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CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA
MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES
LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

DATE	BUYING	SELLING
FRIDAY, MARCH 01, 2024	L\$190.7053/US\$1.00	L\$192.4928/US\$1.00

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

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VOL. 14 NO. 29 MONDAY, MARCH 04, 2024 PRICE LD\$40.00

Liberians react to Ghana's Anti-Homosexuality Bill



This must be the last in Kinjor!

-Weah warns President Boakai

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Continental News

Mr Ibu: Nollywood actor John Okafor dies in Lagos

Nigerians are mourning popular Nollywood actor John Okafor, better known as Mr Ibu, who has died at the age of 62. "I announce with [a] deep

which became his career-long nickname.

It is still regarded as one of the best Nigerian performances in a comic role.

He went on to star in more than

"brought laughter to many".

Nigeria's Culture Minister Hannatu Musawa described him as a household name who had made families smile throughout his career.

According to local reports, Okafor died at an undisclosed hospital in Lagos state.

The actor's health issues first came to public attention last year. One of his legs was amputated in November after fans donated to a crowd-funding scheme for his medical bills.

Since then, his son Daniel Okafor and adopted daughter Jasmine Chioma have been arrested on suspicion of hacking into his phone and taking \$60,700 (£47,800) for themselves.

The pair have not commented since their arrest in January and are expected to appear in court on 11 March for the next hearing.

Okafor's last years were "tumultuous", Nigeria's Punch newspaper said, with the actor claiming to have survived several attempts to poison him.

Local media say he is survived by his 13 children. BBC



John Okafor was known for his comic roles in a career spanning more than two decades

sense of grief that Mr Ibu didn't make it," said Actors Guild of Nigeria President Emeka Rollas on Saturday.

He said the actor had a cardiac arrest.

Okafor rose to fame two decades ago in the film Mr Ibu -

200 Nollywood films - including Keziah, 9 Wives and several Mr Ibu sequels.

"Rest well, sir," said actress Mercy Johnson-Okogie in her tribute. Law professor and former UN rapporteur Joy Ezeilo said the actor was a "beloved" figure who

World Trade Talks End with No Agreement on Agriculture and Fisheries

A high-level WTO conference ended Saturday with a temporary extension of an e-commerce moratorium but no deals on agriculture and fisheries, throwing into doubt the effectiveness of the multilateral trade body.

The outcomes of the World Trade Organization's 13th ministerial conference in Abu Dhabi highlighted the sharp divisions between the body's 164 members amid geopolitical tensions and economic headwinds that are threatening global commerce.

"The WTO needed a good crisis and perhaps this will lead to a realisation that we cannot continue like this," said a senior European Union official participating in the talks.

Speaking at the closing press conference, the Emirati chair of the so-called MC13 gathering, Thani Al Zeyoudi, acknowledged the shortcomings.

"Despite our best efforts, we failed to agree on some texts which are of great importance to many of our members," said Al Zeyoudi, who also serves as the UAE's foreign trade minister.

For her part, WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said the talks came up "against

an international backdrop marked by greater uncertainty than at any time I can remember."

"We have achieved some important things and we have not managed to complete others," she said, while insisting that the "glass was half full."

The WTO, the only international body dealing with the rules of trade between nations, requires full consensus from all members to chalk up deals.

It was hoping the MC13 would replicate the landmark success of its 2022 ministerial in Geneva, which yielded a deal on fisheries and saw members agree to restore a now-defunct dispute settlement system by the end of this year.

But the latest ministerial fell

short of that objective.

"The unexpected weakness of the overall (MC13) package should... serve as a wake-up call," the secretary general of the International Chamber of Commerce, John Denton, said in a statement.

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'Bogged down' After a 2022 deal that banned subsidies contributing to illegal, undeclared and unregulated fishing, the WTO was hoping to conclude a second package focusing on subsidies that result in overcapacity and overfishing. VOA

Burkina Faso Says 170 People 'Executed' By Extremist Attacks on February 25

Around 170 people were "executed" in attacks on three villages in northern Burkina Faso a week ago, a regional prosecutor said on Sunday as jihadist violence flares in the junta-ruled country.

On that same day, February 25, separate attacks on a mosque in eastern Burkina and a Catholic church in the north left dozens more dead.

Aly Benjamin Coulibaly said he had received reports of the attacks on the villages of Komsilga, Nodin and Soroie in Yatenga province on February 25, with a provisional toll of "around 170 people executed."

The attacks left others wounded and caused material damage, the prosecutor for the northern town of Ouahigouya added in a statement, without

spilled over from neighbouring Mali in 2015.

The violence has killed almost 20,000 people and displaced more than two million in Burkina Faso, one of the world's poorest countries situated in the Sahel, a region wracked by instability.

Anger at the state's inability to end the insecurity played a major role in two military coups in 2022. Current strongman Ibrahim Traore has made the fight against rebel groups a priority.

'Co-ordinated' attacks

There were a number of attacks on February 25, notably against a military detachment in Tankoulou in the east, a rapid response battalion in Kongoussi in the north and soldiers in the northern region of Ouahigouya.

In response, the army and members of the Volunteers for the Defence of the Fatherland (VDP), a civilian force that supports the military, launched operations that were able "to



Burkina Faso's junta leader Captain Ibrahim Traore attends the Navy Day parade in Saint Petersburg on July 30, 2023.

apportioning blame to any group.

He said his office ordered an investigation and appealed to the public for information.

Survivors of the attacks told AFP that dozens of women and young children were among the victims.

Local security sources said the attacks were separate from deadly incidents that happened on the same day at a mosque in the rural community of Natiaboani and a church in the village of Essakane.

Authorities have yet to release an official death toll for those attacks but a senior church official said at the time that at least 15 civilians were killed in that attack.

Burkina Faso has been grappling with a jihadist insurgency waged by rebels affiliated with Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group that

neutralise several hundred terrorists," according to security sources.

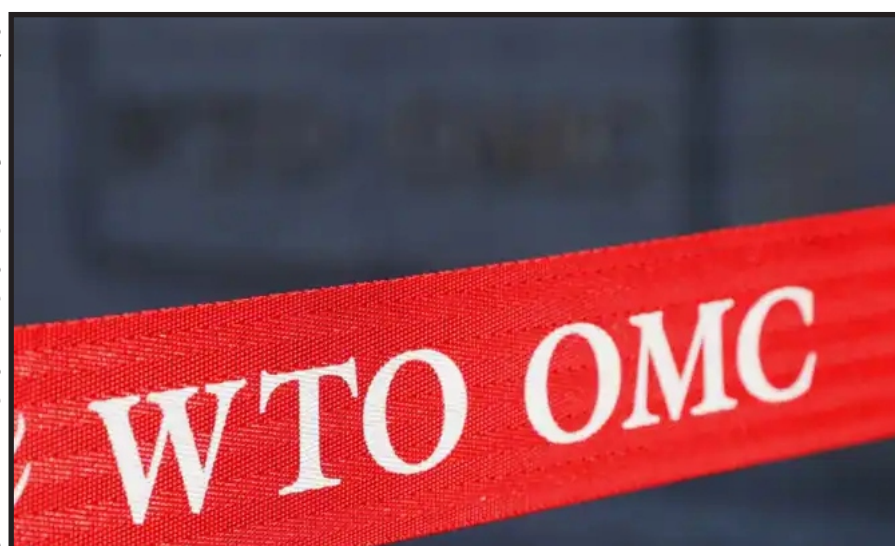
At the beginning of the week, Security Minister Mahamadou Sana described the wave of attacks as "co-ordinated."

"This change in the enemy's tactical approach is because terrorist bases have been destroyed as well as training camps and actions were carried out to dry up the enemy's source of financing, as well as its supply corridors," said Sana.

Mosques and imams have in the past been the target of attacks blamed on jihadists.

Churches in Burkina have also at times been targeted and Christians have been kidnapped.

The ACLED analysis group says that 439 people were killed in such violence in January alone.



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EDITORIAL

Commerce Minister Amin Modad, a player and referee

-A Repeat

It is highly incomprehensible that the chairman emeritus of the ruling Unity Party Amin Modad, who owns and operates chain of businesses here, including hotels is President Joseph Nyuma Boakai's pick for Minister of Commerce and Industry. This choice of the President raises serious transparency and accountability question about his government, particularly departure from business as usual.

How could a man, who is an active player in the sector be the one to supervise and regulate himself and his competitors! It is not just conflict of interest, but pure nepotism that President Boakai and the Unity Party say they came to eradicate.

We think the President would do not just himself, but the country well by revisiting this appointment for the sake of fair play, accountability and transparency.

It is very disappointing to the Liberian people for a party that sat in opposition and preached equity for six years would come to power and begin to do the very things that it talked against. This is not the kind of leadership style Liberians expect from the rescue mission.

Look at what is obtaining in the security sector that has forced the new Minister of Defense, Retired Major General Prince C. Johnson, III, to resign. Trampling on the rights of the men and women in arms is a great disservice to the state, as we saw in the case involving former Minister Brownie Samukai.

