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# 'Insufficient centers may impact BVR outcome'

Senate President Pro-Tempore Albert Chie

**-Chie**



# Cummings supports division of LP

ANC leader Mr. Cummings



LP leader Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence

# -Nyonblee explains her refusal for Cummings VP slot

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# Continental News

## South Africa Military Delegation in Russia to Discuss Combat Readiness

South Africa's main opposition party is demanding to know why there is a high-level

dilemma," said Marais. "The visit is the latest in a string where the South African government clearly and unashamedly demonstrates its support for Russia."

that they can zoom into any port or airport or even battlefield and tell you exactly what color shirt and pants you are wearing so I assume that they have got their own intelligence that can be used to see from above."

Marais says the unconfirmed rumors that ammunition was taken onto the Lady R seem plausible because the Russian military is struggling in Ukraine.

"What we know is what has been reported that they are in dire straits in terms of ammunition," said Marais. "But that is why we need to establish and know what they have loaded. We know it was not consumables like apples and pears."

In WhatsApp messages, Ukraine's Ambassador to South Africa Liubov Abravитova wrote that it is "disturbing" how Russia is eager to make South Africa appear to be on its side and even more disturbing that South Africa is not postponing engagements such as the delegation's trip to Moscow.

Referring to a statement by South Africa's military that the visit to Moscow was planned well in advance, Abravитova said previously made agreements between Russia and South Africa "cannot justify the intensification of military contacts with the country that violates all possible rules of international law and U.N. Charter."VOA



Russian President Vladimir Putin and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa speak during a Russia-Africa

defense delegation in Moscow discussing increased cooperation and combat readiness. The news comes just days after the U.S. ambassador accused South Africa of selling weapons to Russia in violation of its claims of non-alignment in Moscow's war on Ukraine.

U.S. Ambassador to South Africa Reuben Brigety made headlines last week when he said he would bet his life that South Africa had supplied arms to Russia. Marais, who is the shadow minister for defense and military veterans, says the Democratic Alliance has intelligence on what Brigety referred to. He says something worthy of being guarded by men in uniform was loaded onto a Russian cargo ship, the Lady R, when it was docked at Simon's Town Naval Base in December.

"We also know that the U.S. is probably the most advanced in terms of observation technology and specifically with regard to satellites," said Marais. "We know

The Democratic Alliance's spokesperson on defense and lawmaker Kobus Marais, says the visit led by the chief of the South African army, Lieutenant General Lawrence Mbatia was unannounced.

"This once again demonstrates the ANC government's insensitivity to our diplomatic and trade

## Ghanaian influencer charged in US over romance scam

Influential Ghanaian musician and socialite Mona Faiz Montrage, popularly known as Haja4Real, has been extradited to the US and charged with a \$2m (\$1.6m) romance scam. The criminal enterprise she allegedly belonged to targeted lonely American men and women - and in one instance faked married to one victim to further her scheme.

sentences of five and 10 years respectively. The 30-year-old was arrested on 10 November last year in the UK then extradited to the US on Friday. She pleaded not guilty to all charges when she appeared before a judge on Monday. US authorities have expressed concern about romance scams targeting older

people and expressed the need to hold perpetrators to account. Montrage is alleged to have been part of a criminal enterprise in West Africa that defrauded companies and individuals, including romance scams in the US between 2013 and 2019. BBC

The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) in a statement indicated she had been charged with several counts, including conspiracy to commit fraud and money laundering. She could receive a maximum sentence of 20 years in jail for each count if found guilty. She was also charged with conspiracy to receive and the receipt of stolen money, which carry maximum



Montrage is alleged to have been part of a criminal enterprise in West Africa

## Namibia Court Endorses Recognizing Same-Sex Marriage From Other Countries

The Supreme Court of Namibia has ruled in favor of recognizing same-sex marriages from other countries, making Namibia only the second nation on the continent to do so after South Africa.

A small group of LGBTQ activists gathered at Namibia's Supreme Court Tuesday where justices ruled in a 4 to 1 vote that Namibians married to foreign nationals in foreign jurisdictions must be recognized as any other couple within the country.

One of the judges, JA Mainga, dissented on the basis that the laws of Namibia do not recognize same-sex relationships. The other four judges, however, ruled that not recognizing same-sex couples infringes on their rights to dignity and equality.

case, which was dismissed in March, a Mexican national and his Namibian partner asked the top court to grant Namibian citizenship to their child, conceived through surrogacy in South Africa. The Mexican national in that case, Guillermo Delgado, spoke to VOA outside the Supreme Court on Tuesday.

"Our case is very similar and this represents a direct victory also for us, recognition that for marriage and our dependents," said Delgado. Linda Baumann of the Diverse Women's Organization said this judgment will help homosexual couples get access to the same services as heterosexual couples. Hypothetically speaking, she said, as a lesbian woman she could bequeath her estate to her lesbian partner when she dies, or she might be able to buy a house together with a same-sex spouse if the court gave rights to same-sex couples in all spheres of society.

She cautioned that this is just a



Namibian citizen Phillip Luhl holds one of his twin daughters as he speaks to his Mexican husband Guillermo

VOA spoke to the legal counsel of the two same-sex couples, Carli Schickerling, who appealed an earlier judgement of the High Court of Namibia not to recognize their same-sex marriages.

"Today after a six-year battle, we finally won and the court has ruled that the Ministry of Home Affairs has to recognize these marriages by foreign spouses to Namibian spouses," said Schickerling.

Over the past few months, the Supreme Court of Namibia has been hearing similar cases that deal with the subject of homosexuality.

In one case, a Namibian citizen, Friedel Dausab, is asking for the repeal of an anti-sodomy law. In another

ruling. "It is important to understand the status of this case; it's couples that are coming back to this country to claim their right to equality, their right to dignity and their right to family. To answer that question about same-sex marriages, I believe that a lot of LGBTQ people in this country, we experience a number of inequalities in service, in benefits, in having the right to say something over your partner," said Baumann.

While over 30 African countries have laws prohibiting same-sex relationships, Namibia, Botswana and South Africa have taken a different stance. Many gay Namibian couples now get married in South Africa, and after Tuesday's ruling, activists are asking whether gay couples should have the right to get married in Namibia as well. VOA



# EDITORIAL

## Skyrocketing exchange rate is unbearable

Liberians are experiencing a sudden rise in the exchange rate between the United States Dollar and the Liberian Dollar with US\$1.00 costing as much as 168 to 170 Liberian Dollars in just a month from LRD150.

The sudden rise in the exchange rate is creating corresponding increases in prices of basic commodities especially food, petroleum and transportation, imposing serious constraints on ordinary citizens.

Presidential hopeful Cllr. Tiawan Saye Gongloe, recently alarmed here about the rapid rise in the exchange rate, which he attributes to uncontrollable infusion of Liberian Dollars into the market by the ruling CDC-led government to attract voters for the re-election of President George Manneh Weah.

“They are dumping the Liberian Dollars on the market and keeping the United States Dollars. They are saving the United States Dollars because they are not too sure of winning [the] elections”, Cllr. Gongloe explained.

Members of the ruling establishment currently in government and out of government that vying for public officials are dishing out huge amounts of Liberian Dollars to citizens across the country to solidify their chances for election and re-election with serious adverse consequences on the heavily import-reliant economy.

An economist and law professor, Cllr. Gongloe warned that ordinary Liberians are going to be pushed to extreme poverty and hardship as a result of what is happening in the economy with huge amounts of Liberian Dollars chasing few United States Dollars.

“Economically, what is happening now is terrible for Liberia. However, between now and the elections, lives [are] going to be much more difficult than Liberians had ever realized”, he said.

Even prior to the official start of campaign the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change is carrying series of political projects in several counties, including Lofa and Nimba to soften the ground and rally citizens’ support.

As experienced in both the 2017 presidential election and the 2020 Special Senatorial Election when ruling party candidates dished out millions of Liberian Dollars to communities and voters, and flooded the market, a similar replay is expected, as Liberians go to the polls on October 10.

We can but only join Cllr. Gongloe in warning fellow Liberians to tighten their belt and brace themselves for the negative economic consequences during and after the elections that they would have to face as a direct result of election spending though the election law of Liberia has a ceiling on campaign finance.

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# COMMENTARY

By Ayşe Zarakol

## Turkey’s Democratic Resilience

**C**AMBRIDGE - Turkey’s presidential and parliamentary elections on May 14 have been called the most important of the year. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) is trailing in polls behind his main opponent, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the leader of the Republican People’s Party (CHP) who is backed by a broad opposition alliance. If Erdoğan is defeated, the elections will have global significance, demonstrating that the erosion of democracies worldwide in recent years can be reversed - and that even firmly entrenched strongmen can be shown the door.

While other leaders cut from the same cloth, including former US President Donald Trump and former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, have also lost elections in recent years, the Turkish opposition faces a tougher task. The country’s slide towards full-blown authoritarianism is nearly complete. Erdoğan has been in power for more than 20 years - much longer than either Trump or Bolsonaro was - and has used this time to shape the state in his own image.

