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Source: Research, Policy and Planning Department, CBL.

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# Battle for Nimba



LPP Candidate Cllr. Gongloe



VOLT Candidate Dr. Whapoe

## Whapoe accuses Gongloe of preaching divisive politics



Senator Koung

# UP offers strategy to avoid electoral fraud

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# Continental News

## Niger Coup Supporters Protest Sanctions as Neighbors Debate Intervention

As West African states consider intervening in Niger to restore democracy one week after a military coup, hundreds of

States. The group's data also indicate that insecurity in Niger was improving thanks to strategies used by Bazoum's government and assistance from French and U.S.

Meanwhile, China's Foreign Ministry said Thursday it believes Niger and regional countries have the capacity to find a "political resolution" to the current situation, which it refrained from explicitly



Men hold Nigerian and Russian flags as they gather with thousands of anti-sanctions protesters in support of putschist soldiers in the capital Niamey, Niger

supporters of Niger's junta gathered in the capital Niamey on Thursday to protest sanctions imposed by the country's neighbors.

General Abdourahmane Tchiani, the former head of Niger's presidential guard, ousted President Mohamed Bazoum last week in a military coup and declared himself head of state. Tchiani said the power grab was necessary because of ongoing insecurity in the country caused by an ongoing Islamist insurgency.

ACLED is a crisis-monitoring group based in the United

forces.

In addition to imposing sanctions, the main regional bloc, the Economic Community of West African States, or ECOWAS, said it could authorize the use of force if soldiers do not restore Bazoum to power by Sunday. U.S. President Joe Biden called Thursday for Bazoum's immediate release. Biden said in a statement that Niger is "facing a grave challenge to its democracy."

"The Nigerien people have the right to choose their leaders," he said. "They have expressed their will through free and fair elections — and that must be respected."

calling a coup.

"We believe that Niger and regional countries have the wisdom and capability to find a political resolution to the current situation," China's Foreign Ministry said in a written statement to Reuters.

"President Bazoum is a friend of China, it is hoped that his personal safety is guaranteed, and that relevant parties in Niger peacefully manage differences through dialogue with the fundamental interests of the nation and the people as a starting point," the ministry added. VOA

## Cameroon Says Military Deployed After New Militant Attack Kills at Least a Dozen

Cameroon said Thursday that at least 12 people have been killed in new attacks by Boko Haram in Darak, a fishing island on Cameroon's northern border with Chad and Nigeria. Military officials say troops have been deployed to stop more incursions and attacks by the Nigeria-based insurgent group.

Regional officials say the 12 corpses were discovered by civilians.

Government troops say civilians have escaped to safer locations on the island. The military says ongoing sporadic attacks make it difficult to establish a total number of casualties. Midjiyawa Bakari, the governor of Cameroon's Far North region where Darak

is located, said this week's wave of attacks is devastating to the psychological and physical well-being of civilians in Darak, who have not experienced Boko Haram atrocities for more than a year. He said he has asked the

military to immediately collaborate with local militias and put an end to the infiltration which killing and looting jihadists have been carrying out in Darak this week. VOA



Cameroonian soldiers arrive in Darak as they patrol Lake Chad, March 1, 2013. At least 12 people have been killed in Darak in attacks by Boko Haram militants since Tuesday, authorities say

## Amnesty Blames Sudan Rival Forces, Militias for War Crimes, Civilian Suffering

Amnesty International says Sudan's warring military factions are committing war crimes as the country is ravaged by more than three months of violence. The group has documented premeditated attacks against civilians, sexual violence and action that amounts to war crimes. In the Darfur region, Amnesty says some communities are targeted because of their ethnic identity, leading to hundreds of thousands fleeing into neighboring Chad. Sarah Jackson, deputy regional director for Amnesty's East Africa, Horn and Great Lakes, provided details from a new report. "The report that Amnesty International is launching today, 'Death Came to Our Home,' looks at war crimes and civilian suffering in the current context in Sudan," she said. "It looks at the

infrastructure and sexual violence against women and girls. Amnesty International's Somalia and Sudan researcher Abdullahi Hassan said the group has evidence to back up the accounts of abuses taking place in the country. "The report is also supported by other evidence, including digital evidence, which is verified by our evidence lab team, including photos, videos, satellite imagery and forensic reports," he said. "Essentially, what these people told us is that the fighting in Sudan is really devastating communities, both in Khartoum and in Darfur, and particularly in Western Darfur. In Western Darfur, we were able to document targeted, ethnically motivated attacks carried out by the RSF and Arab militias on ethnic Masalit people." The latest Sudan conflict has ignited ethnic conflict in the Darfur region, which has seen targeted killings and ethnically motivated attacks conducted by the RSF and allied



Sudanese refugees are seen at Zabout refugee camp in Goz Beida, Chad

deliberate targeting of civilians as well as civilians who have been caught in the crossfire. And it also documents cases of sexual violence. It shows how serious the war crimes are that are being committed by the rapid support forces and the Sudanese armed forces in the context of the current conflict where we see untold death and destruction." Sudan security factions turned their guns against each other in April in what appears to be a power struggle between the leader of Sudan's Sovereign Council, Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the Paramilitary Rapid Support Forces led by Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, also known as Hemedti. The conflict has killed thousands and displaced 4 million people from their homes, who now are living in dire conditions. The human rights group's investigators spoke to at least 180 Sudanese inside and outside of the country to document attacks on civilians, humanitarian

militias. It's not the first time Sudan's army leaders and militias have been accused of war crimes. The International Criminal Court in the Hague issued four arrest warrants, including former president Omar al-Bashir's relation to the conflict in Darfur between 2003-2008, on charges of war crimes and genocide. Last month, the ICC launched an investigation into the conflict in the Darfur region, where armed groups are accused of killings, rapes, arson, population displacement and crimes affecting children. Jackson says lack of accountability for past atrocities is enabling some leaders and armed individuals to continue to carry out attacks. "Impunity for crimes that have been committed in the past is absolutely a central driver of this current conflict that Hemedti and Burhan think they can get away with this, because they have done in the past," she said. "So, it's really vital that accountability is central to any solution of the current situation, and families of victims and survivors of abuse deserve justice, they deserve truth, and they deserve reparations." VOA



# EDITORIAL

## Stop the violence in Nimba

**INCREASING VIOLENCE** in Nimba County characterized by discharge of firearm and destruction of government and company assets is taking a toll not only on that county, but the economy and should claim the attention of all peace-loving Liberians.

IT IS QUITE unfortunate that a country that is still reeling from 14 years devastated civil war would take delight in violence as a means of seeking redress to issues it is confronted with, as in the recent case at ArcelorMittal Liberia that left the company's assets stolen and vandalized. This raises serious psychological question about the behavior of Liberians.

LAST FRIDAY'S (July 28, 2023) violence in Zolowee, electoral district two, Nimba County during execution of a search warrant by Police that left a 20-year-old man shot, a Police officer wounded and several others hospitalized, was totally unwarranted no matter what grievance citizens had.

EVEN WORSE, this is coming at a time when Liberians are just less than 80 days away from general and presidential elections on October 10th that has left the entire country politically charged with violence languages everywhere.

WE HASTEN to remind that persistent violence by aggrieved citizens in Grand Cape Mount County for land and other concerns was one key reason why the Malaysian oil palm company, Sime Darby, folded and left Liberia, leaving several thousand Liberians jobless.

TODAY, SIMILAR actions are taking place in the same county, this time around, against Bea Mounting mining company, particularly in Kungbor and other districts marred by running battles that left a lawyer brutally attacked recently.

AGGRIEVED CITIZENS of Zolowee town along the Sanniquillie - Yekepa route in Electoral District Two, Nimba went on the offense last Friday during execution of a Search Warrant issued by the Yekepa Magisterial Court on several homes in the town for missing assets that belong to ArcelorMittal Liberia.

CITIZENS HAD no reason to become violent if their consciences were clear and convinced that they had no stolen or missing items hidden inside their various homes.

Liberians who reside near concession areas across the country should be reminded in no uncertain terms that investors come here for a win-win agreement with government that provide employments for jobless citizens. But when concession grounds become battle grounds, real money takes flight and leaves the economy as we experienced during the Civil War. Lest we forget, government alone cannot provide employment. It needs investors to generate revenue for development that all Liberians yearn for.

