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DATE	BUYING	SELLING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 07, 2023	LS187.2193/US\$1.00	LS189.0196/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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Cummings to lead CDC?

-as Koijee announces opposition negotiation



Prosecute sanctioned officials

P11

--Civil society groups petition LACC

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Continental News

Over 50 Civilians Killed in Ethiopia Attacks: Rights Body

More than 50 civilians were killed in attacks in Ethiopia last month, a human rights body said Wednesday, barely

splitting from the Oromo Liberation Front when it renounced armed struggle.

The human rights commission said another 30 people were killed

treatment," the commission said.

"In addition, nine members of the Hamo-Tokuma diocese of Lutheran church located in ... Qellem Wollega zone, Oromia region were killed by as of yet unidentified attackers on November 25," it said.

All the attacks took place between November 23 and 29, after talks in Tanzania to put an end to five years of insurrection ended November 21, with each side blaming the other for the breakdown.

On Saturday, local authorities in Oromia accused the OLA of carrying out "horrendous and brutal" attacks against "many civilians" in the Arsi zone, without giving further details about when those assaults occurred.

The OLA's strength, estimated at a few thousand men in 2018, has increased in recent years, although observers believe it is insufficiently organized or well-armed to pose a real threat to the government.

The Oromo ethnic group accounts for about a third of the 120 million inhabitants of Africa's second-most populous country.

The OLA has been accused by the government of orchestrating massacres, something the rebels deny. The authorities in turn are accused of waging an indiscriminate crackdown that has fueled Oromo resentment. VOA

Britain and Rwanda strike a new treaty in efforts to revive asylum plan blocked by UK courts

The governments of Britain and Rwanda signed a treaty on Tuesday that aims to revive a plan to send asylum-seekers to the East African country that has been blocked by U.K. courts.

British Home Secretary James Cleverly said the legally binding agreement signed with Rwanda Foreign Minister Vincent Biruta would "address all the issues" raised by the U.K. Supreme Court when it ruled last month that the controversial policy was unlawful.

The court said the plan was illegal because Rwanda is not a safe country for refugees. Britain's top court said asylum-seekers faced "a real risk of ill-treatment" and could be returned by Rwanda to the home countries they had fled.

The treaty includes a promise by Rwanda not to send asylum-seekers back to their home countries, even if their applications are refused.

migrants who cross the Channel to be sent to Rwanda, where their asylum claims would be processed and, if successful, they would stay. The U.K. government argues that the deportations will discourage others from making the risky sea crossing and break the business model of people-smuggling gangs.

Critics say it is both unethical and unworkable to send migrants to a country 6,400 kilometers (4,000 miles) away, with no chance of ever settling in the U.K.

Britain has already paid Rwanda at least 140 million pounds (\$177 million) under the agreement, but no one has yet been sent there amid the legal challenges.

Cleverly said Rwanda had not received "any funding linked to the signing of this treaty," but did not rule out paying more to help the African country meet its new commitments. The treaty says only that the sides shall make "financial arrangements in support of the relocation of individuals" under the deal.



two weeks after talks between the government and a rebel group from the country's most populous region ended without agreement.

The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission – an independent, state-affiliated body – said that fighters from the Oromo Liberation Army, or OLA, killed 17 people and burned down villages in Benishangul-Gumuz, which borders the Oromia region.

Classified as a "terrorist organization" by Addis Ababa, the OLA has been fighting the government since 2018 after

in Oromia's Arsi zone in a string of attacks by unidentified assailants, with the victims including multiple members of the same family.

"It's now known that the attackers killed the victims by lining them up after taking them out of their home, while some others were killed inside their home," the human rights commission said in its report.

"Among the deceased are an infant baby, pregnant women and an 80-year-old elderly person. ... An unknown number of people who sustained injuries are currently receiving medical

Gabon Coup Leader Visits Cameroon to Press for End to CEMAC Sanctions

Gabon's military leader, General Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, visited Cameroon on Wednesday, asking central African states to lift economic sanctions on his country before the 2025 elections.

When Nguema ousted President Ali Bongo Ondimba in a bloodless coup on August 30, economic sanctions were imposed on the country by CEMAC, the six-nation Central Africa Economic and Monetary Community, which condemned the unconstitutional power shift and suspended Gabon.

Nguema said Wednesday that he and Cameroonian President Paul Biya discussed the possibility of lifting economic sanctions before he transfers power to constitutional rule in October 2025. Nguema said he took power to save Gabon from a long rule that ruined the country, and he wants to ensure order is brought back to Gabon before handing power to civilians. Nguema's visit to

Cameroon ended a tour that has taken him to Chad, the Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea and the Republic of Congo since he seized power in August.

Jean Rene Oba, an international affairs lecturer at Omar Bongo University in Gabon, said Nguema has been able to convince central African leaders that a military coup was necessary to save Gabon from the Bongo family's long and autocratic rule that impoverished civilians and created political and ethnic tensions. "The president of the transition, Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, is totally mindful of the reality that here is no single

country on earth that can live in its own bubble in the 21st century, so he started a campaign explaining the legitimacy of the action he took on behalf of the Gabonese people and I think the arguments that he has been making are very powerful and that is why we could see he is so welcomed and understood," Oba said.

Nguema told several hundred Gabon civilians in Yaounde that he seized power to improve living conditions in their oil-producing nation because its citizens remained poor during the 56-year reign of Ali Bongo Ondimba and his father, Omar Bongo Ondimba. VOA



Gabon's military leader, General Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, right, speaks after his meeting with Democratic Republic of the Congo President Felix Tshisekedi, in Kinshasa



"We feel very strongly that this treaty addresses all of the issues raised by their lordships in the Supreme Court and we have worked very closely with our Rwandan partners to ensure that it does so," Cleverly said in Kigali, the Rwandan capital.

The Rwanda plan is central to the Conservative government's self-imposed goal of stopping unauthorized asylum-seekers arriving on small boats across the English Channel. Though Britain receives fewer asylum applications than countries such as Italy, France or Germany, thousands of migrants from around the world travel to northern France each year in hopes of crossing the English Channel. More than 27,300 have done that so far this year.

Britain and Rwanda struck a deal in April 2022 for some

For years, human rights groups have accused Rwanda's government of cracking down on perceived dissent and keeping tight control on many aspects of life, from jailing critics to keeping homeless people off the streets of Kigali. The government denies it.

Biruta said Rwanda had been unfairly criticized "by international organizations, by the media, by courts."

"It is not helpful for all of us to criticize a country like Rwanda which is contributing to a solution while we are not even addressing the root causes ... which produce those refugees," he told reporters in Kigali. The British government says the new treaty will give it the basis to pass a law declaring Rwanda a safe destination.

That legislation is due to be published within days, but will likely take weeks to be approved by Parliament – and the Rwanda plan could still be subject to further legal challenges. AP

EDITORIAL

A subpoena is not an indictment

It has been observed in many instances that a subpoena from the court, inviting somebody to appear often leave people worrying and panicking, as if they have been indicted for a crime, which often proves the contrary. A subpoena is nothing to worry about as long as one is convinced of his or her innocence and can prove beyond all reasonable doubts.

So many people have been at one time or another subpoenaed by the court and have appeared, testified before the judge and leave. Testifying in court simply means telling the judge all that you know about a particular issue, saying nothing but the truth and the whole truth.

A recent example of a court subpoena involved Unity Party Standard Bearer and President-elect, Joseph Nyumah Boakai, during the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP's) rigmarole that saw former Presidential candidate Alexander B. Cummings, taken to court for allegedly tempering with the CPP Framework Document.

Ambassador Boakai, in adherence to the subpoena, appeared in court and testified all that he knew about the document and left. Period. The court had nothing else to do with him so he walked out a free man and continued his political sojourn that eventually saw him officially pronounced as President-Elect, of the Republic of Liberia.

About a week ago, Criminal Court 'A' Judge, Roosevelt Z. Willie, in the ongoing murder trial of former Chief Justice Gloria Musu Scott, ordered the Clerk of Court to do a subpoena Ad Testificandum Decu Tecum to Police Inspector General, Patrick Sudue, to produce the report of April 25, 2022 on incident of Justice Scott's missing license plate, and the ledger testified to on Monday, November 27, 2023, by Col. Sudue's representative, Detective Curtis B. Koffa.

Subsequently, Judge Willie has granted defense's application for subpoena Decu Tecum and Ad Testificandum to be served on Monrovia City Mayor Jefferson Koijee to present to the court, Mr. Varlee Telleh along with his (Telleh's) numbers that were used from 21st - 25th February, 2023, and to also testify to said numbers as to whom he (Telleh) called within the timeframe mentioned. That's what it means: to present the individual being requested in court along with the relevant information asked for.

However, it is important that the person being subpoenaed comply by appearing in person and testifying to or answering all questions to avoid being held in contempt for disobeying court order.

On the other hand, a criminal indictment is a formal accusation of a crime, usually a felony, by a grand jury that contains notice of the criminal charges against an individual and initiates the criminal case. Besides, an indictment is a way of protecting the accused from being prosecuted without enough evidence or proof. It is also a way of allowing the prosecution to proceed without a judge or defense attorney's involvement.