Erdoğan formally or informally controls all of Turkey’s political institutions, further centralizing an already-centralized state. There are hardly any checks on his executive presidency: the parliament is a rubber stamp, and the judiciary answers to him. The military is defanged; the police are loyal. His alliance with the far-right Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) means that he has a semi-organized civil militia at his disposal (the opposition suspects that such a group was involved in the stoning of Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu and his supporters at a campaign rally in Erzurum last Sunday). A nationwide network of cronies and political appointees feed on the regime’s corruption, with much to lose if Kılıçdaroğlu wins.

Erdoğan also maintains a firm grip on Turkey’s media. Most TV channels and print outlets run nonstop pro-AKP coverage, while opposition candidates must campaign via online interviews and social media. Selahattin Demirtaş, the erstwhile leader of the pro-Kurdish Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP), campaigns from prison.

Many international observers are understandably skeptical that the opposition will win or, rather, that Erdoğan will allow a loss. After all, leaders who amass so much power do not tend to give it up willingly. Opposition voters are being warned not to get their hopes up.

But such “realism” misses a key point: the fact that we are even speculating

about the possibility of Erdoğan’s ouster next Sunday (or later in the month, if the election goes to a run-off) is the result of the opposition bloc’s dogged refusal to give up hope. As Max Weber said in his 1919 lecture *Politics as a Vocation*, “man would not have attained the possible unless time and again he had reached out for the impossible.”

It is forgotten now, but a common complaint about pre-Erdoğan Turkey was that its citizens lacked a proper civic culture and understanding of democracy. It was said that Turks always looked to the armed forces to save them from political crises. Had this characterization been true, Turkey’s opposition would be as cowed as Russia’s by now. Yet here we are.

Regardless of the outcome on Sunday, Turkey’s democratic forces have truly proven their resilience. Most of the country’s opposition parties have united behind one presidential candidate, who has promised to restore the parliamentary system that Erdoğan overturned in 2017. Many journalists, politicians, and civil-society leaders have been imprisoned, yet others continue working. Many ordinary citizens have been detained on spurious charges of insulting Erdoğan or for their social-media posts, yet people continue criticizing the regime.

Individuals volunteer to monitor voting and protect ballot boxes. Civil-society groups organize buses to take those displaced by the recent earthquake back to the cities where they are registered to vote. At the heart of these efforts is the belief that no strongman is as strong as he seems in the face of determined opposition.

Moreover, those fighting for democracy in Turkey can rely only on themselves, not on the military - or even on the international community. The support Erdoğan receives from other autocratic leaders is more visible, but democratic governments have also given him free rein. Western leaders may complain about Erdoğan but are willing to make deals with him as needed, whether to reduce irregular migration or to restart Ukrainian grain exports. In some ways, an opposition victory would create more uncertainty for the West.

If the opposition wins more votes than Erdoğan, the credit will belong wholly to Turkey’s citizens. By standing up to an autocrat, they have shown, once again, that the demand for democracy is not confined to the West. No matter what happens on or after Sunday, their commitment is the best guarantee that democracy will prevail.



## OP-ED

By Jim O'Neill

# Sell in May and Go Away?

**L**ONDON - During my lengthy career in finance, I picked up several market heuristics that have generally proven more useful than not. Every January, for example, I remember the “five-day rule,” which holds that if the S&P 500’s accumulated performance is positive over the first five days of the new year, there is around an 80% probability that the overall market will end the year higher than where it started. So far, this analytical trick has worked pretty well, despite all of the world’s uncertainties.

With springtime comes a second rule of thumb: “Sell in May and go away” (and, for us Brits, “come back on St. Leger Day” - September 15). Though less statistically precise, this one has also often proven useful. If you are an investor - especially one who has had a good first four months of 2023 - you might want to bank your gains and sit on the sidelines until the fall, because there is a decent chance that markets will have declined in the intervening months.

Of course, there is no objective reason why either of these rules holds true. After all, equity markets historically tend to rally more than they fall, and they also generally outperform other financial markets - not to mention cash or fixed income - over time. Obviously, one should never let a rule of thumb override the fundamentals. Yet there are times when the fundamentals can become quite hazy, and there is good reason to think that we are in such a period right now.

Consider the latest round of monthly purchasing managers’ indices in globally important countries. Not only do they show continuing weakness in manufacturing; they also indicate that the global economy may technically be experiencing a manufacturing recession. At the same time, services indices remain strong and are even accelerating in some cases.

While some services-reliant economies (such as the United Kingdom) can cope relatively well with manufacturing weakness, it is very unlikely that these two indices would move in opposite directions for long. Service industries either will ultimately stimulate other forms of activity, or they will be dragged down by their own dependencies on other industries.

As usual, China offers an important window onto the global economy. Following the end of its zero-COVID policy late last year, the Chinese economy had a strong start to 2023, and forthcoming data will almost certainly show a robust year-on-year acceleration for many components of output and demand in April. But there are signs that the recovery’s momentum may be waning, and that various structural challenges are holding back activity. Moreover, inflation has not merely subsided, but has fallen so far as to raise concerns about deflation. Nor is China alone. Other important Asian economies, such as Japan, are also experiencing tame inflation, in stark contrast to the surging price levels seen in Western economies over the past year and a half.

Looking beyond Asia, I have been confounded by the inflation indicators that I tend to rely on most. For example, recent producer-price indices in the United States, along with some components of consumer prices, have shown clear signs of deceleration; and, as I have mentioned before, many global commodity prices are now much lower than they were a year ago. Sooner or later, these developments should feed into many producer and consumer prices. But the latest “core” inflation figures (excluding volatile food and energy prices) in the US, the UK, and the European Union have complicated the picture by revealing continuing strength in price pressures. And the University of Michigan’s closely watched five-year inflation expectations survey recently showed a notable rise to 3.2%, after having fallen to 2.9% in recent months.

Central bankers doubtless remain troubled by the situation. One hopes the most recent figures are just a one-off exception. But if they are not, the Federal Reserve Board will confront a very problematic situation.

The interest-rate outlook remains the elephant in the room. Right now, markets seem pretty convinced that most central banks are either “done” raising rates or close to it, and some are even anticipating rate cuts before the end of the year. That could well happen; but first, the inflation data would need to improve quite a bit. On the other hand, if current market expectations are forced to change, new rallies in equity markets will be harder to sustain, barring a significant acceleration in earnings.

Where does that leave us before the summer? On balance, I suspect that the inflation picture will continue to improve gradually. But if the Michigan survey’s findings about inflation expectations aren’t reversed, equity investors will have good reason to worry.

## OPINION

By William A. Haseltine

# Remembering the Pandemic

**F**AIRFIELD COUNTY, CONNECTICUT - President Joe Biden’s administration has officially ended the national health emergency in the United States, allowing the remaining pandemic restrictions to expire on May 11. Other countries have already taken similar steps, and more are expected to follow suit. With the World Health Organization no longer considering COVID-19 a global health emergency, it seems that the virus and its massive death toll will soon fade from memory, along with N95 masks and PCR tests. But this collective forgetting jeopardizes efforts to secure consistent funding for public health.

Our ability to forget something as catastrophic as a pandemic is partly a coping mechanism, reflecting the emotional immune system that enables us to move on with our daily lives. As devastating as the pandemic’s social and economic impact has been, it has left an indelible mark on only a relatively small subset of the population, including survivors of lost loved ones, health professionals and other frontline workers, the immunocompromised, and those experiencing long COVID or other related health issues.

While tragic events often inspire us to pursue reform, our willingness to act is often short-lived, making it difficult to affect lasting change. This pattern is particularly evident in the news coverage and Google search trends that follow tragedies such as mass shootings, tsunamis, and earthquakes, which typically show an initial surge of interest that gradually fades over time.

To create and retain memories, the human brain undergoes a complex process that involves multiple interrelated stages, such as encoding, consolidation, and retrieval. When presented with new information, our brains process it by modifying neurons in the hippocampus, a critical center for memory, along with other regions like the amygdala, which handles emotional memories. Together, these neurons form a physical representation of the memory called an engram.

A significant portion of the information we encounter can be lost unless it undergoes memory consolidation, which frequently occurs during sleep and helps to stabilize and retain memories in the long term. During this process, the hippocampus effectively “replays” the memory, which is then distributed to cortical neurons for extended storage. During the final stage, memory retrieval, the trace neurons within the hippocampus and cortex are reactivated.

Every day, we are bombarded with an overwhelming amount of information that our brains struggle to retain. Given that forgetting and remembering are inextricably linked, this “infodemic” further aggravates our tendency to forget. Moreover, the process by which our brains assess risk is deeply personal and influenced not just by data but also by our own biases and needs.