Rather than resorting to persistent violence, vandalizing both private public assets, discharging firearms and wounding people, we encourage citizens with concerns no matter how grievous, to choose roundtable in seeking redress to their grievances because we need foreign investors to keep the economy out of the toilet.

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# COMMENTARY

By Juan Carlos Jintiach

## Protecting the World's Forests Means Protecting Indigenous Rights

**T**ENA - For more than 500 years, indigenous peoples in Ecuador have been fighting to protect their lands, culture, and very existence from the disastrous consequences of colonization. From the moment the colonizers set foot on our land, they sought to exploit its natural resources for profit. Today, corporations from China, Canada, and Australia mine our territories for gold, disregard our objections, and defy government orders, perpetuating death and destruction.

Indigenous peoples have long served as the stewards of humanity's collective future, living in harmony with nature and respecting its cycles and complexities. We recognize that our survival (and the survival of everyone else) is inextricably tied to the health and vitality of natural ecosystems. But the forests that we call home, which have sustained our communities over generations, are under attack. Once-pristine rivers are now contaminated with toxic chemicals, poisoning our food, lands, and communities.

As the relentless extraction of oil and minerals degrades our lands and rivers, the delicate ecosystems that serve as habitats for countless species are being pushed to the brink of collapse. But it is not just the physical destruction that we lament. The violation of our sacred lands is an affront to indigenous peoples' spirit and resilience. Our profound bond with the Earth is the bedrock of our cultural identity. When multinational corporations indiscriminately ravage our forests, they trample on our ancestral legacy and disregard the wisdom and knowledge that have been passed down through the generations. Moreover, this devastation serves as a stark reminder that despite centuries of commodification, contemporary societies still cling to economic models that prioritize profits over the well-being of people and the environment.

As I write this, my friends, family, and I are actively challenging these companies' harmful practices.

We call them out on social media and take them to court. But our objections are often brushed aside, as indigenous peoples have been for centuries. This fuels a vicious cycle of poverty, inequality, and cultural disintegration.

Regrettably, my fight to protect the ancestral lands where my friends and family reside is merely a microcosm of the broader struggle to preserve our planet. An economic model predicated on maximizing short-term profits, with

little regard for the environmental consequences, has pushed the planet to the brink of climate catastrophe and resulted in polluted rivers, decimated ecosystems, and the displacement of indigenous communities.

Ecuador, like much of Latin America, is a victim of this economic model. Despite having freed themselves from colonialism, Latin American countries still rely on exporting commodities and amassing high-interest foreign loans to boost economic development. Ecuador, for example, exports oil extracted from the Amazon to service its debts.

As long as extractive capitalism prevails, Ecuador's indigenous communities have no choice but to oppose it. We have tried to voice our concerns through peaceful protests, petitions, and lawsuits, and yet our pleas continue to fall on deaf ears. Given this blatant disregard for indigenous peoples' basic human rights, the international community must intervene and enforce the court orders protecting our lands.

Indigenous peoples' ongoing struggle to conserve their lands and traditional ways of life underscores the urgent need for a radical shift in consciousness and practice. We must move beyond the narrow confines of profit-driven economies and embrace a new ethos that emphasizes the well-being of individuals, societies, and the planet.

To this end, Barbadian Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley's Bridgetown Initiative calls for far-reaching reforms to the global financial architecture. Making multilateral lenders more responsive to the climate needs of low-income countries would enable critical funds to be directed to the countries that need them most, such as Ecuador. While it may be too optimistic to believe that such reforms would end gold mining in the Amazon, these changes are essential to dismantle today's exploitative system and put the world on the path to sustainability.

In this time of crisis, let us draw inspiration from the indomitable spirit and unwavering commitment of indigenous communities that have been fighting to protect their lands for centuries.

By coming together and embracing alternative economic models, we can compel multinationals to abandon their destructive practices and reclaim a future where indigenous peoples' rights are upheld, our forests are safe, and the well-being of all living things takes precedence over the corporate bottom line.



## OP-ED

By Maria Eitel

## Corporate Responsibility in the Age of AI

In the past year, a cacophony of conversations about artificial intelligence has erupted. Depending on whom you listen to, AI is either carrying us into a shiny new world of endless possibilities or propelling us toward a grim dystopia.

Call them the Barbie and Oppenheimer scenarios - as attention-grabbing and different as the Hollywood blockbusters of the summer. But one conversation is getting far too little attention: the one about corporate responsibility.

I joined Nike as its first Vice President of Corporate Responsibility in 1998, landing right in the middle of the hyper-globalization era's biggest corporate crisis: the iconic sports and fitness company had become the face of labor exploitation in developing countries.

In dealing with that crisis and setting up corporate responsibility for Nike, we learned hard-earned lessons, which can now help guide our efforts to navigate the AI revolution.

There is a key difference today. Taking place in the late 1990s, the Nike drama played out relatively slowly. When it comes to AI, however, we don't have the luxury of time. This time last year, most people had not heard about generative AI. The technology entered our collective awareness like a lightning strike in late 2022, and we have been trying to make sense of it ever since.

As it stands, generative AI companies have no externally imposed guardrails. That makes guinea pigs of all of us. There is nothing normal about this.

If Boeing or Airbus introduced an airplane that promised to be cheaper and faster, but was potentially very dangerous, we would not accept the risk.

A pharmaceutical company that launched an untested product, while warning that it might be toxic, would be found criminally liable for the sickness or death they caused. Why, then, is it okay for technology companies to bring to market AI products that they themselves warn pose the risk of extinction?

Even before generative AI burst onto the scene, Big Tech and the attention economy were facing growing criticism for their harmful effects. Products like Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok are designed to trigger dopamine surges in the brain, making them as addictive as cigarettes. A scientific consensus has emerged that digital media are harming users' - especially children's - mental health.

AI has turbocharged the attention economy and unleashed a new set of risks, the scope of which are far from clear. And while calls for regulation are growing louder, when they come from the very people behind the technology, they come across largely as public-relations campaigns and corporate stall tactics.

After all, regulators and governments don't fully understand how AI-based products work or the risks they create; only companies do.

It is a company's responsibility to ensure that it does not knowingly cause harm, and to fix any problems it creates. It is the government's job to hold companies accountable. But accountability tends to come after the fact - too late for a technology like AI.

If Purdue Pharma's owners, the Sackler family, had acted responsibly once they realized the danger OxyContin posed, taking steps to stop the drug from being overprescribed, the opioid crisis that has gripped the United States in recent years could have been avoided. By the time the government got involved, countless lives had been lost and communities ruined. No lawsuit or fine can undo that.

When it comes to AI, companies can and must do better. But they must act fast, before AI-driven tools are so entrenched in daily activities that their dangers are normalized and whatever they unleash cannot be contained.

At Nike, it was a combination of outside pressure and an internal commitment to do the right thing that led to a fundamental overhaul of its business model.

The nascent AI industry is clearly feeling external pressure: on July 21, the White House secured voluntary commitments from seven top AI companies to develop safe and trustworthy products, in line with the Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights that was introduced last year. But vague voluntary guidelines leave far too much wiggle room.

Our collective future now hinges on whether companies - in the privacy of their board rooms, executive meetings, and closed-door strategy sessions - decide to do what is right.

Companies need a clear North Star to which they can always refer as they pursue innovation. Google had it right in its early days, when its corporate credo was, "Don't Be Evil." No corporation should knowingly harm people in the pursuit of profit.

It will not be enough for companies simply to say that they have hired former regulators and propose possible solutions. Companies must devise credible and effective AI action plans that answer five key questions:

What are the potential unanticipated consequences of AI? How are you mitigating each identified risk? What measures can regulators use to monitor companies' efforts to mitigate potential dangers and hold them accountable? What resources do regulators need to carry out this task? How will we know that the guardrails are working?

The AI challenge needs to be treated like any other corporate sprint. Requiring companies to commit to an action plan in 90 days is reasonable and realistic. No excuses. Missed deadlines should result in painful fines. The plan doesn't have to be perfect - and it will likely need to be adapted as we continue to learn - but committing to it is essential.

Big Tech must be as committed to protecting humans as it is to maximizing profits. If the only finish line is the bottom line, we are all in trouble.

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## OPINION

By Hippolyte Fofack

## Resilient Remittances

CAIRO - When former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was asked about the risks of "brain drain" - the large-scale and sustained migration of well-trained citizens from lower-income to higher-income countries offering better opportunities - he allegedly responded, "Better a brain drain than a brain in the drain." Back then, in the 1980s, India's universities were already churning out far more graduates than the country's labor market could absorb, and developed economies, especially the United States, that sought to strengthen their comparative advantage in skill-intensive manufacturing welcomed these highly educated migrants with open arms.

