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DATE	BUYING	SELLING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2023	L\$185.4494/US\$1.00	L\$187.3092/US\$1.00


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

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Continental News

UN Organization Unveils Emergency Plan to Assist 10 Million Sudanese Amid War

The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO, has launched a plan to assist at least 10 million Sudanese farmers, herders and fishermen across 17 states. The 12-month program aims to address the threat of food insecurity in the country,

"The ELRP aims to mitigate the impact of the recent conflict on vulnerable people, address their immediate needs, and enhance their ability to recover and strengthen their resilience, besides achieving food security at its minimum level for the overall population," Elwaer said. "Agriculture remains a lifeline in

"I think this will help us and others be encouraged to look for and seek such kind of help and organize themselves," he said. "But the condition is demanding; seriously, the Sudanese people need help from the international community because they lost their government."

Aid agencies say during Sudan's dry season, which runs from November to May, farmers reliant on rainfall face food shortages, while livestock owners are faced with water and pasture shortages, leading to threatened livelihoods.

According to Integrated Food Security Phase (IPC) projections published last month, more than 20.3 million Sudanese are food insecure, with six million suffering from emergency levels of acute hunger. Abdulrahman said that Sudanese farmers use seeds to produce food, but also require so much more. "I don't think that's enough because the farmers need more than the seeds," he said. "They need money to make the preparations. They need money to continue with other agricultural activities."

The FAO said that much of the support for the vulnerable farming and herding households will be delivered through cash assistance and livelihood input packages, including seeds and agricultural, animal and fishing tools.VOA



A child carries bags with bread as he walks in a street in Khartoum, Sudan

which has been exacerbated by a five-month-old armed conflict. The FAO will add to recent seed distribution efforts to enhance food production, with the hope of feeding 13 to 19 million people in coming months. Abdulhakim Elwaer, FAO regional representative for the Near East and North Africa, said the Emergency Livelihood Response Plan is designed to combat hunger and poverty in Sudan.

Sudan." Sudan plunged into conflict in April, sparked by a power struggle between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary group Rapid Support Forces. The conflict has killed thousands of people, displaced millions, and prompted millions more to seek refuge in neighboring countries in search of food, medicine and shelter.

Mohamed Abdulrahman, a farmer in Sudan's Upper Nile State, expressed optimism about the assistance.

Death Toll Surges Above 2,900 in Aftermath of Morocco Earthquake

The death toll in Morocco has now risen to 2,900 after a 6.8-magnitude earthquake shook the High Atlas Mountains southwest of Marrakech on Friday. More than 5,500 people have reported injuries, more than twice the previous tally. Many survivors complain of a lack of aid from Morocco's government.

This earthquake is the North African nation's worst in more than 60 years.

After four nights exposed to the elements, locals who have been left homeless are frustrated with the emergency response.

Mehdi Ait Bouyali, 24, has been stranded along the Tizi N'Test, a lengthy road that connects Marrakech to outlying rural valleys. In the aftermath, he has been camping on the roadside with others who escaped.

They have received no

government support and say if not for food and blankets from strangers driving by, they would have nothing.

"The villages of the valley have been forgotten," he said. "We need any kind of help. We need tents."

Government spokesman Mustapha Baitas on Monday disputed the accusations of inaction.

"From the first seconds this devastating earthquake occurred, and in following the instructions of

His Royal Majesty, all civil and military authorities and medical staff, military and civil, have worked on the swift and effective intervention to rescue the victims and recover the bodies of the martyrs," he said. Rescue teams, including some brought in from Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Britain and Spain, have built tent camps and have begun to deliver food and water where they can.VOA



A blue door is seen surrounded by rubble in the devastated village of Adouz after the deadly earthquake in Morocco

More Than 5,000 Believed Dead in Libya Floods, Over 30,000 Displaced

The International Organization for Migration said Wednesday that the deadly flooding that hit eastern Libya has displaced more than 30,000 people.

The U.N. agency said at least 30,000 of the displaced were from the city of Derna, with thousands more from other areas including Benghazi.

More than 5,000 people are believed dead, with exact figures difficult to confirm in the country where rival governments have competed

her. None of her kids, none of their bodies, none. Not even the building. It's gone. It's not there at all." The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said Wednesday the situation in Derna is very bad and that international support is needed. Mey Al Sayegh, the head of communications at the IFRC Middle East and North Africa office, said in a briefing on X that there is no clean drinking water in Derna and no medical supplies, and that the only hospital in the city could no longer take patients.

Al Sayegh said what is needed now is water, shelter, medical aid,



A man stands next to a damaged car, after a powerful storm and heavy rainfall hit Libya, in Derna, Libya



This satellite photo from Planet Labs PBC shows flooding in Derna, Libya

for control for a decade. Some officials say that number could double.

Hichem Abu Chkiouat, minister of civil aviation in the administration that runs eastern Libya, told Reuters that more than 5,300 bodies had been counted in Derna. The city was the hardest hit after Mediterranean Storm Daniel brought torrential rains and two dams collapsed.

Fatma Balha, a medical student in Derna, told VOA English to Africa's Hassuna Baishu that the center of Derna has suffered major damage.

"It's all gone. All the buildings are gone. It all went with the floods, probably they have gone to the sea. We cannot see the building," Balha said. "I have my aunt. She's there and we cannot find

food and psychosocial support.

Ahmed Bayram, media advisor for the Middle East for the Norwegian Refugee Council, told VOA's James Butty that Libya had already faced challenges for years and needs funding.

"This is going to be a tragic situation for tens of thousands, not just in Derna, but also across Libya," Bayram said. "The thing about this is that Libya, with its many problems, has been off the headlines for months, if not over a year now. Now it's back in the spotlight and it is important to stress that Libya has been left behind. The Libya crisis has been left behind. And now it's time for donors to get back on track and fund this emergency."

Hassuna Baishu and James Butty contributed to this report. Some information was provided by the Associated Press and Reuters.VOA

EDITORIAL

Welcoming the EU Election Observers Mission to Liberia

NEWS THAT THE European Union has deployed 20 Election Observers Mission across Liberia, ahead of the October 10th Presidential Legislative Elections, is both welcoming and encouraging.

THESE ELECTIONS MARK a significant milestone in the consolidation of Liberia's democracy, Deputy Chief Observer, Jarek Domanski, who has been in the country since the end of August, is quoted as saying.

ACCORDING TO A press release, the Mission's primary focus will be on monitoring electoral preparations and campaign activities in all of Liberia's 15 counties.

DEPUTY CHIEF OBSERVER Domanski said group of experts, including specialists in election procedures, politics, law, campaign finance, media, social media, and data analysis are in the country to carry out such mission.

THE NEWS SHOULD be welcomed by all Liberians that desire a peaceful election and peace for Liberia.

The presence of international observers to monitor the polls will also deter would-be troublemakers that are planning to disrupt the process and revert Liberia to chaos.

IT INDICATES THAT the people of Liberia are not alone in the quest to remain on the path of transparent elections and sustaining the democratic process.

AS FOREIGN OBSERVERS troop into the country, it behooves us as Liberians to set the right image for ourselves that we are ready to keep the nation peaceful and stable.

ELECTIONS ARE FOR just a day, but after the polls and results start trickling in, it will be the crucial time for all sides to exercise high degree of maturity and tolerance until a winner is declared by the National Elections Commission.

AS CHIEF OBSERVER Andreas Schieder revealed, the EU Election Observer Mission is here at the invitation of the Government of Liberia, which should indicate that the government is committed to conducting free, fair and transparent elections.

THEREFORE, THE ONUS is on all Liberians to work towards ensuring that polls are not just free, fair, and transparent, but violence-free for the benefit of both the current generation and generations to come.

WE BELIEVE STRONGLY that doing so would leave behind a good footprint for posterity to come.

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COMMENTARY

By Kristina Skierka, Aisha Mohammed Mussa

The Key to Sustainable Food Systems

SAN FRANCISCO/ADDIS ABABA - The fabric of our global food system is fraying under the strain of climate change and an ever-expanding population. To prevent it from unraveling, we must embrace distributed renewable-energy solutions, which are critical for reducing greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions, boosting resilience and productivity, and cutting costs. Failure to do so would jeopardize efforts to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and threaten our very survival.

Halfway to the 2030 deadline, progress toward the SDGs - conceived as a "shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet" - is lagging significantly. In July, the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York and the UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment in Rome underscored the importance of ensuring access to modern energy (SDG 7) and achieving zero hunger (SDG 2), respectively.

