

I work hard, I
work late,
I have nothing
on my conscience.
When I
go to bed,
I sleep.
...EJS

MIA Renaissance



A Weekly Newsletter. Ministry of Internal Affairs. Capitol Hill. Monrovia, Liberia.W.A.

Vol.1 No.5

Website: www.mia.gov.lr Email: info@mia.gov.lr

Phone No.: 0777403678

25TH NOVEMBER, 2013



LIBERIA WILL RISE AGAIN!



NATIONAL NEWS

Cabinet endorses 'radical' civil service reforms



Efforts applied by authorities to institute radical and progressive reform measures aimed at restoring sanity to the country's troubling civil service under the leadership of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf were recently endorsed. When fully implemented, the reforms, will bring an end to the practice of the dual payroll system, collapse various benefits such as gas slips and scratch cards into one compensation package for political appointees, and ensure uniformity in general allowances across the public bureaucracy.

According to a release from the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism, the Cabinet, under the leadership of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, reached the decision on Friday, November 15, after hours of

Lofa's determination to reclaim 'Bread Basket' status



A boy carrying harvested rice in Lofa

Prior to Liberia's civil crisis, Lofa County was the unquestionable leader in food production, feeding itself and harvesting enough for the rest of the country. The dogged determination of the people to toil the soil with added assistance from such Liberian institutions as the Lofa County Agriculture Development Project (LCADP) and the Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation (LPMC), the county soared to the top as the nation's primary producer of food. Farmers in Lofa produced fruits, vegetables, sweet potatoes and other cash crops including oil palm fruit (from which palm oil is extracted), coffee, cocoa, and sugar.

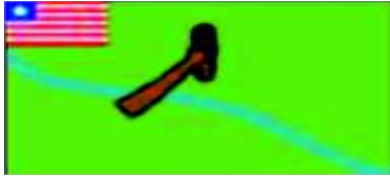
Then the civil crisis stepped in and the county experienced some of the worst cases of the conflict which paralyzed everything, from infrastructure to human capacity to agricultural activities among others.

The once booming agriculture base, known as the 'Breadbasket of Liberia' dropped far behind in food production, with Nimba County taking the lead.

But, Lofa County's dream of regaining its

Continued on page 6

County Profile



Lofa



County officials: (1) George S. Dunor (Supt), (2) Mrs. Klubo Y. Jones-Jangar (Asst. Supt) & (3) Jemeh Kamara, county Inspector

Senator Sumo G. Kupee

Senator George T. Tengbeh



Representatives: (1) Moses Y. Kollie, (2) Fofi Sahr Baimba, (3) Clarence Massaquoi, (4) Mariamu B. Fofana & (5) Eugene F. Kparkar

Lofa became a county by an act of the Legislature in 1964. Before this time the area was known as the Western Province, comprising of four Districts: Kolahun, Voinjama, Zorzor, and Suehn Bopolu. Lofa County was for decades the largest county in Liberia, with eleven administrative districts and a population made up of at least eight of the sixteen major tribal groups in Liberia. Five administrative districts have since been re-designated to form what is now called Gbarpolu County.

The County's population is now made up of at least six distinct ethnic groups, including the Kpelleh, Lorma, Mandingo, Kissi, Gbandi and Mende.

The symbol of Lofa County is a flag comprised of three colors: green, light blue and brown. In the middle of the flag there is a hand holding a stick, which symbolizes unity. The blue represents the river commonly known as the Lofa River, after which the county was named.

The green represents the vast forest of Lofa County. Initially, before the declaration of Gbarpolu as a County, the total land

area of Lofa County was 7600 square miles, or 19,683.90 square kilometers. From that time until now, the land area of Lofa County is not known.

Lofa County has seven political sub-divisions or districts, namely: Salayea, Zorzor, Voinjama, Quardu-Gboni, Kolahun,

Foya and Vahun; one Township, Zogolomai. The capital of Lofa is Voinjama. At least six of Liberia's tribes (Lorma, Kissi, Gbondi, Mende, Mandingo and Kpelle) are resident in Lofa County.