Gandhi's assessment proved prescient: many of these workers, from India and elsewhere, helped shape the modern digital economy, which is poised to extend the organizational and geographical fragmentation of work into new realms. A recent study found that highly skilled immigrants account for 36% of innovation in the US and also contribute significantly to the exchange of ideas across borders, given that they are more likely to rely on foreign technologies and collaborate with foreign inventors.

Buttressed by the contributions of qualified foreign labor, digitalization has expanded the potential of remittances. The cost of sending money to family members back home - a process that migrant workers of all skill levels know well - has traditionally been high. But new digital business models have achieved faster payments, greater transparency, and lower costs for users, increasing the cross-border flow of money in support of welfare improvement and macroeconomic stability.

The growth of digital remittances cannot be overstated. The amount of money sent by migrant workers to family members in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) has increased more than fivefold over the last two decades, reaching \$647 billion in 2022. Remittances now exceed more than a quarter of GDP in several countries, supplementing threadbare social safety nets. Over half of remittances go to people in rural areas, and around 75% are used to meet basic needs such as food, housing, medical costs, and school fees.

These inflows also have enormous benefits in terms of growth and macroeconomic management. In a growing number of LMICs, remittances have overtaken both foreign direct investment and official development aid (ODA) as the largest source of external funds. They are financing investments and mitigating the risk of sudden stops and capital-flow reversals, which are especially important as ODA declines and many LMICs confront balance-of-payments pressures and currency gyrations.

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, which upended the world economy, migrants continued to send money home, with flows to Latin America and the Caribbean increasing by 6.5% in 2020. And despite broad-based growth deceleration in 2022, remittances to LMICs grew by an estimated 8%. This partly reflects the tight labor markets in advanced economies, many of which implemented large fiscal and monetary stimulus measures to sustain incomes during the pandemic. Moreover, the dollar's sharp appreciation in 2022 increased the value of inflows to LMICs.

The resilience of remittances is also the result of international migration, which has helped shield high-income countries with low fertility rates from demographic headwinds, as well as the effectiveness of quantitative-easing policies after the 2008 financial crisis and in the years leading up to the pandemic. In the era of hyper-globalization, which sustained downward pressure on prices, these policies boosted output expansion to drive wage growth.

Likewise, the shift in remittances from informal to formal channels, together with the decline in transfer costs that followed the normalization of digital payments, has been crucial to increasing cross-border flows and bodes well for future growth. A study by the GSMA, the global trade association of mobile operators, found that mobile technology halves remittance costs, while research from PayPal and Xoom shows that the average cost of transferring money back home has fallen to 3.93% - nearly half that of traditional fees.

According to the International Monetary Fund, cost reductions have a short-term positive impact on remittances and could even generate an additional \$32 billion in inflows, if the target of 3% set by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals is reached.

The relatively low procyclicality and volatility of remittance inflows, coupled with greater cost reductions and increased operational efficiency, will ultimately benefit LMICs. Many of these countries are facing mounting debt-service costs, especially in view of widening spreads and tighter global financial conditions, as well as rising poverty levels exacerbated by food-price inflation.

The projected growth of remittances will shore up these countries' foreign-currency reserves, which could help avert a debt crisis.

Remittances can also reduce the risk of a financial crisis. Studies have shown that the impact of a sharp decrease in international reserves on current-account reversals becomes less severe when remittances to a country exceed 3% of GDP. More than 43% of LMICs - 76 countries - have surpassed that threshold, and more countries look set to join them. Meanwhile remittances can also stabilize the balance of payments by keeping current-account deficits under control in countries with a negative trade balance. Such inflows can thus help promote macroeconomic stability as operating environments become more challenging in an age of "polycrisis."

Is a brain drain better than a brain in the drain? Given the current state of the world economy, the answer is a resounding yes. For low-income households that depend on remittances for basic consumption goods, and for LMICs contending with twin deficits and currency risk, it has helped prevent social unrest and balance-of-payments crises.

For high-income countries contending with low fertility rates, international migration has alleviated demographic headwinds and the risk of secular stagnation.

The growth of digital remittances may not fully compensate for the loss of skilled workers and the decline in human capital in LMICs. But the gains associated with brain drain and international migration have been momentous, driving innovation and financing development globally.

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## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# ‘You better shut up’: A Ghana family’s relentless calls for justice

By Jonathan Rozen and Evelyn Okakwu

**K**amilu Ibrahim Tahidu and his brothers gather every evening outside their family home in Ghana’s capital of Accra. They sit in a circle of plastic chairs and enjoy each others’ company. They pray together. And they never forget that one of them is missing.

It’s been over four years since assassins came to their neighborhood, waited for their sibling, investigative journalist Ahmed Hussein-Suale Divela, and then shot him in his car. “We heard the gunshot,” Tahidu recalled in a recent interview with CPJ. “Someone ran and said that they were killing our brother.”

Sitting steps from the crime scene, Tahidu expressed frustration with the failure by Ghanaian authorities to apprehend those responsible. Certain political elites have not been sufficiently scrutinized, he said, and his speaking out about the murder had brought new threats.

The lack of accountability in Divela’s case is indicative of a broader pattern of impunity for crimes against journalists in the West African country, often seen as one of the region’s most stable democracies with a high degree of media freedom. As with cases of other journalists attacked in recent years, Tahidu expressed dismay that officials had not been more supportive and communicative about their investigations.

Ghana’s presidential election is scheduled for December 2024 and opposition candidate John Mahama recently committed to “speed up” the investigation into Divela’s January 2019 killing. But words from authorities have offered the family little clarity or comfort. “They promised to get results very soon,” Tahidu said, recalling a conversation with Ghanaian Inspector General of Police George Akuffo Dampare following his appointment back in 2021. “Soon is yet to come.”

Divela decided to become a journalist out of dissatisfaction with inflation and the economic situation for average people in Ghana, his family told CPJ. He worked as a reporter with Tiger Eye Private Investigations, an investigative journalism group headed by Anas Aremeyaw Anas. The identities of Tiger Eye PI members are not publicly known, as they operate largely undercover to document alleged wrongdoing by those in positions of power.

The year before the murder, Anas and Divela received public threats from Kennedy Agyapong, a prominent member of Ghana’s ruling party now seeking to be Ghana’s president. The threats came ahead of the release of a Tiger Eye PI film exposing alleged corruption among African football officials, including then president of the Ghana Football Association Kwesi Nyantakyi. The documentary, “Number 12,” caused an uproar in Ghana’s soccer world when it aired in 2018, prompting Nyantakyi’s resignation and world governing body FIFA to ban him for life from football-related activities.

In March, a Ghanaian judge dismissed Anas’ defamation suit brought in response to Agyapong’s comments. A similar defamation suit filed in the U.S. is ongoing.

According to a Forbidden Stories investigation into Divela’s killing, Agyapong said he had “nothing to do with this murder.” Police said they questioned Agyapong - described as being close to Nyantakyi - as

part of their preliminary investigation, but Tahidu believes the politician has not been adequately investigated. “He thinks he [is] above the law,” Tahidu said. CPJ’s calls to Agyapong did not connect, nor did calls to his brother, Ralph Agyapong, who serves as his lawyer.

Divela and told police he did not have any information about the murder.

