BUREAU OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CAPITOL HILL, MONROVIA

NEWS SUMMARY, MONDAY, May 27 through Thursday, May 30, 2024

The Bureau of Press and Public Affairs during the week covering from Monday, May 27 through Thursday, May 30, 2024, subscribed to Frontpage, The Inquirer, Heritage, The Analyst, GNN Liberia, The ECOWAS Citizens, Women Voices and NewDawn newspapers, and highlighted headlines/stories from the front, back and inside pages of these local dallies.

This week’s summary captures stories about how President Boakai Climaxes Cabinet Retreat; President Boakai Amends Export Ban; 285 Earth Moving Equipment Expected Soon; Vice President Koung Leads Delegation to Freetown; Vice President Koung Lauds ArcelorMittal’s $1.7 Billion Phase 2 Expansion; Minister Nyanti Wants Government Communication Strategy Revamped; The ECOWAS Celebrates 49TH Anniversary; Speaker Koffa Challenges Education Stakeholders; “We Are Not Firing Them” CSA DG Clarifies 40,000 Civil Servants’ Status, amongst other stories.

**DORMINANT STORIES**

President Boakai Climaxes Cabinet Retreat

According to ***GNN Liberia*** newspaper, President Boakai said his government’s agenda during the first three and the half months centered around efforts to make bold decisions and take concrete steps to meet development goals thereby leading to progress and prosperity. He said his government pledged to bring about transformative change Liberians have long yeaned for and it is incumbent upon his government to ensure improved livelihoods and bring about much-needed dignity lost over the years. To deliver expeditiously to the Liberian people, the president urged his officials to do things differently and with a renewed sense of patriotism and determination.

**Related Caption*:*** *President* *Boakai Challenges Cabinet Officials* **(The Inquirer)**

President Boakai Amends Export Ban

In a significant move to support Liberia’s rubber industry, President Joseph Boakai has signed executive order No. 132, amending the previous moratorium on the exportation of unprocessed natural rubber: This new order, which modifies Executive order No. 124, addresses the immediate concerns of local producers and rubber businesses adversely affected by the sudden ban imposed last November, ***The ANALYST*** newspaper says.

**Related Caption:** *CORSAL Extols Gov’t for Lifting Ban on Exportation of Unprocessed Rubber* **(The Inquirer)**

AS 285 Earth Moving Equipment Expected Soon Gov’t to Reactive Maintenance Zones

About 285 earth moving equipment are expected to arrive in Liberia soon. The earth moving equipment, which will be divided across the fifteen counties, will see each county receiving nineteen pieces. According to the ***Heritage*** newspaper, the move by Government of Liberia (GoL) is part of its ARREST Agenda with focus on road construction. The initiative is part of President Joseph Nyuma Boakai’s vision to see no car stuck in the mud across Liberia. Speaking during her presentation, the Minister of State Without Portfolio, Mamaka Bility, disclosed that as part of the initiative, the government will reactive the Maintenance Zones across the country. “We will construct Maintenance Zones across the country and with assistance from the engineering department of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), Minister Bility stated. She told her fellow Cabinet Officials that bridges will also be constructed as part of the plan under the project. “We are working and our plan to ensure that no car will be stuck in the mud is gradually being rolled out and we will increase our work and visibility,” she added.

**Related Caption:** *Government Unveils Major Road Construction Equipment* **(GNN Liberia)**

VICE President Koung Leads Delegation To Freetown

The Vice President of the Republic of Liberia, Mr. Jeremiah Koung leads Delegation to Freetown, Sierra Leone for peer-to-peer learning visit on Monday, May 27, 2024. The three-day visit aims to facilitate knowledge exchange on successful nutrition programs, leveraging insights from Sierra Leone’s experience with donors, NGOs, and stakeholder support. While in Sierra Leone, the Vice President is expected to meet with both President Maada Bio and Vice President Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, ***The ECOWAS Citizen*** newspaper reports.

**Related Caption:** *At High-Level Meetings In Sierra Leone: Vice President Koung Rallies Support Against Malnutrition***(The Inquirer)**

“We Are Not Firing Them” CSA DG Clarifies 40,000 Civil Servants’ Status

The Director General of Civil Service Agency (CSA), Josiah Jokai, has assured the House of Representatives that no civil servants are being fired or dismissed, despite widespread speculation. Instead, Jokai detailed a new initiative aimed at regularizing the status of 40,000 employees identified in a recent payroll audit. The audit revealed two groups: 19,600 employees who initiated but did not complete the mandatory Personnel Action Notices (PAN), and 20,400 employees who were placed on the payroll without starting the PAN process. Jokai attributed these discrepancies to previous administrative oversights. To address these issues, the CSA has launched the Employee Status Regularization Project. This project aims to complete the PAN process for both groups, ensuring compliance with the Human Resource Policy Manual and Civil Service Standing Orders, the ***IN PROFILE***newspaper states.

