transmis ses vœux de Korité dans une déclaration écrite depuis Doha. Il dit qu'il a « trouvé la force de pardonner à ceux qui m'ont fait du mal ». « Bien qu'ayant été l'homme politique le plus calomnié dans l'histoire du Sénégal, écrit-il, injustement emprisonné et contraint à l'exil loin de mon pays, des miens, des personnes qui me sont chères et de ma famille politique, je n'ai aucun ressentiment à l'égard de qui ce soit. » Karim Wade indique qu'il « regarde maintenant vers l'avenir ».

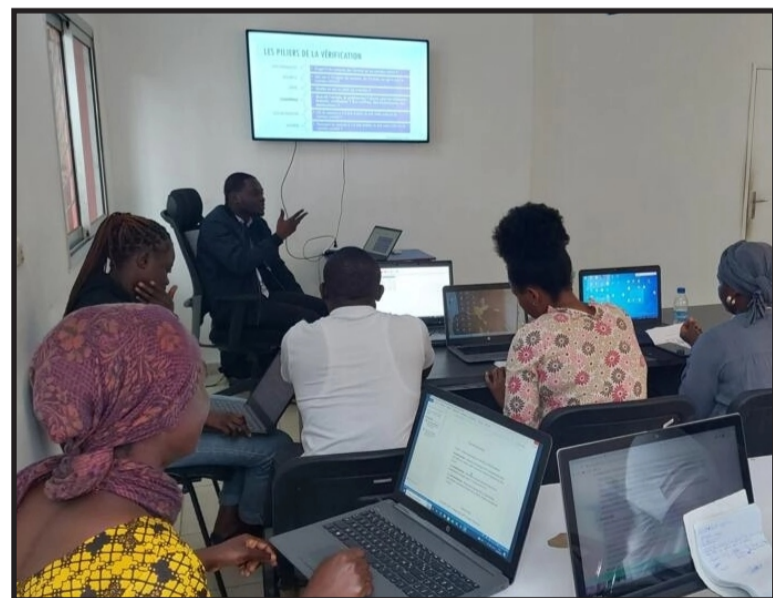
Côte d'Ivoire: une école pour détecter les fausses informations et vérifier les faits

Comment lutter contre les discours de haine et les fausses informations ? Une école dédiée au « fact checking » - la vérification des faits - a ouvert ses portes en début d'année à Abidjan. Cette école accueille surtout des jeunes de moins de 35 ans qui ont appétence pour les réseaux sociaux et le numérique.

L'enseignement est gratuit et se compose de plusieurs sessions de quelques semaines. RFI a rencontré la première promotion de cette école, située dans le quartier Angré Château, à Abidjan.

Dans une petite salle de classe, des étudiants travaillent en binôme, les yeux scotchés sur leurs ordinateurs, tout en pianotant sur leurs téléphones, pour certains. Chaque équipe travaille sur une image ou une vidéo et doit en analyser ses sources.

Parmi les élèves, Audrey Doukaga, étudiante en journalisme : « On avait des outils, mais on ne savait pas forcément faire de la recherche. Mais avec cette formation, j'ai appris, en peu de temps, beaucoup de choses par rapport à la recherche d'informations. »



Vingt-cinq élèves participent à cette formation qui met l'accent sur la théorie pour mieux comprendre ce qu'est une information. On leur donne aussi des astuces pour mieux cerner la localisation d'une image véhiculée sur les réseaux sociaux.

Des outils qui leur permettent d'acquérir un esprit critique, selon Ange Cyntiche, une étudiante en deuxième année de communication digitale : « On nous apprend ici que tout n'est pas information. Si on parle d'information, c'est que c'est quelque chose qui a déjà été vérifié, avant d'être distillé.

Mais on parle beaucoup de désordre informationnel sur le digital, et nous sommes vraiment exposés à cela, nous qui sommes nés sous l'ère digitalisée. »

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Power theft on the rise in Weh Town, Gobachop Community

By Emmanuel Wise Jipoh

The Chairman of the Weh Town - Gobachop Community in Red Light, Paynesville, Mr. Cyrus M. Sayeh has alarmed rising power theft in his community.

through the LEC being undermined by individuals he described as witchcraft engaging in illegal connections or stealing of current.

He said at night in the Weh Town- Gobachop Community, two men purported to be employees of LEC only identified as P-40 and ED

homes of their clients. He also claimed that there are other homes enjoying illegal connections without meters.

"We no longer sleep during night hours. These so-called LEC men, only work at night, and cut people's wires, while they connect other residents, who are far from the community, just to collect little income," he said.

Mr. Sayeh appreciated the intervention of the Zone Five detachment of the Liberia National Police, "but said despite the effort of the Police, the men are still carrying on their scrappy ingenuity.