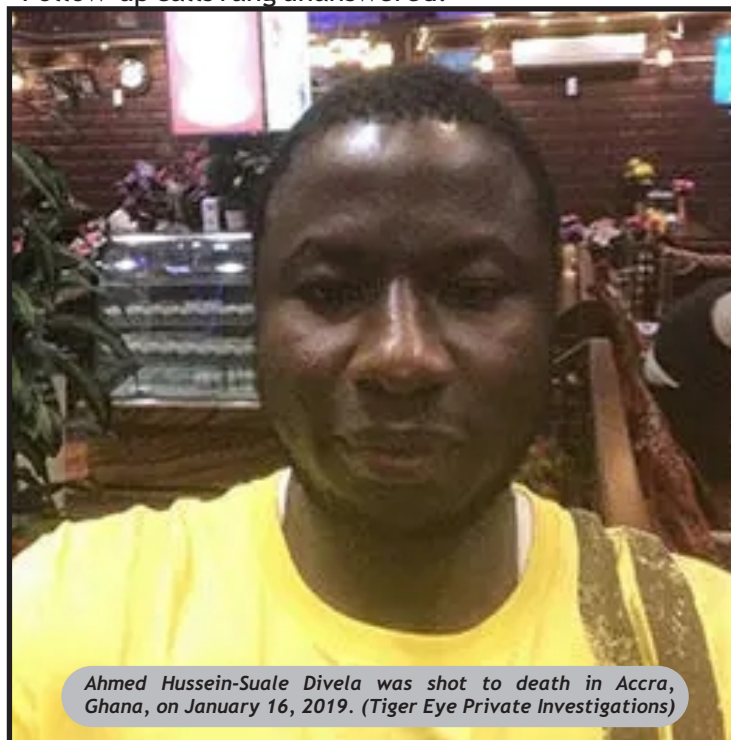
Unus Alhassan, another of Divela’s brothers who previously spoke for the family, told CPJ in a phone interview that he left Ghana in 2020 over safety concerns



**Kamilu Ibrahim Tahidu, a brother of slain journalist Ahmed Hussien-Suale Divela, sits outside their family home in Accra, Ghana. (Photo: Jonathan Rozen/CPJ)**

Tahidu told CPJ he reacted with furious disbelief when police showed him a cheap cell phone without internet capabilities as the device Nyantakyi handed over for the murder investigation. Tahidu did not believe something so low-tech could be the primary device of a once-powerful sports boss and said it suggested the authorities had not taken their job seriously. Local media reported that police seized phones and computers from Nyantakyi months before Divela’s murder as part of their fraud investigations related to the allegations from Tiger Eye PI’s film, but Tahidu said police did not mention these to Divela’s family.

CPJ reached Nyantakyi by phone, but when asked about the police investigation into him after the killing, he said, “OK, thank you” and then the line disconnected. Follow-up calls rang unanswered.



**Ahmed Hussein-Suale Divela was shot to death in Accra, Ghana, on January 16, 2019. (Tiger Eye Private Investigations)**

related to his speaking about the killing. Two unidentified men had followed him on a motorbike in Accra and his friends speculated that he may be targeted further, Alhassan said. He too filed a police report, but has not received any follow-up.

CPJ visited the Ghana police headquarters in Accra in March to request an interview about Divela’s case and other investigations into attacks on journalists in the country, but was told no one was available to speak. Officers there provided a Google email address for media requests. CPJ emailed that address and another listed on the police website requesting an interview, but received no response. Police similarly did not respond to questions about Divela and 30 other journalists arrested, threatened, or physically attacked since January 2019.

“We only feel totally neglect[ed], as if we are not Ghanaians in our own country,” Tahidu said, emphasizing that he and his family will continue pressing for answers. “If it is left with this Ghanaian law enforcers, I’m afraid it will always be a talk show.” Tahidu also refuses to let anyone else in his family become a journalist. He knows why his brother Ahmed entered the profession, but vows to prevent anyone else he loves from doing something so dangerous.

*Jonathan Rozen is CPJ’s senior Africa researcher. Previously, he worked in South Africa, Mozambique, and Canada with the Institute for Security Studies, assessing Mozambican peace-building processes. He also wrote analyses for the think tank adelphi on links between climate action and conflict prevention. Rozen was a U.N. correspondent for IPS News and has written for Al-Jazeera English and the International Peace Institute. He speaks English and French. Follow him on Twitter @Rozen\_J.*

*Evelyn Okakwu joined the Committee to Protect Journalists as a Nigeria consultant in August 2019. She was appointed CPJ’s West Africa correspondent in January 2021. Okakwu previously worked for four years as a judiciary correspondent for the Premium Times online newspaper and for two years as a general assignment reporter with the Peoples Daily newspaper in Abuja, Nigeria’s capital. Okakwu has a Higher National Diploma from the Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adama State, Nigeria. Follow her on Twitter @EveOkakwu.*



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Liberia's redemption is here

### -LRP Brown announces

**By: Emmanuel wise Jipoh**  
 Rev. Allen Roosevelt Brown Jr., Presidential Candidate of the Liberia Restoration Party (LRP) says top on his presidential

However, he said if you train up a child in a way, that he will grow, and won't depart from it, so the quest of the (LRP), is creating that enabling environment that Children won't depart from it.

a savior figure. He reminded Liberians of the role they need to play in the redemption of the nation, encouraging them to take an active role in shaping their own future.

In reiterating the LRP's agenda, Brown expressed his desire of returning Liberia back to God as contained in his agenda, while calling for inclusiveness, and coexistence.

The LRP standard bearer further explained that his party's aim is to harness the potential of Liberians enabling them to be capable of earning meals for themselves while impacting the larger society.

Mr. Brown also outlined policy options for Agriculture through mechanized farming that will allow the flow of food for the citizens, Youth Empowerment, and at the same time pushing professional development of Liberian Youths in all capacities.

Announcing his running mate, Noosevett Janice Weah, former Entrepreneur at Orange-Liberia, Rev. Brown described Madam Weah, as a God- Chosen one - who was selected after scrutiny.

He narrated that his vice-presidential running mate is a person who has love for God and for country, adding that she comes with a wealth of



plate is the welfare of children growing up in Liberia.

"The redemption of Liberia is here and starts with the Children," Brown Jr., told journalists here Thursday, August 3, when he unveiled his vice presidential candidate at his party's headquarters in Sinkor.

"We want to see children becoming children again, with love, responsibility, and discipline," he said while emphasizing that a broken society begins with broken children.

He bemoaned the suffering of Liberians mainly children in the country, stressing that the platform of LRP is about God and Liberia-restoring the purity of the nation and its peoples.

Rev. Brown noted that the greatest resource that Liberia has is in the People, bemoaning that this hasn't been utilized but rather underdeveloped over the years in terms of Empowerment and Productivities of the society from teenage.

Brown's message suggests that he sees himself as a facilitator of change rather than

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

## UL partners with UNDP to accelerate digitalization using UniPod project

The University of Liberia (UL) and UNDP Liberia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to commence the implementation of the University Innovation Pods (UniPod) Project.

The project aims to encourage students in universities to engage in innovation and design thinking as part of the new UNDP Africa Timbuktoo Initiative involving 11 countries (Benin, Guinea, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Togo, Uganda, and Liberia).

At a brief signing ceremony on July 27, 2023, on the campus of the University of Liberia, UNDP Liberia Resident Representative a.i. Louis Kuukpen described the initiative as an opportunity to test students' imagination as they create ideas and find solutions.

Kuukpen said the signing of the MOU demonstrates a call

to action to accelerate the implementation of the UniPod project as they work closely with think tanks and other partners to ensure that it is

Julius Nelson expressed appreciation to UNDP and its partners for what he termed "Turning a dream into reality" with the commencement of



accessible to other students and sustained.

Responding, the President of the University of Liberia Dr.

the UniPod project. Dr. Nelson said the project sets

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

## Integrity Watch Liberia launches regulations for county councils

By Lewis S Teh

Integrity Watch Liberia with support from USAID Liberia has partner with the Government of Liberia to formally launch the administrative regulations for county council. "We are delighted to have developed this administrative regulations and excited to launch this instrument because we believe it will guide and put the country on the right trajectory interns of development", said executive director, Harold Aidoo, during the formal launch recently.

He noted that chapter 2 of the Local Government Act defines the powers, and authority of local governments, and calls for establishment of local government structures, including County Councils. "These Administrative Regulations are promulgated to guide the process of selecting

economic resource decision-making, and more local ownership of, and responsibilities, for making decisions that impact local communities. He explained that the goal is to take government closer to the people, establish semi-autonomous local government structures, and increase participation of citizens in the planning and management of development nationwide. He added that they will also be used as a guide for establishment, administration and governance of county councils, pursuant to Chapter 2, Sub-section 2.3 and Chapter 9, Sub-section 9.4 of the Local Government Act. He said administrative regulations with support from USAID Liberia what it does is to provide the framework for the guidelines for inclusive and transparent process for election of county council structures. He said the regulation is also pursuant to Section 2.2 and 2.11 of the Local Government Act establishes the rules that will



Executive Director Harold Aidoo

qualified persons, representative of county organizations, inclusive of women and youth, and people with disabilities", he explained.