**Related captions:** *Civil service Boss response to 40,000 civil servants reported dismissal* **(WOMEN VOICES)**

*“40,000 CIVIL SERVANTS STILL TAKING PAY”, CSA Boss Tells Law Makers* **(The New Dawn)**

*CSA Clarifies Civil Servants’ Status* **(The Inquirer)**

World Bank Boss Reaffirms Commitment To End Poverty In Liberia.

The World Bank Liberia Country Manager, Georgia Wallen, affirmed that the World Bank group’s mission is to end extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity on a livable planet places people at the core – the Liberian people, especially youth and women.
According to the ***Heritage*** newspaper, in an engagement with development partners at the recently held cabinet meeting, Madam Wallen told the gathering including government partners that their greatest motivation aims to drive towards concrete next steps and listen for areas of convergence; convergence around shared priorities is the foundation for future partnership.
She told the gathering that one point of convergence is already very clear adding, “We all agree on the urgency of this moment, with no time to waste in the six years to 2030. This is a defining moment for Liberia, and we are all committed to making the most of it.”

***Related Caption:*** *World Bank Unveils More support for Liberia - Gives Update at Retreat On Handsome Envelop in Offing* **(The Analyst)**

*4th Cohort Applications Open Under Growth Accelerator*

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Growth Accelerator Liberia has launched the 4th Cohort of the Micro-Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) at the Ministry of Commerce & Industry Conference Room ministerial complex in Congo town.
Applications for the 4th cohort are open from 28 May 2024 until 21st June.
In this fourth cohort, there will be three categories; general MSMEs, Agriculture Cooperatives and Forest-based with support from the Delegation of the European Union to Liberia and the Swedish Embassy in Liberia for the first time. “57 applicants will be selected where 14 out of 23 general MSMEs will receive a co-financing of US$ 10,000 each, five to receive US$20,000 each and four to receive US$ 40,000 each. “30 applicants will be for the forest-based category while four will be Agriculture Cooperatives under the UNDP Accelerated Community Development Program (ACDP)” explained the iCampus Liberia CEO Luther D. Jeke who added that all candidates/applicants will also benefit from capacity building, coaching/mentorship, and co-financing grants, ***The Inquirer*** newspaper reports.

**Related Caption:** *Growth Accelerator 4th Cohort Applications Launches* **(Frontpage Africa)**

SOEs Critical for Economic Growth -World Bank Manager Calls for Robust Governance Mechanisms

The World Bank Liberia Country Manager in Liberia, Georgia Wallen, says state-owned enterprises (SOEs) play a pivotal role in many economies around the globe, serving as engines of growth, providers of essential services, and catalysts for development. She pointed out that their potential can only be fully realized when accompanied by robust governance mechanisms that prioritize transparency, accountability, and efficiency. Ms. Wallen was addressing a day-long dissemination workshop on a new report released by the World Bank – Improving Governance of State-Owned Enterprises and Reducing Fiscal Risks, with theme: “Navigating the Path to Sustainable State-Owned Enterprises.” The workshop, held on Tuesday, May 28, served as a vital platform for presenting the report’s findings and recommendations to relevant stakeholders, including government officials, policymakers, regulators, and SOEs representatives. The World Bank Liberia Country Manager said the new report also underscores the importance of enhancing governance frameworks within SOEs to mitigate fiscal risks and promote sustainability, ***The Analyst*** newspaper says.

**Related Caption:** *State-Own Enterprises Play Crucial Role In Economies -Says World Bank Country Manager* **(The Inquirer)**

Finance Minister Challenges African Development Bank …As Liberia, Canada Renew Economic Cooperation

Finance and Development Planning Minister, Boima Kamara, has challenged the African Development Bank (AfDB) to improve its financing model to spur growth in special sectors in member states. Minister Kamara, in his opening remarks at the ongoing Annual Meetings of the Bank in Kenya, further narrated that the increasing ADF 17 to 25 billion will spur growth in special sectors in member states. He said, “While these ADF allocations are contributing to priority sectors in the country, Liberia believes that the financing gaps in infrastructure and agriculture investment to move Africa into middle income level remain significantly wide.”
Minister Kamara noted that the investment capital demand for Africa’s transformation cannot be addressed with eight US$8 billion and thereby called for ADF capital mobilization of US$25 billion to target infrastructure, agriculture, digitalization and domestic resources mobilization.
Minister Kamara, on behalf of Liberian government also recommended that reforms in the Bank should consider giving priority to domestic resources mobilization by member states for sustainability and innovation, ***The Inquirer***newspaper asserts.