When it comes to strengthening the long-term resilience and adaptability of the global food system, these two objectives are interlinked. Translating this into public policies has taken on new urgency, given that rapid global warming, population growth, public-health crises, volatile energy markets, and conflict have exposed the food system's unique vulnerabilities and shortcomings.

Past solutions and approaches will no longer work; on the contrary, they contributed to the current problems. Previously, concerns about food supply - including high prices during the 2008 global financial crisis - invariably led to agricultural intensification and mechanization, as well as an increase in land use.

As a result, agribusiness (including the production, transport, and storage of food) today accounts for roughly one-third of all GHG emissions, which in turn threaten the future of agriculture.

While the effects of climate change are felt throughout the global food system, they are disproportionately borne by those least responsible for the problem: smallholder farmers in the Global South.

For example, Sub-Saharan Africa, which relies on rainfed agriculture, already experiences one-third of the world's droughts and is vulnerable to higher temperatures and other extreme weather. The International Monetary Fund has found that a single drought can lower an African country's medium-term economic-growth potential by one percentage point.

That conclusion reflects agriculture's central role in the developing world: in some of the least-developed countries, it accounts for more than 25% of GDP, while 52% of employed people in Sub-Saharan Africa are active in the sector. Given this, achieving sustainable and climate-friendly food production in the Global South could lead to significant welfare improvements. This will require a shift to distributed

renewable energy, which can be used in primary production, post-harvest processing, storage, and cooking - the agricultural activities that tend to consume the most energy in developing countries.

To be sure, decentralized renewable energy is not a panacea. But it could contribute significantly to stabilizing the global food system by lowering energy costs, a crucial factor for boosting productivity; by facilitating financing for productive applications, which could democratize access to yield-enhancing technologies; and by reducing GHG emissions and promoting climate-change adaptation. Last but not least, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and decentralizing energy production can help shift global power dynamics within the food system.

Solar-powered irrigation, for example, has significantly improved water access and enabled multiple cropping cycles, increasing productivity and reducing GHG emissions. Solar-powered pumps have boosted farmers' incomes by more than 50% in India and led to significant increases in yields in Rwanda. The Ethiopian Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands - which one of us heads - recently banned the import of diesel irrigation pumps to support the rapid transition to renewable-energy solutions.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, solar milling machines could make grinding grain into flour more efficient, affordable, and sustainable. Additionally, the expansion of mini-grids to power post-harvest processes can bring more economic and environmental benefits by enabling communities to preserve their produce locally.

Cold storage and refrigeration are crucial for extending shelf life, reducing food loss, and maintaining product quality. Decentralized cold-storage solutions that are powered by renewable energy could improve market access and reduce spoilage for smallholder farmers and remote communities. By converting existing infrastructure to renewable energy sources, we can cut GHG emissions and make cold chains more environmentally friendly and affordable.

All the above examples demonstrate the diverse applications of distributed renewable energy, and each solution contributes to a more resilient, sustainable, and climate-friendly food system.

By scaling up these innovations, we can address the energy challenges faced by smallholder farmers, processors, and consumers while reducing our carbon footprint.

Reinforcing the fabric of our global food system requires a new framework designed to reduce land use, enhance productivity, minimize food loss, and cut GHG emissions. Renewable energy must be its foundation.

Otherwise, developing countries will be unable to raise agricultural yields and end hunger, stop and reverse environmental degradation, or democratize energy access.

OP-ED

By Jim O'Neill

The G20 Wins the Group Battle

LONDON - Following the recent summit of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), where the group agreed to add six new members, I argued that neither it nor the G7 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States - plus the European Union) has the credibility or the capacity to tackle global challenges.

That leaves the G20 (comprising 19 of the world's largest economies, plus the EU) as the only grouping with the legitimacy to offer truly global solutions to global problems.

The joint declaration that emerged from last week's G20 summit in New Delhi provides further confirmation of this. Member states reached a consensus to address a wide range of issues.

Despite obvious challenges - such as the considerable differences in how member states operate - they managed to reassert the G20's relevance after a lengthy period in which its role had been called into question.

We should applaud those who played the biggest roles - presumably India and the US - in pushing through the final communiqué.

The New Delhi declaration could be the first step in a stronger concerted effort to address global issues like climate change, the need for a revamped World Bank, infectious disease control, economic stability, the war in Ukraine, and other matters.

Though this agenda was agreed in the absence of Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping, the Russian and Chinese representatives who did attend would not have signed on to anything without having cleared it with their respective governments.

Many speculate that Xi skipped the summit in order to snub India - one of China's longstanding rivals - and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Whatever the motive, his decision had the effect of undermining the significance of the recent BRICS meeting, which many saw as a victory for China.

As I argued last month, the lack of Indo-Chinese solidarity will be a major stumbling block for the new BRICS. Now, Xi's absence from the G20 summit has deepened the divide between the two countries. If Xi wants to convince us otherwise, he will need to reach out to Modi. As matters stand, the success of the G20 meeting makes Modi the clear winner in this season of summitry. Perceptions matter, and right now he looks more like a visionary statesman than Xi does.

Moreover, the G20 achieved another subtle, but important, step by agreeing to expand its ranks to include the African Union - making it a G21.

This breakthrough gives Modi a clear diplomatic victory, allowing him to burnish his image as a champion of the Global South.

It also further underscores the seemingly random nature of the BRICS' own expansion, which includes Egypt and Ethiopia, but not other, more important African countries, such as Nigeria. The big question now is whether a permanent seat at the table will make the African Union itself a more effective body.

Since the BRICS meeting, I have spoken to people who believe that the G7 is still a highly effective body compared to the G20, as evidenced by the solidarity it has shown on issues like Russia's war in Ukraine.

I beg to differ. Though the G20 communiqué's language on the war did not rise to the level that Ukraine's leaders would prefer, it was robust enough to send a clear message to others who may want to violate internationally recognized borders.

It also conveys to Putin that he should not expect even superficial backing from some of his supposed BRICS friends. And, of course, the declaration does not inhibit Western countries or individual leaders from condemning the war in more forceful terms.

More to the point, the voice that matters when it comes to Ukraine is not the G7 but NATO - just as the G20 is the collective voice that truly matters when it comes to the global economy, climate change, public health, and many other issues.

As much as G7 leaders would like to think that they are still a major influence in global affairs, the reality suggests otherwise.

The big takeaway from the New Delhi summit is that you cannot possibly deal with big global challenges unless you include the major emerging powers.

Yes, the G20's critics will counter that it is too large and unwieldy to be effective. But I would simply repeat what I wrote back in 2001, when I first coined the BRIC acronym. If eurozone member states really wanted to demonstrate their belief in the permanence of their joint project, I observed, they would send just one delegate to international gatherings like the G20, rather than retaining their individual representatives.

That made the group less unwieldy and set a powerful precedent. If other blocs, including the BRICS, did the same, the result would be a global-governance grouping that is truly fit for purpose.

OPINION

By Jayati Ghosh and Kanchana N. Ruwanpura

Sri Lanka's Dangerous Debt Restructuring

COLOMBO - More than a year after the mass protest movement known as the Aragalaya ousted Sri Lanka's President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his brother, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, Sri Lankans have once again taken to the streets.

The impetus for the resurgence of public discontent is the recent bailout agreement between the International Monetary Fund and President Ranil Wickremesinghe's government. The deal, which aims to address the country's ongoing balance-of-payments crisis, offers Sri Lanka less than \$3 billion over four years - a tiny fraction of what the country needs to meet its debt-servicing requirements and just one-sixth of its foreign-exchange earnings, which amounted to roughly \$18 billion in 2022.

In exchange for this emergency loan, the IMF imposed a series of conditions that have significantly exacerbated Sri Lanka's wage and cost-of-living crises. The mandated shift to market exchange rates, in particular, immediately led to a sharp currency devaluation, causing imported fuel and food prices to skyrocket and contributing to a 165% increase in electricity tariffs between June 2022 and February 2023.

As fiscal restraints were imposed, the economy continued to spiral down, with GDP shrinking by 7.8% in 2022 and 11.5% in the first quarter of 2023. This has had an adverse impact on employment, livelihoods, and the viability of small and medium-size enterprises. Consequently, real wages fell by 30-50% in 2022 and have remained stagnant.

