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DATE	BUYING	SELLING
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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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# Boakai, Weah battle for office

**P11**

Pres. Weah Amb. Boakai

**-as NEC initial announcement falls below expectation**



# We are not deterred

**P11**

CDCians partisans at a rally

**--CDC urges supporters to be calmed**

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# Continental News

## Chad's President Says Refugees, Host Towns Face Severe Hardship, Pleads for Help

Leaders in Chad say the central African nation is struggling to meet the humanitarian needs of 2 million foreign and displaced people seeking refuge there, protection and humanitarian aid, including food, shelter, water and sanitation.

Deby said that Chad residents in towns and villages along Chad's border are fighting with refugees

Niger, as well as Central African Republic citizens who fled violence as fighting erupted in their country in 2013.

Chad, with a population about 18 million, is one of the world's poorest countries. The nation has faced several institutional challenges in a region rife with conflict.

"I am urging my people, who I know live in poverty, to accept, receive and protect refugees and displaced persons who come to our country in deteriorating health situations caused by conflicts in neighboring states," Deby said.

Humanitarian organizations, including the United Nations refugee agency, say the influx puts a massive strain on already-scarce resources and engenders conflicts between displaced persons, refugees and host communities.

Amina Abu said she arrived in Adre from Darfur, a city in western Sudan, this week.

Speaking on Chad state TV, Abu said she could not bear the shock when her husband was killed in Darfur two weeks ago, so she decided to move with her two children. She said the family has been hungry since they arrived in Chad with scores of other women and children. The United Nations estimates that by the end of the year, 600,000 Sudanese refugees will have arrived in Chad. VOA



Fatma Idriss of Sudan cooks in a refugee camp in Adre, Chad

many of them women and children fleeing violence and increasing hardship in neighboring Sudan.

More than 400,000 Sudanese refugees and nearly 52,000 Chadian returnees have arrived in towns and villages in eastern Chad since April, when Sudan descended into violence, Chad's President Mahamat Idriss Déby said in a state television broadcast this week.

He said Chad needs immediate assistance from the international community to help refugees and host communities that need

and displaced people over limited resources.

For example, he said, several thousand Sudanese refugees entered Adre, a town in the southeastern province of Ouaddai, just within the past two weeks. That brings the number of Sudanese in Adre to more than 210,000, which is four times more than the town's population, according to the government.

Chad's 2 million refugees come from several neighboring countries besides Sudan. They include people fleeing Boko Haram atrocities and violent conflicts between fishers and herders in Cameroon, Nigeria and

## Ugandan MPs reject birth control for 15-year-old girls

Ugandan lawmakers have rejected a government proposal to allow 15-year-old girls to access birth control pills to reduce high levels of pregnancy. Deputy Speaker Thomas Tayebwa called the idea "devilish", saying it would "formalise [the] defilement" of girls.

A senior health ministry official said the "stigma" around young people using contraceptives should end.

Nearly a quarter of 15- to 19-year-old girls in Uganda are either pregnant or are already mothers, a survey says.

The rate increased sharply during the Covid lockdown when schools were shut for almost two years.

During a highly charged parliamentary debate on Tuesday, MP Lucy Akello questioned whether the age of consent was being lowered from the current 18 years to 15 years, the state-owned New Vision newspaper reported. She described the proposal to offer

contraceptives to 15-year-old girls as "scary". Ms Akello said she did not use contraceptives. "I use the natural method, the one God gave me." In her response to the debate, Primary Healthcare Minister Margaret Muhanga said the proposal had not been approved by the government but had been made by a senior medical officer, Dr Charles Olaro. She asked if it was better for a child to get pregnant and then go on to die while giving birth, adding there was "so many teenage pregnancies". Dr Olaro told the privately owned Daily Monitor

newspaper that access to reproductive health information was "not just a matter of choice; it is a matter of fundamental rights". "It is essential that we foster an environment where youth can access information on sexual and reproductive health and contraceptives for those in need without stigma, discrimination, or judgment," Dr Olaro was quoted as saying.

However, the deputy speaker said the proposal "should never see the light of day". BBC



Uganda's influential religious leaders say teenagers should abstain from sex

## Bola Tinubu diploma: No evidence Nigeria's president forged college record

There is no evidence that the diploma Nigeria's President Bola Ahmed Tinubu submitted to the country's electoral commission was forged, the BBC's Global Disinformation Team has found.

Allegations that President Tinubu's certificates were faked went viral on social media following the release by Chicago State University (CSU) of his academic records last week.

We have looked at some of the most widely circulated claims.

The release of the president's academic documents is the culmination of a judicial case filed in August by one of his main rivals in February's presidential election, Atiku Abubakar of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

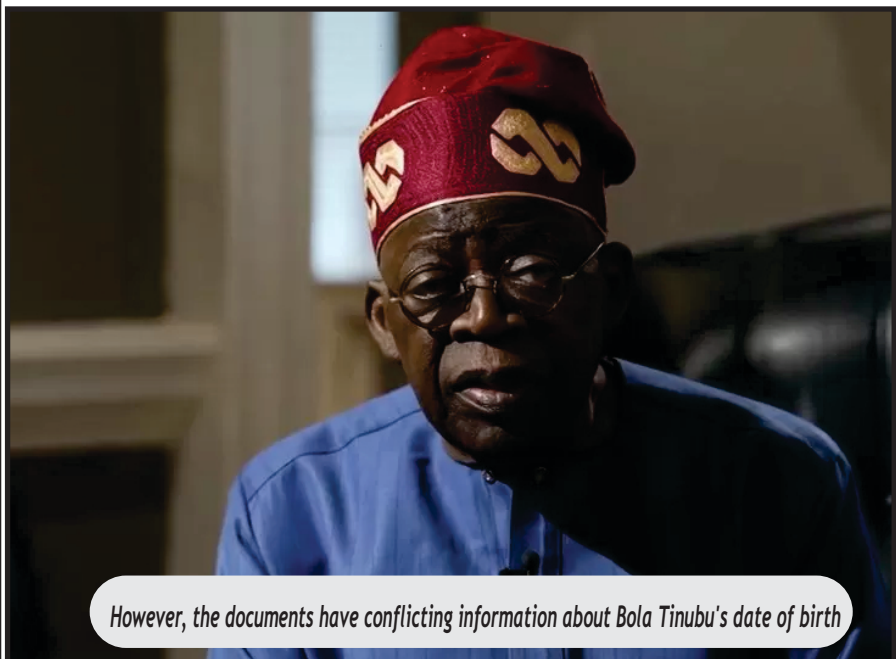
Mr Abubakar was hoping to have the victor disqualified

students that are similar to what CSU awarded to Mr Tinubu in 1979.

Documents from CSU that were certified by Jamar Orr, who was then a staff member of CSU, in the 12 months from 1 August 2022

In response to request one, CSU submitted seven diplomas covering different disciplines with the names of the students redacted. According to the university's registrar, these diplomas had not been collected by the students. In response to request two, CSU stated that it could not find the diploma they issued to Mr Tinubu in 1979, because they do not keep copies of diplomas already collected by students. In response to request three, CSU stated that it produced for Mr Tinubu a replacement diploma dated 27 June 1979. It also released diplomas awarded to other students that bore similar font, seal, signatures and wordings as Mr Tinubu's diplomas.

In response to request four, CSU submitted other academic



However, the documents have conflicting information about Bola Tinubu's date of birth

after accusing him of falsifying the CSU diploma of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration awarded in 1979 that he submitted to the electoral authority (Inec).

To obtain evidence for his case in Nigeria, Mr Abubakar approached a US court in August, requesting it to compel CSU to release Mr Tinubu's academic records through a process called discovery, where the parties exchange information including documents ahead of a trial. Mr Tinubu's lawyers opposed the discovery application, citing privacy concerns, but the US court decided it should proceed.

The documents requested by Mr Abubakar were:

A copy of any diploma issued by CSU in 1979

A copy of the diploma CSU gave to Mr Tinubu in 1979

Copies of diplomas with the same font, seal, signatures, and wording awarded to other

documents initially attested to and released by Mr Orr.

In line with the judge's ruling, Mr Abubakar's lawyer Angela Liu last week questioned Caleb Westberg, CSU's current registrar, in a deposition. The BBC was given access to the deposition transcript by Mr Abubakar's spokesperson, Phrank Shaibu. Some social media users in Nigeria allege that the deposition and the diplomas released by CSU confirm that the diploma submitted to Inec by Mr Tinubu was forged. This claim was also repeated by one of Mr Abubakar's lawyers, Kalu Kalu, at a press conference last week. We found there was no evidence to support this claim.

The CSU released several diplomas issued between 1979 and 2003. We analysed all of them.

There are three different diplomas for Mr Tinubu that we refer to throughout our analysis:

The original one, from 1979, which he has said in the past was lost when he went into exile in the 1990s. BBC

# EDITORIAL

# COMMENTARY

By Richard Haass

## Liberians should applaud themselves

## An Israeli Dilemma

**LIBERIANS HAVE EVERY** reason to pat themselves on the back for demonstrating resilience in Tuesday's elections with huge turnout to elect candidates of their choice, generally void of violence.

**ELECTORATE DEFILED** skeptics and doomsayers and stood patiently in long queues across the country to cast their ballots in highly contested polls. This is commendable.

**HOWEVER, IT IS** important that such non-violence spirit is kept during counting of the ballots by the National Elections Commission and announcement of final results.

