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# Early impeachments call for Boakai

**Pres. Boakai**      **Rep. Yekeh Kolubah**

# New LDEA boss leads citywide raids

**Col. Kromah with Suspects**

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# Continental News

## At least 15 dead in Burkina Faso church attack

At least 15 people have been killed and two others injured following an attack on a church in the West African country's capital, Ouagadougou. A statement by the head of the local diocese, Abbot Jean-Pierre

More than a third of Burkina Faso is currently under the control of insurgents.

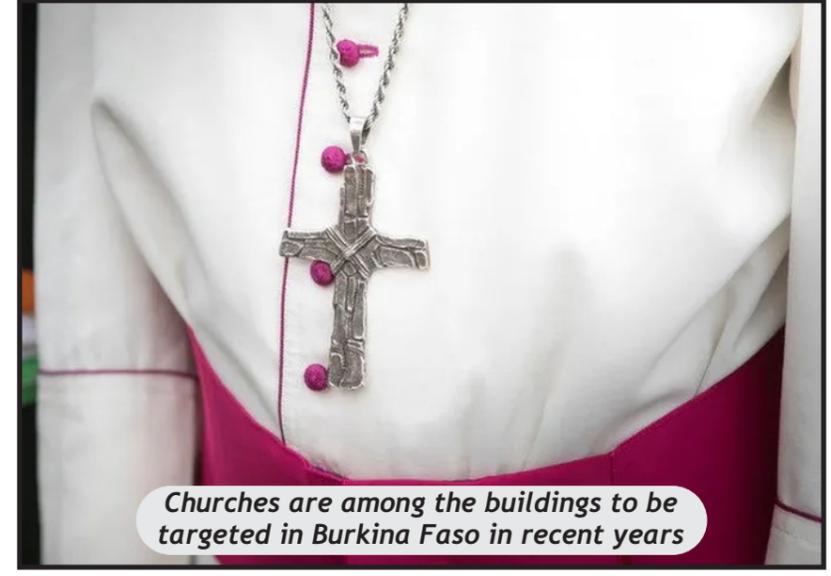
The authorities have been battling Islamist groups linked to al-Qaeda and Islamic State, which have taken over large swathes of land and displaced millions of people in the Sahel region.

In the last three years, churches have been targeted and scores of worshippers killed.

Burkina Faso, which is ruled by a military dictatorship, recently pulled out of the regional political and economic bloc, Ecowas, along with its Sahel neighbours, Mali and Niger.

They cited lack of support from Ecowas in the fight against terrorism as one of the reasons for wanting to exit the union.

The three junta-led countries had already been suspended from the bloc, which had been urging them to return to democratic rule. Earlier this month, Burkina Faso's military-backed president Ibrahim Traoré said Russian troops could deploy to fight jihadists in the West African country if needed. BBC



Churches are among the buildings to be targeted in Burkina Faso in recent years

Catholic church in north-eastern Burkina Faso on Sunday. It took place during Sunday worship in Essakane village in Oudalan province - close to the border with Mali. Few details have been given. A church official indicated the gunmen were suspected Islamist militants.

There was no immediate response from the authorities

Sawadogo, said 12 people were killed instantly, while three others died at the hospital. "In this painful circumstance, we invite you to pray for those who died in faith, for the healing of the wounded, and for the consolidation of grieving hearts," the statement reads. It is the latest atrocity in the country to be attributed to Islamist militants.

## General Strike Brings Guinea's Capital to a Halt

Guinea's capital came to a standstill Monday on the first day of an open-ended general strike amid growing social tensions and the absence of a transitional government. A confederation of the main unions has urged public and private sectors to strike for the release of a prominent media activist, to cut food prices and end media censorship. "This strike is welcome, it will force the authorities to understand that they are not gods on earth," a ministry official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said. "I'm on strike because Guineans are sick of the artificially created suffering, maintained by our leaders."

It comes a week after the military junta unexpectedly dissolved the transitional government - which had been in office since July 2022 - without providing a reason.

Internet restrictions imposed three months ago were lifted last week, a day after the unions announced plans for the strike.

Schools, shops and roads were empty early Monday in Conakry, an AFP correspondent saw.

Young people set up

barricades on some of the main roads late Sunday.

Police were keeping a low-profile presence around midday Monday.

The unions have called for the immediate and unconditional release of Sekou Jamal Pendessa, secretary general of the Union of Press Professionals of Guinea (SPPG), who was arrested at the end of January for "participating in an unauthorised protest."

Television channels have also been removed and radio frequencies disrupted in a crackdown on media outlets.

Protests have become rare

under junta leader General Mamady Doumbouya, who took power in a September 2021 coup. He has not spoken publicly since the start of the year. The military leaders banned all demonstrations in 2022 and have arrested a number of opposition leaders, civil society members and the press.

Under international pressure, the junta has promised to hand the reins of government back to elected civilians by the end of 2024, but the opposition has accused it of authoritarian drift. VOA



Map of Guinea, including capital Conakry

## Surge in patriotism as Namibia president laid to rest

A huge crowd has attended the state funeral of Namibian President Hage Geingob following his death at the age of 82 from cancer. Mr Geingob was interred in a mausoleum at Heroes' Acre on the outskirts of the capital, Windhoek, as mourners paid tribute to a man they hailed as a nation-builder and a pan-African hero.

His widow, Monica Geingos, wept as his casket was lowered into his grave.

Mr Geingob's funeral marked the culmination of three weeks of mourning.

Mr Geingob died in hospital on 4 February, with his deputy, Nangolo Mbumba, sworn in as his successor soon afterwards.

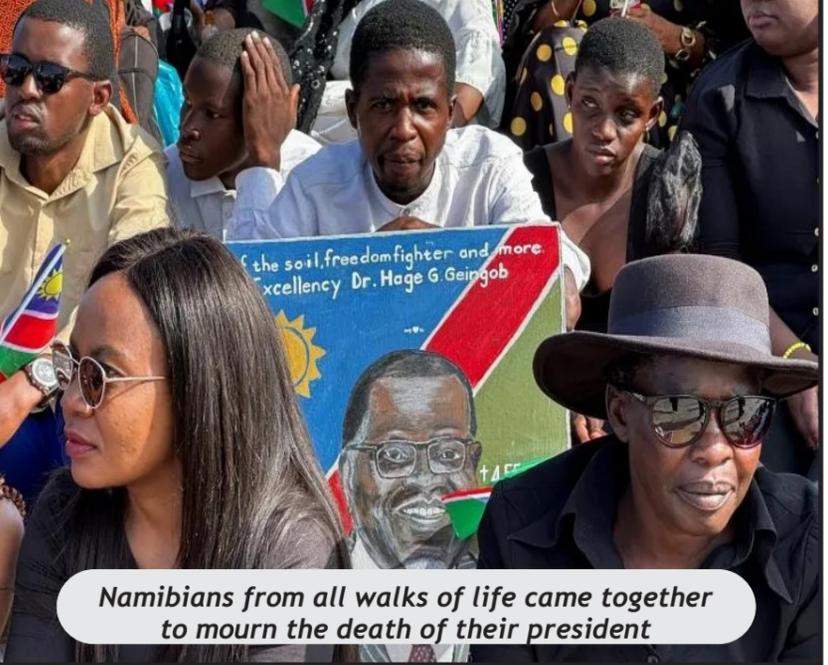
His death led to a surge in patriotism, with Namibians from across the political

president since its independence from South Africa, then under white-minority rule, in 1990. Described as the chief mourner, Mr Mbumba said Mr Geingob was unwavering in his commitment to the nation.

"Your impact on us has been profound, your footprint on this nation is immense. You leave our country in better shape," he said.

Mr Geingob's two predecessors, Sam Nujoma and Hifikepunye Pohamba, attended his burial, along with almost 20 heads of state and government. Germany's President Frank-Walter Steinmeier was among the dignitaries who spoke at Mr Geingob's memorial on Saturday. The privately owned Namibian newspaper quoted him as saying that Germany should apologise for the atrocities it committed in Namibia during colonial rule.

"I believe it is high time to



Namibians from all walks of life came together to mourn the death of their president

divide coming together to mourn.

Thousands of people - many carrying the Namibian flag and draped in the national colours - lined the streets as his casket was driven through Windhoek on Friday and Saturday.

His body lay in state at Independence Stadium, before being taken on Sunday, in a gun-mounted carriage, to Heroes' Acre.

Huge screens were put up so that the public could see his funeral.

The military gave Mr Geingob a 21-gun salute while K-8 fighter jets flew past.

This was the first time Namibia had buried a

tender an apology to Namibia. My only regret is that Geingob will not be there to close the process he started," Mr Steinmeier was quoted as saying. Namibia was under German colonial rule from 1884 till World War One. In 2021, Germany acknowledged committing genocide there.

German colonisers massacred more than 70,000 Herero and Nama people between 1904 and 1908, in what historians consider to be the 20th Century's first genocide. Mr Geingob was first elected president of Namibia in 2015, and had been involved in talks with Germany to secure reparations. He was due to step down later this year, following the end of his two terms. BBC

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# EDITORIAL

## Fight for tenure positions

Holders of tenure positions in government and the Executive Mansion are in words of war about plan by the Presidency to scratch all tenure posts.

