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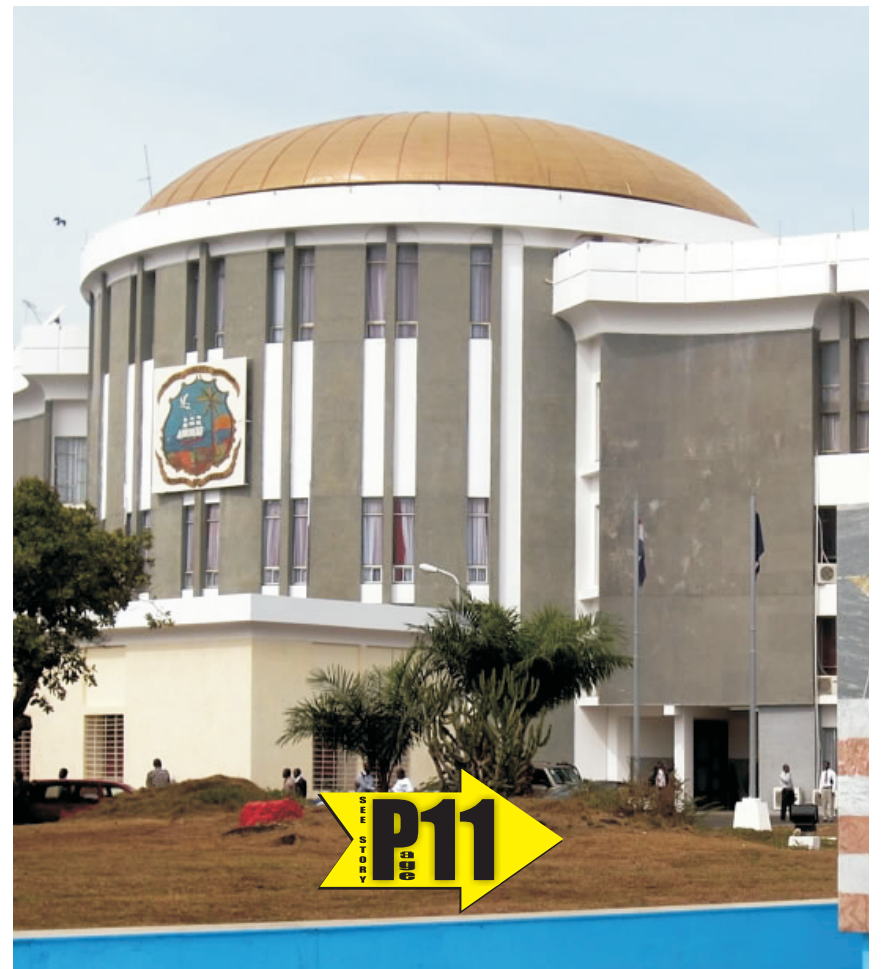
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53rd Legislators mute on 10bn



-As Weeks claims authorization



Devilish appeal

-CDC terms protesters' call



Continental News

Governor 'ordered pregnant lover's death

Kenyan governor Okoth Obado has been charged in court with aiding and abetting the brutal murder of his ex-girlfriend, a pregnant student.

The married governor pleaded not guilty to the charge.

Mr Obado's arrest followed weeks of public anger after the body of Sharon Otieno, 26, was found in a forest.

A post-mortem revealed she had possibly been raped, and stabbed eight times in the neck, abdomen and back. She lost her unborn child during the attack.

Mr Obado, the governor of Migori County, has been remanded in custody, pending the outcome of his bail application on Tuesday.

Ms Otieno's mother Melida Auma was tearful in court, and struggled to control her emotions, Kenya's Standard newspaper reported.

In an earlier statement, Kenya's chief prosecutor Noodin Haji said he had also given instructions for two of Mr Obado's aides to be charged - one for murder and the other for aiding and abetting murder.

"Sharon and her unborn baby lost their lives in a gruesome and horrifying manner in the hands of her killers. My office is therefore committed to ensuring that all the perpetrators of the heinous act are brought to

book and subjected to the due process of the law," Mr Haji added.

How did the investigation unfold?

Otieno's murder has gripped Kenyans since a journalist with the Nation Media Group, Barack Oduor, alleged that Ms Otieno had contacted her about an affair.

The two met, and were kidnapped on 3 September, Oduor said.

He managed to escape from the speeding car, leaving Ms Otieno alone with the abductors, the journalist added.

Two days later, police found her body in a thicket near the small town of Oyugis

in western Kenya.

Later, police traced the vehicle allegedly used by the abductors.

Its tracking device had been deactivated on the day of the alleged abductions, and reactivated the following day in a "well-calculated move by the killers to conceal the movement of the vehicle in question", the chief prosecutor said in his statement.

The investigation also established that an "intimate relationship" had existed between Mr Obado and Ms Otieno, which "subsequently led to a pregnancy with the deceased that the governor was unhappy about", he added.-BBC



Image copyright EPA: Kenyans have been demanding justice following the murder of Sharon Otieno

Rebel attack halts DR Congo Ebola work

Ebola prevention activities have been suspended in the Democratic Republic of Congo city of Beni after a deadly rebel attack.

Treatment centres will stay open but vaccinations and the tracing of people who have been in contact with suspected Ebola patients

have stopped for now.

One hundred people have died in the current outbreak in the east of the country, the health ministry says.

It began in July and is the 10th to hit the country since 1976. The rebel attack in Beni started on Saturday afternoon and lasted for several hours. Eighteen people died

including 14 civilians, the army says.

Local sources say the Allied Democratic Forces, a Ugandan Islamist militant group active in the area since the 1990s, was behind the attack, but this has not been confirmed.

Representatives from aid agencies working on the Ebola

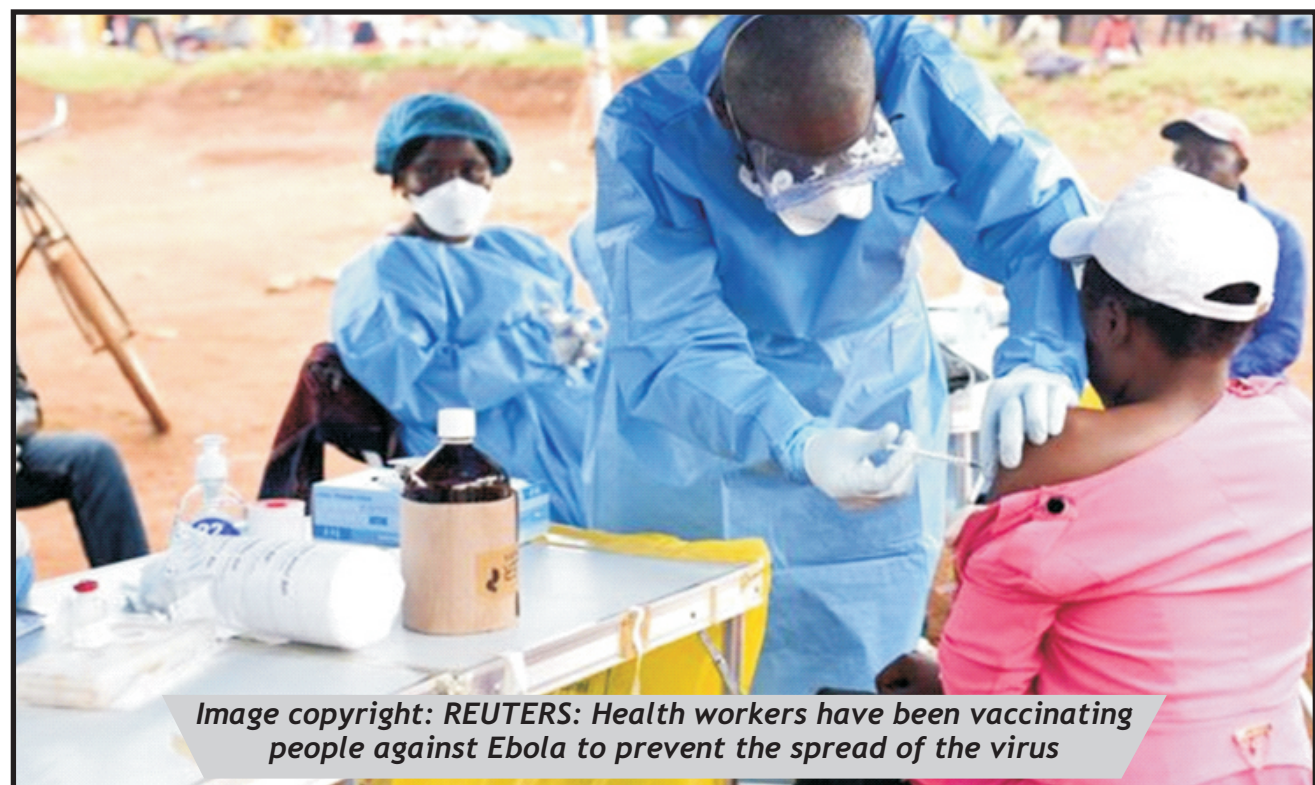


Image copyright: REUTERS: Health workers have been vaccinating people against Ebola to prevent the spread of the virus