Minister Johnson, III did the right thing by immediately tendering in his resignation, for this if the first time in recent history for celebration of Armed Forces Day to be forcible cancelled on account of dissatisfaction of soldiers, expressed thru their wives.

We do not know what awaits our nation's commerce with a player appointed to referee actors and competitors. Will there be fair play or transparency? These are but few of the questions lingering in the public, Minister Modad goes to work daily.

It is important that the government cultivate and maintain a fair but highly competitive business environment to attract direct foreign investments that have eluded the economy in the past six years.

This can only be possible with the kind of policies that would be put in place to stimulate the economy and attract more investors for healthy competition and growth.

We are raising these concerns not that we have anything specific against Minister Amin Modad, but that compromise and selfish interests would be thrown out of the window so that the right things are done for the general good of the country that needs serious economic viability.

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COMMENTARY

By Roselyn Fosuah Adjei

Carbon Credits Hold the Key to Combating Deforestation

ACCRA - Over the past few years, intense media scrutiny has prompted a growing number of companies to pursue high-quality carbon credits. Seeking to avoid accusations of "greenwashing," many of these firms are no longer content with merely offsetting their emissions and have been actively seeking credits that deliver tangible benefits to local communities.

The Ghanaian government is prepared to help. We have devoted more than 15 years to developing a robust forest-conservation program. After extensive planning and preparation, we are ready to offer high-integrity credits to buyers in the Global North who are eager to demonstrate their commitment to fighting deforestation.

To be sure, several forest-protection schemes have come under fire in recent years. Critics argue that instead of reducing deforestation, these offsets are primarily aimed at serving the interests of corporations seeking carbon credits to meet their climate targets and validate their claims of carbon neutrality.

But jurisdictional programs like Ghana's are different. Designed to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, these initiatives cover vast areas while addressing some of the problems facing individual projects. For example, they mitigate the risk of illegal deforestation outside of designated conservation zones.

The concept is not new. Article 5 of the 2015 Paris climate agreement encourages developed countries to offer results-based payments to developing countries for achieving emissions reductions. Over the past two decades, jurisdictional forest-protection efforts have been largely funded by public donors, while corporate support has flowed toward specific emissions-reduction projects through the voluntary carbon market. But this is now changing, and countries like Ghana are leading the way.

Ghana's High Forest Zone, located within the Guinean Forests of West Africa, is recognized as one of the world's 36 biodiversity hotspots. In 2008, an alarming increase in deforestation rates prompted the Ghanaian government to join the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and develop its forest-conservation program with the goal of harnessing carbon finance to halt and reverse deforestation.

With financial support from the FCPF, the World Bank, and the Green Climate Fund, we identified five critical commodity-linked areas for intervention.

Through community engagement, our teams devised benefit-sharing strategies tailored to the diverse needs of various stakeholders.

They also developed specialized measurement technologies, enabling more accurate monitoring of the carbon stored in Ghana's forests.

After spending nearly two decades laying the necessary technical groundwork and establishing relationships with local communities, Ghana recently entered the voluntary carbon market. We are preparing to issue jurisdictional carbon credits through the Architecture for REDD+ Transactions (ART) process, thereby enabling domestic and international companies to support our conservation efforts.

Our objective is to transform carbon credits into a long-term revenue stream. To this end, Ghana recently became one of the first countries to sign an emissions-reduction agreement with the Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest Finance (LEAF) Coalition. As part of the deal, Ghana is set to receive \$50 million for reducing carbon dioxide emissions by up to five million tons.

While buyers in the Global North may view carbon credits as instrumental in meeting their climate targets, in Ghana, they represent a more profound shift. The revenue generated from these credits translates into tangible income for local communities, enabling households to benefit financially from forest preservation. These credits are more than a financial resource; they are a testament to years of dedicated work and commitment to environmental stewardship.

But for this program to be effective, buyers must recognize that integrity and impact require substantial investment. High-quality credits should do more than bolster corporate climate strategies; they should also contribute to preserving the world's forests.

In essence, this means providing communities with financial incentives to conserve trees instead of cutting them down. While the LEAF agreement, which values CO2 emissions at \$10 per ton, represents a positive first step, it is not enough, because the returns on illegal deforestation are higher.

Given that carbon pricing appears to have been designed by and for those on the demand side, Global North buyers should consult countries like Ghana to understand the true cost of producing high-integrity credits. Based on our extensive experience fighting deforestation, prices should account for the necessary preparatory work and, crucially, exceed the rates paid to illegal loggers and miners.

Carbon credits are not like aid funds, which are distributed by donor countries according to their own assessments of what they can or should give.

Rather, they are payments for emissions reductions that issuers like Ghana have worked hard to achieve - and that are crucial to limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius.

Potential buyers should visit, see for themselves the challenges we face in fighting deforestation, and then discuss pricing that reflects the real value of our accomplishments.

OP-ED

By Wempi Saputra

Banking on the World Bank's Knowledge

WASHINGTON, DC - Amid a cascade of intertwined challenges, including public-health emergencies, climate change, and violent conflict, that threaten to reverse decades of hard-won development progress, the World Bank has introduced an Evolution Roadmap to boost efforts to reduce poverty and inequality. Crucially, the unified and scaled response called for by Bank President Ajay Banga includes leveraging knowledge to help countries make more informed and effective decisions.

While best known for its financial services, the World Bank has a long history of researching and disseminating the lessons of development. In 1996, then-President James D. Wolfensohn, recognizing the potential of the information-technology revolution, urged the institution to function as a "Knowledge Bank." He emphasized that the World Bank's relationships with governments and international organizations would allow it to play a leading role in new global partnerships for creating and sharing knowledge. So long as it invested in the necessary systems, the Bank would be able to make more and better information available to its client countries.

Since then, the World Bank has offered both financial support and knowledge services, including technical assistance, training, capacity-building, policy advice, and data analysis. In fact, many clients consider these services - which capitalize on the Bank's vast experience, sectoral expertise, and wide array of data sources - to be as valuable as the financial assistance provided by the institution, if not more so.

But, to become a fully-fledged Knowledge Bank, the World Bank still needs to build these services into its operating processes and develop a model that supports the creation and dissemination of information as a standalone activity. This is crucial to improving the effectiveness and relevance of its knowledge initiatives.

Moreover, the Bank must ensure that it is providing client countries with the knowledge they need. After visiting 14 countries over the past year in my capacity as an executive director of the Bank, I have identified three areas in which clients could use more guidance. Fortunately, the Bank can mostly fill these gaps with its existing knowledge services and products.

For starters, client countries need to know how to use financial resources more efficiently to create projects or programs that have the largest multiplier effects and serve as many beneficiaries as possible. For example, a successful mangrove-rehabilitation project in Indonesia could be a model for other countries seeking to improve the welfare of local communities, support small and medium-size enterprises, and generate revenue through carbon credits in a transparent way.

Countries also require a better understanding of how to align domestic priorities with climate and development goals, which is essential for accelerating the green transition, broadening crisis-response toolkits, and strengthening climate resilience. According to the International Monetary Fund, delaying the transition to a low-emissions economy could impede GDP growth. But so far, striking the right balance between meeting environmental and social targets and pursuing an agenda for domestic development has been a challenge for many of the Bank's clients.

Lastly, there is the question of how to sustain strong, balanced, and inclusive economic growth by mobilizing private capital and boosting investment. To address this challenge, the Bank could provide systematic country assessments and international comparisons of good practices or lessons learned, which would likely contribute to poverty alleviation and shared prosperity.

Over the past 25 years, the World Bank has developed the capacity to address such questions. Its World Development Report, published in 1998, recognized that knowledge, not capital, is the key to sustained economic growth and focused on two main issues: knowledge gaps (the unequal distribution of know-how within and across countries) and information gaps (incomplete knowledge of products, processes, and institutions). The Bank's inaugural report assessing the state of its knowledge services, published in 2011, provided a comprehensive overview of the institution's efforts to overcome these problems. Later, in 2021, the Bank established a strategic framework for knowledge.

Last year's annual report summarized the World Bank's knowledge achievements to date, showcasing how far it has come. Examples include the launch of the Utility Knowledge Exchange Platform in 2022, which helps countries improve the performance of their electricity systems through policy, regulatory, institutional, and governance reforms. This initiative was complemented by more than \$27 billion in Bank-financed projects supporting utilities between 2018 and 2022.

In 2023, the Bank also supported 510 employment-related projects, totaling around \$87 billion, while conducting job diagnostics and facilitating global knowledge-sharing and research. And in Kenya, a youth-empowerment program that combined classroom learning with on-the-job experience significantly increased the number of young Kenyans in paid work.

When Wolfensohn first proposed the idea of a Knowledge Bank, he aptly noted that lessons from economic development are part of the "global commons," and that the cultivation and dissemination of this expertise requires international cooperation. Banga has inherited an even more daunting development challenge in this context, given the corrosive effects of contemporary geopolitics on multilateralism.