President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr., seems resolved in legally undoing or removing all those occupying tenure positions especially, from the previous administration.

Institutions with tenure posts include the General Auditing Commission, Public Procurement and Concessions Commission (PPCC), Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, National Elections Commission (NEC) Liberia Ant-Corruption Commission (LACC), Internal Audit Agency (IAA), Liberia Human Rights Commission, Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) and Civil Service Commission as well as the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA), among others.

The President has already made nominations to several of these positions last week but the news received stiff resistance from those currently occupying tenure offices that the Executive Mansion seeks to replace, prompting the Presidency to put a hold on the process.

Fact of the matter is that these institutions with tenure posts were created by law. But the law says persons occupying each of these offices may be removed for a cause.

Interestingly, the current rigmarole would not have come about if former President George Manneh Weah had sought the approval of the 54th Legislature to remove Cllr. Kla Martin, who Mr. Weah was not comfortable with, from the Liberian Anti-Corruption despite Cllr. Martin's resistance under the law.

He went as far as the Supreme Court of Liberia, and the High Court rendered an opinion that was in favor of the former President, thus setting a precedent that current President Boakai may rely on to boot all those presently in tenure offices out.

We understand that all those appointed by the Executive work at the will and pleasure of the President, but our only qualm is if the Presidency wield so much power to undo or amend the law for his convenience, there is no need for the legislature to pass such law.

Some of these tenure offices are important for check and balance purposes, but if everyone that is appointed in those positions must dance at will and pleasure of the President, then it defeats the objective for which they were created.

As the Executive Mansion and current tenure office holders dig their heels into the ground for a faceoff, we can but only caution all sides to proceed with care to avoid sending a wrong signal.

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# COMMENTARY

By Jean Kaseya,  
Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

## Strengthening Africa's Community Health Programs

**M**ONROVIA/ADDIS ABABA - In 2017, African Union heads of state pledged to deploy two million community health workers (CHWs), recognizing their role in advancing health for all. Seven years on, as African leaders prepare to convene in Addis Ababa, we must reflect on our progress. By 2030, Africa will face a shortage of six million health workers, making CHWs a key component and a fast solution to bridging the continent's health needs. Developing resilient community health-worker programs across Africa has never been more urgent.

We have witnessed how disease outbreaks can plunge a country into darkness - and how the power of CHWs can help pull it back into the light. As Liberia's experience shows, CHWs need adequate resources and financial support to be effective. In the early 2010s, Liberia's efforts to offer primary health care in remote areas faced significant challenges.

There was a shortage of health workers, and where CHWs were deployed, they were under-compensated and did not have the necessary equipment or training to deliver the essential care that was so desperately needed. As a result, different community health initiatives run in parallel by the government and other stakeholders failed to have a significant impact on patients - a common problem in many African countries.

In 2016, the Liberian government launched the National Community Health Assistant Program to address these issues and apply the lessons learned from the Ebola outbreak that began in 2014. With proper supervision, adequate salaries, and enough supplies to reach every household in their communities, CHWs were empowered to provide standardized, integrated primary health-care services. The results speak for themselves. Liberia's 4,000 CHWs now deliver nearly 50% of all reported malaria treatments for children under five and consistently provide access to health services, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Programs that take a similar approach have yielded positive results in other African countries. Since Ethiopia implemented its community-based Health Extension Program, which has deployed 40,000 community health workers, vaccination rates have tripled and child mortality has fallen dramatically. The experience of these and other countries shows that supporting CHWs and integrating them into national health systems can save lives and create livelihoods. It should serve as a guide for expanding community health services across the continent.

A resilient community health workforce is key to overcoming existing and future health challenges in Africa, which currently range from alarming maternal

and infant mortality rates to a high burden of communicable diseases. Equally worrying is the escalating climate crisis, which has underscored the urgency of improving access to care and building health systems that can adapt to a changing environment. Increasing the number of CHWs, and ensuring that they have adequate resources, is one of the most cost-effective and sustainable ways to achieve these goals.

Unfortunately, a daunting \$4.4 billion annual funding gap - compounded by fragmented financial flows - continues to slow our progress toward a healthier, safer, and more prosperous Africa. The solution is to adopt a "one plan, one budget, one report" framework, like that used by Liberia and Ethiopia. With this approach, governments outline their strategies for national community health programs, and partners coordinate resources and technical expertise to reduce the bureaucratic burden.

To that end, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and partners launched the first-ever continental coordination mechanism for community health in November 2023. Encouraging coordination among stakeholders will enable African countries to build effective and efficient CHW programs to tackle the challenges of high-burden communicable diseases such as HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, and non-communicable diseases, as well as to respond better to emergencies, including epidemics and climate shocks.

The Africa CDC remains firmly committed to strengthening the community health workforce, which dovetails with the New Public Health Order - the organization's health-security agenda - and the AU's initiative to deploy two million additional CHWs on the continent. As part of this effort, the Africa CDC has collaborated with Africa Frontline First to mobilize the financing needed to professionalize CHWs.

Last year's Reaching the Last Mile Forum in Dubai was a success on that front: 12 partners committed to accelerating support for professional CHWs. This announcement also included \$900 million from the Global Fund over the next three years, 74% of which is earmarked for Africa.

The private and public actors in Africa must take coordinated action. As heads of state convene for the AU Summit, we urge them to make the development of an integrated professional community health workforce a top priority, with clear metrics of success to enable data and evidence to be shared with member states. This will foster a culture of continuous learning and standardization of CHW programs across Africa.

Community health is the key to a more prosperous, healthier Africa. We must seize the opportunity to train and deploy a robust corps of CHWs.

# OP-ED

By Kenneth Rogoff

## Don't Count on a Soft Landing for the Global Economy

**C**AMBRIDGE - A month into 2024, the consensus forecast for the global economy remains cautiously optimistic, with most central banks and analysts projecting either a soft landing or potentially no landing at all. Even my colleague Nouriel Roubini, famous for his bearish tilt, regards the worst-case scenarios as the least likely to materialize.

The CEOs and policymakers I spoke to during last month's World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos echoed this sentiment. The fact that the global economy did not slip into recession in 2023, despite the sharp rise in interest rates, left many experts upbeat about the outlook for 2024. When asked to explain their optimism, they either cited the US economy's better-than-expected performance or predicted that artificial intelligence would catalyze a much-hoped-for productivity surge. As one finance minister remarked, "If you are not naturally optimistic, you should not be a finance minister."

The world's economists appear to share this outlook. The WEF's Chief Economists Outlook for January 2024 found that while a majority of respondents foresaw a mild global downturn in 2024, most were not overly concerned and viewed the expected slowdown as a healthy correction to the inflationary pressures caused by excessive demand.

Even the disruption to global trade caused by Yemeni Houthi attacks against commercial ships in the Red Sea and the ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza have not dampened the jubilant mood of analysts and business leaders. The US stock market is at record levels, and even the normally conservative International Monetary Fund revised its growth forecasts upward, with the latest World Economic Outlook describing the risks to global growth as "broadly balanced." This characterization marks a significant departure from the cautious tone the IMF typically uses to discourage finance ministers from engaging in unsustainable spending sprees.

In a crucial election year in which voters in dozens of countries - representing half the world's population - will head to the polls, government spending is already expected to surge. In macroeconomics, this phenomenon is known as "political budget cycles": incumbent politicians want to stimulate the economy to improve their chances of being re-elected, so they increase public spending and run larger deficits.

Despite the relatively buoyant consensus, recent developments suggest that the risks to global growth are still tilted to the downside. For starters, I am deeply skeptical of the Chinese government's announcement that its economy grew by 5.2% in 2023.

GDP growth figures have long been a politically charged issue in China, particularly over the past year, as President Xi Jinping consolidated his one-man rule by sacking numerous top officials, including his defense and foreign ministers. With the Chinese economy grappling with deflation, falling property prices, and weak demand, it is increasingly evident that its economic woes are far from over - and that Xi is determined to control the narrative.

The combination of a prolonged economic slowdown and a collapsing real-estate sector could bring China to the brink of a Japan-style "lost decade." The obvious Keynesian solution to the country's slow-moving trainwreck of collapsing real-estate ventures and local government debt is to initiate direct cash transfers to households. But, given that Chinese consumers are more inclined to save (in contrast to their spendthrift American counterparts), and that government debt is already rising rapidly, a debt-deflation spiral seems increasingly likely.

Meanwhile, despite dodging a recession in 2023, European economic growth is widely expected to remain lackluster this year. Moreover, European countries' persistent unwillingness to invest in their own defense suggests that former US President Donald Trump's potential return to the White House in 2025 could necessitate a painful adjustment. Alarming, European leaders do not seem to be preparing for such a scenario, even as the war in Ukraine depletes their ammunition stockpiles faster than they can be replenished.