Court postpones trial of Kagame critic

Lawyers for a prominent critic of Rwanda's President Kagame say they believe one of the trial judges is biased because of her involvement in pre-trial detention hearings, and must therefore be removed.

her mother, Adeline. The pair say the charges are politically motivated.

Ms Rwigara was barred from running in last year's presidential election, which Mr Kagame won with nearly



The trial, which began today at the High Court in Kigali, has been postponed.

Diane Rwigara faces charges of insurrection and has spent the past year in prison. She is on trial alongside

99% of the vote.

Her father Assinapol Rwigara, who died in 2015, was a businessman and a former supporter of Mr Kagame.

response are meeting to assess whether to increase security measures in Beni, reports the BBC's Louise Dewast in the capital, Kinshasa.

Some residents of Beni have taken to the streets to protest against the security problems.

The World Health Organization (WHO) had

warned in August that insecurity in the region could affect the Ebola response.

At the time, the WHO's Peter Salama described it as a "dreaded" scenario.

This is the second Ebola outbreak in the country this year. The previous outbreak, in the west of the country, killed 33 people, according to the government.-BBC

EDITORIAL

Liberians must exercise caution

IN THE PAST two weeks the airwaves and newspapers' headlines, including social media and public fora here, particularly in Monrovia have been saturated with news about the alleged disappearance of two 20-foot containers and bags of moneys from the Freeport of Monrovia and the Roberts International Airport. Official accounts put the total amount of moneys in question as between 15 and 16 Billion Liberian Dollars that was printed abroad and brought in the country thru the Freeport of Monrovia and the Roberts International Airport.

THE GOVERNMENT OF Liberia thru the Ministry of Justice last week announced an ongoing investigation by a Special Presidential Investigative Team comprised of investigators from the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Liberia National Police to investigate information surrounding the arrival of containers and bags of moneys into the country.

A GOVERNMENT CIRCULAR subsequently issued last Tuesday asked for the continued cooperation of several individuals, including ex-governor Milton Weeks, George Abi Jaoudi, Charles Sirleaf, Richard Walker, Mariea E. G. Toe, Musulyn R. B. Jackson and Opheila Nyenpan. Others are Oldada Deshield, Prince Bull, J. Barquolleh Gabriel, Theodosia B. Jreh, Zinnah Davison, Solomon Jaykpah, Kollie Ballah, and Andrew Pabai, amongst others.

SINCE THE NEWS broke, Liberians have been restless and upset, demanding the whereabouts of the country's moneys, and threatening to stage street protest. Already, some overzealous and misguided citizens are beginning to intrude into private premises with the aim of vandalizing those places and disrupting public peace.

BUT PRIOR TO departing the country last week for the United Nations, President George Manneh Weah called on Liberians to exercise patience as the investigation continues, assuring that everything is being done to unearth the facts and that anyone found culpitable would face the law.

WE JOIN PRESIDENT Weah in reechoing the call for restraint as investigation into the matter proceeds. Although it is the right of Liberians to protest whenever their peace and happiness are threatened, as the current situation indicates, but we emphasize the need for caution in exercising such right to avoid the matter degenerating into chaos.

IT IS IMPORTANT that we allow the government to probe the issue and come up with the facts so that the law would take its course, and the chips would fall wherever they may, rather than behave in ways that could become counterproductive to our desire to know the truth.

IT IS DISHEARTENING that a government less than a year in power with expressed desire to deliver development and economic prosperity would face such embarrassment. Those responsible for bringing such disgrace to our nation in the quest to satisfying their selfish desires, should not be allowed to go with impunity.

THEY SHOULD BE made to face the law and account for this broad daylight white collar crime that has the potential to rob this country of development and deny its citizens opportunity to better school and health facilities, paved roads and other social services.

WE AS LIBERIANS, have a lot to gain by exercising patience to allow the investigation reach a conclusive end, so the culprits can be identified and brought to justice rather than acting in ways that could derail our fragile peace undermine the government.

COMMENTARY

By Shlomo Ben-Ami

Israel Chooses Identity Over Democracy

Israel's new law stating that "the right to exercise national self-determination" in the country is "unique to the Jewish people" has been denounced for infringing on the rights of Arab Israelis. But the law's real purpose may be more insidious: to ensure that Jewish Israelis remain in control, even if they become the minority.

TEL AVIV - Israel's new "nation-state law" asserts that "the right [to exercise] national self-determination" in the country is "unique to the Jewish people," sets Hebrew as the country's official language, and establishes "Jewish settlement as a national value" that the state will work to advance. Liberals denounce the law for infringing on the Arab minority's civil rights. But it may weaken Israeli democracy in an even more insidious way.

The new law - the latest move in the reckless drive by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's far-right coalition to turn Israel into an illiberal democracy - contradicts the 1948 Declaration of Independence and the 1992 Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty. Both guarantee the individual rights of all, Jews and Arabs.

Yet, in practice, the Israeli government has been defying those legal norms for a long time. While Arab Israelis may technically be constitutionally equal to Jewish Israelis, that has not stopped the government from discriminating against them. Most state land, for example, is held in trust for the Jewish people.

Likewise, long before the new law established that the Israeli government would "labor to encourage and promote" the "establishment and development" of Jewish settlements, the government was doing just that. Not a single new Arab village - much less a city - has been created since the establishment of the state of Israel 70 years ago, and old villages lack planning and zoning programs. This is why illegal construction is so common in Arab villages.

Moreover, a broad array of Israeli laws already explicitly and implicitly defines Israel as a Jewish state - a definition on which the international community agrees. The 1947 United Nations Partition Plan defines Israel as the state of the Jewish people. And the Israeli-Palestinian peace process has long been based on the principle that the Palestinians should exercise their right of national self-determination in a separate state on the other side of the pre-1967 borders.

Most Israeli Jews believe that there should be limits on their Arab counterparts' political influence, with "crucial national decisions," such as self-determination, being left to the Jewish majority. That is why former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who made social investment in Arab communities a national priority, resisted making the passage of the Oslo Accords dependent on Arab parliamentary support.

Despite all of this, as of 2017, over 60% of Arab Israelis reported that Israel is a good place to live (down from 64% in 2015), and 60% would rather live in Israel than in any other country in the world (up from 58.8% in 2015). Furthermore, in 2012, 60% of Arab Israelis reported that they accepted Israel as a Jewish-majority state, with official Jewish characteristics, such as Hebrew being the official language and Saturday being the accepted day of rest.

If the nation-state law's tenets were already in effect, and generally accepted by the population, why pass it at all? The obvious explanation lies in

the fact that, like US President Donald Trump and populist leaders throughout Europe, Netanyahu amasses political capital by appealing to the population's base tribal instincts.

With ultra-nationalist and anti-Arab rhetoric, Netanyahu manipulates Israelis into believing that they are under threat, physically, demographically, and even existentially, thereby pitting them against their Arab compatriots. He won the 2015 election after having warned that the Arabs were heading to the polling stations "in droves."

