

Ready and Prepare to Perform

Liberia's 27th Chief Justice His Honor Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay Promises Result Oriented Administration

Liberia's 27th Chief Justice His Honor Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay, Sr. has officially taken seat as the official spokesperson and administrative head of the Judiciary in a colorful ceremony held at a Special Session of the Honorable Supreme Court on the grounds of the Temple of Justice in Monrovia on Wednesday, August 20, 2025.

On the order of Senior Associate Justice, Her Honor Jamesetta Howard Wolokollie, the Marshall, along with the Minister of Justice/Attorney General & Dean of the Supreme Court Bar and the President of the Liberian National Bar Association proceeded to the Robing Room from whence they escorted the Chief Justice His Honor Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay, Sr. to His Seat of Honor on the Supreme Court Bench.

On the order of the Chief Justice, the Marshall also escorted His Honor Boakai N. Kanneh, Associate Justice, to His Seat of Honor on the extreme left of the Chief Justice.

In accordance with the provision of Judicial Canon # 2, to occupy any of the five seats of honor on the row of the Supreme Court Bench for the first time, the Chief Justice and Associate Justice must be commissioned and ceremoniously seated to enable them to participate in the deliberations of the Court.

In obedience thereof, this seating program was the last step of the processes required for Chief Justice Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay, Sr. and Associate Justice Boakai N. Kanneh to formally sit on the Supreme Court Bench in their respective capacities to take part in the work of the Court.

The official program for the Seating of the two top Judiciary officials was graced by several high profile government officials to include the Vice President of the Republic of Liberia Honorable Jeremiah Kpan Koung, Sr., the Speaker of the 55th National Legislature Honorable Richard Nagbe Koon, members of the diplomatic corps, justice actors, family members, friends and well-wishers.

The program was marked by traditional songs from the Monrovia Inland Church Traditional Choir and remarks from Cllr. Bornor M. Varmah, President of the Liberia National Bar Association; Cllr. N. Oswald Tweh, Minister of Justice/Attorney General & Dean of the Supreme Court Bar; the Vice President of the Republic of Liberia, Honorable Jeremiah Kpan Koung, Sr., His Honor Boakai N. Kanneh, Associate Justice, Supreme Court of Liberia and His Honor Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay, Sr. Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Liberia.

His Honor Chief Justice Yamie Quiqui Gbeisay, Sr. delivering his remark at the occasion said life is a stage or theater. When you are given the opportunity to appear on it, you must meet the challenge and perform to the best of your ability. So, he has come ready and prepared to perform.

Chief Justice Gbeisay is no stranger to the Judiciary. He actively practiced law in the courts for seventeen (17) years, served as a Circuit Court Judge for seven (7) years, and served for three (3) years as an Associate Justice in the Supreme Court before his appointment as the Chief Justice. So, he knows the problems of the Judiciary from all perspectives.

As he takes on the enormous task of leading the Judiciary, the Chief Justice promised to work with the other members of the Court and the support staff of the Judiciary to find the solutions. He pledged to administer justice to all without fear and favor in line with the Constitution and Statutory laws in an effort to protect the rights of the people and safeguard the democracy.

According to him, there are so many areas within the Judiciary that need changes and reforms which he intends to undertake; however, he earmarked some key areas that will require immediate attention.

Chief Justice Gbeisay stated that the Rebranding Program of his predecessor will continue. There will be credential audits to ensure that all staff of the Judiciary have the required academic qualification and experience to effectively perform their assigned duties.

Concerning infrastructure development, he observed that lack of electricity is posing serious challenge to the courts, particularly in the rural areas throughout the country, including some newly built judicial complexes. To mitigate that, there will be appropriate arrangements made for the provision of solar panels as an alternative.

Performance based Judiciary

Widely known to be man of few words who talk less but do more, Chief Justice Gbeisay administration promises to be robust and result oriented; therefore, much emphasis will be placed on performance.

The Chief Justice immediately mandated transforming the Inspectorate Division of the Judiciary to the Judiciary Monitoring and Evaluation Division (JM&ED) to be headed by a Counselor-at-Law.

This Division will also be required to analyze the returns of all judges and magistrates and establish statistical data reflecting the number of cases disposed of by judges and magistrates and how many of these cases were confirmed or reversed by the Supreme Court. The information compiled and collated by the Division will be essential in making critical financial and administrative decisions.