As COVID-19 fades from our collective consciousness, we are reminded why so many people were eager to forget the 1918 influenza pandemic and embrace the joys and risks of the Roaring Twenties. But collective amnesia threatens to leave us woefully unprepared for future airborne disease outbreaks, forcing us to re-learn fundamental lessons about the importance of masking, ventilation, and shifting activities outdoors to prevent transmission.

The 1918 pandemic infected a third of the world’s population and claimed more than 50 million lives, surpassing the combined military casualties of World Wars I and II. Yet, despite its enormous human toll, there are no permanent memorials or days of remembrance for its victims. Before 2020, if you asked people to name the deadliest event of the twentieth century, very few would have cited the virus. Only recently, historians such as Guy Beiner have begun to explore this pattern of forgetting. Without rituals of remembrance to commemorate the millions of lives lost to COVID-19, we risk perpetuating the cycle.

People often have a more positive view of the future than the past as a way of building psychological resilience. This future-oriented positivity bias arises because, unlike the unchangeable past, the future offers endless possibilities. But our tendency to look forward also impedes progress on issues like pandemic preparedness, as it leads us to believe we are better equipped than we are.

Numerous academic bodies, think tanks, public-health organizations, and governments have published detailed recommendations on how to improve pandemic preparedness, but there has been no coordinated and comprehensive effort to implement them. Three years after the start of the pandemic, we still lack clear explanations for why our public-health agencies are understaffed and underfunded, why supply chains failed, why COVID-19 misinformation was allowed to run rampant on social media platforms and cable news outlets, and why our public-health responses remain reactive rather than proactive.

To ensure that we are better prepared for future pandemics, prominent medical and scientific figures in the US have proposed creating a COVID-19 Pandemic National Task Force modeled after the 9/11 Commission, but proposals have languished in Congress. In the face of other crises, it seems that many would rather forget the destruction wrought on our societies by the pandemic and return to “normal.”

But as difficult as it may be to break the cycle of normalization that enables us to forget tragedies such as mass shootings and pandemics, it is necessary that we do. We must acknowledge how our biases endanger our lives and those of future generations. There are clear, evidence-based policy roadmaps that could help us reduce gun violence and improve pandemic preparedness, potentially saving countless lives and preventing immeasurable suffering. To implement these measures successfully, however, we must avoid the trap of division and distraction.

It has taken Ireland more than 150 years to build memorials and museums commemorating the impact of the Great Famine of the 1840s. We cannot afford to let the same happen with COVID-19. To ensure that we heed the lessons of the pandemic, we must memorialize its ongoing effects, enact days of remembrance, update school and university curricula, establish permanent museum exhibits, and build monuments. Our ability to remember the past could affect billions of lives in the future.





Harmonizing and Improving Statistics in West Africa Project (HISWAP)

P169265

**Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)**  
**Statistics House, Capitol Hill, P.O. Box 629, Monrovia, Liberia**



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT SELECTION)

Assignment Title: Hiring of an M & E Officer (Local Hire)

Reference No.: LR-LISGIS-341028-CS-INDV

The World Bank has committed to improving the statistical capacity of low-income countries. The Bank initially targeted for at least one household survey to be conducted every 3 years but in May of 2019 incorporated the regional project in order to strengthen the statistical systems of participating countries and regional bodies in Africa to produce, disseminate, and enhance the use of core economic and social statistics.

The Liberia component of the project is being implemented by the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS). The goal of the project is to strengthen the capacity of LISGIS and line ministries and agencies (MACs) to produce, disseminate, and enhance the use of core economic and social statistics in Liberia. LISGIS is thus seeking the services of an M&E Officer to provide support to the Project Management Team.

**The duration of the assignment is 12 months.**

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found at: [www.emansion.gov.lr](http://www.emansion.gov.lr)

The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services now invites eligible Individual Consultants ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are listed below.

The Consultant must have minimum qualification and experience as follows:

- A degree in management, Economics, Mathematics, Statistics, Development studies, the social sciences or other field related to Project Monitoring and Evaluations;
- At least three (3) years' experience as an M&E Officer on donor funded projects (specifically the World Bank) or NGOs;
- Knowledge/experience of the logical framework approach and other strategic planning approaches;
- Knowledge/experience of quantitative, qualitative and participatory M&E methods and approaches;
- Knowledge/experience of M&E planning and implementation; Information analysis and reporting
- Must be familiar with M & E guidelines, policies and procedures of multilateral Financial institutions (preferably the World Bank Group)
- Ability to find and communicate accurate information concerning processes, policies and procedures to Project stakeholders.
- Excellent skills in project management and communications in English, both written and oral, demonstrated in previous jobs
- project management and communications in English, both written and oral, demonstrated in previous jobs

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" July 1, 2016, Revised November 2017 and August 2018 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Individual Consultant Selection method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours, i.e. 0900 to 1600 hours GMT.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in written form to the address below via email Only (No Hand Delivery) with subject: "Re: Application - M & E Officer"

**Harmonizing and Improving Statistics in West Africa Project (HISWAP)**  
**Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)**  
**Statistics House, Capitol Hill, Monrovia, Liberia**  
**Attn: Alahaji S.M. Dukuly**  
**Acting Project Coordinator**  
**E-mail: [adukulyii@yahoo.com](mailto:adukulyii@yahoo.com)**  
**Cc: [mambog2005@gmail.com](mailto:mambog2005@gmail.com)**

**Deadline for Submission of expression of interest is midnight on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

# ON 2ND THOUGHTS



with Othello B. Garblah

## Beyond corruption within the judiciary

In his 2008 US\$1.4 Million corruption trial, former interim President Charles Gyude Bryant (late), in accusing the government of unfair trial said he was not being tried by "jurors of his peers."

From a legal perspective, a juror of one's peer is a jury whose members are from the same community as the person on trial.

It is also a way of getting a fair jury made up of men and women who could be considered peers of the person who is on trial. This helps in reducing the chances of bias among the jurors.

In the late Bryant's argument, members of the jury who were charged with responsibility of deciding whether, on the facts of the case, he was guilty or not guilty of the offense for which he was charged were men and women outside of his social circle and therefore, not qualified to try him.

In other words, they could not understand the intricacies of the matter at hand and therefore could not have handed down a fair and unbiased verdict in the trial.

The late Bryant's argument of not being tried by "jurors of his peers" is one of the fundamental problems facing the Liberian Justice System that is most often or not ignored by critics of the local justice system.

Human Rights reports on the Liberian Judiciary have remained focused on bribery and corruption within the local justice system and how the rich and powerful are able to manipulate the system to steer justice in their favor.

But what has not been mentioned beyond bribery and corruption, particularly in criminal trials is the role of jurors. An uninformed jury is totally not aware of the fundamentals of the case at hand and is unable to hand down a fair and unbiased verdict that could be considered a miscarriage of justice as well.

The argument here is that select individuals who are clothed with the authority to determine the factual questions and final judgment should have knowledge of the matter at trial and not just be hand-picked to sit on a juror panel.

From personal experience, it appears that some jurors are not just abreast of the charges or have no experience in such cases. In such situations, verdicts are most likely to be influenced by emotions, intimidation, etc.

When jurors are far from or not connected to the argument of the case at hand, they remained uninformed and have no idea about the factual question of the case at hand. Therefore, their verdict will not just be unfair and biased, but it will also compromise the entire trial.

This raises the question as to how jurors are selected to preside over jury trials here. In one particular case, I was told, the jurors were selected based on their college experiences and not their experiences on such matters.

Selecting a juror because he or she is a "college" graduate with no prior experience sitting on a jury panel to preside over a matter of national security speaks volumes.

In most jurisdictions, relevant life experiences as it relates to the case in question are considered an important aspect in selecting or de-selecting a potential juror.

Other things to consider could include but are not limited to the person's ability to withstand social pressure, legal opinions, ability to be impartial, etc. To select a group of individuals in the name of forming a jury panel is a mockery of the intent of the framers of the Constitution.

In the late Gyude Bryant trial, the Liberian Government lost the case following a series of prohibitions one of which was a writ of prohibition issued by the Supreme Court. Bryant's lawyers asked the Supreme Court to stop his prosecution on grounds that the late Bryant was a former head of state who brought peace to the country and could not be held for actions he took while he was in office. Well whether or not that was decided on merits or demerits, its left for the lawyers' to argue.



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Pro-temp Chie applauds successful BVR process

By Ethel A. Tweh

The President Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate, Grand Kru County Senator Albert T. Chie, describes the just-ended biometric voters registration exercise across the country as successful.

Senator Chie says recent legislative break afforded senators an opportunity to visit their constituents and

Legislature to NEC amid many equally important competing priorities.

He also lauds the Ministry of Justice and various security apparatus, including the Liberia National Police and the Liberia Immigration Service for ensuring a peaceful process.

"Nevertheless, the final results of the BVR process may not be what we anticipate in some of the counties due to the

assistance should take into consideration aspirations and real needs of the voting population. He stresses that over and over, citizens in rural Liberia had asked lawmakers to request NEC to create additional voting centers to enable them register and exercise their rights to vote, adding "Unfortunately, NEC informed us that it was unable to create additional voting centers due to financial constraints."