**THE LEVEL OF** resilience and maturity demonstrated at the ballot box on October 10, 2023 has gone down in history as one of the most peaceful elections in the entire subregion in recent history, which is admirable.

**WE URGE** political parties, candidates and their supporters to maintain this same spirit throughout these elections in the interest of peace and the Motherland. Whoever emerges as winners is a victory for Liberia.

**DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS** set the stage for pluralistic governance, peace, unity and development. It must not and should not be about winner taking it all. Liberia needs all of its brightest minds on deck to building a prosperous nation irrespective of political, tribal, religious or economic background.

**ONE LIBERIA SHOULD** be the focus in these elections because this is the only country we have as Liberians and we need to keep the peace at all cost.

**THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS** Commission should also be commended, because the elections were without challenges ranging from funding difficulty, deplorable roads and capacity needs.

**INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS TOO** deserve commendation for standing with the people of Liberia, leaving their countries and family members to come and observe the polls.

**WE MUST SEE** these elections as an opportunity to correct our past mistakes, unit and forge ahead with nation building not only for the current generation, but posterity.

**NEW YORK** - The history of Israel has often been a history of conflict. A partial list includes the 1948 Arab-Israeli War that followed Israel's birth; the Israeli-British-French attempt in 1956 to seize the Suez Canal and topple Egypt's Arab nationalist leader; the 1967 Six-Day War; the 1973 Yom Kippur War; and Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982. There are also the two Palestinian intifadas and numerous smaller conflicts.

To this list must now be added Hamas's October 2023 invasion of Israel. Thousands of short-range rockets were launched from Hamas-controlled Gaza against towns and cities in western Israel. Hundreds if not thousands of Hamas fighters crossed into Israel by breaking through defensive barriers, flying over them, or sailing around them.

The human toll of these attacks is enormous and growing. More than 900 Israelis have lost their lives. Several thousand have been injured. Some two hundred Israelis attending a concert were killed in cold blood. Nearly the same number have been abducted. It was terror - the intentional harming of innocents by a non-state actor - on a large scale.

It was also a colossal Israeli intelligence failure. The most likely explanation for Israel's being caught unprepared is less a lack of warning than a lack of attention. As was the case in 1973, complacency and an under-estimation of the adversary can be dangerous.

It was a defensive failure as well. Deterrence broke down. Expensive physical barriers were overrun. Israeli military readiness and troop levels were woefully inadequate, possibly because attention had shifted to protecting settlers in the occupied West Bank. There will surely be official inquiries and independent investigations.

Why Hamas attacked remains a subject of debate. The most likely explanation is that Hamas wanted to demonstrate that it alone - not the Palestinian Authority that rules the West Bank and not Arab governments - is able and willing to protect and promote Palestinian interests.

The timing of the assault is another matter. It is possible that the date was chosen to coincide with the last successful surprise attack against Israel, carried out by Egypt and Syria 50 years ago almost to the day. But the planning and training for the attack took place over months, which suggests a strategic purpose not tied to a specific event.

The timing may have been motivated by a desire to disrupt the growing momentum in negotiations to normalize diplomatic relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia, an outcome strongly opposed by Iran, the principal backer of Hamas. Hamas may also have sought to take advantage of Israeli political divisions. Or all of the above.

The Hamas attackers took hostages back to Gaza for two reasons: to limit Israel's

freedom of action lest those individuals be placed at even greater risk, and to exchange them for Hamas operatives held in Israeli jails.

Israel now faces an acute dilemma. It wants to deal a decisive blow to Hamas, both to weaken the organization militarily and to discourage future attacks and Iranian support for them. And it wants to accomplish this without bringing Hezbollah, which has some 150,000 rockets in Lebanon that could reach much of Israel, directly into the conflict. It also does not want the war to expand to the West Bank. Restoring meaningful deterrence without widening the war will be difficult.

There is the additional consideration that Israel's military options are limited. The hostages are one reason. In addition, occupying - or, more precisely, re-occupying - Gaza would be a nightmare. There are few, if any, military undertakings more difficult than urban warfare, and Gaza is one of the most densely populated urban environments in the world. Many Israeli soldiers would lose their lives or be captured in such an operation.

Massive attacks from the air, designed to avoid the need for a ground invasion, would inevitably kill or injure a significant number of innocent inhabitants of Gaza, thereby decreasing international sympathy and support for Israel. Efforts to shut off Gaza's supplies of food, water, fuel, and electricity also would be counterproductive. Regional and international pressure for a cease-fire would surely mount.

There is also the question of the operation's strategic objective. Hamas cannot be eliminated, because it represents an ideology as much as an organization. Efforts to destroy it risk building support for it.

What comes to mind is the famous question posed by then-US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, who wondered whether US drone strikes on suspected terrorists, which at times killed innocents, were effective. His question - "Are we creating more terrorists than we're killing?" - remains worth asking.

All of which is to say that while there must be a military component to Israel's response to its security challenge, including reconstituting Israel's ability to defend itself from attacks and targeted strikes on terrorists in Gaza, there is no solely military answer.

A diplomatic element will need to be introduced into the equation, including a credible Israeli plan for bringing about a viable Palestinian state.

There is an American saying that you cannot beat something with nothing. Rewarding those Palestinians willing to reject violence and reach an accommodation with Israel is still the best way to marginalize Hamas.

## OP-ED

By Peter Singer

## OPINION

By José Manuel Barroso

# The Spiral of Violence that Led to Hamas

**P**RINCETON - Hamas's brazen and vicious attacks within Israel have rightly drawn condemnation from around the world. If this is a war, as both sides agree it is, then Hamas's deliberate targeting of civilians counts as a major war crime.

But the brutality demonstrated by Hamas did not emerge in a vacuum. The lesson of what is currently happening in Israel and Gaza is that violence breeds more violence. The last real chance of avoiding the tragic conflict being waged between Israel and Hamas was destroyed by a single killing: the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995. The assassin was not a Palestinian militant, but an Israeli extremist opposed to the Oslo Accords, by which Rabin sought a "land for peace" deal that was anathema to Israeli radicals, for whom Jewish sovereignty in the Holy Land is non-negotiable.

Rabin's assassination occurred at the end of a peace rally attended by more than 100,000 Israelis, hopeful of an end to hostilities between Israel and Palestinians. At the time, that hope seemed realistic.

The great beneficiaries of the assassination were Israeli nationalists, above all Binyamin Netanyahu, the leader of the right-wing Likud party. Netanyahu had rejected the Oslo Accords, because they required Israel to withdraw from the territories it had occupied after the Six-Day War in 1967. In a protest against the Accords, and against Rabin, Netanyahu led a mock funeral procession, complete with a coffin and hangman's noose.

In the years after Rabin's murder, and particularly following the failure to reach a settlement at Camp David in 2000, right-wing extremists gained power in Israel, and the prospect of achieving a viable Palestinian state in the occupied territories all but disappeared. At the same time, the failure of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's secular Fatah movement to deliver Palestinian statehood strengthened the Islamist Hamas, which, along with other Palestinian militant organizations, bases its legitimacy on killing Israelis (as well as accused collaborators with Israel).

With Hamas extending its influence (and exporting its violence) from Gaza, which it has controlled since 2007, to the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where the Fatah-controlled Palestinian Authority is nominally in charge, a growing number of Israelis supported the repressive measures Netanyahu promised. And with the hapless PA unable to halt relentless expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, the cycle of extremism and violence continued.

Netanyahu now leads the most fanatically nationalist government in Israel's history, a government that includes Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, whose responsibilities include administration of a large part of the occupied West Bank. Smotrich has repeatedly incited violence against Palestinians.

In February, after a Palestinian shot dead two Israeli settlers, hundreds of Israelis rampaged through Huwara, a nearby Palestinian village, in scenes reminiscent of Cossack pogroms against Jewish settlements in Russia more than a century earlier. The Israelis set fire to Huwara, leaving one villager dead and others injured. And, like the Russian police when a pogrom was underway, Israeli forces in the area did not intervene to protect the residents or arrest the perpetrators.

None of this excuses the atrocities committed against Israeli civilians by Hamas terrorists who killed more than 1,000 Israelis, most of them defenseless civilians, including women and children. Horrific videos show Hamas gunmen shooting, in cold blood, young people at a music festival. As a proportion of the population, this attack killed ten times as many people as al-Qaeda's attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

When Hamas attacks Israeli civilians, it knows that this will lead to Israeli counterattacks in Gaza that are bound to kill and injure many civilians. Hamas locates its military sites in residential areas, hoping that this tactic will restrain Israeli attacks, or at least lessen international support for Israel.

Hamas reportedly holds roughly 150 hostages, and has said that it will kill one every time Israel bombs a Gazan home without warning. Hamas leaders surely remember that in 2011, Netanyahu, as prime minister, was willing to free over 1,000 Palestinian prisoners, some of them terrorists, in exchange for the release of a single captive Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit. Against that background, they may believe that Israel will not be prepared to sacrifice the lives of the hostages in order to achieve its military objectives.

If that is what the leaders of Hamas believe, they may find that they have made a mistake. Whether Israel can eliminate Hamas as a military force remains to be seen, but it is clear that in the battle to achieve that objective, Israel will have to be prepared to lose many lives, probably of both soldiers and hostages.