All of this, together with the demise of the peace process, has left a majority of Israelis convinced that their country cannot be both Jewish and fully democratic. So they have accepted the erosion of democratic values that Netanyahu has overseen, determining that they must put identity first. Given this, it is perhaps unsurprising that Israeli Arabs' recognition of Israel's legitimacy as a Jewish and democratic state fell from 53.6% in 2015 to 49.1% just two years later.

But the nation-state law is not just another means of accumulating political capital among an increasing identity-focused electorate. There is another motivation at play - one that poses an even more serious threat to Israeli democracy.

Israel is a prosperous, advanced economy, but it is built on a labor market that is too small. Arab Israelis, however, represent a considerable labor pool (as does the Orthodox Jewish community, among whom the labor-force participation rate is much lower than among secular Jews). To advance its interest in Arab Israelis' economic and social integration, in December 2015 the Israeli government approved a truly historic five-year plan.

Nearly three years later, the integration of Arab Israelis is progressing apace. According to the 2017 Israel Democracy Institute Index of Arab-Israeli relations, 70% of Israel's Arabs speak fluent Hebrew, and 77% are not interested in separation. Moreover, Tel Aviv University's Amal Jamal has highlighted the consistent increase in the number of Arab academics in Israel and the emergence of an Arab middle class in the country. This goes, he found, with a rise in national sentiments.

This is where the nation-state law comes in. The increasing integration and prosperity of Arab Israelis is empowering them to push back against discriminatory policies. With the nation-state law in place, however, their legal recourse will be severely constrained.

But this may not only be a matter of silencing an increasingly empowered minority; Israeli's government could be laying the groundwork to suppress the Arab majority that would emerge if (or when) it annexes the occupied Palestinian territories. In this sense, the nation-state law is a kind of hedge against the government's own expansionist policies - and a potentially devastating blow to Israeli democracy.

With the two-state solution all but dead, Israel has determined that its Jewish identity is more important than its democracy. This will be bad not just for its Arab citizens, but ultimately for Jewish Israelis as well.

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O-PED

By Bjørn Lomborg

The Global Cost of Domestic Violence

PRAGUE - Domestic violence costs the world 25 times more than war and terrorism, according to research conducted by James Fearon of Stanford University and Anke Hoeffler of Oxford University on behalf of the Copenhagen Consensus Center.

By looking at different kinds of violence, Fearon and Hoeffler find that the global costs of conflict - including the economic toll of deaths from wars and terrorism, refugee-related outlays, and general pecuniary damage - add up to around 0.2% of global GDP each year.

That figure is dwarfed by domestic violence. The cost of domestic violence adds up to an astonishing 5.2% of global GDP each year. Nevertheless, the amount of research and funding directed at solving the problem of domestic violence is tiny compared to what is spent in pursuit of international peace.

In recent years, domestic violence has come into sharper focus in India, where shocking stories of extreme brutality have made headlines around the world. Because India is home to approximately one-fifth of the global population, finding scalable solutions to the problem there could have far-reaching implications for the rest of world.

Like many countries, India's gender inequalities are deeply entrenched. Yet, given the sheer size of its population, any meaningful reduction in domestic violence could transform millions of lives for generations to come.

The most recent National Family Health Survey conducted in India showed that 29% of married women aged 15-49 had experienced spousal physical or sexual violence. That means that millions of Indian women will likely suffer domestic violence this year alone.

In the coastal state of Andhra Pradesh, the Copenhagen Consensus Center recently collaborated with Tata Trusts, one of India's oldest philanthropies, to identify the best policy options for solving the state's biggest challenges. More than 30 researchers, including Nobel laureate Finn Kydland, examined a host of local issues ranging from the indebtedness of ultra-poor farmers to educational quality, tuberculosis rates, and adolescent mental health. Among these important issues, two of the top-ten policies that we identified dealt with domestic violence.

Among the various approaches to tackling domestic violence, very few are backed by empirical evidence of effectiveness. But new research from Srinivas Raghavendra, Mrinal Chadha, and Nata Duvvury of the National University of Ireland Galway have identified two proven approaches that involve not just a safety-net response to domestic violence, but also efforts to change public attitudes.

One approach is based on the SASA! project, which works with entire communities to raise awareness about how men's use of power over women can both fuel violence against women and raise HIV/AIDS rates. SASA! shows how individual communities themselves can reduce the social acceptability of violence. The approach was pioneered in Uganda, and has now been used in more than 20 countries, at a cost of just \$15 per person.

The other intervention, which has proved effective in South Africa, combines microfinance loans to women with training about domestic violence, gender norms, sexuality, and women's rights. While microfinance ensures that women have the practical means to support themselves, the additional training furnishes them with the means to improve their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Based on the evidence, the NUI Galway researchers find that these models could be adapted for Andhra Pradesh, where 1.7 million women aged 15-59 live below the poverty line and have been in a partnership within the past year. (Domestic violence affects women of every income level, but these programs' particular focus is on lower-income women.) The total cost to administer these programs would be \$23.5 million and \$19.5 million, respectively.

Extrapolating from the results of a self-reported survey suggests that more than 500,000 of these 1.7 million women will be assaulted by a partner each year. And, based on previous studies, each of these women will likely experience physical abuse not just once or twice, but eight times every year, on average.

Now, consider that both of the programs in question have been shown to reduce domestic violence by around 55%, and that the benefits are estimated to last at least four years. Either program on its own could save more than ten lives each year, while preventing a far greater number of physical injuries.

Moreover, the costs of abuse do not stop there. Surveys show that each domestic assault incapacitates a woman for an average of around 5.5 days. The economic costs of such violence, then, can be estimated by adding up the loss of paid work, along with the value of unpaid domestic work and free time.

Using this approach, the NUI Galway researchers show that reaching those 1.7 million women in Andhra Pradesh could create total benefits worth about \$550 million. Each dollar spent would produce more than \$27 worth of social benefits, owing to the reduction in suffering.

These findings, along with other recommendations on education and nutrition policies, have been presented to Andhra Pradesh's chief minister, Nara Chandrababu Naidu, who has requested an action plan. The evidence indicates that many other Indian states and countries around the world could learn from Andhra Pradesh's experience. Future generations of women and girls would benefit, and so would the entire economy.

OPINION

By Robert H. Lustig

Big Food's Poisonous Propaganda

SAN FRANCISCO - Every advertising executive knows the difference between marketing and propaganda. One uses facts to espouse a point of view, while the other relies on falsehoods and deceit. But if the difference is truth, what is the commonality? For scientists, it is dopamine. And for the processed food industry, that fact has been worth trillions of dollars.

Dopamine is the neurotransmitter of the brain's reward center, and it is activated by stimuli like cocaine, nicotine, and alcohol. But it is also triggered by information. For example, brain scans show that when people hear a statement that they believe is true - the veracity is irrelevant - they get a dopamine hit. Propagandists have taken advantage of this quirk in our brain physiology for centuries, and today, this neuroscientific flaw can be individually targeted to weaponize populist politics.

But the biggest opportunists are businesses. Several sectors have propagandized their products to the public, systematically suppressing concerns about real harms; the petroleum, tobacco, and opioid industries immediately come to mind. But no industry has provided more party-line disinformation over the years - and contributed to more morbidity, mortality, public cost, and economic havoc - than the processed food industry.

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) account for about 50% of the global disease burden and some 75% of total health-care spending. The role of processed foods in these chronic conditions is undisputed; every country that adopts the high-fat, high-sugar "Western pattern diet" is plagued by the same diseases and costs. But the big question for health professionals is whether the quantity or the quality of foods is to blame. This is an important distinction, because quantity is determined by the user, while quality is determined by the industry.

Some health experts argue that specific components of processed foods - in particular, sugar - are as addictive as cocaine and heroin. For example, sugar is consistently the ingredient with the highest score on the Yale Food Addiction Scale, which measures people's food cravings.