Even so, with the new playbook developed under Banga's watch, the World Bank can continue its shift toward becoming a Knowledge Bank. Now more than ever, the Bank must make its expertise more widely available, use its convening power, and deepen its partnerships to meet the needs of its client countries.

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OPINION

By Junaid Nabi

How AI Could Reshape Medicine

BOSTON - On a recent international trip, I found myself running late to the airport. Not being fluent in the local language, I used a translation app that enabled me to convey the urgency of my situation to the taxi driver. The app's camera feature also allowed me to understand the road signs, providing real-time updates.

This is just one example of how digital innovations, particularly artificial intelligence, are reshaping our world. With recent studies showing that AI models can now identify early signs of health complications such as sepsis, these technologies are poised to revolutionize medicine, too.

These rapid technological advances also underscore the urgent need for AI regulation. The European Union's Artificial Intelligence Act, which is expected to be approved in the second half of 2024, is a prime example.

This pioneering law classifies AI systems according to their risk levels and explicitly bans specific high-risk applications, such as social scoring and emotion recognition, that pose a threat to personal safety, civil liberties, and democratic governance. It also highlights the importance of transparency and explainability, so that users can access information about AI-generated decisions.

The EU's ambitious legislation offers a good starting point for a global discussion on how not to use AI. But given these technologies' vast potential to transform health care, it is equally crucial to explore how they can be used to augment the human-centric aspects of medicine.

For starters, AI has the potential to make medicine more compassionate. For example, a recent study published in JAMA Internal Medicine compared responses from ChatGPT to health-related questions with those provided by human doctors. Interestingly, a panel of licensed health-care professionals preferred ChatGPT's answers 79% of the time, viewing them as more empathetic toward patients.

Previous studies have shown that greater empathy and compassion can improve patient outcomes and expedite recovery.

In recent years, health-care providers have become increasingly overwhelmed by managerial and administrative duties, constraining their ability to establish clinical rapport with patients. This "documentation burden" often leads to burnout and undermines the quality of care.

By providing automated answers to routine questions, scheduling appointments, and managing paperwork, AI-powered platforms could streamline administrative processes and free up physicians to spend more time with patients.

But AI's applications extend well beyond rationalizing administrative tasks. A growing body of clinical evidence suggests that deep-learning algorithms - trained on vast datasets of medical images and patient records - can analyze X-rays, MRIs, and other medical scans with remarkable accuracy, frequently surpassing the diagnostic capabilities of human physicians. These innovations could revolutionize precision diagnostics, facilitating the early detection of diseases like pneumonia and cancer and supporting global health efforts, particularly in remote areas with limited access to specialized care.

Policymakers worldwide are increasingly recognizing the importance of preventive health care, largely owing to its economic benefits. AI is central to this shift, interpreting data from wearable devices and sensors to identify early signs of pathology, particularly cardiac conditions, and thus preventing minor health issues from becoming catastrophic crises.

Moreover, smartwatches and fitness bands use AI-powered tracking systems capable of detecting potential sleep apnea and prompting users to seek medical advice before they develop severe health problems.

To be sure, integrating AI into health care poses significant challenges and raises numerous ethical questions. In addition to ensuring fairness, combating algorithmic bias, and maintaining data privacy and security, it is crucial to recognize that AI cannot replace the personal touch that is essential to clinical practice.

Medical professionals ought to lead this transition, using new technologies to augment their skills. While chatbots are unlikely to replace doctors and nurses anytime soon, AI tools are already supporting health-care providers by improving diagnostic accuracy and facilitating more personalized, data-driven care.

Given that persistent health challenges, especially chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension, often stem from inadequate investment in public health and a lack of social cohesion, addressing them requires more than just technological solutions. In such cases, comprehensive reform of national health policies is needed.

By adopting the emerging digital technologies in a responsible and ethical manner, we can transform the ways we diagnose, treat, and prevent diseases, ushering in an era of data-driven medicine in which health professionals and AI systems work together to deliver better care for all. But while machines can help, the ability to forge a healthier future is ours alone.

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ON 2ND THOUGHTS



with Othello B. Garblah

How Gov't kills local businesses in Liberia

Monday, March 4, 2024:-Ideally, business failure means a company ceasing operations because of its inability to make a profit or to generate enough revenue to cover its expenses. Equally so, a profitable business can fail if it does not generate adequate cash flow to meet expenses.

In Liberia, the failure of businesses is not only the presence of the conditions listed above but lack of government support is the main reason why businesses failed here. The country's dual currency regime, tax incentives, and laws protecting investments make it an appealing destination for investors.

However, political interests, corruption, and the country's weak legal system influenced by government actors continue to kill off small businesses and some foreign investments.

Ideally, to grow their economies, countries put in place regulations and laws to protect local industries, small businesses, and or indigenous businesses which are the engines of economic growth in any society, but in Liberia, those laws and regulations only exist on the books, while politically motivated interests take precedent.

The Liberian government on paper appears to put in place some protective clow for indigenous businesses, but in practice, government actors are the canker worms that undermine these indigenous businesses for their selfish interests or kickbacks.

Take for example the Liberianization policy which reserved certain businesses for Liberians only. There are sixteen businesses exclusively reserved for Liberians. Those businesses are Supply of sand, Block making, Peddling, Travel agencies, Retail sale of rice and cement, Ice making and sale of ice, Tire repair shops, Auto repair shops with an investment of less than USD 550,000, Shoe repair shops, Retail sale of timber and planks.

The rest are the Operation of gas stations, Video clubs, Operation of taxis, Importation, or sale of second-hand or used clothing, Distribution in Liberia of locally manufactured products, and the Importation and sale of used cars (except authorized dealerships, which may deal in certified used vehicles of their make.

The reason for these exclusive reserves is to protect Liberians from competing with foreign investors in these sectors so that they do not become spectators in their own country due to the belief that the foreign investors who are mostly Indians and Lebanese have financial capacity as compared to the Liberian businessman or woman. Unfortunately, these exclusive businesses are being taken over by foreigners authorized by government agencies and ministries who grant them such licenses to operate, thereby pushing Liberians off their businesses.

A typical example is the supply of sand or sand mining. Today, the Chinese are supplying sand and crushed rocks all over the place with the blessing from the Ministry of Mines and Energy, while Liberians who once spearheaded this supply chain are now at the beg and calls of the Chinese who are siphoning millions of US Dollars out of the country.

A ten-tyre load of sand that was once sold between US60 to 75 USD is now being sold for between US 250 and US300, making it difficult for a poor man to build a concrete house.

Not only are the Chinese engaging in sand and crushed rocks supplies, but they are also into block making as well. These are proudly patronized by not just government officials but even government agencies as well during construction.

Next comes the Lebanese and Indians who are into retailing almost everything from used clothing to rice and cement. As if that was not enough, the Lebanese now control the auto repair industries with their garages on every street corner.

But these are supposed to be businesses reserved by laws for Liberians. However, these are the very businesses government officials will patronize over Liberian ones.

In the Printing industry, for example, the Liberia Revenue Agency and other revenue-collecting agencies will squeeze taxes out of these businesses just to pay government officials.

In return, these government officials and agencies take their printing contracts to Ghana and China to businesses that pay no dime in taxes to the Liberian government.

The Liberian businesses are not alone. Policies to protect local industries and promote manufacturing are lacking and if they exist, the laws protecting them are weak. Yet government will want you to believe that it is bent taking the economy from being import-driven to consuming locally manufactured goods.

The rubber industry is a good example. Last year, former President George Weah, like his predecessor, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf put a moratorium on the exportation of unprocessed rubber.

The aim is to ensure that local rubber manufacturing companies here whose existence depends on unprocessed rubber have the supply to continue doing business.

As good as this intention is, the possibility of it being revoked to satisfy just a few political interests over the greater good of the country's economy is most likely. The question then is how can the country grow its local industries when raw materials needed are being allowed to be sold to companies operating outside of its borders with no Liberian in their employ.

Until, the new administration, takes an inner look, and puts in place appropriate policies that stop the killing of Liberian businesses and prioritize the same, the Liberian economy is bound to be stagnant forever.



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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR A CONSULTING FIRM TO AUDIT THE BI-BEST PROJECT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

COUNTRIES: Sierra Leone and Liberia

Sector: Gender Equality

Mode of Financing: Grant

Project ID: P-Z1-ID0-009

Grant No: 5900155016801

Issued Date: 3 March 2024

The Mano River Union Secretariat has received a grant from the African Development Fund to implement the project to Build Inclusive Business Ecosystems for Stabilization and Transformation (BI-BEST) in the Mano River Union (MRU) and intends to apply part of the agreed amount for this grant to payments under the contract for the Consultancy Services to Audit the Project Financial Statements

The particular services required from the Consulting Firms under the assignment include, but not limited:

The services include the conduct of financial audit on the project's financial statement, the statement of expenditure and the special account taking into consideration the provisions of the financing agreement, project appraisal report and other relevant documents of the project. The audit is expected to be carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing and they will be required to prepare an audit report including its management letter that will express an independent professional opinion on the financial position of the project and to ensure that the funds granted to the Project have been used for their intended purposes.