How far Israel will go with its declared intention to deny electricity, fuel, food, and water to the two million citizens of Gaza, many of them children, is hard to know. What is certain is that Hamas's brutal crimes do not entitle Israel to starve children.

In the eyes of many outside observers, the cause of Palestinian autonomy and statehood has long held the moral high ground. Now that cause has been stained by the gruesome murders and abductions - many of them captured on video - carried out in its name. Paradoxically, if Palestinians are ever to regain the moral high ground, they must hope for the destruction of Hamas. As long as Hamas can claim to represent them, the evil it has perpetrated will taint their cause.

# Pandemic Preparedness Cannot Wait

**G**ENEVA - As a firm believer in multilateralism, I was heartened that the United Nations General Assembly adopted a political declaration on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response at its first-ever high-level meeting on the subject in September. It confirms that world leaders recognize the existential threat of pandemics and are committed to breaking the panic-neglect cycle, whereby policymakers pull out all the stops to fight disease outbreaks, only to turn their attention elsewhere once the crisis ends.

The landmark declaration has generated much-needed momentum for a global pandemic treaty, which is currently under development at the World Health Organization. But translating a political commitment into a meaningful agreement requires significant buy-in from WHO member states, and negotiations are sure to be arduous.

As this process unfolds, we must implement practical measures to preserve the knowledge gained during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to improve upon the innovative mechanisms that emerged from it. Any eventual treaty can thus enter into force with many working parts already in place. And, in the meantime, the world will be better prepared for the next infectious-disease emergency.

The pandemic may have faded from our collective consciousness, but with official COVID-19 deaths nearing seven million and the pandemic's cost to the United States economy alone reaching \$14 trillion, it is clear that a more strongly coordinated global response is required to protect against future threats. And make no mistake: another pandemic is an evolutionary certainty. In addition to the current rise in COVID-19 cases, the world is already experiencing more climate-related health emergencies, including outbreaks of infectious diseases such as cholera and yellow fever.

The good news is that some progress is already being made on this front. The COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) facility, established in 2020 by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (whose board I chair), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, the UN, and the WHO, has delivered nearly two billion doses of vaccines. The vast majority went to lower-income countries, where 81% of health workers and 67% of older people received at least two doses. Averting more than 2.7 million deaths, the initiative is undoubtedly the most successful response to a global health emergency in history.

As we prepare to phase out COVAX at the end of the year, Gavi has already devoted considerable effort to assessing the facility's shortcomings and has taken practical steps to do better next time. That means, from the outset, having enough cash to preorder vaccines on behalf of lower-income countries - just like wealthier countries reserved COVID-19 doses. It also means incentivizing investment in vaccine-production capacity across Africa and in other underserved regions that were hit hard by export bans.

Building up manufacturing networks, if done right, is a multi-year process. But it is necessary, as is immediate access to cash, to counter the tendency, apparent during the pandemic and rooted in national self-interest, to direct scarce supplies to the countries with the most money rather than the most need. And more needs to be done to ensure that countries are prepared, to improve vaccine readiness, and to sustain a broad coalition of partners ready and willing to implement a coordinated response.

Countries need the most help coping with rapid case surges that can undermine their ability to provide other public-health services. This means investing in existing health systems, especially outbreak prevention and detection, and recruiting and training future vaccinators. It will also be important to redouble efforts to bring up to date childhood vaccinations, which dropped sharply during the pandemic; otherwise, we run the risk of causing health systems to collapse under the weight of multiple crises.

To increase vaccine uptake requires more than expanding manufacturing capacity. It will be necessary to invest in and capitalize on innovation, whether mRNA technology, a new delivery method like needle-free patches, or something else entirely. We should also stockpile reserves of vaccine candidates for deadly diseases such as Sudan ebolavirus or Marburg virus, so that, in the absence of fully licensed antigens, there is still a first line of defense when an outbreak inevitably occurs.

Finally, a coordinated network of partners from across regions and sectors must be established to advance this work. COVAX was nimble enough to provide an end-to-end solution, from funding research to delivering shots in arms. Now, a broader group of stakeholders from civil society, the private sector, humanitarian and emergency agencies, development banks, and regional organizations must work together with global health agencies, funders, and countries to start preparing for the next pandemic.

Pathogens will not wait for policy deliberations. While we must do everything in our power to help achieve a global pandemic treaty, we must also build a broad vaccine coalition in the meantime - or risk being caught flat-footed once again.

## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# Liberia: The 2023 Presidential Election Analysis; Who will win?

By Dagbayonoh Kiah Nyanfore II

On October 10, 2023, Liberians went to the polls to elect a new president. There are 20 candidates, including current president George Manneh Weah. He was elected six years ago. Either the Liberian people will retain or replace him. Also among the candidates is Joseph Boakai, former vice president under President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who led Liberia for 12 years. Boakai unsuccessfully ran in 2017, but Weah defeated him in the second round. Boakai vows to win this time.

This article analyses the three leading candidates in their campaigns and indicates which one would win. First, some information on the candidates might be necessary to repeat. Weah entered politics in 2004 as the standard bearer of the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC). He lost the 2005 election in the second round after winning the first. Weah ran again unsuccessfully in 2011 as vice standard bearer to Winston Tubman. After returning to school upon his first defeat, he ran as a senator for Montserrado County and won by a landslide. Weah won the presidency by defeating 20 other contestants. In the second round, he defeated Boakai overwhelmingly by capturing 14 of the 15 counties in Liberia. Before politics, Weah was a former soccer star, winning African, European, and World best. He holds a master's degree.

Joseph Nyema Boakai has been in government for over 40 years. He first worked as head of the Liberian Produce and Marketing Corporation under President William Tolbert. He served as the Minister of Agriculture in the Samuel Doe government and as managing director of the Liberian Petroleum Refinery Company under Amos Sawyer interim presidency. Boakai is a quiet and peaceful person. He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Liberia.

Alexander Cummings is a former Coca-Cola executive. He worked in the corporate sector for over 20 years. He entered politics in about 2015. He became the political leader of the Alternative National Congress (ANC) and the standard bearer for the party in the 2017 presidential election. Although he has not worked in government, he was appointed by President Sirleaf to the board of the Booker T. Washington Institute (BWI). Cummings lost in the 2017 election, but he took second place in the Montserrado County votes. Additionally, lacking government experience does not equate to the impossibility of winning a presidential election. As known, in the US, Donald Trump lacked government practice but won the election. ANC is now part of the Collaborating Political Parties with the Liberty Party. Cummings has a master's degree from Clark-Atlanta University.

The CDC-led government has made many development tangibles, including building more roads and hospitals and improving education and the economy. It makes tuition to public colleges and universities free and constructed public housing and markets. However, corruption continues to be a major problem. For instance, the US government has sanctioned three Liberian officials for corruption. Further, Weah failed to personally and politically fight corruption. He failed his previous campaign promise to institute war and economic crime court in Liberia. However, the other candidates have problems. For example, some observers say Boakai has difficulties making decisions and cannot solve problems and reconcile. Under his watch, he could not resolve the breakaway issue and unite the CPP, indicating his leadership inability.

Moreover, others view him as unkind, not giving freely, and having health problem. UP appears to have financial difficulties. Unlike when it was in power, the party had been unable to pay its headquarters rent. In this election, it has few campaign billboards and other materials compared to the ruling party.

## THE CAMPAIGN

Weah worked harder than the other candidates. Besides leaving the country to attend the UN assembly, he campaigned consistently. He visited many remote areas, such as traveling to the Southeast with bad road conditions. Boakai did not travel to that area. Additionally, the CDC had more resources at its disposal. This is seen by the many vehicles, campaign advertisements, and programs displaced. The party implemented more Jehovah's Witness campaigns from door to door. The party maintained its coalition with other political parties and had a regular radio program called The Voice of the Coalition. This exercise informed the public regarding the campaign and spread the party's message. More campaign songs were produced and sung over the country than by the other camps. Particularly in the campaign's last few days, the opposition made many inflammatory remarks that brought public



condemnation.

However, the opposition has campaigned virtually. Many of its parties have published their platforms and debated the issues. They have kept the government's feet to the fire.

## POLLS

While opinion polls are not 100% accurate, in most instances, they tell how a campaign is doing and how the public feels about a candidate. Most polls in Liberia are unscientific. Their sample sizes are smaller, and people call in to give opinions. Nevertheless, polls can provide an indication regarding public views. OK FM radio conducted a poll in Nimba before the campaign. The survey showed Weah leading in that county. Before the campaign, the station did another poll in Monrovia, pointing to Boakai winning. But during the campaign, its poll in Monrovia showed Weah leading Boakai and Cummings. A public survey by a credible international firm indicates Weah leading comfortably over Boakai and Cummings. Though a CPP official familiar with the poll questioned some of its elements, he agreed with the findings. However, he believed the survey confirmed Cummings was doing well.

Again, a campaign should not put all its eggs in polling. Survey results may be flawed. In the 2016 presidential election in the US, Hillary Clinton led Trump in most polls. But in the end, Trump won, stunning political pundits and election experts.

