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ALSO INSIDE





President Bio appoints youthful cab





David Sengeh, Chief Minister



Timothy Kabba, Minister of Foreign Affairs By Alfred Koroma

resident Bio has appointed his full cabinet list with youth controlling strategic ministries including the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Corporation, Chief Minister in the Office of the President and the Ministry of Information and Communications.

Leading youth advocate, Chernor Cee Bah has been appointed as the Minister of Information, replacing Mohamed Rahman Swaray, who has been sent to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

A very youthful Timothy Kabbah has been appointed as the new Foreign Affairs Minister, replacing octogenarian David Francis.

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U.S Government demands investigation of June 24 electoral process



tears in Court Bank for S

UK to increase visa application, NHS fees for immigrants significantly



APC: Let's try again tomorrov

By Talib Jalloh

ike the saying in one of The reason for their action, they play, justice, and transparency. William Shakespeare's masterpieces, Macbeth, "until Birnam woods come to Dunsinane," Tower Hill, which hosts the House of Parliament in Freetown, was a 'sea of green on Thursday, July 13. Parliamentarians, predominately from the ruling Sierra Leone Peoples Party and their supporters, had thronged Parliament Grounds where the remains of Sir Milton Margai, the country's first post-colonial In my mind's eye, the Parliament.

Visibly absent were members of the main opposition, the All People's Congress (APC), save for one. It brings back memories of the last time they painted Tower Hill red, hoping they had garnered enough majority to elect the Speaker and Deputy in what would have been unprecedented in the country's political history.

our security forces entering the opportunity to influence well of Parliament like Mike meaningful change from within Tyson or Holyfield on live TV- a will be swept under the carpet. day, I am sure, the APC The benefit of a resounding partisans will not forget in a opposition essential for hurry.

While following development at Tower Hill on TV, I recalled a Kenyan colleague and friend gifted me a green leather book mark with the inscription, "Let's try again tomorrow." The wording awoke me to what I love most: sharing my views on national issues, something I had shelved for over a decade. The first thought that came to mind Mama Salone or not.

A week or so ago, a decision by making body, the National Advisory Council (NAC), was supported when their elected representatives for Mayor, Chairpersons, Councilors and parliamentarians affixed their signature to a document in support of the party's decision not to take their seats in the Councils and the Parliament. None but one elected APC they (Politicians) always come member of Parliament showed again and have another try and up.

claim, is that fairness and That fight, should, however, not credibility have been short-cloud their responsibility to changed in the June 24 provide a strong voice to their elections. The APC has voters in Parliament and the questioned the election results councils. Sierra Leone should no and sought for transparency to longer accept "e don be done" as be dispensed. Not claiming solution to our problems. We victory, the APC believe that should demand accountability. Bio's plate had been served with 'coco yebeh' while it was still The UN, AU and ECOWAS boiling.

Head of State (Prime Minister), consequences of the action by were buried for the the main opposition party would commencement of the sixth be equal or more devastating, perhaps, than the elections in which transparency and credibility are in question. The voice of everyone who voted the APC would remain unheard as they will be unrepresented.

Sierra Leone moved beyond a one-party state year's ago, and the lack of an alternative to the five years. Bio traveled the government might drift the country back to that path with And what happened? Images of all its ramifications. The democracy to thrive will dissipate, and the Sierra Leone People's Party will enjoy unchecked rulership. It will be very detrimental to the country.

Should the APC drop its fight? No. We fully support the call for the election results to be published as demanded. We believe fairness and justice should prevail. Peace without was, given the aftermath of the accountability and justice is just concluded elections, should fragile. And to accept the status the APC join in the governance of quo without digging and revealing the truth of the matter is to accept wrong doing.

search for a just political agreement between the two time.

Politicians believe that there is weakness in giving up. And I share this view too. This is why yet another try. The APC should not give up on the fight for fair

should not give a blind eye and wait until the water becomes muddy. They should push for dialogue; one that upholds fairness, transparency and, one that will let the people's vote be seen as counted.

The buck stops with the president for a sensible way out. Bio needs to soften his stance and mind his utterances. He should create the enabling environment for a path to peace and togetherness which should not exclude accountability. For world, among other reasons, to

clean the image of Salone. It is time for that cleaned image to be dried and iron within the country.

ECSL's Chief, Mr. Konneh, should be bold and face the international community's challenge of openness. Let the world know that you were right by making public the RRFs at polling station level. If he had cooked figures, let justice visit him accordingly.

How the APC handles this delicate matter will set them up for a greater leap. We, as a nation, should take that leap together and strengthen our democracy with fair play and justice again and again. Tomorrow can only be better if the unfairness and injustices of today are addressed.

(Author is a former Editor of the Concord Times and now works for the UN refugee agency).

President Bio appoints youthful cabinet

From Cover







As per alliance agreement, Leader new Minister, together with the politician in the current SLPP- President Bio took office in 2018. administration.

appointments.

Information Ministry which saw, retained in their positions. gender activist, Chernor Bar as its

and founder of the National Press Secretary, Yusuf Keketoma Grand Coalition, Hon. Kandeh Sandi who will now move in as Yumkella in a second cabinet list Deputy. Mohamed Rhaman published during the weekend, Swaray with his deputy have been ending weeks of speculations separately moved out of the about the fate of the top profile Ministry for the first time since

Swarav has been appointed to The former UNIDO Diplomat has head the Ministry of Employment, been appointed to serve as Labour and Social Security while Chairman, Presidential Initiative his deputy, Solomon Jamiru joins for Climate Change. Renewable the President at State House as and Food Security. His Press Secretary, also replacing the party's highest decision- Nonetheless, balancing the appointment is a fulfilment of an Yusuf Keketoma Sandi for the first

dispensation and the parties to work as an alliance and Hon. Alhaji Alpha Khan, former participation in governance have Bio as presidential cabinet Minister under the main should be the icing the unity candidate for both SLPP and NGC opposition All Peoples Congress in the just concluded June 24 remains the Presidential elections. The deal was when Bio Spokesman. And some ministers, wins, he forms an inclusive including the Minister of Health, government wherein the NGC Dr Austin Demby; the Minister of party is allocated a number of Lands, Dr Turad Senesie; Energy positions in various categories of Minister, Kanja Sesay and Mohamed Orman Bangura, There is significant shift in the Minister of Youth have been

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LOCAL NEWS

By Hassan Gbassay Koroma

he prestigious Euromoney Awards for Excellence has for the second time awarded Ecobank Group as the leading pan-African Banking Group, for the Africa's Best Bank for the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), in the Africa Continent.