**Related Caption:** *Finance Minister Attends AFDB Meeting in Kenya* **(The New Liberia)**

**OTHER STORIES**

Minister Nyanti Wants Gov’t Communication Strategy Revamped.

Foreign Minister, Sara Beysolow Nyanti has expressed discontent over the government’s communication strategy and stressed the need for an open and systematic information-sharing strategy for public consumption. Speaking during the ongoing three-day cabinet retreat at the EJS Ministerial Complex in Congo, Minister Nyanti criticized the premature release of information on social media before official announcements are made by the government. She also emphasized the importance of effective communication in advancing Liberia’s foreign policy objectives and enhancing its image abroad, precisely on the international stage, a move she said would help sell the government locally and internationally. Minister Nyanti furthered that a well-coordinated and targeted communication strategy is essential for building strong relationships with other countries, attracting foreign investment, and promoting Liberia’s cultural and economic interests, ***The Inquirer***newspaper writes.

Vice President Koung Lauds ArcelorMittal’s $1.7 Billion Phase 2 Expansion -Highlights Job Creation Potential

ArcelorMittal Liberia (AML), the largest foreign direct investment and the highest revenue contributor to the Government of Liberia, is nearing completion of its massive ore processing plant in Yekepa, Nimba County. The company, which is also the largest private-sector employer in Liberia, is currently undertaking a 1.7 billion “Phase 2 Expansion” project, which includes not only the construction of a state-of-the-art iron ore concentrator but also the augmentation of existing rail and port infrastructure to support the production and shipping of 15 million tons of concentrate ore per year. Expected to revolutionize both Liberia and the region, the plant is poised to become the second largest in Africa. The high-technology plant, a key component of AML’s Phase II expansion, will process approximately 25 million tons of raw ore annually to produce 15 million tons of concentrated product. This would then represent a significant advancement in Liberia’s mining capabilities and position the country as a crucial player in the global steel industry. During a recent site visit, Vice President Jeremiah Koung described ArcelorMittal Liberia’s Phase II Expansion Project as a significant investment that will create numerous jobs for Liberians. Vice President Jeremiah Koung commended the company for its $1.7 billion investment in the company’s second phase development and for constructing for the first time an ore concentrator, ***THE ANALYST*** newspaper asserts.

UK Investors Arrives Today Eye Several Sectors

***The Analyst*** newspaper is reporting about the arrival of a group of investors from the United Kingdom under the aegis of Uni-Commerce Group International (UGGI) on Monday, May 27, 2024, to assess possibilities for investment in Liberia, a potentially resource rich country. The group which is headed by Mr. Benyounce Faiz Hamacha will be in the country on the invitation of Representative Jacob Debee of District # 3, Grand Gedeh County and will begin high level discussions with Key government officials including the Chairman of the national Investment Commission (NIC). Representative Debee said he looked forward to fruitful engagements between the investors and Liberian Government officials leading to what he called “launch of the much-needed investment to absorb the country’s youths”.

THE ECOWAS @ 49TH ANNIVERSARY: CELEBRATING A LEGACY OF ECOMOG PEACEKEEPING EFFORTS IN LIBERIA.

On the occasion marking the 49th anniversary of ECOWAS, the ECOWAS Citizens union in Liberia have planned series of program activities to commemorate the event in Monrovia, with the theme: “Harmonized and Affordable Resident Permit Free for ECOWAS Citizens across the sub-region”. The occasion marks not only the longevity of the organization but also the resilience and unity of its citizens. According to His Excellency, Yaya E. Jalingo, Chairman of Ecowas Citizens union in Liberia, the program will also be highlighting the significant milestones and the challenges faced by ECOWAS over the years, ***The ECOWAS CITIZEN*** newspaper asserts.

Speaker Koffa Challenges Education Stakeholders

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa recommends investment into Technical Vocational Education to develop the skills of the country’s work force. According to ***The ECOWAS*** *Citizen* newspaper, the speaker pledged the Legislature’s support and collaboration towards programs intended to improve the Education sector. The gathering on Capitol Hill brought together authorities of the Ministry of Education, Monrovia Consolidated School System, the parents Teachers Association among others.

