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Continental News

Rwanda genocide suspect unfit to stand trial, UN court rules

Wealthy businessman Félicien Kabuga outwitted prosecutors of the Rwandan genocide tribunal for more than two-and-a-half decades by using 28 aliases and powerful connections across

He was arrested in Paris in 2020 after evading capture for 26 years.

Said to have been Rwanda's richest man at the time, he is alleged to have financed ethnic Hutu militias who slaughtered about 800,000 Tutsis and

to take this forward".

This is the first time a court has given such a ruling in a decades-long campaign to bring Rwandan genocide suspects to justice.

In their ruling, judges at a UN war crimes court in The Hague said Mr Kabuga was "unfit to participate meaningfully in his trial and is very unlikely to regain fitness in the future". One of the four judges disagreed with the majority decision.

The judges proposed an alternative legal procedure that "resembles a trial as closely as possible, but without the possibility of a conviction".

The court had paused his trial in March to allow for his health to be assessed. According to court documents, he is 88, although there is some dispute about his precise age.

It is alleged that Mr Kabuga used his large fortune, made in the 1970s tea trade, to buy weapons used to arm the Hutu death squads.

The wealthy businessman is also accused of using the radio station he set up to urge Hutus to kill Tutsis, fuelling the genocide by broadcasting inflammatory hate speech.

French investigators tracked him down to an apartment in Paris where he had been living under a false identity.

The United States had offered a reward of \$5m (£4.1m) for information leading to his arrest. BBC



Félicien Kabuga, who made his fortune in the tea trade, avoided capture for decades

two continents to evade capture.

The 84-year-old had been on the run for so long that the international tribunal set up to bring to justice those responsible for the 1994 genocide had ceased to work.

An 88-year-old man accused of being a major financier of the 1994 Rwandan genocide is unfit to stand trial, a UN war crimes court has ruled.

Félicien Kabuga had "severe dementia", according to medical experts.

moderate Hutus. He denies the charges.

The head of Rwandan genocide survivors' association Ibuka told BBC Great Lakes he was "saddened" by the judges' decision.

"As survivors, we felt relief when he was arrested, thinking that we were going to finally get justice," said Philbert Gakwenzire.

He said he doubted whether Mr Kabuga really was unfit to stand trial and that the association was thinking of "ways

Sudan conflict hitting neighbouring economies

The ongoing conflict in Sudan has created a regional crisis that has security and economic repercussions, a senior official with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in Geneva, has warned.

"The impact of this crisis on South Sudan is multiple - there is an economic impact which is very serious because good parts of the northern part of South Sudan were very much dependent on the economy of Sudan," said the UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Operations Raouf Mazou.

"So, it is a regional crisis having security considerations, but also very important economic considerations," Mr Mazou continued, adding that Chad had echoed similar concerns.

Since the start of the

conflict in Sudan in April, refugees have fled across the border to South Sudan, the majority of whom are South Sudanese returnees who are now coming back to the country they had once been forced to flee.

They are arriving alongside refugees from Sudan and various other countries.

The number of new arrivals into South Sudan this week has surpassed the 100,000 mark, the UNHCR says.

Mr Mazou told reporters in the capital, Juba, on Tuesday that about 7,000 registered refugees had entered South Sudan since the conflict in Sudan began. BBC



People flee their neighbourhoods amid fighting between the army and paramilitaries in Khartoum

Tunisian black women: 'My skin colour says I don't belong'

Black Tunisian women say they are experiencing more instances of racism after the country's president criticised sub-Saharan migrants.

"In Tunisia people are always questioning the fact that I'm Tunisian," says activist Khawla Ksiksi, a black Tunisian citizen.

In February, President Kais Saied ordered "urgent measures" against sub-Saharan migrants, accusing them of a "criminal plot" to change the country's demographics and cultural identity.

He went on to say that immigration came from "a desire to make Tunisia just another African country and not a member of the Arab and Islamic world".

There has since been a rise in violence against black African migrants, according to

language of "outsiders", and so when people use it to reply to her, they are making it clear they do not think she is Tunisian.

Ms Ksiksi, who is a co-founder of the Voices of Black Tunisian Women collective, wants to challenge the misconception that black Tunisians do not exist.

"I feel like I belong to Tunisia even though it's so violent towards me [and people who look like me]," the 31-year-old says.

"They treat us not as Tunisians and treat themselves as not Africans."

She argues that despite independence from France in 1956, Tunisians want to be seen as belonging to Europe, and the colonial viewpoint that black Tunisians are "dusty and unclean" lingers.

"That's why we have a huge identity crisis in Tunisia. We had independence on paper, but the colonial politics are still here."

A lack of black representation in



Khawla Ksiksi says she is sometimes made to feel as if she is an outsider and not Tunisian

Human Rights Watch, and the statement has only made the situation worse for black Tunisians, who make up between 10-15% of the Tunisian population, according to official figures.

This number includes some who are descendants of sub-Saharan African slaves - the slave trade was abolished in Tunisia nearly 180 years ago - while others trace their origins much further back.

Ms Ksiksi tells the BBC she is made to feel invisible: "Sometimes I speak in Arabic and they will answer in French because they don't want me to be a part of Tunisia."

Arabic is Tunisia's official language, but Ms Ksiksi says she is often rejected when she speaks it, because other people do not want to acknowledge a sense of kinship with her.

Although French is associated with privilege and education, it is also the

places of social and political power, she believes, reinforces the idea that there are no black Tunisian citizens.

"My skin colour says I don't belong so as black Tunisians we have to constantly prove that we are enough," Ms Ksiksi says.

For black women it is even harder, she adds: "In school, I had to always have the best grades because all the teachers thought that I would cheat because in their minds black people are not very intelligent."

The activist says she has had the financial resources to get a good education, but this privilege has often left her isolated: "The fact that you're always the only black person in the room makes you feel excluded and on your own."

"I always feel like everything is white and I'm the black dot."

Like Ms Ksiksi, Houda Mzioudet says the problem is that Tunisian society has been built on a "homogenised nationhood" that does not allow the discussion of racism. BBC

EDITORIAL

Minister Tweah's threat is belated

Finance Minister Samuel D. Tweah's threat to hold back salaries of heads of ministries, agencies and commissions, who fail to present budget performance reports to his office is nothing but belated.

"I didn't make that law; it's the legislature and it says the Minister of Finance will hold back salaries of officials, who failed to report for the budget given their various institutions", Tweah explained on Monday, June 4, when the Government of Liberia and the European Union signed four new financing agreements in the tune of US\$88 million and 80 million euros, respectively. The monies are intended for various government programs.

But having spent five years in office without enforcing such law, when did Minister Tweah realize that spending institutions of government are not providing performance reports for funds allotted them.

From year to year, this has been a major problem for heads of ministries, agencies and commissions appearing for budget hearings at the Legislature. In fact, ministers go with the audacity of requesting for increments of their allotments without detailed reports of expenditures from the previous year. And the government, under the watch of Minister Samuel Tweah, has been making increments for several ministries.

For instance, increments have been made for the Ministries of Health, Education and Agriculture, among several others without expenditure reports from the previous fiscal period. Today, the country's educational sector is in shamble with dilapidated public school buildings across the country staffed with volunteer teachers yet to be placed on the payroll.

Similar situation is with the Health and Agriculture sectors, where millions have been allotted thru the Finance Ministry with no progress on the ground like a bottomless drum that one tries to fill with water. What an irony!

Yet, Tweah wants foreign partners to believe that he means business when it comes to public financial management, while the reality in practice is totally the opposite.

In fact, the Public Financial Management Law of Liberia has been on the book since the administration of former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. So why has Tweah, as Minister of Finance, not enforced this law as a prudent financial policy 'till now?

These are some of the lip services of our public officials. Without political will, they profess to be tough in applying the rules when they mean completely something else. This has kept Liberia in a vicious cycle with no tangible progress.

The government is trying to present itself as tough in an election year, a strategy that could boomerang and further erodes already dangling public trust. It may well be shooting itself in the leg with the ammunition of Minister Tweah, who seems to be overly zealous in putting out a face that does not exist.

If the right thing was never done at the beginning, how relevant can it be at the end? It could be misconstrued and interpreted as a ploy to witch-hunt people being targeted in government. We rest our case here.

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COMMENTARY

By Jim O'Neill

The Poverty of AI Pessimism

LONDON - Hardly a week goes by without various pioneers in artificial intelligence issuing dire warnings about the technology that they introduced to the world. I got an early glimpse of this emerging pessimistic consensus a couple of months ago, when I attended a dinner with some AI experts who suggested that millions of relatively sophisticated, high-paying jobs could be at risk. I came away asking if this bleak outlook is really justified.

I have my doubts. Since the start of my professional life in the 1980s (and of course for much longer), technological progress has repeatedly been held up as a major threat to jobs in key industries such as automobile manufacturing. Yet until the Brexit debacle, the United Kingdom was producing more vehicles than it did in the supposed heyday of the auto industry, owing to the role of sophisticated new technologies in boosting leading producers' core businesses. In the northern English port city of Sunderland, Nissan currently operates one of the most productive auto plants in the world.