Europe is also grappling with the adverse economic effects of US President Joe Biden's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which uses tax incentives to lure European companies. While the IRA is ostensibly aimed at accelerating America's green-energy transition, it is essentially a protectionist trade policy. It may have provided the US economy with a short-term boost, but its long-term consequences could mirror those of the 1930 Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, which triggered an international trade war and exacerbated the Great Depression.

Nevertheless, Biden's trade protectionism is mild compared to Trump's plan to impose a 10% tariff on virtually all imported goods, a move that could wreak havoc on the global trading system. European countries are understandably rooting for Biden, who - unlike Trump - has repeatedly reaffirmed his commitment to reining in Russian expansionism.

Alarming, both Democrats and Republicans in the US seem uninterested in cutting government spending, let alone reducing the deficit. Regardless of which party controls Congress after November's election, a deficit-fueled spending spree is all but certain. But if real interest rates remain elevated, as many expect, the government could be forced to choose between deeply unpopular fiscal tightening or pressuring the Federal Reserve to allow another bout of inflation.

Despite the widespread belief that the global economy is headed for a soft landing, recent trends offer little cause for optimism. As the world confronts yet another turbulent year, policymakers and analysts need to bear in mind that a soft landing means little if the runway is in an earthquake zone.

# OPINION

By Célestin Monga

## How to Finance Higher Education in Africa

**C**AMBRIDGE - On-campus activities at Senegal's Université Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), one of Africa's largest institutions of higher education, have been suspended since last June, when students protested violently against the jailing of the country's main opposition leader. The prolonged closure has made life difficult for UCAD students, many of whom normally reside on campus, and disrupted operations, because online classes are not widely available.

The learning gaps that have become visible are exacerbating inequities, fueling social tensions, and threatening the reputation of Senegal's higher-education system. Calls to reopen UCAD have grown louder, but worsening political conditions - led by the postponement of the presidential election - all but preclude it.

UCAD is far from the only African institution of higher learning in crisis. Recent strikes by students and teacher unions have affected public colleges and universities in Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, and other countries. These strikes reflect diverse agendas, from political activism to demands for better pay, higher cost-of-living allowances, improved working conditions, and more financial aid for students.

The irony is that most students at public colleges and universities in Africa receive free on-campus housing and monthly grants, making them a privileged group, and the changes they advocate seldom address the biggest problems facing Africa's colleges and universities. For starters, benefit-incidence analyses and public-expenditure reviews often show that students from the poorest families rarely enroll in tertiary education, implying a need to redesign admissions criteria.

African colleges and universities also tend to be poorly resourced, saddled with colonial-era curricula, ineffective at monitoring the quality of learning, and subject to bureaucratization and politicization. Government interference in their management and pedagogical choices also diminishes their effectiveness.

Perhaps the most important challenge facing African higher education, in the context of the continent's rapid demographic growth, weak public finances, and low private incomes, is financing. There are three possible revenue sources, the most obvious being tuition fees. Moreover, governments can provide support in the form of land, capital grants for infrastructure, direct budget allocations for recurrent expenditures, subsidies for scholarships, and low-interest-rate loans. Lastly, colleges and universities can generate their own funding through endowments, fundraising campaigns, and income earned from research, patents, and consultancy services.

The three main university-funding models correspond to these three revenue sources. A fees-based system like that in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, which depends on a mix of public and private student loans, could be justified in Africa on the basis of tertiary education's high returns. While well-trained, highly skilled African workers often move to developed countries, the benefits of migration - namely remittances - would likely compensate for the brain drain.

But, given high delinquency rates and the lack of reliable national credit-reporting systems, African financial institutions are reluctant to set up effective credit lines for students. Moreover, student groups (and parents of students) across the continent would likely balk at high individual and collective debt burdens and their attendant risks, exacerbating political instability and further weakening universities.

Many Asian and European countries have effectively established free or very low-cost higher-education systems financed by high tax-to-GDP ratios and tax collection. The rationale for this government-funded model is the high social returns of tertiary education, which contributes directly to economic growth and structural transformation by supplying workers who can implement scientific and technological advances and innovation. Well-educated people in the labor force also generate positive externalities by providing opportunities for others.

Africa has tried but failed to implement this model. As a result, such colleges and universities are often poorly equipped for teaching and learning - some even lack libraries - and many graduates cannot meet the increasingly technical requirements of the labor market. They end up underemployed or unemployed, which reduces the social value of higher learning and undermines Africa's ability to build human capital.

Looking to the future, the prospects of making the model work are low, despite its attractiveness. African taxpayers are already heavily burdened. While governments could manage existing resources more efficiently, the savings would not be enough to cover the cost of quality higher education for the continent's growing youth population.

A third option is for colleges and universities to tap into their endowment revenues to create a need-blind system. For example, many elite institutions in the US admit students on a need-blind basis and provide scholarships to those who cannot afford the cost.

But need-blind admissions are feasible only when schools have large endowments, most often built from grants, capital gains from assets, research and consulting income, alumni donations, and philanthropic initiatives. An additional challenge for African higher education is setting a credible income threshold for financial aid and verifying family income when most of the workforce is in the informal economy.

Given high demand for higher education, the rapidly growing student population, and most governments' limited fiscal space, a mix of several funding streams represents the best chance to provide young Africans with access to quality colleges and universities. Such a hybrid model would combine public and private financing to ensure need-blind admissions.

To complement these measures, national, regional, and international development banks - such as the African Development Bank Group - could establish and invest in educational endowments. Africa's resource-rich economies could allocate a percentage of the revenues to university endowments. Besides signaling strong commitment to higher education, this would receive support from student groups, teacher unions, and other civil-society organizations, while assuaging concerns that revenues from natural resources could be hijacked by a corrupt elite. Rigorous management would be required to create and enforce a transparent, rules-based system for granting subsidies and to align teaching quality with the highest international standards.

To compete in the twenty-first century, African economies must build, attract, and retain human capital. As economist L. Alan Winters of the University of Sussex put it, "The largest single contrast between developed and developing countries lies in the availability and use of highly skilled labor." Drawing lessons from economic theory and experience, Africa can improve access to high-quality colleges and universities, and educate the types of workers and leaders the continent needs.

# Boakai inherits Liberia's high debt

By Seltue Karweaye

As the 26th president of Liberia, Joseph Nyumah Boakai [1] inherits an economy that is grappling with inflation [2], chronic unemployment [3], extreme poverty [4], an enormous infrastructure gap [5], insecurity [6], etc. Liberia's debt profile stands out among these problems like a sore thumb. The external debt stock - what it owes non-residents - was US\$1.3 billion [7] in 2022. Multilateral lenders accounted for almost two-thirds of Liberia's debt. The World Bank and the IMF are Liberia's two largest external creditors.

The country's public debt stock - what the government owes in total - was about US\$2.21 billion [8] at the end of December 2023. External debts can become a significant burden for countries as they are

denominated and serviced in foreign currencies, which can lead to fluctuations in interest payments due to exchange rate changes. For example, if the currency of a debtor country depreciates, it may increase interest payments, negatively affecting the country's budget.

Furthermore, interest rates may rise, making it even more difficult for the country to manage its external debt. The country's debt profile, which includes the amount and type of debt, as well as the interest rates and repayment terms, should be a concern for Boakai and his team as they work to revitalize the Liberian economy. However, this concern need not hamper their ability to implement policies that reduce unemployment, poverty rates, infrastructure deficits, etc.

Is the current debt level in Liberia sustainable? When evaluating a country's debt sustainability, economists have a range

of indicators [9] at their disposal, however, two of these metrics stand out as the most commonly utilized and reliable.

One of the indicators is gross debt as a percentage of gross domestic product (also known as the debt-GDP ratio). In Liberia, it is 52.7% [10] in 2024. The average for sub-Saharan African countries was 56%. Debt begins to harm an economy when the debt-GDP ratio surpasses 77% according to a World Bank report. In comparing debt to GDP ratios, Liberia's ratio is moderate and significantly lower than the stipulated threshold of 77%. For example, Ghana's debt to GDP has crossed the dreaded 77% to 98.7% [11] in 2022, the country's unsustainable debt levels forced the government to go back to the IMF for another bailout in July 2022 [12] - despite the IMF deal - Ghana isn't out of trouble yet, the country's debt to GDP stands at 81.5% [11] in 2024.

Moderate increases in Liberia's national debt will unlikely lead to insurmountable repayment burdens within the next few years; however, reckless financing schemes aimed at supporting unnecessary infrastructure endeavors must be avoided as they could have adverse fiscal consequences. Instead, measures are needed to create an enabling environment conducive to encouraging investor confidence while fostering tangible progress in economic growth, employment generation, and poverty reduction.

Although the United States and Liberia differ in various aspects, the former has demonstrated that a high debt-to-GDP ratio does not necessarily constrain economic vitality. Despite having a debt-GDP ratio of approximately 126.9% [13]; the US managed to reduce the unemployment rate to 3.8% [14] while keeping inflation at a stable level of around 3.1% [15].