Despite paying lip service to the importance of combating corruption and curbing illicit financial flows, the IMF plan falls short of tackling these issues effectively. Although it includes a modest increase in corporate income taxes, it neglects the possibility of imposing wealth taxes. Moreover, its focus on highly regressive measures, such as nearly doubling the value-added tax to 15%, means that the bulk of additional revenues will be generated through indirect taxes that disproportionately affect ordinary people.

The current wave of protests is partly a reaction to the government's decision to comply with the IMF's demand to restructure both external and domestic debt. Instead of focusing on lowering the external debt to a sustainable level, however, the agreement aims to bring down total debt, thereby reducing the haircut imposed on foreign creditors to just 30%.

This has exacerbated the crisis and is difficult to justify. In countries that do not issue global reserve currencies, there is a clear distinction between domestic and external debt. Governments can and do service domestic debt using their own currencies, the supply of which is controlled by their central banks. By contrast, foreign currency-denominated debt necessitates either foreign-exchange earnings or new borrowing.

Sri Lanka's crisis is largely the result of the country's inability to service its external debt due to insufficient foreign-currency reserves. Since 2016, the government has preferred to take on new international loans, primarily from private lenders, to repay its foreign creditors, including bilateral and multilateral lenders. In early 2022, the government chose to default on its foreign loans rather than explore alternative solutions.

But restructuring domestic debt in an economy already in decline is both painful and unnecessary. Sri Lanka's domestic debt is held by various entities, including the central bank, commercial banks, and pension funds. Given that the country's banking system is already severely weakened, pension funds will almost certainly bear the brunt of the expected adjustment.

This will have a significant impact on the retirement savings of workers who have already been hit by massive price increases. By reducing the interest rates on sovereign bonds held by Sri Lanka's largest pension funds from more than 20% to 12%, and then to 9% from 2025 until maturity, the government aims to reduce its interest burden by 0.5 percentage points of GDP annually.

Recent estimates by Ahilan Kadirgamar suggest that this will result in a 30% decline in the value of retirement funds a decade from now. Moreover, these pension funds, often holding the only financial assets of working people, will be subject to a 30% tax on their returns - higher than the tax rate applied to many in the corporate sector.

Many workers whose life savings are invested in these retirement funds earn wage incomes well below the minimum taxable rate. This includes workers who face numerous intersecting deprivations stemming from gender and ethnic discrimination, such as women employed in the garment industry and tea-plantation workers, especially those from minority Tamil groups.

These groups have already experienced an alarming decline in living standards. Nearly 56% of Sri Lanka's 22.2 million people are now grappling with multidimensional vulnerabilities, with women and girls being the hardest hit. Official estimates suggest that roughly 43% of children under the age of five suffer from malnutrition, as do a growing number of pregnant and lactating women.

By targeting the meager pension funds of Sri Lanka's wage workers, the government's domestic-debt restructuring plan is likely to exacerbate existing class, gender, and ethnic inequalities. With their hard-earned savings eroded, poverty-level workers will be pushed further into destitution.

Meanwhile, the adjustment process relies heavily on the unpaid labor of women who continue to provide care in the face of austerity and diminishing social services. The plight of working-class Sri Lankan women underscores the clearly gendered effects of the country's debt crises and the government's approach to tackling them.

A genuine resolution to Sri Lanka's prolonged economic crisis would require a dramatic change in strategy. To bring about a robust economic recovery, the government and the IMF must focus on improving the lives of working people rather than imposing on them the burden of adjustment.

Jayati Ghosh, Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, is a member of the Club of Rome's Transformational Economics Commission. Kanchana N. Ruwanpura, Professor of Development Geography at the University of Gothenburg, is a member of the coordinating collective of the virtual and voluntary initiative Institute of Political Economy in Sri Lanka.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Crowd-Pulling Rallies in 2023: The New Phenomenon of Liberian Electioneering

By S.Karweaye

The theatricals for winning the hearts and minds of the Liberian voters are all around us. The perceptual game of showing strength in the number of supporters is an age-long effective game plan of the parties, and it is one strategy that cuts across mainly the ruling Coalition For Democratic Change (CDC) and the former ruling Unity Party (UP).

These two political parties are outdoing themselves in winning the popularity contests typified by pulling crowds with the most outrageous noises and boisterous displays in rallies on the streets, roads, stadiums, and other venues that can contain crowds. If pulling crowds is the determinant of election outcomes, the 2023 general elections would have been won and lost.

Politics all over the world feeds on numbers- crowds.



Liberia is no exception, and with what we have seen so far in the 2023 electoral campaigns, Liberian politicians are taking this to another level. Liberian politics feeds on a crowd fuelled by a panoply of factors, most importantly Money.

The crowd that congregates whenever there is a rally has more to do with economic reasons than belief in a cause or loyalty to a party.

The availability of young men and women for political rallies is due to the high level of unemployment, hunger, and abject poverty in the country. Although the crowd is an old phenomenon associated with politics, unemployment in Liberia has complicated the matter.



Unemployed youth is a fertile ground for political mobilization and they are ready to be hired; with their energies channelled to political causes that do not serve them any purpose or represent their views.

Another factor responsible for large crowds at political rallies in Liberia is the acute poverty pervading the land. Many Liberians who should ordinarily be engaged in productive activities are hired for between US\$2 to US\$10 to attend campaign rallies. These amounts depend on which region of the country the rallies are held in and whether the party involved is in power or not.

With 2.7 million (52.3%) Liberians being multidimensional poor, every dollar available for the next meal or to help pay school fees and the house rent is important and worth sacrificing time for. Most persons attending campaign rallies under the current dispensation are going for the day-paid job, and it has nothing to do with passion for any political ideal or candidate or even the hope of a better tomorrow, which ordinarily politicians trade in.

The next factor contributing to the growing crowd pulling at political party rallies is the significant erosion of our value system. Honesty, integrity, and self-respect are vanishing traits in Liberian society. Most participants in these rallies know the candidates and the parties are incompetent and the opposite of what they believe in and know, yet they openly identify with them in rallies when paid, even though many still vote otherwise.

Truth be told, most of our dominant political parties have no known ideologies, and attraction to them is often based on tribal, regional, parochial or mundane sentiments. This anomaly is counterproductive during electioneering campaigns when people see all political activities as making money, consolidating political capital, and gaining political patronage.

Some in the crowd want to have fun, love the atmosphere and fun activities during rallies, and want to participate. Although in the rally, out of curiosity or just having fun, this group will collect money or other provisions if provided.

Hunger has been weaponized in Liberia, and any political campaign rally that provides food will experience more crowd-pulling.

For a country blessed with so many food production endowments, the 2022 Global Hunger Index (GHI) scored Liberia at 32.4 indicating a 'serious' hunger problem in the country. Social media are awash with real-life videos of the fights for food and provisions in various rallies across the nation. It is embarrassing that hunger is linked with political campaigns in Liberia.

People are struggling to survive and live in the moment. Sadly, Liberians avoid rallies where candidates will elucidate policies to alleviate hunger. They want rallies where they are fed for the day and given money.

In the case of CDC, the party claimed to have hosted a one million men rally on September 7, 2023, as their core argument for a one-round victory in the 2023 presidential election even though at the height of George Weah's popularity in 2005, the CDC received 275,265 (28.27%) in the first round of the presidential election while in the second round, he lost with 327,046 (40.60%). Fast forward to the 2017 presidential election, CDC received 596,037(38%) of the popular votes in the first round while 732,185 (61.54%) of the popular vote despite boasting of another one million men campaign launched.

This one-round victory perception is crucial as portrayed by the CDC, especially for winning the election and managing the post-election conflicts that are often inevitable in Liberia politics, especially at the Supreme Court. However, it is evident that such crowd-pulling, no matter the visual power they portray, does not translate to voter loyalty or electoral victory.

Liberia has a history of voter apathy, where a significant number of registered voters fail to show up on election day. During the 2017 general elections, the country had approximately 2.1 million registered voters, however, turnout in the presidential election was 1,641,922 (75.19%) despite massive crowds pulling at political rallies during the campaigning period. In the 2014 Special Senatorial Election, it was 25.2% while in the 2020 election for the Liberian senate, out of 2.4 million registered voters, the turnout was 36% which means 64.42% of



registered voters never voted so large crowds at political campaign rallies usually do not translate to high voter turnout either.