He said since the end of the civil conflict in 2003, the Government of Liberia has continued to demonstrate commitment to democratic governance reforms. He revealed that government's policy on decentralization is articulated in the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance launched in 2012. He recalled that President George Weah signed the Local Government Act and the Revenue Sharing Act into law respectively in 2018 and 2022, consistent with government's priorities enshrined in the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD). Both Acts, according to Director Herold, are the enabling legislations that provide for greater participation of citizens in governance, more equity in

govern operations of all county councils across the country. "We strongly believe that this is a monumental milestone that sets the framework for a more transparent, inclusive and accountable local government development in Liberia", he added. Mr. Aidoo disclosed that Integrity Watch Liberia has observed that since the county development fund was instituted by the administration of former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, there has been challenges, with accusations of manipulation by lawmakers. He said lawmakers are most often accused of taking delegates to their various counties and making unilateral decisions on what project should be implemented. Integrity Watch Liberia strongly believes the passage of the Local Government Act and the Revenue Sharing Law, and the establishment of county councils, will address many of the issues relating to manipulation and exclusion relative to development priorities.



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## NEC launches civic, voter education campaign 2023

By Naneka Hoffman

The National Elections Commission (NEC) has launched Civic and Voters Education Campaign for the 2023 Presidential and Legislative Elections under the theme: "Citizens Participation A Must."

(NEC Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah says there are

fairly, and independently. He explained that they should also make sure that they teach everyone to vote once in the district they registered during the biometric voter's registration exercise.

She narrated that they include faith-based organizations, CSOs, and Community-Based Organizations, hoping that the work will further deepen knowledge about the process and understanding about the rights of Liberians to turn out in

Sayor urged all CBOs political parties to participate in the process so that citizens will come out on October 10th to cast their ballots.

Also speaking, oversight commissioner for civic voters'



some 81 community-based organizations (CBOs) conducting civic computer education activities across all 15 counties in nineteen (19) ministerial districts and the 73 electoral districts of Liberia, respectively.

She says so far, the Commission has also accredited and certified 400 civil society organizations to assist in

their numbers.

The NEC Chairperson underscored that the exercise is to enable Liberians make informed decisions at the ballot box on Elections Day.

The Chairman of Steering Committee, Floyd Oxley Sayor said the launch of the CVE is to ensure everyone participates in the electoral process freely,

education Cllr. Ernestine Morgan said communication is very key in the electoral sojourn of any electoral management body. She said in order to do that, they will have to explain the meaning of civics and civic obligation so that citizens will know their rights and how to exercise them in elections. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

## LEC lights up slum communities

By: Emmanuel wise Jipo

The Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) has finally switched on electricity cables in several slum communities across Monrovia.

LEC Chief Executive Officer, Monie R. Captan, recently led a team of electricity engineers to switch on cables to difficult-to-reach communities, including Iron Factory Block B, 72nd Army Camp Field, and Lone Star Cell Number One & Two, and Jacob Town, respectively.

The exercise is part of Corporation's Gap Communities Electrification Project (G-CEP) that targets communities, villages, and towns initially left out of the LEC power grid electricity program sponsored by the World Bank. The G-CEP is a self-initiative by the Corporation in an effort to expand electricity to slum and hard to reach communities to help curtail power theft. Leading the team carrying on the exercise, CEO Captan stressed the significant of electricity to thresholds of the population, saying the aim is to provide access to electricity for unserved and underserved areas.

He said it is also intended to improve livelihoods, social services, and help mitigate environmental and economic challenges of slum communities, and curtail power theft that continues to hinder economic growth. For his part, the Executive Director for Engineering and Major Connections (PEMC) at LEC, Dele I. Shobayo, cautioned community dwellers to be patriotic citizens and report power theft. Mr. Shobayo said the G-CEP seeks to bridge

electricity access gaps, especially for people living in difficult and remote areas with thousands of households expected to benefit electricity. He added that the intervention fits into the poverty alleviation efforts of the Government of Liberia through its PAPD program, while decentralizing electricity to foster socio-economic development and improve livelihoods of residents.



## LWSC takes 3 water companies to court

The Management of the Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC) has taken three of its major customers to court for protracted indebtedness, noncompliance and defiance.

This comes a week after receiving the US\$6 Million Would Bank-funded water express line.

Following several failed attempts to claim legitimate payments from Diamond Mineral Water Company, City Life Water Company and Ducor Safe Drinking Water Company, the LWSC, on Monday, August 1, 2023, took the three companies to the Debt Court at the Temple of Justice, as part of new Managing Director G. Alphonso Gaye's pledge to execute President George Weah's mandate to resuscitate and reform the corporation.

The three companies were held liable and made to pay a portion each of what they owe the corporation, before appealing for time to negotiate

paid US\$1,500.00 (One thousand five hundred United States Dollars) out of US\$6000.00 (Six thousand United States Dollars) it owes as well.

Court officers also moved on facility of Dukor Safe Drinking Water Factory in Duport Road community, Paynesville, but could not gain entry into the company's compound.

However, they placed the seal of the court on the gates of the factory, as a legal notice to the corporation to comply with proceedings at the court based on complaint from the LWSC.

This exercise, according to the LWSC management, will continue until the corporation recovers all of its legitimate and much needed revenues.

Immediately upon taking office at the corporation, Director Gaye committed to closing "all leakages," both administrative, commercial and technical, that are hampering the corporation's effective service delivery and its revenue-



Managing Director G. Alphonso Gaye

with the management for the settlement of the remaining amounts.

City Life Water Company made a cash advance payment of US\$700.00 (Seven hundred United States Dollars) out of US\$6000.00 (Six thousand United States Dollars) it owes, while Diamond Mineral Water Company

generating capacity.

Speaking shortly after the court actions were taken, he reiterated this commitment to ensuring that the LWSC truly functions as a major income-generating entity with viability to enhance government's financial capacity amid major challenges. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

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# Français

## 20 prétendants pour un seul fauteuil présidentiel

20 candidats, dont le président sortant George Weah, ont été autorisés par la Commission électorale

(CDC) au pouvoir, l'ancien vice-président Joseph Nyumah Boakai du Parti de l'unité (UP), l'ancien directeur Afrique de Coca-Cola Alexander B. Cummings de la Collaboration des partis politiques

terminait son deuxième mandat, l'élection présidentielle a mis aux prises 20 candidats, une élection que le président sortant Weah a remportée à la suite d'un

## Éditorial

### Arrêtez la violence à Nimba

L'augmentation de la violence caractérisée par l'usage des armes à feu et la destruction des propriétés publiques et des entreprises privées dans le comté de Nimba constitue un obstacle pour le développement non seulement dans ce comté, mais aussi sur l'ensemble du pays, d'où la nécessité d'une attention particulière sur cette question de la part de tous les Libériens épris de paix.

Il est tout à fait regrettable qu'un pays encore sous le choc de 14 années de guerre civile dévastatrice se délecte de la violence comme moyen d'obtenir réparation des problèmes auxquels il est confronté, comme dans le cas récent d'ArcelorMittal Liberia qui fut victime de vandalisme. Ces nouveaux événements soulèvent de sérieuses questions psychologiques sur le comportement des Libériens.

La violence de vendredi dernier (28 juillet 2023) à Zolowee, dans la deuxième circonscription électorale du comté de Nimba, était totalement injustifiée. Il y a eu vendredi dernier des affrontements entre un groupe de jeunes citoyens et des éléments de la police lors d'une perquisition. Un homme de 20 ans a été abattu, un policier blessé et plusieurs autres civils hospitalisés.

Ces violences arrivent alors que nous ne sommes qu'à moins de 80 jours des élections générales et présidentielle et que la tension politique monte de plus en plus. Nous nous empressons de rappeler que la violence persistante des citoyens lésés dans le comté de Grand Cape Mount pour des raisons foncières et autres était l'une des principales raisons pour lesquelles la société malaisienne de palmiers à huile, Sime Darby, a fermé ses portes et a quitté le Libéria, laissant plusieurs milliers de Libériens sans emploi.

Aujourd'hui, des actions similaires ont lieu dans le même comté, cette fois-ci, contre la société minière Bea Mounting, en particulier à Kungbor et dans d'autres districts. Des citoyens lésés de la ville de Zolowee le long de la route Sanniquillie -Yekepa dans la deuxième circonscription électorale du comté de Nimba s'en sont pris à des agents des forces de sécurité qui exécutaient un mandat de perquisition de plusieurs maisons de la ville pour retrouver des biens appartenant à ArcelorMittal Libéria.

