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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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Cllr. Scott gets life imprisonment

-But

Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott Late Charloe

UP wants Chief Justice refused

Chief Justice Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh Cllr. Frank Musa Dean

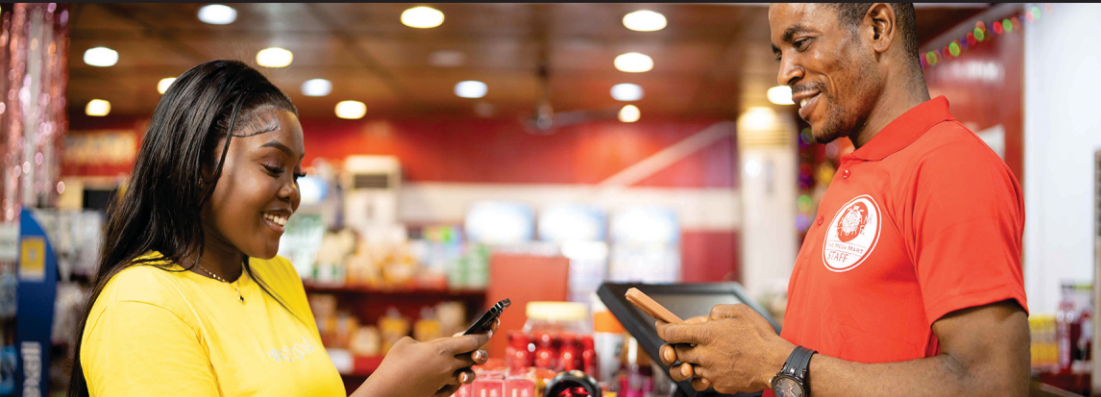
-As Dean's Supreme Court nomination hearing drags

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Continental News

Niger military junta frees deposed president's son

The son of Niger's deposed President Mohamed Bazoum has been released by a military tribunal after spending more than five months in detention. He had been charged with conspiracy to undermine the authority of the state following the coup.

tribunal said that the release of Mr Bazoum Jnr was provisional, and it would be "up to him to respond to justice as soon as he is required to do so".

give details of his whereabouts.

Sierra Leone had also been involved in mediation efforts to secure the release of the ousted president's son, it added in a statement.

Last month, the court of the West African regional bloc Ecowas ruled that the Bazoum family's detention was arbitrary. It ordered their release, and the reinstatement of Mr Bazoum as president. The military junta has ignored the ruling, and has said that there would be a transition of up to three years to civilian rule. Mr Bazoum was overthrown by the head of the presidential body guard, Gen Abdourahamane Tiani, in a coup that was denounced by Ecowas and Western nations, including former colonial power France. The last French troops withdrew from Niger last month on the orders of the junta. Ecowas said it would maintain sanctions on Niger until it saw progress on a return to civilian rule. The sanctions have contributed to a sharp rise in food prices and a shortage of some basic items in Niger. BBC



Ousted President Mohamed Bazoum and his wife are still being held by the military junta

than five months in detention. Salem Bazoum left for Togo after mediation efforts by regional leaders led to him being freed.

He was detained along with his parents at the presidential palace after the military staged a coup last July. His parents remain in detention, with the junta so far refusing to bow to diplomatic pressure to release them. In a statement, the military

He had been charged with conspiracy to undermine the authority of the state following the coup.

In October, the junta alleged that the ousted president and his family, his two cooks and two security officials made a failed attempt to escape. Togo's Foreign Minister Robert Dussey came to Niger to escort Mr Bazoum Jnr out of the country, the tribunal's statement said. Togo's government confirmed his release, but did not

Ethiopia-Somaliland army chiefs meet amid tensions

The army chiefs of landlocked Ethiopia and the self-declared Republic of Somaliland have been discussing military cooperation as concern grows over a deal that could give Ethiopia a naval base on the Gulf of Aden. The two sides signed a deal on 1 January to give Ethiopia commercial and military access to the sea. Somalia called it an act of aggression. It considers Somaliland as part of its territory and has vowed to defend its sovereignty.

Somaliland, a former British protectorate, seceded from Somalia in 1991 but is not internationally recognised as an independent state. Ethiopia's Field Marshal Birhanu Jula spoke with Somaliland's Maj Gen Nuh Ismael Tani about "possible ways to work together" at a meeting on Monday in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's military said in a statement. No further details were given. Somaliland agreed to lease part of the coast to Ethiopia for a naval base in the 1 January Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that they signed, according to statements from

both sides. Somaliland has said that in exchange Ethiopia would agree to recognise it as independent at some point in the future. Ethiopia has not confirmed this and instead talked about making "an in-depth assessment towards taking a position regarding the efforts of Somaliland to gain recognition".

Somalia sees the MoU as an assault on its territorial integrity. On Sunday, its President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud asked people to prepare for the defence of the country. The African Union and the US have both moved to try and calm tensions. Somalia's allies, including Egypt and Turkey, have pledged their support for Somalia. As the military men from

Ethiopia and Somaliland were meeting in Addis Ababa, Mr Mohamud was in Eritrea holding talks with his counterpart in Asmara, Isaias Afwerki. Official statements made no direct mention of Ethiopia's deal with Somaliland, but it is likely that the issue came up. Eritrea said the two leaders agreed to work together "with patience and constructive spirit while refraining from a re-active posture to various provocative agendas". On Monday, President Mohamud's office said the two leaders would "discuss issues of mutual benefit". BBC



Ethiopian Field Marshal Birhanu Jula (L) held talks with Somaliland's Maj Gen Nuh Ismael Tani in Addis Ababa

How Nigerian preacher covered up fatal building collapse

The BBC has unearthed new evidence the late Nigerian megachurch leader TB Joshua hid dead bodies and intimidated families, to cover up his role in the collapse of a building which killed at least 116 people at his church in 2014. The collapse is one of the worst disasters to ever strike a place of worship in Africa.

The BBC's investigation is the first time insiders from TB Joshua's Synagogue Church of All Nations (Scoan) in Lagos have presented evidence of what caused the incident nearly 10 years ago, and of how the pastor allegedly orchestrated a cover-up.

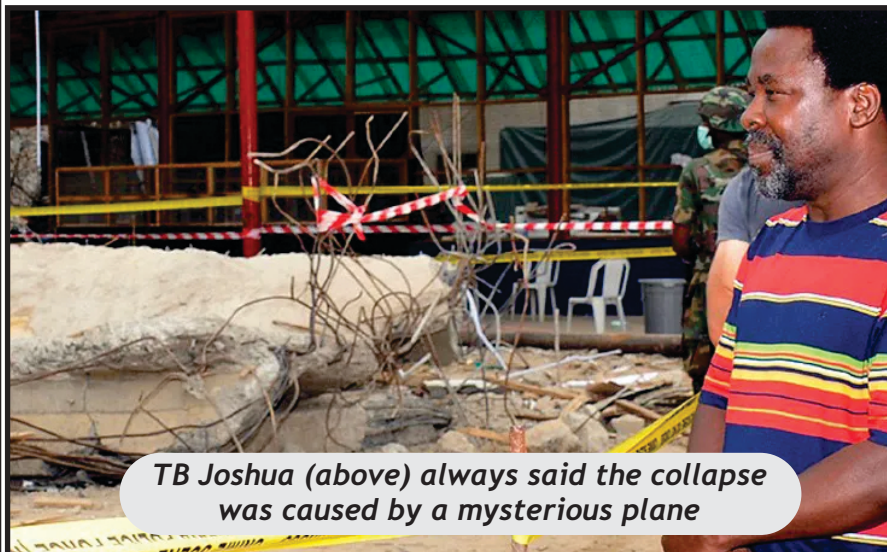
It follows evidence uncovered by the BBC of widespread abuse and torture by the founder of one of the world's biggest Christian

building's dining room on the ground floor to eat their lunch - where they were seated when all six storeys of concrete descended on top of them. Many were killed instantly, but more than 100 were trapped inside alive.

"I could hear people crying out: 'Help me, help me, help me,'" says Emmanuel, who was on the scene within minutes of the collapse. "Their voices were fading and you could tell these people were dying off."

Others described horrifically injured victims, with missing eyes and limbs - splintered by the beams which came down on top of them. "It was quite clear that that building was never built for the height that TB Joshua built it to," says Rae, from the UK, who spent 12 years living in the church as a disciple.

She says she was present when TB Joshua ordered his workers to



TB Joshua (above) always said the collapse was caused by a mysterious plane

evangelical churches. Two days after the collapse on 12 September 2014, TB Joshua publicly said it was linked to an aircraft that flew over the building used to house visiting pilgrims. But an inquiry by a Lagos coroner agreed with emergency workers that structural failure had caused the guest house to collapse, and said it had been built without proper planning permission.

Eyewitnesses told the BBC that TB Joshua had been warned of serious structural problems prior to the disaster. They say the aeroplane explanation was a "lie".