The Senate Pro-Tempore continues that these circumstances, may have a negative impact on the outcome of the BVR process.

He adds that despite improvements made in strengthening the electoral system through reforms, government engaged partners both locally and intentionally to consider contributing financially to buttress its efforts of increasing registration centers to enable easy access for citizens in rural parts to register without the torment of traveling far to locate centers. "Hopefully, said assistance will be considered to improve the democratic process and systems at NEC, especially with the pronouncement of millions being contributed to the electoral process by some of our partners through the UNDP and other international organizations." He expresses.

challenges of having limited centers far away from towns and villages; hence, the inability of many of our citizens to reach voting centers which in many instances are miles away, at times three to four hours walk." He says cognizant of elections being a nationally-owned process, efforts and contributions of Local and International Partners are also commendable in ensuring a successful election, but their



Senate President Pro-Tempore Albert Chie

participate in the BVR process in all fifteen counties.

Speaking Tuesday, 16 May at the opening of the 2nd segment of the 6th session of the 54th Legislature in the chambers of the Liberian Senate, Senator Chie thanked the National Elections Commission for overseeing the process, and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning for providing funds appropriated by the

## Diaspora Liberians want to vote in elections

By Lewis S. Teh

To enable diaspora Liberians vote in elections back home, the All Liberian Conference on Dual Citizenship (ALCOD) is urging the Government of Liberia through the National Elections Commission (NEC) to set up and implement electronic voting equipment at every Liberian foreign mission around the globe.

ALCOD Chairman, Mr. Alfred Sieh, who currently resides in the United States, stressed the importance of providing Liberians residing in the diaspora the opportunity to vote like their compatriots back home.

Speaking during an interview with reporters at the weekend in Monrovia, Mr. Sieh defended that this is necessary to put Liberia on par with her counterparts in the region and to cut down expenses incurred by Liberians, who normally return to the country to participate in elections because they don't have the

privilege vote abroad. He highlighted the constitutional obligation of all Liberians to participate in electoral processes, emphasizing the need for government to introduce measures aimed at affording citizens opportunity to easily vote wherever they reside.

He disclosed that ALCOD is currently in collaboration with diplomats and partners to ensure such call is heeded, saying ALCOD is committed to supporting the NEC in realizing this objective.

"By introducing electronic voting systems, Liberians residing outside the country will have the means to fulfill their civic duties and have a direct impact on the future of Liberia", he stressed.

Simultaneously, he noted that ALCOD is actively working towards bolstering the country's economy by establishing a Diaspora Bank.

Chairman Sieh explained that the Diaspora Bank will aim to provide financial

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## WHO, German government boost Liberia infectious disease control capacity

- donate two ambulances, one pickup to MOH

By Lincoln G. Peters

The World Health Organization (WHO) with funding from the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, on Tuesday, 16 May 2023, donated two ambulances and one Toyota Land cruiser pickup to the Government of Liberia.

The donated items were turned over to the Liberian government through the Ministry of Health to support the operation of the Oxygen Plant in Liberia, a boost to the country's infectious disease control capacity.

The vehicles are intended to promote the operation of the infectious disease control oxygen plant and prevent future public health infectious diseases. The donation ceremony was held at the Ministry of Health in Congo Town, outside Monrovia.

It was graced by German Ambassador to Liberia Dr. Jakob

transportation of infectious patients from one facility to another," Dr. Clement noted.

According to him, the infectious disease centers will serve the public in critical cases when the vehicles are used properly and managed. "This will strengthen case management, and the same with the Oxygen plant which is critical to save life."

He said he thinks this logistical support is critical for Liberia post-COVID-19, among others.

The vehicles, according to him, were bought by the general contribution of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany.

For his part, German Ambassador to Liberia Dr. Jakob Haselhuber said Liberia's health system had suffered many challenges in recent times, ranging from the Ebola virus to COVID-19 and many others.

According to him, it's now time that Liberia uses its experiences learned from COVID-19 and other infectious diseases to inform and



Haselhuber, WHO Country Representative Dr. Peter Clement, and Liberia's Health Minister Dr. Wilhelmina Jallah, among others. The donation is in fulfillment of the WHO Country Representative Dr. Clement's commitment made during the official opening of the Oxygen plant at the Star Base.

Donating the vehicles, Dr. Peter Clement said the vehicles were intended to support and boost infectious disease control in the country. "This morning, on behalf of the WHO ..., I present to you two ambulances and one pickup," said Dr. Clement.

"This is meant to support [the] infectious disease center in the management of COVID-19 and other diseases that may be at the center," he added. He explained that the second vehicle is the Land Cruiser pickup which is meant to coordinate the affairs of the Oxygen plant in the center. "We all know that there are almost ... ten Oxygen plants in the country, and so this will help in the

strengthen the capacity of the health sector. "We are excited to [be a] part of this ceremony. We hope that the vehicles donated here today will be maintained and kept in good condition at all times," the German Envoy said.

"This has the goal of increasing infectious disease control at the Star Base, promoting quality healthcare, and saving lives of patients." He said he trusts that the vehicles will be used and maintained to further strengthen the health system and improve quality emergency health care. Receiving the donation on behalf of the Government of Liberia, Health Minister Dr. Wilhelmina Jallah expressed excitement over what the WHO and the German government have done.

According to her, the government will make sure that the vehicles are maintained and used for the intended purpose.

"Dr. Clement, Mr. Ambassador, on behalf of the Government and people of Liberia, we want to say a

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**ECC evaluates BVR Phase II**

The Elections Coordinating Committee (ECC) says registration procedures improved during Phase Two of the Biometric Voter's Registration process that just ended in the country.

incidents observed and recommendations to improve the process. It observes that registration centers generally opened on schedule during Phase Two of the BVR process and that necessary BVR kits were

security deployment was again observed, even though slightly higher than phase one," it continues.

According to the Committee, political party representatives were present to observe the procedure in 131 of the 180 centers that the ECC observed, something it said is also an improvement over Phase One.

At the same time, the Elections Coordinating Committee points that voter trucking was observed during Phase Two, saying the preliminary findings focus on key issues observed over the period of April 21 to May 9, 2023. It explains that observers covered the entire process of registration from set-up to closing of centers, noting that during this period, several observations were made.

"ECC observed that 160 of the 185 centers opened on schedule between 8:00 am and 8:30 am, which is 86% of all the centers, and that only 11% of these centers opened after 8:30 a.m. as a result of the late arrival of staff, lack of ink for the printer, shortage of cards or a lack of electricity to power the equipment."

It says during set-up, BVR centers were seen to have a complete BVR kit available, adding that these centers were generally accessible, and applicants did not have to go upstairs to access the center.



A press release from the ECC, says malfunctioning of equipment still persisted during Phase Two of the Biometric Voter Registration process executed by the National Elections Commission (NEC).

The Committee's preliminary update released here on Tuesday, May 16, covers findings from 184 centers in over five days of deployment from April 21-May 9, 2023.

The ECC adds that the update also contains critical

available.

However, the release reveals that despite this, several of the centers observed continued to experience malfunctioning of equipment.

"ECC observers however, noted an improvement in the way NEC registration staff requested verification of eligibility prior to enrolling applicants during phase two. While the ECC recommended an increase in security presence at registration centers to cover phase two of the BVR, a relatively low

**Liberian rights campaigners call for war crime court**

**-present resolution to U.S. Government**

Rights community in Liberia, war crimes victims and justice actors have officially presented a resolution to the Government of the United States, calling for the establishment of a war and economic crimes court in Liberia. A dispatch from the United States says the resolution was presented to the Desk Officer on Liberia at the African Bureau within the Department of States, witnessed by Democratic and Republican Congressional staff and the U.S. Ambassador for War Crimes.

According to the dispatch, the Secretary General of the Civil Society Human Rights Advocacy Platform of Liberia, Adama Dempster, in collaboration with Human Rights Watch and the Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA) held several meetings before presenting the resolution recently, reaffirming

Liberians' commitment to call for the establishment of a war and economic crimes court here.

The resolution, endorsed by civil society, justice campaigners, war victims and survivors and the human rights community in Liberia, highlights Section 46 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Act, considering civil society organizations as moral guarantors of the Comprehensive Peace

Agreement (CPA) charged with the responsibility to monitor and campaign for the scrupulous implementation of all recommendations contained in the TRC report.

Counts 3 & 4 of the document calls on the U.S. Government, a historic friend of the people of Liberia, and particularly through the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia and the Office of Global Criminal Justice, to take action to stand with victims by supporting the establishment of a war crimes court for Liberia.



**Senate pressurized to pass Public Health Bill**

By: Emmanuel wise Jipoh  
The Liberian Senate has come under serious pressure to pass into law, the Revised Public Health Bill Number 23.

The campaign comes amid calls for an improved public health delivery system to address numerous health challenges confronting the country.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) here and Health Association of Liberia are jointly asking the Senate to concur with the House of Representatives on the passage of the Revised Public Health Bill #23.