According to press statement from the Bank's Headquarters, this is the second time the bank had won the same award in since in 2022 and in 2023 respectively.

According to the Chief Executive Officer, Ecobank Group, Jeremy Awori the award reflects Ecobank's absolute commitment to supporting African SMEs and their continuous suite of innovations financial and non-financial to spur their growth and success.

"We aim to be the bank of choice for Africa's SMEs. Undoubtedly, these SMEs

Ecobank wins Africa's Best Bank for SMEs

across the continent," he stated.

The Ecobank has launched major initiatives for the benefit of SMEs during the last 12 months including, the Ecobank Single Market Trade Hub, which supports the AfCFTA's single African market.

The hub is a one-stop shop providing information about the AfCFTA, access to Ecobank's full range of trade facilitation products and solutions (covering trade finance, advisory, payments and collections) as well as a marketplace for products, services and businesses across Africa.

They also launched their RapidCollect, which enables Ecobank's business customers to receive payments from their clients in their home country

are the key drivers for Africa's economic and across Ecobank's network of 33 growth, as they create jobs, generate affiliates, instantly and at a lower cost prosperity while eliminating poverty than any other cross-border solution also in partnership with Mastercard Farm Pass through which we have digitised the agricultural value chain for smallholder farmers, simplifying and better securing the process for obtaining a fair price for produce.

> They further launched Ellevate Equip Leadership Programme for theirn women led or focused business customers. Modules include emotional intelligence; leading with authenticity; defining strategic leadership; mastering influence, decision-making; and negotiating for results. And also the Financial Literacy Series equipping SME Managers and owners with necessary financial education, the first in the series was 'Preparing SMEs for the Capital Markets' and it attracted nearly 3,500 registered participants.



Ecobank Group is the leading private pan-African banking group with unrivalled African expertise. Present in 35 sub-Saharan African countries, as well as France, the UK, UAE and China, its unique pan-African platform provides a single gateway for payments, cash management, trade and investment.

The Group employs over 13,000 people and offers Consumer, Commercial, Corporate and Investment Banking products, services and solutions across multiple channels, including digital, to over 32 million customers.

APC initiates disciplinary action against Hon. Mohamed Bangura By Alhaji Haruna Sani

he All Peoples Congress (APC) Party has noted with dismay and disappointment the defiance of Mohamed Bangura to boycott governance

under the Sierra Leone People's Party and initiated a disciplinary action against him, a release from the party states.

Mohamed Bangura is one of the APC listed Members of Parliament, representing Karene District who Thursday 13th July 2023 presented himself at the opening session of the 6th Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone and proceeded to subscribe to the Oath of Office of Members of Parliament, contrary to the policy decision of the National Advisory Committee (NAC).

The party in a public notice issued on 13t

July, noted that Mohamed Bangura's attitude is a blatant disregard and disobedience of party policy decision.

The public may recall that in a press release dated the 30th June 2023, the Party stated its position on matters concerning the June 24th 2023 elections. Specifically, it is declared that the Party will not participate in any level of governance, including the legislature and local councils, owing the lack of transparency and inclusiveness in the tabulation of the elections results.

The party further demanded the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (ECSL) to publish Station-by- Station elections results for the party and other stakeholders to ascertain the veracity of what ECSL announced as the results.

"The All Peoples Congress (APC) strongly holds the view that ECSL tampered with the people's mandate to give the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) an unverifiable presidential victory and an unjust majority at all levels," it reads.

According to the APC, conclusion on nonparticipation was reached at a meeting of the National Advisory Committee (NAC) in which Mohamed Bangura was in attendance. At a meeting summoned on the 5th July 2023 of all Members of Parliament, Mayors and Chairpersons of Council (elect), the said decision was further communicated to and endorsed by all present.

"Pursuant to Article 21 (h) of the APC Constitution 2022, decisions of the NAC are binding on all subordinate organs, bodies and members of the Party. Article

38 establishes the Parliamentary Group, comprising of the Party's Members of Parliament, as one of the bodies".

According to the APC, Honourable Mohamed Bangura, being a member of the Party, and also a member of the Parliamentary Group, by his conduct, has flagrantly disregarded and disobeyed the decision of the NAC in contravention of the Party's Constitution.

The party notes his disobedience of the decision of the NAC constitutes a cause for strong disciplinary action under Chapter 6 of the APC Constitution 2022. Thus, the Honourable Mohamed Bangura, along with the APC rank and file and the general public, is hereby informed that the Party has initiated disciplinary action against Honourable Mohamed Bangura in line with the provisions of the APC 2022 Constitution.

AYV, ECSL celebrate cypher rappers for a peaceful election

By Yusufu S. Bangura

s a way of appreciating young people for a peaceful elections, Africa Young Voices(AYV) Media Empire and the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone(ECSL) on Friday celebrated cypher rappers and dancers for the peaceful messages they preached during the June 24th elections.

The celebration ceremony took place at ECSL headquarters, Tower Hill in Freetown.

The AYV Hit the Street Peace Edition was done on the 22nd June 2023 and it was sponsored by ECSL.

Speaking at the event, Chief Operating Officer for AYV, Messeh Leone said they organised the event to celebrate Sierra Leoneans for the peace they maintained before, during and after the June 24th general elections.

demonstration that we the people of Sierra Leone took the election very serious and peace played an important part. We as a media company, we

are not a protagonist or antagonist because our role is to give credible and factual information to the people of Sierra Leone that is why the commissioner said 'AYV Nar E Salone Sabie,"

He further said during the elections, they provided a level playing field for all politicians, including young people through the cypher and hit the street show, and that that was a proud moment for AYV.