Likewise, despite German autoworkers commanding relatively higher nominal wages, the country's carmakers have managed to adapt and thrive for decades, competing globally and helping to satisfy a growing global middle class's demand for high-quality performance vehicles. Yes, German auto companies face their biggest challenge yet with the global transition to electric vehicles, and the slowdown in China implies weaker growth in the short term. But if the past is any guide, the industry could adapt and emerge even stronger in the future.

AI doomsayers also ignore the fact that populations are aging fast across most of the developed world and many major developing and emerging economies. With the growth of the labor force slowing at a time when people are also living longer, there will be more and more pressure on smaller working-age populations to finance pensions, health care, and other (typically) nondiscretionary commitments.

Unless this smaller working population can become more productive, the economy's growth performance will struggle. Japan and Italy are two stand-out examples of this trend from the past few decades, but they are hardly alone. Among others, China, South Korea, and most of continental Europe are in the same boat. While immigration offers a partial solution, it

is an increasingly charged political issue. Productivity-enhancing AI applications could be precisely what is needed.

Moreover, just look at what has been happening at the UK's treasured National Health Service, which is eating up ever more of the country's finances. The NHS employs more people than ever, yet it is becoming less and less productive. We in the UK are exposed to endless horror stories about the NHS's failings and what they mean for citizens seeking care.

Having dug into this issue as a member of the Times Health Commission, it is obvious to me that the NHS needs a dramatic uptake of modern technology to help with simple tasks (such as getting one computer system to talk to another), as well as more complicated ones. For example, embedding high-speed, AI-augmented diagnostics across the system could help to detect disease risks and provide earlier treatment - preferably through pharmacies or general practitioners. Such interventions would vastly improve both productivity and quality of care.

We already have early but extremely powerful evidence of what AI could do for public health globally. According to a May 25 BBC story, a group of scientists in Canada and the United States have used AI to discover a new antibiotic that is proving effective (so far) against *Acinetobacter baumannii*, one of the known antimicrobial-resistant superbugs on the World Health Organization's watch list.

Having led the UK's independent Review on AMR from 2014 to 2016, I am highly encouraged by this development. The drug will still have to go through the usual clinical trials, which is a lengthy and expensive process. But if all goes well, it will be the first time in decades that we have acquired a genuinely effective antibiotic for use against deadly superbugs. Now imagine what else AI could do just in the realm of medicine - from helping to discover or develop vaccines for hitherto unpreventable diseases to streamlining the clinical-trial process more broadly.

Of course, the AI experts are surely correct that we will need guardrails and high standards of regulation, lest this latest wave of innovation cause social, political, and economic havoc. The current era of round-the-clock social media, clickbait, and fake news has little to recommend it, and makes much of the pessimism understandable. But that is no reason to ignore the obvious, massive potential benefits of AI.

OP-ED

By Jafer Ahmad &
Abigail Kukura

Building a Biotech Alliance of Democracies

WASHINGTON, DC - Like electricity and artificial intelligence, biotechnology is poised to drive a general-purpose leap in human history. Offering the ability to manipulate the very essence of life as we know it, biotechnology represents a multi-trillion-dollar sector that straddles industries as diverse as agriculture, health, materials, and energy.

From pathogen risks and the security of biodata to the ability to bioengineer solutions to our most intractable challenges, the coming era presents both considerable perils and immense opportunities to transform our world at both the molecular and global levels. And the new era is beginning at a time of heightened competition between democratic and authoritarian countries that apply different norms and values to biotechnology.

Fortunately, the United States and its allies and partners have a head start. According to Pitchbook, the US remains the world's leading originator and destination of biotech investments, with US-based firms raising \$466 billion in 2022 - roughly ten times the amount of Chinese-origin capital. Close to 90% of that US capital goes toward domestic investment, highlighting America's role as both a global innovation hub and a marketplace for leading-edge biotech.

As of 2022, this has resulted in the US being home to the world's largest number of biotech companies, nearly three times more than in China. The US government has also begun to set the strategic course for durable biotechnology leadership with the Executive Order on the Bioeconomy and the creation of the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology and the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H).

Meanwhile, Europe is a world leader in biotech patents. The continent secured more than 40,000 health-related biotech patents over the past five years, and outperforms the US on biotech patents related to food, macromolecular chemistry, and environmental technology. French DNAScript and United Kingdom-based Nuclera are leaders in producing "desktop" DNA synthesizers. And the UK and Canada have established meaningful national biotechnology strategies dating back to 2017.

But an increasingly authoritarian China is determined to lead the world in biotechnology by 2035. The People's Republic is investing heavily to address impending domestic demographic and health-care challenges and even weaponize biotech innovations for military advantage. While total Chinese biotech investment is far below the US level, it now has the second-highest number of biotech companies listed in the Forbes Global 2000. Furthermore, China may now be the lead producer of research in synthetic biology and biological manufacturing.

The implications for US national-security interests are far-reaching, because collaboration and links between the countries' life-science ecosystems mean that US advances could also accelerate China's biotech development. For example, the rise of BGI Group (formerly Beijing Genomics Institute, now the world's largest genetic-research organization), was partly enabled by its access to US intellectual property and markets.

In the context of international competition, enduring leadership in this general-purpose technology cannot be left to chance. It requires sustained focus by the government, greater public-private collaboration, and a willingness to make strategic bets on our biotech future.

To this end, the Special Competitive Studies Project (SCSP) has published a National Action Plan for US Leadership in Biotechnology, a policy roadmap with top-line recommendations and supporting detail for coordinated academic, private-sector, and government efforts to establish US leadership in the sector through 2030, alongside allies and partners.

Given the biotech sector's unique nature, it's worth focusing on where the US and its allies and partners can coordinate efforts. As biotechnology's building blocks are inherently local and distributed, it is more diffuse, accessible, and interconnected than other technologies, offering distinct benefits and risks in the context of global tech competition. The US and its allies and partners should capitalize on these distinct benefits to work together more closely in facing a determined competitor like China.

First, because biology knows no borders, bioresponse capabilities must be both local and global. By creating a globally accessible information-sharing portal - a "Bionet" - to enable early-warning systems, the US and its allies and partners could enable rapid localized responses to biotech-related incidents. The data streams provided by a Bionet could support and feed into countries' rapid-response systems for biosecurity ("Medshield(s)"), enabling capabilities such as a biothreat "radar," and swift deployment of vaccines and therapeutics.

Second, setting standards is crucial to gaining and sustaining leadership in any technological sector. The US and its allies and partners should work to shape industry and ethical standards toward democratic principles, respect for individual rights, and promotion of a fair economic playing field. They should also deprive strategic rivals of the opportunity to shape biotech standards in their interests. This requires coordinated and consistent engagement with the International Standards Organization, the OECD, and other relevant multilateral organizations to develop and advance common positions.

Third, the US and its allies and partners should turn disparate genomic-data ecosystems into a strategic resource greater than the sum of its parts. They should consolidate open and proprietary datasets on human, animal, and plant genomes in a central biobank that is well-curated, interoperable, easy for researchers to access and use, and maintains strong privacy protections for human genetic data. This biobank could democratize biotech innovation, facilitate AI-enabled analysis, and reduce reliance on entities like BGI Group.

Fourth, the US and its allies and partners must improve their ability to attract and retain global biotech talent, including from China. They should update and leverage relevant employment-based, research, and investor visas to give priority to applicants with expertise in biotech, as well as supporting reciprocal biotech research fellowships.

Fifth, the US and its allies and partners should create a democratic biomanufacturing alliance to enable "design anywhere, grow everywhere" network effects, secure democracies' supply chains, and enhance geopolitical soft power. Here, the US should develop data-sharing agreements within existing and future alliance structures to enable shared access to an interface for local biomanufacturing capabilities.

Last but far from least, a baseline for global biotechnology cooperation must be established. Advances in biotech require cooperation and collaboration, sometimes even among competitors. The US government should identify and openly signal to the US private sector and to its allies and partners whether and where opportunities for cooperation on advancing global public goods may be worth the associated risks to democratic values.

Harnessing the power of biotechnology requires the US and its allies and partners to work together to craft a shared vision that puts democratic values front and center, especially in an era of international competition with authoritarian countries. The SCSP biotech plan is a starting point from which to do just that.

OPINION

By Daniel Gros

The Transatlantic Carbon-Pricing Clash

SOFIA/MILAN - Economists have long argued that regulation alone cannot bring about the reduction in global greenhouse-gas emissions that is needed to curb climate change; a carbon price is also essential. So far, dozens of carbon-pricing arrangements, mostly tax-based schemes, have been implemented around the world. But, when it comes to impact, the devil is in the details.

The US Inflation Reduction Act, passed last year, highlighted just how complicated carbon pricing can be. The IRA includes a little-noticed subsidy of \$85 per ton of carbon dioxide captured from industrial processes, paid to any new facility for 12 years. Whether the provision will lead to a significant reduction in emissions is impossible to predict. What can be expected is a test of the viability of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology.

As it stands, only a few industrial CCS facilities exist globally, and they remove only small amounts of CO₂. While the potential cost of CCS varies widely, many estimates put it below \$85 per ton. The guarantee of a generous subsidy, which investors can count on for a long period, could thus give the sector a major boost.

But whether or not the CCS subsidy proves successful is a secondary consideration. More important is the fact that it establishes a de facto carbon price for US industry. If a steel plant, for example, begins employing CCS, it would receive \$85 for every ton of carbon no longer emitted.