According to him, he wants the government to immediately step in to arrest those individuals and prosecute them while putting in stringent measures to curtail the stealing of electricity in the Country.

In November 2022, Stakeholders, and the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) launched the "Anti Power Theft Campaign" to combat power theft. The LEC has overly emphasized that power theft is a major driver of commercial losses at the company with an alarming sum of \$USD 46 million monthly.

The electricity company said such practice poses a serious problem in having the entity provide adequate services to its numerous customers. *-Edited by Othello B. Garblah*

NEC begins phase two of BVR in Maryland

By Patrick N. Mensah Maryland County

The National Elections Commission began Phase Two of the Biometric Voters Registration in Maryland and eight counties on Friday, April 21, as part of preparations for the October 10 polls.

The Phase Two BVR exercise is currently underway in Bong, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, Rivercess, River Gee, and Sinoe Counties respectively.

The process, however, started at a slow pace, especially in Maryland County with a few challenges. Turnout, as expected, has been low so far.

However, NEC workers also

said. "I think there was an issue with proper training" he stressed.

He lamented that NEC should have done better by ensuring that the first day of the BVR Phase Two exercise showcased good impression rather than discouraging citizens from turning out early.

"I can say to you for free that since this morning not up to 20 persons have registered. It is now 2 pm already and I have been here since the early hours of this morning. It is very slow and there are no lines for older people, pregnant women, or baby mothers. Such people should be given first preference in activities like this. But that is not the case here," he disclosed.

He argued that one person serving as registrar at a center with a number of people showing up to



Chairman of the Weh Town- Gobachop Community

He said the criminal activities of power theft are defrauding the Liberian Electricity Company (LEC) of needed revenue to improve electricity stability in the country.

The Weh Town-Gobachop Community is in Electoral District #5 in Montserrado County.

Mr. Sayeh said it is disheartening to see the effort of the Government

illegally cut electrical wires from the main Community Transformers and connect other people in nearby communities.

He named the Soul Clinic Community as one of the nearby communities that are heavily benefiting from the illegal connect activities of P-40 and ED.

He said both men usually bypassed the LEC meters and make direct connections to



arrived late at some centers and in some cases, took up to hours to set up – a situation that caused some people who had gathered very early in the morning to complete the process and return to their normal activities frowned upon.

This paper has visited several registration centers and observed some challenges that might hinder the successful implementation of the exercise if not addressed.

During our visit to these BVR centers in the County, this paper noticed that NEC's workers were seen struggling to secure enough energy supply from solar power to power their equipment, something which led to the registration starting very late at some centers.

At the Pleebo High School Center in Pleebo, it was observed that staff could not begin due to the wrong entrance of assigned staff information by the National Elections Commission. It took the intervention of their supervisor to sort things out.

Expressing his frustrations, Jacob Wleh said the situation was embarrassing because he left his house as early as 6:00 a.m. to register as soon as possible and go back to attend to his business but was accorded attention up until 2:00 PM.

"I am not happy at all. The process started very late," Wleh

register is not good, recommending that NEC allows two or more persons to serve as registrars.

Sources told the New Dawn that some of BVR materials arrived in the County very late, which made it very impossible for NEC's BVR staff to test the equipment ahead of time.

This paper also gathered from the social media page of the National Election Commission that their material has spent five days on the road from River Gee to Maryland.

NEC explained that though the process of the BVR started across the nine remaining counties as planned, transporting the equipment for the second phase took five days.

All trucks with the equipment left the NEC warehouse in Monrovia on 16 April 2023, on Sunday morning. However, the equipment to Maryland and River Gee reached their destinations on the same day the exercise was planned to have started on 21 April at 4 AM.

The drivers and NEC personnel spent five days on the road, sleeping on the trucks safeguarding the equipment, and doing their best to reach the destinations in time.

"We are all aware of the road conditions in this part of the country. I have been transporting different loads, but this time, it was special. I was worried about the security of the load, and we had to reach the destination in time for the second phase.

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'Liberia is going down

Joseph Nyumah Boakai if he goes second round against Mr. Weah.

Senator Johnson is supporting former Vice President Boakai's 2023 presidential bid. According to him, senators and members of the House of Representatives are unhappy with the CDC regime.

The Nimba senator explained that during former President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's regime, she opened

corridor for the legislative caucus to meet with her.

He said she knew that the people were thinking through their legislators, adding that since Mr. Weah became President, he decided to close all the corridors for them.

"We can't meet Mr. Weah, he pick and choose as to who to meet. He has his members at the House of Representatives that he meets at Jamaica resort, but the rest of the senators don't meet with him,"

Johnson complained.