In reality or by all sorts of axioms large crowds may not actually translate into an election victory in the elections. This is because the political leaves are already changing color and the wind feels different with the political quotient amongst the Liberia electorates. Therefore you cannot judge the popularity of any candidate by the large crowds around him or her. On October 10, 2023, Liberians will see whether those who have been attending rallies are true supporters of candidates or not. I rest my case.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

AYF Liberia on violence-free election

By Lewis S. Teh

A member of the African Youth Fellowship, Thompson N. Temitope said the AYF envisages a society free of violence in which citizens

He made the observation recently at celebration of International Youth Day with a call to young people across the country to remain peaceful.

According to him, the organization operates under

high schools as well as peace conferences focusing on violence-free election in Montserrado, Grand Bassa, Margibi, Gbarpolu and Bomi counties.

He added AYF also renovated and dedicated youth hub in 2019, which has provided space for young people to do research and enhanced their skills in computer literacy.

At the same time he said as part of their plans for 2023, they were able to host a day-long peace leadership conference, with the objective of informing young people of their role during these electoral period.

Mr. Temitope stressed that the peace of Liberia is being threatened, if nothing is done to address increase of disadvantaged youth, who are otherwise considered here as zogoos.

We certainly celebrated this gone Nelson Mandela day in various ghettos in Paynesville outside Monrovia with the aim of creating awareness on sustaining the peace of Liberia", he said.

Also giving a background of

▶ CONT'D page 11



have the right and opportunity to express their opinions on matters affecting their wellbeing.

Mr. Temitope explained that AYF is a non-political youth-led organization that was founded in 2017 by Ambassador Moses Nuwon Buwee with the goal of creating young leaders as agents of peace and promoting democracy.

four pillars namely; peace building, leadership development, entrepreneurship and advocacy, adding that since its establishment, it

has hosted series of activities, including leadership and peace building conferences in Montserrado County, including non-violence campaign messages in various

Fallah- urges electorate to vote wisely to wipe out corruption and human rights abuse on October 10, 2023

Mr. Austin S. Fallah, a distinguished graduate student pursuing his Law studies at the renowned Hamline University in Minnesota, USA, has passionately called upon the Liberian electorate to utilize their voting power on October 10, 2023, to send a resounding message against corruption and human rights abuses.

He emphasizes the urgent need for development in Liberia, envisioning a prosperous, united, and peaceful nation where corruption is eradicated.

Speaking before a gathering of fellow Liberians in Coon Rapids, Minnesota, Fallah, who also serves as the President of the Graduate Students Association of Hamline University, voiced his concerns about the prolonged suffering endured by Liberians under current and past administrations.

He decried the adverse effects of immorality and corruption, which have plunged many into abject poverty, tarnished Liberia's reputation with human rights abuses, and

transformed it into a sanctuary for drug lords and violent criminals.

Addressing the audience in Anoka County, Minnesota, where they had gathered to celebrate a fellow Liberian's birthday, Fallah drew a poignant parallel between Liberia's current living conditions and the historical injustices faced by enslaved Africans.

He emphasized the need for Liberians to break free from such oppressive circumstances, reminiscent of a bygone era characterized by iron doors, iron windows, high fences, and the fear of being victimized by their own compatriots.

Fallah stated, "In today's civilized world, Liberians must rise above these living standards and embrace a brighter future free from the shackles of insecurity and crime perpetuated by their fellow citizens.

Severe punitive measures must be taken against those responsible for subjecting our people to such conditions."

The accomplished graduate, holding multiple undergraduate and graduate degrees in Economics, Business Administration, Finance, Software Systems Engineering, Public Administration, and Strategic Leadership from revered United States of America Universities, reminded fellow Liberians that October 10, 2023, presents an invaluable opportunity to exercise their constitutional right to vote out corrupt leaders,

▶ CONT'D page 7



ECOWAS and its partners mobilize to strengthen cybersecurity in West Africa

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its partners are mobilizing support to strengthen cybersecurity in West Africa through the launch, this Tuesday, September 12, 2023, in Abuja, Nigeria, of the Joint Platform for the Advancement of Cybersecurity in West Africa. This initiative was launched by the ECOWAS Commission in collaboration with Germany's G7 Presidency in 2022.

The three-day event will serve as an official starting point for the joint implementation of the ECOWAS Action Plan to increase regional cybersecurity resilience and capacity.

The first concrete lines of work from the action plan to be implemented will focus on (i) the importance of developing and implementing regional confidence-building measures in the field of cybersecurity, (ii) on strengthening regional

African community citizens in line with our 4x4 Strategic Objectives, ECOWAS Vision 2050, and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

"Cybersecurity is not merely a technical issue; it is a matter of national security, economic stability, and safeguarding the privacy and rights of our people. It is important to act decisively to protect our critical infrastructure, secure our data, and ensure the trust and confidence of those who use digital services..." said the Commissioner Sediko Douka.

It should be noted that other speeches were delivered during this important ceremony namely those of H.E Ambassador Musa NUHU, Permanent Representatives of ECOWAS to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Mr. John Reyels, Head of Cyber Staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany and Mr. Franck-Emerly Mongbe from GIZ, Head of Component, Organizational Development Project with ECOWAS, in the



cooperation and cyber capabilities at the regional level, (ii) on skills development as well as regional cyber diplomacy mechanisms.

For Mr. Sediko Douka, the Commissioner in charge of Infrastructure, Energy and Digitization of the ECOWAS Commission, who spoke at the opening of the launch ceremony of the platform, stated that the advancement of cybersecurity in West Africa is not just a necessity; it is an opportunity. An opportunity to protect our economies, our infrastructure, and our people. An opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to a digital future that is safe, secure, and prosperous for all. An opportunity to improve the lives and livelihood of our West

presence of representatives of the ICT and Digital Economy Ministries, the Foreign Ministries of the ECOWAS Member States and Development Partners. it shall be recalled that the ECOWAS action plan (2022-2025) on cyber security is based on four thematic pillars (Development of cyber diplomacy mechanisms and skills, strengthening protection of critical infrastructure, protection of vulnerable groups from cybersecurity threats, including cybercrime and terrorist use of the Internet, fight against cybercrime and data sovereignty). It provides concrete areas for the ECOWAS Commission to structure its cooperation with global, regional and national partners to lead capacity building initiatives in the field of cybersecurity.

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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Cummings pledges better and more decent paying jobs

The Standard Bearer of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), Mr. Alexander Cummings has credited himself as the most qualified Presidential contender with the requisite capacity and

aimed at generating more revenue to fix the health and educational systems, while at the same time beginning the process of an strengthening an agro-based economy, Eco-Tourism, and reviewing the

October poll, noting that “the CPP is very intentional and deliberate about how it is going about it.”

He said his campaign tour of several counties, since August 5, revealed that, “while big political rallies are absolutely necessary, they don't give you the needed votes, unlike the person-to-person engagement,” noting that 80 percent of Liberians at these rallies are the same people.

On claims by his critics that he lacks government work experience, Cummings questioned if government experience was an antidote to good governance and national prosperity, why would Liberia, at 176 years, still be lagging in development and vast majority of its citizens subjected to widespread suffering and extreme poverty.

The CPP Standard Bearer said his competence, qualifications, and professional experiences are far unmatched with Mr. Weah and Joseph Boakai, and that he can do exceedingly well in reviving the economy for massive job creation and opportunities.

Responding to questions about the credibility of the electoral process, Cummings expressed concerns about the capacity and capability of the National Elections Commission (NEC) to conduct free, fair and transparent elections.

He said, however, it is incumbent on President George Weah, in keeping with his constitutional obligations and responsibilities, to adequately fund the NEC and ensure the October poll is free, fair and transparent.

The CPP Standard Bearer warned of grave consequences of an underfunded NEC, should the processes leading up to and tallying of results of the October poll, are not free, fair and transparent. He referred to past electoral violence.

On the huge public outcry about the massive influx and abuse of dangerous and illicit drugs in Liberia, Cummings vowed to stop the widespread smuggling of drugs, by reinforced border points and working with Anti-drug enforcement agencies to curb the danger.

Commission, to ensure that every vote is accurately counted, preserving the integrity of the electoral process. Austin S. Fallah's rallying cry resonates with the collective hope of a brighter future for Liberia—one free from corruption, injustice, and insecurity. -Press release



CPP Leader Mr. Alexander Cummings

expertise to revamp the country's ailing economy, create decent paying jobs, and pay civil servants living wages that will better their lives.

Cummings assured that within the first one hundred days of a CPP-led Government, Liberians will begin to feel the impact of change in their daily life.

He has promised to provide micro-Finance loans for Liberian entrepreneurs including market women for a private sector driven economy, establish a national youth service program, and vigorously tackle the issues of sanitation in Monrovia and suburbs.