The European Union relies on a very different carbon-pricing model. The European Emissions Trading System - the world's first, and largest, carbon market - employs a cap-and-trade approach. The ETS effectively establishes a carbon price by forcing companies to acquire enough permits, or "allowances," to cover their CO₂ emissions. A certain amount of free permits are doled out, and firms must purchase additional permits on the market.

Imagine two identical steel plants, one in the United States, the other in the EU. Both would face, in principle, the same marginal incentive to reduce emissions. The European steel plant that reduces its emissions would need fewer permits, which it could sell to higher emitters at the market price - a price that, at €80 (\$86) per ton, is currently almost exactly the same as that created by the American CCS subsidy.

If the EU plant receives its allowances for free, the financial situation would be exactly the same on both sides of the Atlantic. The extra money would simply be coming from different sources: the federal government (for the US plant) or those who buy surplus ETS certificates (for the EU plant).

But this does not mean that we have achieved transatlantic carbon-pricing harmony, owing to the way the EU approach works in reality. A key feature of the ETS is that it treats the power sector and industry very differently. Power stations get few allowances for free, and have to buy the rest on the market. Industry, by contrast, gets all the allowances it needs for free. A steel plant that cuts production, thereby reducing its CO₂ emissions, loses its free allowances, destroying the incentive to reduce emissions. It should not be surprising that industrial emissions have fallen little in Europe since the ETS began operating almost two decades ago.

So, while US industry now faces a kind of carbon price, EU industry still does not. And this will not change any time soon: the EU plans to continue providing most of industry's allowances for free until 2030. Yet Europe continues touting the ETS, with its make-believe carbon price for industry, partly to avoid a politically awkward situation: if the EU attached no strings to its free emissions allowances, companies would close their plants and sell their allowances, realizing hefty profits.

The EU also knows that simply cutting local carbon-intensive production would do little good for the climate, because the same goods would then be imported from outside the bloc. To prevent this so-called carbon leakage, the EU is now planning to introduce a controversial "carbon border adjustment mechanism" (CBAM), under which importers would have to buy ETS certificates equivalent to imported products' carbon content. The current plan is that, as the CBAM gradually comes into force - between 2026 and 2034 - free allowances for industry will be incrementally eliminated.

Since the CBAM will apply only to imports from countries that do not have a carbon price, and the US now effectively has a carbon price, US products should be exempt, averting potentially significant transatlantic friction. But another problem soon arises: once EU industry no longer receives free allowances, producers of carbon-intensive products would have an incentive to shift production to the US, where the government covers decarbonization costs. EU political leaders will then face the difficult choice between continuing free allowances and applying the CBAM to the US anyway.

The CBAM can be justified under World Trade Organization rules, because its purpose is not to protect domestic industry, but to advance a global good by extending the EU's carbon price to imports. But applying the CBAM, including to countries like the US, while maintaining free allowances to EU industry, would clearly protect European industry. This would be very difficult to justify under WTO rules.

The overall lesson is that different approaches to carbon pricing for industry have very different implications. For now, the US has gone with carrots, while the EU has focused on sticks. It is difficult to say which approach is better for the climate, but it is easy to foresee major trade and political frictions resulting from these opposing choices.

Pictorial of US Ambassador Michael McCarthy tour of Jeety Rubber Factory on Wednesday, June 7, 2023



MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Six notorious armed robbers get 10 years sentence each

By Lincoln G. Peters

The Criminal Court “D” in Monrovia has sentenced six notorious armed robbers to ten years imprisonment each following their trial at the

testimonies from witnesses and evidence produced during the trial.

They were found guilty of armed robbery, and criminal conspiracy.

The indictment said defendants Alieu Sumoe,

and his wife and [made] away with 25 of 25kg bag of rice valued at US\$350.00,” the indictment said.

It said the accused also made away with one Tecno C-X valued at US\$210.00 and one flat-screen TV, 32 inches LRC valued at US\$80.00.

For defendants Kryah Lee Dopoe and Jackson Geiah, the indictment disclosed that on 18 January 2023 at 6:00 a.m. in the Lakpazee Community, Airfield, they committed armed robbery against victim Estell Gataweh.

Prosecutors said victim Estell was awaiting a tricycle (kekeh) to go to work when she noticed that the defendants were watching her movement from a porch. The accused allegedly rushed victim Estell later with a knife and other deadly weapons and threatened to injure her. They allegedly took away her properties during the robbery.

“The defendants stole the plaintiff’s hang bag containing US\$60.00, one Intel phone valued US\$150.00, cash US\$150.00, and two hundred Liberian dollars and documents containing her voting card,” the indictment noted.

For his part, Jerome Stephen was charged with armed robbery, aggravated assault, and theft of property. The indictment said he was seen on 29 November 2022 at 9:40 a.m. dragging the victim under a tree after she came down from a bike and took her belongings from her.

Melvin Kollie, Qumie Sanoh, and Alfred Doe who is at large, purposely, willfully committed armed robbery against victim Mohammed Saryon and his wife while they were in bed.

The accused were allegedly armed with deadly weapons including single barrel shotgun pistols, cutlasses, and knives on 30 September 2022 around 3:30 a.m. in the Plank Filed Community, Battery Factory with a criminal intent to commit theft.

“The defendants advanced gun at the private prosecutor



Temple of Justice

Temple of Justice.

Defendants Jerome Stephen, Kryah Lee Dopoe, Jackson Geiah, Alieu Sumo, Melvin Kollie, and Qumie Sanoh will serve their sentence at the Monrovia Central Prison or South Beach.

Presiding Criminal Court “D” Judge Mameita Jabateh Sirleaf handed a ruling Wednesday, 7 June 2023, committing the defendants to ten years imprisonment.

She said their sentencing followed a bench trial. They were convicted based on

Man discovered dead in Maryland County

By Patrick N. Mensah
Maryland County

A 51-year-old man identified as Philip Wion has been discovered dead in Pleebo, Zone 2 community in Maryland County.

The lifeless body of the late Wion was discovered early Wednesday morning, 7 June 2023.

Wion's lifeless body was seen lying under a tank early Tuesday morning until officers of the Liberia National Police, County Health Team, and community leaders arrived to examine it.

It sparked more concerns among residents of the New Pleebo Community.

According to Joseph Quire, an elder brother of the deceased, Mr. Wion had left his home on Tuesday evening for work. He was said to work as a security for a businessman.

His brother said he didn't return home until the discovery of his lifeless body.

“Philip left the house Tuesday night and went to work

because he is a security for a businessman whose name is unknown,” Mr. Quire explained.

According to Quire, the man for whom his late brother Wion served as security, had a shop around the big market.

“And the only thing we could see was our brother’s dead body this morning,” Quire lamented.

Quire said the death of his brother Mr. Wion brought sorrows and worries because it has left the family, including the community dwellers panicking.

He said his brother’s death came in the wake of rumors of ritualistic killings in the county.

Meanwhile, a 15-man jury comprising the zone leadership and County Health Team after a thorough examination of the corpse reported no foul play.

Police in the district have launched an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death.



‘My job is to speak for you’

—Rep. Saah Foko tells constituents

By Lincoln G. Peters

Montserrado County Electoral District #9 Representative Frank Saah Foko says his legislative responsibility to his constituents is to speak and lobby for them.

He said his job is to ensure that the district gets the needed development that will improve the lives of the people and lift their spirits across the district.

“My job is not to look for money to do this project by myself. My job as [a] member of the 54th Legislature is to speak for you,” he said Wednesday, 7 June 2023.

Representative Foko spoke while breaking grounds for the construction of a proposed multi-purpose administrative building in Lakpazee, Montserrado Electoral District #9.

He was joined at the ceremony by Montserrado County Senator Saah Joseph, and Madam Elizabeth S. B. Pelham,

do this work,” he said.

“Let give God the glory for President Weah who saw destiny in me as well as many others, including Saah Joseph that today we are at this level,” he added.

In special remarks, the Mayor of Monrovia Jefferson Tamba Koijee inspired the gathering, saying the story of Rep. Foko is a testimony that God can bless anybody and change their story.

He pleaded with residents of the district to rally around the lawmaker and to see him as one of their own.

Also remarking at the occasion, Senator Saah Joseph pledged his unflinching support to the project and called on everyone to join hands in supporting the project.

He said he would work to ensure that all resources are available for the project.

Speaking on behalf of the Chairman of the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), Mr. Alexander Saylee expressed gratitude to Representative Foko.

Earlier, giving the historical



Representative Frank Saah Foko

the Mother of Foko’s late boss, Munah Pelham-Youngblood.

“This project is a milestone project. Let us all rally for the success of the project,” he pleaded with his constituents.

“Do not look at who Saah Foko is, look at the greater good of the project,” he urged residents.

Rep. Foko said it was by the special grace of God to break ground for what he termed as a “Legacy Project in honor of his late boss” Pelham-Youngblood.

He worked with Pelham-Youngblood when she represented the district up to her death, and he subsequently succeeded her in a by-election.

Foko disclosed that the project will live the late Representative Pelham-Youngblood’s dream and make an impact in the district.