"He knew the building was unstable," says Emmanuel, who spent more than a decade as a disciple of TB Joshua - a group of devout followers who lived in his church in Lagos.

Like most of the former disciples interviewed by the BBC, he opted to only use his first name. He described the pastor receiving a report, hours before the collapse, that the building was "swaying" and "shaking". Multiple witnesses say the visitors were not warned. Instead more than 200 of them were led into the

construct additional floors: "The foundations weren't built to hold a building of that many storeys."

"He just kept kind of pushing and saying: 'I want it higher. It must go higher. It must go higher.'"

The church insiders who spoke to the BBC also say lives could potentially have been saved had TB Joshua responded promptly to the collapse itself. Instead, they say, he blocked emergency services from accessing the site for 24 hours - an allegation corroborated by news reports at the time. During this crucial window for rescuing people and assisting the injured, the BBC's eyewitnesses say some church workers attempted to save lives in reckless and amateur ways. Without the use of mechanical equipment or medical training, they used tools from the church's maintenance department. In one instance, a church worker allegedly used a chainsaw to amputate the leg of a man who was trapped under a fallen beam.

"He was screaming!" says Emmanuel, visibly shaken during his interview. He is not sure if the man survived. "I saw a lot of things that really traumatised me... faces were crushed," says Michael, a disciple who was in his late teens at the time. BBC

EDITORIAL

Elect a people-centered Speaker

Lawmakers on Capitol Hill are gearing up to elect a Speaker that will head the incoming 55th Legislature. The race for the speakership is between incumbent Deputy Speaker, Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa and Representative Richard Nagbe Koon of Montserrado County District#11.

The election is intended to replace outgoing Speaker Bhofal Chambers, who lost his district in Maryland County during the October 10, 2023 election.

As the lawmakers prepare to vote on January 15, 2024, we urge to elect the right candidate that serve the public interest. This is important to main the doctrine of separation of power and promote the wellbeing of the citizenry.

This does not mean however, that whoever emerges as the next Speaker should be confrontational or combative with the executive. There should be strong coordination with the other two branches of government to keep the nation sailing smoothly.

The Speaker should be people-centered first before exercising party loyalty so as to keep a level head. By doing so he will focus on the bigger picture that is Liberia.

Lawmakers going to vote should look for these qualities and more in the candidates before arriving at a decision who to elect. A person should not be elected merely on friendship.

A Speaker that will champion Liberia's interest will do better. He should be able to navigate his way in diplomatic cycles to win trust and woe foreign investments to the country that will provide jobs for Liberians.

He should know needs of the people besides his immediate constituency and be able to sway his colleagues to act.

The Speaker wields so much power, but should not allow himself to be intoxicated by power that could lead to his destruction. In other words, power should be exercised judiciously.

Lastly, the Speaker should be someone that upholds transparency and accountability in both his public and private dealings to command respectability. Whether it is Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa or Representative Richard Nagbe Koon, these should be some of the characteristics of any emerging as Speaker of the 55th Legislature to preside over the business of the Liberian people.

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COMMENTARY

By Ndongo Samba Sylla

The Conceptual Roots of the Global South's Debt Crisis

DAKAR - The widening debt crisis in the Global South largely emanates from a flawed multilateral system. But it also reflects the inadequacies of the dominant analytical and policy frameworks - specifically, their assumptions about the nature of money, the economic possibilities available to currency-issuing governments, and the underlying causes of developing countries' external indebtedness.

Viewed through the lens of Modern Monetary Theory (MMT), the limitations of mainstream economic thinking as applied to sovereign-debt crises become even clearer. The basic idea behind MMT is that, unlike households or private firms, governments that control their own fiat currency cannot default (assuming their debt is denominated in their own currency). As they are not money-constrained, they can spend to achieve their goals. Their main constraint is the availability of productive capacity, which determines the risk of inflation.

MMT explains why the most indebted countries, in absolute and relative terms, are not in distress. Consider that Japan's sovereign debt-to-GDP ratio was 254% last year, while the ratio was 144% in the United States, 113% in Canada, and 104% in the United Kingdom. Yet none of these countries is experiencing a sovereign-debt crisis. By contrast, in 2020, Argentina, Ecuador, and Zambia had much lower debt-to-GDP ratios when they defaulted on their external obligations.

The main difference is that Japan, the US, Canada, and the UK are monetarily sovereign: their public debt is denominated in their national currency, while their central banks maintain some control over the interest rates applied to that debt. Most governments in the Global South are at risk of insolvency because they borrowed in foreign currencies.

MMT implies that if rich countries desired to provide significant debt relief to the Global South, the main challenges would be coordination - between different creditors and debtors, as well as other relevant actors - and accountability, not affordability. Given that these countries cannot run out of their own currency, there are no financial constraints on canceling in whole or in part the public and publicly guaranteed external debt stock of 131 lower- and middle-income countries (excluding China, Russia, and India). This debt stood at \$2.6 trillion in 2022 - an amount less than Germany's public debt.

Why do Global South countries that are currently in or at risk of debt distress borrow in foreign currencies in the first place? Economists' usual answer is that these countries would otherwise lack "money" and "savings." Such a view is based on an erroneous understanding of the nature of money. Currency-issuing governments cannot run out of their own money. Moreover, as the Bank of England has shown, banks are not intermediaries between savers and loan applicants; instead, they create new purchasing power every time they extend a loan.

This leads to another important observation derived from MMT: as money is not scarce, anything that is technically and materially

feasible at the national level can be financed in the national currency. Developing countries need not issue foreign-currency debt to finance projects that require locally available resources such as labor, land, raw materials, equipment, and technologies.

When required resources are not locally available and can be purchased only with foreign currencies, developing countries might be forced to take on the burden of dollar-denominated debt. One could imagine resource-poor or climate-vulnerable countries making such a choice.

But this ignores the fact that Global South countries often earn substantial income from exports. The issue is that a significant proportion of this income is remitted back to foreign investors - many of whom benefit from an inequitable global tax architecture - as profits or dividends. This is on top of the fraudulent practices that result in illicit financial flows.

Between 2000 and 2018, for example, African countries suffered greater financial hardship from profit transfers by foreign investors, dividend repatriation by subsidiaries to their parent companies, and illicit financial flows than from servicing its external debt. They issued foreign-currency debt that paid high interest rates partly to plug the gap created by foreign nationals appropriating - both legally and illegally - vast dollar earnings.

Consider Zambia, a copper-producing country that lost around \$10.6 billion in the form of illicit financial flows between 1970 and 1996 (355% of its GDP in 1996), \$8.8 billion between 2001 and 2010, and \$12.5 billion between 2013 and 2015. Zambia's public and publicly guaranteed external debt was \$1.2 billion in 2010, rising to \$12.5 billion by 2021.

If the Zambian government had better fiscal and technical control over its export sector, it would have accumulated sufficient dollar reserves to enhance food and energy self-sufficiency and to finance investment in infrastructure and other public goods requiring the import of foreign productive capacity. There would have been no need to take on so much foreign-currency debt. The same could be said for other resource-rich African countries.

In a just world, countries subject to asymmetric tax agreements and resource theft would be fairly compensated, rather than crushed by austerity policies. Barring that, external debt cancellation would help developing countries invest in climate resilience and improve the health and well-being of their populations. As many policymakers, economists, and social movements have argued, it is an urgent necessity.

But even such a bold step would not be enough to address the root causes of recurring debt crises in the Global South. That would require stopping the financial bleeding caused by multinational corporations and promoting an economic development strategy that makes full use of the resources each country can command with its national currency.

OP-ED

By Daniel Gros

Western Chip Subsidies Will Benefit China

BRUSSELS - If there is one certainty about the coming year, it is that geopolitical rivalries will persist. For the European Union, this will translate largely into an effort to reduce dependence on foreign suppliers, especially of critical goods. For the United States, the focus will be on maintaining military supremacy by denying potential adversaries - namely, China - access to relevant technologies. Both approaches overlap in an important area: the chips industry.

Because advanced microchips are central to many advanced weapons systems and integral to economic security and prosperity, the industry has become a key arena in today's geopolitical competition. To improve their chances of prevailing in the "chip war," all large economic powers have implemented major programs to support their domestic chip makers.

The US enacted the CHIPS and Science Act in 2022. As part of the legislation, the Commerce Department will hand out \$50 billion in direct funding, federal loans, and loan guarantees to support semiconductor research and development, manufacturing, and workforce training.

The EU, whose share of global chip production is falling, has adopted the European Chips Act, which should mobilize billions of euros to bolster "competitiveness and resilience" in semiconductor technologies and applications. Because there is limited room for maneuver in the EU budget, the European Commission has also relaxed its state aid rules, enabling some large countries, such as France and especially Germany, to promise large subsidies - totaling €20 billion (\$21.9 billion) - for the construction of chip-production plants. As a proportion of GDP, Germany's subsidies are even larger than those of the US.