United States Awards Grants to Strengthen Agriculture and private Sector.

The United States, through it Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in Liberia on May 22, 2024 signed co-investment grants to improve food crop production, processing, and marking. These grants are co-investment made with eleven agricultural cooperatives and small medium- sized enterprises (SMEs) from Bong, Nimba, Montserrado and Grand Bass Counties. This initiative is part of the $20- million “Feed the Future Liberia Food Security, Nutrition and Resilience” project funded by USAID, which aims to enhance agriculture-led economic growth, food security, and nutrition. Feed the Future is the U.S. Government’s global initiative to end poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. This first cohort of co-investment grants, totalling $450,000. These grants are designed to enhance food crop productivity and create job opportunities, thereby contributing to Liberia’s overall economic expansion. “We are thrilled to partner with local cooperatives and SMEs to drive private-sector-led agricultural growth and development in Liberia,” said Jim Wright. USAID Liberia Mission Director. “Today’s event is a testament to the power of partnership and collaboration.” One of the sub-grantees, the Say No to Hunger Farmers’ Multipurpose Cooperative, has outlined ambitious plans for the use of the grant. They intend to expand their agricultural operations, thereby increasing their production capacity and creating more employment opportunities within the community, says the ***Heritage*** newspaper.

US African Development Foundation Urges Liberian Entrepreneurs

The United States African Development Foundation (USADF)President is urging Liberian entrepreneurs to remain determined and dedicated to achieving their goals. Travis Adkins believes that doing so will enable them to tap into their full potential and discover innovative ideas. Mr. Adkins was speaking recently at the United States African Development Foundation Agribusiness Mini Trade Fair in Sinkor, Monrovia. According to ***Heritage*** newspaper, the USADF President also recommitted the organization to supporting Liberian entrepreneurs to bolster their potential and capabilities. Meanwhile, EDUCARE-Liberia Executive Director, Deola Famak, wants entrepreneurs in the agribusiness industry to develop good networking skills. Mrs. Famak described networking as crucial in the success and growth of agribusiness start-ups. She said: “Good networking also provided more opportunities for strong partnership.” EDUCARE-Liberia Executive Director, Deola Famak, noted that the essence in the event is to enable entrepreneurs in the Agribusiness Sector to showcase their products and gain insights on navigating challenges.

Catholic Relief Services Sponsors A Crucial Workshop To Tackle Malnutrition In Liberia.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in collaboration with the government of Liberia and the National Fortification Alliance (NFA) of Liberia, recently concluded a three-day strategic working aimed at addressing chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies in Liberia. The workshop held from May 22-24, 2024, brought together approximately twenty-seven representatives from the private and public sectors, civil society organizations, developmental partners and the media. The workshop focused on reviewing the NFA’s structures, identifying gaps, defining stakeholders’ roles and responsibilities, and developing strategic priorities for the NFA’s 2024-2025 work plan. Chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies continue to pose a significant public health concern in Liberia, with the nation at risk of losing substantial individual and national economic potential as well as facing premature death and disability. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, the workshop focused on the importance of food fortification, which involves adding essential vitamins and minerals to commonly consumed staple food products, the ***Frontpage Africa***newspaper reports.

LFA US$6 Million Budget Approved by Stakeholders.

Stakeholders of football have approved the LFA budget just over US$6 Million. This follows a 25-13 vote at Extraordinary Congress in Congo Town. President Mustapha Raji expressed satisfaction over the result and thanked each stakeholder including those that voted against and the Executive Committee for the decision which he believed was in the interest of football. The presidency told the Extraordinary Congress that the development of football Liberia is threading on is the extension of the good works done by the predecessors, Izetta Wesley, Willie Russell, and Musa Bility. Raji has pleaded with the National government to support its national teams, especially Women’s football following Liberia’s U-17 and U-20 recent successes in the female World Cup campaign and WAFU A competition in Senegal,the ***Frontpage Africa*** newspaper says.

ALCOD Commends Boakai

***The Inquirer***newspaper is reporting that the All-Liberian Conference on Dual Citizenship (ALCOD) is commending President Joseph Boakai for issuing Executive Order # 131, which establishes the War and Economic Crimes Court (WECC) Office in Liberia.
ALCOD, through its Eminent Chairperson, Emmanuel Wettee, said the President’s action has driven the nation in the right direction toward holding individuals legally accountable for their direct and indirect actions during Liberia’s 15 years of civil conflict.
The President’s action, he said, is not only going to hold individuals accountable, but it is also going to bring to the law, institutions and groups that contributed to the wonton destruction of Liberia, including leading to the slaughter of about 250,000 Liberians and foreign nationals.
President Boakai moves came after the Legislature signed a Joint Resolution calling for the establishment of said Court in Liberia.