“I don’t want you to give me the glory, neither to Senator Saah Joseph. It is God who provides the resources for us to

background of the proposed Munah Pelham-Youngblood Multi-purpose Administrative Building, Emmanuel Gbortoe said back in 2014, the District Development Council (DDC) signed a joint resolution aimed at securing the space for the project.

He added that the building, when completed, shall contain a three storey building that will host a library and resource center for students across the district.

He said it shall also contain an office space for the District Development Council as well as a hall that will host program and district meeting, festival, and personal programs.

Making remarks, the Chairman of the District Development Council Mr. Morris Kamara promised that the council will work along with the project team to ensure that the historical building is constructed.

He noted that when completed, the building will serve its true purpose for the livelihood of the residents of district #9 and beyond.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Southeastern group endorses Boakai

By: *Kruah Thompson*

A group styled South Eastern Alliance for Weah's Re-election or SEAWR, has instead, endorsed the Boakai-Koung Ticket of the opposition Unity Party.

The South Eastern Alliance

distressing sexual abuse attacks suffered by many Liberian women and girls, as revealed in a leaked audio released by ruling CDC chairman, Mulbah K. Morlu, involving citizens soliciting jobs from government officials.

Boakai, to rescue the country.

"The high level of corrupt practices has deterred international investors from returning or investing in our economy, which requires sustainable development," he says.

He laments that unprecedented surge in drugs, never before witnessed since Liberia's establishment in 1822, is allegedly being supported by President George Weah himself.

Chelley recalls President's association with a fellow Liberian, James Bestman during the latter's arrest in the United States for drug trafficking, noting that Bestman was convicted on charges of marijuana possession and money laundering in April 2012.

"The fact remains that Mr. Weah was present with James Bestman when he was apprehended for drug trafficking in the United States of America. This incident serves as a reminder," he underscores.

He also observes that the recent US\$100 million cocaine case, which the Ministry of Justice did not handle with due

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



for Weah, comprised of key regional leaders, declared its support for the UP's ticket here on June 7, 2023 thus, bolstering the momentum of Amb. Joseph N. Boakai and Senator Jeremiah Koung as the presidential race gains intensity.

The chairman of the group, Watson Chelley, says the decision is influenced by

The endorsement by the South Eastern Alliance is anticipated to significantly shape the political landscape as the nation approaches the upcoming elections.

Mr. Chelley also highlights pervasive hunger prevalent throughout the republic, emphasizing the need for an experienced political figure like former Vice President

Bishop blames irresponsible fathers for economic hardship

By: *Lewis S Teh*

The president emeritus of the Liberian Council of Churches (LCC) Bishop Kortu Brown, has identified irresponsible fatherhood in the Liberian society as one of the factors that is contributing to economic hardship in the country.

Bishop Brown who's general overseer of the Apostolic Pentecostal Church International notes that the situation has contributed to many family crises across the country.

"Liberian fathers, many of them have shown that they are irresponsible. They abandon homes and leave their children with the mothers; this is increasing economic hardship on Liberia", says the Bishop.

He made the observation in an interview with reporters recently at his residence in Brewerville outside Monrovia.

Bishop Brown underscores a need for Liberian fathers to stop being irresponsible and learn how to take

responsibility to reduce current economic hardship that has engulfed the country.

"If you take a look on the street, you will see thousands of children not in school; families don't have food to eat and this is increasing the economic challenge on the country, and these are due to fathers abandoning homes, leaving their children with their mothers and at the end, the children will subsequently become breadwinner for

themselves."

He says conditions in the country aren't like before when foreign missionaries or humanitarian organizations came to Liberia to offer assistance to struggling parents, who couldn't afford for their children, adding that all these are real causes for the increased economic hardship being witnessed here today.

According to the Liberian religious leader, most Liberian children, who are seen in the streets come from homes, noting that it is situation that put them in the streets.



Liberian Council of Churches (LCC) Bishop Kortu Brown

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PYJ abandons

environment. Before we get treatment, we have to go to Yorpea, a town that is about three to four hours away from here. Another problem, we only have a junior high school that has no instructor, which is the Gomahplay Public School. Before we get high school education, we have to go either to Yorpea or Butuotuo", he adds.

According to him, due to the lack of clinics and other social services for residents of the town, there has been an increase in childbirth, and most pregnant women going to give birth died on the way while trying to access healthcare services.

For his part, an elder of the town, Dolo Delekpah says it's frustrating that Senator Johnson, their son, abandoned them for the past 18 years as senator.

"We feel very bad now my son. For the past 18 years that Senator Johnson has been electing presidents, we have not benefited anything from him. This is his hometown, we have no

clinic, school, roads, and opportunities for our children. We only see him during campaign time. When we vote for him, he can sell our votes. We are tired of this. If he can't come and sit at the table with us, we will reject him", he warns.

An ex-rebel general and leader of the erstwhile Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) rebels that captured and slain President Samuel Kanyon Doe at the Freeport of Monrovia during the peak of the 14 years of Liberian Civil War in 1990, has been a three-time kingmaker, always being in an advantageous position in the runoff to decide the next elected President.

He did so for former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf twice before crossing over to then Senator George Weah and lifted his hand in Nimba County in the runoff with former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai got Weah elected President in 2017 but severed ties with President Weah is now with former VP Boakai. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Starts from back page

Bility denies

legislative seat in Nimba, says he remains focused on the work he promised his people, adding that he is working on proving electricity right now, so by next month the whole of Sacelpea, towns and villages in that district will be electrified, which PYJ wants to distract his attention from.

Both men who hail from Nimba County, are presently on a

political divide, with Bility in bed with CPP Standard Bearer Mr. Alexander B. Cummings, while Senator PYJ is with former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai of the Unity Party.

The CPP and the UP are two main opposition parties among dozen others that want to defeat President George Weah in October. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Independent Presidential hopeful rallies Liberians to look ahead

By: *Emmanuel wise Jipoh*

With four months to Presidential and Legislative elections in Liberia, an independent presidential hopeful here, Robert T. Morris, has called on Liberians to let go the past, and think ahead by voting for the future.

Speaking Tuesday, 6 June on a local radio station in Monrovia, Mr. Morris criticized the CDC-led administration of doing the worse to increase suffering among Liberians.

He stressed that change is now and Liberians can make a U-turn, which lasts in the hands of the young people, saying "Our nation needs saving and the young people are the only ones, who can save Liberia."

He said the fight for survivability of Liberia rests with the people, and if Liberians cannot fight to save their nation, they risk not having a nation to call their own in the nearest future.

He urged citizens not to be complacent by wishing for a return of the days of old, as such stories cannot make the desirous

changes they are yearning for, but rather, the armor is in their hands to make a decisive decision at the ballot box in October.

He said Liberians should realize how far they've gone as a country and look to the future which will be determined by how they vote in the pending elections.

According to him, changing Liberia requires a leadership with vision and understanding how to improve every sector of the country, including Education and Health as well as livelihood of the people, while creating jobs and empowerment for the youth and women.

Mr. Morris said one of the major problems facing the country is acute poverty in spite of its human resource potential.

"If you go around, you can see our people are suffering, no jobs for our young people, majority of them are now engaged in bad habits, turning into disadvantaged youths, are mothers and more; we need change."

He said due to poor health facilities across the country, patients are being transferred to neighboring countries for survival, which Liberians do not deserve.

Français

La CPP s'en tient aux électeurs âgés de 18 à 35 ans pour sa victoire

Mlle Charlyne W. Brumskine s'est dite confiante de la victoire de la Collaboration des Partis Politiques (CPP) en octobre. Elle croit que la majorité silencieuse votera

le mardi 6 juin, le porte-étendard adjoint de la CPP a dit « les électeurs âgés de 18 à 35 ans sont le moteur des résultats des élections ».

Selon elle, les Libériens ont un besoin urgent de changements

gouvernance de la CPP met l'accent sur les politiques de transformation, d'amélioration des conditions de vie des gens ordinaires, d'impact sur la vie de la jeune génération, d'autonomisation des femmes, de création d'emplois et d'amélioration des secteurs de la santé et de l'éducation, entre autres.

Elle a décrit le ticket Cummings-Brumskine comme une force formidable. « Je ne suis pas une politicienne conventionnelle, mais M. Cummings m'a choisie, car il sait que j'ai la vision de diriger, et c'est un partenariat unique non pas pour moi, mais pour les commerçantes, les jeunes garçons, les enfants qui vendent dans les rues, les jeunes du Libéria, désireux d'améliorer leurs conditions de vie, les jeunes défavorisés, qui aspirent à la réhabilitation ».

« Nous représentons les femmes, les enfants, les électeurs silencieux, qui ne peuvent pas parler. Nous représentons les écarts entre les riches et les pauvres, c'est pourquoi je suis de la conviction que nous allons gagner l'élection, avec les électeurs silencieux », a-t-elle dit.

Mlle Brumskine a également profité de l'occasion pour

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ANC leader Mr. Alexander B. Cummings

Cllr. Charlyne W. Brumskine

pour son parti.

La jeune Brumskine croit que le scrutin sera décidé par de les jeunes électeurs âgés de 18 à 35 ans. Ce sont eux qu'elle appelle la majorité silencieuse qui, selon elles, ressentent les difficultés et les souffrances extrêmes sous le gouvernement dirigé par Weah.