Traditional culture remains strong in Lofa with the Poro and Sande societies still playing a critical role in the education and initiation of boys and girls. The two largest tribes are the

Lorma and Gbandi, which are largely Christians and Muslims respectively. Before the war, Lofa was considered the "breadbasket" of Liberia as a result of its high level of food production, especially of rice, the nation's staple food.



Voinjama City, the capital of Lofa County

Editorial

Behind The Power Switch in Nimba, An optimism for Vibrant Economy

The switching on of electric power in Sanniquellie and Gompa cities in Northeast Liberia, gives local officials hope that economic growth is once again knocking at their doorsteps. The officials say now that electric power is returning to their areas, the prospects of business boom are assured.

But at the same time, while electricity's return brings hope for a brighter future, stubborn challenges such as current financial difficulties being experienced in local cities could put hurdles in the way of rural municipal officials' desire to undertake development activities.

"We really need money to finance our local initiatives," Gompa (popularly known as Ganta) city Mayor Dorr Cooper said. Mayor Cooper said his city needed to be part of a greater transformation into the modern times.

Gompa and the provincial capital, Sanniquellie, became the first two Liberian cities to be connected to the West African Power Pool (WAPP). The project is the initiative of ECOWAS—Economic Community of West African States— the regional organization grouping 15 countries of the subregion, begun on May 28, 1975; it originally started with 16 countries, but in the mid-1980s, Mauritania withdrew its membership in protest against many ECOWAS states' recognition of the Polisario Front of Western Sahara

The transmission line connecting Sanniquellie and Gompa originates from Mahn, Ivory Coast. They will also connect towns along the Ganta-Harper Highway.

While test transmission conducted recently proved successful, actual distribution into homes has not started. Residents would have to buy wires to be connected from the street poles into individual homes. Mayor Cooper said home study would have to be done to ensure safe connections to the different homes.

Liberia has not had regular electricity supply since the war intensified in 1990. Transformers were destroyed, hydro dams shattered and all sources of electric power damaged. Generators powered by fuel became the only source of electricity since then.

"With electric power, business will be good," Sanniquellie's Mayor Mrs. Mary Nyan-Gonlepa said recently. She said majority of the entrepreneurs in the city are locals. "Local business ownership is the engine driving local economy," she said. "The local businesses know and understand local conditions, which is why steady electricity supply will help them increase their inventories while new businesses develop."

The Mayor of Gompa also agreed. He said one of the challenges facing local businesses was the cost of power supply from

Continued on page 6

MIA Renaissance

A publication of Ministry of Internal Affairs.
Capitol Hill, Monrovia, Liberia, W.A.

Board of Directors

Morris M. Dukuly, Sr.
Chair Ex-Officio & Publisher

Varney A. Sirleaf - Chairman

Amos B. Tweh - Co-Chair

J. Tiah Nagbe - Member

Momolu S. Johnson - Member

Elvin C. A. Frank - Member

Joe K. Roberts - Media Specialist /Editor-In-Chief

D. Emmanuel Wheinyue - Media Consultant/Deputy Editor

David S. Kollie - Photographer

Kingsley Ighodalo - Layout Editor / Graphic Artist

County Briefs

Nimba & Montserrado Counties

Two tuberculosis diagnostic centers for drug resistant tuberculosis patients have been set up in Liberia, an official of the National Leprosy and Tuberculosis Control Program disclosed Tuesday. Program Manager Dr. Catherine Cooper told the Liberia News Agency that the centers were established in Ganta, Nimba County and at the TB Annex in Congo Town, Montserrado County.

She said with the establishment of the centers, the program now has the capacity to test and confirm drug resistant TB cases. Dr. Cooper explained that the NLTCP realized few years ago that some TB patients were not responding to the regular TB treatment due to their resistance to drugs.