Rep. Attoh-Wreh Gives Land For Muslim Women Clinic.

The Marbigi County District 3 lawmaker has presented to the Muslim Community a payment receipt for a lot of land, proposed for the construction of a Muslim Women’s Clinic in the District. The presentation of the land to the Muslim community brought about a huge appreciation from the residents, thus resulting in Islamic jingles being voiced in a sportive slogan and the show of anxiety to their lawmakers. She made the presentation before hundreds of Muslims in Kakata City, Margibi County who gathered for a reconciliation meeting with their District 3 Representative Ellen Attoh-Wreh. According to the representative of the community, Mohammed Alieu Bility, the gathering was aimed at holding a frank conversation with their Representative for reconciliation, following the outcome of the 2024 elections which they believed brought some strange feelings within their community. ***The Inquirer***newspaper *says* Solaiman A. Barry, the Muslim Youth Community representative, and the Muslim Women representative, Assata Dunor called on their Representative to see all persons of the district as one people.

Pres. Boakai Redirects Liberia's Nat'l Priority Agenda Sets up Strategic Developmental Forecast at cabinet Retreat

With a little over four months into the Boakai's led administration, it now seems clearer the direction in which Liberia is headed. The country is at the brink of better agriculture, roads rule of law, and education, sanitation, and tourism adventures among others. At the three-day cabinet retreat with officials of the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf ministerial complex in Congo town outside Monrovia, His Excellency, President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, enlightened the euphoria of a new Liberia directed at placing Liberia's renewal and enviable quest among the comity of nations once again, t*he* ***New Liberia*** newspaper pens.

LRRC Leads GOVT. Delegation to Ghana For 2nd Batch of Returnees As May 31 Ultimatum Draws Near

After repatriating 770 Liberia refugee last week from the Republic of Ghana, the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission {LRRRC} is on the verge of leading another Liberian government delegation to Ghana to bring back the remaining 3,462 refugee who are believed to be stranded in that country. LRRRC authorities have disclosed that in line with the agreement reached with the Ghanaian government to repatriate all 4,232 Liberian refugees by May 30, 2024, the organization will next week depart to honor that commitment. LRRC Executive Director Patrick Worzie told MICAT regular press briefing Tuesday May 28, 2024, that their job now is time bound, as the Ghanaian government has given the refugees up to May 30,2024 to leave the country. He stressed that currently, the Liberia refugees are living in a peculiar situation as their previous homes in the Buduburum Refugee Camp has since been demolish following demand by the Ghanaian traditional landowners to their government to evict the refugees who have been living there over thirty years now as the result of the outbreak of the Liberian civil war, the ***New Liberia*** newspaper writes.

MFDP Validates 2010 Charts of Accounts Manual

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) through the Department of Comptroller and Accounting General has concluded a validation of the 2010 Chart of Accounts in Kakata, Margibi country. The Chart of Accounts is a critical public financial frame work document adopted in 2010. The validation in Kakata was intended to review and establish changes the Chart of Accounts will have a policies, process, procedures, and operations of the Public Financial Management or PFM system (IFMIS, and other relevant PFM systems) The process also afforded key stakeholders the opportunity to review the works of the technical team; identifying issues that could impede the optimal use of the Chart of Accounts. They also concluded on a final updated version of the Chart of accounts that will subsequently be printed and disseminated, t*he* ***New Liberia*** newspaper asserts.

Continuing Government Configuration Pres. Boakai Makes More Appoints

President Joseph Nyuma Boakai,Sr, has nominated and appointed additional members of the Liberian Government affecting the National Security Agency (NSA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Booker Washington Institute (BWI), Harbel College and the Office of the President. Additionally, the Liberian leader also appointed Senior, Junior and Local aide-De-Camps. In a statement signed by Presidential Press Security, Kula Fofana, the institutions and those appointed and nominated are: National Security Agency, Stephen B. Dolo, Deputy Director for operations Marc Alain Amblard, Deputy Director for Special Services, Dr. Mounir Siaplay, Deputy director for Research and Analysis ,Nelson A. Wolo, Assistant director for Operations, Titus Jaeyenneh Nyankum Sr., Assistant Director for Field Offices, Baseeru M. Sonii, Assistant Director for Special Services, Julius Augustus Thomas, Assistant Director for Administration and Giovanni Shang Samuel Jr., Assistant director for Research and Analysis, the ***New Liberia*** newspaper writes.