## THE NUMBERS

Polls and crowds do not vote and are not final in determining an electoral victory. What matters is the number of votes cast. Based on NEC's statistics, Montserrado, Nimba, and Bong counties have the largest registered voters. They constitute about 57% of the total national registered voters, with Montserrado having 37%, Nimba 12, and Bong 8. In other words, a candidate who wins a substantial number of votes from these counties will have an excellent chance of victory. The rest of the 12 counties have fewer registered voters. Nimba and Bong will be battlegrounds. Their votes will split. Tewon Gongloe, Weah, and Boakai will divide Nimba's votes. Boakai is included because of the Jeremiah Koung factor. Koung is Boakai's vice running-mate and is from Nimba. As stated in the last update, analysts predict that either Weah or Gongloe will take first place in the county's votes count. Weah could take first place in Bong, considering Jewel Taylor's and Jeremiah Slonteh's factors. Taylor is from Bong County and is Weah vice standard bearer. Boakai would take second, based on Senator Prince Moye's account. Montserrado is a Weah-CDC stronghold. Therefore, Weah should do very well, receiving about 60% of the votes. Weah would take the Southeast

and significant votes from the Western region, including Bomi, Grand Bassa, and Rivercess.

Interestingly, Lofa is a battleground, though it is Boakai's birthplace. This is unlike in 2017 when Boakai's influence dominated the county politics. By culture, Lofains consider him an uncle or father. With the Thomas Fallah impact and the government development activities in Lofa, the county prefers development over culture. Consequently, Boakai is less influential than in 2017. The recent special senatorial election in Lofa attests to this analysis. Hence, Weah could do well in Lofa.

With the above, the development of tangibles, and the opposition disunity, Weah would do much better than the other candidates in this election. But pre-election analysis could be a mere intellectual exercise. Elections have a way of functioning differently from the human mind. We can predict and hope the projection will materialize.

The election could go to a second round. While the opposition would prefer a second round to unite, the goal could be problematic and challenging. Usually, some opposition members tend to support the winner of the first round, as happened in 2011 and 2017. Indeed, in 2011, Charles Bromskine of the Liberty Party, Togba-Nah Tipoteh of the Liberian People's Party, and other opposition leaders supported President Sirleaf. 2017, the primary opposition parties' vice standard bearers and key members backed Weah. Historically, in Liberia, since 1980, no ruling party has lost an election. Moreover, as Front Page Africa publisher Rodney Sieh stated, if the opposition can not unite before or during the campaign, it would be unlikely in the second round.

Yet, the above does not mean that records can not be broken. Liberians and the international community hope for a fair, free, peaceful, and transparent election. The election will start at 8 AM to 6 PM. Results should be coming in about 9 PM.

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Wait calmly, patiently and peacefully

### -U.S. cautions candidates, parties

By Bridgett Milton

The United States Embassy in Liberia has issued a statement, warning all political parties and

claiming victory and congratulating themselves.

The U.S. Mission applauds the people of Liberia for their participation in the October 10, 2023 Presidential and

free, fair and peaceful elections in Liberia. Mr. Heath disclosed that on 27 September, Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced a new visa restriction policy under Section 212(a) (3) (C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act for those undermining democracy in Liberia. Mr. Heath noted that this policy is not directed at the Liberian people or the Government of Liberia.

He said the decision to impose visa restrictions reflects America's commitment to support Liberians' aspirations to have free and fair elections that demonstrate the will of the people and strengthen democracy and the rule of law.

Preliminary results released by the National Elections Commission from two counties indicates that the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) and the opposition Unity Party (UP) battling each other for votes followed by the opposition Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) trading behind, as one of the three top parties in the race. More than 2 million voters went to the poll on Tuesday to elect a President, among 20 candidates, including incumbent President George Manneh Weah, who is seeking a second term. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



candidates to await the General Elections, official results calmly, patiently and peacefully from the National Elections Commission (NEC), rather than announcing themselves winners of Tuesday's polls.

"We urge all citizens, political parties, and political aspirants to await official results calmly, patiently, and peacefully from the National Elections Commission of Liberia", the statement issued in Monrovia reads. Immediately after polls closed on Tuesday, many political parties and political aspirants took to social media here,

commitment and dedication they displayed in exercising their right to vote and engage in the electoral process. The U.S. recently announced visa restrictions for those that will undermine Liberia's democracy, including their family members. Speaking in a news conference on Thursday, September 28, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary for West Africa, Michael Heath, who visited the country, said his visit is a manifestation of the United States Government's desire for

## Limited security observed at District#11 Precincts

By Ethel A Tweh

Precincts within Montserrado County Electoral District#11, specifically Barnesville were left with one or no security at all, during the October 10th 2023 Presidential and General Elections.

Only one police officer was visibly present in precincts at New Life Ministry Center by 9 PM, while counting process was ongoing. Polling Places 2 and 5 of the Precinct were outside the building covered with tarpaulin and a piece of plywood at the entrance.

An individual who claimed to be a staff of the National Elections Commission came by 9 PM and said he was under the tarpaulin, serving as an observer in the day, but left to go eat, something that sparked tension at the center.

The lone Police officer present tried intervening but was overwhelmed by the self-pronounced NEC staff that failed to identify himself, a situation that brought the counting to a standstill, as Polling Place#5.

Earlier, at the same Precinct, ruling Coalition for Democratic Change Representative Candidate Jim Garwolo, who had gone to vote, was seen talking pictures, and when told to stop, resisted, arguing that "even President Weah's pictures were taken when the President went to vote, and Candidate Frank Saah Foko took along someone to take his pictures too, so no one can stop me from bringing someone to take my Pictures."

Turnout in District#11 like elsewhere in the country was

huge as Liberians came out in their numbers peacefully to cast their votes.

However, voters complained of slowness of the process, saying that they were in queue as early as 6AM, but waited patiently up to four hours later, to cast their votes.

At E. Jonathan Goodridge Precinct center, group of boys were in the queue claiming that they came to help voters to scan their voting cards. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



## WONGOSOL extols Liberians for peaceful election

Liberians continue to receive commendation for their peaceful participation in the October 10, 2023 presidential and general elections.

The latest commendation from the Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL) extends gratitude to all Liberians, especially women of Liberia for peacefully turning out in their numbers to vote in Tuesday polls.

WONGOSOL Executive Director, Esther Davis Yango, notes that women worked tirelessly in one accord in exercising their civic duty as required by the Constitution of Liberia.

Speaking Wednesday in Monrovia following the polls, Ms Yango added,

"It's commendable to see that Liberians were considerate of our values regardless of our political, social and religious affiliations."

She underscores that Liberians' ability to work, reason, and commiserate with each other,

body that has the authority to announce the official results", she notes.

She continues that Liberians should be conscious that every election has winners and losers, adding "I understand the full spectrum of our country's political views, and cognizant that Liberians are worried about what this election means for themselves, their families, and the nation at large and there are others who genuinely see this election as a moment of positive change for our country. Whatever our political interests are, together, we all can make Liberia a better place for all."

She says now that the elections are over, despite differences, Liberians must respect the poll results and deliberate on what role they want to play in the country's next chapter. "I hope we will take this opportunity to come together with one voice and focus on our strengths and aspirations and how we can best support each other."

The WONGOSOL further observes that already, most Liberians are



Executive Director Esther Davis Yango

signifies their strength and resilience as a people. "As we continue to process the election results in different ways, I want to remind us that the NEC is the only

engaging in thoughtful conversations about the election results and their hopes for the nation. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

## We are not deterred

Starts from page 11

despite the results that are coming out from there.

According to him, no results will deter President Weah from halting his developmental initiatives in any of the fifteen counties.

President Weah is seeking re-election against 19 rivals. His main rival is the former Liberian Vice President, Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai of the Unity Party (UP).

Weah has been heavily criticized here for inflicting suffering on Liberians, insecurity, economic hardship,

and the frequent importation of drugs by individuals, among others.

In another development, Mr. Koijee said the Monrovia City Corporation (MCC) has officially begun full operation in catering to the welfare of the city.

"As you may be aware, the city has been facing a series of daunting challenges in terms of waste, our landfill station is filled, and we are working tirelessly to ensure that can address the situation to make the city clean and green," he said.

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# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## WSR leads peace march

By Lincoln G. Peters

Dozens of women led by the Women's Situation Room (WSR) staged a peace march recently cautioning government and political actors to sustain and maintain the peace of Liberia. The marchers said their children must not grow up in a nation

citizen, regardless of their political affiliation," the women stated Monday, 9 October 2023. They noted that their message to their leaders, both current and aspiring, is that "Liberia's future depends on your commitment to peace."

"We urge you to prioritize the well-being of our nation over personal gain or political

Room (WSR), a flagship program of the Angie Brook International Center for Women's Empowerment.

The purpose of the march was to demonstrate the unity of Liberian women, and their significant role played in the negotiations of Liberia's peace and democracy. It was also intended to dramatize and symbolize the importance of maintaining and sustaining the peace of Liberia during and after the elections.

The Establishment Coordinator of ABIC Cllr. Yvette Chesson-Wureh read the position statement of the group. "Today, as we gather here in the heart of Monrovia, Liberia, for this pre-election Women's Peace March, we do so with heavy hearts, yet with an unwavering commitment to the future of our beloved nation," she said.

She noted that the road to this moment has been marked by challenges and tribulations. Cllr. Chesson-Wureh added that the women's peace march was intended to send a powerful message to the world that they are the guardians of peace, the bearers of hope, and the architects of change.

She stated that they refuse to accept the status quo, and they are determined to reshape the nation's destiny.



where the ballot is stained with blood.

According to the women, their peace march was meant to say that enough is enough.

"We call upon our law enforcement agencies to rise above partisanship and uphold their duty to protect every

victory." "Remember that the power to shape Liberia's destiny lies in your hands, and history will judge you by the choices you make," they warned.