In Asia, Japan and South Korea have introduced multibillion-dollar plans to support their chips industries. Not to be outdone, China is crafting a massive chips-industry support package, reportedly totaling more than \$140 billion.

A common element of all these plans is that the largest sums are earmarked for the construction of so-called fabs - the plants where chips are made. This is misguided. Given the specialized equipment and ultra-clean environment fabs require, they are extremely expensive. Yet these plants represent only the most visible stage of a multi-step production process that occurs in many locations.

The process begins with silicon, which is refined, sliced into wafers, and polished until extremely smooth. The wafers are then covered in a thin film of semiconducting material, before highly specialized machines at the fabs etch intricate circuit patterns onto them. This enables the application of a huge and growing number of processing elements - over a billion - that make the chips work.

Today, the biggest and cleanest fabs are in Asia, the most advanced machines (such as for etching) are produced in Europe, and the best software (needed to organize the patterns on the chips) comes from the US. To become truly self-sufficient in chips, one of these locations would have to master all stages of the production process.

This is easier said than done. Rapid progress in making chips smaller and faster - as described by Moore's law - reflects the accumulation of highly specialized knowhow by a limited number of firms, which contribute the key components necessary to make the most advanced chips. This knowhow is so vast, specific, and complex that the technologies that underpin chip production cannot simply be imported and copied. By the time this accumulated knowhow could be replicated, chip technology would almost certainly have advanced, leaving the imitator perpetually at least a generation behind.

This explains why China has so far failed at becoming competitive in chipmaking, despite having already poured billions of dollars' worth of government funds into the industry. The Made in China 2025 strategy, unveiled in 2015, aimed to ensure that domestic production covered 70% of the country's semiconductor needs by the target date. But with just one year to go, domestic production remains very limited.

Instead, China is the world's biggest importer of integrated circuits, which total more than \$400 billion annually - more than China's imports of crude oil. By contrast, the EU imports only about €50 billion worth of chips each year, about the same level as the US.

This points to a fundamental asymmetry. The Chinese economy would be crippled without foreign-made chips, whereas the US and the EU would experience problems only in sectors that rely on the older generation of chips made in China. Moreover, whereas China does not produce most of the advanced chipmaking equipment it would need to develop its own industry, EU exports of such equipment are large enough to cover all of its chip imports.

Two conclusions can be drawn. First, while China has managed to gain dominance in less specialized, more mature industries like electric vehicles, there is no need to fear an imminent Chinese takeover of the semiconductor industry. Second, an uncoordinated subsidy race is tantamount to a competition among different Western suppliers, and when all these subsidized fabs start producing, the price of chips is likely to fall.

As the biggest importer of chips by far, China stands to gain the most from this. A 20% fall in chip prices would reduce China's import bill by \$80 billion annually. Since a large share of the chips China imports are used as inputs in exports of electronic goods (such as smartphones), subsidies for chip production in the US, the EU, and elsewhere amount to implicit support for Chinese exports, courtesy of Western public money.

The uncoordinated chips subsidy race in the West is unnecessary. It is also counterproductive, as it will end up benefiting mainly China.

OPINION

By Imme Scholz

The Sustainability Transformation Needs a New Narrative

BERLIN - In 2015, all 193 members of the United Nations agreed to achieve 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - a broad policy agenda aimed at ending poverty, protecting the planet, and promoting well-being for all - by 2030. Now, eight years on, the UN's Global Sustainable Development Report 2023 (GSDR) warns that the world is far from meeting these targets. Poverty and hunger are increasing, greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions have continued to rise, and, at the current rate of progress, it will take 300 years to achieve gender equality.

The COVID-19 pandemic's devastating social and economic impact certainly pushed us off track, as did the war in Ukraine. But the transformative action required to meet the SDGs has also been lacking. As the GSDR shows, incremental steps and targeted interventions will not suffice. Instead, we need sweeping reforms that pursue several SDGs at once.

According to the GSDR, the sustainability transformation is a process in which new technologies, infrastructure, and decision-making approaches replace old ones, addressing the negative effects of the existing versions and producing better results. This change is usually met with resistance and can lead to conflict, because it has a cost: companies need to find new business models and markets, and workers are forced to retrain and then find new jobs. Policymakers should anticipate and plan for these outcomes.

One such innovation is renewable energy. But in most countries, renewables are a complement rather than replacement for fossil fuels. Making a full switch, however, is necessary to reach net-zero GHG emissions, which the European Union aims to achieve by 2050. In addition to the large-scale deployment of renewables and clean technologies such as electric vehicles, it will be crucial to scale up investment in energy infrastructure, especially in Africa, and improve energy efficiency. Social innovations that emphasize the collective provision and use of space and mobility services can also help reduce energy use.

Sweeping changes are also needed to end hunger and halt biodiversity loss. People in wealthy countries should drastically reduce their meat consumption, adopt plant-based diets, and halve food waste. Globally, agriculture must adopt low-input and multifunctional production systems that preserve land, water, and biodiversity, and the use of persistent pollutants such as heavy metals and plastics must be cut significantly to ensure a healthy environment.

To promote human well-being and inclusion, policymakers must relentlessly pursue gender-equality objectives, which requires strengthening women's legal status and economic autonomy. Moreover, putting a price on carbon in high-emitting countries could generate revenue for a global fund for social protection that low-income countries can use to improve education and health services. This would go a long way toward reducing poverty.

Transformation on this scale will not be easy to achieve. That is where the power of narrative comes in: people must be convinced that these changes are the best way to build a livable future, and that our current trajectory leads only to catastrophic outcomes that threaten human existence.

To shift the narrative, policymakers will have to learn how to shore up and maintain broad-based political and societal support for wholesale change. That means focusing more on common purpose than partisan conflict, developing long-term strategies that can achieve a just green transformation, and being proactive about identifying and resolving conflicts over the distribution of costs. It also means working with civil society, the private sector, and trade unions to identify implementation problems and adjust policies accordingly. Developing partnerships that enable mutual learning and exchange within and across regions can help build this capacity.

Democratic processes are fundamental to designing policies that fairly distribute the costs of transformation. The magnitude of the change required, however, is so enormous that anyone whose business or livelihood is affected will resist reform. Especially in societies with high levels of income and wealth inequality, people are more likely to believe that they will be worse off during such a paradigm shift.

That is why policymakers must put equity and justice at the center of this transformation and commit to transparency and accountability in determining how costs should be shared across different income groups and generations. Monitoring progress against agreed targets, in particular, would enable the public to hold government accountable, strengthening the rule of law and building trust in institutions.

As much as achieving the SDGs depends on democratic consensus, pursuing these radical but necessary reforms could in turn strengthen democracy.



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- Change Management Procedures
- Logical Access Controls
- User Management & Security
- OS Hardening
- Performance, Scalability and Availability

2. Review of IT Processes and IT Management Tools

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- Enterprise Management System
- Change Management
- Incident Management
- Network Management
- Backup & Media Management
- Enterprise Anti-Virus Management
- Vendor & SLA Management

3. Security Management

- Security Equipment Configurations & Policies
- Penetration testing and Vulnerability Assessment (PT / VA) of various security Zones.

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- Network traffic analysis and base lining
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Article

Article

Liberian 2023 Election Campaign Finance Public Disclosure

"Public disclosure of campaign contributions and spending should be expedited so voters can judge for themselves what is appropriate." - Mitch McConnell



J. Patrick Flomo
Columbus, Ohio
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Election Campaign Finance Public Disclosure is a fundamental element for assuring and maintaining election integrity and is the desideratum of the people to have faith in their government.

Elections are the centerpiece of a democratic system because they are a means of allowing the people to control their

government with their votes. However, democracy is in danger when the power to hold elected officials accountable is skewed in favor of a few with a lot of money, especially when the few are not disclosed.

According to Chapter 7: Election Campaign Expenses; Section 7.7: Reports of Contributions and Expenses, of the 1986 Elections Laws of Liberia mandates that the National Elections Commission makes public all campaign expenses, including sources of funding after each electoral cycle. It has been 60 days and counting since the 2023 general elections took place; NEC has yet to make public the cost of the 2023 elections expenses.

In addition to Chapter 7, Section 7.7 of the 1986 Elections Laws, this article on this topic was prompted by the EU's claim that the CDC Party used government revenues to finance its campaign. Moreover, it is rumored that in addition to government material resources, \$50M was used to finance the CDC campaign. In addition, certain Liberians made allegations that the Unity Party campaign was funded by certain foreign entities (aside from Liberians in the Diaspora). In the event that these assertions prove to be true, then they constitute an existential threat to our democratic system. Therefore, the NEC is required (and by law) to provide answers to the public so that conspiracy theories can be avoided. There is therefore an urgent need for an official (NEC) compendium of all candidates' campaign expenditures in the 2023 elections to be made available to universities, newspapers, social media, and other political institutions.