For example, an indictment was unsealed against jailed former Liberian President Charles Ghankay Taylor by the UN-backed Special Court of Sierra Leone, while Mr. Taylor, then still a sitting President, had gone to Ghana to initiate peace talks.

However, following the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA), cessation of hostility by warring factions and election of a democratic government in Liberia, Taylor was subsequently brought back from Nigeria and dragged before the Special Court in Freetown, Sierra Leone where he pleaded not guilty after charges were read. The rest is history.

But between the two, an indictment is more grievous and weighty than a subpoena. What is important though, is that they both must be respected in accordance with law, regardless of the status of persons being sought by the court.

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COMMENTARY

By Amos Wemanya

How to Make Green Hydrogen Work for Africa

NAIROBI - Efforts to build the nascent green-hydrogen industry in Africa are underway, most notably in Namibia's Tsau Khaeb National Park. In May, the Namibian government signed a feasibility and implementation agreement with Hyphen Hydrogen Energy for a green-hydrogen production and supply project close to the coastal town of Lüderitz.

In June, the government agreed to take a 24% equity stake in the \$10 billion project, whose value is nearly equal to Namibia's GDP.

Once fully operational, the project is expected to produce 350,000 metric tons of green hydrogen per year and create 3,000 permanent jobs (in addition to 15,000 temporary construction jobs). It could position Namibia as a major producer of low-cost green hydrogen. But important questions remain about the project's local value addition and how to avoid the creation of another extractive industry.

For decades, African countries have invested billions of dollars in fossil-fuel energy systems, and yet 600 million people on the continent remain without access to electricity. Even as global warming destroys ecosystems, undermines food security, and worsens water scarcity, Africa still relies heavily on fossil fuels; renewables account for only about 21% of electricity generation. But the rapidly escalating climate crisis implies an urgent need to reorient the continent's energy system away from oil and gas.

A rapid rollout of renewable energy could be transformative, helping Africa meet the twin challenges of climate change and underdevelopment. But to ensure electricity access for all, such systems must be environmentally sound and socially inclusive. Ironically, the continent's limited energy infrastructure means that African countries can leapfrog past fossil fuels (thus avoiding stranded assets as the world shifts to renewable energy) and build a green economy that is based on renewables and designed to meet their needs.

Low-cost green hydrogen can expand energy access on the continent and accelerate the shift toward renewables. And by creating local value chains, generating green jobs, and transferring technology and knowledge, it could also contribute enormously to the development of producer countries.

But, to reap these benefits, the development of green hydrogen in Africa must primarily serve African interests. That means the processes and policies for generating and using green hydrogen must comply with the standards set out in the Sustainable Development Goals, the

ambitious global targets introduced by the United Nations in 2015. They must also meet the objectives of the Paris climate agreement and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

Such projects must also maintain ecosystem integrity, promote decent work and economic prosperity, boost social inclusion and cohesion, and respect human rights. Crucially, these objectives can be met only by gaining broad public acceptance: the free, prior, and informed consent and participation of potentially affected communities.

Good governance and transparency in developing green hydrogen could change power relations between the developed world and African countries. Instead of falling into the trap of "green colonialism," these countries could build equal partnerships that address head-on issues of equity and ownership, inclusion, resource competition, and displacement.

To be sure, green-hydrogen projects pose significant risks. Chief among these are land-use conflicts, forced resettlement, expropriation, and other potential human-rights violations. There are also environmental concerns, including the fact that production requires large amounts of freshwater. Given that one in three Africans faces water scarcity, developing this energy source could compound the problem, and may even cause or exacerbate conflicts, especially in Africa's driest regions.

Moreover, large-scale plants, as well as export infrastructure, could damage fragile ecosystems, destroy protected areas, and endanger marine life. This is especially true if desalinated seawater is used in hydrogen production, and the resulting brine is released, untreated, into local bodies of water.

But the biggest concern is that green hydrogen produced in Africa could be exported elsewhere.

This would defeat the purpose of developing renewable-energy capacity on the continent. Instead of expanding electricity access and boosting climate resilience, this new industry would merely be the latest in a long line of energy injustices. Moreover, it would be wasteful: converting hydrogen into derivatives like ammonia - which are more suitable for transport - can result in 13-25% energy loss, while transportation itself requires high energy inputs.

Green hydrogen can fuel economic growth and prosperity for producer countries. But to realize the potential of a hydrogen-powered economy, African leaders must ensure that the industry is structured to achieve a just energy transition on the continent and serve the needs of local communities, not foreign interests.

OP-ED

By María Fernanda Espinosa,
Rishikesh Ram Bhandary

The Global South's Debt Crisis Is Thwarting Climate Ambition

MADRID/BOSTON - This year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), currently underway in Dubai, will be decisive for the Loss and Damage Fund established at COP27, because governments must agree on how the new fund will be operationalized and financed. But equally important is the first global stocktake (GST), which will assess countries' progress toward achieving the goals of the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

A preliminary report on the GST, released in October, is underwhelming, while the most recent World Energy Outlook from the International Energy Agency found that global carbon dioxide levels have yet to peak. This implies that if we want to achieve our climate targets, we must fast-track the clean-energy transition and urgently slash greenhouse-gas emissions. But while this will undoubtedly require closing the massive climate financing gap, policymakers must overcome widespread sovereign-debt distress.

The Debt Relief for a Green and Inclusive Recovery Project, using data from the UN Development Programme and the International Monetary Fund, estimates that 69 countries need immediate debt relief, of which 61 have at least \$812 billion in debt that must be restructured across all creditor classes. Moreover, an IMF working paper calculated that only seven of 29 low-income countries that submitted estimates of their adaptation needs had sufficient fiscal space to meet those needs and achieve their emissions-reduction targets, also known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs). With debt-service costs set to increase in 2024, many countries will spend more on interest payments than on health or education.

As long as the debt crisis in the Global South grinds on, many emerging-market and developing economies will be unable to invest in gender-sensitive low-carbon development. This, in turn, would make these countries more vulnerable to climate shocks and fiscal instability, and would also foreclose the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius, the target set by the Paris climate agreement.

To address the debt-climate nexus at COP28 and beyond, policymakers should focus on three objectives: a more inclusive and efficient debt-restructuring process; more concessional finance; and expansion of the size and remit of multilateral development banks (MDBs).

For starters, the G20's Common Framework must be reformed to ensure that all climate-vulnerable countries, including middle-income countries, are eligible for debt treatment. While the Common Framework has started providing relief, recent debt-restructuring deals have been modest in scope and came at the cost of protracted negotiations that only exacerbated the problem. Future deals must ensure significant relief measures that enable countries to kickstart economic growth and achieve climate goals, rather than merely returning them to previous levels of austerity or helping them stave off the next crisis.

Second, the need for more concessional finance has never been clearer. In October, at the annual meetings of the World Bank and the IMF in Marrakesh, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva noted that interest rates were in a "higher-for-longer era." This comes at the same time that countries must accelerate the deployment of renewables, which are highly sensitive to the cost of capital. Moreover, climate vulnerability has been found to drive up the cost of debt and restrict access to financing.

But there is ample room to scale up concessional finance. From 2021 to 2022, low-cost project-level debt and grants accounted for only 11% of total climate finance, according to the Climate Policy Initiative. The World Bank, as part of its "Evolution Roadmap" initiative, has indicated that it will expand concessional lending beyond the poorest countries to fund necessary climate investments. Other MDBs should emulate this approach, and their shareholders should inject more capital to facilitate it, so that governments can access affordable financing that does not crowd out other priorities.

Moreover, MDBs must become bigger and better-equipped to supply the low-cost, long-term finance that climate-vulnerable countries need. While the World Bank has taken a step in this direction by implementing balance-sheet-optimization measures to increase the scale of its lending by \$50 billion over the next ten years, it is not enough. Other MDBs should devise concrete plans for capital increases and, when presenting it to their boards, outline how a fresh injection of funds will enable them to provide low-cost finance to developing countries and make bolder bets on transformational investments.

In addition to increasing their lending capacity, MDBs must reform the debt architecture. For example, the World Bank has advanced a debt-pause clause in new and existing lending agreements that permits 45 small islands and states facing qualifying events to postpone their interest and principal payments. But loans of all borrowing countries should include such a clause. It would also be in the interest of MDB shareholders to improve the debt-restructuring process: an extended debt crisis simply means that MDBs will need to provide concessional finance for a longer period, given that it is tied to debt indicators.

The GST at COP28 is sure to find that the world is falling far short of the Paris agreement's targets. Accelerated action - across climate finance, global policy coordination, and renewable-energy deployment - is needed, but high levels of debt stand in the way. Tellingly, Egypt, the host of last year's COP, explicitly noted in its revised NDC that debt-service payments were limiting the country's climate ambition.

G20 governments and international financial institutions must acknowledge that a severe debt overhang could worsen the climate crisis. Mobilizing financial resources on an unprecedented scale, while important, should be complemented by measures to address heavy sovereign-debt burdens. One hopes that by forcing policymakers to confront the world's dangerously slow progress toward net-zero emissions at COP28, the GST will generate the political will and trust necessary to tackle the interlocking problems of debt distress and global warming.