S'exprimant lors d'une émission sur la radio Truth FM

urgents qui ont un impact sur leurs conditions de vie et leurs moyens de subsistance.

Elle a critiqué l'administration dirigée par la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC) et les anciens régimes dont celui du Parti de l'unité (UP) « qui ont plongé les Libériens dans une crise de pauvreté, d'humiliation et de marginalisation ».

À en croire le porte-étendard de la CPP, le programme de

L'économie libérienne est sous perfusion

Le Sénat a vu des signes d'une morosité dans l'économie depuis la promulgation du budget national de 2023, selon M. Albert Tugbe Chie, président par intérim du Sénat.

« Depuis que le budget national de 2023 a été promulgué, le Sénat a vu des signes d'une morosité dans l'économie, entraînant des défis tels que la dépréciation du taux de change », a-t-il déclaré le mardi 6 juin 2023.

Lors d'un point de presse, M. Chie a également fait état du retard du paiement des salaires ainsi et de la plainte des agences et des institutions du retard de l'obtention des fonds pour leurs diverses activités et programmes.

Compte tenu des défis qu'il a énumérés, M. Chie a déclaré que ces questions économiques ont été discutées avec le ministère des Finances et de la Planification du développement et la récente mission du Fonds monétaire

international (FMI).

« Il a été noté que l'Autorité fiscale du Libéria n'a pas atteint ses objectifs trimestriels », a-t-il ajouté.

Chie a révélé que le FMI a également indiqué que les recettes douanières ne sont pas performantes malgré l'augmentation des volumes d'importations.

« La lenteur de l'économie n'est pas étrange dans une année électorale dans les pays en

développement en raison de nombreux facteurs associés aux élections, y compris l'attitude de laisser-faire des contribuables », a-t-il plaidé.

Selon Chie, l'exécutif et le législatif travaillent ensemble pour remédier aux défis économiques et, espérons-le, d'ici la fin juillet, des progrès significatifs seront réalisés.

Il a précisé que certaines des mesures qui pourraient

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Sen. Pro-Tempore Mr. Chie

Éditorial

Le gouvernement doit s'exprimer sur l'affaire de diamant

Le gouvernement du Libéria n'est toujours pas clair sur le diamant de 53,3 carats estimé à 5 millions de dollars américains à cause duquel plusieurs personnes ont manifesté vendredi devant le maquis Jamaica Resort du président George Weah situé à Paynesville.

Des centaines de manifestants, dont la plupart des courtiers et des mineurs, se sont amassés devant la boîte de nuit Jamaica Resort du président George Weah, le long de l'autoroute de l'aéroport international Roberts à l'extérieur de Monrovia, pour exiger le limogeage du ministre adjoint des Mines Emmanuel T.T. Swen, qui aurait refusé de retourner un diamant trouvé par un jeune libérien.

Mohammed Kamara aurait trouvé un diamant de 55 carats à Gbarpolu, dans l'ouest du Libéria, et l'aurait remis aux autorités du ministère des Mines à Monrovia. La pierre précieuse pourrait être vendue à environ 5 millions de dollars américains.

Des manifestants amenés par Bill Lama et Mohammed Kamara, alias "Jack" et Ma Fatu Nyumah Borbor, propriétaire du ruisseau dans lequel le diamant a été trouvé, ont pris d'assaut jeudi 1er juin la boîte Jamaica Resort, appelant au limogeage immédiat du ministre adjoint Swen, qu'ils accusent de vol de bien.

Selon les manifestants, le diamant de 53,3 carats a été trouvé par le pêcheur Mohammed Kamara, alias "Iron Jacket" dans un ruisseau à Gbarpolu. Le ruisseau appartient à Ma Fatu Nyumah Borbor, qui serait une marchande de minéraux expérimentée.

Selon le manifestant Lama, c'est au cours d'une routine régulière que M. Kamara aurait trouvé le diamant. Il a ensuite informé les autorités de la région. La nouvelle s'est aussi répandue dans tout le pays comme une traînée de poudre.

Le diamant aurait été remis au ministre adjoint des Mines Emmanuel T.T. Swen, en tant que représentant du gouvernement, mais le ministre refuserait délibérément de restituer la pierre précieuse.

S'exprimant, chagrin au cœur, Mohammed Kamara a dit qu'il a trouvé le diamant pendant qu'il travaillait dans le ruisseau de Ma Fatu Borbor. Et il a informé les voisins qui lui ont conseillé d'en informer le ministère des Mines qui a compétence sur les questions minières afin que tout se passe dans la légalité et que toutes les parties en bénéficient.

C'est alors que le ministre adjoint Emmanuel Swen a été contacté. On lui a remis le diamant. Mais maintenant il refuserait de le remettre aux gens qui l'ont trouvé.

« Tout ce que nous voulons, c'est que le président George Weah limoge le ministre Swen parce qu'il est un voyou, c'est un criminel. Il a volé notre diamant », a-t-il dit.

« Nous ne dormirons pas et nous ne nous reposerons pas tant que nous n'avons pas notre diamant. Le ministre Swen a conclu un accord clandestin. Il a essayé d'utiliser son influence pour nous intimider, et il a pris notre diamant et l'a donné à ceux auxquels il préfère le vendre. Il veut profiter de notre sueur, mais cela ne fonctionnera pas », a juré Lama.

Le ministre Swen aurait remis le diamant en question à un certain Kpaku, à en croire ses accusateurs. Ce dernier aurait été demandé de donner 100 000 dollars américains à ceux qui ont trouvé le diamant pour oublier l'affaire, mais finalement, il leur aurait donné 88 000 dollars américains qu'ils ont rejetés.

« J'ai besoin de mon diamant pour que nous le vendions dans la transparence. Nous ne pouvons pas vendre de diamants sans les mineurs et le gouvernement », a-t-il dit.

De même, Ma Fatu Borbor, propriétaire de la mine où le diamant aurait été trouvé, a demandé au ministre Swen de rendre le diamant à Mohammed Kamara, qu'elle décrit comme son beau-frère.

« Je lance un appel à notre président, George Weah, pour qu'il vienne à mon secours en me rendant mon diamant découvert dans ma crique », a-t-elle exigé.

Madame Borbor : « Nous avons besoin de notre diamant. Je pleure sur le président George Manneh Weah pour qu'il intervienne afin que [cela] profite au district et au comté dans son ensemble. C'est une opportunité susceptible de changer ma vie et celle de mes enfants.

La police a arrêté plusieurs manifestants et dispersé les autres. Mais depuis l'incident, ni les autorités du ministère des Mines ni le bureau du président Weah ne s'est officiellement exprimé sur la question. Par conséquent, les rumeurs courent partout.

Français

La CPP s'en tient aux électeurs

s'opposer aux critiques selon lesquelles elle n'était pas apte à être la vice-présidente de M. Cummings. « Il n'y a pas de meilleur moment pour apporter le changement dont les gens ont besoin. Il ne s'agit pas de Charlyne Brumskine; il s'agit des jeunes du Libéria, qui aspirent à un leader visionnaire. Arrêtons notre façon de faire et changeons les mentalités », a-t-elle déclaré.

Lorsqu'on lui a demandé quel genre de vice-présidente elle sera si la CCPP est élue en octobre, Me Brumskine a dit qu'elle servira en partenariat

avec M. Cummings, pour impacter des vies, plutôt que de simplement s'asseoir comme une voiture dans un garage.

« M. Cummings et moi-même aurons un partenariat en matière de gouvernance », a-t-elle déclaré, ajoutant « Je ne serais pas une vice-présidente qui ne fera qu'observer M. Cummings. Il connaît mon expertise, c'est pourquoi il m'a choisie pour représenter mon peuple. Je dois être reconnaissante de l'opportunité de diriger mon peuple et ce moment est venu », a-t-elle ajouté.

L'économie libérienne

être prises rapidement consistant à annuler certains des accords d'incitation qui ont été conclus entre le gouvernement et certaines sociétés privées.

Il a mis un accent particulier sur les accords qui n'ont pas fait l'objet de ratification du parlement et sur l'annulation de certains privilèges en franchise de droits, en particulier sur le carburant.

« Il y a une prévision d'un déficit budgétaire d'environ 44 millions de dollars américains et il est prévu de préparer et de promulguer un budget de refonte afin de réduire les dépenses », a-t-il poursuivi.

Concernant les résultats du recensement national, Chie a déclaré que l'Institut libérien des services de géo-information (LIGIS) avait écrit au Sénat et indiqué que les résultats définitifs du recensement seraient disponibles d'ici la fin de ce mois.

Une fois les résultats reçus, il a déclaré que l'Assemblée législative agirait conformément à la Constitution et aux autres lois.

Chie a expliqué qu'il existe plusieurs projets de loi qui font l'objet de d'études au niveau des comités sénatoriaux et législatifs.

Ces projets de loi, a-t-il dit, comprennent la loi sur les drogues, l'amendement à la nouvelle loi électorale, le projet de loi sur les infrastructures et quelques autres.

Selon lui, la plénière du Sénat a reçu des assurances par l'intermédiaire des commissions judiciaires que tous les projets de loi qui sont au niveau des commissions mixtes seront achevés avant l'ajournement de ce deuxième segment.

Dans un autre développement, M. Chie a condamné les membres du personnel de l'Assemblée législative qui organisent des activités politiques dans les locaux du parlement.