In a knife-edge decision on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, The PEOPLE of the Republic of Liberia, in the runoff presidential election, took the Republic's baton of power from CDC and entrusted it to the Unity Party. This was exercised in a free, fair, and nonviolent election. Currently, the election is considered the most elegant democratic election in 2023 in the West African region. The crown jewel of this election was George Weah's (the incumbent president) decision to concede the election before the final results were announced; a very rare event in African elections.

This is the fifth presidential election since the Liberian civil war ended. Thus, it is now engraved in the country's history books. In anticipation of the inauguration of the new president-elect, Joseph Boakai, there is one salient question that Liberians yearn to be answered -- that is the campaign finance disclosure. In order for us to have a full picture of the campaign financing in the 2023 elections, the National Election Commission (NEC) must provide a compendium report on all political parties, including the runoff presidential election. I think the public has a right to know. With the incumbent conceding before the election result was promulgated, there is no question about ballot fraud or election rigging. But the second most pertinent question is that of the integrity of the election. I think this should be the paramount concern of all people. Since money is the prodigiously spent lifeblood of political campaigns, the people have the right to know the full sources of campaign funding in order to determine the election's integrity, which is vital to the legitimacy of the government-elect.

The 2023 presidential and legislative elections have brought the Unity Party back to power for the third time in 18 years. The first two terms of Unity Party hegemony in Liberia began with Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as the standard-bearer. According to her, corruption in the Liberian government is the equivalent of being a vampire, a blood vacuum that sucks the country's resources to quench the elite's sybaritic lifestyle while the masses live in abject poverty.

On Saturday, January 20, 2024, the Unity Party will take the helm of power for the third time with Joseph Boakai as the standard-bearer. Having described the Liberian government corruption as "cancerous," Boakai has said that corruption has hamstrung the nation in its attempts to modernize.

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Naymote wants 55th Legislature to be robust

By Bridgett Milton

Naymote Partners for Democratic Development is

functional website for access to Legislative activities and introducing a state of the art electronic voting system to

oversight in a thriving democracy, Naymote advocates for legislators to enhance their oversight function. This entails holding the executive branch accountable, diligently monitoring executive functions, maintaining a balance of power, and steadfastly defending the interests of the people”, Mr. Jarwolo added.

He said the core legislative functions of law making, representation, and oversight must consistently uphold the principles of social accountability and efficient delivery of public goods and services.

He explained that after closely monitoring the performance of the 54th Legislature from January 2018 to January 2023, Naymote noted deficiency in oversight functions, resulting in lack of transparency and openness in executive activities, noting that the Legislature failed to hold the executive branch accountable for many of its actions and inactions.

He disclosed that Naymote's observations during this period uncovered the absence of budget performance reports, non-submission of reports by

provide transparent voting records, among others will make the Legislature more citizen centric, accessible, responsible and accountable, thereby fostering a democracy that effectively serves the people.

He said members of the 55th Legislature should champion principles of accountability, transparency, and responsiveness in serving the needs and expectations of the Liberian people.

“Recognizing the pivotal role of robust legislative

calling on the incoming 55th Liberian Legislature to adopt a more robust approach in legislative work to better serve the people. Members of the 55th Legislature officially take office on 15 January 2024.

Speaking in a news conference recently in Paynesville, Executive Director Eddie D. Jarwolo, said implementing institutional reforms to fortify oversight committees, establishing transparent system, launching a



UNDP, LISGIS end multidimensional Poverty Indicator Phase I

By Lincoln G. Peters

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has announced successful conclusion of Phase I of the Validation and Training Workshop and community entry/engagement activities for field data collection, a pivotal step in the establishment of the Community-Based Local Multidimensional Poverty Indicator (CB-LMPI). UNDP in collaboration with the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) achieved this milestone in Local Poverty Measurement with the Completion of the Validation and Training Workshop, and field deployment of digital data collectors to assess multidimensional poverty in selected communities.

The initiative, held from January 3-7, 2024, is supported by the Accelerated Community Development Programme (ACDP) targeting select-electoral districts in Bomi, Bong, Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Lofa, Nimba

and Rivercess counties. A total of 100 participants were targeted for the workshop from ACDP communities and Montserrado County. It is a dynamic process encompassing validation exercises, comprehensive training, rigorous field tests, and insightful feedback sessions with the objective to co-create the data collection instruments, give feedback to communities that were consulted with in terms of what poverty is to them, what causes poverty, how is poverty known, who and where are the poor, what they

do for a living, what to be done to address poverty and what support systems are available.

UNDP Economic Specialist, Stanley Kamara, said the successful completion of these exercises will lead to the production of first ever multidimensional poverty profile for a community or electoral district, paving way for support allocations.

“This initiative epitomizes a collective drive to uplift the livelihoods of marginalized groups within these regions, reduce vulnerabilities and multidimensional poverty using local context and approaches”,

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Gov't urged to introduce career program in schools

By Thomas Domah, Nimba County

The Government of Liberia has been urged to introduce career program in the nation's educational system. An executive of United Bank for Africa (UBA) made the call during the weekend at the 38th Graduation Convocation of the Ganta United Methodist High School in Ganta City, Nimba County.

Serving as Keynote Speaker, Mr. Emmet M. Sanoe said such decision will enable young people graduating from secondary schools to have a fair knowledge of what to aspire for in pursuing college education. He said career program will greatly impact lives of many young people graduating from various high schools across the country.

He notes that most youth leaving secondary school don't

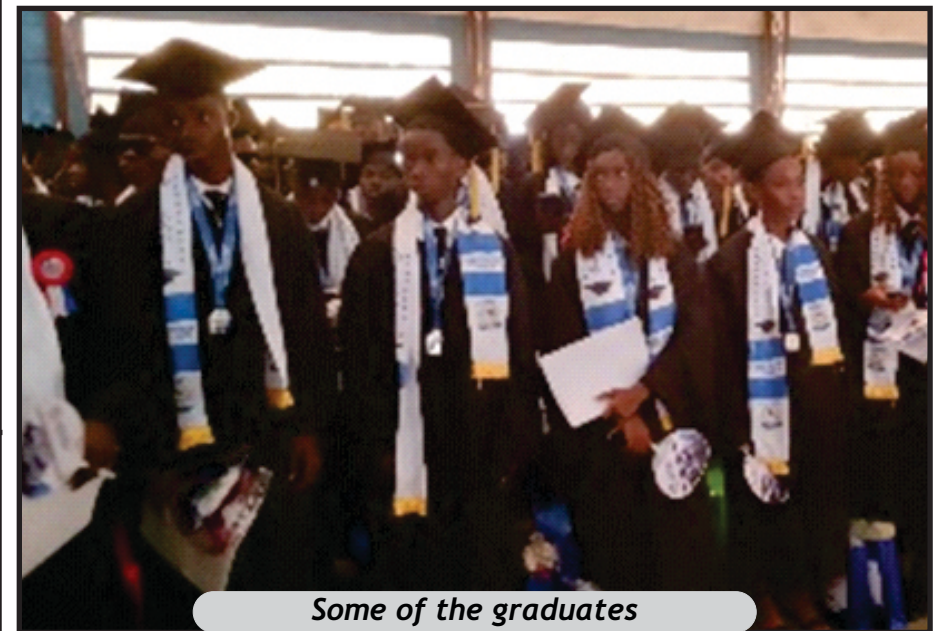
He notes that private institutions are helping government to educate future leaders of Liberia, so they should not be seen as enemy of progress but rather a great help to government.

The event was witnessed by local authorities, including district education officers (DEOs) parents and educators, amongst others.

Nimba County district#7 Representative and Pastor, Roger S.W.Y. Domah, urges the graduates to move ahead in their educational sojourn rather than get involved substance abuse that is destroying many young people in Liberia.

Rep. Domah, also a former principal of the Ganta United Methodist High School, calls on the graduates to be productive in achieving their education goals.

Also speaking, Rev. James Y. Korlorblee, Sr., joined previous speakers in expressing



Some of the graduates

know what profession or discipline to pursue in university, so such program will enable them to better plan for university studies.

He urges parents to continue to be involved with their children's education because children are expected to impact their parents' lives when they're educated.

At the occasion, a total of 144 candidates graduated after completion of their academic studies.

The Director of the Department of General Education of the Liberia Annual Conference, United Methodist Church, Rev. Christopher G. Marshall, expresses disappointment and frustrations in the Weah administration for not providing subsidy to private and mission schools in the country.

“We are helping government to educate the future leaders of this country, but government is looking at us to be their enemy”, he says.

disappointment and frustrations in the government.

“As we anxiously look forward to a new day in Liberia, it's our ardent hope and aspiration that there will be a new Liberia that will prioritize the education of her citizens despite their enrollment in private, mission, community and public schools. We hope that there will be a thorough review of government policies on education, where all schools in Liberia will be treated holistically to avoid segregation in any form between private and public schools, as government is the father for all”, Rev. Korlorblee expresses.