The debt service ratio, another indicator of debt sustainability, measures the portion of export earnings used to repay borrowed funds. A healthy rate is below 18% [16]. Liberia's debt-service ratio was 6.4% [17] in 2022 and 3.7% in 2017. The 2022 number shows Liberia is getting closer to the point where servicing its debt would become a problem. In the 2016/2017 budget, debt servicing amounted to US\$30.2 million (6.1% of recurrent expenditure), and by 2023, debt servicing amounted to 99.91

million (15.72% of recurrent expenditure) in the budget. To alleviate Liberia's increasing debt burden, the Boakai administration must prioritize boosting the country's revenue.

With one of the lowest revenue-GDP ratios, Liberia registered 27.3% government

revenue as a percentage of GDP. Unfortunately, average annual government revenue declined by 0.05% between 2015 and 2021.

Liberia's reliance on iron ore and rubber as major sources of revenue implies that revenues will continue to fall with the prices of iron ore [18] and rubber [19], given uncertainties in the global iron oil and rubber market.

The economic growth of Liberia slowed down between 2022 and 2023, specifically from 4.8 percent to 4.6 percent, which also negatively impacted the country's ability to generate revenue.

In addition, President Boakai stated in his State of the Nation Address (SONA) that government expenditure has been growing faster than expected, resulting in a significant budget deficit of over US\$80 million as revealed by Revenue collection reported for 2023 standing at US\$710.23 million while totaling expenditure was recorded as US\$796.32

million. In 2024, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reported that Liberia's debt-revenue ratio was 18.1% [7], which is a consequence of dwindling revenue leading to high debt-revenue ratios and creating an unending cycle of borrowing for government expenditures as more revenues are devoted towards servicing existing debts thereby increasing the overall debt burden. Liberia's debt-to-revenue ratio might be lower, but the proportion of external debt service to revenue is alarmingly high.

In the 2022 budget, Liberia spent \$105 million on debt servicing which includes interest payments and principal repayment, however, \$79.6 million [20] was specifically

utilized for settling external debts. The Boakai administration must be mindful of the country's debt profile and avoid exacerbating it through prudent management of Liberia's debt, steering clear of the financial mismanagement that characterized the early 2000s when the debt-to-GDP ratio soared beyond 80%.

To improve the current state of affairs, Bokaia's administration must reduce governance costs and eliminate wasteful spending. This can be achieved by streamlining processes, cutting unnecessary expenses, and implementing more efficient systems.

Additionally, measures should be taken to combat corruption while also exploring alternative methods for addressing economic problems that do not rely solely on perennial borrowing which can lead down a dangerous path towards unsustainable indebtedness.

Given the current low revenue and the numerous projects announced in his SONA aimed at promoting economic growth, employment generation, and poverty reduction in Liberia, the Boakai administration will have to continue implementing deficit spending policies. However, this approach is mainly financed by domestic and external borrowing.

To change the prevailing narrative about the risks associated with investing in Liberia, the Boakai administration must prioritize introducing policies that strengthen the nation's economic foundation and increase its attractiveness to potential investors.

In conclusion, a country's debt stock, although often viewed as a critical factor in assessing its economic health, pales in comparison to the significance of the quality of its economic policies. Well-crafted and effectively implemented economic policies have the potential to

generate budget surpluses that can be utilized to repay debts.

Economic growth and expansion require a strategic approach that includes investment in physical capital like roads and electricity, infrastructure, and access to capital for businesses of all sizes.

Moreover, prioritizing tourism and agricultural development can significantly contribute to the overall economy and lead to long-term success.



President Joseph Nyuma Boakai

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# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Gov't identifies with Du-Port Road fire victims

By Lewis S. Teh

The Government of Liberia through the Disaster Management Agency of Liberia over the weekend identified with

items. We are quite aware that nothing can bring back your loved ones, but it's our weak way of showing that we are concerned about our people," said Mr. Dulleh.

He said the government was

chaotic scene as neighbors attempted to help the victims out. However, they failed due to the lack of immediate firefighting resources. The Liberia National Fire Service was unable to respond promptly, as all of its trucks were reportedly out of service at the time of the incident.

The eyewitnesses said the incident began at around midnight when they saw heavy dark smoke from the apartment where the deceased lived. "Fire, my people y'all come ooo," Elijah Korpue said he became raising alarm.

"We immediately contacted the Liberia Fire Service, but they told us that all their trucks were down. So, people brought water from their homes to help cut the fire off, but it was so heavy." Receiving the donations, Montserrado County Electoral District Four Representative Michael Thomas extolled the government through the Disaster Management Agency to identify with the people.

"This donation speaks volumes. It means the government is concerned about you and as your direct representative, I will do all in my power to seek additional assistance," said Mr. Thomas.

He described the donation as timely, adding that it demonstrated the government's commitment to respond to the plights of its people.



families of those killed in a recent fire incident in Du-Port Road, Paynesville.

The fire disaster is said to have killed at least five persons. In consoling the bereaved families, the Disaster Management Agency presented to them 100 bags of 25kg bags of rice. Presenting the gesture on behalf of the government, the agency's Executive Director Mr. Ansu Dulleh said the donation was the government's way of responding to the death news of its citizens in a tragic fire incident that occurred recently. "We have come on behalf of the President, Joseph N. Boakai to present these

saddened by the number of fire incidents across the country, adding, "As we speak, the team is going to Cape Mount carrying additional donations for fire victims." On Wednesday, 21 February 2024, a tragic fire incident occurred in the Du-Port Road Community and killed five victims.

According to sources, the fire was reportedly started by a candle in one of the rooms in the house and it spread throughout the entire house. Community dwellers made efforts to extinguish the fire using sand and water, but the blaze proved too intense to control.

Eyewitnesses described a

## First Lady Extols Carter Center's Support to Mental Health in Liberia

The Office of the First Lady of the Republic of Liberia, Kartumu Yarta Boakai, has praised The Carter Center for its pivotal role in advancing Liberia's development, particularly in the area of mental health.

Mrs. Boakai lauds The Carter Center's steadfast support as instrumental in bolstering the nation's efforts to address mental health

challenges.

In a meeting held on Monday, February 26, 2024, at her Executive Mansion office in Monrovia, Mrs. Boakai warmly welcomed James Dorbor Jallah, the outgoing Country Director of The Carter Center in Liberia.

During the meeting, Mrs. Boakai, a trained psychosocial counselor herself, underscored her commitment to initiatives

aimed at furthering support for mental health initiatives nationwide.

Expressing gratitude for The Carter Center's partnership, Mrs. Boakai highlighted its pivotal role as a key ally of the Liberian government in enhancing the national mental health intervention strategies.

Mr. Jallah reciprocated the sentiment, affirming The

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



(Monrovia, February 26, 2024)

## NaFAA boss request 'executive to setup independent committee'

Representative Korkubah, Forko and other members of the House with Madam Glassco Middle

(Monrovia, Liberia)-The Director General of the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority, NaFAA has asked members of the House's Committee on Marine Time, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Mines to request the Executive to setup a committee to probe into massive allegations against her.

Addressing a joint press conference Monday February 26, 2024 with some members of the House's Committee on Marine Time, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Mines, at NaFAA Headquarters, Madam Emma Metieh Glassco stated that only an independent probe into all the allegations against her character will settle the issues.

Madam Glassco who has been

now a new way to get people out of office to incite violence".

Madam Glassco maintained that she will not resign as the Director General of NaFAA under illegal circumstances created by individuals who are planning to take on the position after she leaves.

She said she wants justice for the damage done to her reputation as the Director General of NaFAA that is why she is calling for an independent probe into the massive allegations against her by some individuals who wish to take over the entity.

"I want to get my fair justice as well, I want people to probe into these allegations to see if I did anything illegal than I will make myself available for whatever cause it maybe"

Moreover, she said if the Executive sees it necessary to invite her for negotiations, she is ready to hold fruitful discussions in the interest of Liberia.

Meanwhile, Members of the



accused of several allegations ranging from illegal dismissal among others, pointed out that she has been unfairly treated by those group of Liberians that are seeking the Director General post at NaFAA.

The NaFAA Boss who described the actions by some Liberians to defame her hard-earned reputation at NaFAA as politically motivated, clarified that at no time she intends to hold on as Director General illegally.

"No one holding on to the post, let me make it clear, it is just an opportunity to serve, i will not hold on to it. I think it is

House's Committee on Marine Time, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Mines told the media they were at NaFAA for what they termed as acquaintance meeting.

Representatives, Yekeh Korkubah, Frank Saah Foko among other Lawmakers promised to get to the bottom of the numerous allegations as they plan to hold discussions with some former workers of NaFAA who are claiming to be illegally dismissed.

They also promised to ensure that Madam Glassco receives justice amidst all of the allegations against her character. -Press release

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# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## VP Koung declares his assets

**urges officials to do same**

By Emmanuel wise Jipoh

Liberia's Vice President Jeremiah Koung declared his assets to the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) on Monday, 26th February 2024 in an attempt to reinforce the

Koung urged all public officials to follow the lead of President Joseph Nyumah Boakai, Sr. who declared his assets immediately after he took office and tested for narcotic substances.

The President's test result proved negative.