He said they were proud of their track record being the leading voice for media in the country because they provided the platform for everyone in the country and across Africa.

AYV Chief Operating Officer said during the election they knew the peace of the country was stake, therefore whatever they did was towards protecting and promoting the peace of the nation.

"The Saful Elections that was conducted is a He said they were very happy that the cypher project came on board to preach peace.

He stated that the cypher guys are not just voice of the street, but they are serious people as some



AYV staffs, ECSL commissioners & Cypher team pose for photo

of them are in the universities.

He said they have proven it that young people can play an important role in society hence the foundation of AYV was based on the premise of young people.

Speaking to various winning groups, Chief Electoral Commissioner for ECSL, Mohamed K. Konneh thanked AYV Media Empire and the Cypher team for partnering with the commission to conduct a peaceful 2023

He said when he was appointed as the Chief

Electoral Commissioner, he promised Sierra Leoneans that he would conduct an election that everyone would be involved in the process.

Commissioner Kenneh said despite there were concerns from people, he believes that as an institution they did their very best and conducted a credible, free and fair elections.

He said they also partner with AYV Cypher team to use their talent to educate Sierra Leoneans about the electioneering process through entertainment show for those who love entertainment, so he appreciate their contribution by bringing everyone on board before, during and after the elections.

Commissioner Konneh said during that time they worked with every sector to conduct a peaceful election, adding that their partnership with AYV cypher helped them to get a large turnout of voters and reduced invalid votes.

"We want to thank God because after the elections, we were able to protect the peace of this country and we hope we will continue to work as one big family for the betterment of our nation. We will also continue to work with AYV to preach peace because this partnership will not end here. I also want to congratulate the winners of the AYV cypher," he said.

LOCAL NEWS U S Government demands investigation of June 24 electoral process

By Alfred Koroma

he United States Government has called on the Government of Sierra Leone to institute an independent investigation into the process of June 24 elections process.

The US Government made the call in a press statement published on Friday 14 July, 2023.

Last month, incumbent President Julius Maada of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) was declared winner of a widely disputed election, securing 56.17 percent of the total votes cast for the Presidential election. Dr. Samura Kamara, his main challenger from the main opposition All Peoples Congress (APC) got 41.16 percent, according to the results announced by Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone. The Parliamentary results of the pools also gave the ruling SLPP a total control of the legislative house having secured 81 parliamentary seats while APC has APC pulled 54 seats. staunchly rejected the result, claiming it has been 'tampered with to give the

SLPP an unjust majority at all levels.'

But the main opposition party refused to seek redress at the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone, citing lack of trust in the judicial system, and went further to declare it elected members will not participate in any level of governance, including the legislature and local councils.

June 24 election which has left the country deeply divided, was largely emblazoned with violence, political intolerance, hate speech and fake news orchestrated mostly by members and supporters of the two main political parties.

Huge number of voters turned out to vote on the Election Day but voting was delayed in many parts of the country due to late arrival of voting materials. Inaccuracy of voter registers also caused crowds of voters to wait longer in queues. Further concerns around the conduct of the election and the results announced have emerged from the main opposition party and observers.

its press statement, the U.S. Government said remained "concerned about irregularities in the election results announced by the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (ECSL)." "Independent parallel vote tabulations and analyses by accredited national and international observation missions raise questions about the integrity of the official results," the government said, calling for an independent, outside investigation of the elections process and integration of observer recommendations to improve the electoral modalities for future elections.

The United States also said it is disturbed by the reports of death threats against domestic and



international observers, civil society organizations, and ECSL personnel and called on all actors to exercise restraint and engage in peaceful dialogue to resolve disputes.

"Free and fair elections are essential for any democracy," U.S said, "government and political parties must commit to strengthening democratic institutions to better protect the rights and reflect the aspirations of the people of Sierra

The path to ending AIDS

By Alfred Koroma

n a new report released on Thursday, UNAIDS, the agency dedicated to ending the epidemic said there is a clear path to ends AIDS and the path will help tackle future pandemics and advance progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The report, titled 'The Path that Ends AIDS', contains data and case studies that says ending AIDS requires a strong 'political and financial choice.

HIV and AIDS remains a major public health challenge globally, having killed about 40.4 million people while over 30 million continue to live with the virus worldwide, according to 2022 WHO data

Leaders have the opportunity to save millions of lives and be "remembered by future generations" as those who put a stop to the world's deadliest pandemic. They could save millions of lives and protect the health of everyone. They could show what leadership can do, says UNAID Executive Director, Winnie

According to WHO, African Region remains most severely affected, accounting for more than two-thirds of the people living with HIV worldwide. The region's women and girls suffer, especially in sub-Saharan Africa suffer severely with around 4,000 of them becoming infected with HIV each week in 2022.

access to effective HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care could manage the health condition and people with the virus could live

But UNAID reports says countries and leaders who are already following the path that ends AIDS are achieving extraordinary results.

For example, countries like Botswana, Eswatini, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe have already achieved what is known as the "95-95-95" targets. That means, 95 per cent of the people who are living with HIV know their status, 95

percent of those who know that they are living with HIV are on lifesaving antiretroviral treatment, and 95 percent of people in treatment are virally suppressed.

There is an opportunity now to end AIDS by increasing political will by investing in a sustainable response to HIV through financing what matters most: evidence-based HIV prevention and treatment, health systems integration, non- discriminatory laws, gender equality, and empowered community networks, the UNAIDS says

According to the report, progress has been strongest in the countries and regions that have the most financial investments, such as in eastern and southern Africa where new HIV infections have been reduced by 57% since 2010, the UN agency reports.

There is also an increase in the number of people on antiretroviral treatment worldwide, from 7.7 million in 2010 to 29.8 million in 2022.

However, the agency said there is still a long way to meet the aspiration of ending AIDS by 2030. AIDS claimed a life every minute last year and about 9.2 million people still miss out on treatment, including 660,000 children living with HIV.

Funding for the deadly disease also declined in 2022 from both international and domestic sources, falling back to the same level as in 2013, No cure is available for HIV infection. But UN said. Funding amounted to US\$ 20.8 billion in 2022, far short of the USS 29.3 billion needed

> "We are hopeful but it is not the relaxed optimism that might come if all was heading as it should be", said Ms. Byanyima. "It is, instead, a hope rooted in seeing the opportunity for success, an opportunity that is dependent on action".