Meanwhile, the NLTCP Manager says there is an indication that TB is on the increase in Liberia as the program continues to receive new cases every year.

Bong County

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has, with immediate effect suspended Mr. Weletee Joseph Flomo, Kokoyah District Superintendent; for failure to account for thirty thousand United States Dollars; he received as part of a lease agreement. According to a directive signed by Internal Affairs Minister, Morris M. Dukuly, Mr. Flomo is suspended, pending investigation into complaint filed by Representative George S. Mulbah, Chairman of the Bong County Legislative Caucus.

Meanwhile, President Sirleaf has appointed a Special Investigative Panel headed by Bong County Superintendent, Selena P. Mappy to look into the complaint.

Other members of the panel are: County Inspector, William S. Kollie, Joseph M. Urey and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, representatives of chiefs, elders and women.

In the communication dated November 14, 2013, Mr. Nixon L. Kpee has been appointed to serve as acting District Superintendent.

Grand Kru

Citizens of Taybour, Flenneken and Wuturken communities were delighted when they for the first time, saw a sitting County Superintendent visiting them.

Grand kru county has many infrastructural and road challenges. "This year, I decided to conduct a county tour by visiting my people in communities that have never been visited by any sitting Superintendent". Madam Elizabeth Dempster, Superintendent of Grand Kru County disclosed.

The first phase of the tour held November 14 and 16, this year, took Madam Dempster and her 'cabinet' to Taybour in Kpi Administrative District, Buah Statutory District, Flenneken and Wuturken in Barclayville Administrative District.

She said those communities are not connected by motor road; therefore the delegation traveled by bike, ferry or canoe and in some cases trekked long distance.

According to Madam Dempster, the visit is intended to take government to the people, regardless of where they live and the distance.



Supt. Dempster (middle) on her way to Wuturken via canoe

Hearing into Malawu Christians and Elders Dispute Convened by Internal Affairs minister Morris M. Dukuly November 18, 2013 (1)