Dozens of women, and youths took part in the march led by the Women's Situation

## Acarous Gray appreciates supporters

By Lewis S. Teh

The ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) Representative for Montserrado County Electoral District #8 has extended appreciation to his supporters who backed him during Tuesday's election.

The incumbent believed that with the support of his people, he had confidence in being re-elected.

The National Elections Commission (NEC) has not declared a winner in the district. The NEC began announcing results Wednesday evening with just a small percentage of votes so far.

"From what we have seen, we are in a comfortable lead and the lead is irreversible. But it's the NEC that will announce the final results," Mr. Gray alleged during a press conference on Wednesday, 11 October 2023.

Gray extended appreciation to various community leaders, and district chairpersons for their unflinching support given

him over the last years.

"... I'm thankful to everyone including the women, youth, district chairpersons, and every auxiliary within District 8 for the battle," Gray continued.

"I want to call on all my supporters to remain calm. The gossip that you are hearing that they have won is false because we have in our possession all of our tablet sheets, and with [that] I can proudly say we are in the lead," Gray claimed.

He also encouraged his supporters to wait for the NEC

to make the official pronouncement because they have the authority to do so.

Meanwhile, Mr. Gray has admonished his rivals to stop what he thinks are fake election results to the public.

"I ask that you concede to defeat because to defeat I Gray is not as ordinary as one would think. We fought with our bare hands, and we won," said Mr. Gray.



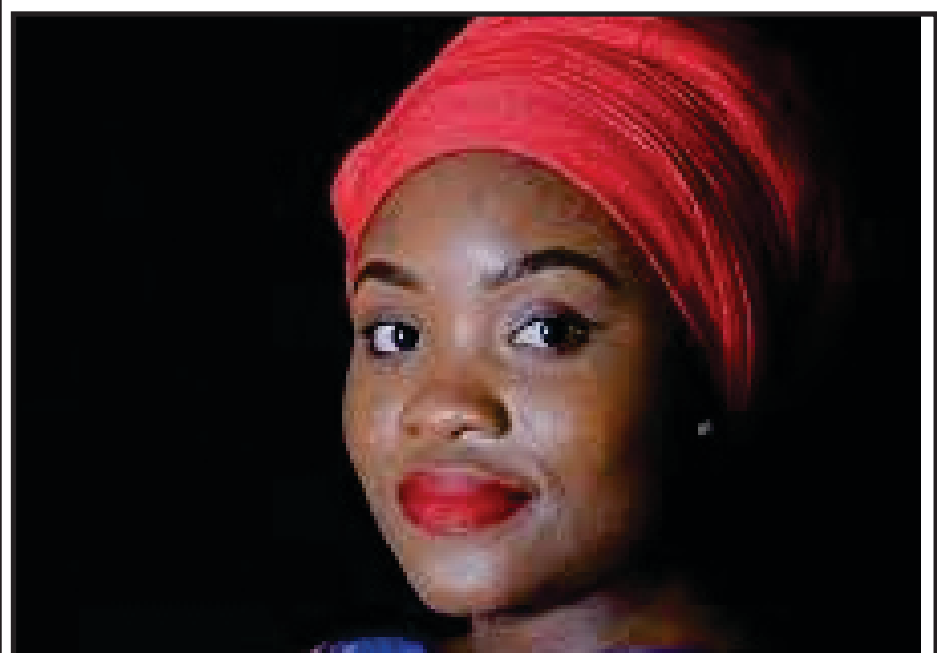
## Candidate Kruah-Togba concedes defeat in District#13

Barely a day after the 2023 Presidential and Legislative Elections, Montserrado County Electoral District#13 Representative Candidate, Cornelia Kruah-Togba, has conceded defeat.

According to Kruah-Togba, from what she have gathered with just few polling places left to be counted, there are strong indications that she has lost the election.

Kruah-Togba noted that she wanted a chance to rescue the future of children of the district that is gradually being snatched, a chance to improve the lives of women, develop small medium enterprises, and a chance to exemplify a leadership that works for the people of district#13, but was never given the opportunity again this time around.

She disclosed that in the coming days, she will begin a tour to thank the people of District#13 across



However, she maintains that she has been vying for elected post since 2018, and there will be no stopping until she gets a chance to serve her district through the Legislature.

"Our passion to lead this District is genuine; whether I am a lawmaker or not, I'll continue to impart the lives of residents of District 13", she vowed.

various communities for their support during the electioneering period.

She thanked her supporters and sponsors that made this process easy for her.

In 2018, Madam Cornelia Kruah-Togba contested in the same district but was defeated by Rep. Edward P. Flomo. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

# Let's maintain the peace

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# Français

## Il n'y a pas eu de vote dans certaines localités du sud-est

La Commission électorale nationale (NEC) a admis avoir été confrontée à des difficultés lors du scrutin de mardi (10 octobre 2023). Un

du sud-est sont difficiles d'accès, les retards dans la livraison du matériel dans les centres de vote et la lenteur des performances des agents électoraux ont contribué à de

électeurs ont attendu en vain l'arrivée du personnel de la NEC et du matériel de vote.

Le canoë transportant le personnel de la NEC et du matériel électoral de Zardobo, un village du district n°5 de Grand Bassa vers certaines parties du comté de Rivercess, a chaviré tôt mardi. Bien que les agents électoraux aient été secourus, les documents n'ont jamais été récupérés.

A cause de la forte pluie battante qui a commencé depuis samedi, la plupart du matériel électoral et des travailleurs de la NEC se sont coincés dans la boue.

À Sinoe, le vote aurait eu lieu uniquement à Greenville, tandis que les autres villes et villages n'ont pas reçu le matériel de vote. La NEC, lors de sa conférence de presse régulière mardi, a confirmé la situation et a annoncé qu'elle prolongerait le vote dans les zones touchées.

« Membres de la presse, la Commission rapporte également que même si le vote progresse généralement bien dans tout le pays, il existe quelques défis notables, en particulier dans les comtés du sud-est de Sinoe et Rivercess.

En raison des fortes pluies des cinq derniers jours, la rivière Planson dans le comté de

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



NEC Boss

canot transportant une partie de son personnel vers des comtés difficiles d'accès du sud-est du Libéria a chaviré avec le matériel électoral, empêchant des centaines, voire des milliers de citoyens trop enthousiastes de voter.

La NEC a promis par contre de reprogrammer les élections dans les districts concernés pour permettre aux citoyens d'exercer leur droit de vote. Outre le fait que de nombreuses régions

longues files d'attente dans de nombreux bureaux de vote de Montserrado et d'autres comtés.

Les électeurs de certaines parties des comtés de Grand Bassa, River Cess, Sinoe et Grand Kru n'ont pas eu la possibilité de voter mardi parce que le matériel de vote n'a pas pu leur parvenir. Dans le district n°5 du comté de Grand Bassa, par exemple, où les électeurs s'étaient rassemblés dès 5 heures du matin, de nombreux centres de vote n'avaient pas pu ouvrir jusqu'à 18 heures et les

## Élections générales au Libéria : une forte participation pour un scrutin dans le calme

Près de 2,4 millions d'électeurs étaient appelés aux urnes ce 10 octobre 2023 pour élire notamment leur président. Le scrutin a débuté dans la matinée et s'annonce serré. Le président sortant, George Weah, fait face entre autres à l'ancien vice-président, Joseph Boakai. Les Libériens doivent également choisir leurs députés et 15 sénateurs. Les premières tendances font part d'une participation importante pour première élection organisée sans la présence des Casques bleus de l'ONU.

Les Libériens ont voté ce 10 octobre, pour élire leur futur président et renouveler en même temps leur Parlement et une partie de leur Sénat. Mais c'est surtout le scrutin présidentiel qui focalise l'attention. Le chef de l'État sortant, George Weah, est candidat à sa réélection, face à 19 concurrents. C'est la

quatrième élection que le Libéria organise depuis la fin de la dernière guerre civile, en 2003.

Des affrontements meurtriers en fin de campagne avaient fait craindre de violences. Lundi, la Cédéao et l'Union africaine avaient lancé un appel au calme à tous les acteurs politiques. Et le vote s'est déroulé dans le calme.

Dès le début de la matinée, des centaines de Libériens se sont pressés à l'entrée des bureaux de vote, sous le soleil. Certains sont arrivés avant même l'ouverture, désireux d'exercer leur devoir constitutionnel. Les électeurs se sont rendus massivement aux

urnes, avec une forte affluence constatée dans de nombreux bureaux de vote. Par moment, les forces de l'ordre ont eu du mal à maîtriser les foules, ce qui montre toute la difficulté pour elles de sécuriser le scrutin, sans l'aide cette fois des forces des Nations unies.

« Les gens espèrent que ces élections seront pacifiques » Les Libériens doivent départager vingt candidats, dont trois font figure de favoris : le président

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Éditorial

### Les violences sporadiques menacent les élections démocratiques

Les violences qui auraient fait deux morts la semaine dernière (29 septembre 2023) dans le comté de Lofa sont pour le moins regrettables. Elles constituent une menace sérieuse pour les élections du 10 octobre.

Selon certaines informations, des violences ont éclaté vendredi entre des partisans rivaux de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC) au pouvoir et du Parti de l'unité (UP), un parti d'opposition, faisant au moins deux morts et plusieurs autres blessés.