"The facts and figures shared in this report do not show that as a world we are already on the path, they show that we can be. The way is clear," she

Samura Kamara's alleged corruption matter: First accused shed tears in Court

By Ibrahim Kabba Turay

defense, the first accused in the the Ministry of Education. corruption matter, Saidu Nallo, started his testimony on Friday, 14th July, 2023, at the Anti-Corruption Court, Law Court Building in Freetown

During his testimony in court, the accused person burst into tears when he was explaining to the court that during his time as Head of Chancery at the United Nations Mission in New York, he had no time for his family, but Sierra Leone.

On that note, Justice Fisher stood down the court for over an hour and an adjournment was requested by the first accused's Lawyer, Mohamed Pa Momoh Fofanah, for his client to compose himself from that emotion.

Because there was no objection from the prosecuting team, led by Lawyer Robin Mason Senior, the matter was adjourned to Wednesday, 19th July, 2023.

Earlier, Nallo told the court that before becoming a career diplomat, he had served six different ministries including the Ministry of Labour, Mines, Education and Foreign Affairs of the state for one month each.

He said he started with the Ministry of Finance as an Administrative Officer in 2001, where he was tasked with budget preparation in the budget bureau working under the supervision of the Financial Secretary, among other responsibilities and later moved to the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources.

Having left the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he said he worked for six

months, Nallo said he was promoted to aking the witness stand in his the rank of Deputy Assistant Secretary of

alleged Chancery Building In that regard, between 2003-2007, he said was made an Integrity Officer for the Anti-Corruption Commission under the leadership of Val Collier, but left the Ministry of Education in 2007 and returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Senior Assistant Secretary in charge of the Asia Division during which one Mr. Yillah was the Permanent

> The first defense witness said he rose through the ranks at the Foreign Affairs Ministry until he was posted in 2010 to the Sierra Leone Chancery in New York,

> At the time, he underscored that Ambassador Sheku Turay was the Permanent Representative for the Mission and Margaret Jah Matturie was the Head of Chancery.

> On the issue of the Chancery Building, he maintained that it had been under discussions since 2003-04 but with no funds until 2015 when he was still Councillor, equivalent to Deputy

> He said in April 2015, he was recalled to Freetown for two years as Acting Director Multi-Lateral and in May 2016, he was promoted to the rank of Permanent

> He said by 2015, Vandy Chidie Minah the Permanent Representative while Alusine Sesay was the Head Chancery.

> He pointed out that the Director General at the time was Ambassador Rashid Kargbo, who was succeeded by Ambassador Kadijatu Basil, and Dr. Samura Kamara as the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

On numerous occasions, Mr. Nallo said he had acted nonchalantly to take up the assignment in New York because it was

having a toll on his family relationship. During such a moment he burst into

....in your best interest



he United Kingdom has announced that it is set to increase visa application fees for foreigners, seeking to migrate to the European country to live and work.

UK Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, who and prison officers. made this known during a press conference at Downing Street, added that the Immigration Health Surcharge, a fee paid by foreigners to access the country's National Health Scheme, the increase would be between five and would also increase significantly.

Sunak explained that the hike became necessary in order to raise the money to pay public sector workers more without would only fuel inflation.

fees for foreigners hoping to move to the UK would cover the cost of pay

Following a series of strikes by some public sector workers in the UK recently demanding a pay rise, the prime minister accepted the recommendation of an independent review of pay for teachers, junior

LOCAL NEWS UK to increase visa application, NHS fees for immigrants significantly

doctors, consultants, dentists, police

Others to benefit from the pay rise, according to him, are senior civil servants and military personnel, even as the Prime Minister confirmed that seven per cent across board.

Sunak said, "If we're going to prioritise paying public sector workers more, that money has to come from somewhere resorting to borrowing, which he said else because I'm not prepared to put up people's taxes and I don't think it would Instead he said a combination of higher be responsible or right to borrow more because that would just make inflation

> "All of those fees are going to go up and that will raise over £1 billion. So, across the board visa application fees are going to go up significantly and similarly for the IHS. Work and visa fees are expected to rise by 15 per cent, with all other visa fees rising by at least 20 per cent.



End of AIDS' still possible by 2030: UN



← The end of AIDS" is still possible ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030, the United Nations by 2030. that the world's deadliest pandemic HIV -- the virus that causes AIDS -could only be halted if leaders grasped was being made in the countries and the opportunity.

"AIDS can be ended" as a public health She cited eastern and southern Africa outlined a roadmap of investment, dropped by 57 percent since 2010. evidence-based prevention and Botswana, Eswatini, Rwanda, treatment, empowering civil society Tanzania and Zimbabwe have already and tackling the inequalities holding achieved what are called the 95-95-95 back progress.

UNAIDS said ending the pandemic This means that 95 percent of those was, above all, a political and financial living with HIV know their status; 95

"We are not yet on the path that ends Winnie Byanyima said, but "we can choose to get on that path".

The UN first set out in 2015 the target of others.

insisted Thursday, but cautioned Byanyima said the greatest progress on regions that have invested strongly.

threat, the UNAIDS agency said, as it where new HIV infections have

targets.

percent of those who know they have HIV are on life-saving anti-retroviral AIDS," the agency's executive director treatment; and 95 percent of people on treatment to achieve viral suppression -- and therefore highly unlikely to infect

At least 16 other countries are close to achieving the target.

They include eight in sub-Saharan Africa - the region where 65 percent of HIV-positive people live -- and Denmark, Kuwait and Thailand.

39 million living with HIV

In a report, UNAIDS said that two decades ago the AIDS pandemic seemed unstoppable, with more than 2.5 million people acquiring HIV each year and AIDS claiming two million lives annually.

But the picture is now dramatically different.

UNAIDS said that in 2022, 39 million people globally were living with HIV, of whom 29.8 million were accessing anti-retroviral therapy. Those missing out include 660,000 children.