For his part, the Valedictory for the graduating class, Student Nyan Zeantoe, calls on his colleagues to move ahead and combat any bad behavior that want to stop their educational sojourn.

He says they should become agents of change to help their families and parents alongside the country for a better future. Editing by Jonathan Browne

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

UP wants Chief Justice recused

-As Dean's Supreme Court nomination hearing drags

By Lincoln G. Peters

Opposition Unity Party (UP) has demanded Chief Justice Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh's

for a writ of prohibition will be heard after the hearing of the motion seeking the recusal of the Chief Justice. The court deferred the hearing of the matter for another day to be

"We informed the court that the motion for recusal was filed January 8, 2024, [praying] for the recusal of Chief Justice Yuoh from this proceeding," they noted. Reacting to the UP motion, Liberia's Solicitor General Cllr. Nyanati Tuan and two other respondents in the case said the motion for the Chief Justice's recusal was an ambush.

Tuan lamented that they were taken by surprise over the filing of the motion.

"The motion needs to be fundamentally and legally observed at this time because it lacks legal standing," Cllr. Tuan argued. "This motion was never served on us, therefore, we are taken by surprise and we have been ambushed. Until we can be served the motion we can't respond," he added. The State lawyer requested the court not to hear the motion for the Chief Justice's recusal, pleading that it should be denied. Additionally, the second and third respondents in the case said Chapter 8.2 of the Civil Procedure Law of Liberia provides that motion shall be served on the opposing parties in the case. They argued that unfortunately, the UP has not served the respondents in the case with the motion for recusal. After listening to the various arguments and law citations, Chief Justice Yuoh declined to hear the motion for her recusal, saying the court

announced. At the start of the Supreme Court's hearing of UP's petition for a writ of prohibition against a planned Senate confirmation hearing of Cllr. Dean's nomination, the UP notified the Court that it had filed a pending motion for the Chief Justice's recusal. The UP said in its pending motion of recusal, it is requesting the recusal of Chief Justice Yuoh from the case based on some proximity she allegedly has with Minister Dean.

"Petitioner notified this court that there is a motion filed pending before the court and it should be looked at and handled first before looking at the petition," the UP lawyers said.

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CPJ calls for investigation of attack on 5 Kenyan journalists reporting a raid on Nairobi bar

On January 5, agents with Kenya's National Authority for the Campaign Against Drug Abuse and police officers raided the Kettle House Bar and Grill in Nairobi. Bouncers at the club resisted authorities and assaulted at least five journalists and several police officers. (Screenshot: YouTube/Citizen TV Kenya) In response to news reports that private security personnel assaulted and harassed at least five journalists covering a January 5 raid on a bar in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, by police and drug enforcement officers, the Committee to Protect Journalists has urged a transparent and immediate investigation. "Authorities should swiftly investigate assaults on the five journalists attacked during a drug enforcement operation at a Nairobi bar and hold all

owned Nation Media Group, was stabbed twice in the ribs, according to separate reports by the journalists' media outlets. Bonface Okendo, a photographer with privately owned media house The Standard Media Group, sustained injuries to his arms and legs during the attack and had his camera confiscated, according to a report by his outlet, which also said a Standard Media Group camera operator, Jackson Kibet, "managed to escape with few injuries but had his memory card confiscated." The report did not clarify how the journalists were injured.

The Standard reported that Bogita and Okendo were treated in a hospital, and KBC reported on January 6 that Kibira had been treated and discharged from a hospital.

Lawrence Tikolo, a camera operator with the privately owned broadcaster Citizen TV, was



Chief Justice Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh

Cllr. Frank Musa Dean

recusal from the hearing of a challenge against Justice Minister Frank Musa Dean's nomination to serve as an Associate Justice. The UP motion filed Tuesday, 9 January 2023 before the Supreme Court could drag the main court hearing concerning a petition for a writ of prohibition that should conclude before Cllr. Dean would face the Liberian Senate for his confirmation hearing. However, the Supreme Court did not immediately hear the UP's motion for the Chief Justice's recusal because the rival parties in the case had said they were not served with the instrument filed. The petition

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We'll resist corrupt individuals

Accordingly, he says their understanding is, Christopher Bailey was once indicted by the Unity Party government in 2011, for alleged corruption, and the case was to be heard in Margibi County.

According to him, the case is still in court, so appointing him means that the Boakai administration is not ready to bring any significant changes

to the country's leadership.

Chelley notes that the Unity Party's campaign focused on mitigating corruption therefore, it must desist from appointing people who have been accused or indicted for stealing.

"The Southeastern Alliance in support of Unity Party does not support any act of corruption, as such we are

resolved that the group will be drastic on the government about their actions mainly putting people into key positions. Though we supported the Unity Party against CDC, it does not mean we will not hold them accountable for some of the mistakes that may emerge", he sounds. Editing by Jonathan Browne



perpetrators to account through a transparent process. This is the only way to send a message that attacks on the press will not be tolerated," said CPJ Sub-Saharan Africa Representative Muthoki Mumo. "Police and other state authorities should also take steps to ensure that journalists who cover their operations are protected from harm." On January 5, agents with Kenya's National Authority for the Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NACADA) and police officers raided the Kettle House Bar and Grill in Nairobi's Lavington neighborhood as part of a broader crackdown against the smoking of shisha pipes, which may contain tobacco and are illegal in Kenya. Bouncers at the club resisted authorities and assaulted at least five journalists and several police officers, according to those news reports.

Jane Kibira, a camera operator with the state-owned Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), was stabbed in the back, and Boniface Bogita, a photographer with the privately-

punched in the ribs and had his camera "vandalized," the media outlet reported.

In a statement published on X, formerly known as Twitter, NACADA condemned the violence by security officers and said it led to the "hospitalization of some of the victims."

Police officers said they arrested 21 people in connection with the incident, according to the news reports. On January 8, Nicholas Kosgei, the head of enforcement at NACADA, told CPJ that investigations were still ongoing and suspects would be arraigned this week.

KBC reported that police recovered a knife at the scene believed to have been used in the attack.

A person who answered the phone when CPJ called the Kettle House Bar and Grill on Monday night said a manager was not immediately available for comment.

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Français

La juge Scott connaîtra son verdict aujourd'hui

L'ancienne juge en chef du Liberia et trois membres de sa famille doivent être condamnés par un tribunal aujourd'hui, mardi 9 janvier

les accusés ont maintenu leur innocence et ont plaidé non coupables à l'acte d'accusation. La regrettée Charloe est une fille de Cllr. Scott.

Le juge d'instruction du

rapport du Bureau des services correctionnels et de réhabilitation sur l'enquête de leurs comportements afin de prendre une décision.

Les lois libériennes considèrent le meurtre comme une infraction capitale passible d'emprisonnement à perpétuité ou de vingt-cinq ans d'emprisonnement en fonction des circonstances entourant l'affaire.

Au cours du procès, le pathologiste de la défense, le Dr Matthias I. Okoye, a témoigné que les coups de couteau qui ont tué Charloe ont été causés/faits par un homme musclé.

Il a également noté qu'aucun des accusés ne pouvait causer ces blessures.

Le Dr Okoye a expliqué que l'ADN d'un homme a été trouvé sur l'ongle du milieu de la main gauche de la victime.

Néanmoins, le jury a décidé que les accusés étaient coupables du meurtre de Charloe.

Leur procès est intervenu après que le maire sanctionné de Monrovia et secrétaire général du parti au pouvoir, Jefferson Koijee, a nié avoir ordonné l'attaque brutale au cours de laquelle Charloe a été assassinée.

L'ancien président de la Commission Vérité et Réconciliation du Liberia (TRC), Cllr. Jerome Verdier, a

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott

Late Charloe

2024, quelques semaines après que les jurés les ont reconnus coupables de meurtre.

Onze des douze jurés du panel ont convenu, par un verdict rendu le jeudi 21 décembre 2023, que Cllr. Scott et Gertrude Newton, Alice Johnson et Rebecca Youdeh Wisner étaient responsables du meurtre de Charloe Musu.

Tout au long du procès,

Tribunal pénal "A", Roosevelt Z. Willie, devrait prononcer la sentence des accusés à l'issue de leur procès.

Après le verdict du jury le mois dernier, la défense a annoncé un appel devant la Cour suprême, et il est rapporté qu'une requête en cinquante exemplaires a été déposée auprès de la Cour suprême pour contester la décision.

Le tribunal devrait prononcer la sentence des accusés après un

Des militants de la CDC s'en prennent à Chambers

Un groupe pro-gouvernemental soutenant la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC) au pouvoir est mécontent des propos du président sortant de la Chambre des représentants, Bhofal Chambers, contre le vice-président, Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa. Le vice-président de la Chambre, M. Koffa, représentant du comté de Grand Kru et fidèle de la CDC, cherche à remplacer son patron, M. Chambers, lors de l'élection à la présidence de la Chambre prévue plus tard ce mois-ci.