OPINION

By Kenneth Rogoff

Higher Interest Rates Are Here to Stay

NEW YORK - Even with the recent partial retreat in long-term real and nominal interest rates, they remain well above the ultra-low levels to which policymakers had grown accustomed, and they are likely to stay at such levels even as inflation retreats. It is now past time to revisit the widely prevailing "free lunch" view of government debt.

The idea that interest rates would be low forever seemed to support the view that any concern about debt was an endorsement of "austerity." Many came to believe that governments should run large deficits during recessions and only slightly smaller deficits in normal times. No one seemed concerned with the possible risks, in particular to inflation and interest rates. The left championed the notion that government debt could be used to expand social programs, going beyond what could be generated by reducing military spending, while those on the right seemed to believe that taxes exist only to be cut.

The most misguided approach involved using central banks to purchase government debt, which appeared costless when short-term interest rates were zero. This idea is at the core of Modern Monetary Theory and "helicopter money." In recent years, even prominent macroeconomists have floated the idea of having the US Federal Reserve write off government debt after soaking it up through quantitative easing, a seemingly simple solution to any potential sovereign-debt problem.

But this approach assumed that even if global real interest rates rose, any increase would be gradual and temporary. The possibility that a sharp rise in interest rates would dramatically increase interest payments on existing debt, including debt held by central banks as bank reserves, was simply dismissed. But here we are: the Fed, which previously paid zero interest on these reserves, is now paying more than 5%.

Aside from a few notable exceptions, those who championed the notion that debt is a free lunch have not acknowledged the likelihood of a new reality. At a recent conference, I listened to a well-known financial commentator who had been a staunch advocate of the "lower forever" narrative and seemed unaware that it had been thoroughly debunked. When pressed, they conceded that if interest rates do not quickly revert to the ultra-low levels of the 2010s, budget deficits might matter after all. But they were reluctant to admit that the existing debt overhang could pose a problem, as this would impugn their previous endorsements of spendthrift fiscal policies.

Similarly, in a recent paper about the record levels of global debt, presented to the world's leading central bankers at this year's Jackson Hole conference, Serkan Arslanalp and Barry Eichengreen appeared reticent to discuss the implications of the current debt overhang or the connection between high government debt and sluggish growth in countries like Japan and Italy.

To be sure, the next recession, whenever it occurs, will likely lead to a significant decrease in interest rates, potentially offering a temporary respite to the wildly overleveraged US commercial real-estate market, where the mantra today is "stay alive until '25." If property owners can endure another year of falling rents and surging financing costs, the thinking goes, a sharp drop in interest rates in 2025 could stem the tide of red ink threatening to drown their businesses.

But even if inflation declines, interest rates will likely remain higher for the next decade than they were in the decade following the 2008 financial crisis. This reflects a variety of factors, including soaring debt levels, deglobalization, increased defense spending, the green transition, populist demands for income redistribution, and persistent inflation. Even demographic shifts, often cited as a rationale for perpetually low interest rates, may affect developed countries differently as they increase spending to support rapidly aging populations.

While the world can certainly adapt to higher interest rates, the transition is still ongoing. The shift could be particularly challenging for European economies, given that ultra-low interest rates have been the glue holding the eurozone together. The European Central Bank's "whatever it takes" bailout policies appeared costless when interest rates were near zero, but it is unclear whether the bloc can survive future crises if real interest rates remain high.

As I have previously argued, Japan will struggle to move from its "zero forever" interest-rate policies, as its government and financial system have grown accustomed to treating debt as cost-free. In the United States, the commercial real-estate sector's vulnerabilities, together with increased borrowing, could trigger another wave of inflation. Moreover, while major emerging economies have managed to cope with high interest rates so far, they face enormous fiscal pressures.

In this new global environment, policymakers and economists, even those who previously belonged to the "lower forever" camp, may need to reassess their beliefs in light of current market realities. While it is feasible to expand social programs or boost military capabilities without running large deficits, doing so without raising taxes is not costless. We are likely to find out the hard way that it never was.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

How And Why President Weah's Failures In Leadership Ended His 2nd Term Bid

By S. Karweaye

Judging by the high spate of insecurity, shrank economy, and endemic corruption in public affairs, among several other vices pervading the country at the time President George Weah is fighting for re-election, Liberia can be rightly said to have drifted inexorably into a failed state.

The point being made here is that nowhere and no one is safe under the Weah government, except probably the heavily guarded so-called public officials. Six years of his leadership had not improved the national economy either; rather, it collapsed. The national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), representing the total value of all economic activities in the country, had nosed-dived and remained down, pushing the country into almost a state of permanent recession throughout his regime. Depletion of our foreign reserve and humongous debts with no productivity combined to send the value of the Liberian dollar plummeting to an exchange rate of LD 188 to \$1 at the time Weah was seeking re-election, and the resulting inflation sent many Liberians below the poverty line into a state of deprivation and destitution. In 2023, Liberia was listed as the tenth poorest country in the world.

The same failure was also evident in the fight against corruption. With the appointment of Ndubusi Nwabudike as the head of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC), the key anti-corruption agency, in contravention of the law, the fight against corruption started on a wrong footing under Weah. On account of reports accusing Nwabudike of obtaining his Liberian citizenship illegally, thus denting his moral standing to prosecute the war, the Senate declined to confirm his nomination as required by law.

Still, President Weah kept him in office for months, thus calling to question the sincerity of the administration's commitment to fight corruption. Not surprisingly, Nwabudike himself ended up being further accused by Senator Darius Dillion which led to the Senate investigation on his citizenship which resulted in his resignation as the LACC head. In effect, the twin evils of bribery and corruption continued having a field day under the Weah-led CDC regime. Hence, all over the country, persons on corruption charges were roaming about free. Many had even bribed themselves back into public offices either in elective or appointive capacities.

There were also widespread outrageous open displays of stupendous wealth by several serving public officers, hitherto living from hand to mouth, suggesting corrupt enrichments in the Weah government. Under Weah Liberia is ranked amongst the top most corrupt countries on earth. As it is, Nwabudike's deputy at the LACC Kanio Gbala was allegedly embroiled in a corruption scandal at the National Port Authority. Aside from these core issues, many other aspects of our national life similarly deteriorated under the Weah administration, the principal of which is ethical decay. What was morally wrong, had become politically right. But one needs not list instances, for they were endless! Right under our noses, we helplessly watched Liberia drift into a failed state. This is the stark reality that must be admitted by the Weah regime.

Weah ran for office and was elected president on a set of principles of trust and hope. In 2017, the overriding factor in Weah's campaign was "Change For Hope", on his assumed integrity, incorruptibility, forthrightness, and the magic wand to deliver! The presidential campaign was mainly about Weah the person - not his policies, nor his programs, nor even his political party, but Weah the man and his promises - that had received the drumming endorsement of the Liberian people, particularly north and southeasterners.

To virtually everyone in the southeastern region, Weah was the only man, and therefore the only hope, for the people. That was why a sagacious political strategist would draw up a sophisticated strategic blueprint after his 2-failed attempts without asking for something in return. That was why young and old people would sit out in the scorching sun at the Coalition of Democratic Change (CDC) headquarters for a whole day just to see and listen to the man Weah without expecting anything back from him. That was why poor wheelbarrow pushers, nail cutters, shoe shiners, motorcyclists, taxi drivers, hewers of woods, and fetchers of water, literally the wretched of Liberia, would starve themselves to buy their shirts and print Weah's photo without any hope of ever meeting him. And that was why someone would trek from New Kru Town, Logan Town, Clara Town, and West Point to Sinkor in a joyous celebration of Weah's electoral victory without a price tag.

So, when Weah won the contest and was sworn in as president, it was expected he would solve the numerous problems of the country. Other than solving problems of individuals' survival, there were also daunting challenges threatening the very survival of the nation itself that President Weah was equally expected to resolve. In his inaugural speech, Weah summed these concerns up into three - corruption,

economy, and development partners. In other words, the resolution of these three would resolve both the individual and collective developmental challenges of the nation; to create a sense of belonging and forge functional unity in a desperate and despairing nation torn apart by cries of marginalization and agitations tendencies.

Given that President Weah came to office with the confidence and goodwill of Liberians behind him, it was sad that, as seen above, he woefully failed in his leadership and lost the people's confidence and goodwill in the last six years. So how and why did he fail as president? To me, the simple and truthful answer to this twin question is that President Weah just lacked leadership acumen, which he displayed in seven discernible ways.

First, as president, Weah was deficient in the effective acquisition, control, and utilization of state authority to deliver valuable leadership. After being sworn into office he failed to immediately appoint officials who would take control and charge in the utilization of state power timely, resulting in a period of lull in the polity and creating doubts in people's minds to his leadership ability. It was after petulant whispers started becoming loud reproaches that a handful of Advisers, Ministers to Government, and a couple of personal aides were appointed. Consequently, when at last he constituted his cabinet, he ended up with a kakistocratic team that further plummeted the situation. Thus, from the beginning, Weah had sown the first seed of leadership failure by neglecting this critical aspect in the exercise of state power as an important element of governance. Since then, he lost the momentum and never regained it.