« Bien que nous chérissions le

pluralisme politique, de telles activités ne devraient pas être menées », a-t-il averti.

« Nous demandons à tous les membres du personnel de se conformer au mémorandum émis par le directeur de la sécurité. »

En outre, Chie a adressé des accusations selon lesquelles il aurait fait don de véhicules à un parti politique d'opposition.

Il a déclaré que le 16 mai 2023, il avait laissé une mise en garde lors de sa déclaration liminaire lors de la deuxième partie de la sixième session.

Dans cette déclaration, il a dit qu'il avait exhorté les Libériens à faire attention à bien digérer ce qu'ils entendent et lisent avant de croire parce que c'est une année électorale.

« Le mensonge politique, les assassinats, les rumeurs, la fabrication avec l'intention de tromper les masses seront à l'ordre du jour », a-t-il répété.

Après avoir donné un tel avertissement, Chie s'est dit consterné d'apprendre que les médias sociaux et quelques stations de radio avaient défilé avec des informations alléguant qu'il avait acheté un certain nombre de véhicules pour le parti de l'unité, un parti de l'opposition.

« Certains ont dit 8, d'autres 10, 15 et jusqu'à 25. Les opportunistes viennent d'ajouter 73 motos à la liste et pourraient ajouter d'autres articles avant la fin du week-end », a-t-il déclaré.

Chie a déclaré que ces informations sont fausses, sans vides et sans fondement et qu'elles sont maintenant devenues une campagne de diffamation pour détourner l'attention du Congrès pour le changement démocratique (CDC) au pouvoir.

« A aucun moment, je n'ai acheté un véhicule ou fait [un] don de quelque nature que ce soit, directement ou indirectement, ou demandé à un individu ou à une entreprise, directement ou indirectement.

Mali : les anciens rebelles du CMA et du CSP-PSD toujours opposés au référendum constitutionnel



Au Mali, les anciens rebelles maintiennent leur opposition au référendum constitutionnel. Les autorités de transition ont annoncé un vote le 18 juin. Il sera organisé partout, sauf dans certaines zones du Nord contrôlées par les groupes armés signataires de l'accord de paix de 2015, notamment Kidal et Ménaka.

La Coordination des Mouvements de l'Azawad (CMA) et la plateforme du CSP-PSD se sont réunies de samedi à ce mardi 6 juin à Kidal. Elles ont rencontré la médiation internationale dimanche. Mohamed Elmaouloud Ramdane, est porte-parole du CSP. Pour lui, il n'est toujours pas question de soutenir l'initiative tant que l'accord de paix n'est pas relancé.

« Ce projet de nouvelle Constitution ne prend pas en charge les principales dispositions de l'accord, donc on ne peut pas l'accepter en son état actuel. C'est vrai, nous avons rencontré la communauté internationale, nous avons discuté ces sujets. Les portes restent ouvertes pour trouver un compromis avant les référendums, donc on attend les retours

de la médiation. On attend les propositions des autorités de la transition pour une sortie de ces blocages pour un dénouement heureux », dit-il.

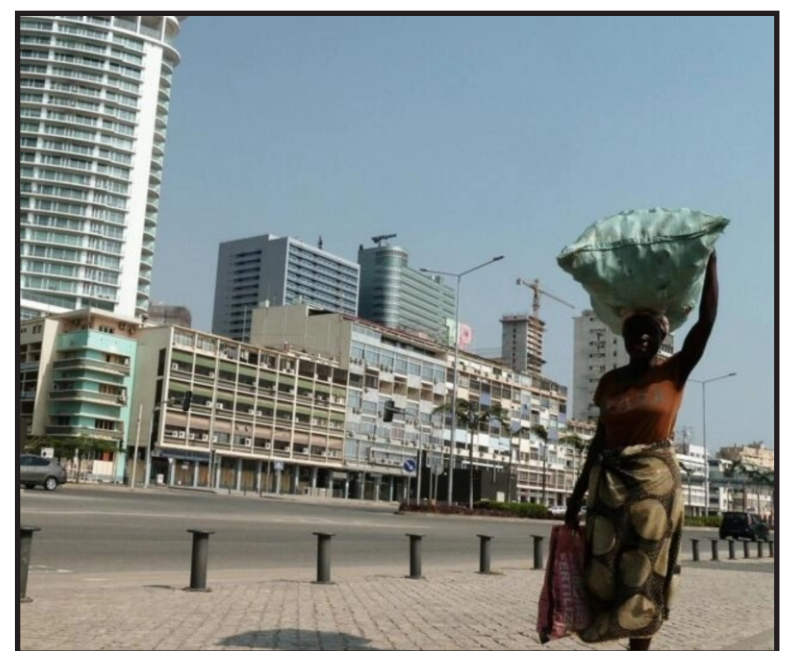
« Ce que nous demandons, c'est la mise en œuvre de l'accord, et pour sa mise en œuvre, il faut qu'elle soit prise en charge dans cette Constitution, bien qu'il y ait des engagements sincères de la part de ces autorités. L'expression d'une volonté réelle, qu'elle soit mise en priorité de cette transition. Car pour nous, l'accord reste est demeure le seul outil d'une paix durable et d'une réconciliation nationale. »

La croissance en Afrique subsaharienne continue à ralentir

C'est le constat dressé par la Banque mondiale. L'institution financière a publié, mardi 7 juin, ses perspectives économiques mondiales. Le tableau dressé est plutôt sombre. Les perspectives de réduction de la pauvreté sont minces. Une situation qui s'explique par au moins deux facteurs.

Premier facteur mis en avant par la Banque mondiale : l'inflation galopante. Même si elle s'est atténuée, la hausse annuelle des prix des denrées alimentaires reste à deux chiffres dans 70% des pays. En cause, les coûts élevés des intrants agricoles, les dépréciations monétaires et les nouvelles difficultés d'approvisionnement liées aux violences intercommunautaires ou au changement climatique.

D'après l'institution bancaire, ces phénomènes ont aggravé la pauvreté et l'insécurité alimentaire par rapport au début de l'année 2022. La Banque mondiale compte ainsi 35 millions de personnes



supplémentaires en situation d'insécurité alimentaire aiguë.

Deuxième élément mis en avant : la croissance des trois plus grandes économies d'Afrique subsaharienne continue à fléchir. L'Afrique du Sud reste pénalisée par de graves pannes d'électricité, en plus de l'inflation et d'un durcissement des politiques intérieures. En Angola et au Nigeria - les plus grands producteurs de pétrole de la région -, la dynamique de croissance est au point mort, poursuit la Banque mondiale, en raison notamment de la baisse des prix de l'énergie.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

The Cost of Governance: Former Ruling Party, Current Ruling Party in Game of Buck-passing

By. S.Karweaye

There are countless things wrong with governance in Liberia, and many Liberians would relate to this quite easily. Notably, however, one of the factors bedeviling governance in the country is the huge cost incurred in running the government in post-conflict Liberia. This challenge started under the former ruling Unity Party (UP) and passed down to the current ruling party, the Coalition of Democratic Change (CDC) and according to analysts, might lead Liberia into bankruptcy someday. The negative impact of this high cost is known and felt by most Liberians who bear the brunt daily.

It is worth noting the millions of dollars Liberia makes from mining, timber, maritime registry (flag of convenience), electricity, and foreign aid, independent of other earnings like income taxes, have yet to translate into desirable development because most of the country's funds go into recurrent expenditures like payment of wages, salaries, purchase of vehicles, gas slips and allowances for overseas travels, accommodation, medical expenses, servicing debts, among many others.

For example, under the UP-led government in the 2016/2017 budget, out of the US\$556 million signed into law, recurrent expenditure got US\$487.2 million (88% of the total budget) while capital expenditure got US\$68.8 million (12% of total budget) and the US \$26 million for debt servicing while the 2017/2018 budget, out of US\$563.5 million signed into law by the outgoing Unity Party-led administration, recurrent expenditure got US\$499.2 million (94% of total budget) and capital expenditure got US\$ 27.3 million (5.2%).

Under the CDC-led government, the 2020/2021 budget signed into law by President George Weah, out of the US\$570 million budget, the allocation of US\$511.4 million (89.7% of the total budget) went to recurrent expenditure while capital expenditure was US 58.7 million (10.3% of total budget) and US\$ 92.2 million (16.3% of total budget) went to debt servicing.

In the 2022 budget of the government of Liberia, out of the US\$786.6 million budget, the highest allocation of US\$647.6 million went to recurrent expenditure, while capital expenditure was US\$139 million (17.7%) and the US \$105 million (10.8%) went to debt servicing.

This has been the practice over the past seventeen (17) years under both the Unity Party-led government and the current Coalition of Democratic Change-led government, and in addition, the country's debt profile keeps mounting by the day. At the moment, the country's debt burden stands at about US\$1.69 billion and is climbing according to President Weah's fifth annual message to members of the Legislature on January 24, 2022.

Notably, the President, Vice-President, Senate President, Speaker, House of Representatives, cabinet ministers, directors at all levels, and people in positions of authority across the country are believed to be aware of the damning impact of the huge cost of governance and how it impedes the country's growth and development. But happenings have shown that instead of taking decisive steps at their respective levels to address the conundrum and ensure that funds

needed to address infrastructure deficit and provide social services are freed up from allowances, they only highlight the problem, and sometimes give excuses as to why it is difficult to correct the anomaly. Then they move on, leaving the problem to fester with no one in particular to take responsibility for the inaction.