The numbers on anti-retroviral treatment have near-quadrupled from 7.7 million in 2010.

Furthermore, 82 percent of pregnant and breastfeeding women living with HIV had access to anti-retroviral treatment in 2022, compared to 46 percent in 2010 -- which has led to a 58 percent drop in new infections in children.

Around 1.3 million people became newly infected with HIV last year -down 59 percent from the peak in 1995. Meanwhile 630,000 died from AIDSrelated illnesses, and it is still the "number one killer" in countries

including Mozambique, said Byanyima.

"Overall, numbers of AIDS-related deaths have been reduced by 69 percent since the peak in 2004," the report said. 'Dependent on action'

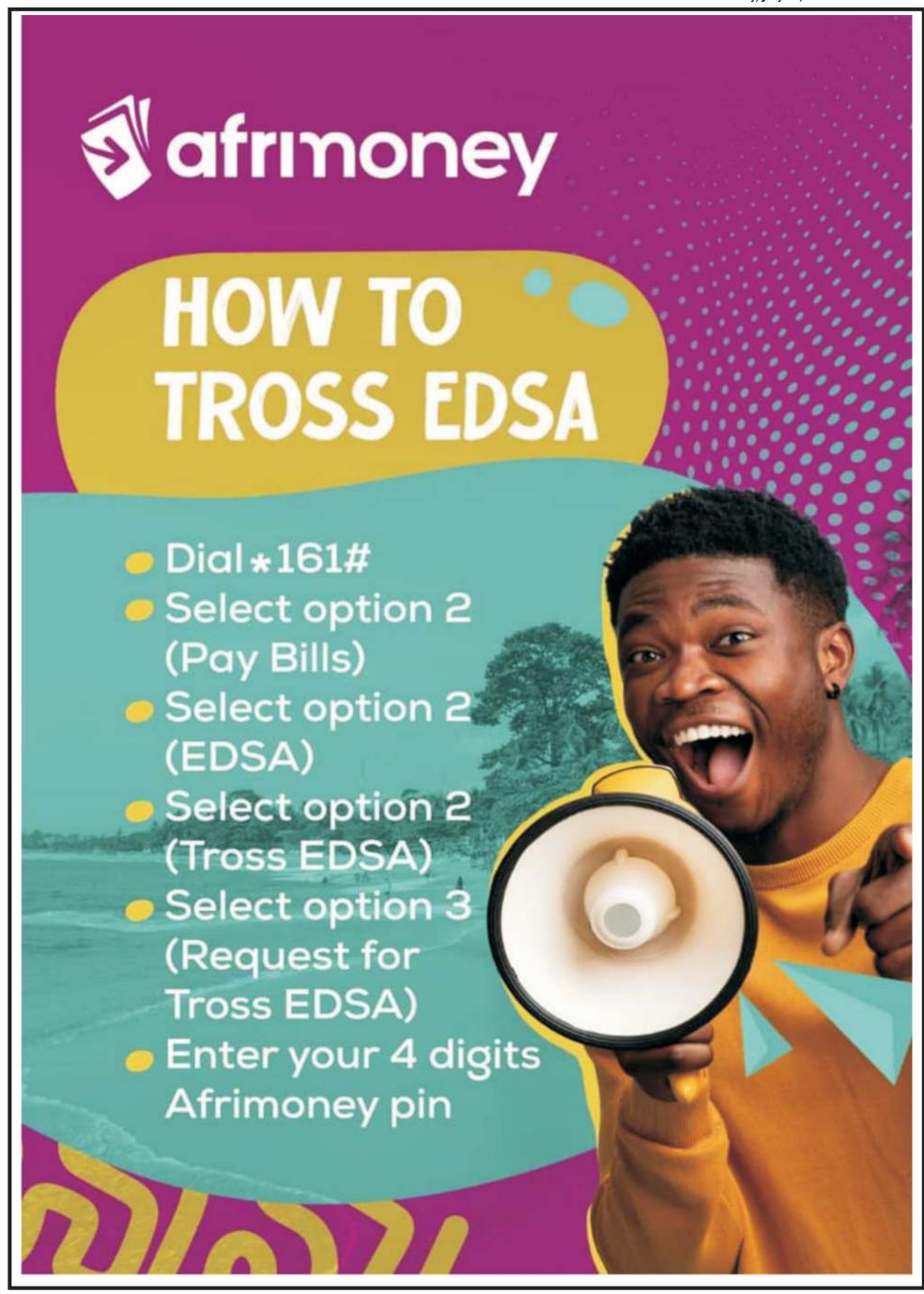
"The end of AIDS is an opportunity" for today's leaders to be remembered as "those who put a stop to the world's deadliest pandemic", said Byanyima.

"We are hopeful, but it is not the relaxed optimism that might come if all was heading as it should be. It is, instead, a hope rooted in seeing the opportunity." Funding for HIV fell back in 2022 to \$20.8 billion -- around the same level as in 2013, and well short of the \$29.3 billion needed by 2025.

Laws that criminalise people from key populations, or their behaviours, remain in place in many nations, UNAIDS said, giving the example that criminalisation, and stigmatisation, of drug injectors prevents them from coming forward for treatment.

HIV continues to impact key populations more than the general population, it added.

In 2022, compared with adults aged 15-49 in the general population, HIV prevalence was 11 times higher among men who have sex with men; four times higher among sex workers; seven times higher among people who inject drugs; and 14 times higher among transgender people.



Senegal: Opposition politician Sonko declared presidential candidate by his party

election, his party announced on Friday, despite Mr. Sonko's uncertain eligibility and shortly after the banning of a rally scheduled for Saturday in Dakar to make his candidacy official.

Mr. Sonko was sentenced on June 1 to two years' imprisonment in a vice case, a verdict which. according to his lawyers and legal experts, renders him ineligible. He was also given a sixmonth suspended prison sentence on May 8 in an appeal for defamation, a sentence widely perceived as rendering him ineligible for the presidential elections. But he has not yet exhausted his appeals to the Supreme Court.

Mr. Sonko is due to speak on Friday, according to his party. He has been blocked by security forces at his home in Dakar, "sequestered" according to him, since May 28.