Second, there was an incapacity to provide strong and decisive leadership by President Weah. Even though the regime's apologists always blamed his failings on the enormity of the misdeeds of past regimes, COVID-19, or the dislocated structures of our society, the real reason was the lack of leadership's firmness, confidence, and direction from the president himself. Almost any problem can be successfully resolved if there is effective leadership at the top. All that is required is the force of personal leadership, and this was manifestly lacking in President Weah. He is a passive leader - one who allowed

problems to be solved themselves, refusing to intervene even when it was necessary! Given that the resolution of the country's problems is the responsibility of the government, it therefore ultimately required direction and prodding of the leadership at the Executive Mansion. That entailed the president taking full charge and responsibility for all acts and outcomes of whatever events the government set in motion. Where this is lacking, then there is a problem. And this is simply absent in President Weah's leadership.

Third, even in organizing collective decisions, President Weah exhibited other serious deficits. Throughout the six years, there was a lack of harmony and coordination among the various segments and agencies of the executive organ he headed. There were conflicts and acrimony among members of the government that affected the regime's general output. In all these, the president abandoned his appointees to thrash out issues and settle differences and disagreements themselves, with minimum or no intervention from him. This was a wrong approach to leadership, as harmony and cooperation are benchmarks for successful government, and the role of the leader in ensuring these conditions is essential.

Fourth, throughout his reign, President Weah had little value for ideas and innovations. The essence of collective decision-making in a government is to aggregate various ideas from cabinet members to evolve the best policy option for the problem at hand. As we all know, there are plenty of good ideas out there if only they were listened to and harnessed into use by the leadership. But the president is a non-listening leader. This explains his rebuffing of all genuine and well-meaning calls on him to amend his ways on certain national issues. He even alienated the ideas of his key appointees through his misconceived directive to his Cabinet Ministers to pass through his Chief of Staff (at the time Nathaniel McGill) in dealing, communicating, and meeting with him. This was a bureaucratic process that delivered, but mediocrity. A serious leader must evaluate and guide first-hand the initiatives of his appointees.

However, in Weah's disorderly style, an appointee became responsible for evaluating and deciding on policy initiatives of other appointees. This was not only an unnecessary bureaucratic bottleneck created but the process also indeed diminished the zeal, confidence, and energy of the appointees concerned, ultimately hindering the general policy outputs of his government. Naturally, this lack of direct evaluation and guidance of the president on the initiatives of his

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SOS Liberia and partners prepare 5-year plan

SOS Children's Villages in Liberia and partners have embarked on a 5-year National Strategy

situation of children across the country is not at the level it should be.

He notes that poverty remains high amid low nutritional diet, poor healthcare, lack of quality education, while climate change poses more risk to children than ever before.

He explains that in their engagement with children and stakeholders in the last few months, discussions centered on protection, education, empowerment and sanitation, amongst others. He says SOS Liberia took into account their concerns and is resolved in continuously working with communities, partners and stakeholders to effect change.

"These concerns should lay the foundation of what is expected of us in the coming five years, and it is upon all of us here to ensure that their voices are heard and acted upon", he underscores. Director Ndione reveals that institution has an ambitious agenda that includes advocacy, partnership for quality care, repositioning its brand in Liberia, and they can more

effectively champion the rights of every child especially, children who have lost parental care or at the risk of losing it.

"SOS Children's Villages is an international childcare and child protection organization whose vision is a world where every child belongs to a family and grows with love, respect, and security." He adds.

He further explains that they have consistently aligned their work with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - mainly goal1: No poverty; 3: Good health and well-being; 4: Quality Education; 5: Gender equality; 8: Decent work and economic Growth; 10: Reduced Inequalities; and 17: Partnerships for the goals.

He is confident that together with partners, they all can work to achieve the SDG targets with the greatest impact for children and young people as well as support the country's national development agenda. "We have invited you all here today to produce an ambitious but yet a quality strategic plan. If we do it together well - we will create something powerful together that will lead to an excellent 5-

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51st Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council holds in Abuja

The 51st Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council (MSC) at the Ministerial Level successfully opens in Abuja, Nigeria, on Wednesday, December 06, 2023. This high-level meeting prioritised discussions on pivotal regional concerns concerning peace, security, and development.

The attendance at the meeting reflected the seriousness of the matters to be discussed notably peace, security, and stability in the West African region.

In his welcome address, Dr. Omar Alieu Touray, the President of the ECOWAS Commission highlighted the gravity of the political, security and humanitarian challenges experienced in some member states.

President Touray said the region is confronted with

timetables have been implemented at varied paces amid worsening security situations.

He disclosed that the attempted coup d'état in Niger has further distracted attention from the support to these transition processes as the transition countries seek to forge a solidarity with the military authorities in the Republic of Niger, thereby creating an impression of a divide between them and ECOWAS.

Dr. Touray also stressed the impact of unconstitutional change and coup d'e'tat as drivers of insecurity in the region noting that there were 1503 incidences of terrorist attacks recorded in Burkina Faso from January 1st to October 22, 2023, 1044 in Mali and 376 in Niger since the coup.

The humanitarian consequences of insecurity have



complex security and governance challenges, including terrorism and violent extremism, inter-communal and armed conflicts, transnational organized crime, democratic reversals, and dire humanitarian situations.

He added that the region continued to witness the menace of military coup d'état and its negative impact on political governance, peace, and security.

Presenting an update on the transition roadmaps and timetables agreed with the transition authorities in Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso for a rapid and peaceful restoration of constitutional order, Dr. Touray said that these

been dire as seen in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger where a total of 4.8 million people face food insecurity, 2.4 million people are internally displaced and close to 9000 schools remain closed.

The Chairperson of the Mediation and Security Council and Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E. Yusuf Maitama Tuggar encouraged the Ministers to proffer solutions to address the current challenges, with a view to engendering sustainable peace and stability in the region.

The MSC precedes the meeting of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers scheduled to hold in Abuja from November 6 to 7, 2023, where the report of the meeting will be adopted.

Center for Legal Aid ends conference

The Center for Legal Aid Support Services (CLASS) has ended a National Legal Aid Conference in Monrovia, adopting the exercise as an annual national event.

The first session of the conference was held on 30th November at the James A. A. Pierre Judicial Institute at the Temple of Justice, bringing together legal practitioners, including Prosecuting Lawyers from the Ministry of Justice, Public Defenders lawyers in private practice and magistrates.

Also in attendance were representatives of United Nations agencies in Liberia, including UN Women, UNDP, UN Office on Human Rights and the International Development Law Organization (IDLO).

The Chief Executive Officer of CLASS, Atty. George N. King, lauded participants for attending the conference and urged them to be aware that Legal Aid is a missing link of the Liberia Judiciary. He reflected on the adopted resolution of the 2022 National Legal Aid Conference, outlining successes and challenges.

Speaking on the Concept of Legal Aid and its Application in Liberia's Jurisdiction as it

relates to Human Rights and Access to Justice, Atty. King emphasized that legal aid is not a charity but a right under the law consistent with Article 21(I) of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia, Chapter 65 of the Civil Procedure Law of Liberia which speaks to indigent representation and Chapter 2 of the Criminal Procedure Law of Liberia which outlines the rights of accused persons and the obligation of the state to observe and protect those rights.

Two guest lecturers from international circles appeared at the event. The first was Drew Engel, the INL Senior Judicial Advisor embedded in the Prosecution Department of the Ministry of Justice in Liberia. He spoke on the topics legal aid and pretrial detention from his experiences in the US,

Europe, and Asia, and then shared observations about legal aid and pretrial detention challenges faced in Liberia and proposed some possible solutions.

Mr. Engel reiterated that an accused person has right to counsel and speedy trial, and that said rights are guaranteed by national and international laws, but that justice actors, especially Defense Attorneys, are needed to ensure that the state fully observed and complied with those rights.

He said the state should either timely prosecute or dismiss charges against pretrial detainees rather than unjustified delay.

The Justice and Security Officer at UNDP Liberia, Madam Lisa Karlsson, speaking on the

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Cross section of participants of the 2023 National Legal Aid Conference

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Outgoing World Bank Country Director honored for valuable contribution to Liberia's growth and development

World Bank outgoing Country Director for Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone, Mr. Pierre Frank Laporte, has been outlining progress made by Liberia during his tenure with



Mr. Pierre Frank

single digits, and the exchange rate observed a notable strengthening." Country Director Laporte thanked his Excellency President George M. Weah, for the excellent support that he has given to the World Bank and to him as Country Director, these past four and a half years.

Important macro-fiscal as well as structural reforms were realized in recent years, which the World Bank supported. "I know how much his Excellency President Weah appreciates and values that collaboration that we have experienced over that time. Today's event is a manifestation of this strong partnership that the World Bank and Liberia enjoy.

The World Bank executive made these remarks during a farewell reception tendered in his honor by the Government of Liberia at the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Ministerial Complex in Monrovia on Tuesday, December 5, 2023.

The reception was attended by Finance and Development Planning Minister Samuel Tweah, Executive Governor of the Central Bank of Liberia J. Aloysius Tarlue, ministers of Health, Agriculture, including the Chief Executive Officer of Liberia Electricity Corporation, Monie Captan and other senior officials of the Liberian Government who praised the World Bank for its valuable contribution to the development of Liberia.

support of the World Bank. He pointed out that macroeconomic stability improved significantly to the extent that Liberia was able to cope with the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic with much more resilience than most countries in the region.