The Mano River Union Secretariat is therefore inviting firms with a legal mandate to operate in both Sierra Leone and Liberia, and with required expertise in Auditing. The Mano River Union Secretariat requires that interested Consulting Firms shall provide information on their qualifications and experience (cover letter, supporting documents referencing similar services and showing demonstrated experience in similar assignments, etc.) to undertake this Assignment.

Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short-list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank's "Procurement Policy and Methodology for Bank Group funded Operations" (BPM), dated 2015, which is available on the Bank's website at <http://www.afdb.org>. MRU is under no obligation to shortlist any consultant who expresses interest.

Interested Consulting Firms may obtain further information from the email addresses provided below during the Office's working hours between 09:00 to 17:00 hours GMT, Procurement Specialist: kensah@mru.int and copy Finance Associate: lwilson@mru.int

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by March 18th 2024.

Sierra Leone time and mention " **AUDIT THE BI-BEST PROJECT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** "

Attention:

Mano River Union Secretariat

32 S Spur Loop, Wilberforce, Freetown

Rep. of Sierra Leone

Tel: +232 76-964-965

E-mail : procurement@mru.int

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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UNDP supports NEC's journey toward Excellence in Elections

Monrovia, Liberia; March 1, 2024: The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and partners (Ireland, Sweden, the European Union, and the European Partnership for Democracy) held a BRIDGE

focus on electoral processes to develop skills in areas crucial to the effective operation of an institution.

Nineteen (19) participants, including the Commissioner of NEC, the Executive Director, Directors, Magistrates,

different election topics and components in democracy.

Using advanced interactive adult learning, BRIDGE training methodology includes real-life scenarios and simulations to facilitate the experiential learning process. One of the main components of BRIDGE is a TtF, which delivers advanced facilitation skills and builds local trainers' ability to produce and deliver high-quality capacity-building interventions by using the same tools and resources used in any other developed countries.

This program represents the most advanced methodology and a database of electoral knowledge. The TtF provided the participants with access to international comparative electoral literature and analytical materials to further enhance Liberia's democratic governance knowledge and electoral framework.

The BRIDGE methodology aims to immerse the participants in an engaging and rewarding learning process that explores options, lessons learned, benefits, and challenges of numerous aspects in the field of electoral administration and sharing best practices from different countries. During the certificate ceremony, the Chairperson of NEC, Davidetta Browne Lansanah urged the



Train the Facilitators (TtF) workshop from 14 - 24 February, in Ganta, Nimba County for the National Elections Commission (NEC) officials and other stakeholders engaged in electoral processes. The workshop was part of technical assistance to enhance long-term capacity building and institutional strengthening. Building Resources in Democracy and Elections (BRIDGE) is the most advanced professional development program with a particular

Assistant Magistrates, and representatives from civil society and academia completed the TtF together with three university professors whose participation in this workshop will assist in extending this most advanced learning methodology into the Liberian education system.

BRIDGE is a comprehensive professional development curriculum developed by election professionals and is intended for knowledge sharing. It is composed of several modules addressing

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Lawmaker demands investigation into LEC killing

The killing of an alleged power thief by men believed to be from the anti-power theft taskforce has prompted the Montserrado District #15 Representative to demand an investigation.

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monday, March 24- Montserrado County Electoral District #15 Representative Abu B. Kamara has demanded the Liberia National Police and the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) to investigate all those connected with the alleged killing of Mr. Josephus S. Tukpeh, a resident of the Caldwell community.

Kamara, an opposition lawmaker has given the authorities 72 hours to investigate the incident or they will face an unspecified citizens' action. "Based upon that, we are giving the joint team 72 house ultimatum. If we don't get readdress, you will see what's going to happen to the citizens. All we need is justice," Kamara said over the weekend. "We believe that his death was reckless, wicked, and careless because they should have worked with the community leadership to do

so," he noted. Mr. Tukpeh was allegedly murdered over the weekend by some members of the Power Theft Division of the LEC and the Liberia National Police for alleged power theft.

The Joint LNP-LEC team has alleged that it observed that Mr. Tukpeh was engaged in power theft. It also accused the deceased of preventing the team from having access to his house to disconnect his power line. That allegedly resulted in a conflict and the unfortunate killing of Mr. Tukpeh.

Following a meeting with the LNP headquarters, Representative Kamara told journalists that they are demanding justice, adding that it's the only thing that can make his district and people happy.

He expressed frustration over the government's alleged disrespect towards the family and the district by taking the body of the deceased from the Stockton Creek Clinic without the concern and approval of the family.



The deceased

The deceased widow at the LNP Headquarters

LRA New CG James Dorbor Jallah Takes Over

-Outlines His Vision for A 'New' LRA

Liberia's Revenue Authority new Commissioner General took over on Friday, with hopes that his appointment will boost the country's revenue in take over the next 6 years.

Monrovia, Liberia - March 1, 2024 - The Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) welcomed its new Commissioner General, James Dorbor Jallah, who officially assumed leadership of the Tax Authority on Friday, March 1. Commissioner General Jallah outlined his ambitious vision for reform and progress in revenue collection, emphasizing the pursuit of autonomy for the LRA.

In his inaugural address, Commissioner General Jallah underscored the vital role of revenue collection in national growth and development, calling for the unwavering commitment of all LRA staff. He assured employees, taxpayers, the business community, and stakeholders with a vision of a

duties. He announced plans to enhance existing whistleblowing programs to enhance transparency and integrity within the LRA.

Commissioner General Jallah outlined his objective of securing full autonomy for the LRA within his first year, envisioning it as a strategy to bolster performance and efforts to exceed the billion-dollar revenue goal. He emphasized that autonomy would facilitate strategic investment in technology, enabling automation and providing staff with the necessary resources to fulfill their duties effectively.

Additionally, Commissioner General Jallah called upon the business community to adhere strictly to tax and business laws, advocating for transparent compliance with payment processes and procedures. He assured compliant businesses of smooth



revitalized LRA characterized by professionalism, integrity, and prioritization of staff welfare and development.

Acknowledging the commendable efforts of LRA employees in surpassing challenges to elevate domestic revenue to US\$600 million, Commissioner General Jallah set an even loftier goal of surpassing the US\$1 billion milestone. He emphasized the pivotal role of the LRA in advancing the government's development agenda, stressing the government's dependence on collected revenue for success.

To achieve ambitious revenue targets, Commissioner General Jallah urged staff to maintain unwavering integrity in their

operations and success within the business environment. Expressing unwavering dedication to collaboration with the business community, government officials, and the public, Commissioner General Jallah pledged to ensure the fair and transparent collection of domestic revenue crucial for Liberia's development. He affirmed that decisions and actions at the LRA would be guided by professionalism and the best interests of both the LRA and Liberia, urging employees to align their thoughts and actions accordingly. Commissioner General Jallah's assumption of leadership marks a new chapter for the LRA, characterized by a commitment to excellence, transparency, and progress in revenue collection for Liberia's prosperity. -Press release

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MCC reawakens clean-up exercise

Newly-appointed Mayor of Monrovia John-Charuk Siafa, leads a revolution here, not with guns, but brooms, tricycles, and wheelbarrows, to give the nation's capital and its environs a facelift.

Under the current campaign that pops up every First Saturday each month, Mayor Siafa seeks to keep Monrovia, one of Africa's oldest cities, named after United States' Fifth President, James Monroe, clean, green, and safe for residents and visitors.

By Lewis S Teh

Monrovia, Liberia, March 4, 2024 - Following a cool-off period of the first Saturday cleaning up exercise, which came into existence through then Mayor Mary T. Broh, the

giving the city the much needed attention.

Mayor Siafa asked residents of Monrovia and its environs to support the clean city initiative and take responsibility for the process of creating a more hygienic environment.

While cleaning the streets on First Saturday, MCC workers wearing reflective vests and gloves were seen raising awareness in different areas as well. The reboot of the first Saturday citywide exercise jumpstarted with the slogan "Own your street, own your city, keep it clean". The goal of Saturday's awareness campaign was to revive the essence of "First Saturday" and promote a civic and environmental stewardship culture. The cleanup exercise was simultaneously carried out across Monrovia, with enthusiastic community engagement. Institutions and entities that were in attendance during the exercise include the Ministry of Public Works, the JNB/JKK volunteers, and the Monrovia Lions Club, including youth, among others.

Meanwhile, in an attempt to make Monrovia a cleaner, and greener city, Center Street, a major waste hotspot in Monrovia has been targeted.

Center Street Cemetery is one lousy place in Central Monrovia where people unlawfully dispose of garbage.

Thousands of underprivileged young people, most of whom are supposedly drug abusers, reside in the cemetery.

The Mayor reassured residents that the exercise, which is required by the municipal administration, would be carried out completely on the first Saturday of each month.