"This Thursday, July 13, 2023, at the end of a transparent and democratic investiture process, Ousmane Sonko, enjoying his full civil and political rights, is unanimously designated candidate of PASTEF-Les Patriotes (his party) for the presidential election of February 25, 2024," his party said in a statement sent to AFP on

enegalese opposition figure Ousmane Mr. Sonko's investiture took place on Thursday at Sonko has been nominated as a meeting of the party's High Regulatory candidate in the 2024 presidential Authority (HARP), a Pastef body, which validated the decisions reached by delegates from Senegal's 46 departments and the diaspora, the statement said.

> Pastef denounces in this text the "illegal ban" on its candidate's meeting scheduled for Saturday afternoon in a stadium in Guédiawaye, on the outskirts of Dakar. In a press release issued on Thursday, the Dakar government announced that the rally had been banned because of the "risk of disturbing public order".

> "No one can prevent the investiture of President Ousmane Sonko as well as his participation in the presidential election of February 25, 2024", said the Pastef communiqué.

> On July 6, Sonko promised "indescribable chaos" if he is prevented from standing as a presidential candidate, in an interview on the France 24 channel. In early June, his conviction sparked the most serious unrest in years in Senegal, which left 16 people dead according to the authorities, and around thirty according to the opposition.

> President Macky Sall, elected in 2012 and reelected in 2019, announced in early July that he would not stand for the 2024 presidential

NEWS AROUND AFRICA COMPILED BY GABRIEL BENJAMIN CAR: A few hundreds rally against draft Constitution

undreds of people on Friday (Jul. 14) I plans for a constitutional change in the Central African Republic in Bangui.

The march was organised by opposition coalition backlash. the "Republican Bloc for the Defence of the Constitution" (BRDC).

One major change the draft Constitution will allow if approved, is the end of the 2-term limit for presidents.

Opposition leaders headed a march of around 500 people under heavy escort from the CAR security forces and armoured vehicles deployed by the United Nations' peacekeeping mission MINUSCA, AFP journalists witnessed.

"We cannot accept that someone who came to power through a democratic process and maintained his position in 2021 through an electoral farce can decide to stay in power and give himself power for life," Mahamat Kamoun, member of the Bloc Républicain pour la Défense de la Constitution (BRDC) said.

"That is why we have mobilised all the Central Africans who are against (the new draft Faustin Archange Touadéra's administration is constitution to express our discontent, our still battling a rebellion after years of civil war. opposition to this referendum and therefore to this

defied a ban and rallied in Bangui against In addition to a controversial hypothetical new term for president Touadéra who is serving his second term, another provision has attracted

> The proposed Constitution would ban dual citizens from running for the top office.

> "All Central Africans are Central Africans, Today, the President of the Republic has said that people who are not Central Africans by origin are not entitled to take part in elections. But he himself is not a native Central African." Lydia Izedio, an activist with the Union for Central African Renewal claimed.

> "How are our children, who have two nationalities, going to manage? Meaning they won't have the right to start ventures in this country, to fight and to be politicians, to one day become mayor, lawmakers or president of the Republic, why?" On what ground?

The campaign has nkicked off on July 15. and is set to end on July 28.

Voting is due to take place on July 30.

S.Africa's EFF open to 'work with opposition parties' to oust ANC



Julius Malema, leader for Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) addresses supporters at a May day rally in Alexandra, South Africa, Wednesday May 1, 2019. - Copyright @ africanews Jerome Delay/Copyright 2019 The AP. All rights reserved.

Senegal: Death toll from capsized canoe rises to 14



Injured from capsized pirogue -Copyright @ africanews cleared

Friday that the death toll had risen again, to 14 and four injured, following the capsizing of a pirogue on Wednesday in Saint-Louis (north), on the migratory route linking the country to the over 300 migrants, are missing. Spanish archipelago of the Canaries.

A previous death toll established on Thursday by Interior Minister Antoine Felix Abdoulave Diome. during a visit to Saint-Louis the same day, had been eight dead and four injured.

ne Senegalese government announced on

"All State services have mobilized to provide support and comfort to the survivors", said a statement from the Senegalese Ministry of the Interior. The text gives no details on the circumstances of the new death toll of 14, on the survivors or the number of people on board the

The local press reported on Friday that six new bodies had been discovered on the coast near

According to local media, the boat was carrying migrants, and the death toll could be much higher, as these piroques are often crowded and can hold

According to a local official, the boat was coming from the south. The accident occurred in the early hours of Wednesday near the coast, and it is possible that some of the migrants fled, he added. According to the NGO Caminando Fronteras, which obtains its information from calls made by migrants or their relatives, three other boats, departing from Senegal and carrying a total of over 300 migrants, are missing.

According to a local official, the boat was coming from the south. The accident took place in the early hours of Wednesday near the coast, and it is possible that some of the migrants fled, he added. According to the NGO Caminando Fronteras,

which obtains its information from calls made by migrants or their relatives, three other boats, departing from Senegal and carrying a total of

One of them set sail on June 27 from Kafountine, a small coastal town in southern Senegal some 1,700 kilometers off the coast of the Canary Islands, with some 200 people on board. The other two left from the Mbour region.

The search for the missing migrants' boats resumed on Wednesday, Spanish rescuers said. According to the Senegalese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, between June 28 and July 9, 260 Senegalese "in distress" were "rescued in Moroccan territorial waters". It did not specify whether these boats corresponded to those reported by the NGO.

Mr. Diome said on Thursday that 276 people are currently in a center in Morocco and that "they are doing well".

On Wednesday, Caminando Fronteras reacted in a statement, claiming to have been able to verify that the rescues mentioned by the Senegalese government corresponded to other boats "that had also left the Senegalese coast, but not to those that had the 300 wanted people on board".

In addition, the Senegalese navy intercepted a fishing boat carrying 71 migrants during the night of Wednesday to Thursday, said the army in a statement published Thursday on social

The navy boarded the boat near the mouth of the Senegal River, which flows into the Atlantic Ocean, and handed over the passengers to the gendarmerie, according to the same source.

ould South Africa's proposed opposition party to oust long-time ruling ANC next

If it were up to the Economic Freedom Fighters, that would be the case. Julius Malema spoke Friday (Jul. 14) as the country's biggest opposition party the Democratic Alliance announced 7-party coalition excluding the EFF.