The processed food industry says, "You need sugar to live." Dietary sucrose - or common table sugar - is composed of two molecules in equal proportion: glucose and fructose. But despite being calorically identical (4.1 calories per gram), they behave very differently when consumed.

Glucose is the energy of life; it is burned by every cell in the body. Glucose is so important that if you stop eating it, your liver compensates with a process called gluconeogenesis. Conversely, fructose, while also an energy source, is a vestigial nutrient for humans; our cells do not need it to function. My research has shown that when fructose is eaten in excess of the liver's ability to metabolize it, the surplus is turned into liver fat, and those deposits can promote insulin resistance and contribute to development of NCDs.

Fructose also influences dietary sugar consumption. For example, studies on animals have shown that sucrose alters the brain's dopamine and opioid receptors in a way similar to morphine and establishes hard-wired pathways for craving. In laboratory rats, sweetness even surpasses cocaine as a coveted reward.

Human brain scans demonstrate that glucose activates the cerebral cortex (the "cognitive" part of our brains), while fructose suppresses that signal and instead lights up the limbic system (your "lizard" brain). Moreover, while sugar does not exhibit classic withdrawal symptoms, it does lead to tolerance and dependence that can cause bingeing, craving, and cross-sensitization to narcotics. These are some of the reasons why the World Health Organization and the US Department of Agriculture recommend that people reduce the amount of sugar in their diets.

The addictive qualities of sugar are embedded in its economics. Like coffee, sugar is price-inelastic, meaning that when costs increase, consumption remains relatively constant. Purchases of soft drinks and other sweetened foods are not dramatically affected by taxes or fluctuating prices.

Not everyone who is exposed to sugar becomes addicted; but, as with alcohol, many do. While refined sugar is the same compound found in fruit, it lacks fiber and has been crystallized for purity. It is this process that turns sugar from a "food" into a "drug," allowing the food industry to "hook" unsuspecting consumers. The evidence is visible in every aisle of every grocery store, where a staggering 74% of all food items are spiked with added sugar. In fact, sugar's allure is a big reason why the processed food industry's current profit margin is 5% (up from 1%), and why so many of us are sick, fat, stupid, broke, depressed, and just plain miserable.

Propaganda has been essential to sustaining mass addiction. Since at least 1954, food-industry executives have known that excess sugar consumption causes health problems. Using the same tricks as tobacco companies - and in some cases, the same people - they covered up the evidence and doubled down. They funded shoddy science, co-opted researchers and critics, shifted blame, advocated for weaker government oversight, and even marketed their products to children (as with Tony the Tiger, breakfast cereal's equivalent of Big Tobacco's Joe Camel).

As my colleagues at the University of California, San Francisco, have reported, the Sugar Research Foundation - the industry's trade group - even sought to persuade clinical medicine to focus on saturated fat instead of sugar, and pushed clinical dentistry to focus on a vaccine for tooth decay rather than sugar reduction. In other words, Big Food's tactics are no different than Big Tobacco's.

Treating any kind of addiction is difficult once the brain's limbic system becomes so damaged that dopamine no longer generates reward. The best solution is to prevent addiction in the first place, and in the case of sugary processed foods, that means marketing truth to consumers. We have already lost one generation to the scourge of NCDs. It is time to hold Big Food's feet to the fire before we lose a second.

PERSPECTIVES

With Bai M. Gbala, Sr.
June 28, 2017

Public Policy . Economics . Democratic Politics . Political/Economic Decentralization . Public Dishonesty . Dual Citizenship

DONORS, EU, IMF, UNDP, USAID & WBank

THE PROBLEM OF DEPENDENCY AND UNDER-DEVELOPMENT IN LIBERIA

While we appreciate and welcome direct foreign investment and donor assistance in Liberia, but we argue that **Donors, EU, IMF, UNDP, USAID, WBank, etc.**, constitute the main “bag of bribery, corruption and related, political/economic ills” that keep Liberia and other developing countries in the *state of continuing, continuous dependency and profound under-development*.

These agencies are, in fact, *foreign policy extensions* of their respective developed countries - USA, the European States, and the United Nations Organization - which have declared anti-democratic and anti-corruption policies.

But information and policy implementation activities in Liberia disclose or expose that these developed countries “instruct” their in-country, resident agents/advisors to “cooperate fully with governments on the ground”, irrespective of political/economic conditions prevailing. Accordingly, the results, in Liberia have been,

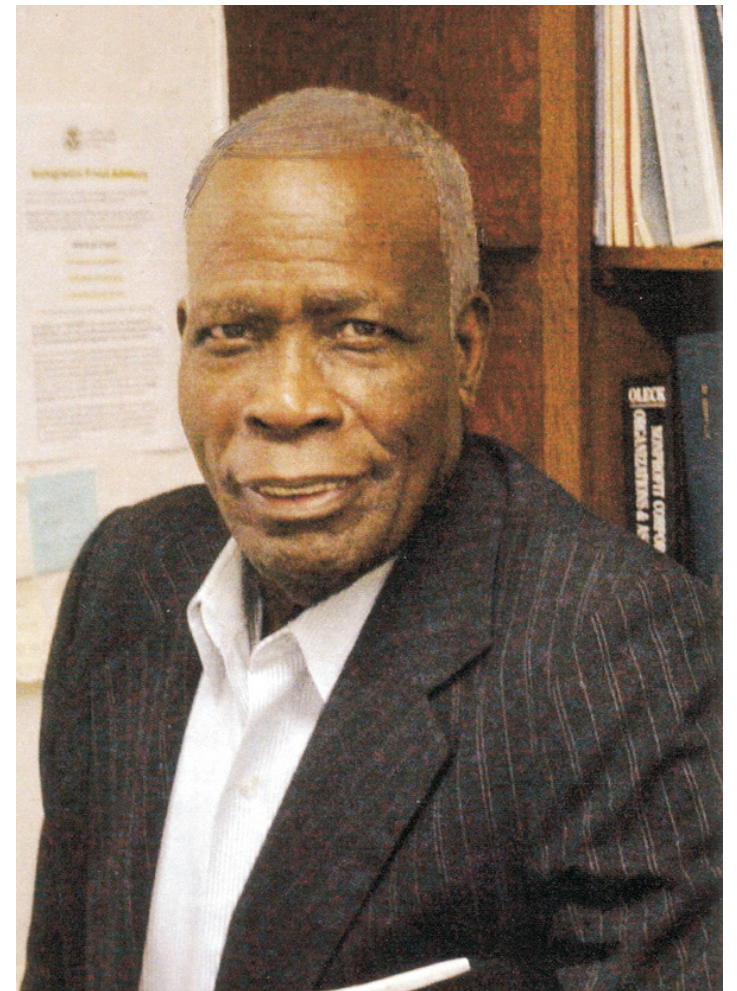
Liberian people.

The Developed Countries

Consistent with the process described above (Items a-c), these developed, direct foreign investment countries, some of which were colonial states, acquire excellent, highly-profitable business opportunities on behalf of their multi-national corporate giants in Liberia and other developing, third-world countries.

The basic objective of the developed, neo-colonialist counties' re-entry in Africa is targeted at (Africa's) our natural resources - oil, gas, diamonds, gold, iron ore, timber, etc., etc. - to feed their factories, while they use our nations as markets for their manufactured goods and services:

- 1) With bribes, developed countries gain foothold in Liberia; loans and related foreign assistance, stacked with kick-backs, etc. and investment contracts,



On the basis of the foregoing, Liberia's political/economic problem is not so much about **Capitalism versus Socialism**, in terms of the results of strict theoretical application, but the pervasive injection and abuse by bribery, deceit, thievery, dishonesty or corrupt practices into the political/economic process, variables that are external or foreign and inapplicable in both Capitalist and Socialist analysis (Zaza, 2017).