LWSC Reactivates Ducor Reservoir-One-Million-Gallon Capacity Restored

 The Liberia water and sewer Corporation has embarked on a series of initiatives aimed at rehabilitating and improving the water infrastructure of the city of Monrovia. this initiative is crucial for addressing the city's water needs and ensuring that residents have access to clean and safe water something that has eluded them since the outbreak of the Liberian civil war in December 1989. Speaking recently at the commissioning of a newly rehabilitated one-million-gallon city reservoir at the deliberated Ducor intercontinental Hotel on Broad street, LWSC Managing director by expressed gratitude to the staff and all others who contributed to works to the restoration of water in the city. He recounted the challenges faced since taking office on March 1, 2024, including the difficulty of maintaining adequate water pressure in central Monrovia due to limitations at the White Plains facility, the ***New Liberia*** newspaper discloses.

 St. Kizito Parish Priest Appointed Vicar General Of The Archdiocese Of Monrovia

According to***The Inquirer*** newspaper, Archbishop Gabriel Blamo Jubwe, Metropolitan Archbishop of Monrovia, has officially appointed the St. Kizito Parish Priest, Very Reverend Fr. Ambrose Dayouga Kroma as the new Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia. As Vicar General, Fr. Kroma will assist the Archbishop in the governance of the Archdiocese (Canon 475 Par!).n As moderator of the Curia, under the authority of the Archbishop, Fr. Kroma is to coordinate those things which pertains to the treatment of administrative affairs and to take care that other members of the curia perform the office entrusted to them.When asked to comment on his appointment, Fr. Ambrose said, “I am undesirably humbled but grateful because His grace is sufficient for me despite my unworthiness.” Fr. Ambrose is a respected clergy known for his dedication to serving the community and for his strong commitment to social justice as well as his efforts to promote unity and peace within the church. Fr. Kroma was ordained priest for the Archdiocese of Monrovia in 1994. Immediately, he was assigned to St. Dominic’s Parish as curate under the pastorship of Fr. Garry Jenkins, SMA.

‘50 Containers Of 25kg Rice To Arrive June’ -Saah Young Business Center CEO Promises

The Chief Executive officer of Saah Young Business Center, Saah Young Kinsley, disclosed his plans to import thousands metric tons of 25kg bag of rice into the country by next month.
Mr. Kinsley narrated that the expected metric tons of rice worth over a millions of United States dollars are all the Indians parboiled rice intended to help with the rice crisis facing the country.
Apparently, his decision was triggered days after the government through the Ministry of Commerce announced the increment in the price of an Indian parboiled rice from US$16.75 to US$18.50 for the 25kg bag. Minister Modad further asserted that his decision was based on continuous discussion with the rice importers who all later agreed that the adjustments be made after reviewing other costs but vowed to continue engagements to reduce the price thereafter. But this decision since led to public outcry among Liberians because rice is the country’s staple, but President Joseph Boakai, in reaction met with rice importers and a decision was taken that the price of rice on the market would remain the same, ***The Inquirer*** newspaper writes.

Liberia: National Port Authority Implements Payroll and Operational Reforms

According to the ***Frontpage Africa*** newspaper, the National Port Authority of Liberia (NPA) is set to commence the disbursement of live checks to over 2,000 employees and contractors this week. Accordingly, the initiative which will impact personnel at the ports of Monrovia, Buchanan in Grand Bassa County, Harper in Maryland County, and Greenville in Sinoe County, is geared towards eliminating non-existent or ghost names from the payrolls to  ensure an accurate and transparent compensation system.
The NPA Management said that the  exercise will verify the legitimacy and accuracy of payroll salaries and confirm that all individuals receiving salaries are bona fide employees of the NPA.
The process, which is expected to last for two months, would ensure the institution identifies opportunities to enhance systems, procedures, and processes, thereby preventing the reactivation of non-legitimate employees on the NPA’s payroll, a statement said.
“The payroll verification process is one of the top priorities of the Management of the National Port Authority of Liberia.”