"The EFF would like to work with opposition parties to remove the corrupt ANC from power, but also to give the people of South Africa something different [...] but we cannot impose ourselves on the opposition parties. If they don't want us, will work with those who want to work with us," Malema concluded.

The leaders of the seven parties will hold what they dubbed "historic" talks on August 16 and 17 ourselves as South Africa, we need a stable in Johannesburg to map out "a common vision for Zimbabwe, we so wish that this election are a new government."

The African National Congress (ANC), which spearheaded the fight against apartheid, has governed South Africa since the advent of democracy in 1994.

seeing its share of the vote slide some predict it could fall below 50 percent.

The ANC's standing is battered by discontent at corruption, power cuts, a sickly economy and entrenched unemployment.

The DA is a liberal party that has a fifth of the seats in parliament. Polls currently indicate it stands to win about 16 percent of the vote.

The militant EFF, which draws inspiration from Marxism-Leninism, is South Africa's third largest Credit: Rédaction africanews with AP

party, polling at around 13 percent.

coalition include the country's third largest The DA this month described its "Moonshot Pact" as bringing together "different parties -- excluding the ANC, EFF and their proxies."

> Under the constitution, the National Assembly meets after the elections in order to choose the president. Usually, a candidate from the party with majority lawmakers wins.

> During his Johannesburg presser, Julius Malema also mentioned neighbouring Zimbabwe.

> Presidential and parliamentary elections will be held on August 23rd.

> Zimbabwe was the largest origin country, accounting for 24 percent of all immigrants in South Africa, according to 2020 United Nations

> "We need a stable Zimbabwe, especially successful and there is no violence, and they produce stability for the sake of our own peace," Malema commented.

"This thing that we see here of Zimbabweans being beaten up and all of that, really it's not nice, But in next year's legislative elections it risks it's not nice, so a functioning Zimbabwe will lessen some of these xenophobic tendencies that we come across from time to time."

> South Africans will cast their ballots next year for the National and Provincial Election.

> Under the constitution, the National Assembly meets after the elections in order to choose the president. Usually, a candidate from the party with majority lawmakers wins.

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Request for Proposals Design and Supervision of Office Space Remodeling

he United Nations Children's Fund wishes to invite Proposals for the Design and Supervision of Office Space Remodeling.

Please visit the United Nations Global Market (UNGM) Website and download the tender documents. Please see the link for this Request for Proposal below:

Design and supervision of office space remodeling (ungm.org)

The submission deadline for is Wednesday 26th July at 10.am.

Proposers are requested to submit any requests in respect of this RFPS to srl-procurement requests @unicef.org by Friday 14th July at 1700 hours.

Proposals are to be submitted to the email addresses indicated in the Tender Documents.

There will be no Bid Conference.







Recruitment of Eighteen (18) Inland Valley Swamp (IVS) Technicians

1. Introduction

The **Government of Sierra Leone** (GoSL) has received financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Adaption Fund (AF), OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) and Toni Blair Institute (TBI) towards the cost of Agriculture Value Chain Development Project (AVDP). The project is placed under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) and managed by a Program Implementation Unit (PIU). AVDP is a six year project and will be implemented in all 15 agricultural districts of the country. The goal of AVDP is livelihoods and climate change resilience of rural farming households in Sierra Leone improved, while the project development objective (PDO) is to promote agriculture as a business for enhanced incomes and reduced rural poverty, among 42,985 rural households. Government intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this funding to eligible payments for the engagement of Eighteen (18) IVS Technicians.

2. Specific Duties and Responsibilities

Under the Supervision of The Regional Irrigation Engineer, the IVS Technician will be required to liaise with the Ministry of Agriculture (AED) and IVS FBO/IVS Community to perform the following technical task and report:

- Ensure that water control structures are done correctly with reference to earth work guide, design and specification.
- Work with community beneficiary or labour force to make sure that bunds are constructed according to earth work guide, design and specification.
- Work in collaboration with Youth contractors to mobilize members or labour for work during IVS rehabilitation.
- In collaboration with youth contractors mark time sheet, technical field work and work achieve on a daily bases at each IVS location.
- Update AED/MAF and AVDP Irrigation Engineer on work achieve every two weeks (biweekly report) at each IVS site.
- 6. Report to AED/MAF and Regional Irrigation Engineer of any mishap going on in the field.
- In collaboration with FBO members, provide local construction materials like sand, aggregates/boulders, bamboo canes, sticks/bush pole to be used as pegs etc. free of cost during IVS rehabilitation/development.
- In collaboration with IVS beneficiary community or labour force shall be responsible for IVS field implementation, operation and maintenance of the IVS to achieve full development/rehabilitation.
- In consultation with the AED/MAF and AVDP Irrigation Engineer, shares progress reports
 of rehabilitation work with PMU/AVDP, MAF visitors, IFAD Supervision Missions.
- Undertake and supervise labour on specialize duties related to finishing of IVS
 infrastructures such as: finishing of bed level of drains and canals, slicing of bunds, drains
 and canals, placement of boulders on the downstream end of the spillway etc.
- Serve as site supervisor/works foreman in the absence of the AED/MAF Engineer and the AVDP IVS TEAM.
- Participate effectively during supervision and monitoring by AVDP and MAF staff. This
 include the supply of information related to the work and measurements of lengths,
 distances and areas of infrastructures.
- Guide in the formulation of work time tables / schedules for the effective use of Community labour
- develop a cluster of five IVS sites each (Minimum of 50ha)

Duration.

The Technician will be engaged for initial period of twelve (12) months, renewal will be based on satisfactory performance.