"He isolates all of us, we don't meet him as a caucus, we cannot discuss anything [with] him about our respective counties."

PYJ insisted that Weah will lose in Nimba, Bong, Gbarpolu, River Gee and all over the place.

"I don't think he's going to win in Grand Gedeh that supposed to be his strong hold because the people are not happy at all."

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Cummings questions

using or implementing it," Cummings said.

"Also, because of the technical problem faced with the BVR, we saw how the first phase was conducted even to the point where vote-rich areas' population dropped."

The CPP standard bearer recommended that if the NEC will conduct free, fair, and transparent elections in October, it must be funded internationally and locally.

He recommended that the

NEC must be robust, effective, and efficient in the BVR process and disengage from any act of partisanship.

"I don't trust that this government will conduct a free, and fair election and so we need to monitor the election," he said.

Cummings said he has no problem if it is the will of the people to elect President George Manneh Weah and his CDC government for the second term.

But said the opposition needs to make sure that the will of the people is protected and guaranteed when the results are announced, and not someone's will.

"However, that is our fear that they will be announcing someone else's will and not the Liberian people's will. To use BVR in [the] national elections without testing it is bad and so they have to do more," he concluded.

'Forgive Boakai'

By Lincoln G. Peters

Long-standing Nimba County political godfather and Senator Prince Y. Johnson has appealed to former President Ellen Johnson-

support you can think of ... she also has a major role to play on October 10," said Johnson.

Amb. Boakai, Unity Party's standard bearer, served as former President Sirleaf's vice president throughout her two six years term.

whatever he may have done to you, I am opening the Holy Bible, the Lord's prayer, that we must forgive those who transgress against us if we want God to forgive us because every day we sin," Senator Johnson pleaded with Mrs.



Sen. Johnson

Former VP Boakai

Former Pres. Sirleaf

Sirleaf to forgive her former Vice President, Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai for any issue she has against him.

Speaking over the weekend via a telephone conversation on Spoon FM, Sen. Johnson said former President Johnson-Sirleaf has a major factor in the pending October 10 presidential and legislative elections.

Senator Johnson described former President Sirleaf as a serious factor in the 2023 elections, saying she will play a major role in the election of the country's next president.

"President Sirleaf is a major factor in this election. You just can't overlook her. She has all the international

But he failed to secure her support in his bid to succeed her in the 2017 presidential and legislative elections which incumbent President George Manneh Weah won.

Senator Johnson supported Mr. Weah in the 2017 elections, and it was also reported that Mrs. Sirleaf and her Unity Party loyalists backed Weah over Boakai.

There were claims that Baokai did not commit to protecting the former president and her interests.

"However, I am appealing to her to forgive the former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai for everything he did that you didn't support him in 2017. Please forgive him," Johnson continued.

"I am appealing that

Sirleaf.

In 2017, Senator Johnson said former President Sirleaf didn't help Amb. Boakai during the election.

He thinks it's now time that the bad blood and differences be put aside and they work together to have this done.

He suggested that "if we keep crossing our minds, the Lord will not hear us as stated in Isaiah 55:2."

"And so with that, I want you to forgive Amb. Boakai from whatever things you think he has done against you. He served you twelve years and so I think, I just think she was never receptive. I think if she forgives him and repents from sin, she will move forward," he concluded.

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Conflicting views emerge

Mr. Sayeh said few days before her death, Princess appeared to be deteriorating in her body from her physical appearance.

According to him, she seems to be appearing "pure-white, in body, almost like someone, who is sickly, and the too much alcohol "(King Juice)." Drinking may have caused draining in her body prior to her death, he said.

Chairman Sayeh, said at the time of her death, it was early Thursday Morning, April 21, when Community dwellers, drew his attention to Princess' condition.

He said he was informed of how she had been complaining of her Stomach and waist pains, and what they said she has told them, what has happened to her resulting in the pains she was going through at the moment.

Sayeh explained that when he got the story and heard a man believed to be her boyfriend, may have condomized her, he requested the presence of the boyfriend "(Prince Kesselley)".

He narrated that Prince attested that Princess' was his girlfriend, but couldn't admit to the allegation of homosexuality, but confirmed he observed that Princess was sick, and was running after money to get her medications. He denied having intercourse with her because of her deteriorating condition.

Mr. Sayeh said because of the condition of the late Princess, before her death, he prevailed on Prince Kesselley to hurry up and find some money to get Princess medications, but while in the process, Princess pass-off, behind his back.

Sayeh said he managed to apprehend (Mr. Kessely) and

took him to the nearby Zone- 5, Police depot in the community for further investigation.