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and are:

- a) That the country agents/advisors have become friendly “political/economic bedfellows” of high officials of government, acting as “conduits” of bribe payments and other anti-democratic/antic-corruption practices and that they (agents/advisors) have been, and are on first-name basis with ministers (of Finance, etc.) having major policy-making authority, including the President of the nation;
- b) They live in luxurious apartments, five-star hotels, all local expenses paid with top-of-the-line, late model, expensive vehicles and salaries paid off-shore; and
- c) Some hardly travel out of Monrovia to Rural Liberia and, apparently, know very little or nothing about the culture and history of the

exploit Liberia's (and other developing countries') natural resources at the expense of the Liberian nation and people, in association/partnerships with Liberian politicians and related elites (Pailey, 2012);

- 2) Control and use Liberia as captive market for developed counties' manufactured products and services - vehicles, banking, insurance, etc. and to provide employment opportunities for their citizens and business organizations, NGOs, multi-national corporations, etc.



MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Snowe, Fahngon take fight to court

By Winston W. Parley

Bomi County Representative Edwin Melvin Snowe and Deputy Information Minister Eugene Fahngon have both filed separate lawsuits before the Civil Law Court in Monrovia demanding millions of dollars awards for damages following a street battle between the two officials early this month.

Through an action of damages for defamation and slander dated 12 September, Rep. Snowe is seeking US\$1.5m “punitive, compensatory and pecuniary damages for defamation” from Mr. Fahngon.

But Fahngon too has also filed a lawsuit dated 21 September for “damages for wrong” against the leadership and members of the House of Representatives of which Mr.

release from a police depot in Congo Town; but officers there refused to do so on Fahngon’s order.

According to Snowe, he then asked Fahngon to return to the police station with Kelvin’s phone, but Fahngon allegedly began ranting invectives at him and berating him, saying Kelvin’s phone was in the possession of the National Security Agency (NSA).

Snowe adds that Fahngon returned to the police station with several persons and began aggravating the situation with continuous insults.

With alleged malice and intent to tarnish his reputation, Snowe complains that Fahngon launched a live video on social media

Snowe says his colleagues here and counterparts from the ECOWAS Parliament are seeking clarification from him regarding Fahngon’s reckless comments made against him.

But Fahngon is also complaining to the Civil Law Court that members of the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to jail him apparently [due to his] refusal to answer any question [from House Speaker Bhofal Chambers during a contempt hearing that grew out of this drama] on 12 September.

Fahngon says, the House invited him through letters on 10 and 11 September to appear with his boss Eugene Nagbe to provide reasons for his alleged willful resolve to rain insults on Rep. Snowe physically and on the social media.

During the contempt hearing at the House, Fahngon says he informed the presiding officer [Speaker Chambers] that he would like to speak through his legal counsel, but the presiding officer refused.

According to Fahngon, Speaking Chambers noted that the House’s rules and procedures do not allow lawyers to speak during such hearings.

Fahngon concludes that his apparent refusal to answer any question from the presiding officer led members of the House to vote overwhelmingly to jail him.

He says he was disgraced and handcuffed before hundreds of people including journalists who took his photos and posted them on Facebook.

Fahngon says he was disgraced nationally and internationally before his family, friends, including his wife, children and his ailing mother who suffered a relapse when she was informed about her son Fahngon’s fate.

Fahngon says the lawmakers must be held liable and the court must award him not less than US\$2.5m for the disgrace, humiliation, embarrassment, mental anguish, distress and torture he and his family suffered.

For Snowe’s complaint, there is a written instruction that Fahngon appears with his answer on or before 22 September; while for Fahngon’s complaint, a written direction instructs that the House appears on 1 October. **-Edited by Othello B. Garblah**



Rep. Snowe



Deputy Minister Fahngon

Snowe is a member, demanding US\$2.5m for being disgraced and embarrassed by the House.

Rep. Snowe and Mr. Fahngon were locked down in a street encounter on the night of 7 September when the lawmaker sought to release from police custody legislative staff Kelvin D.J. Mattaldi who Fahngon accused of photographing him while dancing at an entertainment center.

According to Mr. Snowe’s complaint, he had received a text from Kelvin on 7 September, informing him that he had been arrested on order of Mr. Fahngon for photographing him (Fahngon).

Snowe says he was asked by Kelvin to help facilitate his

(Facebook), ranting at him, damning him and making several accusations of criminal behavior against him including obstruction of justice and assaulting of police officers.

Additionally, Snowe claims that Fahngon’s live video carried on his Facebook page on the internet was seen and watched by millions of people in and out of Liberia, viewed over 102,000 times and shared by more than 2,000 persons in and out of Liberia.

“With Defendant’s page alone having 16,000 followers and 4,900 friends, he knew that his platform would quadruple in spreading said harmful accusations about Plaintiff to millions of people,” Snowe complains.

Due to the alleged video,

Executive branch must account for missing billions

-Sen. Johnson

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Bomi County Senator Sando Johnson says the Executive Branch of Government headed by President George Manneh Weah must account for the controversial missing 15 billion Liberian Dollars.

Addressing reporters at Oldest Congo Town Monday, 24 September, Sen. Johnson claimed that President Weah’s government takes custody of all that comes into the country.

The government has clarified that no container of moneys is missing, but a lot of people are still demanding accountability over alleged missing 15 billion Liberian Dollars after authorities initially said they were inviting external reputable investigators to help probe the matter here.

that former President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf or the Executive did not instruct him to print money.

It leaves Sen. Johnson to wonder as to where Mr. Weeks got his authorization from to print the additional Liberian dollar banknotes.

The Bomi County representative laments that it is disheartening that the money in question disappeared before the very eyes of the Weah led-government.

He believes that explanations need to be provided to the Liberian people, warning that nobody should play on the intelligence of the people.

He alleges that the missing billions are similar to the reported disappearance of some Ebola money which the former government had allegedly miserably failed to account for.

He terms the disappearance of the billions Liberian Dollars as a broad day robbery here.



Senator Sando Johnson

Sen. Johnson says the Act establishing the Central Bank of Liberia clearly spells out that only the executive branch of government can print, disburse and keep the country’s money.

Sen. Johnson argues that former Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) Governor Milton Weeks resigned on July 2, 2018, and three months after his resignation issue surrounding the missing money arose here.

The Bomi Senator claims that Mr. Weeks fails to state whether he was forced to resign or whether he was sick, incapacitated or retired by the Weah led - government.

According to Sen. Johnson, in one of Weeks’ statement regarding the missing money, the former Governor indicated

Sen. Johnson believes that the only way the country would be financially stable is for individuals connected to the alleged “criminal enterprise” to be apprehended and prosecuted.

Meanwhile, prior to his departure from the country to attend the United Nations General Assembly in the United States of America (USA), President Weah assured Liberians of his government’s preparedness to prosecute anyone connected to the missing money.

Authorities here have said that they are requesting the United States Government’s Federal Bureau of Investigation (FIB) to assist in probing into the missing billions issue. **-Edited by Winston W. Parley**

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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AFELL opposes plan to amend rape law

By Ethel A. Tweh

The Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia or AFELL cautions the 54th Legislature of Liberia to abandon its quest to make rape a non-bailable offense in the country.

The Rape Law of 2005 defines rape as “the intentional penetration however slight with the perpetrator’s penis of the victim’s vagina, anus, mouth, or other opening without the victim’s consent, or the intentional penetration with a foreign object or other body part of the victim’s vagina or anus without the victim’s consent.”

bailable offense to abandon their quest to save the children and women of Liberia from continued abuse.

The Liberian Senate recently voted to amend the current rape law, making the crime a bailable offense. The Senate took the decision on Tuesday, during its 60th day sitting of the sixth session.

The amended legislation has also been submitted to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

Sinoe County Senator Milton Teahjay proposed the amendment.

The Senate’s Committee on Judiciary, following a review of

She describes as demonic and wicked, individuals, who rape and kill innocent women and children.

Attorney Neal calls for a speedy trial of those recently involved in the mysterious killing of 17-year-old Satta Binda in Gbartala, Bong County, Central Liberia.

At least six persons have been reportedly arrested in connection with the crime that sent shockwaves throughout the nation.

Atty. Neal addressing journalists at AFELL Office in Monrovia says it is sadden for Liberia that the issue of rape is still alarming.