For example, Mr. Lenn Eugene Nagbe, Commissioner General of Liberia Maritime Authority, recently criticized the Unity Party Standard Bearer and former Vice President of Liberia, Mr. Joseph Nyumah Boakai (JNB), revealing that there were increments in the budget of the Office of the former Vice President totaling USD20m for office expenditures and an additional USD15m for Youth programs directly under the Office of the Vice President.

According to Mr. Nagbe, how can Mr. Boakai be called



"RESCUER" when he walloped in the luxury of taxpayers' monies for over a decade calling the JNB team "Cabal of Budget Manipulators." The CDC stalwart who served in the Unity Party Government as a minister for transport in 2012; minister of youth and sport in 2013 and Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism in 2016, made the disclosures when he appeared on the State Radio, ELBC recently.

It is arguably true that Vice President Mr. Joseph Boakai and his office received more than US\$20 million in compensations in the 12 years. For example, the Office of the Vice President received the following budgetary allocations in five years:

2013/2014 Budget: US\$2.4 million
2014/2015 Budget: US\$2.1 million
2015/2016 Budget: \$2.2 million
2016/2017 Budget: \$2.2 million
2017/2018 Budget: \$2 million
Total in 5 years: US \$10.7 million

The current Vice President, Madam Jewel Howard-Taylor after hearing Maritime Commissioner Nagbe, who heads the Coalition for Democratic Change Special Engagement & Strategies Committee, also criticized Mr. Boakai and his office for receiving more allocations in the budget during his tenure as vice president. According to her, the former VP received more budgetary allocation in the budget than her as current Vice President. This writer wondered if the current Vice President has seen her office budget before criticizing Mr. Boakai and his office. Madam Jewel Howard Taylor and has received the following allocations in the last five years:

2018/19 Budget: US\$2.6 million
2019/2020 Budget: US\$2 million

2020/2021 Budget: US2. 2 million
2021 Special Budget: \$1.4 million
2022 Budget: \$4.2 million.
Total in five years: \$12.2 million

This writer and other meaningful Liberians have been calling for the need to cut down the crushing and prohibitive cost of governance in Liberia, but to no avail. Successive governments, including the present one, have been paying lip service to it. They talk about it but don't do anything about it.

If the President, Vice President, Cabinet Ministers, Directors, legislators, etc would be willing to take a cut in their salaries and allowances it will save the country from ever-increasing national debt. If you look at the salaries, perks, air travel including the private jet of the president, vehicles, vacations, hotel (bills), and tickets and put all those things together, they make up way more than the salaries of teachers, doctors, law enforcement, etc.

We should recognize that we cannot accomplish growth and development in Liberia using loans and outside financing alone. Therefore, we need to impose deep cuts in the cost of governance and improve internal revenue generation and collection so that we can free up resources that can then be deployed to fund policy initiatives that will enhance the lives of our people.

Unfortunately, Liberians have suffered enough from the lackluster kind of leadership of both the CDC and the UP-led administration that has held the country back in the last 17 years. For example, the government of the CDC in the last five years has inflicted a lot of hardship on the lives of Liberians. People are finding it difficult to live decent lives

in this country because everything has skyrocketed in terms of food prices, and the basic needs of people, and when it comes to the issue of healthcare, the country is heading towards collapse.

The CDC-led government has obviously been overwhelmed with incessant killings and life is becoming meaningless in Liberia. Meaningless and worthless people have taken the laws into their hands and we see these people killing other people in almost all parts of the country. If Liberia was on a scale of one to ten, Liberia was at a scale of 5 in 2017 and in the last five years, CDC has taken us down further the scale.

The CDC and UP are Siamese twins who have failed Liberians and should not be voted for in 2023. When you listen to them (CDC and UP) it seems they are just competing on who has done more damage to Liberia. If Liberians should allow the CDC and UP to continue ruling the country, only God knows what will happen to Liberia.

Liberians most especially the youths need to challenge those seeking political power in the country ahead of this year's general election. This is the right time to challenge those in power and bring those with fresh blood, ideas, and initiatives that can change the narratives for Liberians.

Our beloved country, Liberia is now at a critical stage and doesn't need anyone from either the CDC or UP any longer. Liberia as a country deserves much better leaders unlike the one we had with the UP for twelve years and what we are presently having under the ruling CDC. We must shun the CDC and the UP in 2023. I rest my case.

US Ambassador pushes visa flexibility

United States Ambassador Michael McCarthy is pushing for visa flexibility here to enable the country to attract much needed foreign investments.

Amb. McCarthy told journalists during his visit at

for his ambitious investment following his tour of the factory.

"This is the kind of investment that multiplies. This Factory is helping the local community and jobs are already being created in this neighborhood outside of

production of rubber bands and other rubber products in a year or so.

According to Mr. Jeety, he does not intend to plant rubber trees but will purchase rubber from local farmers in the country as a way of empowering them.



the Jeety Rubber Factory in Cinta, Weala, Margibi County on Wednesday, June 7, that if the Liberian Government can introduce a visa upon arrival at the airport or reduce the price of obtaining a Liberian visa it could help bring in more investors.

Monrovia," the US diplomat continued.

The tough-talking US diplomat noted that in a situation where investors can purchase land without controversies and like in the case of Mr. Jeety, it creates confidence for investors.

The US Ambassador was accompanied by his brother George McCarthy who is visiting here in Liberia and an Embassy staff.

Earlier, the citizens praised Mr. Jeety for how his investment has transformed their community in the short period of its existence.

According to him, the cumbersome process potential investors go through to obtain a Liberian visa, sometimes three times the price is undermining Liberia's investment climate,

"There are several things that can be done to bring in more investment if Americans and Western investors don't have to buy visas and can get visas at the airport or reduce the price, more investors will come," Amb. McCarthy said.

He described the Jeety Rubber Factory investment as an ambitious project, saying when Mr. Jeety first told him about the investment, he told him it was ambitious but seeing the factory becoming a reality just shows what can be done when Government creates an enabling environment for investment.

For his part, Mr. Jeety thank Ambassador McCarthy for his visit, saying the project could not have been successful without the support of the citizens and local authorities in the area.

The citizens in a statement read by Clain Chief Madam Musu Yango, said Jeety has improved the economy of the township by leasing properties from them and employing locals from the area.

Mr. Jeety is currently providing university scholarships to some citizens and hot meals three times a week for more than three hundred children in the community.

"The more barrels are removed from foreign investments, the more possibilities there are for Liberia," Amb. McCarthy added.

Amb. McCarthy made the comments after showering praises on Indian businessman Upjit Singh Sahadeva, commonly known as Mr. Jeety

Mr. Jeety also informed the US Ambassador that he enjoys the full support of the government for his investment and has projected 2026 as the year to begin manufacturing tires. He said he will first start with the

They also boasted of his humanitarian gestures, the bringing in of pipe borne water and a clinic.

Overall, the citizens said the establishment of Jeety Rubber Factory has restored life to Weala since the closure of the Weala Rubber Plantation.

PYJ abandons birthplace in Nimba

By Lincoln G. Peters

New DAWN's investigation in Gomahplay, home town of Senator Prince Y. Johnson in Buuyao district, Nimba County uncovers total neglect and abandonment of the town and its residents by PYJ, who prides himself as godfather of Nimba politics.

divided loyalty.

Meanwhile, residents of Gomahplay, Buuyao district, have expressed serious frustration and dismay over the alleged neglect of the district by Senator Johnson.

According to them, since PYJ became Senator of Nimba in 2005 'till now, he has done nothing to help the district that he hails from.

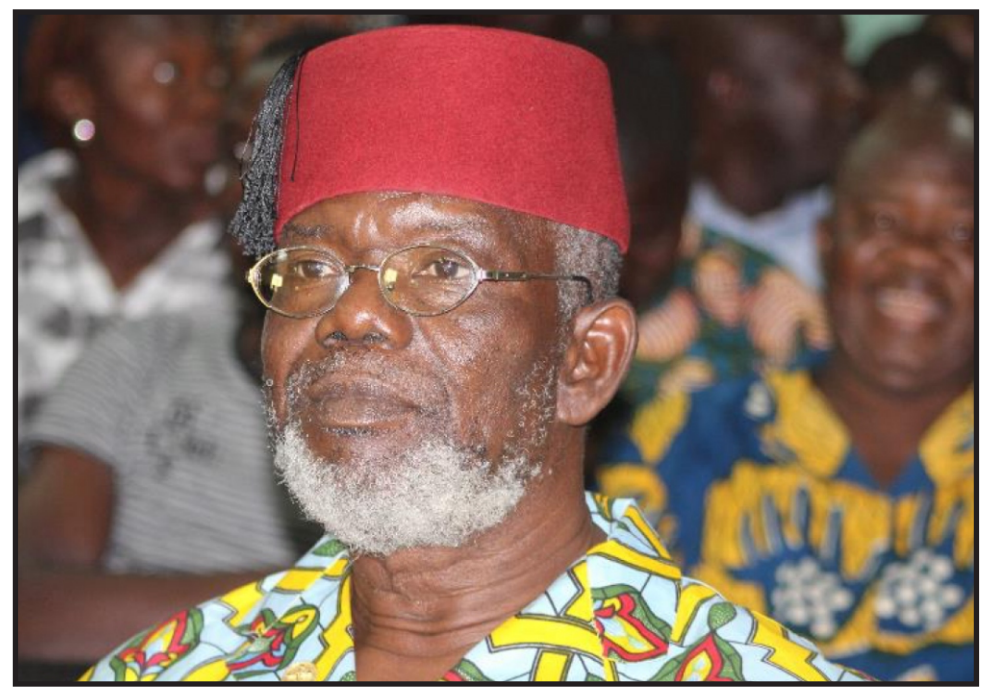
During a brief tour of the town and interview with residents, this paper established that Senator Johnson doesn't have a single house or residence in Gomahplay that he hails from.