In this new dispensation, judges need to be graded to make the Judiciary a performance-based institution. The Chief Justice is aware of the many good judges who continued to make sacrifices over the years to improve the system despite the inadequate salaries and benefits.

In the same vein, the Chief Justice said some judges are not committed to duty. They fail to report to work on time, they come at will and leave at will and perform below standard. The job of a judge is not a part-time one, the Chief Justice noted. There are some judges who even believe that a judge is untouchable; they will have no place under his watch. He said he will ensure that judges and court staff report to work on time and fully perform their assigned duties. He asked all judges to conduct themselves accordingly so that their friendship will remain intact; otherwise, he will take appropriate actions. The Chief Justice is keen on his administration leaving a legacy of discipline.

The Chief Justice will mandate the James A. A. Pierre Judicial Institute to conduct refresher training for judges as well as support staff. Where necessary, legal experts from within and without the Judiciary will be solicited to work with the Institute in developing special short-term training courses to sharpen the knowledge and skill of judges and court staff.

Addressing the Unwholesome Practice of Law

Under the law, the Supreme Court regulates the practice of law and conduct of lawyers. In this regard, Chief Justice Gbeisay said the Supreme Court will initiate concrete steps to ensure that lawyers remain in line with the professional practice of law.

According to the Chief Justice, there have been many missteps and sometimes outright legal malpractices, especially by young lawyers who try to invent or manufacture evidence on behalf of their clients, where there is no justiciable contention.

Chief Justice Gbeisay opined that the solo practice of law or one-man law firm is creating enormous problems for legal practice in the country. Under such practice, a single lawyer establishes a law office. Some do not have an office attendant, as such; when the lone lawyer is out of the office, there is no one available to receive precepts from the courts or documents from opposing lawyers. And when that lawyer travels out of the country, he/she informs the courts, including the Supreme Court, to postpone all cases he/she has in court

pending his/her returned. This is a bad practice which hinders the administration of justice.

Tackling Corruption & Ethical Malpractice

Chief Justice Gbeisay assured the general public that during his tenure, there will be zero tolerance for corruption and ethical malpractice by judicial actors, whether a judge, a lawyer or support staff.

The Chief Justice will work to ensure that the Judiciary is a place where justice is served to all, the rich or poor, irrespective of color, creed or political connections. Whether the constant talk of corruption in the Judiciary is real or perceived, he promised to put systems in place and take necessary actions as preventive measures.

For example: signs and signages will be placed on judicial premises in the clear view of the public warning everyone against indulging in the offering or taking of bribes and other forms of corruptions. Also, CCTVs or security cameras will be installed in strategic locations and special cell phone numbers will be provided in all the courts in the Republic so that employees of the Judiciary engage in corrupt acts will be promptly reported to the office of the Chief Justice; and certain judicial officers, like sheriffs and curators, etc., will be required to post indemnity bond, so that, if and when money entrusted to them is not accounted for, there is an avenue for refund; and the authority and mandate of the Judiciary Inquiry Commission (JIC) and the Grievance and Ethics Commission (GEC) will be reinforced so that recommendations emanating from complaints against judges and lawyers are decisively and promptly acted upon.

Judiciary will be a True Bacon of Hope

Chief Justice Gbeisay pledged and assured that under his watch, the Judiciary will be a true beacon of hope for all Liberian and residents in the country.

“Everyone who is injured and distressed can rest assure that he/she/it will find justice in the courts. Here, we only look at the facts, evidence and the applicable laws as our guards, nothing more, and nothing less. If the private citizen or business entity comes to court with a good case, based on the evidence and applicable laws, we will so declared. And if the Government has a good case, we will make similar declaration in favor of the Government,” the Chief Justice reiterated.

Being fully aware that the work of the Supreme Court is collective responsibility, no one person knows it all, and no one person can do it all; the Chief Justice expressed profound gratitude to his colleagues on the Bench. He stated, *“though I have been chosen as the spokesperson and administrative head, I am only first amongst equals. I have come with open arms as a team player. I will consult all of you from time to time on crucial decisions before they are made. I therefore ask for your continuous support. I have no doubt that together; we can make our Judiciary what it ought to truly be.”*