More than 20 CSO heads, women groups, university regulatory bodies, the Ministry of Health, and Health Association Leadership are calling on the Senate Committee on Health and Judiciary to

The Plenary of the House of Representatives passed the bill on July 21, 2022, on the recommendation of the joint committee on Health and Judiciary and forwarded it to the Senate for concurrence.

Madam Gaye noted with disdain that since the Bill was forwarded to the Senate, the Joint Committee on Health and Judiciary has not taken action toward the passage of the instrument, adding that the urgency for its passage into law cannot be overemphasized.

She told reporters the Revised Public Health Law will play a crucial role in addressing the many public health challenges in Liberia and cover several crucial needs including nuisances, mental health, leprosy, drug peddling, nutrition, and non-communicable diseases.

According to her, she is convinced that when pass into law,



urgently prevail on the entire Senate to concur with the House in enacting the revised public health bill into law.

The appeal is part of a joint resolution that is a crucial component of an ongoing project titled: "Advancing a Framework for Public Health Delivery in Liberia", an intervention being implemented by Sister AID Liberia with support from Kvinna till Kvinna Liberia.

Addressing a news conference over the weekend, Project Focus Person, Madam Patricia Gaye, said the need for the Senate to concur with the House on the passage of this instrument is crucial to achieving a service delivery health system.

She stressed that the unified call is grounded in the clarion cry from the public for improved public health delivery systems in Liberia.

In February 2020, President George Weah submitted the Revised Health Bill to the Legislature, which among others, seeks to address current and future challenges as well as integrate the separate laws governing the public health system.

it will also help solve challenges faced with referral systems in hospitals, clinical trials, sexual reproductive health, and discrimination in providing healthcare services.

The Public Health Law of Liberia (Title 33) was first enacted as "The Public Health and Safety Law" before 1950. In 1956, it was amended and re-enacted as Title 31 of the Liberian Code of Laws. Subsequently, the Law was revised and re-enacted in 1976 as the "Public Health Laws (Title 33, Liberian Code of Laws Revised).

The CSOs believe that the Public Health Law which has been in existence for over four decades does not address new and emerging public health challenges such as emergency treatment, discrimination, mental health, failure to regulate nutrition, reproductive health rights, and marketing of products for infants and children.

Madam Gaye lamented that the draft instrument highly risks future delay if it is not passed into law before the current sitting of the Senate ends in June 2023, which she said, is not a good sign for the health system in Liberia.



# Français

## Une nouvelle lueur d'espoir naît avec Cummings qui nommera son colistier le 27 mai

La présidence n'est pas que puissante, elle a aussi l'humble responsabilité de donner le bon exemple, d'exiger des normes de gestion les plus élevées et de tenir ses promesses au peuple. C'est en tout cas le message qu'a livré en substance l'opposant

meilleur, sûr, pacifique et plus prospère, ainsi que de restaurer le respect et la dignité perdus du pays au sein de la communauté des nations.

L'ancien dirigeant de Coca-Cola qui s'est reconverti à la politique a qualifié le régime de M. Weah d'une grosse plaisanterie qui devrait s'arrêter pour que les

investisseurs sérieux de venir créer des emplois bien rémunérés pour les Libériens. Et si nous réélisons un plaisantin comme président, c'est choisir de suspendre l'avenir du Libéria, et cela aggravera sûrement les difficultés », a prévenu Cummings.

« Si je suis élu en octobre, à partir de janvier prochain, je travaillerai assidûment pour instituer un véritable changement. Nous mettrons un accent sur l'honnêteté, l'intégrité et le leadership fondé sur des principes.

Nous transformerons les jeunes gardiens de magasin en propriétaires de magasins, nous transformerons les petits gérants de tabliers en des boutiquiers, les jeunes diplômés deviendront des chefs d'entreprise, et nous donnerons aux entreprises libériennes, en particulier aux entreprises féminines, la chance et les ressources nécessaires pour réussir » a dit Cummings.

Il a également promis de changer le désespoir et l'anarchie d'aujourd'hui en espoir et légalité, et de réduire considérablement le taux de chômage élevé sans précédent au Libéria.

Cummings se demande pourquoi le gouvernement du CDC a réduit les salaires des fonctionnaires face à la

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 09



Cummings lors du congrès national de son parti à Nimba.

« La présidence est responsable de réparer le système brisé, corrompu et discrédité qui continue de maintenir les Libériens dans la pauvreté », a-t-il dit.

M. Cummings a expliqué que la présidence a également la responsabilité d'unir et de conduire le peuple vers un avenir

conditions de vie des Libériens puissent enfin s'améliorer. Pour lui, le président aurait mieux fait de se consacrer à la musique et à la danse, car cela lui va bien, contrairement à la gestion du pays.

« Elire un président qui ne travaillera pas revient à mettre le Liberia en stand-by, ce qui privera les masses déjà souffrantes de l'aide nécessaire pour améliorer leurs conditions de vie. Mettre le pays en stand-by empêchera les

## Sénégal : le procès de l'opposant Ousmane Sonko pour viols présumés renvoyé au 23 mai 2023

Au Sénégal, le procès de l'opposant Ousmane Sonko pour viols présumés a été renvoyé au 23 mai 2023, a annoncé le tribunal de Dakar où le leader du parti Les Patriotes africains du Sénégal pour le travail, l'éthique et la fraternité (Pastef) était attendu ce mardi 16 mai. Le candidat à l'élection présidentielle 2024, condamné le 8 mai dernier à 6 mois de prison avec sursis pour diffamation, est opposé dans cette procédure-ci à une ex-employée d'un salon de massage, Adji Sarr, qui l'accuse de viols.

Il n'est pas venu : Ousmane Sonko n'a pas assisté à l'ouverture de son nouveau procès, ce 16 mai 2023. L'opposant est jugé pour viols présumés : il est accusé par une ancienne masseuse qui dit aussi avoir reçu des menaces de mort. Lui dénonce un complot pour l'empêcher de se présenter à

la prochaine présidentielle au Sénégal.

L'audience a été très rapide ce mardi. Elle a duré une vingtaine de minutes. « Ousmane Sonko est là ? », a demandé le président de la chambre criminelle, avant de constater simplement son absence.

Le procès a été renvoyé

d'office au 23 mai 2023 pour une question de procédure : il a expliqué qu'il fallait 3 jours après l'interrogatoire d'un témoin - en l'occurrence la propriétaire du salon de massage - pour ouvrir le procès.

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## Éditorial

### La montée en flèche du taux de change est insupportable

Les Libériens assistent, impuissants, à une augmentation soudaine du taux de change entre le dollar américain et le dollar libérien. 1 USD est passé de 150 LRD à 168 voire 170 dollars libériens en seulement un mois.

La hausse soudaine du taux de change crée des augmentations correspondantes des prix des produits de base, en particulier la nourriture, le carburant et les frais de transport, imposant de sérieuses contraintes aux citoyens ordinaires.

L'opposant Tiawan Saye Gongloe, candidat à la prochaine présidentielle, a récemment dit que la hausse rapide du taux de change est attribuable à l'injection incontrôlée de dollars libériens sur le marché par les dignitaires du régime de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC) pour séduire les électeurs pour la réélection du président George Manneh Weah.

« Ils mettent une grande masse de dollars libériens en circulation et gardent les dollars américains. Ils économisent les dollars américains parce qu'ils ne sont pas trop sûrs de gagner les élections », a-t-il expliqué.

Les membres du parti au pouvoir, aussi bien ceux qui ont un poste que ceux qui n'en ont pas actuellement, distribuent d'énormes quantités de dollars libériens aux citoyens de tout le pays pour renforcer leurs chances d'être élus et réélus. Cela a bien sûr de graves conséquences négatives pour le pays dont l'économie est fortement dépendante des importations.

Economiste et professeur de droit, Me Gongloe a averti que les Libériens ordinaires vont être poussés à l'extrême pauvreté et aux difficultés en raison de ce qui se passe dans le pays, où d'énormes quantités de dollars libériens est en quête des quelques dollars américains disponibles.

« Sur le plan économique, ce qui se passe actuellement est terrible pour le Libéria. D'ici les élections, la vie sera beaucoup plus difficile que les Libériens n'ont jamais imaginé », a-t-il prévenu.

Avant même le début officiel de la campagne, la Coalition pour le changement démocratique au pouvoir mène une série de projets politiques dans plusieurs comtés, dont Lofa et Nimba, pour adoucir le terrain et rallier le soutien des citoyens.

Comme cela a été le cas lors de l'élection présidentielle de 2017 et de l'élection sénatoriale spéciale de 2020, lorsque les candidats du parti au pouvoir ont distribué des millions de dollars libériens aux communautés et aux électeurs, et ont inondé le marché, une répétition similaire est attendue, alors que les Libériens se rendront aux urnes le 10 octobre.