“Such act sends a bad picture about Liberia, so, this needs to stop by those wicked individuals.”

After the death of Satta, there was a major protest on Monday, September 17, by residents of Gbartala in Bong County, demanding justice.

Moses Kollie, spokesman for the protestors, said their action was intended to draw attention of local authorities, to ensure justice for the victim.

“We know how the people feel about the death of Satta, but I am calling on them to remain calm as we engage government to bring to book those involved in the act,” she pleads.

At the same time the AFELL boss frowns on the death of a woman who was beheaded in Zorzor, Lofa County; a woman who was shot by her husband in Cow Farm, Bong County, including gang raped of a 13-year-old girl in Maryland County, southeast Liberia.

She says AFELL stands ready to work with the Ministry of Justice in the prosecution of those found in the act of rape and other Sexual Gender Based Violence cases here.

She calls on the entire Nation, especially women, girls and Civil Society Organizations to wear black this and every Thursday to demonstrate solidarity and protest against SGBV. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**



Rape is a non-bailable offense under the current Rape Law of Liberia with perpetrators having no access to parole while serving terms in prison, but the Liberian Senate under the 53rd legislature amended the Rape Law, making it bailable. The amended version is before the House of Representatives for concurrence.

But the President of AFELL, Attorney Vivian Neal says the crime should remain non-bailable to minimize the raping and killings of young girls and women in Liberia.

She urges lawmakers, who are requesting that rape be a

the proposed amendment, recommended to plenary that the crime be a bailable offense.

But AFELL President Neal argues that lives of young girls, women and children will be at risk if such crime is made bailable by the legislature.

“The crime is not bailable and you see how the issue of rape is alarming by the day; our girls, our babies, our women and even young

boys are victims in the midst of this strong rape law, what’s more if you make it bailable, what will happen to us in this country,” she laments.

GoL, AfDB to sign US\$87.87m agreement

The Government of Liberia and the African Development Bank (AfDB) will be signing on Thursday, 27 September a multi-donor funded road project agreement amounting to US\$87.87 million.

The multi-donor funded road project is under the title “Liberia/Cote D’Ivoire Mano River Union (MRU) Road

Development and Transportation Facilitation Program- Phase II,” a press release says.

Specific focus of the project are the asphalt pavement of the 47.1km stretch of road between Sanniquellie and Loguatu in Nimba County, the asphalt pavement of the 20km road between Fish Town and Kelipo

in River Gee County, as well as the construction of a bridge at Loguatu over the Nuor River and the construction of a Joint Border Post Weigh Station at Loguatu.

The Project is a continuation of the African Development Bank’s support to the regional integration of the Mano River Union member states (Liberia, Cote D’Ivoire,

Protesters petition

Starts from backpage

attention to the alleged disappearance of the huge amount of Liberian banknotes.

The leader of COCUBOM, Martin Kollie, says the peaceful protest before the U.S. Embassy, the European Union, the French Embassy, the ECOWAS Office, and the United Nations Office in Monrovia is to tell the world the missing banknotes is leading to economic hardship in the country.

He says the campaign is also meant to bring the country’s money back, and not to destabilize Liberia, as other politicians had interpreted.

“We are going to be peaceful, and the reason is to hold the government feet to the fire to provide explanation on the missing banknotes”, he explains.

The peaceful protesters, who engaged the streets here as early as 8:30 A.M. Monday marched through the principal streets of the capital, beginning from the U.S. Embassy to the EU Office before reaching Monrovia’s most busiest Broad Street, singing and carrying placards with inscriptions “Bring Back Our Money; We Say No To Corruption, among others.

Petitioning the U.S. Embassy, they said the campaign is to expose corruption under the George Weah-led government.

“We want the international community to see what is unfolding here in our country, with just six months in power, 16 Billions have fled with no trace, while peaceful citizens here go to bed with empty stomach; this is what has promoted our protest here today”, Martin explains.

The protesters include former officials of government and leaders of opposition political parties, including Abraham Daruis Dillon of the opposition Liberty Party, former NIC Executive Director George Wisner, former Chief of

Protocol Rufus Neufville, former Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Internal Affairs Amos Tweh, among others.

Speaking with reporters, Mr. Tweh says they will continue the protest in various ways and manners until the Liberian government can provide tangible information about the missing 16 Billion dollars.

“What is unfolding in this country is worrisome, and we cannot sit; this is why we’re here, calling on the President to prosecute all those in connection with the missing funds.”

In response to the protesters’ petition, the U.S. Embassy near Monrovia says it has received a petition from a number of civil society groups concerning the printing of additional Liberian banknotes.

The U.S. Embassy also confirms that last week, it received a request from the Government of Liberia for assistance in ongoing investigation of the incident that has brought the country’s integrity into questioning.

The U.S. Embassy continues that the request has been transmitted to relevant U.S. Governmental agencies in Washington for further review.

“This request for assistance was transmitted to the relevant U.S government agencies in Washington for further review.”

In its request, the Government of Liberia says the investigation is for the purpose of adequately accounting for all flows of money printed and brought into the country between 2016 and 2018.

“The findings of the investigation will be critical to the formulation and implementation of a credible and robust monetary and microeconomic policy in the years ahead”, a statement from Liberia’s Justice Minister Musa Dean reads. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

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Sierra Leone and Guinea).

It is also in support of Liberia’s Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development and is expected to start in January, 2019 and end in December, 2022.

According to the project document, the expected outcomes of the project are reduced transportation costs and travel time, facilitating free movement of goods and

services between the two countries, and improving the living conditions of the project area communities.

It says the expected outcomes also include enhancing potentials for agriculture and thereby contributing to poverty reduction, improving road safety, regional trade and integration. **--Press release**

Français

Les rapports entre l'ex-présidente et son successeur sont-t-ils en périls ?

La politique, selon le socialiste germano-américain Oscar Ameringer, est l'art de recevoir des voix des pauvres et des fonds de campagne des riches, en promettant de protéger les uns des autres. Il semble que la philosophie d'Ameringer sur la politique se déroule ici au Libéria.

Les récents événements survenus à la suite de la disparition présumée de 16 milliards de dollars libériens auraient ouvert de vieilles plaies politiques et risquent de rompre l'alliance politique entre le président Weah et son prédécesseur.

Des commentaires antérieurs de hauts responsables du gouvernement ont laissé entendre que l'ancien gouvernement de Sirleaf a contribué à la disparition des milliards de dollars libériens.

Le ministre de l'Information, Eugene Nagbe, a déclaré à la VOA que le président George Weah n'avait



jamais été tenu au courant des nouveaux billets pendant la période de transition.

"... On aurait pu penser que ce nouveau président aurait été informé de toutes ces transactions lors des notes de transition qui lui ont été présentées lors de la réunion de transition, mais il n'était pas

au courant", a déclaré Nagbe.

Ses commentaires ont apparemment suscité une réaction rapide de Mme Sirleaf, qui a déclaré à FrontPage Africa: «Il est très regrettable que le régime en place fournisse de fausses informations portant atteinte à la réputation du pays»

Madame Sirleaf a ajouté : « Je suis en colère, je suis choquée. En ce qui concerne le gouvernement, je dis que c'est notre pays, nous avons un nouveau président. Nous devons tous le soutenir pour le bien de notre pays. Je voudrais appeler le gouvernement - même si la réputation du pays et la réputation des innocents ont été critiquées - ils doivent retourner aux médias et dire que l'enquête est terminée et que les preuves et les faits sont connus, ils doivent retourner vers les médias et corriger l'erreur. »

Mme Sirleaf préserve son héritage qui lui est si cher au point qu'elle est prête à en découdre avec quiconque tente de le ternir. Et elle a fourni des explications supplémentaires pour tenter, bien entendu, de blanchir son administration qui est mise en cause dans cette affaire.

Elle a fait valoir que l'argent imprimé lors de son administration n'a pas disparu et que toutes les mesures prises pour l'imprimer étaient légitimes.