Le groupe, sous la bannière "CDCians Deserve Better Revolution" ("Les membres de la CDC méritent une meilleure révolution"), s'est opposé aux récentes accusations portées par le président Chambers contre Cllr. Koffa.

Le groupe affirme que sa quête est de défendre les bons principes de la démocratie et de promouvoir l'image de tous les membres de la CDC, au Liberia et à l'étranger, en particulier les partisans de longue date du parti au pouvoir.

Par l'intermédiaire de son président national, Tuss Kezeli, le groupe a déclaré que la récente attaque de Bhofal Chambers contre Koffa serait une tentative présumée de détourner

le représentant du district électoral n°1 du comté de Grand Kru de son ambition de devenir président de la Chambre.

Kezeli a expliqué plus en détail le mécontentement du groupe à l'égard du président Chambers lors d'une conférence de presse tenue dans le bourg de Kru Town, sur l'île de Bushord, le lundi 8 janvier 2024.



Speaker Bhofal Chambers

Éditorial

Élire un président centré sur le peuple

Les législateurs de Capitol Hill se préparent à élire un président qui dirigera la prochaine 55e Assemblée législative. La course à la présidence se joue entre le vice-président sortant, Me J. Fonati Koffa, et le représentant Richard Nagbe Koon du district n° 11 du comté de Montserrado.

L'élection vise à remplacer le président sortant Bhofal Chambers, qui a perdu son district dans le comté de Maryland lors des élections du 10 octobre 2023.

Alors que les législateurs se préparent à voter le 15 janvier 2024, nous les exhortons à élire le bon candidat qui servira l'intérêt public. Ceci est important pour maintenir la doctrine de la séparation des pouvoirs et promouvoir le bien-être des citoyens.

Cela ne signifie pas pour autant que quiconque sortira vainqueur de l'élection de président devra être hostile ou combatif envers l'exécutif. Il doit y avoir une forte coordination avec les deux autres branches du gouvernement pour que la nation aille de l'avant en douceur.

Le président doit d'abord promouvoir l'intérêt du peuple avant d'exercer la loyauté envers son parti afin de garder la tête froide. Ce faisant, il se concentrera sur le tableau d'ensemble qu'est le Liberia.

Les législateurs qui voteront devraient rechercher ces qualités et plus encore chez les candidats avant de prendre une décision sur qui élire. Une personne ne doit pas être élue simplement sur la base de l'amitié.

Un président qui défendra les intérêts du Liberia s'en sortira mieux. Il devrait être capable de naviguer dans les cycles diplomatiques pour gagner la confiance et attirer des investissements étrangers dans le pays qui créeront des emplois pour les Libériens.

Il devrait connaître les besoins du peuple en dehors de sa circonscription immédiate et être capable d'influencer ses collègues pour qu'ils agissent.

Le président détient un tel pouvoir, mais il ne doit pas se laisser griser par celui-ci, ce qui pourrait le mener à sa perte. En d'autres termes, le pouvoir doit être exercé avec discernement.

Enfin, le président doit être quelqu'un qui défend la transparence et la responsabilité dans ses relations publiques et privées afin de commander le respect. Que ce soit Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa ou le représentant Richard Nagbe Koon, ces caractéristiques devraient être celles de tout candidat qui émergera en tant que président de la 55e législature pour présider aux affaires du peuple libérien.

J'espère que cette traduction est fidèle au texte original. N'hésitez pas à me faire savoir si vous avez d'autres questions.

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Français

Starts from page 8 **La juge Scott**

accusé Koijee d'avoir prétendument ordonné à Varlee Telleh, un responsable de la police municipale de Monrovia, de mener l'attaque.

Koijee et Telleh ont tous deux nié l'allégation selon laquelle ils étaient responsables de l'attaque à la résidence de Cllr. Scott à Brewerville.

Cllr. Scott a déclaré qu'elle avait signalé aux autorités policières deux incidents d'attaques à son domicile, mais qu'aucune mesure n'avait été prise avant le troisième incident qui a conduit au meurtre de Charloe.

Cependant, Cllr. Scott et trois membres de sa famille ont été inculpés par les procureurs libériens pour le meurtre de Charloe.

Après le procès qui a commencé en août de cette année, la délibération du jury a duré moins de trente minutes pour que 11 membres du panel trouvent les accusés coupables.

Un des jurés a voté que Cllr. Scott et ses coaccusés n'étaient pas coupables.

La majorité des jurés ont déclaré que leur décision était basée sur les preuves présentées dans l'affaire et leur enquête à domicile de l'ancienne juge en chef.

Selon eux, les preuves suggéraient qu'il n'y avait pas eu d'effraction dans la maison ou l'enceinte de Cllr. Scott.

"Après examen minutieux des preuves présentées pendant le procès, les jurés conviennent unanimement par les présentes que les accusés sont adjoints coupables des crimes de meurtres, de conspiration criminelle et de fausses déclarations aux agents de la force publique en ce 21st Day of December 2023", dit le verdict.

Suite à de multiples accusations de la police concernant le meurtre de sa fille Charloe Musu, Cllr. Scott et trois membres de sa famille ont passé la nuit en prison le mardi 20 juin 2023.

La Police Nationale du Liberia (LN) les a accusés de meurtre, de conspiration criminelle et de l faux témoignage sur le meurtre brutal de Charloe.

Leurs accusations font suite à des mois d'enquête policière sur le meurtre de Charloe.

Le juge Roosevelt Z. Willie du tribunal pénal "A", recevant le verdict du jury, a déclaré les accusés coupables.

"Les jurés du procès sont revenus avec un verdict de leur salle de délibération. La loi stipule que les jurés qui entrent dans la salle doivent être au nombre de 12. Si neuf ou plus d'entre eux reviennent avec un verdict de culpabilité ou d'innocence, c'est ce verdict qui fait foi", a déclaré le juge Willie.

"En ce qui concerne ce verdict rendu par les jurés du procès, ils sont revenus avec une condamnation des accusés. Les accusés sont par la présente déclarés coupables", a-t-il déclaré.

L'accusation a accepté le verdict des jurés du procès, mais les avocats de la défense ont pris une exception et ont promis de se rendre à la Cour suprême pour examiner la décision des jurés.

Réagissant au verdict du jury, le porte-parole de la famille Scott, M. Nathaniel S. Toes, Jr., a rejeté le verdict des jurés, le qualifiant de criminel.

"Personne ne va accepter un processus caractérisé par la corruption et des activités criminelles. Il est clair que les jurés ont été corrompus et manipulés", a-t-il allégué sans fournir de preuve.

"Vous étiez là lorsque le procureur général du Liberia a été accusé d'avoir manipulé les jurés et qu'il a admis avoir visité leur quartier, mais a déclaré qu'il n'avait pas interagi avec eux", a expliqué Toes.

"Avez-vous demandé pourquoi le procureur en chef a été prié de quitter la procédure ?" a-t-il noté.

Selon lui, les officiers qui ont révélé la visite du procureur général ont été remplacés par de nouveaux officiers.

Il a déclaré qu'ils ne feraient pas de compromis parce que les accusés sont innocents.

"Je ne suis pas déçu, mais je sais que le processus a été caractérisé par la fraude et la criminalité. Je sais qu'au lieu de la justice, nous avons eu de l'injustice. Nous allons nous rendre à la Cour suprême. Si la décision de la Cour suprême ne nous satisfait pas, nous irons à la Cour de la CEDEAO."

Les 3,5 millions alloués aux sessions spéciales sont légitimes, selon Conmany Wesseh



Le sénateur sortant du comté de Rive Gee, Conmany B. Wesseh, a défendu le montant de 3,5 millions de dollars US alloué à la 54e législature nationale pour les frais de session spéciale.

Selon le sénateur Wesseh, les 3,5 millions de dollars accordés à la législature pour la session spéciale sont légaux et constitutionnels, et constituent une pratique normale au sein de la législature.

S'exprimant sur la Spoon Conversation durant le week-end, il a déclaré qu'il y a toujours des controverses à leur sujet lorsqu'il s'agit d'argent légitime qui leur est dû.

Selon lui, lorsque l'exécutif convoque la législature en session spéciale pour discuter de questions urgentes, il est normal qu'il prenne en charge leurs frais. Mais si la législature elle-même a signé une résolution pour revenir, il n'y a pas de rémunération pour cela.

"Lorsque quelqu'un se trouve dans un endroit éloigné et que vous lui dites de venir, vous devez payer ses billets et ses frais, et c'est de là que vient cet argent. Mais aucune de ces choses n'a été payée. Vous nous dites de faire une fleur au peuple libérien. Je veux voir le jour où, lorsque vous êtes sur le point de toucher votre salaire en Amérique, vous le donnez aux pauvres en Amérique", a noté le sénateur Wesseh.

"Vous avez eu une partie de ces 3,5 millions ? Il y a une

tendance, en particulier de la part de l'exécutif, à donner une impression au public qu'ils paient quelque chose qui est légitimement dû. Au cours des six derniers mois, nous avons droit à du carburant ou de l'essence, mais pendant les six derniers mois, nous n'en avons pas reçu. C'est légitime et budgétisé", a-t-il noté.