Les citoyens n'avaient aucune raison de devenir violents si leur conscience était claire et étaient convaincus qu'ils n'avaient aucun objet volé à l'intérieur de leurs différentes maisons.

Il convient de rappeler aux Libériens qui résident à proximité des zones de concession à travers le pays que les investisseurs viennent ici pour un accord gagnant-gagnant avec le gouvernement qui fournit des emplois aux citoyens. Mais lorsque les terrains de concession deviennent des champs de bataille, l'argent réel s'envole et l'économie se met à genou comme nous l'avons vécu pendant la guerre civile. N'oublions pas que le gouvernement ne peut pas fournir d'emplois. Il a besoin d'investisseurs pour générer des revenus pour le développement auquel aspirent tous les Libériens.

Au lieu de recourir à une violence persistante, vandalisant biens publics et privés, nous encourageons les citoyens ayant des préoccupations, aussi graves soient-elles, à choisir la table ronde pour demander réparation, car nous avons besoin d'investisseurs étrangers pour maintenir l'économie.



nationale (NEC) à se présenter à l'élection présidentielle du 10 octobre, a annoncé l'organe électoral mercredi 2 août.

Parmi les candidats dont la candidature a été validée sont le président sortant Weah de la coalition pour le changement démocratique

(CPP), l'ancien ministre du Travail du Libéria et ancien président de l'Association nationale du barreau du Libéria (LNBA) Me Tiawan Saye Gongloe du Parti du peuple libérien (LPP) et Freeman Simeon du Mouvement pour le progrès et le changement (MPC).

En 2017, à l'exclusion de l'ancienne présidente Sirleaf qui

second tour face à l'ancien vice-président Boakai.

Et comme en 2017, plus d'une douzaine de nouveaux candidats briguent pour la première fois les suffrages à l'élection de cette année, la plupart des candidats qui

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## Le Libéria averti d'une menace imminente suite à une tentative de coup d'État en Sierra Leone

Le sénateur du comté de Lofa, Steve Zargo, a mis en garde contre une menace imminente au Libéria, affirmant que le coup d'État militaire au Niger et la tentative de coup d'État dans la Sierra Leone voisine suscitent tous des inquiétudes.

L'ancien officier de police croit que la possibilité d'un coup d'État est possible au regard de ce qui se passe dans les pays voisins.

« Je ne vois pas de menace potentielle de coup d'État au Libéria, mais ce que je vois, c'est une menace potentielle. Les Libériens ne sont pas tout à fait rassurés parce que nous l'avons vécu et nous l'avons ressenti. Nous n'en avons plus besoin, mais il y a toujours une menace imminente », a-t-il déclaré.

S'exprimant dans une interview exclusive avec ce journal le mercredi 2 août 2023 à Congo Town, le sénateur de l'opposition a déclaré que bien qu'il ne soutienne pas ou ne veuille pas d'interventions

militaires, il existe une menace potentielle au Libéria.

Zargo a averti le gouvernement libérien de prévenir la menace potentielle de conflit et de violence. Il a exhorté la Commission électorale nationale dirigée par Madame Davidetta Brown-Lassan à faire preuve d'indépendance et de neutralité.

Selon lui, la menace potentielle du Libéria se profile si le

gouvernement, par l'intermédiaire de la NEC, ne parvient pas à être ouvert et à organiser des élections transparentes, libres et équitables.

« Encore une fois, ces coups d'État nous lancent à tous un défi en tant qu'institution et peuple. La NEC, nous avons eu

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Mr. Steve Zargo



# Français

Starts from page 8

## 20 prétendants pour

s'étaient présentés en 2017 ayant préféré cette fois soutenir d'autres candidats. Il s'agit entre autres de Benoni Urey d'ALP, l'ancien gouverneur de la Banque centrale Joseph Mills Jones, Madame MacDella Cooper, Henry Boima Fahnbulleh, l'ancien sénateur Oscar Cooper, Dr MacDonald A. Wento, Dr Isaac Gbombadee Wiles, Aloysius William Kpadeh, Rev. Kennedy Gbleyah Sandy, George Sluwer Dweh Sr. et Wendell J. E. McIntosh.

Plus de deux millions de Libériens ont le droit de voter aux élections présidentielle et législatives de cette année sur une population estimée à 5 millions d'habitants. Un candidat doit obtenir au moins 50% plus une voix pour éviter un second tour plus tard en novembre.

Lors d'une cérémonie au cours de laquelle les candidats qui ont été acceptés ont été annoncés le mercredi 2 août, la présidente de la NEC, Davidetta Browne Lansanah, a déclaré qu'environ mille trente (1 030) aspirants, aussi bien à l'élection présidentielle qu'aux élections sénatoriales et législatives ont fait acte de candidature en déposant leurs dossiers de candidature auprès de la NEC. Parmi eux figurent 159 femmes, soit 15 %, et 199 (19%) candidats indépendants. Par ailleurs, Madame Lansanah a promis tant aux candidats qu'aux Libériens des élections libres, équitables, transparentes et crédibles. Elle a félicité les candidats et les partis politiques pour leurs engagements en signant l'accord de la Déclaration de Farmington 2023 qui permettra un processus électoral libre, équitable et transparent et sans violences.

Starts from page 8

## Le Libéria averti d'une

notre propre problème avec eux. Je n'aime pas la façon dont la patronne de la NEC s'est comportée au fil des ans », a déclaré M. Zargo.

« Nous l'avons relevé. Nous espérons juste qu'elle fasse ce qu'il faut. Je ne suis pas un bébé qui pleure ici », a souligné le sénateur Zargo.

Le président du comité sénatorial de la défense a indiqué qu'en dépit d'être un acteur de l'opposition, il ne se comportera pas d'une manière qui compromettrait la paix et la stabilité du Libéria.

Un coup d'Etat en préparation aurait été déjoué en Sierra Leone. Des individus voulant renverser le président Julius Maada Bio et les institutions du pays ont été arrêtés. C'est ce qu'ont annoncé lundi 31 juillet 2023, les autorités sierra-leonaises.

Selon la communication officielle, les services de renseignements du pays ont reçu des informations concernant les activités de

certaines personnes, dont des officiers supérieurs de l'armée, qui s'emploient à saper la paix et la tranquillité de l'État et à déclencher la violence contre des citoyens pacifiques de la Sierra Leone. Plusieurs individus ont été arrêtés par la suite.

On ne connaît pas encore combien ni leurs noms, mais les autorités ont assuré que « les suspects assistent la police dans les enquêtes ». Ce « prétendu coup d'État » impliquerait des personnes vivant dans le pays et à l'étranger (civiles et militaires). Les enquêtes préliminaires ont révélé que ces individus prévoient d'utiliser de prétendues manifestations pacifiques entre le 7 et le 10 août 2023, pour déclencher des attaques violentes contre les institutions de l'État et des citoyens pacifiques.

Les autorités sécuritaires rassurent que la situation est entièrement sous contrôle.

## Niger : manifestations de soutien à la junte pour la fête nationale



Ce 3 août, c'est le jour de fête nationale au Niger. Le pays célèbre le 63e anniversaire de son indépendance. Mais cette année, pas de défilé militaire. Ce matin, des rassemblements ont eu lieu à Niamey où des centaines de manifestants ont affiché leur soutien aux militaires putschistes. À Niamey, la manifestation s'est achevée en fin de matinée, ce 3 août 2023. Un rassemblement est prévu ce jeudi après-midi à 15h00, au stade Général Seyni Kountché. Ce matin, des milliers de personnes, essentiellement des hommes et des jeunes, se sont retrouvées place de la Concertation pour deux heures de meeting pendant lesquelles plusieurs discours ont été

prononcés, notamment par des membres la société civile, issus de la coalition M62, connue pour ses positions contre la présence militaire française. Dans la foule, des vêtements à l'effigie du général Abdourahmane Tchiani - commandant de la Garde présidentielle à l'origine du coup d'État et président de la junte du Comité national pour la sauvegarde de la patrie (CNSP) - et quelques drapeaux russes. Beaucoup de slogans contre la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Cédéao) ont également été entendus. Cette dernière a lancé un ultimatum d'une semaine aux putschistes pour déposer les armes. D'autres slogans ont aussi été scandés contre la présence militaire française, pacifiquement devant l'ambassade de France, sans heurts. Des éléments de la Garde nationale du Niger avaient assuré un cordon de sécurité entre la représentation française et les manifestants. Concernant l'intérieur du pays, à Agadez, là aussi des centaines de personnes sont sorties en soutien à la junte. C'est une première dans cette ville emblématique du centre du pays qui n'avait pas pris parti depuis le début de la crise. La situation très calme pour l'instant à Maradi, capitale économique située à quelques dizaines de kilomètres de la frontière avec le Nigeria. Elle subit de plein fouet les sanctions de la Cédéao.