Mme Sirleaf a déclaré à la BBC : « La Banque centrale a déjà mené une enquête sur les directives du ministre de la Justice. Pourquoi n'ont-ils pas publié le rapport de l'enquête ? Pourquoi se sont-ils assis dessus ? Le président s'est-il rendu compte de ce qu'il a fait au pays ? La réputation du pays est également en jeu. Ils parlent de 16 milliards, connaissent-ils le PIB de ce pays ? La réaction de Sirleaf était prompte et agressive à l'égard du pouvoir. Certains observateurs croient que c'était approprié et venu au meilleur moment pour sauver les restes de son fragile héritage.

Cependant, elle a attiré les feux des partisans de la coalition au pouvoir. Au cours du week-end, l'ancienne présidente a essuyé les critiques de deux des responsables les plus virulents du parti.

Tout d'abord, c'était le représentant Acarous Gray du district n° 8 du comté de Montserrado qui s'en est pris à Madame Sirleaf lorsqu'il est apparu sur OK FM le vendredi 21 septembre.

Gray, un ennemi politique de longue date de Mme Sirleaf, a accusé l'ancien président de la banque centrale d'avoir imprimé 10 milliards de dollars supplémentaires en violation de la Constitution puisque la Chambre n'avait pas été informée.

« Vous [Madame Sirleaf] avez autorisé l'impression de l'argent à travers une communication que le conseil d'administration a approuvée et vous commencez à jouer à la BBC », a déclaré Gray.

« L'ancien président a été très malhonnête, c'est pourquoi je crois que son gouvernement doit être audité. Je suis très clair avec cela - ils doivent être audités ; ils doivent rendre compte au peuple libérien pour que nous puissions aller de l'avant. »

Lors d'une autre conférence de presse dimanche, Gray a de nouveau accusé l'ancienne présidente d'avoir autorisé l'impression illégale des billets de banque sans l'approbation de l'Assemblée législative.

Il a qualifié ses propos concernant l'obtention de l'approbation de la Législature avant l'impression de l'argent comme un « mensonge noir » qui est « dangereux pour le pays ».

"Je suis convaincu que dès la rentrée parlementaire en octobre, l'Assemblée législative pourrait inviter l'ancienne présidente Sirleaf à comparaître devant elle afin de rendre compte du document qu'elle a rédigé", a-t-il déclaré.

Le député Gray a promis d'adresser une communication au parlement pour lui demander d'autoriser un audit de l'ancien gouvernement.

« Elle n'est pas plus grande que les règles parlementaires. Je vais prendre l'initiative et écrire une lettre à la plénière pour autoriser la commission d'audit à mener un audit complet dans tous les ministères et organismes », a-t-il dit.

Le camp Ouattara accusé de "velléités de fraudes aux élections locales"

L'ex-ministre ivoirienne de la Communication, Affoussiata Bamba-Lamine a reproché au président Alassane Ouattara de vouloir faire "un braquage électoral" pour les municipales et régionales prévues le 13 octobre, en repoussant la réforme de la Commission électorale indépendante (CEI) sur Twitter dimanche.

"Dans sa déclaration du 05

septembre, M. Ouattara prend le contre-pied de son adresse à la nation du 06 août en repoussant la réforme de la CEI", a écrit Mme Bamba-Lamine sur son compte Twitter.

Pour l'ancienne ministre, porte-parole de l'ex-rébellion des Forces nouvelles (FN), le chef de l'État a "levé le lièvre sur ses réelles intentions politiques et est soupçonné de braquage électoral pour les

élections locales".

Le 06 août, Alassane Ouattara avait "instruit le gouvernement de réexaminer la composition" de la CEI comme "le recommande la Cour africaine des droits de l'Homme et des Peuples" qui avait ordonné en 2016 à la Côte d'Ivoire, de rendre l'institution "conforme aux instruments juridiques régionaux", dans un message à la nation. Mais le 05 septembre, M. Ouattara a précisé que cette réforme de la CEI concerne la "présidentielle de 2020? et qu'il n'y aura pas de report" des élections locales comme l'exigent l'opposition et le Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI, ex-allié au pouvoir). L'opposition ivoirienne dénonce régulièrement la composition de la CEI, se disant "insuffisamment représentée" au sein de la commission dont elle souhaite la réforme.

L'actuelle CEI est composée de 17 membres dont quatre représentants des institutions, trois de la société civile, quatre représentants du parti au pouvoir et quatre de l'opposition.



Français

Éditorial

Les Libériens doivent faire preuve de prudence

Au cours des deux dernières semaines, les médias et les forums publics, notamment à Monrovia, ont été submergés de récits sur la disparition présumée de deux conteneurs de 20 pieds et des sacs contenant de l'argent. Selon la version officielle, le montant total des fonds en question se situait entre 15 et 16 milliards de dollars libériens, imprimés à l'étranger et acheminés dans le pays par le port de Monrovia et l'aéroport international.

Le Gouvernement libérien a annoncé la semaine dernière qu'une enquête est en cours et elle est menée par une équipe spéciale d'enquête présidentielle composée d'enquêteurs de la Cellule de renseignement financier (FIU), de la National Security Agency (NSA) et de la police nationale libérienne.

Une circulaire gouvernementale publiée mardi dernier demandait à plusieurs dignitaires de l'ancien gouvernement de coopérer avec les enquêteurs. Il s'agissait de l'ex-gouverneur Milton Weeks, George Abi Jaoudi, Charles Sirleaf, Richard Walker, Mariea E. G. Toe, Musulyn R. Jackson, Opheila Nyenpan, Oldada Deshield, Prince Bull, J. Barquolleh Gabriel, Theodosia B. Jreh, Zinnah Davison, Solomon Jaykpah, Kollie Ballah et Andrew Pabai.

Depuis que la nouvelle a été publiée, les Libériens ont été agités et bouleversés. Ils exigent le retour de l'argent et menacent de manifester dans les rues. Déjà, des citoyens trop zélés et mal avisés commencent à s'immiscer dans des locaux privés dans le but de vandaliser ces lieux et de perturber la paix publique.

Mais avant de quitter le pays la semaine dernière pour se rendre à New York afin de prendre part au sommet de l'Organisation des Nations Unies, le président George Manneh Weah a appelé les Libériens à faire preuve de patience en attendant que l'enquête se poursuive, tout en indiquant que tout a été mis en œuvre pour que la vérité triomphe.

Nous nous joignons au président Weah pour reprendre l'appel à la retenue. Bien que les Libériens aient le droit de protester chaque fois que leur paix et leur bonheur sont menacés, comme l'indique la situation actuelle, nous soulignons la nécessité de faire preuve de prudence dans l'exercice de ce droit pour éviter que le problème ne dégénère en chaos.

Il est important que nous permettions au gouvernement d'enquêter sur le problème et de faire jaillir la vérité pour que la loi suive son cours, et que soient punis ceux qui auront été coupables. Il ne sert à rien de se comporter de cette manière, car cela est contre-productif.

Il est décourageant qu'un gouvernement qui a exprimé sa volonté de relancer le processus de développement et de garantir la prospérité économique, soit confronté à un tel embarras, en mois d'un an de règne. Que les responsables de cette disgrâce dont le seul vœu est d'assouvir leurs désirs égoïstes ne s'en sortent impunis.

Ils devraient être amenés à faire face à la loi et à rendre compte de ce crime en col blanc qui risque de miner le développement du pays et empêcher ses citoyens de jouir des meilleures infrastructures scolaires, des routes bien bitumées et d'autres services sociaux dont ils ont toujours rêvé.

En tant que Libériens, nous avons beaucoup à gagner en faisant preuve de patience pour permettre à l'enquête de se poursuivre afin d'aboutir à une conclusion définitive, afin que les coupables puissent être identifiés et traduits en justice au lieu d'agir de manière à compromettre notre fragile paix.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Shlomo Ben-Ami

Israël : l'identité passe avant la démocratie

TEL AVIV - La nouvelle loi « Israël, État-nation du peuple juif » affirme que le « droit d'exercer l'autodétermination nationale dans l'état d'Israël est unique au peuple juif », que « la langue de l'État est l'hébreu », que « l'État considère le développement des colonies juives comme une valeur nationale et agira pour encourager et promouvoir leur création et leur renforcement ». Les libéraux dénoncent cette loi, estimant qu'elle porte atteinte aux droits civils de la minorité arabe. Elle pourrait en fait affaiblir la démocratie israélienne de manière bien plus insidieuse.