He lamented that family members, who came to take delivery of the body had informed him that their daughter has been sick and was taken to a series of hospitals, coupled with her unwanted street life, which the family had constantly frowned on.

Mr. Sayeh indicated that the parents, upon their arrival on the scene told him they wanted to take delivery of their daughter's body because it was strange to their ears that the deceased was condomized.

All they knew was she had been sick, loves Streetlife, and has been taken away from a series of gaps and ghettos in and around the Soul Clinic Community before she finally flew home and began living in the street, and they became restless of her attitude.

ExxonMobil eyes four offshore blocks in Liberia

LPRA receives pre-application

The Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority (LPRA) has announced that it has received pre-qualification application from ExxonMobil for four offshore blocks in Liberia.

Recently, ExxonMobil expressed interest in Blocks 15, 16, 22 and 24 within the Liberia Basin and the company has now officially applied to be pre-qualified to negotiate for the Blocks.

The LPRA is currently reviewing ExxonMobil's application and when the company has been pre-qualified, the Authority will invite them to negotiate a Petroleum Sharing Agreement (PSC) for the Blocks.

The Direct Negotiation process is framed through a 5-phase process including prequalification as outlined in the information package located on LPRA website (www.lpra.gov.lr). Interested

the applicants about the successful completion of each phase and approvals and requests to move to the next phase will be expressly communicated to the applicants.

ExxonMobil is one of the world's largest publicly traded international oil and gas companies. The company has a previous exploration history in Liberia. In 2013 ExxonMobil acquired petroleum rights on the then Block- 13 and drilled the Mesurado-1 Well in 2016.

It may be recalled that in 2021 the Government of Liberia through the LPRA announced its intension to open 33 offshore Blocks in the Harper and Liberia Basin for Direct negotiation. The Government's decision to offer blocks through direct negotiations was anchored on many significant factors including the investment climate, the latent impact of the energy transition, COVID-19 and its cascading effect on the sector, but also a developing investor



investors are required to satisfactorily complete each phase before transitioning to the next phase. LPRA will notify

appetite for frontier basins and the current position of Liberia within the oil and gas value chain.

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Chief Imam warns

from some members of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) have been very worrisome.

He urged officers of the AFL to be cognizant of their constitutional responsibility, be on the side of the people, and be the defenders of Liberia's democracy.

Imam Krayee admonished the AFL that it cannot force people to accept fraud.

He said it was not possible in 1985, and it will not be possible today.

Krayee urged the army to perform to the expectations of the people in keeping with the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia.

"We have to go forward, and for that to happen, we have to elect the right kind of

leadership. When you vote, use conscience, not your tribe," Imam Krayee cautioned Liberians.

"Vote what is right for Liberia. Vote to elect competent leaders. Vote to ensure a progressive leadership in Liberia," he told the congregation.

On Monday, 18 April 2023, the NEC released preliminary results from the just-ended Phase One of the BVR exercise conducted in six counties, indicating that over 1.4 million people had so far registered to vote in the scheduled October 10 presidential and legislative elections.

Phase two of the BVR exercise in the remaining 9 counties, Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Rivercess, Sinoe, Grand Kru, and Maryland Counties was scheduled to kick off on 21 April 2023.

Cummings questions NEC's integrity

- To conduct free and fair elections

By Lincoln G. Peters
Liberian opposition leader Alexander B. Cummings has questioned the integrity of the National Elections Commission (NEC) to conduct a free, fair, and transparent

Development Forum over the weekend, Mr. Cummings said he is concerned about the credibility and integrity of the NEC to conduct transparent elections.

He is one of several opposition leaders seeking to battle incumbent President

Mr. Cummings alleged that the NEC has introduced new technology to the country's electoral system without practical testing and evaluation before integrating it into the system.

He also alleged that inadequate funding from the government to the NEC is an issue that questions the integrity and credibility of the NEC to conduct free and fair elections.

"And so to answer the question about trust in the NEC to conduct free and fair elections, I will say to you that we have some serious concerns about whether [the] elections will be free, fair, and transparent," said Mr. Cummings.

"We also have [a] very serious concern about the funding of the NEC and the introduction of the Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) process without testing the technology," Mr. Cummings added.

He noted that for the first time Liberia is using the BVR process with no practice and rehearsal done before implementing it.

"Nowhere in the world you will use new technology without testing it first before



ANC leader Mr. Cummings

election this October. Cummings is the head of the opposition Collaboration Political Parties (CPP) which is made up of the Alternative National Congress (ANC) and the crisis-struck Liberty Party (LP).

George Manneh Weah for the presidency during the presidential and legislative elections this October.

He said he does not trust that the NEC can conduct a free and fair election under the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) regime because the ruling party is desperate to stay in power.

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