District Hall, Zorzor City, Zorzor District, Lofa County	Speakers	Comments and Conclusions
<p><u>POSITION OF MALAWU ELDERS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ That Dennis Aggrey misled the Malawu Elders from the very beginning, because they (Aggrey & others) went there as humanitarian NGO. ➤ Aggrey did not talk about forming a church, rather went to create love and provide the basic needs of the community including hand pumps, school, town hall, zinc for thatch-roof houses and many others. ➤ Malawu Elders would have refused if the issue of building a church was mentioned, because it is a traditional town, but Church was allowed because of the cordial relationship that existed. ➤ 61 out of 200 residents have joined the church, yet traditional laws of the town were abided by and both Christians and traditional people co-existed. ➤ That the Samaritan Purse International Relief NGO is the sponsor of all projects in Malawu, but being claimed by Christian Revival Church. <p><u>ROOT OF THE CONFLICT</u></p> <p>A Christian woman broke the town's law by burning palm kernel, she was forgiven.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When traditional leaders decided to sprinkle water on each house as form of sacrifice, church youth resisted the act, by preventing their church from being touched. ➤ Citizens were being prevented access to the guest house, church building and certain areas in the town. ➤ That sawn planks intended for use by the community were used on the school building, the balance transported to Monrovia and diverted to Aggrey's personal use. ➤ That Aggrey and others began inciting youth against the traditional elders, saying, "No one must serve Two Masters". Children no longer respect their elders. ➤ That Rice Processing machine intended to generate support for school feeding was diverted to Aggrey's personal property. ➤ Malawu youth are breaking all the rules without any regret or apologies. ➤ Repeated violation of the town's rules led to foot-cuffing of some upon order of the 'Grand Master'. ➤ Instead of Aggrey's peaceful intervention to calm the situation, he defied the elders by announcing he would bring in 150 persons for crusade purpose. ➤ County authorities however prevented the crusade. ➤ Despite the order by County Authority, Aggrey and John Kukuyonyongee entered Malawu, chanting from one house to another. ➤ They assaulted old man called Duyan with Holy Bible, sat at the entrance of the grove chanting pointing the Holy Bible. They showed the Bible to anyone attempting to greet them by hand-shake. ➤ These actions by the two among other things prompted the Grand Master to order their arrest and foot-cuffing, because there is no other jail of punishment for violators like the two. ➤ A position Statement by Elders and Malawu citizens in Liberia and diaspora attached. 	<p><u>ELDERS</u></p> <p>John K. Sumo Land lord</p> <p>Koiwu G. Zaza</p> <p>Sazi G. Wuolewu</p> <p><u>Also present:</u> Wolobah Nyequoi Zoe Paramount Chief</p> <p>Henry Gobahay Land Paramount Chief</p> <p>Rufus Sumo Town chief</p> <p>Galakpai Beyan Gen. Town chief</p> <p><u>CHRISTIANS</u></p> <p>Dennis Aggrey Head</p> <p>Pastor James C. Koiboi Representative Liberia Council of Churches-LCC</p> <p>Pastor Malawu Branch CRC</p> <p>Pastor David Zauw Zorzor Union of Churches</p> <p>Past. James C, Koiboi Representative Liberia Council of Churches-LCC</p>	<p><u>Zorzor Union of Churches</u></p> <p>The Zorzor Union of Churches headed by Pastor David Zauw, presented a Position Statement on behalf of the Zorzor Christian community (Copy attached).</p> <p><u>Minister Dukuly</u></p> <p>Min Dukuly made these points throughout the two-day meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ That Liberia is a secular state, which means freedom of worship or religion. ➤ The need to accept value of tolerance in the spirit of oneness and reconciliation. ➤ GOL will not aid, abet, encourage or support religious persecution or any form of persecution. ➤ Responding to Aggrey's closing question, Min declared that GOL is charge of the Country and the constitution stands. ➤ Said Mr. Aggrey undermined the elders' authority and inciting the youth against elders of Malawu. ➤ That action by elders to arrest and chain Christians was wrong and will not be encouraged. <p><u>CONCLUSION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ That President will be briefed on the findings, after which final decisions made will be communicated. ➤ Superintendent Dunor remains in charge until the final decisions. ➤ That all church activities in Malawu be halted in line with earlier moratorium issued by Supt Dunor.

Hearing into Malawu Christians and Elders Dispute Convened by Internal Affairs minister Morris M. Dukuly November 18, 2013 (2)



Hearing on Christian and Traditional Elders from Manalu

POSITION OF CHRISTIANS

- Acknowledged being aware of the traditional nature of Malawu before coming to evangelize
- The Christian Revival church was introduced from the beginning in 2008, and also the intention to building church in Malawu was explained and accepted.
- It is during the second visit of Christians the elders declared "no more taking off shoes and blouses before entering Malawu".
- Informed elders that they had gone to build relationship and love.
- Explained the cordial relationship that existed between elders and Christians until Aug 6, 2013, when the 'Country Devil' declared that there should no more worship and church activities.
- The 'devil' ordered seizure of the church building, guest house and all properties belonging to the church.
- Elders arrested, foot-cuffed and ban others from the town; seized church's cross, books teaching materials and cattle.
- Efforts by commissioner Wolobah to restore calm only led to release of Christians, but all church activities and some members banned.
- No good result following consultation among citizens in Monrovia. The Christian Revival decided to invite 150 persons for crusade.
- Denied receiving any communication from Supt Dunor which placed moratorium on all church activities until the matter is resolved.
- The crusade was not held, however, admitted that two persons (Aggrey and John Kukuyonyongee) secretly entered Malawu via motorbike.
- Admitted that they behaved unusual "by moving from one house to another chanting 'Jesus is Lord' and showing the Holy Bible to anyone attempting to shake hands".
- They sat on the ground in front of the town chief's house, refusing to move.
- This aggravated the elders, leading to their arrest and foot-cuffing.
- Termed the action by elders as atrocity, abuse, torture and persecution without any protection from GOL

ROOT OF THE CONFLICT

- The elders feared that the church is recruiting more community members, 61 out of 200.