But VP Koung urged all

making assets declaration is personal, adding that could be decided through consultations with his legal team.

For her part, the Executive Director of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC), Alexandra K. Zoe, describes it as laudable, for the President and Vice President to declare their assets, which will serve as key steps to fighting corruption.

She said now that the LACC is pushing accountability and transparency, officials must declare their assets to ensure accountability and transparency.

That is the right way to go and I must commend the government especially, President Joseph Nyuma Boakai for taking the lead in this, Ms. Zoe said.

She disclosed over 200 Ex-officials, constituting 75% who declared their assets, and the current administration is on the right pace.

The LACC Boss then encouraged former officials to declare their assets even though timeframe for ex-officials has elapsed.

Meanwhile, details of VP Koung's assets declared were not made available to the public, as the LACC said it is engaged with officials themselves, to make available their worth before entering government. Editing by Jonathan Browne



government's commitment to fighting corruption in the public sector.

The Assets Declaration serves as a strong departure of the ruling Unity Party Administration from excesses of its predecessor, Coalition Democratic Change-government that was engulfed with high-level corruption which landed several of its senior officials sanctioned by the United States Treasury Department.

Speaking after declaring his assets here, Vice President

officials to adhere to the mandate of the President and do those things that need to be done by the law to make sure the country is safe.

"We got to lead by example, and I'm calling on everybody to do so, because it is the right thing to do, before coming into public office you must make available what you have, so that you cut down the negative criticisms and forge ahead, Vice President Koung said.

When asked whether he is going to make his worth public, Vice President Koung said

## CENTAL wants Boakai establish Ombudsman Office

The Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL) has urged President Joseph Nyumah Boakai to exert all efforts to establish the office of the Ombudsman to adequately address constitutional breaches. CENTAL said the Office of the Ombudsman should be constituted and fully supported to allow for investigation of possible breach of Code of Conduct provisions regarding political canvassing and campaigning. It noted that these breaches could constitute grounds for removal from tenured positions, especially those of public integrity institutions like the Governance Commission. In a news conference held at the weekend, the program manager for CENTAL Atty. Gerald D. Yeakula said CENTAL believes that in the absence of a determination by the Ombudsman, officials in violation of the Code of Conduct cannot be lawfully removed.

"Due process must be followed in all cases of removal for cause," he said and reminded President Boakai of CENTAL's recently published open letter to him. He said that letter outlined key anti-corruption reforms and efforts he should pursue to succeed in his anti-corruption efforts. He further asked President Boakai to lead by example by publishing his assets, income, and liabilities declared with the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) and set very high standards for other officials and others to follow. Yeakula also urged

President Boakai to provide adequate financial, moral, logistical, and other support to public integrity institutions. He urged former government officials sanctioned for corruption by the US Government should be investigated and prosecuted. According to him, Liberia cannot afford a continuation of disregard for the rule of law and promotion of political interest at the expense of Liberians' hard-fought and growing democracy.

"We cannot continue to repeat the same mistake of yesterday when such can early be avoided," he pleaded.




The Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL).  
With Funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)

**CENTAL Launches its 3RD STATE OF CORRUPTION REPORT (SCORE)**

**Date: Wednesday, 13th December 2023**  
**Venue: Boulevard Palace 13th Street, Sinkor**

## Cassell Kouh takes over FC Kallon Liberia

Liberia Football Association (LFA) former Vice President for Operations, Cassell Anthony Kuoh, Sr., has officially taken full ownership of First Division outfit, FC Kallon Liberia.

FC Kallon Liberia, formerly Muscat FC agreed to sell the club to Mr. Kuoh, who has expressed interest in returning to Liberian football. The deal was completed on Saturday, February 24, 2014 at the office of the new owner in Monrovia.

Club President Charles Massaley and shareholder, Maurice Tosh Gayflor stage-named: CralorBoi CIC signed on behalf of FC Kallon, while Cassell Kouh signed as new owner of the Club.

Though an official statement has not been released by FC

Kouh did not disclose the amount he paid to acquire FC Kallon Liberia, but the fee is believed to be anywhere between twenty-five and thirty thousand (25,000 - 30,000) United States dollars, according to a source close to the club president.

Meanwhile, the club will maintain its name FC Kallon Liberia for the remaining of the season, but it intend to be renamed FC Fassell at the end of the 2023 - 2024 league season.

Muscat FC changed its name last year to FC Kallon Liberia. It was rumored by then that former Sierra Leonean international, Mohammed Kallon reached a business-agreement with Charles Massaley, alias 'Manja' to observe the club for a year before becoming a majority shareholder.

The agreement saw young prospect Emmanuel Gono moved to



Kallon Liberia, it is believe that a formal turning-over ceremony will take place subsequently, where the new owner will be officially presented to players and coaching staff.

In a brief but strong statement about his takeover, Mr. Kouh expressed excitement in returning to Liberian football.

"I can say to you that after months of speculations about me wanting to buy a club, today we want to inform you officially that it is true. We have taken over at FC Kallon Liberia 100% as owner, and I am indeed happy to be back in football to once more create opportunities for the young people", he said.

He said his return is to make an impact by ensuring FC Kallon Liberia maintains its place in the First Division this seasons.

"We will form partnership with clubs outside of Liberia - in Europe, Asia and other places, where we will transfer our players." the former LFA added.

Sierra Leone, where he spent time developing his skills with top flight club FC Kallon, owned by the Sierra Leonean legend before traveling to Sweden.

From a business perspective, FC Kallon Liberia needs direct investment to improve the club current status, while Mr. Kuoh on the other hand has been hunting for a club to regain his status as stakeholder in the football sector.

News making rounds in the football circle says Cassell A. Kuoh is planning to contest for the presidency of the LFA in 2026.

To achieve that he needs to be associated with football at least two years to election, and owning a club in the top two divisions gives him an added advantage. FC Kallon Liberia has on numerous occasions disagreed with some of the league policies under Mustafah Raji's leadership.

Apparently, those disagreements coupled with Mohammed Kallon's alleged reluctance to takeover direct

# Français

## Le président Koffa ne fera pas obstacle au fonctionnement du gouvernement

Le président de la Chambre des représentants, Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa, a déclaré qu'il ne ferait rien qui empêcherait le paiement

budget de 41,3 millions de dollars US demandé par l'exécutif.

Il a déclaré que les gens pensaient qu'en bloquant l'adoption du budget, il aurait

responsabilité et l'ouverture d'esprit sous sa direction. Dans le même temps, il a encouragé les journalistes à demander des éclaircissements sur les questions afin de garantir la diffusion d'informations précises auprès du public.

Récemment, la Chambre des représentants a voté à l'unanimité pour approuver la demande présentée par le président Joseph Nyumah Boakai de dépenser un peu plus de 41 millions de dollars américains.

L'exécutif a demandé ce montant pour couvrir les opérations du gouvernement pour le mois de février 2024.

Le 20 février 2024, la plénière de la Chambre a accepté la proposition de l'exécutif en approuvant le budget demandé.

Dans un rapport de sa commission conjointe des moyens et des finances, de la planification du développement et des comptes publics, il a été recommandé d'approuver la demande afin d'éviter la fermeture du gouvernement et le paiement des salaires des fonctionnaires. Selon M. Koffa, l'objectif principal était de renforcer les relations entre la Chambre des représentants et les médias. Lors de son entretien avec les journalistes,

agissant avec fermeté en tant que président de l'opposition de la Chambre des représentants.

Au contraire, M. Koffa a déclaré qu'il s'était engagé à travailler avec toutes les branches du gouvernement pour créer un équilibre sain dans l'intérêt du pays et du peuple.

Le président Koffa a ajouté que la Chambre des représentants s'est engagée à promouvoir la transparence, la

des salaires des fonctionnaires en temps voulu ou qui arrêterait le fonctionnement du gouvernement du Libéria.

Lors d'une réunion avec plus de trente journalistes accrédités au Capitole le vendredi 23 février 2024, M. Koffa a déclaré que les gens s'attendaient à ce qu'il empêche l'adoption du



Speaker J. Fonati Koffa

## Boakai met en garde les nouveaux fonctionnaires : les corrompus en paieront le prix

Le président Joseph Nyumah Boakai a officiellement nommé le premier groupe de responsables de son gouvernement, les avertissant que toute personne impliquée dans la corruption en subira les conséquences.

"Lorsque nous sommes entrés en fonction, nous avons informé le pays et le monde entier que la pratique habituelle

consistant à 'faire des affaires comme d'habitude' serait un vestige du passé pour cette administration, et nous le pensons sérieusement", a-t-il déclaré lors de la cérémonie la semaine dernière.

Le président Boakai a déclaré que son administration ne tolérera pas la corruption et le détournement de fonds, avertissant que toute personne prise en flagrant délit en subira les conséquences, sans distinction de statut.

"Que l'on sache bien que nous ne tolérerons pas la corruption et le détournement des caisses du peuple, car ceux qui seront trouvés coupables d'avoir enfreint nos lois anti-corruption devront rendre des comptes et en subir les conséquences", a déclaré le président Boakai.