The CPP Standard Bearer, speaking on a Radio talk show on Wednesday, September 13, promised to restore law and order to the chaotic traffic condition in Monrovia and also establish better professional and credible integrity institutions, adequately supported and funded to conduct an audit of all public institutions.

He said his primary focus will be to grow the economy.

commerce and trade laws aimed at making it easier to do business in Liberia.

The CPP Standard Bearer reaffirmed his unwavering commitment to combatting corruption, reducing wasteful spending of government resources on luxurious vehicles and extravagant lifestyle of public officials.

He said the greatest challenge to his Presidential bid is Liberia's political class, who he said are vehemently opposed to change, “but they will be shocked at a Cummings victory, come October 10,” Cummings said.

He said, unlike the vast majority of Liberians, young people who constitute about 65 percent of the country's population, are desperately yearning for change in their current miserable living conditions.

Cummings says he believes that with the level of engagement, interaction and the strategic nature of the CPP campaign activities, which include house-to-house and people-to-people contact, he is confident of victory in the

tirelessly work for the betterment of all citizens.

In conclusion, Fallah fervently implored Liberians not to allow anyone to manipulate their votes and called upon the Liberian government, particularly the Elections

UNDP Partners with Government to conduct training on Disaster Management

UNDP in collaboration with the Ministry of Mines and Energy and the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) has trained the County Disaster Management Committee (CDMC) and Artisanal and Small-scale Mining actors to assess disaster risks. The training held September 4-6, 2023, in Tubmanburg, Bomi County brought together local officials, civil society organizations, and heads of government agencies from Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, and Gbarpolu Counties. Speaking to participants, UNDP Liberia Energy and Environment Specialist Moses Massah, noted that the engagement was aimed at helping institutions and groups develop early warning systems and ensure communities understand the laws and policies developed to assess disaster risk management. Massah said the training focused on identifying and managing disasters, and

concern considering the death rates and other forms of disasters coming from counties where artisanal and small-scale mines are located,” Massah said. Also speaking, the Assistant Minister for Planning at the Ministry of Mines and Energy, Johnson Wallabo called on those engaged in artisanal mining to desist. Minister Willabo warned that the practice of artisanal mining across the country is one of the contributing factors to disaster cases in Liberia adding, that artisanal and small-scale mining is becoming serious because the miners are not taking precautions. “The use of mercury and the long-term effects pose serious health risks to the miners. We want to encourage all those engaged in artisanal mining to stop because this method is posing serious risks of disasters in our communities,” he stressed. The Superintendent of Bomi County, Amos Cooper assured that the county authority will ensure the effective use of the hub as they work closely with



disaster-related issues across communities especially in mining areas. “For the next three days, we will train you so that when you get back to your various counties and communities you will be able to identify and report disaster-related cases,” he added. He also spoke about plans to establish a regional disaster hub in Bomi which will serve four counties-Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, and lower Montserrado applauding the smooth working relationship with the Government of Liberia in managing disaster cases across Liberia since 2008 which led to the establishment of the National Disaster Management Agency of Liberia (NDMA).

“Currently we have brought in materials to be used at the regional hub in Bomi. These include laptops, computers, office furniture, and printers to be used for the smooth running of the hub. UNDP is happy to support the NDMA's training for the County Disaster Management Committees (CDMC) and artisanal and small-scale miners. Disaster risk management is an issue of

the NDMA. For his part, Henry Williams the Executive Director at the National Disaster Management Agency of Liberia, stressed that capacity training and coordination remain the fulcrum in managing disasters. Williams disclosed that with the support from UNDP, his agency has constituted committees in the fifteen counties to work in reporting cases of disaster across Liberia. He mentioned UNDP's support to the NDMA's technical working group in developing the policy that led to the establishment of the agency. “UNDP is supporting us to decentralize the agency. It has supported the development of the disaster policy and resilience strategy, the setting up of the Central Regional Hub in Bong County where they presented some office equipment, supported the renovation of NDMA's head office, and we are grateful for the level of support to this training considering that artisanal and small-scale mining has become an issue of concern with the levels of disasters being experienced,” Williams emphasized.

Fallah- urges electorate to vote

Starts from page 6

mis-managers of state resources, and perpetrators of injustice. Fallah envisioned a Liberia where women, children, and men can move freely day and night without fear of robbery or violence—a Liberia where security forces

Français

Présidentielle : La saisie de drogue à l'aéroport s'invite dans la campagne électorale

La saisie d'un certain nombre de cartons contenant de la drogue illicite au cours du week-end dernier à l'aéroport international

directement du tarmac dans une mini-fourgonnette sans une autorisation de l'aéroport.

La saisie fait suite à des démentis et à des affirmations selon lesquelles les cartons en question ne contenaient que de

blanche, inodore et au goût amer qui se dissout facilement dans l'eau ou l'alcool. Le gouvernement a affirmé que des échantillons analysés dans le cadre de l'enquête de l'Agence libérienne de lutte contre la drogue ont révélé la présence de cette drogue illicite, qui est interdite en vertu des règles de l'Office des Nations Unies contre la drogue et le crime, l'ONUDC. Le gouvernement a fait savoir dans sa déclaration que le ministre de la Justice a ordonné une enquête immédiate sur l'importation de la drogue en vue de poursuivre en justice tous ceux qui sont de loin et de près impliqués dans cette affaire. L'opposition, dont notamment la Collaboration des Partis politiques (CPP), s'est saisie de l'affaire pour fustiger le régime de George Weah. Dans son communiqué de presse intitulé « Weah rend le Libéria anarchique et dangereux : le trafic de drogue en hausse », le Comité national de campagne pour l'élection d'Alexander B. Cummings à la présidence du Libéria a déclaré que la facilitation de la contrebande par le chef de la sécurité du RIA met en exergue l'existence d'un réseau de contrebande directement lié à la présidence. La CPP s'est dite sérieusement

simples feuilles de Moringa.

Le mardi 12 septembre, après six semaines de campagne tendue, le gouvernement libérien, par l'intermédiaire du ministère de la Justice, a confirmé que le lot de cartons interceptés contenait de la méthamphétamine, une drogue illicite. La méthamphétamine est un stimulant puissant qui crée une forte dépendance et qui affecte le système nerveux central. Il se présente sous la forme d'une poudre cristalline

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9

La CEDEAO invite la jeunesse à s'impliquer dans les initiatives de prévention des conflits

La Commission de la CEDEAO exhorte les jeunes de la région ouest-africaine de se préparer à devenir des partenaires utiles dans la mise en œuvre holistique des initiatives de prévention des conflits et de médiation visant à faire taire les armes.

Cet appel opportun a été lancé lors d'un atelier qui avait pour thème : « Le soutien à la mise en œuvre de la prévention des conflits, de la médiation et de la réduction des armes à feu par les jeunes dans les États membres de la CEDEAO » et qui a débuté le 11 septembre 2023 à Cotonou, en République du Bénin. La Commission de la CEDEAO dispose en son sein de divers cadres normatifs, instruments et programmes de consolidation et de maintien de la paix avec lesquels elle a activement impliqué les parties prenantes de diverses couches de la société au fil des ans. Mais la dynamique


de l'époque appelle désormais davantage d'inclusion et des stratégies innovantes de consolidation de la paix de la part de la population active à laquelle appartiennent les jeunes.

S'exprimant au nom de la Direction des Affaires Politiques de la Commission de la CEDEAO lors de l'ouverture de l'atelier, le Chef de Division, Médiation et Coordination des Affaires Politiques Régionales Dr. Onyinye Onwuka a rappelé aux participants la recrudescence des conflits et les défis sécuritaires qui affligent l'espace

de la CEDEAO, déclarant en outre qu'une action systématique et durable de la part de toutes les parties prenantes, y compris les jeunes, est désormais nécessaire pour mettre un terme à la situation.

Notant que les jeunes constituent une proportion importante de la population, elle a réitéré l'engagement de la Commission de la CEDEAO à libérer les énergies et les idées des jeunes, tandis

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



THE ECOWAS CONFLICT PREVENTION FRAMEWORK (ECPF)

le Cadre de prévention des conflits de la

Éditorial

La mission d'observation électorale de l'Union Européenne est la bienvenue au Libéria

C'est avec joie et allégresse que nous apprenons la nouvelle du déploiement d'une mission d'observation de l'Union Européenne à travers le Libéria en vue des élections législatives présidentielles du 10 octobre.