According to Bank's outgoing Country Director Pierre, "we also saw the drop in inflation from double to

through a series of budget operations ranging from US\$20 million to US\$65 million annually, he emphasized.

These reforms, according to Mr. Laporte, were at times painful, courageous but imperative. He commended the Government's courage in implementing such difficult but key reforms, which have been critical in maintaining economic stability.

EcoMedia applauds volunteers cleaning Monrovia

EcoMedia Development Initiative commends a group of Liberian volunteers, cleaning the streets of Monrovia ahead of the festive season and the impending inauguration of a new administration.

The initiative, aptly named "Rescue Children for City Ordinance," boasts approximately 1,800 volunteers actively engaged in clearing debris, unclogging drainages, and eliminating piles of waste across various communities in Monrovia, said Charles S. Kermie, the group's vice leader.

Its leader, Allen O. Gweh, emphasized the urgency of enhancing Monrovia's appearance, citing the current untidiness of the city. He says recognizing this need, they mobilized volunteers to contribute towards revitalizing the capital of Africa's oldest independent country.

Another official, Darlington Davis, notes that the project, which commenced on November 20, is slated to span an initial three-month duration within Monrovia. Additionally, there

are intentions to expand nationwide, aspiring to transform Liberia into a pristine and beautiful nation.

In an official statement released in Monrovia, EcoMedia lauded these cleanliness and sanitation endeavors as an invaluable service to the people of Liberia, warranting wholehearted support and recognition.

Danicus Kaihenneh Sengbeh, Executive Director and Founder of EcoMedia, expressed delight in partnering with the volunteers to promote environmental consciousness, cleanliness, and protection.

He said EcoMedia, a newly founded initiative, endeavors to utilize the influence of media in fostering awareness, education, and engagement with the public, government bodies, corporations, and other

institutions towards proactive climate change actions and environmental preservation.

Sengbeh, a seasoned media and communication expert, underlined the NGO's commitment to bridging the gap between media, environmental awareness, and practical climate action. He emphasized the objective of instigating a transformative shift in public attitudes by influencing policies, nurturing collaborations, and inspiring a collective dedication to safeguarding the natural world.

Meanwhile, EcoMedia is advocating for widespread support for the Liberian volunteers, acknowledging their patriotic and nationalistic efforts. The group's representatives are appealing for brooms, shovels, boots, gloves, water, food, garbage



ECOWAS and MFWA sign partnership agreement

On Tuesday, December 5, 2023, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) signed a historic four-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The MoU, signed by the President of the ECOWAS Commission, H.E. Dr. Omar Alieu Touray and the Executive Director of the MFWA, Mr. Sulemana Braimah, seeks to enhance collaboration and cooperation between the two organisations.

In pursuit of the objectives of the MoU, ECOWAS and MFWA will focus on a number of strategic areas of cooperation aimed at enhancing democratic values, media freedom and development, human rights and peace in the region.

The specific areas of

and its activities across Member States.

At the signing ceremony, the ECOWAS Commissioner for the Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), Ambassador Abdel-Fatau Musah (PhD), reiterated the strategic role of the MFWA as a partner of choice that has the capacity to contribute to dealing with the critical challenges facing the region. He highlighted the role of the media in mobilising public opinion in support of democratic values and countering anti-democratic narratives that appear to be on the rise in the region.

Commissioner Abdel-Fatau Musah noted that the MoU with the MFWA was also critical because of the invaluable role of the media in promoting ECOWAS' vision 2050, which is: ECOWAS of the peoples: peace and



cooperation include: building media capacity to contribute to enhancing democratic norms and values; enhancing the media's role in countering narratives of violent extremism, polarisation, radicalization, mis/disinformation and hate speech; promoting media freedom, freedom of expression (online and offline) and access to information; and coordination with regional media partners to enhance citizens' awareness of ECOWAS

prosperity for all.

On his part, the Executive Director of the MFWA expressed his delight about the formalisation of relations between the two organisations, noting that the partnership provides a great opportunity to build synergies and leverage on each other's capacities and resources to effectively confront the critical challenges facing the region. In attendance at the signing ceremony were other senior ECOWAS officials and senior staff of the MFWA.

Center for Legal Aid ends conference

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topic, Access to Justice, Human Rights & Pretrial Detention: A Comparative Approach, outlined the need for national budgetary support for legal aid program as well as institutionalizing it for an effective access to justice for juveniles and other vulnerable groups.

Meanwhile, the second day session of the conference was held at the Dominion Christian Fellowship Church at 72nd Junction, Japan Freeway, Paynesville with secondary

schools and community members and residents. This session of the conference focused on creating awareness on legal aid and the rights of an accused or suspected persons.

At the end the of the conference, young students were amazed to have learned that an accused person has so many rights, pledging to get involved with awareness campaign on the rights of accused or suspected persons beginning with their schools and communities in the interest of justice for all persons who come in conflict with the law.

Editing by Jonathan Browne

Français

Un homme se suicide à Grand Gedeh suite au décès d'un législateur

Dans le Grand Gedeh, un suicide vient aggraver les tensions suite à la mort d'un législateur. Selon les

informations de Joseph Titus Yekeryan, un homme d'environ soixante ans aurait mis fin à ses jours par crainte des représailles d'une foule en colère cherchant à venger la disparition du représentant Erol Madison Gwion.



Le suspect, Jenkins Ben, aurait choisi de se suicider dans un buisson voisin alors que des manifestants se déchaînaient après le décès du représentant Gwion. Quelques heures avant le début des manifestations, Ben avait été accusé d'avoir

cherchait des soins médicaux temporaires.

La nouvelle du décès de Gwion a engendré des tensions dans la région, certains habitants estimant que sa mort revêtait des implications spirituelles. Outre les accusations dirigées contre feu Ben, le sénateur du comté, Zoe Emmanuel Pennue, a également été mis en cause, les manifestants affirmant que M. Pennue détenait des informations sur la mort de Gwion.

Au cours de la manifestation, deux structures appartenant au

sénateur Pennue ont été incendiées, dont sa résidence principale. De plus, le bureau du conseil traditionnel à Zwedru a été la proie des

flammes, mettant en danger l'intérieur de la maison, bien que les autorités policières aient réussi à maîtriser l'incendie.

Jenkins Ben aurait pris la fuite dans un buisson voisin pendant la manifestation et aurait décidé de mettre fin à ses jours. Une vidéo de la chaîne locale KMTV, diffusée mardi, témoigne du retour au calme dans le comté du Sud-Est après l'intervention de la police.

Simultanément, la Division des services criminels (CSD) de

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Le Sénat ordonne aux commissaires de la LACC de déclarer leurs biens

Dans une décision marquante, le Sénat libérien a émis une directive contraignante à l'endroit des commissaires de la Commission anti-corruption du Libéria (LACC), les enjoignant à divulguer publiquement les détails de leurs avoirs financiers. Cette démarche, orchestrée par le président pro tempore du Sénat, Albert Chie, a été instiguée à la suite des préoccupations émises par le sénateur Abraham Darius Dillon, représentant le comté de Montserrado.

Chie a explicitement mandaté le secrétaire du Sénat, Nanborlor Singbe, pour adresser officiellement la requête aux commissaires de la LACC, mettant en lumière l'impératif légal de cette démarche. "Monsieur le secrétaire du Sénat, veuillez communiquer avec la LACC pour informer que le plénum a besoin des informations de leur

déclaration de biens conformément à la loi", a ordonné Chie, soulignant ainsi l'importance cruciale de la transparence dans la fonction publique.

Cette décision, prise le mardi 5 décembre 2023, intervient dans le sillage des incessantes pressions exercées par la LACC, exigeant que tous les fonctionnaires divulguent leurs biens, revenus et passifs avant la date butoir du 12 décembre 2023, sous peine de

sanctions. Les craintes soulevées par le sénateur Dillon ont jeté une lumière vive sur le statut des déclarations de biens des responsables de la lutte contre la corruption.

Dillon a argumenté que les commissaires de la LACC, en tant que leaders dans la lutte contre la corruption,

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Éditorial

Travailler de concert pour le bien commun

Lors d'une session de travail le vendredi 24 novembre, le président George Manneh Weah a exhorté les responsables de l'Équipe conjointe de transition présidentielle (JPTT) à faire preuve d'honnêteté et d'amour pour le pays dans leurs délibérations afin d'assurer un transfert de pouvoir en douceur de son administration au président élu Joseph Nyumah Boakai et son équipe.

"Aujourd'hui, nous sommes sur le point de passer ce bâton symbolique à un autre dirigeant démocratiquement élu, marquant un autre chapitre important de notre parcours démocratique ; assurons-nous d'un transfert de pouvoir efficace, efficient et sans heurts au président élu Boakai et à son équipe", a exhorté le président Weah.

Cet appel démontre véritablement l'engagement indéfectible de M. Weah à assurer une transition en douceur, ce qui lui a valu de nombreuses admirations à travers le monde et a mis le Libéria sous les feux de la rampe pour toutes les bonnes raisons.