Nous ne pouvons que rejoindre Me Gongloe pour prévenir nos compatriotes libériens de se serrer la ceinture et de se préparer aux conséquences économiques négatives pendant et après les élections auxquelles ils devraient faire face en conséquence directe des dépenses électorales, bien que la loi électorale du Libéria ait un plafond sur le financement des campagnes.



# Français

## Une nouvelle lueur d'espoir naît avec

détérioration des conditions économiques et à la hausse du coût de la vie.

Le porte-drapeau de la Collaboration des partis politiques (CPP) a promis de diriger le Libéria différemment, de manière responsable et honnête vers un nouvel avenir d'égalité et de prospérité pour tous.

Il a déclaré que le deuil face aux défis économiques difficiles ne changera pas le désespoir des masses souffrantes, mais plutôt que le chagrin doit inciter les Libériens non seulement à changer les mentalités ou les partis politiques, mais aussi à changer les principes directeurs du pays.

«Quiconque est coupable d'avoir volé des ressources publiques, quel que soit son statut ou sa position, doit faire face à toute la force de la loi et à ses conséquences, sans hésitation», a déclaré Cummings.

Selon lui, tant que l'on n'applique pas la loi de manière rigoureuse, la corruption et le vol des ressources publiques priveront et empêcheront les institutions publiques, y compris les hôpitaux, de remplir efficacement leurs fonctions statutaires au détriment des familles ordinaires qui ne peuvent pas se permettre de voyager à l'étranger pour les

traitements. Ainsi, remerciant la direction et les membres de la CPP pour la confiance qu'ils ont placées en lui pour diriger la CPP, Cummings a juré de ne pas décevoir les Libériens ou abaisser la norme et les valeurs de la CPP, assurant qu'ensemble, « nous marcherons vers la victoire en octobre, et nous changerons le Libéria pour le mieux », a-t-il déclaré.

Le Congrès du week-end était le premier de la CPP et était présidé par le président du Liberty Party, Musa Bility.

Il a réuni plus de 500 délégués des 15 comtés du Libéria, ainsi que des États-Unis d'Amérique, du Canada et d'autres parties du monde.

Plusieurs dignitaires de la CPP, dont le représentant du comté de Nimba, Larry Yonquoi, et la représentante du comté de Grand Bassa, Charlene Brumskine, ont fait des déclarations spéciales sur le soutien aux objectifs et aux buts, y compris la candidature de M. Alexander Cummings à la présidentielle.

Le congrès a été précédé d'un défilé dans la ville de Gompa, comté de Nimba. Des milliers de partisans et de sympathisants de la Collaboration des partis politiques ont pris part au défilé.

## Sénégal : le procès de l'opposant Ousmane Sonko

La plaignante Adjil Sarr était bien là dès 9h du matin dans la grande salle du palais de justice, qui n'était pas comble, les rangs étaient clairsemés. Adjil Sarr, en longue robe blanche et verte, est restée silencieuse.

Il y a eu un débat sur la date du renvoi. La défense a demandé plus de temps : un mois voire 45 jours pour « s'organiser sur ce dossier de plus de 470 pages ». « Je m'oppose au renvoi, ils ont eu suffisamment de temps pour se préparer. Cela fait deux ans qu'on est prêts. Il y a eu des morts. Il faut qu'on en finisse », a martelé maître El Hadj Diouf, avocat d'Adjil Sarr.

Avec des affrontements à Ziguinchor en Casamance dans le sud du pays et des heurts à Dakar, après l'annonce du décès d'un policier hier, le ministère de l'Intérieur a fait état d'un autre décès à Ziguinchor, et un en banlieue de la capitale, sans

les lier directement à la procédure judiciaire. Mais en appelant les parents à « éviter que leurs enfants ne participent à des manifestations violentes ».

Est-ce qu'Ousmane Sonko se présentera mardi prochain ? « Nous le souhaitons », assure Maître Bamba Cissé, l'un de ses avocats. Mais « si les conditions de sécurité sont réunies », ajoute-t-il.

Le nouveau rendez-vous est n audience spéciale, ce qui signifie que ce sera le seul dossier examiné par la chambre ce jour-là.

Ousmane Sonko avait par ailleurs été condamné le 8 mai 2023 à 6 mois de prison avec sursis dans une autre affaire, pour diffamation et injures face au ministre du Tourisme. Dans cet autre dossier, Maître Bamba Cissé confirme s'être pourvu en cassation, ce qui suspend la condamnation d'Ousmane Sonko, pour le moment.

## Achat des voix : Le Président de la Chambre des représentants s'inscrit en faux



Le président de la Chambre des Représentants Dr Bhofal Chambers a réfuté les informations selon lesquelles il serait en train d'acheter des voix à Pleebo Sodoken, dans le comté du Maryland.

Le président Chambers, qui se trouve actuellement dans son district, a dit que les photos des billets de banque qui circulent dans certains médias libériens et qui le lient à l'achat de votes n'ont aucun rapport avec l'achat des voix et ne visent qu'à provoquer un coup médiatique contre lui de la part de détracteurs politiques qui tentent d'attaquer son intégrité, pendant que les Libériens se préparent pour se rendre aux urnes dans le cadre des élections générales et présidentielles, en octobre de cette année.

Selon le Dr Chambers, l'argent dont les photos continuent de circuler sur la toile, s'élève à trois cent mille dollars libériens (300 000 LD), soit 1 900 dollars américains. Il avait été présenté aux bénéficiaires de son programme de prêt pour autonomiser certaines petites commerçantes dans une

communauté appelée Hospital Camp à Pleebo Sodoken, pour développer leurs activités. Il a promis de continuer à poser des actes positifs pour son peuple. Il s'est dit prêt à répondre à certains des besoins de son peuple à tout moment.

Le comté de Maryland fait partie des autres comtés où se déroulent l'opération d'inscription biométrique des électeurs. Les Libériens se rendront aux urnes en octobre pour voter.

Les partisans disent que la cascade des médias sociaux est une grave contradiction avec les directives de la NEC en ce qui concerne les activités de précampagne.

Pendant ce temps, M. Chambers a également inauguré deux mairies modernes dans les villes de Kwidoken et Selegen respectivement dans le comté de Maryland dont le coût des travaux de construction s'élève à 20 000 dollars américains chacune. Jusqu'à présent, c'est la première fois que les deux villes bénéficient d'une structure moderne en béton contenant des latrines à chasse d'eau et des bureaux séparés afin de tenir des réunions.

Il a été rapporté que Speaker Chambers a également tendu la main à plusieurs villes et villages de son Pleebo Sodoken natal pour sensibiliser le public au processus de BVR.

## Massacre de Moura : le Mali annonce une enquête sur le travail de l'ONU, avec quels objectifs ?

Les autorités maliennes de transition ont annoncé l'ouverture d'une enquête judiciaire contre la mission d'établissement des faits des Nations unies « et ses complices » pour « espionnage », « atteinte à la sûreté extérieure de l'État », et « complot militaire. » Annonce faite samedi soir par communiqué, en réaction à la publication vendredi dernier d'un rapport des Nations unies sur le massacre de Moura, en mars 2022. Rapport affirmant qu'au moins 500 personnes ont été exécutés par l'armée malienne et ses supplétifs russes au cours de cette opération dite « antiterroriste. » Sur quoi doit porter précisément ce travail d'enquête annoncé par les autorités maliennes de transition ?

Ce travail « va concerner les aspects liés à la prise des images par les satellites utilisés par la commission d'établissement des faits des Nations unies, explique Mahamadou Konaté, docteur en droit public, spécialiste du droit international et du droit humanitaire à l'université de Bamako. Donc il s'agirait pour l'enquête de déterminer si ces satellites ont violé l'espace aérien malien ou pas. Il y a bien sûr une



certaine hauteur qui rentre dans l'espace souverain de l'État. Dans la pratique, généralement, c'est 22km au-dessus du territoire. Au-delà, c'est considéré normalement comme l'espace aérien international. »

Les enquêteurs des Nations unies n'ont pas été autorisés par les autorités maliennes de transition à se rendre dans le village de Moura. Ils ont donc procédé, notamment, en recueillant les témoignages de victimes ou d'habitants du village de Moura. L'enquête judiciaire malienne pourrait également concerner ces témoignages ?

« Peigne fin »

« Oui, répond encore le chercheur Mahamadou Konaté, qui a également enseigné pendant plusieurs années à l'École d'état-major nationale de l'armée du Mali.



## FEATURE

## ARTICLE

# Corruption allegations against Jeremiah Koung as the senator becomes UP Vice-Presidential aspirant

By S.Karweaye

Despite allegations of massive budget fraud hanging on his neck, the political leader of the Movement for Democratic Reconstruction (MDR), Senator Jeremiah Koung was on April 28, 2023, selected by Joseph Nyumah Boakai of the former ruling Unity Party (UP) as his running mate in the pending 2023 presidential election. MDR is one of Liberia's many political parties and was founded by former warlord and current Senator Prince Y. Johnson of Nimba County. Johnson is named in Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Report as having committed atrocities during the country's first civil war.