Together with Mayor John-Charuk Siafa, Monrovia City Government staff members ensured that the city was realistically cleaned, as part of the kick-start of the first Saturday cleanup exercise.



Government of Liberia via the Monrovia City Corporation (MCC) has reawakened the first Saturday cleaning up exercise across Montserrado and its environs. Speaking at the resumption of the exercise on March 2, 2024, in Monrovia, newly-appointed Mayor John-Charuk Siafa, said one of the easier approaches to keeping Monrovia clean, green, and safe is for residents to get involved more robustly in

This must be the last in Kinjor

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blame for ills affecting them in the district. The Government of Liberia has launched full investigation into the situation that led to loss of lives and injuries of Police officers. But speaking to his congregation, partisans, and supporters on Sunday, fresh from abroad, Mr. Weah seems robust as he describes as saddening, news of the shooting of peaceful protesters, taking away their lives. According to former President Weah, Liberia is a symbol of Freedom, Unity, and Peace, hence, there should be no casualties, when the Police, who he notes, are trained to protect lives and properties, are the "ones now advancing guns to shoot and kill innocent people" "This is saddening that our people are dying in common protest; Police are now shooting people, this wasn't the consent of our struggle and we cannot sit here and allow this. We must flag it. As they had said doing our Administration, they were going

to keep 'our feet to the fire.' We must now keep their feet to double fires", the former President continues. He also vows to defend the nation and its people, saying that he is ready and prepared to make sure that their rights are heard, whether by protesting or through whatever means of expression, there shouldn't be Police shooting people.

"To Mr. Boakai, don't allow your Police to be shooting innocent people; this thing in Kinjor must be the last, and should not happen again, and when it happens, we will go out there and match the Police Director to court; he must pay for the innocent lives." "We are prepared for it, and to make sure our citizens have their rights to protest, speak to anyone they want to, express their grieves and concerns in harmony without any fear of Police shooting at them."

Mr. Weah: "So Mr. Boakai, make sure that your Police

don't get in the streets to shoot, and if you will allow your Police, we will rebel to the letter, and this is not a threat, but it is our civil liberty and we must exercise it."

He calls on the International Community to investigate the situation in Liberia that led to the loss of innocent lives, something he said is toxic to the democracy of the State. "I want to send this message to the International Community, to see what is now going on in Liberia. Now Police are shooting at citizens; they were here during our Administration, telling us that the people must protest, and we allow the people to protest, providing food and water for them to exercise their Constitutional rights, and now we have left power, the government that has come to rescue us, are now shooting people. This should not happen and they need to join us and tell the government that the people must protest, peacefully", Mr. Weah underscores.

Self-immolator Ponpon bags Int'l Service Award

Self-immolator Activist Leroy Archie Ponpon has received the International Service Award (ISA) from the A.M. Kyne Collegiate Resource Center in conjunction with the Office of the First Lady of Liberia, Madam Kartuma Yarta Boakai.

The Award is in recognition of his stance against rights abuse and societal ills, which led him to set himself ablaze here in 2020 to draw government's attention to salary delays for judicial staffers.

By: Emmanuel wise Jipoh

Monrovia, Liberia, March 4, 2024 - Though many here might have forgotten his stance against rights abuse and societal ills, which led him to set himself ablaze here in 2020 to draw government attention to salary delay for judicial staffers, Activist Leroy Archie Ponpon has received the International Service Award (ISA) from the A.M. Kyne Collegiate Resource Center in conjunction with the Office of the First Lady of Liberia, Madam Kartuma Yarta Boakai.

2020, when he became the first Liberian and a government worker to riot against the former ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) Administration, by setting himself ablaze on the ground of Temple of Justice due to unpaid salary for judicial workers, after several weeks of protest in demand of unsettled arrears owed them. The self-immolator might also be hailed for staging three days of hunger strike in 2018 in front of the United States Embassy near Monrovia, demanding then President George Manneh Weah to declare his assets. Ponpon first grew fames in 2011, when he burnt down the Norwegian Flag in



Mr. Ponpon might have gone unnoticed in recent years, since he blew the trumpet for injustice, pouring gasoline on his body before setting himself ablaze on the ground of the Temple of Justice in Monrovia, but much of the world seems to still cheer him for his bravery and exemplary action as he bags the International Service Award, among 46 other individuals who made devastating impact in the Liberian society but are gone unnoticed. Activist Ponpon, among other top-notch personalities including former Minister of Defense, Retired Major/General Prince Charles Johnson. III, and former Liberian warlord-turned evangelist Joshua Milton Blaty, affectionately known as "Butt Naked" Dr. Adam M. Kyne, co-host of the award were recognized for their exemplary services and immense contributions towards impacting Liberians' lives.

Dr. Kyne said specifically, Mr. Archie Ponpon was given the award because of his stance on Human Rights Violations here, which has made an unwavering and positive impact on the lives of citizens, as Liberia gradually reshapes. Ponpon went down in history here, on November 2,

protest, stating that former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, didn't deserve the Noble Peace Prize Award given by the Norwegian Government for her immense contribution to stabilizing peace in Liberia and across Africa. The International Service Award, which was presented to honorees on Saturday, March 2, 2024, at Effort Baptist Church in Painesville, signifies unnoticed Liberians' commitments to patriotism, and unwavering dedication to speaking about ills in society. Amb. Dr. Michelle E. Richards, head of the International Service Award team, said the Award is a replication of her own achievement, as a human rights activist, winning President Joe Biden Presidential Life-Time Achievement Award which embodies the goal of humanity.

"This is an Award I want to share with all of the countless people throughout the world - combating human rights violations; this aligns with a recognition of me as a recipient of the Joe Biden Presidential Life-Time Achievement Award," which speaks volumes of humanity and it is my goal to travel across Africa to honor deserving people, who are making meaningful impact in the society," Dr. Richards said.

Français

Une manifestation violente à Bea Mountain fait 3 morts

L'utilisation présumée de la force excessive par les forces de sécurité de l'État pour protéger la société minière d'or Bea Mountain se poursuivent. Les manifestations, qui ont dégénéré en violence, ont eu lieu dans le district de Tawore, à Kinjor, dans le comté de Grand Cape Mount.

Toutefois, notre journaliste qui s'est rendu sur les lieux avec des législateurs de Monrovia et du comté a rapporté que les habitants du comté de Grand Cape Mount ont accusé l'Unité d'intervention d'urgence (ERU) de la police affectée à la zone de



Mountain a conduit les législateurs à voter le rappel de l'armée et de la police déployées sur place il y a plus de deux ans.

Au moins trois personnes seraient mortes et plusieurs autres blessées alors que les manifestations de longue date contre l'exploitation de la société minière d'or commerciale Bea Mountain Mining Corporation (BMCC)

Le jeudi 29 février 2024, au petit matin, une manifestation sanglante a éclaté dans le district de Tawore, marquant l'un des nombreux incidents brutaux alors que la dissidence grandit parmi les habitants de la communauté d'accueil de l'entreprise.

Cependant, la police nationale du Liberia (LNP) a démenti les informations faisant état de morts.

concession d'avoir tiré à balles réelles.

Une partie des revendications des manifestants porte sur la nomination d'un de leurs fils à un poste de direction de la BMCC et la distribution d'électricité.

Ils protestent également pour obtenir d'autres avantages tels que ceux indiqués dans l'accord de développement minier signé dans le protocole d'accord (MoU) entre la société et le comté.

La direction des anciens combattants des forces armées annulée

Les Forces Armées du Liberia (AFL) ont dissous, avec effet immédiat, la nouvelle direction du Bureau national des anciens combattants (NBVA), en attendant une consultation avec le commandant en chef, le président Joseph Nyumah Boakai.

Le Haut Commandement des Forces Armées du Liberia a annulé, avec effet immédiat, le résultat de la récente sélection de trois anciens combattants pour diriger l'équipe de direction du Bureau national des anciens combattants.

Un comité directeur de 17 membres, créé par les Forces Armées du Liberia en collaboration avec le Bureau des anciens combattants, a sélectionné le major à la retraite Thomas Plato comme directeur général ; le capitaine à la retraite Edward Tokpah, directeur général adjoint chargé de l'administration ; et le premier lieutenant à la

retraite Isaac Wallace, directeur général adjoint chargé des anciens combattants. Ces noms devaient être transmis au président Joseph Bokai pour nomination et confirmation ultérieure par le Sénat libérien.

Cependant, cette initiative a suscité la colère de l'ancienne direction du Bureau, qui l'a jugée contraire à la loi instituant l'institution.

S'exprimant le jeudi 29 février 2024 dans la salle de

conférence du Haut Commandement de l'AFL, après une journée de réunion avec les parties en conflit au sein de la communauté des anciens combattants, le chef d'état-major de l'AFL, le général de division Davidson Forleh, a déclaré que seul le conseil d'administration du Bureau national des anciens combattants est habilité à sélectionner et à transmettre au président et au commandant en chef les

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AFL Chief of Staff, Major General Davidson Forleh

Éditorial

Un sale coup de relations publiques

La présidence à Monrovia a peiné à fournir des preuves photographiques ou vidéo de la rencontre du président Joseph Nyuma 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 Nyuma 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

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Une manifestation

Les manifestants ont déclaré à notre journaliste qu'ils manifestaient pacifiquement lorsque les agents de la LNP sont arrivés sur les lieux et ont exigé leur retrait forcé.