L'icône du football devenue homme politique entrera dans l'histoire en tant que le premier président africain de l'histoire récente à reconnaître sa défaite et à féliciter son principal rival même avant l'annonce des résultats définitifs par la Commission électorale nationale.

Les membres et partisans de sa sortie de la Coalition pour le Changement démocratique (CDC) peinent encore à digérer et à accepter la qualité du piédestal démocratique que leur porte-étendard a établi pour le Libéria, et il ne peut y avoir de retour en arrière.

Le leader a parlé et doit pénétrer l'esprit des CDCiens que le pouvoir n'appartient pas à un parti politique particulier ou au gouvernement, mais au peuple. Ainsi, chaque fois que le peuple décide lors d'une élection de qui devrait gouverner ses affaires pour lui permettre de jouir de la paix, de la prospérité et du bonheur, il ne reste rien d'autre que d'obéir.

C'est dans cette optique que le président Weah exhorte les membres de la JPTT à donner la priorité et à se concentrer sur l'intérêt national plutôt que sur des intérêts égoïstes, en plaçant le bien général du peuple libérien au premier plan dans leurs délibérations sur la voie du transfert de pouvoir en janvier 2024. En d'autres termes, il s'agit de moments de bilan et de rapports appropriés plutôt que de ce que certains pourraient considérer comme une opportunité de dernière minute pour piller ce qui reste des coffres nationaux pour s'enrichir et partir.

Mais M. Weah a informé les membres de la JPTT que les réalisations démocratiques de son administration ont établi une norme nouvelle et enviable, non seulement pour le Libéria, mais pour l'Afrique et la communauté mondiale, affirmant que "en reconnaissant gracieusement et en félicitant le président élu Boakai avant le décompte final, nous avons également gagné une reconnaissance et une admiration mondiales."

C'est tellement vrai et c'est la principale raison pour laquelle rien ne doit être fait et personne ne doit être autorisé à rendre la route de la transition cahoteuse. Un atterrissage en douceur de la nouvelle administration portera ses fruits, et nous devons nous efforcer de le réaliser, car comme le souligne le président Weah, cette réalisation monumentale est une victoire non seulement pour une entité politique mais pour tous les Libériens et l'ensemble du pays.

Français

Par Michael R. Bloomberg

Jet Yvonne Aki-Sawyer

Starts from page 8 **Un homme se suicide à Grand**

la police nationale du Libéria a constitué un jury de 15 membres pour examiner le corps sans vie de Jenkins afin de déterminer s'il s'agit d'un

acte criminel. L'enquête est en cours, soulignant la nécessité de faire la lumière sur les circonstances entourant ces événements tragiques.

Starts from page 8 **Le Sénat ordonne aux**

devraient donner l'exemple en déclarant leurs propres avoirs. "Je suis préoccupé et je suis d'accord avec la Commission qu'il devrait y avoir une déclaration de biens à l'entrée et à la sortie, ce qui signifie que tous les fonctionnaires gouvernementaux devraient être catégorisés en déclarant leurs biens", a souligné le sénateur.

Le sénateur de Montserrado a souligné que, conformément à la section 10.1 du Code de conduite national et de la Loi modifiée sur la LACC, les commissaires de la LACC n'ont pas respecté l'obligation légale de déclarer leurs biens de manière transparente. Il a insisté sur la nécessité pour le Sénat libérien d'intervenir rapidement afin de garantir que les commissaires de la LACC respectent les dispositions légales en matière de divulgation de biens.

Parallèlement, il a été reconnu publiquement que le Sénat libérien a confirmé les commissaires de la LACC sans exiger qu'ils déclarent et publient leurs biens, une révélation faite par le président de la commission du Sénat sur les agences autonomes, le sénateur Dr. Henrique Tokpa du comté de Bong. Cette confirmation controversée, datant du mardi 5 septembre 2023, a soulevé des questions sur la diligence législative quant à l'application rigoureuse des normes de transparence dans la fonction publique.

Cette confirmation des commissaires de la LACC, opérée de manière controversée le mardi 5 septembre 2023, a suscité des interrogations quant à la rigueur législative dans l'application des normes de transparence au sein de la fonction publique libérienne. Le plénum du Sénat libérien a voté à l'unanimité en faveur de la confirmation des sept commissaires de la LACC, y compris Cllr. Alexandra Kormah Zoe, présidente ; M. Ernest R. Hughes, vice-président ; et M. Randolph E. Tebbs, Surveillance et Investigation. Le sénateur Dr. Henrique Tokpa, président de

la commission du Sénat sur les agences autonomes, a admis publiquement que le processus de confirmation n'a pas inclus l'obligation pour les commissaires de la LACC de déclarer et de publier leurs avoirs conformément à la loi. "Après avoir effectué l'audition, ils ont tous répondu aux critères et étaient très qualifiés, mais en ce qui concerne la présentation de tous leurs titres, je n'ai personnellement pas vu leurs notes de déclaration de biens", a déclaré le sénateur Tokpa.

Le sénateur Dillon, soucieux de garantir la responsabilité et la transparence au sein du gouvernement national, a plaidé pour une intervention rapide du Sénat afin de remédier à cette omission. Il a insisté sur le fait que les commissaires de la LACC devraient initier le processus de déclaration de biens, en accord avec la loi, pour servir d'exemple aux autres fonctionnaires.

La section 10.1 du Code de conduite national, citée par le sénateur Dillon, impose aux fonctionnaires publics l'obligation de déclarer leurs revenus, biens et passifs à des intervalles spécifiques, contribuant ainsi à instaurer une gouvernance transparente et responsable. Dillon a souligné que tout manquement à ces normes priverait le Sénat de son autorité morale pour exiger des déclarations de biens de la part des autres fonctionnaires.

Alors que le Libéria s'approche de la période cruciale de déclaration des biens pour les fonctionnaires, le sénateur Dillon a exhorté le plénum à pousser les commissaires de la LACC à déclarer et à publier leurs biens. Il a affirmé que cela devrait être accompli avant la mise en œuvre effective de la loi sur la déclaration des biens pour l'ensemble des fonctionnaires, soulignant ainsi la nécessité d'une application équitable de ces règles au sein de l'appareil gouvernemental. Cette affaire soulève des questions fondamentales sur l'intégrité et la conformité aux normes éthiques au sein des organes gouvernementaux chargés de lutter contre la corruption. L'issue de cette situation influencera sans aucun doute la confiance du public dans les institutions responsables de la promotion de la transparence et de la responsabilité au Libéria.

L'Alliance UP suspend l'adhésion de VOLT



Amb Boakai

Dr. Jeremiah Z. Whapoe

Au cœur d'un conflit politique, l'Alliance des partis politiques de l'Unity Party (UP) a décidé de suspendre l'adhésion du Vision for Liberia Transportation Party (VOLT) dirigé par le Dr. Jeremiah Z. Whapoe.

Cette décision a été officialisée dans une déclaration signée par M. Carlos Tingban Edison, porte-parole de l'Alliance UP.

La suspension de VOLT découle de divergences entre le parti et l'UP, selon la déclaration de l'Alliance.

Selon les membres de l'Alliance UP, des discussions ont eu lieu avec des représentants de l'UP au sujet de VOLT, des discussions qui semblent être devenues très sérieuses et qui exigent une réponse immédiate de la part de la direction de l'Alliance.

"À l'heure actuelle, la Vision pour la Transformation du Libéria, VOLT pour faire court, est confrontée à un problème politique très sérieux avec le Unity Party qui doit être résolu au plus vite entre les deux institutions", précise la déclaration.

"Jusqu'à ce que cela soit réglé, l'adhésion de VOLT à l'Alliance est suspendue indéfiniment, et nous retirons par la présente tous les représentants de VOLT de cette salle de discussion", poursuit la déclaration.

Le 10 novembre 2023, VOLT a officiellement apporté son soutien à la candidature présidentielle de

l'opposition, représentée par l'ambassadeur Joseph Nyumah Boakai, lors du second tour de l'élection présidentielle du 14 novembre 2023.

Lors de cette annonce, le Dr. Whapoe, leader de VOLT, a déclaré que son parti avait pris cette décision après des consultations et des réunions avec les partisans et les sympathisants, exprimant ainsi son soutien à l'ambassadeur Boakai pour le second tour de l'élection.

De son côté, M. Carlos Tingban Edison a déclaré ce week-end que la lettre de suspension avait été émise par l'Alliance en raison des différends entre VOLT et l'UP.

Selon lui, l'Alliance UP des partis politiques a été formée suite au soutien de tous les partis politiques à l'UP lors du second tour de l'élection présidentielle.

Il a expliqué que la suspension de l'adhésion de VOLT était motivée par des informations provenant de la direction de l'UP indiquant que VOLT n'avait pas soutenu l'UP lors du second tour de l'élection.

"La suspension émane de l'Alliance, elle est valide, émise par moi-même et approuvée par le président de l'Alliance", a affirmé M. Edison.