Mr. Dennis Aggrey concluded by a question: "Who is in charge, government or traditionalists?"

CHRISTIANS' APOLOGY AND RESOLUTION.

- At the end of the two-day hearing, some Christian youth led by the Church Pastor, G. KessellyYoukeh apologized to the elders for the ugly situation and begged for mercy and co-existence.
- They appealed for others who are displaced in Zorzor and for resumption of worship activities.
- Additional apologies came from Min. Dukuly, LCC representative Past. James C. Kolbol, William V. Howard of Lofa Peace Council, Pastor David Zawu head of the Zorzor Union of Churches, Quarud-Gboni Paramount Chief Musa Kamara, Supt George Dunor and other citizens. There was a Position Statement, presented as Resolution (copy attached).

GalakpaiBeyan
Gen. Town chief

CHRISTIANS

Dennis Aggrey
Head
Christian Revival
church, CRC

G. KessellyYoukeh
Pastor
Malawu Branch
CRC

Pastor David Zawu
Zorzor Union of Churches

Past. James C,
Kolbol
Representative
Liberia Council of
Churches-LCC

- GOL will not aid, abet, encourage or support religious persecution or any form of persecution.

- Responding to Aggrey's closing question, Min declared that GOL is in charge of the Country and the constitution stands.

- Said Mr. Aggrey undermined the elders' authority and inciting the youth against elders of Malawu.

- That action by elders to arrest and chain Christians was wrong and will not be encouraged.

CONCLUSION

That President will be briefed on the findings, after which final decisions made will be communicated.

Superintendent Dunor remains in charge until the final decisions.

That all church activities in Malawu be halted in line with earlier moratorium issued by Supt Dunor.

That action by elders to arrest and chain people is violation of laws of Liberia.

Called on Malawu youth not to be misled by non-Malawu citizens to destroy relationship with their elders.

Minister promised to travel to Malawu upon return to Lofa 2nd Week in January, 2014.

3 Outcomes of Conflict
* Win - Win
* Win - Lose
* Lose - Lose



Hearing on Christian and Traditional Elders from Manalu

Lofa's determination

“breadbasket” status is steadily becoming a reality by some estimate. “For now, we are really picking up, in terms of producing food especially rice”. That's according to Mr. John B. Dovee, Lofa County Agriculture Coordinator.

A Joint UN Project comprising the Ministry of Agriculture,



Farmers harvesting rice

Swiss Development Corporation, Vision in Action, WFP and the Smallholder Tree Crop Rehabilitation Support Project are now contributing to efforts aimed at producing more food.

Mr. Dovee said the projects are greatly imparting the success of farming and making a mark on farmers, emphasizing that over twenty farmers of Lofa have for the first time witnessed 'double harvest'.



Mailed rice ready to be bagged

Mr. Dovee puts the number of privately owned local farms to over eleven thousand (11,000) this year.

“This year alone, we have bought at least five thousand bags



Mr. Dovee leads reporters to warehouse of paddy rice bought from farmers of paddy rice, out of which we have produced over three thousand bags of mailed rice”. The Lofa County Agriculture Coordinator told **MIA Renaissance**.

He called on government for more budgetary support to agriculture, because he said conditions of farm-to-market and main roads are great challenges.

Cabinet endorses

deliberations, during which the Minister of Finance presented a comprehensive report on the current state of the Liberian economy, and the Director-General of the Civil Service Agency told the Cabinet about the extent of ongoing reforms in the civil service.

The two officials confirmed that while the changes will lead to an increase in the salaries of political appointees currently amongst the lowest in the sub-region and which have not been improved for years – the exercise will also reduce the increasing recurrent costs of operating the government, including costs of vehicle repairs and maintenance, scratch cards and gas slips which will be collapsed into a single compensation by which the political appointees, rather than the government, will assume these costs.