According to Transparency International's local chapter, the Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL) 2021 State of Corruption Report, several members of the National Legislature were involved in high-level corruption. The two years of an investigation by the CENTAL linked then Nimba County Representative Jeremiah Koung, Montserrado County Senator Saah Joseph and District #6 Representative Samuel Enders, and others to massive corruption.

The CENTAL report said between 2012 to 2021 Nimba County Representative Jeremiah Koung received nearly one million United States Dollars to run his privately owned hospital, the Esther and Geraldine Hospital in Nimba County. According to the report, the African Dream Academy; a private school owned by Representative Samuel Enders was entirely funded from the national budget. The report also said Montserrado County Senator Saah Joseph, in 2020, as Chairman of the Senate health committee annually allocates US\$ 141,000.00, to his company for ambulance services.

It is no longer a secret that Senator Jeremiah Koung has emerged as a powerful symbol of the rotten sweetness of democratized corruption in Liberia. The Legislature of which Koung is part is among the most dangerously corrupt institution in Liberian history. How did Joseph Nyumah Boakai, a man that wants to replace President Weah, select such a character? How can Liberia's former Vice President, Joseph Nyumah Boakai who is on record during the 2017 presidential debate admitting the Johnson-Sirleaf/Boakai administration failed by saying, "we squandered opportunities" select someone the CENTAL report said was involved in the high level of corruption at the National Legislature? Did the former Vice President squander another opportunity?

On the surface, you will be tempted to believe that our democracy is finally working - checks and balances. Illusions! The reality is that we are witnessing the smooth operation of the smartest and pathologically corrupt political operatives in post-conflict Liberia (I have not forgotten the gibberish of "innocent" until proven guilty). To say Senator Koung along with his political godfather, Senator Prince Yomie Johnson are the most potent political operatives is not an overstatement. Even before Koung rose to power, he was highly connected by

virtue of his political godfather, ex-warlord, and current senator Prince Yomie Johnson- the strong man of Nimba politics. Senator Johnson has been sanctioned by the U.S. government for alleged corruption. The sanctions against Johnson come under the Global Magnitsky Act.

To demonstrate that he is untouchable, Jeremiah Koung ignored the CENTAL two years investigation report which linked him and his colleagues to corruption and ran for the senate seat in Nimba, and with his political godfather, Senator Prince Yomie Johnson, and the ruling CDC backing, he won the senatorial seat at the same time, Joseph Nyuman Boakai's backed CPP senatorial candidate, Edith Gongloe lose her senatorial bid.

The newest scandal is the appropriation of US\$3.6 in the 2020/2021 budget that Jeremiah Koung and his colleagues at the Legislature awarded themselves in the name of legislative engagement and public accessibility fund with each legislator taking US\$30,000. In the 2022 budget, Senator Koung and his colleagues at the Legislature awarded themselves an additional US\$3.6 with each legislator taking US\$30,000 in the name of legislative engagement and public accessibility funds

Senator Jeremiah Koung and his political godfather, Senator Prince Yomie Johnson are smooth political operators that belong to the MDR. The MDR as previously stated was founded by Senator Prince Yomie Johnson who supported Mr. George Weah of the Coalition of Democratic Change in the 2017 presidential election. In 2010, Johnson founded the National Union for Democratic Progress Party (NUDP) and ran as a presidential candidate in the 2011 presidential election. He placed third, with 11.6% of the vote, and supported the Unity Party's Ellen Johnson Sirleaf who won the election as the incumbent president.

On December 9, 2021, Prince Yomie Johnson was placed under sanctions by the US Treasury under the Global Magnitsky Act. According to the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), "as a Senator, Johnson has been involved in pay-for-play funding with government ministries and organizations for personal enrichment. As part of the scheme, upon receiving funding from the Government of Liberia (GOL), the involved government ministries and organizations launder a portion of the funding for the return to the involved participants. The pay-for-play funding scheme involves millions of U.S. dollars. Johnson has also offered the sale of votes in multiple Liberian elections in exchange for money."

Recently, Prince Yomie Johnson recently broke ties with the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change government headed by President George Weah, alleging that the Weah-led government refused to incorporate its members of his MDR into key government positions, thereby, reconfirming the U.S. Department of the Treasury sanctions on him (pay-for-play ). After publicly falling out with President Weah and his CDC, Senator Johnson, the founder of MDR, gave his blessing to Senator Jeremiah Koung to assume the position of Standard Bearer of the MDR and lead the Party's operations in preparation for the 2023 General and Presidential Elections as Prince Johnson battle for his senatorial seat in the 2023 elections. The MDR leader, Jeremiah Koung became the vice standard bearer of the Unity Party overnight after he and his political godfather outsmarted

Grand Bassa County Senator Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence of the split Liberty Party (LP), Benoni Urey of the All Liberian Party (ALP) and others that stood with Joseph Boakai during the heyday of the Collaboration Political Parties (CPP). The cabals behind Boakai are now courting Koung's political godfather, Prince Johnson for fear of giving Cllr. Tiawan Gongloe an edge in repositioning the electoral map in vote-rich Nimba County in the 2023 pend presidential election.

Joseph Boakai has limited the anti-corruption fight with his collaborations with the likes of Jeremiah Koung, Prince Johnson, etc. Until the cabals around him can summon the courage to point a real surgical anti-corruption knife at the crocodiles at the National Legislature including Jeremiah Koung, Prince Johnson, and others, and stay far away from these unscrupulous individuals that are involved in multi-million dollar corruption schemes involving fraud, misappropriation, and abuse of authority, Joseph Nyumah Boakai will Never be seen as a Rescuer for Liberia. We are watching



while public institutions including hospitals, and schools are hugely underfunded. Sadly Senator Koung and his colleagues are diverting funds through budget paddling and redirecting those funds among themselves.

One of the primary reasons corruption has thrived in Liberia is the legislators are also involved in malice at all levels and have been clever enough to fool our people. Koung is a career legislator, having served two terms as a representative before being elected as a senator. But he has never been very vocal on national issues and hardly chided the Unity Party administration as a representative on any shortcomings or as Senator in the current CDC administration on any weaknesses.

Is Joseph Nyumah Boakai complicit in encouraging the democratization of corruption in Liberia by choosing Jeremiah Koung as his running mate? Is it a major, general mistake for Mr. Boakai to be romancing corrupt individuals while pretending to be a rescuer? I see the ongoing caricature as simply a case of democratization of corruption; a case of birds of the same feathers flock together, literally.



# 'Insufficient voting centers may impact BVR outcome'

The President Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate Albert Tugbe Chie has warned

of local and international partners in ensuring a successful election. However, he said, their

strengthening the electoral systems through reforms, they engaged partners (local and international) to consider contributing financially to buttress the government's efforts of increasing these centers in rural areas.

Hopefully, he added, the assistance will be considered to improve the democratic process and systems at NEC.

He referenced the pronouncement of millions being contributed to the electoral process by some partners through the UNDP and other international organizations.

Approaching the presidential and legislative elections in October, Chie stated that it is important to reflect on the role of the Legislature in the framework of practicality and under the existing circumstances, especially in meeting the high expectations of the people. Chie assured Liberians that the Legislature will continue to play the role they have designated it to play.

But he also urged Liberians to remember that to play that role, requires a significant number of financial resources, most of which are appropriated in the National Budget and have to be paid from the national treasury, by the law of the land.

"A reminder to you my fellow Liberians: We are in an election year. Be careful to digest well what you hear and read before you believe," he pleaded. He claimed that political lies, character assassinations, rumours, and fabrication with the intent to deceive the masses will be the order of the day.

assistance should take into consideration the aspiration and the real needs of the voting population.

Chie detailed that over and over, citizens in rural areas have asked authorities to request the National Elections Commission (NEC) to create additional voting centers to enable them to register to vote. Unfortunately, Chie said the NEC informed the Legislature that it was unable to create additional voting centers due to financial constraints. "In view of the above circumstances, these challenges may have a negative impact on the outcome of BVR process compared to the recently held census," Chie warned.

He claimed that through the census, enumerators reached every nook and [cranny] of the counties and counted all persons.

Mr. Chie noted that despite improvements made in

## Pro-temp Chie applauds

which are appropriated in the National Budget and paid from the national treasury, in accordance with law.

"We are in an election year. Be careful to digest well what you hear and read, before you

believe. Political lies, character assassinations, rumors, fabrication with the intent to deceive the masses will be the order of the day", Chie cautions fellow senators. Editing by Jonathan Browne

## 'Unification meaningless

have failed to provide a single opportunity for Liberians," Whapoe claimed. He added that there are no jobs, the economy has gone down the drain, and President Weah came to power without a platform.

"This is haunting our country. Based upon that, Liberians are hungry and angry. Our people are not happy and so we have no peace, unity, and unification under this administration," Dr. Whapoe claimed.