Cependant, ils ont déclaré avoir résisté à l'ordre de la police, ce qui aurait incité les agents à tirer à balles réelles.

Les citoyens ont accusé la LNP d'avoir tué trois manifestants en tirant à balles réelles, mais la LNP a démenti ces informations.

"Nous manifestions pacifiquement jusqu'à ce que la police vienne nous expulser de force. Nous avons résisté et ils ont tiré des balles réelles, ce qui a provoqué la mort de trois personnes. Deux personnes ont été enterrées et c'est le corps d'une personne que vous voyez ici", ont raconté certains manifestants.

Sur les lieux de la manifestation, le porte-parole de la police, Moses Carter, a nié tout usage de balles réelles et tout décès lors d'une interview.

M. Carter a plutôt déclaré que quelques personnes étaient inconscientes.

"Nous ne sommes au courant d'aucun décès ni de tirs à balles réelles. Cependant, ce que nous savons, c'est que deux civils et dix policiers sont inconscients et se trouvent actuellement à l'hôpital John F.

Kennedy de Monrovia", a expliqué M. Carter.

Parallèlement, plusieurs législateurs, dirigés par le président de la Chambre des représentants chargé de l'exécutif, M. Emmanuel Dahn, et le représentant Yekeh Kolubah du comté de Montserrado, se sont rendus dans le comté de Grand Cape Mount pour négocier la paix.

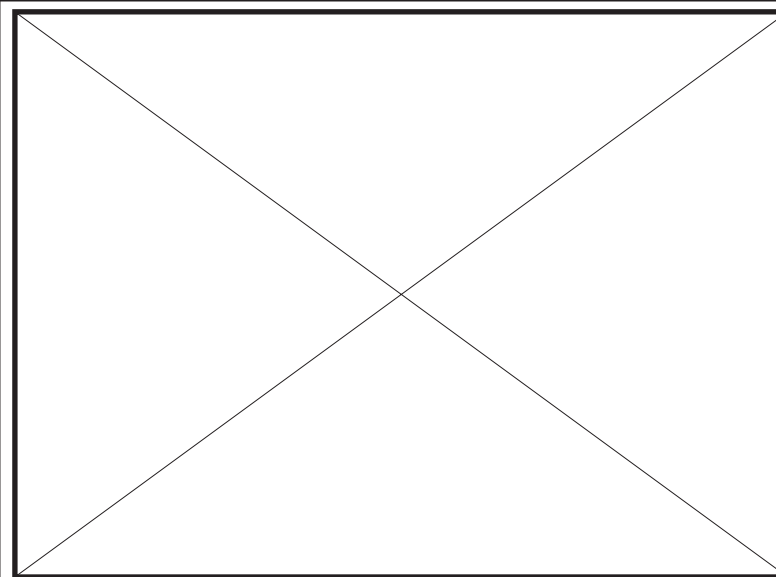
S'adressant aux manifestants lésés, le représentant Dahn les a exhortés à être calmes et patients, ajoutant que leurs préoccupations sont très légitimes et seront prises en compte.

Après avoir écouté les représentants, les manifestants ont accepté d'abandonner la protestation, mais ont donné aux législateurs un délai d'une semaine pour répondre à leurs demandes.

"Nous avons écouté tout ce que vous avez dit et nous avons décidé de nous retirer de cette manifestation. Cependant, nous vous donnons un délai d'une semaine pour répondre à cette préoccupation. Si vous n'y parvenez pas, nous poursuivrons notre manifestation", ont déclaré les habitants.

Parallèlement, la LNP a déployé des équipes opérationnelles et d'enquête sur les lieux de l'incident, suite à la violente manifestation entre la société minière Bea Mountain et les habitants, le jeudi 2

Arrestation d'un suspect en possession de drogues d'une valeur de 50 millions de dollars libériens



A lors que la nouvelle administration libérienne s'attaque au problème des drogues dangereuses qui frappent la société libérienne, l'Agence libérienne de lutte contre la drogue (LDEA) ne ménage aucun effort pour poursuivre les trafiquants, les dealers et les consommateurs, procédant à des arrestations ces dernières semaines.

Fishtown, comté de River Gee, sud-est du Liberia - L'Agence libérienne de lutte contre la drogue (LDEA) du comté de River Gee a arrêté un ressortissant nigérian de 40 ans en possession d'héroïne et de cocaïne d'une valeur de 5 millions de dollars libériens.

Le suspect, identifié comme étant Friday Iloma, a été arrêté le mardi 27 février 2024, vers 7h35 du matin, dans le district de Gbeapo Kanweaken.

Le commandant de la LDEA dans le comté, Jusu M. Kiadii, a déclaré aux journalistes que l'arrestation du suspect Friday faisait suite à des informations reçues d'un habitant de la communauté. Il a expliqué que les habitants de la communauté avaient souvent signalé que le suspect était constamment impliqué dans la vente de drogues illégales, constituant une menace pour la communauté.

Il a été inculpé de plusieurs infractions, notamment le trafic de stupéfiants, la distribution et la possession de drogues sans licence, ce qui contrevient aux articles 14.103, 14.107 et 14.111 de la loi modifiée sur les drogues au Liberia.

Le suspect Iloma a été détenu dans le comté en attendant son procès.

Le commandant Kiadii a décrit la situation des drogues à River Gee comme étant préoccupante, mais il assure aux résidents que ceux qui sont impliqués dans la vente illégale de drogues seront traduits en justice.

Il a appelé toutes les autorités compétentes du comté à lui fournir le soutien nécessaire pour rendre l'Agence efficace, citant notamment le manque de mobilité et de personnel, qui entravent sérieusement le bon fonctionnement de la LDEA sur place.

Parallèlement, les habitants de Gbeapo Kanweaken ont fait l'éloge de l'Agence, soulignant qu'ils s'étaient souvent plaints du suspect pour sa prétendue implication constante dans la vente de drogues illicites.

Le 11 février 2024, Patricia Weah, âgée de 29 ans, a été arrêtée au point de contrôle de Gbeapo Joquiken, dans le comté de River Gee, en possession de 178,3 grammes d'une substance identifiée comme étant du Kush.

Elle a été immédiatement déférée au tribunal d'instance de Fish Town pour une enquête plus approfondie, car elle a été prise en flagrant délit avec la substance dangereuse.

Starts from page 8

La direction des anciens

noms d'anciens combattants qualifiés pour être recommandés.

Selon le général de division Forleh, la présence continue de l'ancienne direction au Bureau et les mesures prises par certains membres pour sélectionner et nommer une nouvelle direction contrastent fortement avec la procédure de nomination, qui doit être approuvée par le conseil d'administration, après un processus de sélection et de vérification approprié.

Il a ajouté qu'en raison des circonstances actuelles, le chef d'état-major de l'AFL a également demandé à l'équipe de direction sortante de renoncer à toutes ses activités en remettant le marteau de l'autorité au responsables des ressources humaines, conformément à la directive de l'ancien président George Weah. Le général de division Forleh a conseillé que l'actuel responsable des ressources humaines, le capitaine à la retraite Edward Tokpah, le contrôleur, le major à la retraite Joseph Nyunder et un personnel restreint dirigent une direction intérimaire au Bureau, en attendant de

nouvelles consultations.

Il a exhorté les deux parties à rester calmes et paisibles, assurant qu'il consultera le président et commandant en chef, Joseph Boakai, pendant l'intérim pour trouver des solutions appropriées conformément à la loi qui a établi le Bureau national des anciens combattants.

Parallèlement, le chef d'état-major a également mis en garde les parties en conflit contre toute protestation et leur a demandé de bien vouloir traiter les veuves des anciens combattants décédés. Le gouvernement examinera leurs préoccupations afin de trouver une solution.

Pour leur part, les parties en conflit ont accepté le conseil du chef d'état-major et ont promis de rester calmes et de travailler ensemble en équipe pour le bien du Bureau. Elles ont également promis d'intervenir pour annuler une manifestation prévue par les veuves des anciens combattants décédés.

La réunion a été honorée par la présence du colonel Theophilus Anto Dana, chef d'état-major adjoint, et d'autres membres du Haut Commandement.

La police enquête sur 2 employés d'ArcelorMittal

U ne enquête sur des allégations de sollicitation de pots-de-vin en échange d'emplois chez ArcelorMittal Liberia est alarmante et mérite une attention sérieuse.

La police de Sanniquellie, dans le comté de Nimba, interroge deux employés supérieurs de la société minière ArcelorMittal Liberia, pour leur implication présumée dans des affaires de corruption et de fraude.

Les suspects travaillent au bureau des ressources humaines (RH) de l'entreprise.