## Coup d'État au Niger : après le Mali, le numéro deux de la junte au Burkina Faso

Le général Salifou Mody, numéro deux du Conseil national pour la sauvegarde de la patrie (CNSP), l'organe qui a renversé le 26 juillet le président du Niger Mohamed Bazoum, est arrivé au Burkina Faso ce 2 août 2023, après une visite au Mali. Deux pays qui ont affiché leur soutien aux putschistes nigériens et leur hostilité à des sanctions prises par la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Cédéao) à la suite du coup d'État du CNSP.

Les putschistes nigériens cherchent des soutiens auprès des régimes militaires de la région.

Après une étape à Bamako, le général Salifou Mody, numéro deux de la junte nigérienne, est ainsi allé à Ouagadougou pour s'entretenir avec le président de la transition burkinabè, Ibrahim Traoré.

Le général Mody s'est en effet rendu dès ce 2 août 2023 au Burkina Faso, dans la foulée de sa visite au Mali.

Mais ce n'est que ce matin que les autorités burkinabè ont communiqué sur la rencontre avec Ibrahim Traoré. D'abord, par le biais d'une photo sur laquelle l'on voit le numéro deux de la junte nigérienne entouré d'une petite délégation, quatre personnes. Puis, par la diffusion aux médias d'une déclaration enregistrée du général Mody.

« Nous ne souhaitons pas que le Niger devienne une nouvelle Libye »

Ce dernier s'y félicite du « très fort soutien du Burkina Faso », « dans le contexte où certains pays de la Cédéao appliquent des mesures de sanctions sévères et où il est question d'une intervention militaire ».

« Nous ne souhaitons pas que le Niger



Président Du Niger Mohamed Bazoum, Est Arrivé Au Burkina Faso

devienne une nouvelle Libye », poursuit le haut gradé nigérien, en allusion à l'intervention militaire occidentale qui a renversé le régime de Mouammar Kadhafi en 2011.

« Nous allons conjuguer nos efforts pour que cette situation n'arrive pas », « en coordination avec nos frères du Burkina Faso, nous avons décidé d'entreprendre un certain nombre d'activités pour pouvoir faire face à la situation pour sécuriser nos populations et pour sécuriser nos deux pays », annonce-t-il sans plus de précisions.

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## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

## DOUKOR FOR MONROVIA

# Why do Liberians continue to Honor James Monroe, An Enslaver?

## This action stigmatizes our self-worth, dignity, and the celebration of our sovereignty

J. Patrick Flomo  
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The whirlwind fever of the 176th Liberian Independence celebration is blowing across the Liberian landscape at home and in the diaspora. From the homeland to the United States and elsewhere in the world where Liberians reside, the mantra is the celebration of July 26.

It is estimated that there are between 250,000 and 500,000 Liberians in the United States (iimn.org). Without empirical data, I will guess that Liberians in the United States will spend around \$2 million for this celebration.

In addition to the millions expected to be spent in the Liberian diaspora community on July 26, Liberians will send family members in Liberia millions of dollars for this national holiday. Foreigner businesses in Liberia are expected to rake in millions of dollars during July 26, the hottest sales season of the year.

In the last ten years, I have constantly questioned the nature of our independence celebration. The historical facts suggest that Liberia was never a colony of foreign powers from whom we had to fight for independence.

Liberia's so-called independence is sui generis among the nations of the world. The independence question was more about economic necessities for the survival of the newly declared independent nation rather than an armed struggle for freedom from oppressor Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), or Kenya. The settlers never shed a drop of blood or had revolutionary fighters imprisoned for fighting for independence, like Ghana (Nkrumah) or Kenya (Jomo Kenyatta).

I think Liberia's independence was a serendipity. Queen Victoria of England did not insist that the American Colonization Society (ACS) colony (the commonwealth of Liberia) had no sovereign rights to levy taxes on British ships doing business along its coastline. Well, the question of sovereignty became the hottest political issue in the 1840s.

Without the American government's financial support, the ACS was not in a position to maintain a colony in West Africa like the European powers after the 1885 Berlin conference. The ACS had no option but to let the commonwealth declare sovereignty. Hence, Liberia's independence came without a war.

Since we do not have independent revolutionary heroes like Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Thomas Sankara, or Patrice Lumumba to celebrate on our independence anniversary, we should be celebrating men and women who would have been icons for transforming Liberia into the first industrialized country or the land of Eden in West Africa.

But sadly, THERE IS NONE!! Instead, we venerate an ENSLAVER, James Monroe, by naming our capital city in his honor. Liberia had celebrated the Silver Jubilee of sovereignty when the 2nd industrialization (technological revolution) came along and has lived throughout all the technological revolution since; yet Liberia is light-years behind modernity when compare to other African countries like Ghana and Rwanda.

After the initial donation of \$100,000.00 from the James Monroe administration to the ACS to get the

African colony project started, the United States government stopped funding the ACS. With only voluntary monetary contributions from goodwilled people, the ACS could not have complete hegemony of the colony. For the colony to sustain itself, she had to declare independence from the ACS and get international recognition from the Great Powers. This would give Liberia the international legal rights to levy taxes on ships doing business along her shores.

The ACS agreed to the sovereignty question. So, in 1847, the Commonwealth of Montserrado, Grand Bassa, and Sinoe declared Liberia's independence after the constitutional convention of 1847.



Since the settlers didn't have to fire a single shot to gain independence, international recognition became more problematic. The most logical source of recognition of Liberia's independence would have been the United States, since Liberia was an outgrowth of American slave institutions.

Because of America's racist attitudes, President James K. Polk (an enslaver of Africans) refused to recognize Liberia's sovereignty. Liberia had to wait 15 years to get the United States' recognition of her independence which was given by President Abraham Lincoln in 1862.

Liberian President J. J. Roberts turned to England for help. In 1849, Roberts visited Queen Victoria of England and secured British recognition of Liberia as a sovereign nation. England was the first world power to do so. The next international recognition came from Europe.

We do not have an Independence Square or Independence Hall or town to symbolize European support for our independence. But the United States, the racist country that refused to recognize our independence proclamation in 1847, is symbolically

recognized everywhere, on the Liberian flag, seal, etc.

On July 26, 2023, Liberians will celebrate the 176th so-called independence of Liberia in the capital city, Monrovia, named in honor of a man who ENSLAVED Africans in the United States.

James Monroe was not an abolitionist, but an enslaver of Africans. As a member of the ACS and President of the United States, he (like Thomas Jefferson) wanted former enslaved Africans out of the United States.

So, he got Congress to appropriate \$100,000.00 to establish the African colony in West Africa. It is for this shady act that the ACS got the sovereign state of Liberia to change the capital city's name from CHRISTOPOLIS to MONROVIA.

For 176 years and counting, we have lived with this SCARLET LETTER and many Liberians think IT IS OKAY. I think this has to do with the fact that we have deconstructed our minds to recognize our inherent dignity and value in contrast to what we have been indoctrinated with.

I think if we are to honor a significant historical person who helped to solidify our independence, that person would be Queen Victoria. Hence, the capital city should have been named "Victoria City".

This would have been more appropriate and logical. I preferred the original name Doukor, as it is known by the largest population, the indigenous people.

It is deeply confounding that after 175 years, Liberians (especially Americo-Liberians) are so enamored with American symbolism rather than feeling strong aversion when the history of the transatlantic slave trade is replete with the horror of inhumanity and degradation against Africans in the American "peculiar institution."

Cities like Monrovia, Greenville, Buchanan, etc., streets like Clay Street, Ashmun Street, Broad Street, etc., and many other places along the coast are reminders of White supremacists and ENSLAVERS.

I think if we had learned to deconstruct our minds to see the worth of our Africanism and human dignity, we would have begun to reckon with this ugly past.

Keeping the name Monrovia in honor of James Monroe, a man who ENSLAVED Africans in the United States.

This is an affront to the Pioneers' sons and daughters, and an insult to the indigenous who want the original African name: DOUKOR.