Les partenaires internationaux, dont la CEDEAO et les États-Unis, appellent le gouvernement du Libéria à enquêter sur les violences afin de contraindre les auteurs à rendre des comptes, d'autant plus que les Libériens se rendront aux élections dans quelques jours.

Le gouvernement n'a pas enquêté sur les violences politiques antérieures qui ont fait plusieurs blessés lors d'affrontements entre partisans rivaux de la CDC et de l'UP à Monrovia, ainsi que dans le comté de Nimba.

Il est important que les autorités fassent preuve de volonté politique en prenant des mesures immédiates pour traduire en justice les auteurs des violences de Lofa qui ont causé la mort de deux personnes. Cela aura certainement un effet dissuasif.

Nous appelons les dirigeants des deux partis à faire preuve de leadership en incitant leurs partisans à s'abstenir de toute violence et à s'engager plutôt dans une campagne pacifique pendant les jours restants avant les élections.

La violence n'a jamais profité au peuple libérien dans le passé et ne profitera pas en ces périodes de campagne électorale. Les élections viendront et auront lieu, mais le Libéria restera et nous devons tout faire en tant que citoyens pour assurer la sécurité de la patrie, non seulement pour la génération actuelle, mais aussi pour la postérité.

Le gouvernement américain a récemment menacé d'imposer des restrictions de visa à ceux qui porteraient atteinte à la démocratie au Libéria. Il est très important que tous les Libériens prêtent attention à la déclaration du gouvernement américain, le partenaire traditionnel du Libéria pour maintenir notre cher pays sur la voie de la paix, de la démocratie, de la justice et de la stabilité économique.

Le sous-secrétaire d'État américain pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest au Bureau des affaires africaines, Michael Heath, qui s'est rendu au Libéria pour la dernière fois et a lancé un avertissement, a félicité le président George Manneh Weah pour sa promesse devant les dirigeants du monde lors de la récente Assemblée générale des Nations Unies que son gouvernement veillerait à ce que des élections libres, équitables, transparentes, pacifiques, inclusives et crédibles.

Les candidats et les partis politiques en lice, avec le soutien de nos partenaires internationaux, devraient tout faire pour faire respecter ses paroles et éviter des actes qui pourraient compromettre les élections et plonger ce pays dans un chaos dont aucun Libérien patriote ne veut après 14 années de guerre civile sanglante.



# Français

Starts from page 8

## Il n'y a pas eu de

Sinoe, situé à la périphérie de Greenville, a débordé de son lit et a traversé la route principale menant à la plupart des centres du district deux du comté de Sinoe. Tous les efforts déployés par le personnel de la NEC pour traverser la rivière des deux côtés se sont révélés vains jusqu'à présent. Cela a affecté le déroulement des scrutins dans au moins 11 circonscriptions du district deux du comté de Sinoe. De plus, le camion transportant le matériel électoral vers le premier district du comté de Sinoe s'est retrouvé coincé dans la boue dans la localité de Butaw en raison des fortes pluies et du mauvais état de la route. Le magistrat a décidé de transporter les documents électoraux hier soir à moto, mais à cause du mauvais état des routes, cela a entraîné un retard dans cette zone. La Commission n'a d'autre choix que de prolonger l'heure des votes dans ces endroits. Dans le comté de River Cess, la rivière Timbo a débordé et les véhicules de la NEC transportant le matériel électoral n'ont pas pu traverser à ce moment-là. Lorsque les eaux se sont retirées, les véhicules sont arrivés tardivement à destination, ce qui a entraîné

un retard dans ces zones. Certaines circonscriptions du district de River Cess, Morweh, ont ouvert leurs portes jusqu'à 11h00. Le vote se poursuit dans le district », a déclaré la présidente de la NEC. Dans le comté de Maryland, une bagarre aurait éclaté lorsque certains membres du personnel de la NEC ont tenté de transférer les urnes de Pleebo à Harper City pour le dépouillement après la fermeture des bureaux de vote, mais cette tentative a rencontré une résistance véhémement.

Plus de 2 millions d'électeurs inscrits à travers le pays se sont rendus aux urnes lors des élections présidentielles et générales, les troisièmes depuis que le Libéria est passé de la guerre civile à la paix et à une gouvernance démocratique.

Le scrutin s'est déroulé dans l'ensemble dans le calme malgré les vagues de violence qui ont caractérisé les campagnes électorales dans les comtés de Nimba, Lofa et Montserrado.

Par ailleurs, la présidente de la Commission électorale nationale, Daviedetta Browne Lansanah, a déclaré que la Commission annoncerait les résultats préliminaires à partir du mercredi 11 octobre à 16h30, et qu'ils se poursuivraient pendant la période de 15 jours prévue par la loi au cours de laquelle les résultats définitifs des élections de 2023 seront publiés.

Starts from page 8

## Élections générales au

sortant George Weah, l'ancien vice-président Joseph Boakai qui cherche sa revanche après sa défaite en 2017 contre le même Weah, et enfin l'homme d'affaires Alexander Cummings.

Chaque candidat cherche à protéger le vote de ses propres électeurs. Dans ce but, des observateurs ont été placés dans les bureaux de vote pour surveiller le déroulement du scrutin. Le désir de paix est l'un des enjeux de cette élection, explique Oscar Bloh, président d'une équipe de 1 500 observateurs locaux :

« Ces élections sont cruciales en raison d'importantes inégalités sociales qui persistent dans ce pays. Il y a la question du chômage qui touche particulièrement les jeunes. Et ces élections sont également cruciales, car le pays est très divisé entre les deux principaux partis politiques. Malgré ça, les gens espèrent que ces élections seront pacifiques. » Les résultats définitifs dans deux semaines, des chiffres provisoires dès vendredi.

Si aucun incident n'a été

signalé, dans le comté de Montserrado, dans le nord-ouest du pays, la commission électorale a dû d'abord fermer l'un des bureaux pour ensuite le déplacer dans un autre quartier, sans explication connue.

Malgré quelques problèmes logistiques, notamment le fait que les personnes âgées et handicapées n'ont pas pu accéder aux urnes qui se trouvaient à l'étage dans certains bureaux de vote, le scrutin s'est déroulé dans le calme. Les bureaux de vote ont fermé à 18 heures (heure locale). Le bidonville du comté de Montserrado est connu pour avoir vu George Weah grandir. C'est ici qu'il a appris à jouer au foot. Mais c'est aussi ici que sa popularité est contestée.

Les derniers sondages le donnent au coude-à-coude avec Boakai. Ce scrutin pourrait alors se transformer en un vote sanction contre l'ancien lauréat du Ballon d'Or, auquel beaucoup reprochent de n'avoir pas tenu ses promesses. Les Libériens doivent maintenant attendre deux semaines pour la publication des résultats définitifs. Mais les chiffres provisoires devraient être connus dès vendredi.

## Liberia : le bilan en demi-teinte de George Weah



urnes ce mardi (10.10) dans le cadre des élections générales : présidentielle, législatives et sénatoriales. Le président sortant, George Weah, brigue un second mandat de six ans au nom de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC). Il affronte 19 autres candidats, dont Joseph Boakai, principal opposant et ancien vice-président sous Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Les bureaux de vote sont ouverts jusqu'à 18H00 TU. La Commission nationale électorale (NEC) va commencer à rendre publics les résultats à partir de mercredi (11.10) au fur et à mesure du décompte et communiquera les résultats définitifs dans les 15 jours.

Ces élections générales sont organisées pour la première fois sans la présence de la mission des Nations unies au Libéria créée en 2003 pour garantir la paix après les guerres civiles qui ont fait plus de 250.000 morts entre 1989 et 2003 et dont le souvenir reste vivace.

Quel bilan retenir du mandat u président sortant George Weah?

Eric Topona a posé la question à Mathias Hounkpè, Directeur-Pays de IFES (International Foundation for Electoral Systems) au Mali.

Selon l'analyste Mathias Hounkpè, en dépit des efforts durant son premier mandat, le président sortant George Weah n'a pas répondu à toutes les attentes de ses compatriotes.

Plus de 2,4 millions d'électeurs libériens sont aux

## Au Niger, la fin de l'aide internationale représente un manque à gagner considérable

Deux mois et demi après le coup d'État au Niger, les États-Unis ont annoncé mardi 10 octobre qu'ils suspendaient leur aide au développement à Niamey. Après la Banque mondiale et plusieurs pays européens, Washington rejoint la liste des pays qui ont stoppé les versements au Niger. Et cela représente déjà un manque à gagner considérable pour le pays.

Les sommes sont conséquentes. Dans un récent rapport, la Banque mondiale estime que près de 1,2 milliard de dollars ne seront pas versés au Niger cette année. Une somme qui représente plus de 6 % du PIB du pays.

En cause : les multiples suspensions des aides au développement de plusieurs pays et organisations. Il y a d'abord eu celles de plusieurs pays européens, comme la France, l'Allemagne, le Luxembourg et l'Union européenne. Au total, ils devaient verser 375 millions de dollars cette année au Niger. Au 26 juillet 2023, date du coup d'État, ils avaient déjà déboursé 28 % de cette somme. Fin de l'aide américaine à cette liste s'ajoutent désormais les États-Unis, qui avaient prévu de déboursé 442 millions de dollars d'aide économique. Une somme dont on ne sait pas quelle partie a déjà été versée. Depuis la décision, le 10 octobre 2023, de parler de « coup d'État », le département d'État américain doit obligatoirement cesser tous ses versements. Les responsables américains précisent toutefois que l'aide humanitaire à destination de la population n'est pas concernée. Au-delà de l'aide au développement, la Banque mondiale et le FMI assuraient également un appui budgétaire de plusieurs

centaines de millions de dollars au régime de Niamey. Avant le coup d'État, seuls quelques dizaines de millions ont pu être versés, sous la forme de prêts et de subventions.

