



## LIBERIA MEDIA FOR DEMOCRATIC INITIATIVES

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*Dialoging for Peace, Democracy & Development in Liberia*

ZEE---MAANEH-----ZEE—MAANEH (PEACE AND ENJOYMENT)

LMDI / LIBERIA Event...”DUCOR DEBATES”...THE LMDI LAUNCHES DEBATES AT TUBMAN UNIVERSITY (TU) AT HERPER IN MARYLAND ON PRESIDENT GEORGE WEAH’S CALL FOR OPENING LIBERIAN CITIZENSHIP TO NON-NEGROES AND ACCEPTANCE OF DUAL CITIZENSHIP TO IGNITE INFRASTRUCTURAL AND ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR LIBERIA AS LMDI CONTINUES ITS TOUR OF THE SOUTHEASTERN LIBERIA CONDUCTING THE REGION’S QUALIFYING ROUNDS FOR YEAR TWO OF ITS NATIONAL GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUIZZING COMPETITION FOR LIBERIAN HIGH SCHOOLS *UNDER, THE PLATFORM, “TOMORROW’S PEOPLE”...LMDI/THE DIALOGUE/DUCOR DEBATES-ZEE-MAANEH--ZEE-MAANEH (PEACE & ENJOYMENT)...PLEASE VISIT AND VIEW OUR NEW WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE AT [www.lmdilib.org](http://www.lmdilib.org) AND [www.facebook.com/lmdilib.org](https://www.facebook.com/lmdilib.org). PLEASE FOLLOW AND KNOW ALL ABOUT US AND LIBERIA AND ALL THAT WE DO TO SUSTAIN LIBERIA’S POST CONFLICT DEMOCRACY.*

***HARPER CITY MARYLAND CO...Friday Feb. 9, 2018...*** The Liberia Media for Democratic Initiatives, the facilitator of the People To People public education flagship platforms, “THE DIALOGUE”, “ DUCOR DEBATES” and TOMORROW’S has launched a series of debate style interactive forums highlighting the recent call by President GEORGE MANNEH WEAH at his first state of the Nation address for a change of Liberia’s constitutional citizenship provision to allow NON-NEGROE and DUAL CITIZENSHIP in Liberia.

An LMDI a team, headed by its Director, John Kollie touring all five counties of the South Eastern Region of Liberia for the conduct of the region’s session of the YEAR TWO of the organization’s annual General Knowledge Pop Quizzing launched the series of forums at the campus of the TUBMAN UNIVERSITY (TU) on Wednesday February 7, 2018.

The first of the open citizenship proposition sensitive forums held under the LMDI People To People Debate Style Flagship platform “DUCOR DEBATES”, heard a fierce debate on the advantages and disadvantages of NON-NEGRO and DUAL CITIZENSHIP as proposed by President GEORGE MANNEH WEAH at his first State of the Nation address.

Divided into two groups of four each, on the pro and con of the proposal, the Tubman University presented strong arguments to defend their sides in the debate.

On the pro defending the call of President GEORGE WEAH, the team headed by THOMAS WILBUR DAVIES propounded that President GEORGE WEAH is right because Liberia is far lagged behind as a result of what they call the segregative and racist constitutional provision of the old order. Team –A- presented that Liberia’s current citizenship provision has only served to

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keep the country backward, while its neighbors move ahead because of their liberal citizenship constitutional provisions.

The Tubman University students on the pro side of the debate pleaded with the audience of more than 500 to accept president WEAH'S proposal for a change of the country's citizenship provisions so that in their view, economic growth can be realized in contemporary Liberia.

Team –A-lead presenter THOMAS WILBUR DAVIES was fiercely buttressed by DWEH DEE MILLER who argued that Liberia's denial of citizenship rights to other races of the World is grossly hurting its general survival, pleading that unless Liberian citizenship is open for both DUAL and NON-NEGROES, the country will remain underdeveloped with its citizens continuously suffering.

Team –B- was led by BRYANT J. KPANGBALA with arguments that President GEORGE WEAH'S proposal, if accepted would buy poor Liberians off their own land and put wealthy foreigners in charge of the best part of Liberia.

KPANGBALA and team contended that the WEAH proposition will only help individual foreigners achieve over suffering indigenous Liberians. Though on the con, they were not totally opposed to the idea but propounded that timing for the proposal is wrong.

They pleaded that WEAH and his government should rather empower Liberians and differ the citizenship relaxation proposal for sometimes in the future, but did not say when specifically. To this point the pro-team jumped in to argue that the World is not waiting for Liberia's gradual cooling off on serious issues to move on.

They argued that Liberia is the oldest nation in Africa and has wasted near two centuries accomplishing virtually nothing in material and social development and as such now is the time for Liberia to act and act swiftly to change the nation for prosperity in this generation.

Meanwhile JOHN KOLLIE, LMDI'S director says the first of the forums the TU main campus and the at Harper City in MARYLAND County and the subsequent ones to be held under the LMDI'S sustained debate style flagship platform, "DUCOR DEBATES which was started during the 2017 legislative and presidential elections, to give those elections a People To Participatory posture and space for the direct engagement between candidates and constituents, will be followed by subsequent ones in the weeks and months to come.

The LMDI Director says the citizenship sensitive debate forums is his organization's own way of sustaining the constitutional review and referendum national public visibility engagement started by it with support from the OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVE FOR WEST AFRICA (OSIWA) in 2015--16 to allow for participation of the marginalized population in the planned constitutional referendum that aims to amend the 1986 constitution of Liberia.

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KOLLIE says though the OSIWA support to his organization's constitution review and eminent national referendum, public consultation and visibility ended in 2016, the people's direct and indirect participation in public policy formulation and other documentation initiatives are a passion of the LMDI, and resuming such work with the renewal of the citizenship change proposition by president WEAH is only living to its foundation principles.

JOHN KOLLIE says though his organization lacks any resource to carry out such ambitious plan, he and the LMDI feel obligated to open the horizon of Liberians in making informed decisions at the polls about Liberia's future citizenship status in an eminent constitutional referendum.

KOLLIE appeals for generous philanthropic and other contributions to this drive so that Liberians are educated to make informed decisions at the polls when the time comes for a national referendum for possible changes to the 1986 constitution.

At the same time, the LMDI continues its trail of conducting the qualifying rounds of the YEAR TWO of its National General Knowledge Pop Quizzing for high schools of the all five countries that make up Liberia's South Eastern Region. Already, four of the counties, SINOE, GRAND KRU, MARLAND and RIVER GEE all qualified for the regional level competition at ZWEDRU GRAND GEDEH County next week.

GRAND GEDEH is the only South Eastern County which has yet to qualify. Its qualifying rounds begin on Monday of next week.

Per the LMDI tradition, deliberations from the first of the DUCOR DEBATES sessions on the WEAH call for citizenship change proposal at the TUBMAN UNIVERSITY at HARPER city are being broadcast on our partner network 45 National and Rural Community Radios around Liberia.

Please also follow us at our new website at [www.lmdilib.org](http://www.lmdilib.org) and also visit our face book page at Liberia Media for Democratic initiatives-LMDI You can send comments to [info@lmdi.org](mailto:info@lmdi.org) and [john@lmdi.org](mailto:john@lmdi.org) THE DIALOGUE & DUCOR DEBATES at this time are generally in association with the WEST AFRICAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL (WAEC) across Liberia.

Signed:



John O. Kollie

DIRECTOR