Il a poursuivi en disant qu'"un avertissement aux sages suffit".

▶ CONT'D page 9



## Éditorial

### Un sale coup de relations publiques

La présidence à Monrovia a peine à fournir des preuves photographiques ou vidéo de la rencontre du président Joseph Nyumah Boakai avec son homologue ghanéen Nana Akufo-Addo ou son vice-président Mahamudu Bawumia lors de sa récente visite en République du Ghana, comme elle l'a affirmé.

La semaine dernière, la présidence a annoncé dans un communiqué de presse que le président Boakai quittait le pays le mardi 13 février 2024 pour une visite de deux jours afin de rencontrer et de consulter le président Nana Akufo-Addo sur des questions d'intérêt mutuel pour les deux pays et la sous-région.

Or, au moment même où le président libérien arrivait à Accra, au Ghana, le président Akufo-Addo quittait le pays pour un voyage officiel à l'étranger. Il s'est avéré ensuite que le président Boakai n'avait pas non plus rencontré le vice-président ghanéen.

La question à 50 millions de dollars que se posent les Libériens et à laquelle les autorités n'ont pas pu répondre clairement est donc celle-ci : qui le président libérien a-t-il rencontré au Ghana ?

Dans une tentative infructueuse de fournir des explications, alors que les spéculations s'amplifiaient à Monrovia, le porte-parole de la présidence, Kula Fofana, a déclaré au NEW DAWN le jeudi 15 février que les choses pouvaient changer dans l'espace présidentiel.

La présidence avait annoncé dans un communiqué publié le mercredi 14 février : "Son Excellence Joseph Nyumah Boakai, Sr., président de la République du Libéria, est rentré chez lui après une brève visite de travail fructueuse en République du Ghana. Au cours de son séjour, il s'est entretenu avec des membres du gouvernement ghanéen.

Lors de sa rencontre avec l'équipe ghanéenne, le président a exprimé sa gratitude pour le soutien reçu avant et pendant son investiture, ainsi que pour la visite du dirigeant ghanéen, le président Nana Akufo-Addo.

Pour sa part, le vice-président du Ghana, l'Honorable Mahamudu Bawumia, s'est réjoui de la visite et a assuré le dirigeant libérien de leur soutien continu et de leur engagement envers le Libéria".

Cependant, une enquête indépendante du NEW DAWN, qui n'a pas été contestée, a révélé que le président Boakai avait été transporté de Monrovia au centre médical de l'université du Ghana le mardi matin de la semaine dernière pour y être soigné, un endroit qu'il fréquentait régulièrement même avant de devenir président du Libéria.

En premier lieu, il n'était absolument pas nécessaire que la présidence induise le public libérien en erreur sur le véritable but du voyage du président au Ghana, ce qui a créé un sérieux embarras pour le pays. M. Boakai est désormais président de la République du Libéria et les Libériens ont le droit de savoir ou d'être clairement informés de ses déplacements et de ses contacts, au lieu de nourrir le public avec des informations totalement différentes de la réalité, comme cela s'est récemment produit.

# Français

## Starts from page 8 **Le président Koffa ne fera**

le président Koffa a exprimé sa gratitude pour la couverture de la Chambre des représentants par les médias et s'est engagé à maintenir des interactions régulières avec la presse. Pour sa part, le président sortant des reporters législatifs, Henry Karmo, a félicité le président Koffa au nom des reporters pour son élection.

## Starts from page 8 **Boakai met en garde**

"C'est pourquoi nous attendons des ministres, des chefs d'agences et des conseillers nommés aujourd'hui, et de ceux qui les suivront, qu'ils ne fassent rien de moins que d'exécuter le mandat de leurs fonctions respectives et de s'acquitter de leurs tâches avec efficacité et désintéressement pour le bien public", a-t-il souligné. Le président Boakai a également annoncé que le projet de mécanisme de retour d'information des citoyens, mis à l'essai dans cinq comtés, serait activé et mis en œuvre dans l'ensemble du pays afin de surveiller de près les performances du gouvernement.

Il a rappelé à ses ministres et chefs d'agences que la fonction publique n'est pas un droit, mais une occasion pour eux de redonner au pays et à son peuple.

À la suite de cette cérémonie, le manoir exécutif a publié une déclaration indiquant que le président Boakai avait nommé le premier groupe de membres de son cabinet récemment confirmés par le Sénat libérien.

Le manoir exécutif a déclaré que cet exercice faisait partie de son obligation constitutionnelle inscrite dans l'article 54 de la Constitution de 1986.

Lors de la cérémonie, le président Boakai a exhorté les nouveaux responsables à prendre conscience de l'énorme tâche qu'ils ont été appelés à accomplir dans l'intérêt du pays. Il les a exhortés à travailler au plus haut niveau, en veillant à la réalisation des priorités du gouvernement afin de mener à bien son programme de développement pour les six prochaines années, sans aucune excuse.

Il a également ordonné à tous les fonctionnaires de déclarer immédiatement leurs biens afin de se conformer aux réglementations anti-corruption, comme l'exige la loi.

Le président Boakai a déclaré que chaque ministre et chef d'agence signerait un contrat de performance afin de garantir la réalisation des objectifs fixés et d'améliorer l'efficacité du gouvernement.

Il a exhorté les responsables à promouvoir un gouvernement ouvert, transparent et

responsable. Parmi les autres responsables figuraient la ministre de la Santé, la Dre Louise Kpoto, le ministre du Commerce et de l'Industrie, Amin Modad, la ministre du Genre, de l'Enfance et de la Protection sociale, Mme Gbeme Horace Kollie, le conseiller du président pour les Affaires étrangères, l'ambassadeur George Wallace, le conseiller principal du président, le Dr Augustine Konneh, et le conseiller à la sécurité nationale, Atty. Samuel Kofi Woods.

Parmi les autres figuraient le conseiller juridique, Cllr. Bushuben M. Keita (Esq.) et Mme MacDella Cooper, conseillère politique du président.

## **La CEDEAO lance une action d'urgence dans le district de Todee**



La Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO) a lancé une action d'urgence en collaboration avec le gouvernement du Liberia, par l'intermédiaire du ministère de l'Agriculture, pour apporter une aide alimentaire d'urgence aux enfants souffrant de malnutrition dans le district rural de Todee, situé à Montserrado. Ce projet, d'une valeur de 351 217,00 dollars américains, est mis en œuvre en collaboration avec l'organisation partenaire Welt Hunger Hilfe. Il vise à fournir une aide alimentaire de base à 2 000 enfants de moins de cinq ans souffrant de malnutrition et à former trente équipes locales de sensibilisation à la nutrition aux meilleures pratiques en la matière. Lors d'un commentaire sur cette initiative, la Représentante résidente du Président de la Commission de la CEDEAO au Liberia, S.E. Mme Josephine Nkrumah, a souligné que cette dernière intervention s'inscrit dans le cadre des plans visant à réduire l'impact de l'insécurité alimentaire qui touche le

Liberia.

Les objectifs du projet sont les suivants : fournir une assistance pour renforcer la résilience et le redressement des enfants vulnérables afin de réduire l'impact de l'insécurité alimentaire et de la malnutrition ; fournir une aide alimentaire immédiate, y compris la distribution de céréales enrichies ; et sensibiliser le public aux habitudes alimentaires culturelles et aux pratiques agricoles tenant compte de la nutrition.

"En tant que CEDEAO des peuples, ayant pour vision la paix et la prospérité pour tous, la CEDEAO s'engage à assurer le bien-être de tous les citoyens de la communauté", a déclaré Mme Nkrumah.

L'envoyée de la CEDEAO a également indiqué que ce projet s'inscrit dans le cadre du Protocole de la CEDEAO sur le mécanisme relatif à la prévention, la gestion, le maintien de la paix et la sécurité des États membres.

Pour sa part, M. Dennis Waigbe, responsable du département de la planification et du développement au ministère de l'Agriculture, s'est réjoui de cette initiative, la qualifiant d'intervention opportune qui devrait donner des résultats compte tenu du taux élevé de malnutrition dans le district de Todee.

"En tant que gouvernement, nous sommes enthousiasmés par cette initiative, car elle renforce les efforts précédents visant à réduire le retard de croissance au Liberia", a-t-il ajouté.

## **L'ambassadrice de la culture accuse la justice d'être manipulée**



L'ambassadrice de la culture du Liberia, Mme Julie Endee, a accusé le pouvoir exécutif de manipuler l'affaire qu'elle a intentée contre Nayapougma Oldpa Yeazeahn, alias Prophète Key, animateur controversé d'une émission de radio sur les réseaux sociaux.

La semaine dernière, le parquet a retiré toutes les charges pénales retenues contre M. Yeazeahn en raison de preuves insuffisantes pour le poursuivre. Toutefois, son accusatrice pourrait relancer l'affaire. M. Yeazeahn était poursuivi pour diffamation et calomnie par Mme Endee. Selon les dossiers judiciaires, Mme Endee a informé le tribunal par l'intermédiaire de ses avocats qu'elle renonçait aux poursuites pénales pour contrainte criminelle, menace et conduite désordonnée à l'encontre de M. Yeazeahn.