The recommendations, which will be fully implemented by the end of January, next year, could see Cabinet Ministers earn US\$6,000 monthly; Deputy Ministers and Ambassadors, US\$4,500; and Assistant Ministers, US\$3,000 and all would pay directly for their scratch cards, gas slips and vehicle repairs and maintenance. The full implementation will also see the end of disparities in the disbursements of general allowances. The projected increase is also tied to the scrupulous implementation of the performance contracts signed between political appointees and the President.

In welcoming the decision, President Sirleaf reminded the Cabinet of the urgent need to lower the recurrent expenditure of the government so as to invest the savings in much-needed Public Sector Investments Projects (PSIPs).

These projects, which include roads, ICT, power and ports, the President said, will have multiplying effects in expanding the economy, lowering the costs of living and doing business in the country, and will provide new opportunities for employment for all Liberians.

According to MICAT, the President directed the Cabinet to cooperate with and assist in accelerating ongoing efforts to clean up the payroll of the government, as well as increase the salaries of civil servants and service personnel, including teachers and health workers, whom she referred to as the unsung heroes and heroines of the ongoing transformation of the country.

Meanwhile, the Government of Liberia has included over two thousand health workers on its payroll. The health workers were previously paid by a number of international non-governmental organizations.

Editorial Continued

generators. “The steady supply of regular electricity will reduce cost of generator use, which will also impact the cost of goods and expand existing inventories,” Mayor Cooper said. “Right now, every profit made of sales goes back on cost of maintaining Tiger generators,” he added.

“But with the revival of electricity, local investments will be guaranteed, and the opportunities for business will be maximized,” Cooper added.

Nimba is the second highest populated county in Liberia. After the war, many of the young people in the county engaged in businesses previously dominated by Lebanese and Syrians. Experts say the exploding population of the county and the high number of college graduates from the county both offer strong opportunities for a viable local economy. **-Guest Editorial**

Minister Dukuly's Lofa County Tour in Pictures

Internal Affairs Minister Morris M. Dukuly and other officials went on a one week tour of Lofa County last week. The tour took the Minister to Voinjama, Kolahun, Barkedu, the Sierra Leone/Liberian border town

of Bomaru and Zorzor, where he mediated between Christians and traditional elders of Malawu (See report on Pages 4 & 5)



The road to peace, officials join Malawu youth in apology



Touring projects in Voinjama



Pastor Kesselly speaks to elders, while Min. Dukuly looks on.



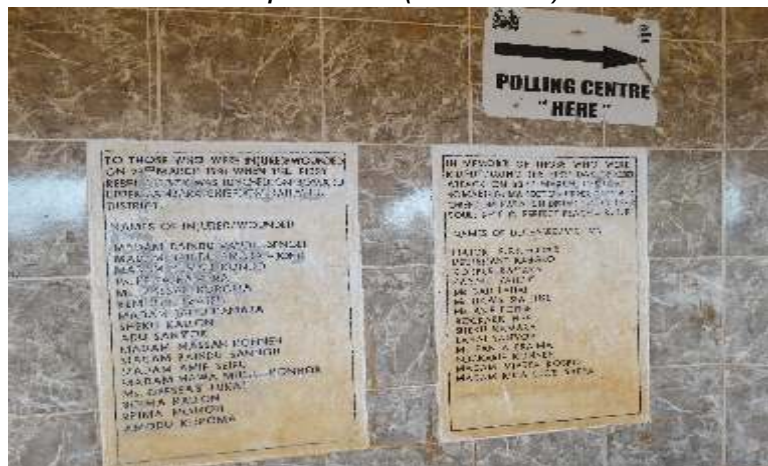
A visit to a War monument in Bomaru, Sierra Leone.