## Diaspora Liberians want to vote in elections

tailored to the specific needs of returning Liberians, by facilitating their smooth transition back to Liberia and supporting their efforts to contribute to the country's development. The proposition is aligned with ALCOD's broader

vision of strengthening ties between diaspora Liberians and their home country, fostering economic growth and progress, he adds.

Mr. Sieh noted that the implementation of such system will not only

# Cummings supports division of LP

By Lincoln G. Peters

Opposition Liberty Party (LP) embattled political leader Senator Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence has been explaining why she refused to be Alexander B. Cummings' running mate, accusing him of supporting her party's division.

On Sunday, 14 May 2023, Senator Karnga-Lawrence endorsed Liberia's opposition leader Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai and Senator Jeremiah Koung's presidential ticket, a boost for the Unity Party campaign.

Delivering her endorsement speech at the Fairground in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, Senator Karnga-Lawrence said she can't sit on a presidential ticket with Mr. Cummings in light

(CPP) leader Alexander B. Cummings before they made a U-turn. The two officials felt let down by Boakai's decision to pick Mr. Koung instead of Senator Karnga-Lawrence as running mate.

She added that her decision followed two weeks of consultations with a broad spectrum of the membership of her party, stakeholders, and sympathizers at home and abroad.

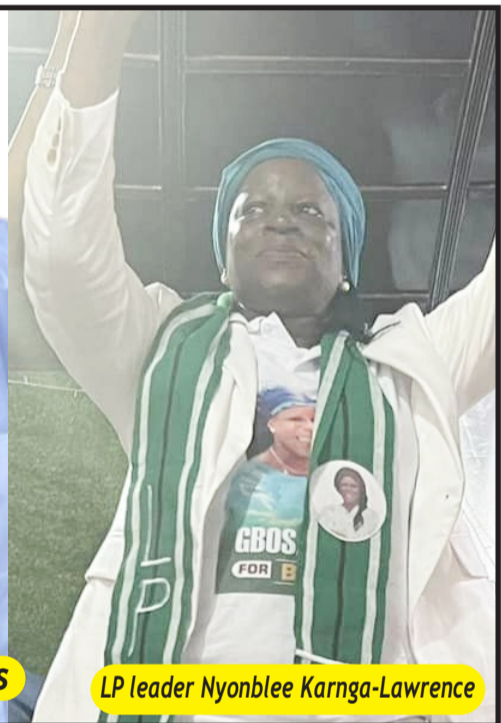
Senator Karnga-Lawrence said her decision to endorse the Boakai-Koung ticket is to secure a better and prosperous Liberia.

The Grand Bassa first female senator disclosed that she didn't see it necessary to form political alliance with Mr. Cummings, head of the CPP and Alternative National Congress (ANC).

She pointed out that she believes that actors on the national



ANC leader Mr. Cummings



LP leader Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence

of his unending support to a man whose desire is to render LP "useless, politically paralyzed and divided." "In Liberty Party's specific case, it would be a deviation and indeed a betrayal of the trust and confidence of our thousands of partisans to unwittingly find the Political Leader sitting on the ticket with Mr. Cummings," she said.

The Liberty Party is divided into factions between Madam Karnga-Lawrence and party chairman Musa Bility. Bility and his faction of the LP support Mr. Cummings' presidential bid, while Karnga-Lawrence and her LP faction support Amb. Boakai.

Nyonblee's endorsement of the Boakai-Koung ticket Sunday, 14 May 2023 came as a breakthrough for the former ruling Unity Party (UP) which nearly lost major political allies since the former Liberian vice president picked his running mate on 28 April.

A Grand Bassa Senator, Nyonblee and her kinsman, Montserrado County Senator Abraham Darius Dillon, were rumored to have nearly concluded an arrangement to switch their loyalties to Collaborating Political Parties

political stage must have a deeper self-examination of trending political events that could lend themselves to political collaboration or the reverse thereof.

"As a matter of fact, Mr. Bility is recalcitrant that he does not recognize the authority of the Political Leadership of the Liberty Party, something that the ANC, through its actions and inactions, tacitly supported and concretized all along," said Nyonblee.

"What is even more disturbing and unconscionable is the fact that the ANC folks are inclined to believe that the only way we could gain control of LP is to accept the running mate slot, and every other thing will fall into place."

But she said to accept such an offer will demonstrate sheer greed for power on her part, and this will be the less honorable path to tread. Madam Karnga-Lawrence disclosed that in essence, to form a presidential ticket with individuals who conspired with a compromised system to rob them of deserved justice, would only be interpreted as approving the same system that she is endeavoring to change.

Senator Karnga-Lawrence asserted that even more, it would be a demonstration of desperation

that the results of the Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) process may not be what is anticipated in some counties due to limited centers.

Delivering a statement Tuesday, 16 May 2023 at the opening of the 54th Legislature on Capitol Hill, Mr. Chie cited the challenges of having limited centers far away from towns and villages. "Nevertheless, the final results of the BVR process may not be what we anticipate in some of the counties due to the challenges of having limited centers far away from towns and villages," Mr. Chie said.

He noted the inability of many citizens to reach voting centers which in many instances are miles away, at times three to four hours walk. Cognizant of elections being a nationally owned process, Mr. Chie commended the efforts and contributions

Starts from page 6

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Dr. Whapoe lamented that Liberians are living in extreme hardship under the leadership of President Weah, accusing the regime of being evil to Liberians. "We have a government that doesn't know [its] functions. They

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assistance to Liberians residing in the United States, who intend to retire and return home to embark on a new chapter of their life after retirement. The proposed Diaspora Bank, he said intends to offer financial services



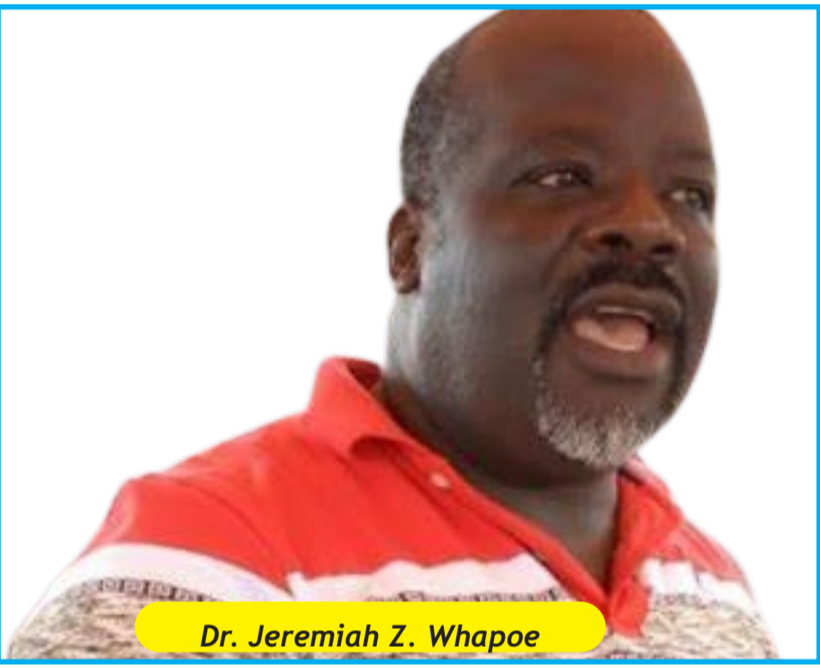
## 'Unification meaningless under President Weah, CDC'

**-Says Dr. Whapoe**

By Lincoln G. Peters

Presidential hopeful Dr. Jeremiah Z. Whapoe says the National Unification Day celebration under President George Manneh Weah's administration is completely meaningless and empty.

Dr. Whapoe's claim was



Dr. Jeremiah Z. Whapoe

contained in a statement when he addressed journalists at his Vision for Liberia Transformation Party (VOLT) headquarters on Old Road Tuesday, 16 May 2023. The opposition alleged that President Weah and his Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) government

have done nothing meaningful to promote unity and peaceful coexistence among Liberians.

"Unity as a whole is very precious to national development that ... [I] embrace. Unification under President Weah at this time, I think, is meaningless," said Dr. Whapoe. He insisted that it is meaningless because President

in the country based on President Weah's alleged disregard for the plights of the Liberian people.

Dr. Whapoe continued that it's unfortunate that President Weah and the CDC will be claiming to be promoting unification when just in five years, there have been more mysterious deaths and disappearances of professional Liberians.

"In this country, we saw how the three auditors died. We also saw that with the three missing boys that went to work for St. Moses," Dr. Whapoe explained.

"We also saw how Princess Cooper died and her family [is] still in tears. The most recent is the one we are seeing with former Chief Justice Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott," Whapoe continued.

Judging from all those things and the government's alleged careless handling of those investigations, Dr. Whapoe wonders how can there be unification under this government.

According to him, the most disappointing part about unification under President Weah is his government's alleged failure to provide jobs, security, and opportunities for Liberians.

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