En conséquence, le parquet a déclaré qu'il abandonnait les charges contre le défendeur en raison d'un manque de preuves suffisantes pour le poursuivre, se réservant le droit de les re-déposer si nécessaire.

Cependant, Mme Endee allègue que le pouvoir exécutif a interféré avec le pouvoir judiciaire et le système judiciaire du gouvernement. Elle a mené une manifestation le week-end dernier, baptisée "Femmes pour la justice", sur le

terrain du Temple de la Justice à Monrovia. Lors de la manifestation, Mme Endee a déclaré aux journalistes que le pouvoir exécutif avait commencé à interférer dans l'affaire l'opposant à Prophète Key, ce qui explique pourquoi l'affaire a été classée sans qu'elle en soit informée.

"Oui, laissez-moi dire ceci, l'Exécutif interfère avec le Judiciaire. Comment pouvez-vous rejeter l'affaire au motif qu'il n'y a pas de preuves suffisantes alors que l'insulte à mon encontre a été proférée lors d'une vidéo en direct, que le monde entier a regardée ?" s'est interrogée Mme Endee.

"Le ministre de la Justice, contrôlé par l'Exécutif, a fait cela parce que Prophète Key m'a dit que rien ne sortirait de l'affaire car c'est son gouvernement", a-t-elle allégué sans fournir de preuve pour étayer ses dires.

L'ambassadrice de la culture libérienne, en poste depuis de nombreuses années, a souligné qu'elle ne renoncerait pas à l'affaire tant que justice ne sera pas rendue. Elle a déclaré qu'elle était prête à porter l'affaire devant la Cour de justice de la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO). Commentant la solidarité que lui a témoignée le pouvoir exécutif, Mme Endee a regretté que les seules personnes qui l'aient contactée soient des sénateurs et des représentants, et aucun membre de l'exécutif.

"J'ai adressé une requête au pouvoir exécutif par l'intermédiaire de la conseillère politique, Mme MacDella Cooper.

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# LIBERIANS DEBATE

Topic: Tenured positions

By Naneka Hoffman

President Joseph Nyuma Boakai is facing stiff resistance here, in his attempt to replace tenured officials from the previous government. Mr. Boakai has appointed a committee to look into this. But debate is on whether or not, he has power to remove tenured officials from offices when their tenures have not expired, as you may read below.



Datty Kaba

“First of all, it is not because former President Weah did it so President Boakai should do the same. But I think it should be because of precedent set in this country. You see, one of the things we always look at public officials is Code of Conduct and for me, I believe strongly that President Boakai in his wisdom is operating in the context of the Code of Conduct. The Code talks about political participation for public officials. We have to be very serious in this country when it comes to our stance in office because there is a law; when you are holding public office and you are a government official and you are in a tenure position and you want to participate in

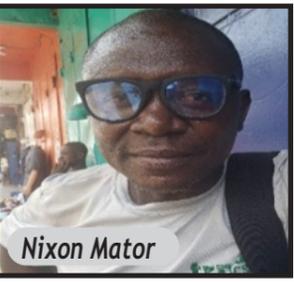
politics, you have to resign from your position. You can't be in that position and wear political T-shirt to campaign and and come back for that position, because those institutions that have tenured are agencies that are independent, so you can't be involved in political campaigning and after you are defeated then you want to go occupy that same position. The law is very clear about tenured positions that the President can't appoint someone in a position that is already occupied by someone serving for five or seven years. The President is processing in the context of the code of conduct because the President is a President of wisdom. He believes that all of those guys that are occupying tenured positions have been compromised. They were compromised during the campaign period. Now the person who they were campaigning for was defeated; this is a new government; do you have the same agenda of the President that you are going to work under, I say no. So for that reason, you have to be removed, so others that understand the President's mandate can work in that position.

“In the first place, the scientific mental of investigation is not concerned with sentiment; what it concerns with is sufficient evidence, so if we allow sentiments to take over this discussion, then we will be suffocated and be misled by these sentiments. In the first place, tenured positions are guarded by law, any position for that matter. President Boakai will not take people off tenured positions because Weah did it. The people, who violated this tenured position, it is was politically motivated in this gone election. CDC wasn't guarded by any



Jutar Monk

principle, so from that point the people violated this tenured position. Since they violated, they should be out of the picture to serve as a deterrent to other government officials. According to Article 54 of the Constitution, the President has right to appoint anybody for that matter, so it is from this his lawyers are relying on; so it is not a witch-hunt.”



Nixon Mator

“President Boakai is an experience President. Based on what they did, you see anyone talking about Central Bank, NEC, LACC, and NEC? In holding tenured positions, you should be independent; you are not walking at the will of the President. The President will not dismiss you. You are working at the will of the citizens. Say for instance, the Central Bank governor, President Boakai will not come tell you that you are dismissed; no then what are you scare for. NEC you doing your work, Maritime you doing your work. Look at Eugene Nagba, he is a smart guy, he resigned because he served as campaign Chairman for CDC. He couldn't stay on that position because he had violated it. So, all those people that are

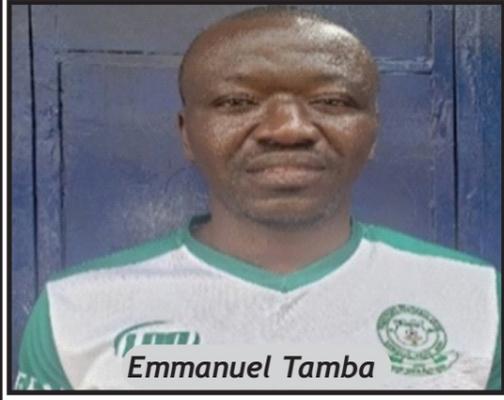
crying ooo they violated the tenured position law, it is right, let them move. You campaigned against me not to succeed then I finished succeeding you come and say you want to work with me. It makes sense to you? You will not work in my interest. You will work in the party interest that you were advocating for, and at the end of the day, you will see the downfall of the government. People will demonstrate against the government so what the papay is doing, he is 100 percent right. Those people violated the tenured position protocol. You don't hear about Central Bank, NEC, GAC, those people are working you didn't see them at party headquarters, campaigning or wearing berets no, because it's against the code of conduct.”

“If President Boakai really knows the law, I don't think Boakai knows the Constitution. Those that printed T-shirts for him and he had his own party workers that printed caps and wore T-shirts around here. What step he took against them, but because that CDCians there, so they want to remove them from their positions. The Constitution says about tenured position anybody that violate law, but I am not seeing what is the violation there because campaign time everyone supported their parties because it was campaign time. They saw other people with T-shirts and belt roll because they don't see the other people with belt roll so they don't sack them. I can prove to you that some Unity Party people were in tenured positions in George Weah government, and they were



Junior Gbehkugbeh

here, running campaign for Boakai, so what this time only CDCians they are taken from there, I says no. What President Weah said before is coming to past now, Boakai, is trying to divide this country now. If you win, you win; it doesn't mean that you must divide our country.”

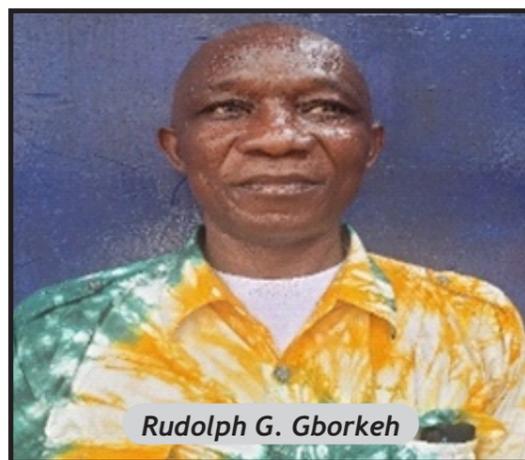


Emmanuel Tamba

“Well, according to Article 56 E of the Liberian Constitution, ot is the right of the President to terminate tenured positions that is his constitutional power. But it also says that whenever your contract is about to be terminated, the President should compensate you, but if there are causes leading to your

termination, Section 5 (1) of the code of conduct says that all government officials who are appointed to those positions must stay off politics. They should not be seen wearing political party's T-shirts and belt roll. You must not use government vehicles to campaign, so I think it was based upon that the President tries to remove someone who he had seen actively involved in politics. Well, the law is there and should protect everybody. The Constitution of the Republic of Liberia should be respected at all time, so if you violated the Constitution, there are laws that you must face. So, I think base upon the Constitution that is the reason the President wants to take that decision.”

“If any government that should respect tenured positions then it should be the Unity Party-led government because it was during their time almost all the tenured positions were created and Boakai was then President of the Senate when those bills were passed under his watch and he signed documents before sending them to the President, so if he signed those agencies to tenured positions and comes back to unconstitutional undo them then it is a sad day. What are we saying, Boakai has 40 years' experience in government? So, what Boakai, should do is to just wait for the expiration of those tenured offices then he can appoint people there or let him call those guys and tell them I don't have confidence in you, so you



Rudolph G. Gborkeh

can't work in my government and just pay them off. But to just appoint people, while others are still occupying those offices is bad.”