I will hope that during this so-called independent celebration, a patriotic and nationalistic senator or legislature will have the courage to uphold the CONSTITUTION by calling for a Legislature debate on this question.

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Presidential hopeful Dr. Jeremiah Z. Whapoe has accused renowned human rights lawyer Cllr. Tiawon Saye Gongloe of engaging in divisive politics to divide the

noted that it's quite unfortunate that some sons of Nimba are engaging in divisive politics, especially when it comes to separating the county into lower and upper Nimba. "There are some of us

that Cllr. Gongloe and his sister Eidith Gongolweh are the masterminds pushing for the division of what they describe as " Mano and Gio Nimba County. He noted that when War Crimes court is established in Liberia, it's



LPP Candidate Cllr. Gongloe

VOLT Candidate Dr. Whapoe

people of Nimba County for person's gain. Cllr. Gongloe is yet to respond to the allegations. Nimba County is so far featuring two presidential candidates and one vice presidential candidate. They are Dr. Whapoe of the Vision for Liberia's Transformation (VOLT), Cllr. Gongloe of Liberia's People Party and Senator Jeremiah Koung of the former ruling Unity Party respectively. Addressing a huge gathering in Nimba County recently, Dr. Whapoe

who believe in the school of thoughts which says "there is strength in unity" but there are some of our sons in this race who wants to become president (but) they want to divide Nimba County into Mano Nimba and Gio Nimba. That is completely wrong. In my administration, there is no Mano or Gio Nimba. There will be a united Nimba County and Liberia under my watch" Dr. Whapoe noted. There are allegations emanating from the county

Nimba citizens who stood up and defended their county and people will be taken to court. " I am not happy because war came to Liberia. I am not happy for that. There is a way that we can solve the problem in Liberia here instead of opening the wounds. I don't know about Nimba County but for me, this election is a defining moment. I am ready to become President and Nimba will produce me as that President, " he concluded.

The opposition Unity Party (UP) suggests here that results of the Presidential elections on October 10th should be announced in various electoral districts to avoid irregularities and fraud. The party made the proposal on Wednesday, 2nd August 2023, when the National Elections Commission (NEC) in partnership with ECOWAS and United Nations-Liberia, held a daylong interactive forum with 20 Presidential Candidates on the need to promote peaceful election. The forum was held under the theme: "Building the Confidence of the

polling precincts and centers before transporting ballot boxes to Monrovia for official release by the NEC. However, Senator Koung dubbed as Rescue-2, argues that if the Presidential election results are pronounced in various electoral districts, governed by electoral magistrates, this will enhance violence-free-credible elections and results will be accepted. He also joins calls from Presidential Candidates for the Ministry of Justice to augment and enhance security measures that will protect the entire electoral process to avoid violence. For his part, the political leader of



Senator Koung

Presidential Candidates in the workings of the NEC." UP Vice Presidential Candidate, Senator Jeremiah Koung, suggested that results of both the Presidential and General elections should be announced in various districts across the country to ensure transparency. By practice, election magistrates had always posted preliminary results at

the Democratic National Allegiance (DNA) William Wiah Tuider, called for justice, fairness and equality in the entire electoral process. Mr. Tuider warned against violence that could undermine the election results while vowing to complain any individual that will perpetrate violence to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Editing by Jonathan Browne

**Starts from page 6**

the stage for helping the UL achieve some of its goals in digitalization and innovation. The US\$600,000 (six hundred thousand) UniPod Project funded by UNDP, is multi-pronged and focuses on supporting and growing innovative, scalable, and impactful entrepreneurship by young people of Africa while relying on a springboard of partners who together

contribute meaningfully to building an African youth innovation and start-up ecosystem. In Liberia, the UniPod will be hosted at the River View Complex, Fendall, University of Liberia. In addition, an Orange Digital Center in Congo Town in Monrovia will feed into the UniPod at the University of Liberia in partnership with Icampus. The UniPOD will have a design Lab which will

create a space where students can learn how to think about problems differently and design solutions using dedicated tools, a space equipped and staffed to enable innovators to make things and supports rapid prototyping & digital - driven production as well as a space to inspire creative collaboration and networking of students, workshops, and events.

**Ahead of 2023 campaign kickoff:**

*Starts from back page*

**Starts from page 6**

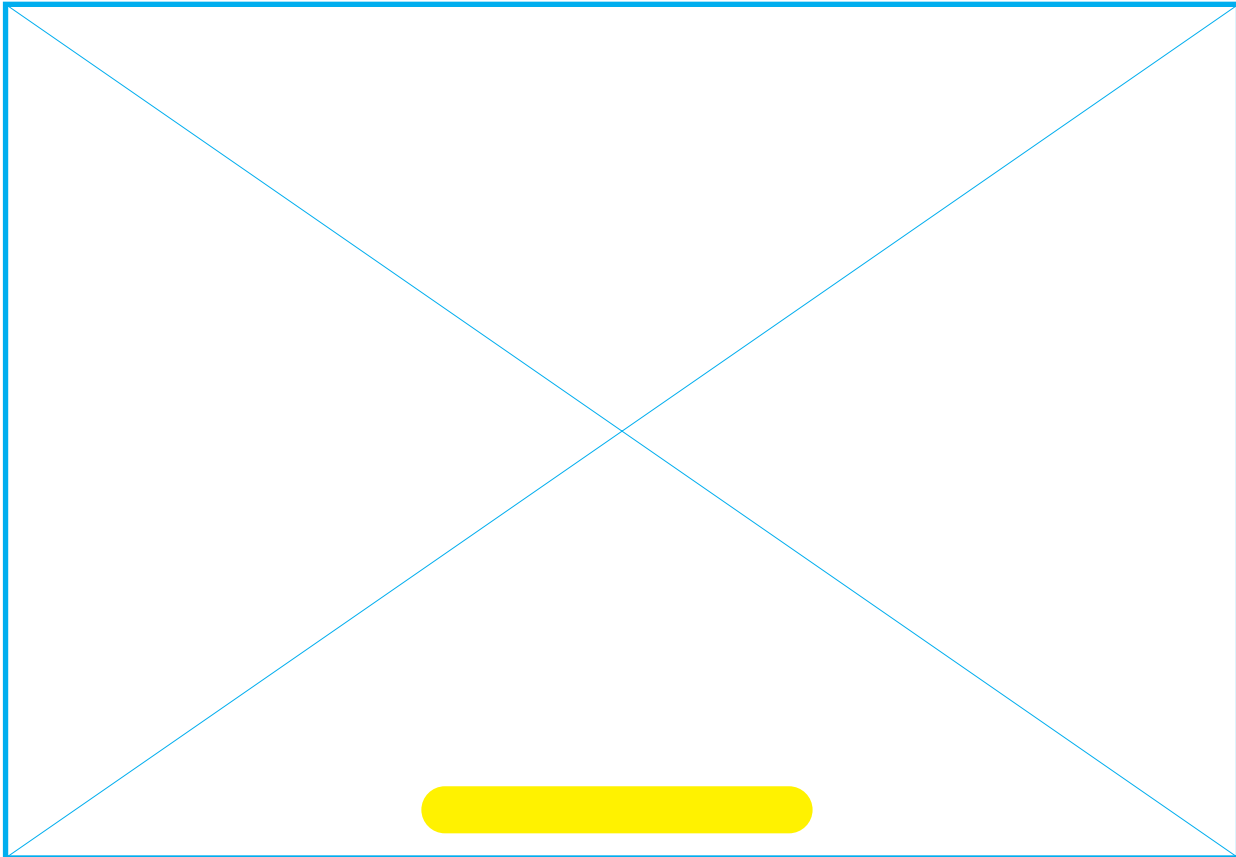
professional competence, integrity and compassion. Speaking following her introduction, Madam said she has come as a service to God and to the Liberian People. She then described her Standard Bearer as a chosen leader for the nation and together they will deliver Liberia. Madam Weah indicated that she has no doubt "Rev Brown will deliver Liberia." The LRP vice presidential running mate pointed out that Liberia

deserves better and it's time Liberians seized the opportunity to trust the LRP to transform the country, saying Liberia does not need a quick impact change, but a gradual transformation. The Liberia Restoration Party is a faith base - Political Movement, fostering the agenda of restoring Liberia back to God, Gabriel Salee-LRP- National Chairman said as he announced his Presidential Candidate Rev. Allen Roosevelt Brown Jr. as one of the 20 Presidential Candidates for the pending October 10, Election. - Edited by Othello B. Garblah



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