4. Qualification

- At least a certificate in IVS rehabilitation/development or a diploma in civil engineering, irrigation (preferably IVS), agricultural engineering or an equivalent field
- Minimum of 5 years' experience in developing irrigation schemes or experience in Inland Valley Swamp rehabilitation/development

5. Submission of Application:

Interested candidates should submit their applications including cover letter, Curriculum Vitae and relevant certificates to avdppmu@gmail.com on or before, Friday, 21" July, 2023 at 5:00 pm. Please ensure that the subject of the email bears the description: "Application for the Post of IVS Technician"



Request for Proposals LTA for General Premises, Building and Electrical Maintenance Works

he United Nations Children's Fund invites tenders for Premises Maintenance, Building and Electrical Works through a Long-Term Agreement for an initial period of 24 months with possible extension for another 12 months.

Please visit the United Nations Global Market (UNGM) Website and download the tender documents.

The Tender Documents can be downloaded at the site below.

GENERAL PREMISES, BUILDING AND ELECTRICAL MAINTENANCE WORKS
(ungm.org)

There will be a bid conference on Friday 21st July at 10.30 am at the UNICEF Freetown Conference Room.

The deadline for the submission of bids is at 10 am on Thursday 3rd August





GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

NATIONAL INVESTMENT BOARD SECRETARIAT
9 Lamina Sankoh Street
Freetown

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy Services

DEVELOPMENT OF A TRANSITION ROAD MAP FOR A ONE-STOP-SHOP FOR THE NATIONAL INVESTMENT BOARD (NIB) SIERRA LEONE

BACKGROUND

The National Investment Board (NIB) Office of the Vice President has received funds from the United Nation Development Program toward the cost of hiring a Consulting firm for the Development of a Transition Road Map for a One –Stop Shop for the National Investment Board (NIB) Sierra Leone and intends to apply this funding to eligible payments under this Contract Procurement number: OVP/NIB/RFP/001/2023

The National Investment Board (NIB) Office of the Vice President now invites proposals to provide the following consulting services: the Development of a Transition Road Map for a One-Stop-Shop for the National Investment Board (NIB). More details on the services are provided in the Terms of Reference in RFP

MODE OF APPLICATION

To apply for this consultancy assignment, the Consulting Firm/ Team must submit an expression of interest to the Secretariat requesting for the issuance of an RFP for a minimum fees of SLN500.

Proposal must be delivered to the address below on or before 12:00noon, 3rd August 2023. All Proposals must be accompanied by the following documents:

- 1. A valid Business Registration Certificate
- 2. A valid NASSIT Clearance Certificate
- 3. A valid NRA Tax Clearance Certificate
- 4. A Firm/Consultant Profile
- 5. A signed Integrity Pact (Section VIII- PAGES XX of bidding document)







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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRM SELECTIO

COUNTRY: Sierra Leone

NAME OF PROJECT: Sierra Leone Land Administration

Project (P177031)

Grant No.: E0600-SL

Procurement Title: Hiring of a consulting firm for the

Coordination of the Recording and

Registration of Land Tenure

Rights

Reference No: SL-MLHCP-364429-CS-

QCBS

27th June, 2023. Date of Issue:

The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning (MLHCP), through the Ministry of Finance has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (SLLAP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services ("the Services") include "Coordination of the Recording and Registration of Land Tenure Rights". The estimated level of effort (professional staff-months) for this assignment is Forty-Eight (48) months. Implementation is expected to commence on the 4th of September, 2023 and ends on the 4th September, 2027.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be requested via email, using the following email address: sllapprocurement@gmail.com, copying Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to joejoe7787@yahoo.com, copying alphajohcham@yahoo.com and jobosamba@yahoo.com.

Or

Can be obtained at the address given below: The Project Coordination Unit Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (SLLAP) 3rd Floor -West Wing, Youyi Building Brookfields, Freetown.

Attn: The Procurement Specialist

Tel: +23279629390

The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning (MLHCP) through the Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (SLLAP) now invites eligible Consulting Firms, ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information, demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

The shortlisting criteria are: Relevance of Core Business and years in business, relevant experience as a firm, technical and managerial capability of the firm. The Qualifications and Experience of Key Experts shall not be included in the shortlisting criteria. Key Experts will not be evaluated at this stage (shortlisting stage).

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" November 2020 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. In addition, please refer to the specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment as per paragraph 3.17 of the Procurement Regulations.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) Method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours: - (09:30 to 1700 hours Sierra Leone Time.

the address below (in person, or by e-mail) by or before 2:00pm on Wednesday the 12th July, 2023.

Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (SLLAP) -Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning (MLHCP)

Attn: The Procurement Specialist West Wing of 3rd Floor, Youyi Building Brookfields, Freetown

Tel: +23279629390

E-mail: sllapprocurement@gmail.com

Africell awards training certificates to bloggers

By Ishmael Dumbuya

fricell Impact Foundation has on Friday 14th July awarded certificates to bloggers trained by Africell for a two-month period. The presentation of the certificates was done at their headquarters on Wilberforce, Freetown.

In his opening statement, Head of Digital Marketing at Africell, Kamanda Koroma, stated that Africell Impact Foundation is the Corporate Social Responsibility arm of Africell, and it's all about empowering people to contribute to their communities, stating further that the Foundation helps to build strong and resilient communities by bringing people together, both digitally and physically and connecting them to opportunities in education, the arts, healthcare, and more.

He went on to state that the training was aimed to equip bloggers with necessary skills on how they can leverage on ways and ideas in order to improve on their Impact Foundation for the work in the country.

Joe Abass Bangura, Chief Corporate Affairs at Africell, added that the training targeted 20 selected bloggers in order to equip them with the necessary skills that

will help in enhancing their work.

He pointed out that the world is moving digital and that social media to the emerging market is very important, adding that the training will serve as an opportunity for those selected bloggers to be equipped on how they can leverage on ways and ideas in order to improve their business.

Head of Media at Africell, John Konteh, announced a partnership with the trained bloggers, and Joe Abass Bangura, presented the certificates to the bloggers.

Samuel Tholley, one of the participants, expressed appreciation to Africell award of the certificates

for the training, which he described as not only important but very timely to them as bloggers in the country.

He said that from the commencement and



strong conviction that they will be capacitated and equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills needed to enhance their work as bloggers.

conclusion of the training, he was with He concluded by thanking and commending the management of Africell for their efforts in ensuring that they be educated and equipped with digital knowledge.

























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