Ces élections marquent une étape importante dans la consolidation de la démocratie au Libéria, a déclaré l'observateur en chef adjoint Jarek Domanski, qui est dans le pays depuis fin août.

Selon un communiqué de presse, la mission principale se concentrera sur le suivi des préparatifs électoraux et des activités de campagne dans les 15 comtés du Libéria.

L'observateur en chef adjoint Domanski a déclaré qu'un groupe d'experts, comprenant des spécialistes des procédures électorales, de la politique, du droit, du financement des campagnes électorales, des médias, des médias sociaux et de l'analyse des données, était présent dans le pays pour mener à bien cette mission.

La nouvelle devrait être bien accueillie par tous les Libériens qui souhaitent des élections pacifiques et la paix pour le Libéria.

La présence d'observateurs internationaux pour surveiller le scrutin dissuadera également les fauteurs de troubles potentiels qui envisagent de perturber le processus et de plonger le Libéria dans le chaos.

Cela indique que le peuple libérien n'est pas seul dans la recherche des élections transparentes et d'un processus démocratique. Pendant que des observateurs étrangers posent leurs valises dans le pays, il nous incombe, en tant que Libériens, de nous donner une bonne image, de faire savoir que nous sommes prêts à maintenir la paix et la stabilité de la nation.

Les élections ne durent qu'une journée, mais une fois que les résultats commencent à tomber, c'est le moment crucial pour toutes les parties de faire preuve d'un haut degré de maturité et de tolérance jusqu'à ce qu'un vainqueur soit déclaré par la Commission électorale nationale.

Comme l'a révélé l'observateur en chef Andreas Schieder, la mission d'observation électorale de l'UE a répondu à l'invitation du gouvernement du Libéria, ce qui devrait indiquer que le gouvernement est déterminé à organiser des élections libres, équitables et transparentes.

Il incombe donc à tous les Libériens de veiller à ce que les élections soient non seulement libres, équitables et transparentes, mais également exemptes de violence, pour le bénéfice de la génération actuelle et des générations à venir. Nous sommes convaincus que cela laissera une bonne empreinte pour la postérité à venir.

Français

Starts from page 8 Weah traite l'opposant

préoccupée par la question de la sécurité aux ports d'entrée du Libéria vu la collusion des hauts responsables gouvernementaux dans la contrebande et le trafic de stupéfiants dangereux dans le pays « On se souvient que de la cocaïne d'une valeur de 100 millions de dollars avait été introduite clandestinement au Libéria via le port franc de Monrovia. Une enquête et des poursuites boiteuses, conspiratrices et collusoires ont vu les auteurs sortir de prison et s'éloigner du Libéria sans aucune conséquence pour le pays au vu et au su du gouvernement dirigé par Weah. Il est également rappelé aux Libériens l'importation illégale d'armes et de munitions via le même port franc de Monrovia. Encore une fois, une enquête boiteuse et une dissimulation conspiratrice n'ont conduit à aucune arrestation, à aucune poursuite et, par conséquent, à aucune condamnation pour contrebande internationale d'armes dans le pays. À ce jour, malgré les rapports faisant état de la formation et de l'armement de milices privées et d'anciens combattants par certains responsables gouvernementaux, il n'existe aucune comptabilité publique pour les armes et munitions de contrebande », a déclaré la CPP. Le parti a déclaré que le Libéria est devenu de plus en plus

anarchique sous le règne de six ans du président Weah. Selon lui, les responsables chargés de garantir l'intégrité des frontières du pays sont pris dans des stratagèmes et des collusions visant à aider et à encourager la violation non seulement des lois libériennes, mais aussi de la commission de crimes internationaux. Le « Kush » et d'autres drogues dangereuses créent une dépendance et tuent nos enfants. Le Libéria est privé de son avenir en empoisonnant l'esprit de nos jeunes », a déclaré la CPP. L'année dernière, de la cocaïne évaluée à 100 millions de dollars a été découverte dans un entrepôt de TRH Trading Company, importateur d'aliments surgelés. Quelques mois plus tard, en février de cette année, de la cocaïne d'une valeur de 37 millions de dollars a été découverte dans un autre conteneur appartenant à TRH Trading Company. Les responsables de la Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency (LDEA), par l'intermédiaire de son directeur général, Michael Zeyhou, ont déclaré que la drogue, évaluée à 37 millions de dollars, était liée à un ressortissant kenyan non identifié. En juillet de cette année, le gouvernement du Libéria a adopté une nouvelle loi sur les drogues, connue sous le nom de Control and Substance Act, afin de renforcer les lois existantes. En vertu de la nouvelle loi, la possession illégale de drogues ou le trafic de substances de contrebande constituent un délit ne pouvant donner lieu à une libération sous caution.

Starts from page 8 La réalisation des objectifs de

que leur résilience et leurs innovations peuvent jouer un rôle essentiel dans la promotion de la paix, la prévention des conflits et ainsi faire taire les coups de feu qui sont à nouveau en plein essor, menaçant la stabilité de la région.

Déclarant l'atelier ouvert plus tôt, le Représentant spécial de la CEDEAO au Bénin, l'Ambassadeur Amadou Diongue, représenté par M. Mamadu Konate, a convenu que l'énorme potentiel des jeunes pour la consolidation de la paix a souvent été inexploité. Notant que leurs voix ont été marginalisées dans les processus décisionnels, il a souligné la nécessité de prendre en compte les voix des jeunes tout en les formant à apporter des contributions positives pour faire taire les armes. De son côté, le gestionnaire du Fonds pour la paix de la CEDEAO, M.

Dieudonné Nikiema, a promis le soutien continu à toutes les initiatives de paix et de sécurité par les dispositifs de financement domiciliés dans la CEDEAO. Il a ensuite présenté un document-Le Fonds pour la Paix et le Nexus du Développement et de la Paix ainsi que le modèle de financement accessible à diverses associations de développement de la jeunesse.

L'atelier a également examiné les diverses lois, déclarations et instruments nationaux, régionaux et mondiaux qui constituent les éléments fondamentaux du développement et des efforts de la jeunesse. Un point culminant remarquable de l'activité comprenait les leçons tirées du documentaire L'imam et le Pasteur raconté par le pasteur James Movel Wuye et l'imam Ashafa Muhammad Nurayn, qui sont des dirigeants du Centre de médiation interconfessionnelle, basé à Kaduna, au Nigeria.

La NEC annonce l'arrivée du matériel électoral



La Commission électorale nationale (NEC) a informé les acteurs électoraux que le matériel pour les élections générales du 10 octobre 2023 a commencé à arriver dans le pays. Il s'agit des urnes

et des kits de circonscription jaunes et gris. Ils sont arrivés à l'entrepôt central de la NEC. En outre, la NEC a reçu des échantillons de bulletins de vote pour toutes les catégories d'élections (Présidentielle, Sénatoriales et législatives). Des guides de vote tactiles pour les malvoyants et du matériel de papeterie assorti pour le déroulement du scrutin sont également arrivés. Du matériel supplémentaire arrivera dans les prochains jours. En outre, la Commission distribue des affiches « Connaissez vos candidats » dans le cadre de son exercice d'éducation civique et électorale. Pendant ce temps, l'emballage du matériel de formation pour les élections générales du 10 octobre 2023 a commencé le lundi 11 septembre 2023 dans l'entrepôt central de la NEC. Dans le même ordre d'idées, une formation de formateurs (ToT) pour le personnel de la magistrature débutera le 13 septembre 2023 au siège de la NEC en préparation des élections du 10 octobre. En outre, la NEC a lancé une série d'ateliers de formation de formateurs pour les agents des partis politiques et les candidats indépendants pour les élections générales du 10 octobre 2023.

Sénégal : nouveau départ au sein de la coalition au pouvoir à l'approche de la présidentielle

Après la démission du ministre de l'Agriculture, Aly Ngouille Ndiaye, samedi, c'est au tour du directeur général de la Caisse des dépôts et consignations, Mamadou Mame Boye Diao, de quitter son poste et la coalition au pouvoir Benno Bokk Yakaar pour être candidat à la présidentielle de 2024.