Liberia: NIR And CSA Sign MOU for Enhance Collaboration and Service Delivery in Public Sector

*The* ***Frontpage Africa*** newspaper is reporting that the National Identification Registry (NIR) and the Civil Service Agency (CSA) have signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance collaboration for improved service delivery in the public sector.The MOU between the NIR and the CSA was signed on Monday at the NIR office in Sinkor, and aims to design, produce, and issue biometric cards, with an assigned number for all 103 government spending entities to address the challenge of possible fraudulent duplication in the public sector.The CSA Director-General, Hon. Josiah F. Joekai, Jr, speaking at the ceremony on Monday, described the occasion as historic and a great step forward for both institutions, noting that the MoU with the NIR will make the CSA’s job easier in verifying employees’ status and will help eliminate inefficiencies and discrepancies from the government payroll. “The process is part of ways to help the CSA to verify all civil servants across Liberia ensuring they are legit and help bring integrity to the payroll by removing names that are on the payroll without any justification of their workings,” CSA Director-General, Hon. Josiah F. Joekai, Jr added.

**Amplifying Rights Network Observes Menstrual Hygiene Day.**

The Amplifying Rights Network joined other rights groups around the world to raise awareness on Menstrual Hygiene Management. According to Amplifying Rights Network, promoting open conversations and education about menstruation, will not only challenge the harmful norms and promote open conversations and education about menstruation, but also help to empower individuals to embrace their bodies and menstrual cycles with pride. In many parts of the world, menstruation continues to be a significant barrier to education, work, and social participation for individuals who menstruate. Lack of access to menstrual products, sanitation facilities, and menstrual health education disproportionately affects marginalized communities, including girls and women in low-income countries. Activities marking the observance of the day included awareness raising activities in over 10 elementary, junior, and senior high schools in Montserrado, Margibi, and Bong Counties. One of the primary objectives of World Menstrual Hygiene Day is to break the stigma and silence surrounding menstruation, ***The Inquirer***newspaper says.

ECOWAS, UNDP Meet On Disaster Risk Reduction And Resilience

Experts from various departments of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are convening from in Abuja, Nigeria, for a three-day meeting that ran from May 27-29, 2024, to formulate solutions for the implementation of the resilience strategy in addressing natural disasters and conflicts in the region. In her opening address, Prof. Fatou Sow SARR, ECOWAS Commissioner for Human Development and Social Affairs, delivered by Dr Sintiki Tarfa Ugbe, Director of Humanitarian and Social Affairs of the same Commission, underscored the significances of this retreat as a milestone in the collective efforts to enhance regional stability, peace, and development in West Africa. Prof. SARR expressed the Commission ‘s gratitude to the technical and financial partners, including the Swedish and Danish governments, and the UNDP, for their support in combating natural disasters linked to climate change, poor governance, various conflicts, violence, extreme poverty, terrorism, and food insecurity in member states, ***The Inquirer***newspaper disclosed.

House’s Committee On Information Holds Dialogue On Media Law Reform

The House’s Committee on Information Broadcasting, Culture and Tourism, in collaboration with Internews have announced plans to hold a one-day roundtable dialogue on media law reforms in Liberia. With support from USAID, Swedish Embassy and EU Mission to Liberia, the event will take place on today, May 29, 2024, at the Legislature in Monrovia.
The committee Chairperson, Representative Bernard Blue Benson, disclosed that the legislative meeting will focus on the critical issue of media law reforms, specifically the proposed bill to establish the Community Radio Sustainability Act.
He averred that the roundtable aims to foster a comprehensive discussion on the challenges and opportunities surrounding community radio sustainability and the broader implications for media freedom and development in Liberia, ***The Inquirer*** newspaper notes.

Liberia, China Strengthen Health Cooperation

The Minister of Health, Louise Kpoto, has been striving to improve the healthcare system in Liberia since taking office in February 2024.
One of her key initiatives has been to strengthen cooperation between China and Liberia in healthcare system strengthening.
In line with this initiative, 28 Liberians, including four OBGYN specialists and 24 nurses left Liberia for China to participate in a three-week Maternal Emergencies Management training in Chengdu City, Sichuan Province in Southwest China.
This training program is a significant opportunity for these healthcare professionals to enhance their skills and expertise in managing maternal emergencies, which are crucial in reducing maternal mortality rates in Liberia.
The program will cover various aspects of maternal healthcare, including labor and delivery complications, postpartum hemorrhage, and emergency newborn care.
The initiative to send these healthcare professionals to China for training is a testament to the commitment of both the Liberian and Chinese governments to collaborate and support each other in healthcare capacity building, ***The Inquirer*** newspaper discloses.