Ils auraient sollicité d'importantes sommes d'argent auprès de demandeurs d'emploi en leur promettant de les faire embaucher.

Les suspects sont identifiés comme Cyrus Yini de Yekepa, comté de Nimba, et Johnny Ndorbor de Buchanan, comté de Grand Bassa, respectivement.

Certaines de leurs victimes ont déclaré au correspondant de Nimba du NEW DAWN que les suspects leur avaient demandé de transférer des paiements pour des emplois via leurs comptes d'argent mobile. Elles ont affirmé avoir été escroquées de 500 dollars américains chacune pour obtenir un emploi.

Selon elles, il est actuellement difficile d'être embauché par l'entreprise, car les primes en espèces ont pris le pas sur les qualifications au sein de l'entité, des personnes non qualifiées étant embauchées, tandis que les candidats qualifiés, qui manquent d'argent, sont laissés pour compte dans la frustration.

Elles ont également révélé que, sur la base de cette pratique présumée, le



bureau des ressources humaines privilégie les Guinéens et autres ressortissants étrangers pour l'emploi, tandis que les Libériens en souffrent.

Ce journal a recueilli des informations selon lesquelles la plupart des chauffeurs embauchés sont des Guinéens, qui auraient payé d'importantes sommes d'argent pour obtenir leur emploi, principalement à Yekepa.

Dans l'intervalle, la police a écrit à la huitième cour de circuit judiciaire de Sanniquellie, par l'intermédiaire du procureur du comté, pour demander officiellement aux directions des sociétés de téléphonie mobile GSM opérant ici, Orange Liberia et Lonestar Cell MTN, de fournir les journaux d'appels des deux suspects afin de contribuer à l'enquête en cours en déterminant s'ils ont effectivement reçu des transactions d'argent mobile de leurs victimes, comme allégué. Cependant, le service de communication d'AML nie que la société, en tant que politique, demande ou accepte des pots-de-vin en échange d'un emploi.

Tout candidat à un poste est tenu de suivre strictement les procédures de recrutement de l'entreprise, a expliqué la direction, qui note qu'il existe une tolérance zéro pour la corruption et la fraude.

UNDP supports NEC's journey toward

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participants to use the facilitation skills acquired to effectively perform their respective duties. "I hope that you all will internalize the knowledge gained to make a meaningful impact. There is real interest in BRIDGE, and we will continue to support more training initiatives," said Lansanah.

Talking about the impact of the workshop, NEC Assistant Magistrate for Margibi County, Deddeh Rita Kollie who partook in TtF said, "I have been facilitating trainings and I was convinced that I am a great facilitator, but this TtF has given me a very different perspective of how to effectively facilitate training. Going forward, I will never be the same again. BRIDGE has reinforced my confidence, and it has shaped my career in the right direction".

Through the Liberia Electoral Support Project (LESP), UNDP and its partners are providing technical assistance to enhance the institutional capacity and accountability of electoral stakeholders by employing a comprehensive approach in more advanced areas of electoral operations.

"I am thrilled to have attended this workshop with my team. Experiencing the advanced BRIDGE methodology and fostering an enabling environment helps us promote critical thinking and innovative minds. We are dedicated to excellence in elections, and we stand by this promise," noted Anthony Sengbe, Executive Director of NEC who participated in the TtF.

Having completed the TtF, participants are expected to demonstrate modern work ethics,

influence their peers and other stakeholders, and increase cross-cultural understanding. By that NEC will serve as a platform for innovative work practices, influencing other stakeholders and the Liberia society.

"This BRIDGE TtF provides a vibrant learning opportunity for us to harness valuable skills that will enhance the management of elections" emphasized Commissioner Barsee Kpangbai, a participant in the workshop who further said that developing a research mindset open to innovation will propel the NEC forward and influence a stronger Liberia.

BRIDGE implements various approaches, including coaching, on-the-job training, mentoring, facilitation of the processes, and review of the internal organizational structure, processes, rules, and procedures. The aim is to develop skills in areas important in the participants' work, with emphasis on understanding the relationships between tasks to effectively meet tight deadlines.

Developed in 2000 by the Australian Election Commission, International IDEA, International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES), UNDP, and the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD), BRIDGE supports the strengthening of national capabilities in elections. The BRIDGE curriculum undergoes three major revisions and updates. The content is regularly updated and aligned to the latest developments and global lessons learned.

Police confirm 2 deaths in Bea Mountain protest

Start from back page

engaging in other violent acts at which point the police officers discharged live bullets and used whatever they had.

He indicated that the wounds on the two deceased are consistent with the weapon and ammunition that police officers carry, indicating that the round could be from the police officers involved in the Kinjor issues.

Col. Coleman disclosed that the investigation is ongoing, saying that transparency comes and starts from in.

"We have asked the Association of Liberian Law Enforcement Professionals in the United States to also take a second review of our use of force in this incident as it relates to the death of two of our citizens," said Col. Coleman.

"However, when that is concluded, we will be releasing it to the public. We will be very open and transparent about it," he assured.

He stated that it was evidence that the firearm was discharged and anyone could go to JFK and see the wounds on the body.

Additionally, he noted that the medical death report can be released which justifies the use of firearms.

Mr. Coleman pointed out that

just as he is honest about the use of firearms and the wounds on the bodies, there are also protesters in the video footage who had single-barrel guns, and one person was seen recharging with a round.

"The actual death in Kinjor, Grand Cape Mount County is three but two of those three are associated with the riot while the other one is between two members from the community when the other stabbed his friend," he explained.

"That person is in police custody. We are investigating the policy in the use of force," IG Coleman stated.

He was asked whether the officers took instructions before discharging live bullets. In response, Col. Coleman said the police officers don't need order to discharge live bullets if their lives are being threatened.

"Before officers are given firearms, they are trained on the usage. They are also drilled on the use of force policy."

"They don't need to call someone before discharging a live bullet because they are trained to that, at which point they should. They are trained to the proportionality of force," he added.

COMMENTARY

By Togba-Nah Tipoteh

Promote Democracy Not Colonialism

Since the end of World War Two, there continues to be the availability of data indicating the domination and control of the Liberian economy by former colonialists. Almost all national religious, political, civil society and government leaders in Liberia continue to promote this bad system. It is a bad system because the Constitution of Liberia, the Voice of the People of Liberia, says that it is a bad system, as seen in Chapter I Article 1 of the Constitution.

This bad system is also seen in the access that National Legislators in Liberia have to at least LD200,000 a day and their foreign partners have access to at least LD300,000,000 a day while nearly all of the people of Liberia have access to at most less than LD300 a day (The Annual Reports of CBL, LISGIS, MFDP, MCI, WB, IMF, ADB and UNDP). This a bad system because it has led to poverty generation, which if frustrating to the poor and, at times, leads to coup d'etat and civil war, both of which have been experienced in Liberia and in other countries. In Liberia, these forms of violence have taken the lives of over 300,000 people and injured many more people.

It is this bad and unfair situation that has led the people of Liberia to conclude that Liberia is headed in the wrong direction (Afrobarometer, 2022). This wrong direction

takes lives instead of save lives. This wrong direction leads to poverty that has become the pretext for violence. Nearly all of the people of Liberia, who do not know book but have sense, become frustrated by this wrong direction. This wrong direction results in frustration that leads to violence. This wrong direction continues because the powers that be have the need for poverty to continue to satisfy their selfish pursuits.

The prevailing of this selfish posture of the powers that be means that the prevailing societal situation in Liberia is the rule of outlaw. Under this bad and unfair situation, hat many times there are no investigations. When there are investigations, no reports are made public, if they exist at all. This bad situation includes disappearances, murders and unexplained deaths. However, people who love Liberia continue to raise awareness by promoting the Truth through the Rule of Law, with much success, as seen in the non-re-election of Legislators who wanted to be re-elected.

This raising of awareness continues. It is only through this awareness raising within the Rule of Law that the transformation of the prevailing unfair electoral system is being changed into the enduring fair electoral system. It is only through this transformation that persons with good records can get elected to bring in the system of Justice, the indispensable ingredient for Peace and Progress in Liberia and in any other Country.

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Liberians react to Ghana's Anti-Homosexuality Bill

Liberians are debating Ghana's recent approval of an anti-homosexuality bill by parliament, criminalizing LGBTQ+ activities with penalties ranging from fines to imprisonment. Opinions gathered vary, with some expressing strong or somewhat dislike for having a law criminalizing same-sex unions, while others believe that such policy decisions are necessary to maintain a straight society where nobody can

By Kruah Thompson

Monrovia, Liberia, March 4, 2024 -The recent approval of an anti-homosexuality bill by the Ghanaian Parliament has ignited significant discourse

rights to freedom, dignity, and equal treatment under the law. Discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity goes against fundamental principles of human rights and equality,"

laws criminalizing same-sex activity.

Stewart also emphasizes the need for equal rights and protection for all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. He criticizes the discriminatory attitudes prevalent in Ghana and stresses the importance of upholding the rule of law and respecting human rights.