Ces sanctions représentent un manque à gagner considérable pour le Niger, qui dépendait de l'aide internationale pour boucler son budget, mais aussi dans la réalisation de plusieurs projets d'infrastructures. Ainsi, alors que la croissance devait atteindre 6 % en 2023, elle ne pourrait être que de 2,3 %, selon les estimations de la Banque mondiale.

Des conséquences en matière d'infrastructures Les conséquences sont très importantes dans certains domaines. Dans le secteur de l'électricité, la Banque mondiale s'inquiète des « retards dans les projets d'infrastructure » qui entraveront l'augmentation de l'accès à « une électricité abordable et fiable ». Parmi ces retards, il y a par exemple celui de la centrale de Gorou Banda, financée par l'Agence française de développement (AFD). La Banque mondiale prévient : « la situation financière de la NIGELEC [la société nationale d'électricité, NDLR] va se détériorer avec l'augmentation des coûts, ce qui pèsera sur l'investissement privé ». De nombreux projets en matière d'accès à l'eau, dépendant de financements internationaux, sont également menacés. C'est le cas du barrage hydroélectrique de Kandadji, sur lequel Niamey comptait pour irriguer une grande partie des cultures de la région. Mais pire encore, l'arrêt des travaux en cours de route « crée des risques pour l'intégrité » des installations, selon la Banque mondiale.



# LIBERIANS

# DEBATE

Topic: Elections

By Naneka A. Hoffman

Liberians went to the poll on Tuesday, 10 October to vote in the 2023 Presidential and General Elections. The elections were generally peaceful across the country.

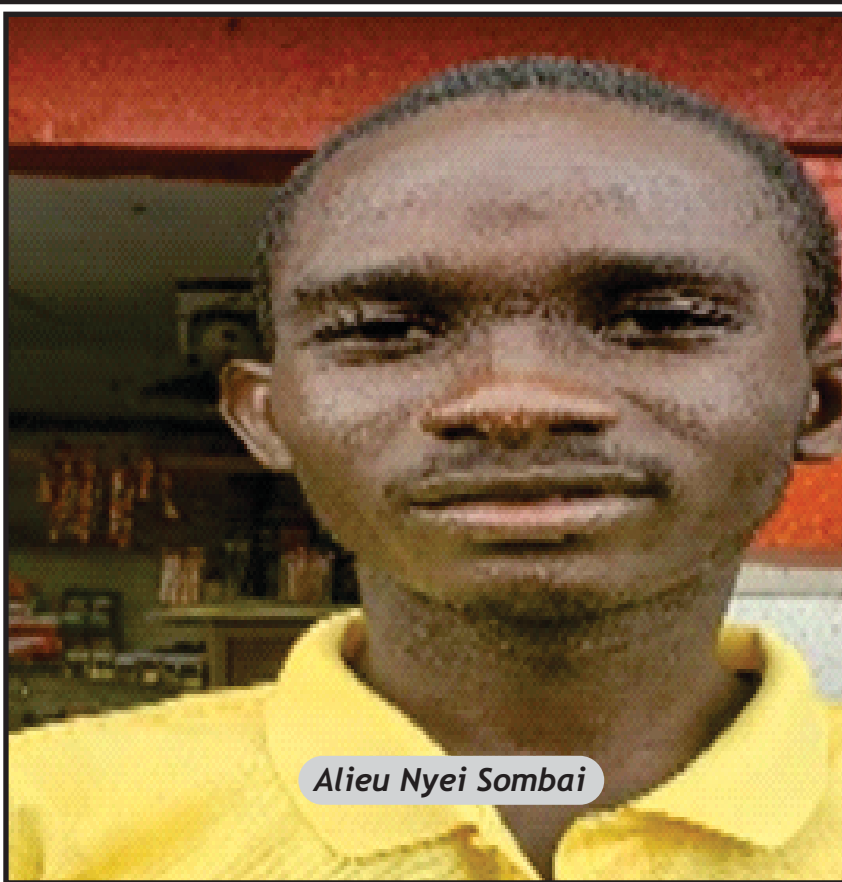
The NEW DAWN randomly asked some Monrovia residents to give their views on Tuesday's poll and what message they think it sends for the entire country. Read their comments, as compiled below.



Selekie Konneh

"The issue that has to do with peace awareness that was shared across the entire district helps a lot. But for Montserrado, it helped also in district#14 where something was expected to happen, but state security handled it more

"There are few things that I experienced during the voting process. We were actually moving from one center to another; as a supervisor, I was denied; I think the elections law says as long you are a supervisor, you are eligible. You have the right to enter and monitor the process for few minutes and we went there and were denied of entry.



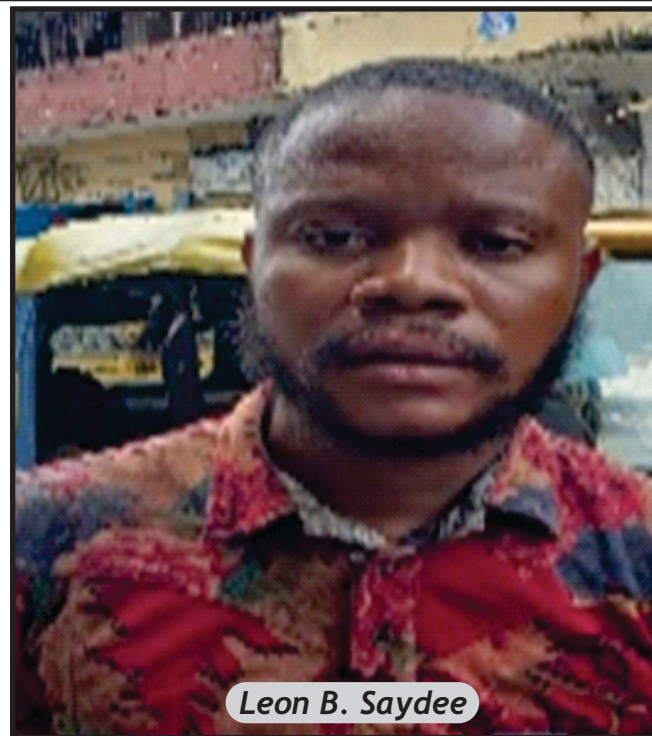
Alieu Nyei Sombai

They said because the counting process was about to start so it was closed. I experienced fear in district#14. During the night hours, we observed a group of men from AVC campaign team that came in three cars;

they all were matching in the street and when they met us at Methodist polling precinct, having conversation with some of the security, a guy called 'SB' pointed fingers at us, telling the security not to open

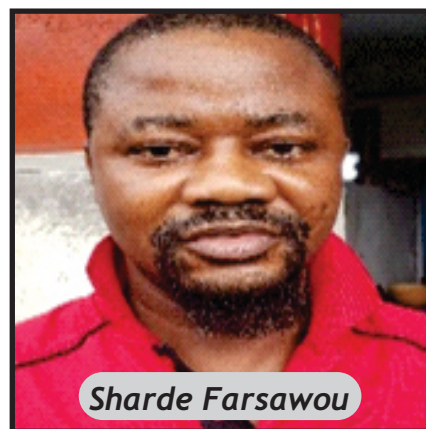
especially, incumbent Representative Abraham V. Corneh, who sent thugs in the street to misbehave and probably take away the ballot boxes. The people decided who they want to vote for. He decided not for it to happen, but God made it possible and the joint security was there. They were able to take away the thugs and sent them to the central prison. They arrested several of them, including campaign manager, 'SB' from Spanish block and the chief of office staff of AVC. They are currently in central prison, pending police investigation."