IWYE Commends Gov’t For Increasing Family Planning Budget, But…

The Executive Director for the Initiative for Women and Youth Empowerment in Liberia (IWYE), Musu Davis, has commended the Liberian government for increasing the Family Planning budget from US$20,000 to US$40,000 in the 2024 national budget but craved for more budgetary allotment. Madam Davis also praised the government for recognizing the importance of family planning in health promotion and the wellbeing of women and youth in Liberia, evidenced by its budgetary allotment. She noted that access to family planning services is crucial in empowering women and youth to make informed decisions about their reproductive health and future and as such, its latest increment in FY-2024 budget is welcoming.
Family Planning is the consideration of the number of children a person wishes to have, including the choice to have no children, and the age at which they wish to have them and things that may play a role on family planning decisions include marital situation, career or work considerations, financial situations. It can be recalled that the IWYE has been a champion for family planning right in Liberia, thus knocking on the doors of requisite government institutions including the Ministry of Health and Legislature to prioritize family planning in the budget, ***The Inquirer*** newspaper writes.

No WASSCE Mathematics Test Today

The Liberia National Office of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) has with immediate effect postponed the Mathematics test scheduled to be administered on today, May 30, 2024. A new date for the conduct of said exam will be issued in the soonest time possible.
The postponement of the exam is due to what WAEC termed as an unforeseen circumstance beyond the control of its national office.
The management in a late evening notice yesterday said it regrets the inconvenience this decision may cause its numerous stakeholders, especially the candidates, ***The Inquirer*** newspaper reports.

Public Safety Group Petitions Legislature To Improve Road Safety

During the week of May 20-26, 2024, the National Safety Partnership of Liberia (NASAPAL), joined a global campaign of civil society organizations to advocate for safer motor roads in all countries of the world. Dubbed: #CommitToAct #MakeItSafe brought out on the street in the same week across the world, over 300 civil society groups including NASAPAL drawn from over 100 countries including Liberia to show the reality of people’s journeys. Like NASAPAL in Liberia, volunteers of civil society groups took snapshots of the movement of road users including vehicles and pedestrians. They identified intersections, snapped photos, recorded the number of pedestrians, observed drivers’ adherence to the 30 km/h zones, and noted pedestrian facilities and tra?c calming ramps. Said data is being processed for submission to the Alliance which, in turn, would upload the findings to its website for global use.
Prior to NASAPAL’s formation and registration in October 2013, its Founder, Philip Woods and team conducted a public safety survey with emphasis on road safety from 2007 to 2010. The survey covered Margibi, Grand Bassa, Sinoe, Lofa, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Gbarpolu, Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Rivercess and Montserrado, ***The Inquirer*** newspaper writes.

ECOWAS On Benchmarks And Framework For Recognition And Equivalence Certificates

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Over 6,000 Rural Communities To Benefit From Solar Energy In Liberia

The Rural and Renewable Energy Agency (RREA) and Rural Solar Incorporated have signed a grant agreement to bring electricity to underserved rural and last-mile communities across Liberia. The milestone initiative will connect 6,900 households in all 15 counties to enhance the quality of life and economic prospects for thousands of Liberians.
The grant agreement is part of the Liberia Solar Home System result-based financing project funded by the World Bank and implemented by RREA in collaboration with Energizing Development or EnDev. According to the Executive Director of the Rural and Renewable Energy Agency, Samuel Nagbe, the project aims to stimulate the off-grid solar market in Liberia through strategic subsidies and ultimately provide electricity to over 200,000 nationwide.
Speaking last week at the signing ceremony in Monrovia, Mr. Nagbe, explained that the great agreement signifies a major step toward Rural Solar Incorporated’s mission to illuminate Liberia’s rural landscapes and drive socio-economic development through sustainable energy, ***The Inquirer*** newspaper asserts.

‘Involve Local Leaders In WASH Sector’s Decision’-Deputy Speaker Fallah Urges Stakeholders

Deputy Speaker Thomas Fallah has stressed the need for local leaderships to play a more active role in decision-making activities within the country’s Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) sector. The Lofa County Representative further believes that involving local leaders in the decision-making process will lead to more effective and sustainable solutions to the country’s water and sanitation challenges.
He also emphasized the importance of engaging local leaders in the development and implementation of WASH policies and programs, noting that these leaders have a deep understanding of the needs and priorities of their communities other than the policy makers.
Deputy Speaker Fallah spoke yesterday, when he proxy for House Speaker, Fonati Koffa, during a one-day multi-stakeholders’ engagement aimed at presenting members of the House’s standing Committee on WASH and Environment at the Capitol Building in Monrovia.
The day-long consultative meeting was held with sector stakeholders drawn from the Standing Committee on WASH and Environment, WASH Caucus, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), WASH Consortium, CWSA and partners and WASH MACs, ***The Inquirer***newspaper reports.