"L'Alliance UP regroupe de nombreux partis qui ont soutenu l'UP lors du second tour de l'élection. Ces partis sont qualifiés pour faire partie de l'Alliance appelée l'Alliance UP des partis politiques." Selon lui, VOLT n'a pas suivi la procédure régulière pour faire partie du processus. Il a souligné que tant que VOLT n'aura pas réglé ses différends avec l'UP, sa suspension restera en vigueur jusqu'à nouvel ordre.

"Qu'ils règlent cela avec l'UP pour retrouver leur légitimité. Qu'ils résolvent ce différend. Nous avons eu une discussion avec leur président et leur secrétaire général qui nous ont affirmé avoir soutenu l'UP, mais l'UP a nié cela. Par conséquent, nous avons dû suspendre leur adhésion jusqu'à résolution de la situation", a conclu M. Edison.

Burkina : après avoir disparu, l'activiste Daouda Diallo réapparaît en tenue militaire sur une photo



l'homme.

Daouda Diallo fait partie d'une dizaine d'acteurs de la société qui se sont vu signifier leur réquisition militaire suite à des propos jugés critiques par le pouvoir de transition. Pour Isabel De Sola, directrice de la Fondation Martin Ennals - qui a remis son prix pour les droits humains en 2022 à Daouda Diallo - cette réquisition forcée d'un homme qui a une formation médicale et non militaire n'a aucun sens. « Souvent, les activistes qui ont un charisme qui arrive à toucher les personnes et a créé des mouvements sur le terrain, sont les plus poursuivis, harcelés, arrêtés sur de faux prétextes. Donc ce n'est pas la première fois que le prix [Martin Ennals] doit traiter avec un cas de harcèlement de ce niveau. C'est une aberration d'amener des gens par la force sur le front militaire. Un pharmacien est beaucoup mieux auprès des malades et des victimes des violences qui ont besoin de soins. Nous avons l'espoir que les ambassades, les agences de l'ONU et de l'UA pourraient convaincre le gouvernement de relâcher Daouda et d'autres activistes qui ont aussi été enlevés. »

Depuis mardi, une photo de Daouda Diallo, le secrétaire général du Collectif contre l'impunité et la stigmatisation des communautés (CICS) circule sur les réseaux sociaux. Si on ne connaît pas le lieu et la provenance de cette photo où l'on voit Daouda Diallo en treillis et casqué, ses proches ont confirmé que les vêtements et chaussures portés sous l'uniforme sont bien ceux qu'il avait le jour de son arrestation vendredi dernier. Depuis, on était sans nouvelle de cet acteur des droits de

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LIBERIANS

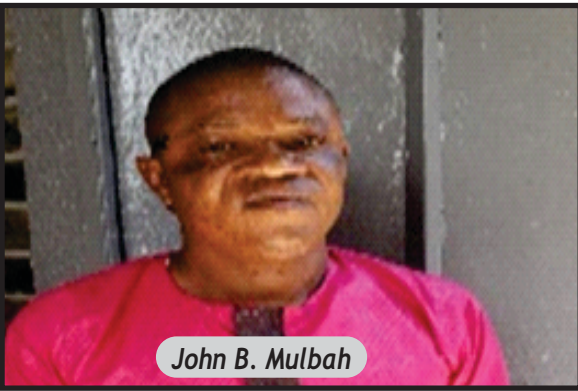
DEBATE

Topic: Police Investigation

By Naneka Hoffman

The Liberian National Police have launched an investigation into the death of Joshua Solomon, a youthful member of the Coalition for Democratic Change, who was allegedly beaten during a political riot by the Unity Party in August this year. Four months after, Police spokesperson, H. Moses Carter, said based on preliminary findings, the Police have declared a female UP partisan, Queen Johnson, alias "Rescue General" and others to be identified, wanted.

In this random sampling, The NEW DAWN asked several Monroviaans what they make of the incident and subsequent response from the Police. Read their comments as compiled below.

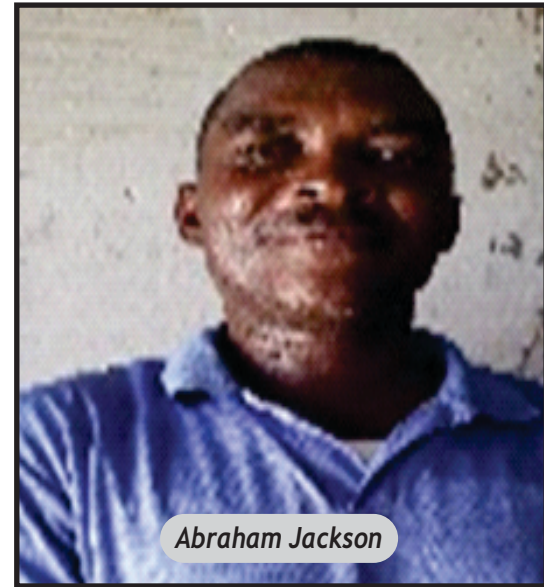


John B. Mulbah

"First of all, we occurred can from don't have good the riot that took security system. place? I will say no, The incident took because the police place in August; we are not doing due got September, diligence to us, as October. The man Liberians, because ran campaign in when riot happens October and at any time, the November and he police should be voted; you never there to investigate carried on any first because lives investigation to matter. Queen establish what Johnson in the happen to Solomon video, they are when he was alive, bringing politics but today, Solomon in t o t h e is death. How can investigation. I you identify that know Queen to be a the death that very tough talker

but she isn't that type of arrogant person that will take tool to hit it on somebody; no. Queen can't give order to beat on somebody, I say no. she can stand in front of people and express herself, but she can't order people to beat on anyone; I say no. The police are not doing justice to the Liberian people and Queen. By Moses Carter coming up to say Queen is wanted, Moses Carter we believe that Moses Carter isn't even a professional police officer, who should be using that type of words. Moses Carter to be saying that we want to invite Queen Johnson for maybe some questions and answers. When Solomon was alive, the police should go to the hospital and ask Solomon who are those that wounded him, even his family asked for help. Nobody came in to help, but they didn't do it until he died before they want to come investigate, so who are they investigating? They are not doing well to the Liberian people and Queen Johnson."

"As for me, the investigation will not be balance because the police are not professional. They are not working through professionalism; in terms of security, police should be proactive in their performance. When the man was alive, it was the best time the police should have investigated Queen Johnson and Solomon, but now Solomon is dead, they want to take the case serious; I think the Liberian police need to be revamped; the video can't be enough for investigation, so they will only be able to get the investigation on hearsay. They need to do all the best to get full investigation."



Abraham Jackson

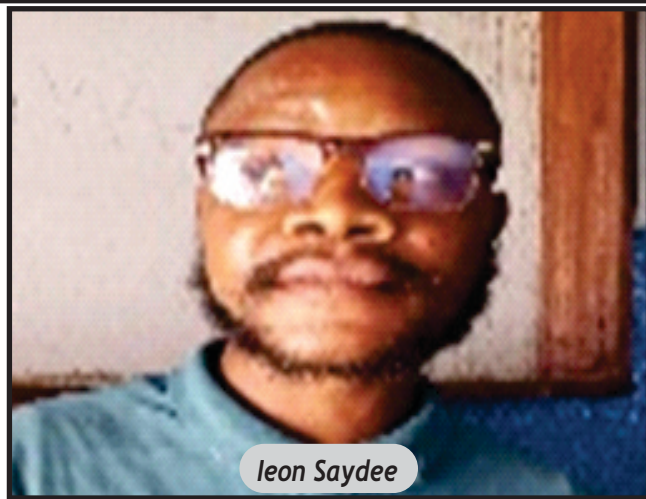


Selekie V. Konneh

"The issue of Solomon, who died from immense bleeding; actually from evidence, it's almost like conflict with CDC and Unity Party during the campaign; to seen a man dying from immense bleeding, there might have

been real beating he experienced. So for the police to come up after one or two months to carry on investigation after this thing happened, there where we're trying to see that there is some level of insincerity because when the incident happened, immediately the police should have started with their investigation they should not have the man dead before coming up with investigation. When the man was alive, they could have asked him to give his side of the story. How can you do the investigation? It will be a one-between two parties - that has to do side story and everything that will come up will not be factual because the man didn't explain anything when he was alive."

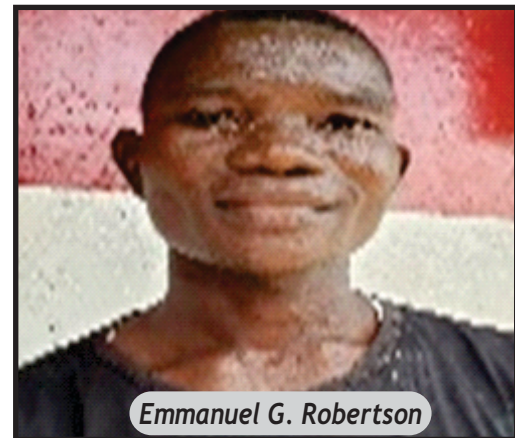
"Firstly, I want to say thanks to the New Dawn Newspaper for sampling Liberians' views on critical national issues. I think the police themselves are undermining this particular investigation. I can remember it was during the heat of the campaign period when that incident took place. A brother was seriously wounded massively and was rushed immediately to hospital. The Doctors were able to stabilize him, meaning that he could respond to any questions and he was in communication with the CDC and other family members. I think in my own mine, that was the time the police should have started to launch their investigation, because we are protected; don't allow the life to be taken away before you can start investigation; when the brother was seriously wounded, that identical platform gives you the opportunity to start all your investigation from there; they



Leon Saydee

should have started investigation with those people who were caught between Solomon in the scene. Solomon could better respond because he was stable, he could better response to that investigation from the police angle, but police ignored this, all their minds were focused on protecting the executive during the campaign, forgetting about the other people. It was a campaign scene; Queen Johnson wasn't in CDC party headquarters so the rioters were between CDC and Unity Party, so the investigation is not necessary now and it can't be necessary in the future because when Solomon was alive, the police should have go there to do their investigation. We are seeing now the investigation as a witch-hunt."