"First of all, let me say thanks to the National Elections Commission and the Government of Liberia for the voting process. Challenge were many, but we didn't experience major outbreak of violence across the country; thanks to NEC. We had top challenges experienced in the elections. In Sinoe County District#2 where ballot papers got wet and NEC had to postpone the poll. It is first time in our elections history. I saw strange faces in West



Leon B. Saydee

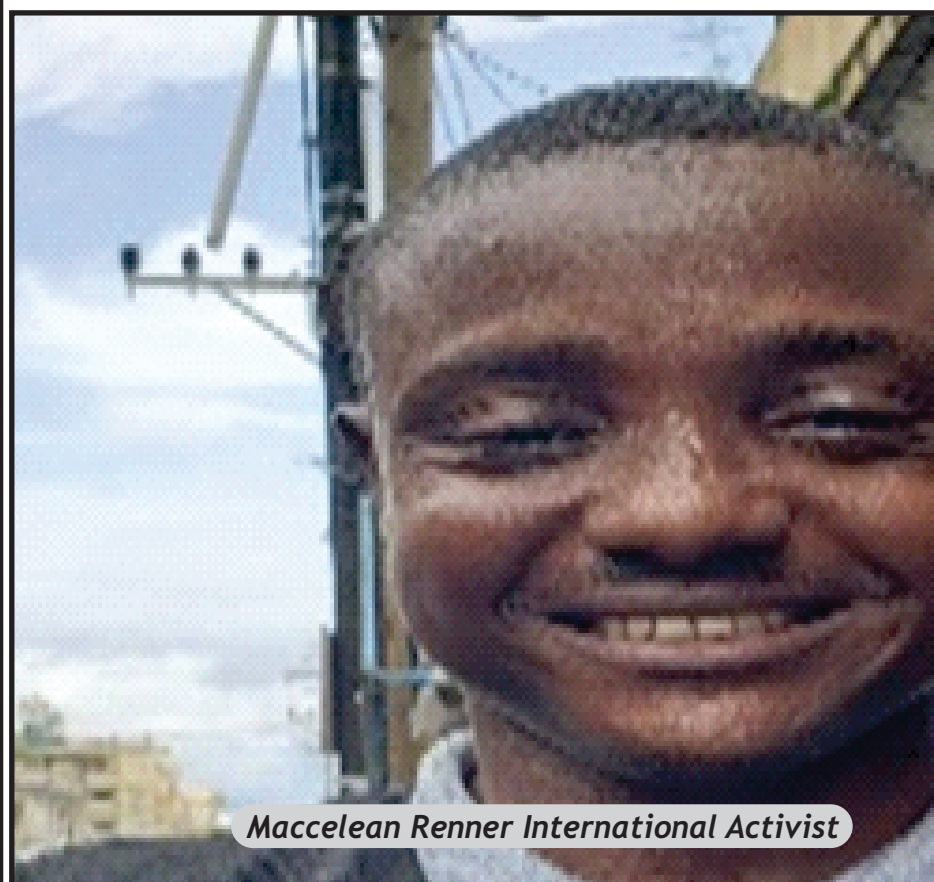
Point during the voting process of people that are not living in the district, but they went to cast their votes because they were paid by a female candidate in the district to go and vote there."



Sharde Farsawou

"The voting process was not really bad, but the main thing that made the process a little slow was identifying the main area to vote.

But late on, everything was smooth. We should keep the peace; all went well. We're only waiting to see who all will be victorious."



Macclean Renner International Activist

"The voting process was kind though in some places, and voting ended 6pm. Nobody got hurt and nobody die. It is a positive sign for us as Liberians. While we wait for the preliminary results, let us remain peaceful; Liberia is all we have, so let us keep the peace."

# Boakai, Weah battle for office

By Lincoln G. Peters

Liberia's opposition leader Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai and incumbent President George Manneh Weah have emerged so

transmitted through the data center at the NEC headquarters where they have been collated for announcement.

She said in Bomi County, 13 polling places out of 171

reports are progressively tallied reports.

From the three polling places collated so far, Madam Brown-Lansanah said Boakai obtained 576 votes amounting to 47.56%, while Weah got 547 votes amounting to 45.17%.

She reported that the CPP's Alexander B. Cummings got 39 votes constituting 3.22%, and Cllr. Gongloe of LPP obtained 8 votes amounting 0.66%.

ALCOP standard bearer Mr. Kamara got three votes amounting to 0.255.

Providing senatorial results for Bomi County, she said former House Speaker Alex J. Tyler, an independent candidate, got 1,599 votes amounting to 40.79%, while independent candidate Adama S. Dorley obtained 1,688 votes constituting 43.06%.

On the Bomi representative results from district number one, Madam Finda Lansanah, an independent candidate obtained 2,339 votes amounting to 59.58% out of the 13 polling places collated from the 50 polling places.

Mr. Sonnie Kamara got 1,402 votes amounting to 35.71%.

At the same time, she said of 3 polling places collated from 2008 polling places in Montserrado County, CDC's incumbent Senator Saah Joseph obtained 665 votes while UP's Wilmot Paye obtained 295 votes, amounting to 25.17%. For Montserrado County Electoral District #10, Madam Brown Lansanah said incumbent opposition Representative Yekeh Kolubah obtained 171 votes amounting to 44.65%, while CDC's Josephine Davies got 144 votes of the 3 polling places out of 129 polling places, constituting 37.60%.

Madam Brown-Lansanah continued that Liberian People's Party (LPP) standard bearer Cllr. Tiawan Saye Gongloe got 16 votes, amounting to 0.40%.

The NEC boss disclosed that the total valid votes from 13 polling places is 3,973, while invalid votes amounted to 153. She said the total votes were 4,126.

Regarding Montserrado County, Madam Brown-Lansanah provided preliminary results of 3 polling places of the 2008 polling places in Montserrado County amounting 0.15%.

She explained that the

# We are not deterred

By Lewis S. Teh

The ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) has urged its partisans and supporters to be calm, saying it is not deterred by preliminary election results being announced after Tuesday's polls.

During a press conference on Wednesday, 11 October 2023, the CDC urged its supporters not to be frightened by what it claimed was disinformation from the public.

The National Elections Commission began announcing preliminary election results Wednesday evening in which opposition leader Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai had a lead.

Boakai, the former ruling Unity Party (UP) presidential candidate, is battling incumbent President George Manneh Weah of the CDC for the presidency.

Both men wrestled for the nation's highest office in the 2017 polls, but Mr. Weah won the run-off as an opposition candidate at the time. Ahead of the NEC's official preliminary results, private and public-owned media

chairman will brief you on happening in the country," he added.

Koijee stated that if CDCians keep the peace, they will be the beneficiaries, or they will become the victims if they do not keep the peace.

To maintain the peace, he said the Joint Security must act fast, alleging that a media house could cause chaos in the country by spreading disinformation. Koijee provided no evidence about the alleged disinformation being spread. Meanwhile, local media houses have been reporting unofficial election results based on what they say is published at voting precincts by assigned NEC workers.

He noted that to protect the peace of Liberia, potential voters have made their decision, and the CDC is hoping that the police will be on their alert to curtail alleged misinformation and disinformation.

"We will not sit and watch as spectators while people are trying to plunge this country into chaos," Koijee further said. He specifically asked the police and the Ministry of



far as the archrivals in the battle for the presidency following Tuesday's polls.

The National Elections Commission (NEC) began announcing preliminary election results Wednesday evening, 11 October 2023 after the Tuesday polls for presidential and legislative seats.

Mr. Weah is seeking re-election against 19 opposition candidates. But it seems that the battle has now been narrow to just one opponent, former Vice President. The two politicians previously battled in the 2017 run-off that brought the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) to power in January 2018.

To the disappointment of many, NEC preliminary results released captured just few polling centers from two of Liberia's fifteen counties-Bomi and Montserrado showing a tight race between the two.

Releasing the preliminary results from Montserrado and Bomi Counties, NEC chairperson Madam Davidette Brown-Lasanah said that the results are progressively tallied reports.

According to the NEC boss, the results released are tallied results from magisterial offices which have been progressively



houses began announcing unofficial results from NEC voting precincts across several counties.

Up to Wednesday evening, the country remained calm as voters eagerly waited to hear from the electoral house about the outcome of the polls. Over 2.4m Liberians were qualified by the NEC to vote in the 2023 presidential and legislative elections. There were 20 presidential candidates. Addressing a press conference Wednesday, Monrovia Mayor and CDC Secretary General Jefferson Koijee said the CDC remains confident of winning the elections. "We want you our partisans to remain calm and peaceful; don't listen to the ... disinformation that [is] being spewed in the public, we are confident about these elections," said Mr. Koijee. "We ask you to assemble at the national headquarters where our national campaign manager and party

Justice to halt alleged misinformation on private media, Spoon Network. But Koijee did not explain what constituted the misinformation being spread by Spoon Network. Meanwhile, Koijee said the press conference was intended to extoll citizens for the huge turnout in the just-ended election. "We call on our young people, specifically the younger ones, to remain calm. Don't be carried away by the fake news in the public," Koijee lamented.

He insisted that he was confident that the CDC would win the elections. Mr. Koijee said he was not frustrated over the election results coming from Nimba and Lofa Counties, saying they didn't hinder any form of development in those counties. He maintained that President George Manneh Weah will continue to undertake development in those counties

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## Maryland County: Speaker Chambers Calls for Calm amidst Electoral Disturbances in Pleebo

House Speaker, Dr. Bhofal Chambers, has taken a commanding lead following the Tuesday, October 10, 2023, Presidential and Legislative elections in Maryland the ballots' site. Prior to this incident, specifically on elections day, it was observed that members of Mr. Anthony Williams's team were seeing harassing and reported act perpetrated by the Country Devil and its co-conspirators. Scores of supporters of Dr. Bhofal Chambers are pointing accusing fingers at



Speaker Bhofal Chambers

County. Speaker Chambers early lead, followed the tallying of results from his wall room. However, results from a precinct in Old Sodoken, comprising two polling places, were plagued with series of controversies which involved the appearance of a 'Country Devil' Wednesday morning leaving the CDC observers to flee for their lives. It was reported that the Country Devil, took over intimidating members of the CDC and Team Chambers, to the extent of threatening them with bodily harm and destruction of elections materials—the ballots. Reports say, the ballot boxes, are currently in the possession of the National Elections Commission in Harper, Maryland County. Officials of the CDC and Team Chambers have filed an official complaint against the candidate Anthony Williams who reportedly ordered scores of young people to take to the streets of Pleebo chanting undemocratic slogans. In the wake of these uprising, House Speaker Dr. Bhofal Chambers, encouraged his supporters to remain peaceful, bracing themselves for a victory celebration on Thursday, October 12, 2023.

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