Maire de la ville de Kolda, dans le sud du pays, et directeur de la Caisse des dépôts et consignations depuis février dernier, Mamadou Mame Boye Diao n'est pas un poids lourd du parti du président Macky Sall. Mais cette deuxième démission fissure un peu plus la coalition au pouvoir, estime un observateur de la vie politique sénégalaise, dans un contexte électoral où il faut avancer unis. D'autant que l'hémorragie pourrait se poursuivre, car un autre candidat déçu, Abdoulaye Daouda Diallo, l'actuel président du Conseil

environnemental, ne s'est pas encore exprimé. Ce pilier du parti du président, Alliance pour la République, a été reçu par Macky Sall dès lundi ; il lui aurait proposé le poste de chef de gouvernement dans une équipe remaniée. Mardi, c'était au tour de l'ex-Premier ministre Boun Abdalla Dionne d'avoir une entrevue avec le président sortant. Autant de tentatives pour éviter de nouvelles démissions et



que la coalition au pouvoir ne vole en éclat à cinq mois de la présidentielle.

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LIBERIANS

DEBATE

Topic: Violence-free campaign

By Naneka A. Hoffman

Barely weeks to the 2023 Presidential and General Elections, Liberians are calling on candidates in the race and their supporters to preach violence-free campaigns and to tolerate opposing views without resorting to violence language, as you may read below.



Cross Tamba

think you can insult them. If you do that, it provokes violence. All we can do is to go to the process to say what we can do, how we can do and how we can transform; how we can lead and how we can do things that can better our lives and our country then to insult another Candidate - it encourages violence. So we are saying to all those in the race, tell all your supporters to be very civil in their messages as they go through the electoral process because elections bring tension but the way we engage the process is important to us the more."

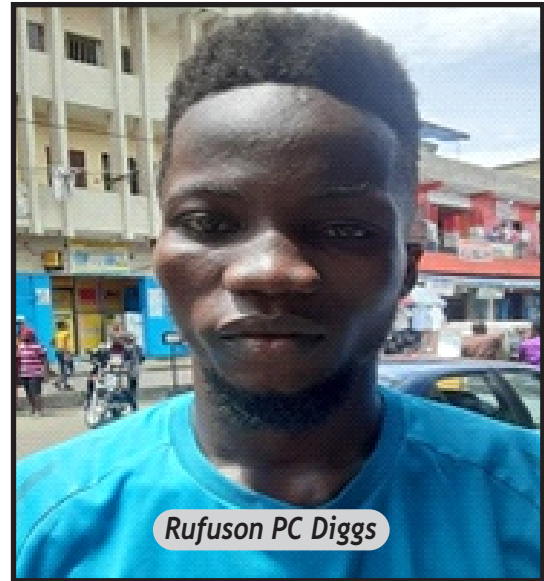
"The first thing, their supporters not to use profanity language on another candidate; hit the point by telling the people what you can do, how you will do it, not to insult other Candidates because you can't go to elections under a violence atmosphere. So the first thing, candidates are under obligation to tell

"My advice to the candidates is, they should tell their supporters to conduct themselves in a peaceful manner, as we gear toward October 10. Supporters should be able to carry their candidates' messages by avoiding harsh words because mind you, elections will come and go, but the country remains, so we need to protect the peace and stability of this country. This is the only country we have despite our political views, despite our political diversity. Liberia remains a common dominator. We should go for a peaceful elections, we should conduct ourselves peacefully and our candidates should preach peaceful messages and go to various communities and preach non-violence messages."



Robert T. Harrison

"What I will like to tell aspirants is to tell their supporters to stay away from election violence. We should practice tolerance that at least when we go to the poll, the process will be free, fair and transparent. Issues should not be about trucking, but sensitizing the people to carry the message and spread it so people can hear your message. Don't attack personality, discuss the issues. If supporters discuss the issues, you will see that people will buy their ideas and the message will spread and people will



Rufuson PC Diggs

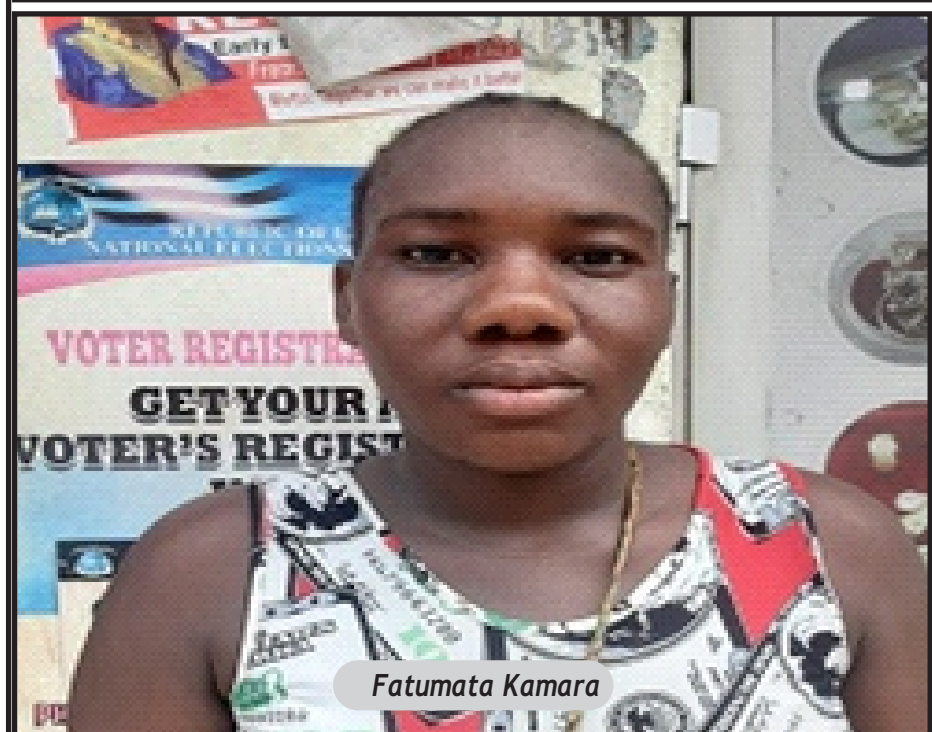
vote for their candidates immediately. They should tell their supporters to not dwell on violence, let them stay away from non-violence election. Let Candidates take their platforms to the people and exercise tolerance."



Famon Fofana

"Aspirants should tell their supporters to stop insulting one another's

parents. They should tell their supporters to stop fighting for aspirants because all of us are one Liberians. They should tell their supporters to stop violence. They should tell them to preach their messages in a peaceful manner and what they can do for the people in the district and for the country. They should be able to preach messages that will encourage the people to vote for them come October 10, 2023."



Fatumata Kamara

"Those candidates that are in the race are not enemies, but we the citizens make ourselves enemies based on political differences. Both of us will not have the same ideology; everyone believes in whom they choose to believe and this why we call it

democracy. So Candidates that are heading their supporters should tell them to respect democracy, because everyone not supposed to be on the same side; if everyone is on the same side, you think we will go for elections? I say no; Candidates should advise their supporters to be tolerant and respect democracy

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Cummings support gathers momentum in Montserrado

Citizens of Districts # 11, 12 and 13 of Montserrado County converged in their thousands on Wednesday, September 13, and pledged their unflinching support to the Presidential bid of

the international community would prefer a Cummings presidency in October."

The Stephen Tolbert soccer pitch political rally was one of the largest gatherings of CPP supporters in Montserrado County.

In response to the citizens pledge of support, Mr. Cummings reiterated his commitment to addressing the serious economic challenges and infrastructural deficits which are making life unbearable and leaving a vast majority of people in abject poverty.

The CPP Standard Bearer promised to resuscitate the country's ailing economy, create better decent paying jobs, fix the deplorable road conditions, and ensure better health care and educational systems nationwide. He called for sober reflection on the part of every well-meaning Liberian desirous of change in the country and a better life, to support his Presidential quest.

He noted that within the first one hundred days of a Cummings' Administration, citizens will begin to experience the impact of change for the better.

sympathizers and well-wishers, amidst singing, dancing and chanting of slogans such as, "Cummings is the man we want."

In separate statements of support and solidarity,

citizens expressed confidence in the integrity, competence and qualification of Mr. Cummings as the best suitable Presidential candidate capable of dealing with the vexing socio-economic challenges and country's current predicament.

Youth leaders, women and inter-religious groups cautioned Liberians against repeating past mistakes of electing the wrong leaders, and said, "even members of



Mr. Alexander Cummings, Standard Bearer of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP).

Cummings, accompanied by Representative aspirants of the three Districts, and Montserrado County Senatorial aspirant Victoria Koiquah, toured several communities up to the Stephen Tolbert soccer pitch in Gardnersville, where the official ceremony was held.