Il a ajouté que la session spéciale convoquée par le président était destinée à débattre du budget, ce qui a été fait, ainsi que d'autres questions nationales.

En attendant, le législateur du comté de Rive Gee a indiqué que si le président George M. Weah l'avait écouté, il aurait pu éviter certaines des difficultés qu'il a rencontrées.

Selon lui, les personnes qu'il a conseillées et avec lesquelles il a travaillé qui l'ont écouté ont réussi dans leur service au Liberia, notamment l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf et le Dr Amos C. Sawyer.

Il a ajouté que même les membres du cabinet du président Weah n'avaient pas accès à lui, car il y avait un énorme protocole autour de lui qui rendait difficile de le conseiller.

"Les problèmes que le président Weah a aujourd'hui, il les a cherchés et les a trouvés lui-même. Son recrutement était basé sur l'ignorance, l'arrogance et la corruption. Ces trois choses ont endommagé l'administration du président Weah. La clé de ses nominations, il cherchait ces trois choses et donc, il ne les a pas combattues et ne pouvait pas les combattre", a-t-il déclaré.

"Le président Weah m'a demandé quand nous avons parlé pour la dernière fois. Une fois, nous nous sommes rencontrés dans un hôtel local, la seule chose qu'il ait pu me dire était comment il s'organisait pour me faire sortir du Sénat, qu'il allait mettre un jeune homme contre moi, et le jeune homme était assis là. C'est le genre de conversation que nous avons eue", a-t-il noté.

Côte d'Ivoire : des habitants dénoncent des démolitions abusives en lien avec la CAN



En Côte d'Ivoire, les autorités du district autonome d'Abidjan ont annoncé, samedi 6 janvier, aux habitants du quartier précaire de Boribana qui occupent illégalement le domaine public, selon le gouvernement, qu'ils seraient « déguerpis », le lundi 8 janvier et chassés de ce vaste terrain qui se trouve aux abords du Quatrième pont d'Abidjan. Samedi, les quelque 28 000 habitants de Boribana ont réuni la presse pour annoncer qu'ils refusaient la destruction, sans compensation, d'un quartier précaire qui existe depuis plus de 60 ans. Ils soupçonnent les autorités de vouloir « nettoyer » la ville avant le lancement de la CAN, qui doit débuter dans six jours. Dans le sous-quartier de Boribana, les petites maisons aux toits de tôle sont désormais coincées entre la lagune Ebrié

et l'imposant Quatrième pont qui doit ouvrir à la circulation dans les prochains jours. Parmi les 28 000 habitants, beaucoup y sont nés, y ont grandi et ont passé leur scolarité. L'annonce des services du ministre-gouverneur Cissé Baongo de détruire le quartier dans les prochaines 72 heures, a créé un vif émoi.

« Personne ne décide de naître pauvre » « Humainement parlant, ce n'est pas possible. Même un animal, quand on veut le déplacer, entretenir son enclos, il faut trouver un point de chute d'abord. Nous sommes des humains, nous avons des droits, nous sommes des Ivoiriens, nous sommes nés ici, personne ne décide de naître pauvre. On n'a pas d'endroit où aller, on va aller où ? C'est la question qui est là. Nous allons rester ici. S'ils veulent nous enterrer ici, ils nous enterreront ici. Ce qui est sûr, c'est que nous, nous allons rester ici », s'indigne Ignécin Adama, père de famille de 51 ans. « Nous avons essayé d'expliquer cela à la police. Nous avons essayé de rentrer en contact avec les autorités du district d'Abidjan. Personne ne nous a écoutés et on n'a pu joindre personne », alerte de son côté Keïta Moribo, représentant du quartier.

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Visa-free regimes to bolster African tourism growth in 2024

As more countries tear up visa requirements, major African markets are beginning to record rising numbers in Intra-Africa tourism, a trend expected to extend through 2024.

Conrad Onyango, bird story agency

African countries are set to record an increase in tourism numbers in 2024, as more countries continue to open their borders to other African countries by abolishing visa requirements.

In 2023, most African countries made significant strides to liberalize their visa regimes, with Rwanda and Kenya being the latest to completely remove visa requirements for all African travellers, joining Gambia, Benin, and Seychelles.

Kenya's transition towards a visa-free regime saw the country's Immigration Department receive almost ten thousand applications for the new Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) allowing foreign nationals to visit or transit through the country by air, in the first week of January 2024 alone.

The Immigration Department was processing the applications based on the travel schedule submitted by each applicant, according to Kenya's Immigration Principal Secretary Julius Bitok.

Kenya expects to more than double its tourism numbers from 2 million visitors to 5 million arrivals every year, thanks to the new system.

The African Development Bank's 2023 Africa Visa Openness Index, reports that 50 countries have now improved, or maintained, their openness scores

The increase has been attributed to the rise in country-to-country and, in some instances, multi-country agreements to completely remove or ease visa restrictions.

A concerted effort by African countries to promote the free movement of people across the continent is seen growing in the new year, to bolster tourism and trade.

"Sustaining the momentum on visa liberalisation is crucial for realising the vision of the 'Africa We Want.' Embracing liberal visa policies will not only facilitate seamless travel but also contribute significantly to enhanced trade in goods and services, cross-border investment and shared prosperity," said African Development Bank Group Vice President, Regional Development, Integration and Business Delivery, Marie-Laure Akin-Olugbade.

According to the report, there have been significant improvements in visa openness all over the continent, including in regional blocs like the Southern Africa Development Co-operation and East African Community which recorded slight reductions in overall scores in 2023.

Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and Angola are among the countries in the bloc that made strides in opening up their borders for travellers.

In October of 2023, Angola expanded its visa-free regime to include several African countries. In March of the same year, Botswana and Namibia agreed to allow citizens from each other's countries to cross their borders using just a national identity card instead of a passport.

Later in December, Zimbabwe and Botswana signed an agreement allowing their citizens to stay for up to 90 days each year in either country without needing a passport, visa, or work permit.

Apart from Kenya and Rwanda, which have recently eliminated the need for Visas, Uganda and DRC have also agreed to abolish visa requirements for each other's citizens. South Sudan shifted to a visa-on-arrival regime for the citizens of Burundi and Rwanda. All of which offer greater integration within the East Africa Community region.

A growing openness to African travellers is reflected in the already rising number of Africans

that visited neighbouring countries in 2023, according to official government data from Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania.

A survey by Kenya's Tourism Research Institute shows African nationals visiting Kenya in 2023 picking up a share of 42.19% in 2023, compared to 34.47% for European, 11% for North America and 9% for Asian nationals, respectively.

According to the Tourist Exit Survey Report 2023, the primary reason (39.4%) for visiting the destination was identified as leisure, holidays, and recreational activities, with only 27.2% choosing business-related activities and 20.6% travelling to visit friends and family.



"The survey also revealed that apart from the primary purpose of travel the respondents also engaged in other activities. Shopping was the other major activity for the respondents on transit and those seeking medical services at 54% and 50% respectively," said Tourism Research Institute researchers.

Tanzania's National Bureau of Statistics 2023 data, showed that the majority of African arrivals came from Kenya with 128,753, followed by Burundi (69,505), Zambia (38,394), Rwanda (37,269) and Uganda (28,594) - between January and August.

During this period, arrivals from Kenya were more than those from the United States of America with 84,541 and France (72,009). Arrivals from Burundi were more than those from Germany (57,798), the United Kingdom (51,505) or Italy (51,056).

A similar trend was witnessed in South Africa with data from Statistics South Africa showing that tourists from the rest of Africa constituted a significant 75.8% of all arrivals, equating to 3.6 million tourists during the January to July 2023 period, despite the negative attitudes towards other African nationals, a mentality referred to locally as xenophobia.

Within the African region, Zimbabwe and Kenya stood out for their remarkable growth. Zimbabwe saw an exceptional 115.6% increase in tourist arrivals, totalling 1.2 million, while Kenya recorded a 110.2% surge during the period under review, compared to 2022.

Demand for leisure travel in Africa will remain robust in 2024, according to yet another report. The WTM Global Travel Report shows that nine out of Africa's 10 largest domestic leisure travel markets are likely to enjoy greater amounts of domestic travel spend in 2024 compared to 2019.

"The outlook for leisure travel demand in 2024 remains robust. In the post-pandemic era, travel demand has persistently defied the macroeconomic backdrop upon which it typically relies," the report adds.

Egypt will retain its position as the largest destination for inbound luxury travel receipts, with inbound leisure spending expected to return US\$12.2 billion to the economy, according to WTM.

Mauritius is anticipated to jump up the rankings table, from seventh in 2019 to the sixth-largest inbound market in Africa in 2024. Ethiopia is expected to enter the top 10 as the eighth largest destination for domestic travel spend in 2024, up from 12th in 2019. It will likely push Angola from eighth in 2019 to 10th in 2024, and Tunisia from 10th in 2019 to 11th in 2024.