"The police investigation on Solomon's issue some of us are not going to take it serious, because the riot occurred since August; they never care to get Solomon's side of the story when he was alive and his family even called on the public for help to save their son's life; now the man is gone then the police are carrying on investigation on an issue that occurred two or three months ago. Are the police really serious in Liberia in saving lives and property in this country, I think this story is one sided, so Liberians shouldn't give attention to the



Emmanuel G. Robertson

police investigation because it is not timely."



Mamadee M. Kesselly

"I think in my mind, the police have to be serious when we come to investigation in this country.

They are not saving human lives and property; how will riot occurred during campaign period, they don't care to investigate the both parties to find out what was the cause of the riot. Solomon was going under treatment at the hospital; this was the best time the police should have carried on their investigation, but they never did it to come to the boy's security until the boy passed off before the police started to carry on their investigation. I think it is just a mere bluff."

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Cummings to lead CDC? Prosecute sanctioned officials

By Lincoln G. Peters

Information circulating in the corridor of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change suggests that CPP and ANC political leader Mr. Alexander B. Cummings is likely to head the CDC.

The NewDawn is learning that there are ongoing negotiations and conversation within the hierarchy of the CDC for the once stern critic of President George Weah to replace Mr. Weah as the new political leader of the towering Coalition that lost the 14 November presidential runoff election recently.

The CDC seems to have embarked on a rebranding mission in readiness for 2029, as it reenergizes to face the UP, its main rival since 2005.

Sources are hinting that the decision to bring on board Mr. Cummings is to replace President Weah, who they said has no intention of contesting for the Presidency again.

One source discloses that the executive committee of the CDC is resolved in making

sure that Mr. Weah retires as face of the party following what die-hard CDCians describe as his hasty concession to the UP, ignoring the leadership in the just-ended Presidential run-off election.

Angry and disappointed CDCians are accusing President Weah of handling over the

Presidency to Ambassador Joseph Nyumah Boakai, winner of the 14 November runoff election unknown to the party, something they consider as disrespectful.

CDC Secretary General Jefferson Tamba Koijee, has disclosed that they are holding conversation and consultation with the Alternative National Congress of Mr. Alexander B. Cummings to form a stronger opposition alliance.

Making the disclosure on December 4, 2023 when he appeared on Voice of Liberia live morning talk show, Mr. Koijee said that they are in conversation with Mr. Cummings to build a stronger opposition alliance to keep the feet of President-elect, Boakai

to the fire. "We are having conversations with the ANC and the CPP by extension, to bring the party together in order to build a stronger opposition alliance. With this alliance, we will keep the feet of the government-elect, to the fire. And so, we are having conversations with Mr. Cummings and other political parties to build a stronger opposition alliance for 2029", Koijee confirmed.

Meanwhile, validating Koijee's revelation, a stalwart of the CDC, Dr. Lester D. Tenny, has been venting his anger at incumbent President George Manneh Weah, for various reasons.

In a recent conversation with Spoon FM, Dr. Tenny vowed that never again will Mr. Weah be allowed to run or contest on the CDC ticket as its standard bearer.

Dr. Tenny believes that Weah, founder of the CDC, will no longer be given the privilege and opportunity to contest on the party ticket in 2029 and beyond.

"I have read in several newspapers and even listened to radios where I heard President Weah blaming the Executive Committee of the Party for the defeat and describing the Executive Committee as insincere," he said. "Quote me, President Weah will never be the standard bearer of the CDC again," he maintained.

However, it remains to be seen whether CDCians who literally worship Mr. Weah as godhead of the Congress for Democratic Change have the muscles to reject the man that has led them in the past 19 years up to the Presidency. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

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corruption allegations which led the U.S. to sanction three Liberian officials in the outgoing Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC)-led government.

Reading the petition at LACC's office in Congo Town, JOCSAI member Alfreda T. Joe disclosed that Transparency International defines corruption as the abuse of entrusted power and authority for private gain.

Alfreda lamented that corruption is pervasive in Liberia and it is considered one of the major causes of the country's gross underdevelopment and poverty-stricken conditions of its citizens.

She noted that the country is endowed with natural and other valuable resources. The group began its match against corruption from CENTAL's head office and paraded the streets with several banners carrying different inscriptions. Some read: Investigate sanctioned officials for a better Liberia; and don't be part of corruption, be part of the solutions, among others.

According to JOCSAI, the Government of Liberia, supported by international partners, citizens, and

By Lewis S. Teh
At least eight Civil Society and Community-based organizations have petitioned the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) to investigate and prosecute sanctioned officials.

The petitioners are made up of 228 practitioners under the auspices of the Joint Civil Society Anti-Corruption Initiative (JOCSAI).

In their petition, they have asked the newly confirmed Board of Commissioners at LACC to act against alleged sanctioned officials.

The CSO groups said they are committed to supporting the fight against corruption and bad governance in Liberia.

They call on the LACC to launch a timely, robust, and impartial investigation into corruption allegations.

They also petitioned the LACC to prosecute the concerned officials in line with its mandate of investigating

and prosecuting all allegations and incidences of corruption in Liberia. JOCSAI gets its funding support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA) through the Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL). JOCSAI took to the streets in Monrovia Wednesday, 6 December 2023 seeking the attention of the government through the LACC regarding its demand for investigation and prosecution of alleged corrupt officials. The group presented a petition to the LACC to act on

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Mr. Alexander B. Cummings



Make NEC financially autonomous

Starts from back page

for the rule of law. Also speaking, the Commissioner on Political Affairs at the National Elections Commission, Boakai Dukuly, called on political parties to pressure President George Weah to appoint an ombudsman to foster good governance.

He urges political parties to organize and force the Liberian government to

appoint an ombudsman that will oversee the Code of Conduct for public officials.

"I'm talking about you organizing and getting people petitioning the legislature, petitioning the President to make sure he sets the ombudsman to ensure that the minister in any government does not become a campaign manager for some political parties; it's against the law but you must be able," he

emphasizes. At the same time Commissioner Dukuly lauds Integrity Watch Liberia for its continued efforts in the fight to ensure adherence to political campaign financing in the country, but stresses that political parties themselves have a major role to play in enforcing legal compliance.

Editing by Jonathan Browne

SOS Liberia and partners prepare 5-year plan

Starts from page 6

year strategy that we all can be proud of; I encourage all of us to remain focused" the SOS Liberia boss reminds participants. He says in the coming three days, seniority will be put aside and they

work as members of a team to develop a new roadmap that will impact the lives of many more children in Liberia.

"We have a brilliant team who will be leading us step by step through

the process of developing our strategy. This team has worked hard to get us where we are today. The team has both local and international expertise" he stated.

Editing by Jonathan Browne

JUDICIAL BRANCH REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA. BEFORE HIS HONORABLE J. KENNEDY PEABODY, RESIDENT CIRCUIT JUDGE. THE PETITION OF SAYBAH G. KUPEE FOR A DECREE OF CHANGE OF NAME IN FAVOR OF PETITIONER TO BE KNOWN, CALLED AND REFERRED TO AS "SAYBAH GOVEGO". COURT'S DECREE OF CHANGE OF NAME. THE PETITIONER BY AND THROUGH HIS LEGAL COUNSEL FILED A PETITION BEFORE THIS COURT REQUESTING THIS HONORABLE COURT TO ORDER THE CHANGE OF HER NAME FROM SAYBAH G. KUPEE TO "SAYBAH GOVEGO".

Make NEC financially autonomous

-Integrity Watch Liberia recommends to GOL

By Lewis S. Teh
Integrity Watch Liberia says here that the National Elections Commission (NEC) will be more effective if

during elections. Speaking at the official start of a one-day lessons learned conference for representatives of political parties Wednesday, December 6, in Monrovia, IWL Executive Director, Harold Aidoo, said it is no secret that most of the campaign finance violations during elections are committed by the incumbent party, and they often have a way of strangulating the NEC through funding restrictions.

“By Making the NEC financially autonomous, a lot of issues will be addressed, including its capacity to be efficient and effective in delivering on its



the Government of Liberia strengthens the Commission by making it financially autonomous. The integrity institution believes that the strengthening NEC's role will enhance its capacity to fully enforce compliance such as political

mandate,” he recommends. He stresses the need for national conversations beyond elections to critically reflect on general societal problems of the non-compliance or respect

▶ CONT'D page 11

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