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# Early impeachments call for Boakai

# New LDEA boss leads citywide raids

By Lincoln G. Peters

Controversial Montserrado County Electoral District #10 Representative Yekeh Kolubah has joined forces with opposition Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) lawmaker Frank Saah Foko in

corrupt because he did not disclose the source of LD\$10m he had given to fire victims of the Bong County tanker explosion. He has since demonstrated through his incessant verbal attacks against Mr. Boakai that they are no longer on any good

Boakai's impeachment. Within the space of one month, Foko alleged that President Boakai has given enough reasons and proven to the Liberian people that he is incapable of providing leadership direction for the Liberian people.



Foka claimed that Boakai's leadership is very poor, stating that he performed dismally in his first month in office and therefore he should not continue to lead for the next six years. He accused Boakai of disrespecting the Constitution of Liberia by appointing individuals to tenured positions when the terms of officials there have not yet expired.

According to Foko, nobody expects this from President Boakai who claimed to have served as Vice President for twelve years and has over forty years of government experience. "President Boakai has convinced us in the space of one month that he can't steer the affairs of this country and so he has to go," said Foko. "We have work with our lawyers in drafting and by today it will be on the flow." For his part, controversial Representative Kolubah said he supports an impeachment bill against President Boakia, adding that it's time he is the shortest-serving Liberian President.

pushing a bill to impeach President Joseph Nyumah Boakai. CDC-controlled House of Representatives is due to entertain the petition for Boakai's impeachment. The instrument is drafted and sponsored by Mr. Foko, Representative for Montserrado County Electoral District #9 and it is co-sponsored by Mr. Kolubah.

political terms. It seems Kolubah now finds comfort aligning with Boakai's main opposition CDC to do business, judging from his rushed efforts to dethrone a president he helped to bring to power less than two months in office.

In their petition, Kolubah and his CDC ally Foko have accused Boakai of "poor leadership management skills and constitutional violation." Rep. Foko was interviewed by journalists while on an inspection tour of the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA). In that interview, Foko said his communication is expected to be entertained on the flow of the House of Representatives on Tuesday, 27 February 2024 for President

"I am standing with a representative and I support the bill which is expected to be heard today calling for the President's impeachment," said Kolubah. "The President has gone against the Constitution and the Code of Conduct, therefore, we are using that to make him the shortest [serving]-President in Liberia's history through impeachment," he noted.

By Kruah Thompson

Following the confirmation of AB Kromah early this February as Director of the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency (LDEA), the agency has intensified efforts in combating narcotics trafficking, resulting in the arrest of several suspected drug dealers from various neighborhoods across Monrovia.

to be Nigerian, but Director Kromah clarified that the LDEA under his leadership has not yet begun active operations, as it is still in a setup exercise phase.

"We remain committed to eradicating the scourge of drug trafficking from our communities," he said, adding "These arrests send a clear message that we will not tolerate the proliferation of narcotics within our borders, and we will continue to pursue those responsible with unwavering determination."

Just days into his new role, the newly confirmed LDEA Boss spearheaded a special task force that conducted a series of successful raids, targeting individuals believed to be involved in the distribution and sale of illicit substances.

The successful operation stems from close collaboration between the LDEA and other law enforcement agencies, as well as support from community members who provided valuable tips and information leading to the apprehension of suspected drug dealers. Contraband confiscated will serve as evidence as investigation progresses, with charges expected to be filed against those suspects in accordance with Liberian law.

The operations spanning several days in Sayon Town Community, St. Paul Bridge Community, Boma Bridge Community, and Kakata, yielded multiple arrests and seizure of a substantial quantity of narcotics, including cocaine, heroin, cush and marijuana along with paraphernalia used in their packaging and

The LDEA has urged citizens to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities related to drug trafficking or substance abuse to the appropriate authorities. By working together, law enforcement agencies



Pres. Boakai

Rep. Yekeh Kolubah

Start from page 6

## First Lady Extols Carter Center's

Carter Center's unwavering dedication to fortifying and sustaining a robust public mental health system in collaboration with the Liberian government and local stakeholders. One of the key initiatives supported by The Carter Center in Liberia is establishing a self-sustaining system for training and

continuing education in behavioral health, managed by Liberian institutions, among other programs.

The Deputy Program Lead, Mike Mulbah, of the Carter Center for his part, assured the First Lady of the center's support in championing mental health issues not just in Liberia but across the

subregion and the continent at large. The meeting between the Office of the First Lady and The Carter Center Liberia office sets the stage for future collaborations, paving the way for potential partnerships that will further advance mental health initiatives in Liberia and across the continent.

distribution. In addition to the arrests, LDEA officials say, some of the suspects apprehended during the operation are believed to be part of a larger network responsible for drug trafficking in the region. Some of those arrested are believed

and the community can effectively disrupt drug syndicates' operations and prevent harmful substances from reaching the streets.

Statistics put the number of drug-addicted youth in Liberia at 250,000. Editing by Jonathan Browne

Start from page 7

## Cassell Kouh takes

ownership of FC Kallon Liberia, the owners had no better option to save the club other than putting it up for sale.

And the policy disagreements with Raji's administration made Cassell A. Kouh, who has financial backing to handle the team's finances, and a potential presidential candidate in the 2026 LFA election that suitable

buyer.

FC Kallon Liberia is facing relegation threats with eight games left to play in the First Division. The Paynesville-based club is currently seated at 12th place in the 14-team table with 6 points from 18 games.

And in order to play in the top flight next season, Emmanuel Kaykay, who, it

has now been confirmed, will stay on as Head Coach and his men, must return to winning-way and avoid conceding defeats.

They need to accumulate more points from the possible 24 points currently up for grab. Editing by Jonathan Browne

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## Freeport of Monrovia embraces modernized trade with arrival of gearless vessels

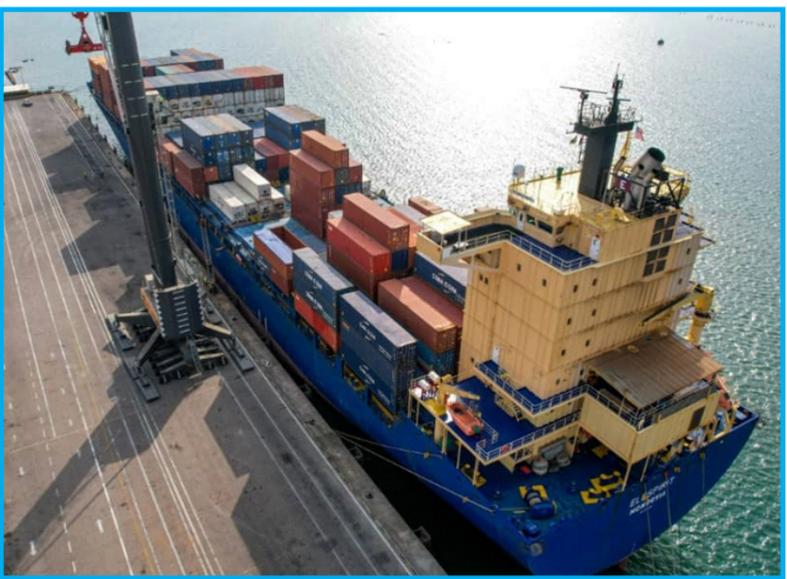
The Freeport of Monrovia has witnessed a transformative period with the recent visit of several gearless vessels, marking a significant step towards

beginning of a new era for the Freeport of Monrovia. These gearless vessels, which do not require onboard cranes for cargo handling, demonstrates the port's ability to accommodate modern

significantly enhanced the port's cargo handling capabilities, allowing for the efficient loading and unloading of ships. Additionally, the recent dredging of the port has increased its depth, enabling it to accommodate larger vessels and further expanding its capacity.

APM Terminals commitment to embracing modernized trade and shipping is evident in the developments at the Freeport of Monrovia. The port's ability to handle gearless and larger ships signifies its readiness to adapt to the evolving needs of the shipping industry. By investing in infrastructure improvements and embracing innovation, Liberia is positioning itself as a key player in the regional trade network.

The Freeport of Monrovia stands as a symbol of Liberia's dedication to fostering economic growth and development through enhanced trade and shipping capabilities. As more gearless and bigger vessels continue to visit the port, it is clear that Liberia is open to embracing new opportunities and modernizing its trade infrastructure to drive progress and prosperity for the nation.



modernizing trade and shipping in Liberia. APM Terminals Liberia, the operator of the Port, has successfully welcomed these vessels, showcasing the port's enhanced capabilities and readiness to handle larger ships.

shipping requirements. Following these milestone arrivals, other gearless vessels have since visited the port, further solidifying Monrovia's position as a hub for efficient and advanced trade operations.

The successful handling of these vessels was made possible with the deployment of mobile harbor cranes. These cranes have

The arrival of MSC Carla in December 2023 and 228 meters long CMA ELBSPIRIT in January 2024 marked the

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