Speaking in an interview with this paper Tuesday, June 6, youth leader Francis Bouyah, alleged that the senator has refused to help the district in the provision of basic social services.

Our investigative team also unearthed that the entire Buuyao, Nimba County District #5, doesn't have a healthcare center, high school, town hall, or road connectivity, including other basic social services.

"My brother, this is the town that Senator Johnson is from. This is the town that makes him who he is today. But, so sadly, we have not seen our own son since he took office. The last time we saw Senator Johnson was during the campaign period. In fact, Senator Johnson doesn't have a house here. And once he comes for campaign, he doesn't sleep here",

During the tour on Tuesday, June 6, it was observed that the deplorable road leading to the hometown of Senator Johnson is currently being paved by cocoa and rubber buyers frequenting there for business.



There is also ongoing construction work for what residents say is a town hall that began last year by Nimba County District#5 Representative Samuel Korgar, who was expelled by PYJ's Movement for Democracy and Reconstruction party for alleged

Mr. Bouyah narrates.

He discloses that the town currently lacks a town hall, clinic and a high school, among others.

"We don't have a clinic in this

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Southeastern group endorses

seriousness, could be attributed to alleged manipulation from President Weah.

The South Eastern Alliance leader warns that Liberia would face dire consequences if citizens make a mistake in electing President Weah for a second term.

Chelley explains that the group was established two years ago with the sole purpose of supporting President Weah's re-election, adding that despite the

President neglecting the region due to deplorable road conditions, they have worked tirelessly to persuade their people to re-elect him.

But he notes: "We, as a team, have come to realize that supporting the president in the past was the most regrettable decision in our nation's history."

According to him, the level of suffering currently being experienced by counties in the Southeast

surpasses even hardships endured during the height of the civil war in the country.

Moreover, he laments the absence of basic social services, impassable roads, business closures, drug shortages in hospitals, and a lack of teachers in schools, while criticizing the Weah-led government for providing the people of Sinoe County only 15 ineffective solar light poles don not function during heavy downpour.

JUDICIAL BRANCH
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
CIVIL LAW COURT, MONT. CO. R.L.

BEFORE HIS HONOURABLE..... J. KENNEDY PEADY..... RESIDENT CIRCUIT JUDGE

THE PETITION OF VARNEY KAMARA, PETITIONER, BY AND THRU HIS LEGAL COUNSEL, PRAYING THIS HONOURABLE COURT FOR A DEGREE OF CHANGE OF NAME IN FAVOR OF PETITIONER TO BE KNOWN, CALLED AND REFERRED TO AS "AMADU K. SANOH" 00010935

COURT'S DEGREE OF CHANGE OF NAME

THE PETITIONER BY AND THRU HIS LEGAL COUNSEL FILED A PETITION BEFORE THIS COURT REQUESTING THIS HONOURABLE COURT TO ORDER THE CHANGE OF HIS NAME FROM VARNEY KAMARA TO "AMADU K. SANOH".

During the hearing, the Petitioner testified that the Change of his name requesting this honourable Court is intended to reflect his father's name, after conducting the necessary interrogations required by law in these proceedings, the Court observed that the intention is just and legal and that there is no objection to the change of name proposed by him.

That the petitioner having shown with justification and satisfaction that he was born on July 3, 1996, in the City of Voinjama, County of Lofa, Republic of Liberia, and that he was born unto the union of Mr. Kemoh Sanoh, and Mrs. Bendu Sanoh, all of the County of Lofa, Republic of Liberia, and that the Change of his name will substantially promote his interest in all of the understandings and help to establish his just identify more firmly and that he has met all legal requirements for the Change of his name in this jurisdiction.

The Petition having been heard, same is hereby ordered granted and we now render that the name Varney Kamara be changed to "Amadu K. Sanoh" beginning this 10th Day of May, A.D. 2023. The all documents signed by the Petitioner herein prior to his degree remain valid.

THIS DEGREE, shall be registered in the Office of the Registrar of DEEDS and other Official Documentations within (10) days from this date and also be published twice in any recognized Newspaper operating in the republic of Liberia within (20) days from this date. AND IT IS HEREBY SO ORDERED.

COURT'S SEAL

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF THIS HONOURABLE COURT, THIS 10TH DAY OF MAY, A.D. 2023

HIS HONOUR J. KENNEDY PEADY
RESIDENT CIRCUIT JUDGE PRESIDING
SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, CIVIL LAW COURT

REGISTERED ACCORDING TO LAW, IN VOLUME 06-023 PAGES 00010935

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June 2023 101015 6

Bility denies receiving US\$5m

By: Naneka Hoffman

Speaking on Tuesday, June 6, on Radio Saclepea in Nimba County, Liberty Party/CPP Chairman Musa Hassan Bility denied receiving US\$5 million

Nimba has gone through a lot and there is no need for that. While speaking to the Voice of Gompa radio station in Nimba on Monday, June 5, Senator Johnson accused Mr. Bility of receiving US\$5 million

Senator Johnson is opposed to the government, so he can't be the one speaking for the government.

However, he adds that hopefully when the government comes out and makes such claim, then they will start from there.

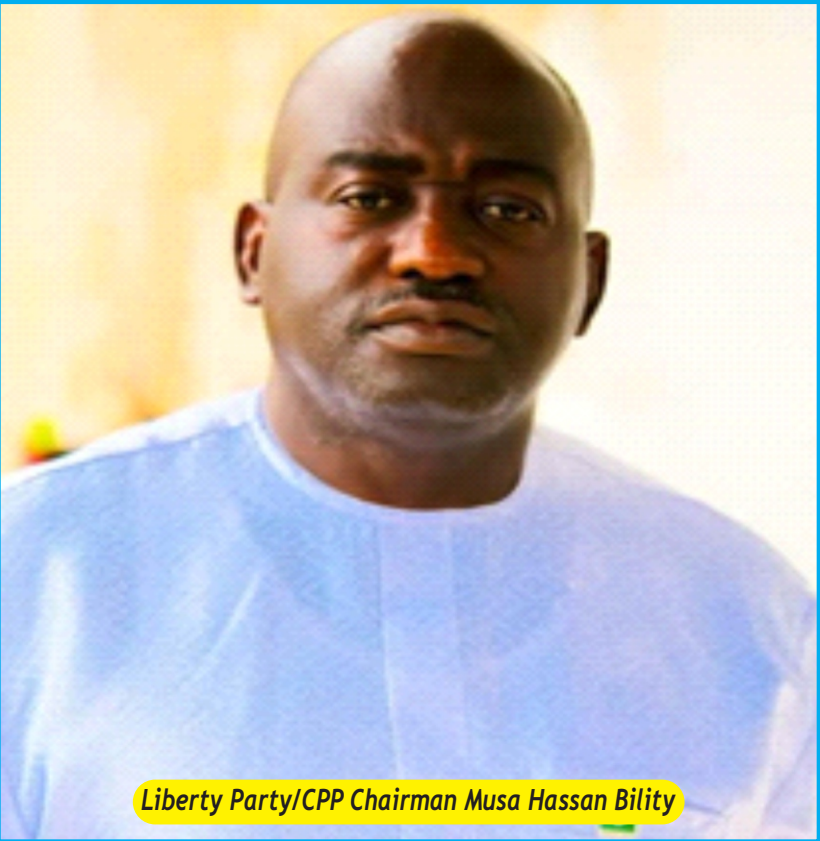
According to him, the reason why all this is coming out is because of the current development he is carrying out in Nimba, nobody is thinking of doing such so it has surprised many people, but it is God that put it in his heart to help his people.

He explains that if helping his fellow citizens is making detractors angry then they should go ahead and do anything.

Bility maintains that he will continue to help his people in Nimba by providing whatever they want but there is no plan to stop despite ploys from detractors.

He says even if Senator Johnson attempts to provoke him, he will not pick a fuss with him, adding that he and Senator Johnson are not in any beef and he is not fighting him, but just want to be left alone to help his people.

Bility, who has expressed his desire to contest for s



Liberty Party/CPP Chairman Musa Hassan Bility

of the \$13 million road funds, as alleged by Nimba County Senator Prince Y. Johnson, terming it as false and misleading.

from the \$13 million road funds, threatening to write the Liberian Senate to invite the LP/CPP chairman to answer questions.

Chairman Bility says he will continue to try not to have any conversation with Senator Johnson, adding that

But Bility counters that there is a government on the ground he thinks that PYJ and the government are no longer

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