"Consumers have exhibited a propensity to prioritise spending on travel above other categories of discretionary spend since travel resumed. With significant excess savings still available to some households there is demand still to be realised," the WTM report says.

Other top luxury destinations in Africa are South Africa and Kenya. Nigeria is the only market where domestic demand is expected to remain below 2019 levels in 2024.

bird story agency

Cllr. Scott gets life imprisonment

By Lincoln G. Peters

Liberia's former Chief Justice Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott and three of her family members have been sentenced to lifetime imprisonment weeks after jurors found them guilty of

defense lawyers have taken exception to the ruling and announced an appeal to the Supreme Court of Liberia. Eleven out of twelve trial jurors had earlier concurred through a verdict handed Thursday, 21

Change (CDC) secretary general Jefferson Kojee denied ordering the brutal attack in which Charloe was murdered. Liberia's former Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) boss Cllr. Jerome Verdier accused Kojee of allegedly ordering Monrovia City Police official Varlee Telleh to carry out the attack.

Both Kojee and Telleh have denied the allegation that they were responsible for the attack at Cllr. Scott's Brewerville residence. Cllr. Scott said she had reported to police authorities two incidents of attacks at her home, but no action was taken before the third incident led to Charloe's murder.

However, Cllr. Scott and her three family members were instead indicted by Liberian prosecutors for Charloe's murder. Speaking in an interview with journalists after the court's sentence, defense lawyer Atty. Dickson Tamba expressed disappointment, arguing that the doubts in the case are numerous. "The doubts in [the case] are numerous. There were numerous doubts in this case. Scientific doubts were created," Atty. Dickson lamented.

"The Liberian pathologist conducted their autopsy and said that he found a male chromosome, but in his judgment, it was herniate bacterial. After scientific examination, a foreign pathologist found that the DNA of a male was in the deceased. And so, we are taking an appeal to the Supreme Court, and we believe this decision will be reversed," he noted.



Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott

Late Charloe

the murder of Charloe Musu. Presiding Criminal Court "A" Judge Roosevelt Z. Willie sentenced Cllr. Scott and Gertrude Newton, Alice Johnson, and Rebecca Youdeh Wisner on Tuesday, 9 January 2024.

Reading an over forty-page ruling, Judge Willie confirmed the jury decision against the accused and sentenced them in keeping with the facts and circumstances as determined by the eleven jurors. The judge ordered the defendants' lifetime imprisonment in recognition of Liberia's abolition of the death sentence against those found guilty of murder.

"...The defendants - Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott, Gertrude Newton, Alice Johnson, and Rebecca Youdeh are hereby sentenced to life imprisonment for the death and murder of Charloe Musu," Judge Willie ruled. But the

December 2023 that Cllr. Scott and her three family members were responsible for Charloe Musu's murder. The late Charloe is Cllr. Scott's daughter.

Throughout the trial, the accused maintained their innocence and pleaded not guilty to the indictment. During the trial, the defense lawyer's pathologist Dr. Matthias I. Okoye testified that the stabbings that killed Charloe were caused/done by a muscular male. He also noted that none of the defendants could cause these wounds. Dr. Okoye detailed that there was a foreign DNA of a male found in the middle fingernail of the left hand of the victim.

Notwithstanding, the jury and the judge decided that the accused were guilty of Charloe's murder. Their trial came after sanctioned Monrovia Mayor and ruling Coalition for Democratic

UP wants Chief Justice recused

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takes record as to the time the motion was filed.

"This court ... observed from the record that the said motion to recuse was filed ... one day before the assigned hearing of the petitioner's writ of prohibition," she said.

"This court says that notice is a cardinal principle of law which in this case is lacking. Hence, this matter is hereby deferred for hearing for another day to be announced by this court and is hereby so ordered," she noted. Lawyers of Liberia's Supreme Court bar appeared before the high court on Tuesday to debate Justice Minister Dean's nomination to serve as an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court bench.

Outgoing President George Manneh Weah nominated Cllr. Dean for the top job, but the opposition Unity Party challenged a planned Senate confirmation hearing for Cllr. Dean.

The Court halted the planned Senate hearing pending the outcome of the matter brought before it. There are questions if there is any vacancy on the Supreme Court bench to warrant Cllr. Dean's

request. Cllr. Dean's nomination has stirred controversies across Liberia with less than a month for Mr. Weah's administration to expire. According to the Executive Mansion, President Weah granted Associate Justice Nagbe's early retirement request, a move also criticized by some members of the public.

Associate Justice Nagbe was nominated by President Weah and confirmed by the Liberia Senate in August 2018, replacing retired Associate Justice Philip A. Z. Banks.

Through its National Chairman Rev. Luther Tarpeh, the National Secretary General, Amos Tweh, and all other officials, the Unity Party filed a petition for the writ of prohibition against the confirmation of Minister Dean. Following the Unity Party's petition, the court ordered the leadership of the Senate, Cllr. Dean and all those under his authority ... to appear and file their returns and brief before the full bench of the court before 8 January 2024. The court ordered them to



Chief Justice Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh

Cllr. Frank Musa Dean

nomination by incumbent President Weah. Dean is supposed to replace ailing Associate Justice Joseph Nagbe, but the latter's request for an early retirement is being debated by those who say he has not served the required time to be granted this

show cause why UP's petition should not be granted. The court instructed the Senate to stay all further procedures or actions pending the determination of the matter.

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Naymote wants 55th

ministries, agencies, and commissions to the legislature, no access to voting records of legislators, absence of a functional website for public engagement, and the non-availability of annual reports.

"Notably, during the 2018-2022 period, the Legislature received appropriations exceeding US\$228 million without an accompanying audit report on fund management."

He noted that Naymote is committed to contributing to legislative strengthening by creating a Legislative Engagement Guide (LEG) that will enhance involvement of

civil society organizations and citizens in the legislative process.

Additionally, Naymote pledges to host town hall meetings which are expected to bring legislators closer to the people, support youth legislative dialogues, provide training for legislative staff, monitor legislative engagements, and improve media engagement with legislator.

At the same time the group has affirmed its commitment to vigilant monitoring of policy responses, coupled with ongoing assessment of political accountability. This commitment will result in

development and publication of policy briefs and periodic reports, potentially on a quarterly and yearly basis.

According to Mr. Jarwolo, these publications will meticulously detail performance of elected officials to enhance transparency and accountability in government for the benefit of the broader population. Editing by Jonathan Browne

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Starts from page 6 UNDP, LISGIS end multidimensional

he stated. Mr. Kamara explained that the successful completion of Phase I of the Validation and Training Workshop represents a momentous leap toward establishing robust local multidimensional poverty indicators, saying that Phase II will be after the Household survey.

According to him, these indicators will play a pivotal role in shaping more inclusive and well-informed development policies that cater to the diverse needs of communities. He said the workshop sought to equip participants with digital data collection tools and field data collection protocols.

Giving the primary objective of the symposium, he detailed that it

aims to lay the groundwork for designing a robust household survey instrument tailored for data collection across all eight counties. He said that supported by the Regional Service Center, the initiative signifies a concerted effort to fortify local capacities for sustainable development strategies across Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. He disclosed that the mobilization and community entry activities were part of the workshop's aims and field staff are expected to engage with various households in their assigned locations, collect household data to summit by 15th January. Editing by Jonathan Browne

We'll resist corrupt individuals

-Pro-Boakai group sounds a caveat

By Lincoln G. Peters

A Pro-Boakai movement, Southeastern Alliance for President-elect Joseph Nyumah Boakai, vows to resist appointment of corrupt



individuals in the incoming Unity Party-led government. The group's comment is in reaction to a purported list published recently, containing names of individuals that are expected to be appointed to key positions in the new government. President-elect Boakai and Vice President-elect Jeremiah Kpan Kung will be officially inaugurated on 22nd January 2024

to commence work. But, addressing a news conference Tuesday, 9th January in Monrovia, Chairperson Watson Chelley, said they have learned that

some individuals that were accused and indicted by previous administration, are parading the corridor and holding meetings, seeking appointment in the Boakai-Koung administration. He cautions that President-elect Boakai might land wrongly, if thorough examination is not done to ascertain whether those being vetted are free of

corruption. He notes that a government that promises transparency and accountability to the Liberian people should be prepared to do the right things and avoid early mistakes.

"We the Southeastern Alliance for the election of Amb. Boakai -Koung are calling on the Unity Party government to do away with the appointment of individuals accused or indicted in the past for act of corruption. Anything contrary to what the UP promised during the election, we want to make it categorically clear that we will resist corrupt individuals who may be appointed in the coming days", he warns. Chelley continues that they are receiving unconfirmed information that former Grand Gede Superintendent, Christopher Bailey, is poised to be appointed as deputy minister for operations at the ministry of internal affairs.

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