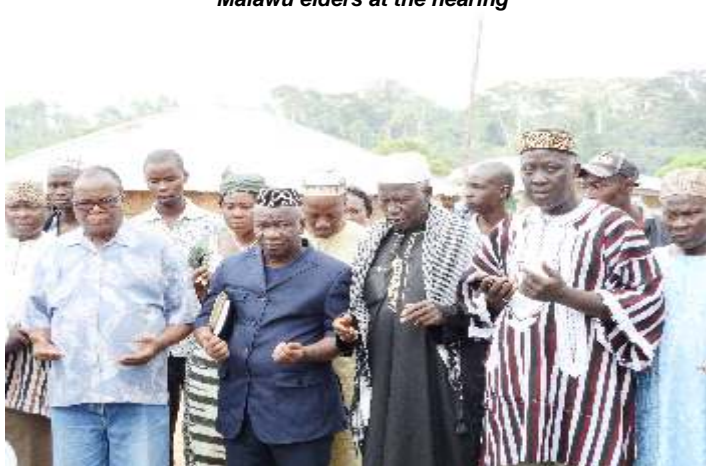
Group discussion (Malawu Case)



Malawu elders at the hearing



A visit to a War monument in Bomaru, Sierra Leone.



Remembering the dead, Barkedu, Quardu-Gboni Dist.

MIA Mediates Malawu Christians / Traditional Elders crisis



Apologies accepted

Christians and traditional elders from Malawu Town of Lofa County came close to resolving their conflict when at the end of a two day hearing; the Church's Pastor Kesssely Youkeh apologized to the elders for the ugly situation and begged for mercy and co-existence. The Minister of Internal Affairs Morris M. Dukuly who mediated the hearing, along with Lofa County Superintendent George S. Duno, himself offered his apology to the town's elders.

Additional apologies also came from the Representative of the Liberia Council of Churches (LCC) Pastor James C. Koiboi, William V. Howard of Lofa Peace Council, Pastor David Zawu head of the Zorzor Union of Churches, Quardu-Gboni Paramount Chief Musa Kamara, Supt George Dunor and other citizens.

However, it was concluded that final decisions will be made and communicated to both parties when President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is thoroughly briefed by Internal Affairs Dukuly. Meanwhile, Superintendent Dunor remains in charge until the final decisions and that all church activities in Malawu be suspended in line with an earlier moratorium issued by Lofa county Superintendent George S. Dunor. Calm has since returned to Malawu.

Fresh Faces appointed at MIA

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf last week appointed several people to augment the staff of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Those appointed include one assistant minister, three acting mayors and several Assistant Superintendents for Fiscal & Financial Affairs.

The new faces are:

Mr. Elvin C. A. Frank Assistant Minister for Technical Services

Local Government Appointments

Mr. Nathaniel Waha	–	Acting City Mayor, Foya, Lofa County
Ms. Mary S. Ngaima	–	Acting City Mayor, Kolba, Kolahun, Lofa County
Mrs. Christine Norman	–	Acting City Mayor, Bensonville, Mont. County
Rev. Joseph Dongbo	–	Supt., Suehn Mecca Stat. District, Bomi County

Assistant Superintendents for Fiscal & Financial Affairs

Ms. Roselyn M. Tokeh	–	Bomi County
Ms. Fatu C. Sumo	–	Bong County
Ms. Maria S. Quaye-Kerpoah	–	Gbarpolu County
Ms. MonjouPaye Solo-Sumo	–	Grand Bassa County
Mr. Rolando K. Woheel	–	Grand Cape Mount County
Mr. S. L. Eric Momo	–	Grand Gedeh County



Mr. Rolando K. Woheel -Grand Cape Mount County



Ms. Fatu C. Sumo – Bong County

Mr. Prince M. Lighe	–	Grand Kru County
Mr. Lamie V. Sharpe	–	Margibi County
Mr. Roland M. Jallah, Sr.	–	Maryland County
Mr. Arthur Bestman	–	Lofa County
Mr. George M. Zenneh	–	Montserrado County
Mr. Moses D. Mendin	–	Nimba County