Regarding the influence of external actors on Ghanaian politics, he points to the role of radical religious groups and conservative individuals from the United States who have been successful in influencing policy decisions in Ghana and expressed concern about similar influence in Liberia.

Stewart, who had reported numerous stories on LGBTQ individuals for years in Liberia, underscored the complexity of the issues at hand, including misconceptions about sexual reproductive health and the involvement of foreign interests in African countries. He highlights the need for critical scrutiny of external funding sources and their on domestic policies.

He also laments challenges faced by LGBTQ individuals in Ghana and the limitations imposed on journalists covering these issues, while urging Ghanaian authorities to reconsider the implications of the anti-homosexuality bill and uphold the rights and freedoms of all individuals in the country.

The issue of homosexuality remains divisive within Liberia, reflecting deeply rooted cultural, religious, and legal complexities.

Advocates for LGBTQ+ rights have emphasized the importance of inclusivity, non-discrimination, and upholding fundamental human rights principles.

said Prince S. Bonnah, a resident of Matadi. Monrovia.

Bonnah emphasized that the government must carefully weigh these factors as it determines its stance on LGBTQ+ rights and any potential legislative action in the near future. Instead of advocating for the quarantine of LGBTQ+ individuals, he underscores that it is essential to promote inclusivity, respect, and acceptance of diversity.

According to him, the Liberian society should work towards creating environments where all individuals feel safe, valued, and supported, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

From a journalistic perspective on Ghana's Anti-Homosexuality Bill, Gboko Stewart, Editor-in-Chief of JournalRage, highlighted the implications of this legislation on press freedom, noting that the bill also targets the media by restricting coverage of LGBTQ+ issues.

Stewart emphasized the chilling effect on journalistic freedom, citing the risks involved in reporting on LGBTQ+ communities in Ghana. He noted the overwhelming support for the bill among the Ghanaian population, making it difficult for dissenting voices to be heard.

Reflecting on his experience covering LGBTQ+ issues in Liberia, Stewart expressed skepticism about the prospects of progress in the country. He highlighted the influence of radical conservatives who hinder advancements in LGBTQ+ rights, citing the existence of



and evoked varied reactions from Liberians. The legislation, which criminalizes LGBTQ+ activities with penalties ranging from fines to imprisonment, has sparked concerns about human rights and discrimination within the region. In response to Ghana's legislative action, Liberia, a neighboring West African nation, finds itself at a crossroads with its own considerations and potential implications. While Liberia has yet to enact similar legislation, ongoing discussions surrounding LGBTQ+ rights and the broader African context suggest that the passage of such a bill in Ghana may influence Liberia's stance and policy decisions.

A survey conducted by this publication explored how the passing of such a bill in Ghana might impact Liberia's policy decisions in months or years.

Opinions gathered vary, with some expressing strong or somewhat dislike for having a law criminalizing same-sex unions, while others believe that such policy decisions are necessary to maintain a straight society where nobody can harm their children.

From details gathered, most of those who support Ghana's decision argue that it is not about freedom of speech but rather about addressing the crime itself, which they term as a spiritual issue. Conversely, others clarify that advocating for the quarantine of LGBTQ+ individuals in Liberia would be both discriminatory and unethical.

"All individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, have the same

This must be the last in Kinjor

Former President George Weah warns his successor, President Joseph Boakai not allow a repeat of Thursday, February 29, 2024 violence in a mining rear in Grand Cape Mount County, reportedly leaving at least three persons feared dead. Mr. Weah, speaking at his Forkly Kloneh Family Fellowship Church in Paynesville, outside Monrovia, Sunday 3rd March 2024, excoriated President Boakai, noting "This situation in Kinjor must be the last; this must not happen again."

By Emmanuel wise Jipoh

Paynesville, Liberia, March 4, 2024 - Former President George Manneh Weah warns President Joseph Nyuma Boakai here, over Police shooting live bullets against protesters last week in a concession area, who have

noting "This situation in Kinjor must be the last; this must not happen again."



He describes such incident as unfair and injustice to a struggle he and his now former ruling Congress for Democratic Change labored for in maintaining peace. Ground officers of the Liberia National Police (LNP) last Thursday in Tarwon, District,



expressed grievances against Kinjor Grand Cape Mount County fired operational procedures, leaving live bullets at aggrieved protesting at least three persons feared workers of the Bea Mountain Gold dead. Mr. Weah, speaking at his Mining Company, demanding the Forkly Kloneh Family immediate removal of the Company Fellowship Church in Manager Debar Allen, as well as Paynesville, outside Monrovia, dismissal of its Human Resource Sunday 3rd March 2024, Manager, Jackson Yulk, who they excoriated President Boakai,

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REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
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Invitation for Bids [IFB]
Goods
(One-Envelope Bidding Process)

IFB Number: **NIC/AIDB/SAPZ/OCBI/001/24**
Purchaser: **National Investment Commission**
Project: **Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone**
Contract title: **Procurement of Rice Milling, Oil Palm Extraction Machines and Power Generator**

Country: **Liberia**
Loan No.: **2100150042703**
Procurement Method: **Open Competitive Bidding (International)**
OCBI No.: **NIC/AIDB/SAPZ/OCBI/001/24**
Issued on: **February 29, 2024**

- The Republic of Liberia through the National Investment Commission has received financing from the African Development Bank (AfDB) hereinafter called the Bank and intends to apply part of proceeds toward the cost under the for the procurement of Rice Milling, Oil Palm Expeller Machines and a Diesel Generator through the SAPZ project for the Grand Bassa Community College in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County. The Borrower shall process the payments using the Direct Payment disbursement method, as defined in the Bank's Disbursement Guidelines and procedures for Investment Project Financing, except for those payments, which the contract provides to be made through letter of credit.

Schedule of Requirement

No.	Description	Quantity	Delivery Schedule	Delivery site
1	5 Ton Rice Mill 3500*2600*2900mm, 380V 1340KG	1	Twelve (12) weeks After contract signing	Grand Bassa University College, Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County
2	65KVA (Diesel Generator)	1	Twelve (12) weeks After contract signing	Grand Bassa University College, Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County
3	Small-Scale Oil Palm Extraction Machine 125 -175kg	1	Twelve (12) weeks After contract signing	Grand Bassa University College, Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County

- The National Investment Commission now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for procurement of Rice Milling & Oil Palm Ex traction Machine Including 65KVA Diesel generator as indicated in the Schedule of Requirement stated above.
- Bidding will be conducted through the Open Competitive Bidding (International), (OCBI) method as specified in the Bank's **Procurement Framework** beginning February 29, 2024 and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Procurement Framework.
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from Project Implementation Unit, National Investment Commission (NIC), Andrew Anderson, Project Coordinator, Email: aanderson2024@gmail.com or Boimah Gibson, Procurement Officer, Email: boimahgibson@gmail.com and inspect the bidding document during office hours from 0900 to 1700 hours GMT at the address given below
- The bidding document in English may be obtained by interested eligible Bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below. The bidding document will be sent by Project Implementation Unit through Electronic means
- Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 14:00 Hrs. GMT April 11, 2024. Electronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend at the address below on April 11, 2024 at 14:30 Hrs. GMT.
- All Bids must be accompanied by a "Bid-Securing Declaration," form found in Section IV page 94 under Bidding Forms.
- The address (es) referred to above is (are):

Attention: Andrew Anderson (Project Coordinator)
National Investment Commission
Project Implementation Unit (PIU)
P.O. Box 9043, UN Drive
1000 Monrovia 10 Liberia
Email: aanderson2024@gmail.com or boimahgibson@gmail.com
Tel: +231-770120493/+231-886-976983/+231-888-409194

Police confirm 2 deaths in Bea Mountain protest

State security forces have faced repeated accusations of using brute force in protecting the gold mining company Bea Mountain has led to lawmakers voting to recall the army and the police deployed there over two years ago.

By Lincoln G. Peters
Monrovia, March 3, 2024: Police Inspector General Col. Gregory Coleman

Mountain Mining Corporation (BMMC).
 The new police chief addressed a major press conference Saturday at the

resulted in the deaths of two persons.

"Yes, the LNP did discharge live round on the scene. The live round was discharged. If you look at the video released, the police exercised maximum restraint. They didn't reach the point of using live round until there was a threat, danger feared by the officers before reaching that point," Col. Coleman explained.

According to him, officers were on the line crying after they had used all the non-lethal weapons, and he placed phone calls to the senator and leaders of the county appealing to them to talk to the protesters to back off because the officers were out of non-lethal weapons.

But Coleman said the leaders failed to communicate with them and so the police discharged a live bullet.

He indicated that the protesters had become arrogant by burning down the police station in the area and



Inspector General Col. Gregory Coleman

Coleman has admitted that a live bullet was discharged by the police who were responding to a protest against the operation of commercial gold mining company Bea

Liberia National Police (LNP) headquarters in Monrovia following the tragic incident in Grand Cape Mount County last week.

Mr. Coleman said the police discharged a live bullet which

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