It was attended by thousands of partisans, supporters,

Starts from back page "We are not bringing in drugs"

County, which appears to have overshadowed the 2023 Presidential and Legislative elections.

It all started when a contingent of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) detailed at the airport arrested and placed under investigation RIA's Security Manager Samuel Freeman for his alleged attempt to smuggle several cartoons of suspected contraband substance directly from the tarmac into a minivan using an unauthorized exit at the airport.

The arrest follows denials and claims that the content in the boxes were mere Moringa leaves flooded the local media including social media calling on the Liberian Government to come clean.

On Tuesday, 12 September, which marked six weeks into a tense campaign, the Liberian Government through the Ministry of Justice confirmed that the consignment of boxes intercepted contained illicit drug methamphetamine.

In its press statement signed by Information Minister Ledgerhood Rennie, government confirmed that the consignment of boxes it intercepted containing herbal plants - packaged and in

natural form - at the Roberts International Airport reveals a presence of methamphetamine.

Methamphetamine is a powerful, highly addictive stimulant that affects the central nervous system. It takes the form of a white, odorless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder that easily dissolves in water or alcohol.

Government noted that as part of the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency's investigation, which included scientific examination, samples tested revealed the presence of the illicit drug, which is banned under the rules of United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes, UNODC.

However, the confirmation by Government that the substance contained in boxes were illicit drugs, the Collaborating Political Party (CPP) took a swipe at the George Weah regime, while condemning the continuous smuggling of illicit drug here.

In its press statement titled "Weah Makes Liberia Lawless And Unsafe: Drug

Smuggling On The Rise, the National Campaign Committee to Elect Alexander B. Cummings President of Liberia said the confirmation by Government that the so-called moringa leaves being smuggled under the facilitation of the head of security of RIA points the smuggling ring directly to the Office of President.

The CPP said disturbing details raise serious questions about the security at Liberia's ports of entry, as well as the collusion of senior government officials in smuggling and peddling of dangerous narcotics in the country.

"The latest drug smuggling through the RIA reminds of the \$100M cocaine smuggled into Liberia through the Freeport of Monrovia, for which a lame, conspiratorial and collusive investigation and prosecution saw the perpetrators walk out of jail and away from Liberia with no consequences for the commission of an international crime, on the watch of the Weah-led Government.

Nyanti condemns drug importation

By Emmanuel wise Jipoh

Opposition presidential candidate Rev. Sara Beysolow Nyanti has strongly condemned the importation of illicit drugs in Liberia.

The African Liberation League (ALL) standard-bearer has frowned on Liberian government officials who are allegedly involved in the importation of illicit substances into the country.

On Tuesday Liberian authorities confirmed the seizure of a consignment of illicit drugs at the Roberts International Airport (RIA), a contrast to earlier reports that the consignment in question contained herbal moringa leaves.

The Ministry of Justice, through the Joint Security of Liberia, confirmed that the consignment of boxes intercepted revealed the presence of methamphetamine.

In reaction, Madam Nyanti commended the vigilance of the Armed Forces of Liberia personnel for their role in alarming and seizing the drugs at RIA.

She also stressed that her commitment to safeguarding Liberia's sovereignty against corrupt and nefarious practices is unwavering.

citizens whose actions lead to the arrest and conviction of individuals involved in drug trafficking within Liberia.

In her press release, Nyanti extended her heartfelt appreciation to the Armed Forces of Liberia personnel who intercepted the illicit drugs and promptly raised the alarm.

She noted that this act of patriotism underscores the importance of collective efforts in combating the drug trade within the nation.

"The solution to the drug problem in Liberia goes beyond the rehabilitation of our affected children; it also involves intercepting the importation of harmful substances. We must put an end to the importation of drugs," she urged.

Nyanti added that the fight against this scourge is one of the central pillars of her presidential candidacy.

"The African Liberation League, under Nyanti's leadership, stands resolute in its dedication to eradicating the drug trade and protecting Liberia's future generations," she noted.

Madam Nyanti called upon all



She has previously pledged that if elected, she will establish a whistleblower account to reward loyal

Liberian citizens to join in this vital mission to ensure a safer and drug-free Liberia.

Cummings pledges better

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International Youth Day, program manager, Jutomue S. Kollie, said the Day came as a result of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 45/120 that endorsed recommendation by the world Conference of Ministers of youth of Portugal, Lisbon from 8-12 August in 1998 that August 12 each year should be commemorated as International Youth Day to draw worldwide focus towards various issues surrounding youths globally. According to him, IYD offers a platform to honor qualities of youth and potentials that they hold towards development of a nation and the world as a whole. The day he added, also acknowledges challenges young people face and how to eliminate those challenges. A lot of contribution has been made by young people towards community development, in protection of environment and volunteering on

under various social projects; this year we are celebrating this day under the theme "Peaceful Coexistence: a pathway to sustainable peace and development" with a global theme "Green Skills for Youth towards a sustainable world", Mr. Kollie explained. He noted in preparation for the 2023 Election in the country, AYF Liberia has begun youth peace dialogue with different stakeholders, including media executives with phase I targeting Bong County. For her part, Madam Rolsin Timmons, Youth Coordinator in the Office of UN Resident Coordinator here, extolled AYF Liberia members for dedicating themselves up to the celebration, saying the Day is significant to youth of every country.

“We are not bringing in drugs”

-Weah tells Bong citizens during a campaign rally

By: Joseph Titus Yekeryan

President George Manneh Weah has sharply reacted to his critics who continue to blame

members of the opposition bloc have been criticizing Weah's administration for the high level of drug intake which according to them has led to many youths being on the

critics that his government supports the importation of drugs is a calculated plan to wreck the trust Liberians have reposed in him as they gear to ensure his second term victory.

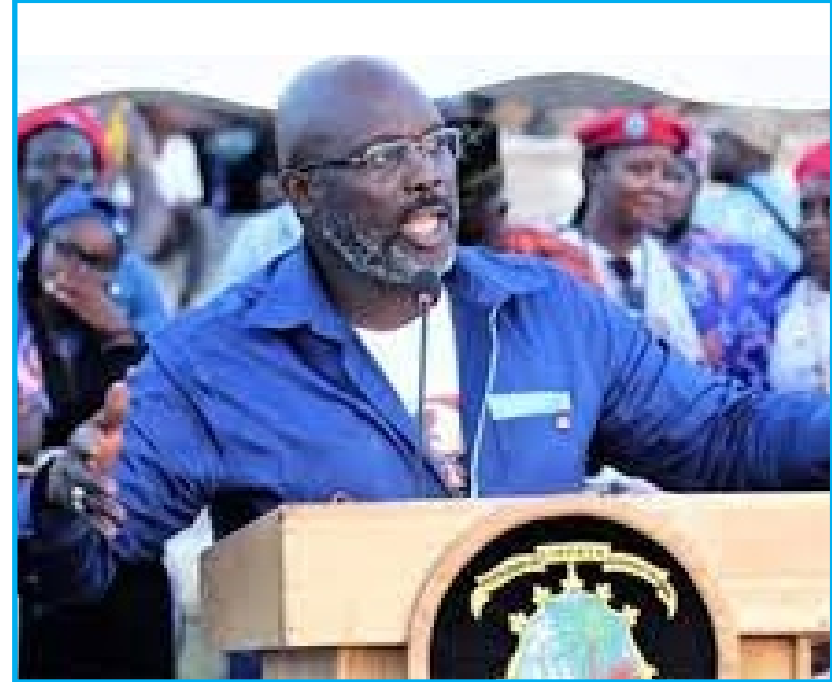
“They feel they can use lies to buy empathy, they feel they can lie to get your vote. Don't listen to them,” he said.

Weah said he has and continues to work with the Liberian Drug Enforcement Agency to make sure that illegal drugs are fought and that the country can be what everyone wants.

He referenced the US100 million drugs that were confiscated by his government; adding that in no way he won't be against drugs and then be setting ablaze such a huge quantity of illegal substances.

President Weah's denial follows the confiscation of boxes continuing illicit drug over the weekend at the Roberts International Airport (RIA) in Margibi

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him for the high increase of narcotic substances in the country.

“We are not bringing drugs; we do not even support the act that's while our government has been doing all it can to arrest and prosecute those involved”. Weah said.

streets.

Some have even blamed the Weah's government for being part of the importation of narcotic substances in Liberia.

But speaking to a cross-section of citizens during a major political rally in Bong County, the Liberian Leader said the statement from his

Most of his critics including

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