Cette nouvelle loi - la dernière manœuvre de l'offensive irresponsable menée par la coalition d'extrême-droite du Premier ministre Benjamin Netanyahu pour transformer Israël en une démocratie illibérale - est en contradiction avec la Déclaration d'indépendance de 1948 et la loi fondamentale sur la liberté et la dignité humaine de 1992. Les deux garantissent les droits individuels de tous les citoyens, qu'ils soient juifs ou arabes.

Dans la pratique, cela fait pourtant longtemps que le gouvernement israélien fait fi de ces normes juridiques. Les Arabes israéliens, qui sont en principe égaux sur le plan constitutionnel aux Juifs israéliens, font l'objet de nombreuses discriminations de la part de l'État hébreu. Par exemple, la plus grande partie des terres appartenant à l'État sont détenues en fiducie pour les juifs du monde entier.

De même, bien avant que la nouvelle loi stipule que « l'État agira pour encourager et promouvoir la création et le renforcement » des colonies juives, le gouvernement prend depuis des décennies des mesures en ce sens. Pas une seule nouvelle communauté arabe - et encore moins de ville - n'a été construite depuis la création d'Israël il y a 70 ans et les anciens villages arabes ne sont pas intégrés dans la loi sur la planification et la construction, raison pour laquelle les constructions illégales sont monnaie courante dans ces agglomérations.

Par ailleurs, tout un ensemble de lois israéliennes définissent implicitement et explicitement Israël comme un État juif - une définition acceptée par la communauté internationale. Le Plan de partage de la Palestine adopté par l'ONU en 1947 déclare qu'Israël est l'État du peuple juif. Et le processus de paix israélo-palestinien repose depuis longtemps sur le principe voulant que les Palestiniens exercent leur droit à l'autodétermination nationale dans un État distinct, situé au-delà des frontières d'avant 1967.

La majorité des Juifs israéliens pensent que leurs concitoyens arabes doivent avoir une influence politique limitée, et que les décisions nationales cruciales, dont l'autodétermination, sont le privilège de la majorité juive. C'est la raison pour laquelle l'ancien Premier ministre Yitzhak Rabin, qui avait pourtant fait une priorité nationale des investissements sociaux dans les communautés arabes, s'était opposé à ce que l'adoption des accords d'Oslo dépende du soutien des députés arabes.

En dépit de cette conjoncture, en 2017, plus de 60 pour cent des Arabes israéliens se déclaraient satisfaits de vivre en Israël (contre 64 pour cent en 2015), et 60 pour cent d'entre eux préféreraient vivre dans ce pays qu'ailleurs dans le monde (contre 58,8 pour cent en 2015). De plus, en 2012, 60 pour cent des Arabes israéliens ont indiqué qu'ils acceptaient qu'Israël soit un État à majorité juive, avec des caractéristiques juives telles que l'hébreu comme langue officielle et le samedi comme jour de congé hebdomadaire.

Si tous les principes constitutifs de l'État-nation sont déjà en vigueur et généralement acceptés par la population, pourquoi donc adopter une nouvelle loi fondamentale ? L'explication évidente est que

Netanyahu, comme le président américain Donald Trump et des dirigeants populistes en Europe, accumule un capital politique en faisant appel aux instincts tribaux primaires de la population.

Au moyen d'une rhétorique ultra-nationaliste et arabophobe, Netanyahu manipule les Israéliens et leur fait croire qu'ils sont menacés, physiquement, démographiquement et même existentiellement, les dressant contre leurs concitoyens arabes. Il a d'ailleurs remporté les élections législatives de 2015 après avoir déclaré que « les électeurs arabes se rendent en masse aux urnes ».

Tous ces facteurs, couplés à la disparition du processus de paix, ont conduit une majorité d'Israéliens à croire que leur pays ne pouvait être à la fois juif et pleinement démocratique. Ils ont en conséquence accepté l'érosion des valeurs démocratiques supervisée par Netanyahu et l'idée que l'identité juive devait primer sur tout le reste. Il n'est peut-être pas surprenant dans ce contexte que la reconnaissance par les Arabes israéliens de la légitimité d'Israël comme État juif et démocratique ait chuté de 53,6 pour cent en 2015 à 49,1 pour cent, à peine deux ans plus tard.

La nouvelle loi « Israël, l'État-nation » n'a toutefois pas pour seul objectif d'accumuler un capital politique au sein d'un électorat de plus en plus centré sur l'identité. Une autre motivation entre en jeu, et celle-ci constitue une menace plus sérieuse encore pour la démocratie israélienne.

Israël est une économie avancée prospère, mais qui repose sur un marché du travail trop restreint. Les Arabes israéliens représentent toutefois un vivier de main d'œuvre considérable (comme la communauté des Juifs orthodoxes, dont le taux de participation au marché du travail est bien inférieur à celui des Juifs laïcs). Afin de renforcer l'intégration économique et sociale des Arabes israéliens, le gouvernement a adopté un plan de développement quinquennal véritablement historique en 2015.

Près de trois ans plus tard, l'intégration de la population arabe progresse à grands pas. Selon l'indice des relations entre Juifs et Arabes de l'université de Haïfa, 70 pour cent des Arabes israéliens parlent couramment l'hébreu, et 77 pour cent d'entre eux ne souhaitent pas de séparation entre les deux communautés. De plus, le professeur de sciences politiques de l'université de Tel Aviv Amal Jamal a souligné l'augmentation constante des étudiants arabes israéliens et l'émergence d'une classe moyenne arabe dans le pays, donnant lieu à un sentiment d'appartenance nationale.

C'est là qu'intervient la loi de l'État-nation. La plus grande intégration et prospérité des Arabes israéliens leur donnent les moyens de lutter contre la politique de discrimination dont ils sont victimes. Avec l'adoption de la nouvelle loi, leurs recours juridiques seront sérieusement limités.

Il ne s'agit d'ailleurs peut-être pas seulement de réduire au silence une minorité de plus en plus émancipée ; le gouvernement israélien pourrait être en train de jeter les bases qui lui permettront de réprimer la population arabe qui deviendra majoritaire si (ou quand) l'État hébreu annexera les territoires palestiniens occupés. Dans cette perspective, la nouvelle loi est une sorte de couverture contre les risques liés à sa propre politique expansionniste - et potentiellement, une catastrophe pour la démocratie israélienne.

Maintenant que la solution à deux États est pour ainsi dire moribonde, le gouvernement israélien actuel a décidé que l'identité juive est plus importante que la démocratie. Cette évolution ne sera pas seulement préjudiciable pour les Arabes israéliens, mais en fin de compte également pour les Juifs israéliens.

ARTICLES

How Can President Weah Balance Diplomatic Ties With Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping?

....A Special Diplomatic Analysis (Part Three)...

CONT'D FROM LAST EDITION

By: Josephus M. Gray, PhD (graymoses@yahoo.com)

In order to cement Liberia's bilateral ties further higher with the current powers in Washington and Beijing, the Weah's administration should attempted to build close cooperative relations with the two countries using diplomatic, thus keeping a vigorous communication channel with the two economics powers and the rest of the free world to the advantage of the CDC-led government pro-poor agenda, the interest of Liberia above other interests.

However, the diplomatic equilibrium can only be achieved if the rightful individuals assigned at Liberia's embassies and diplomatic missions abroad are demanded to perform a national duties since the president or the foreign minister cannot be presence every were at once to project the nation's images. Those currently in the field requires a strong background of a multidisciplinary perspective since diplomacy today is an appropriate instrument to attract investments and businesses back home, and, simultaneously, prove to be politically and economically profitable to Liberia.

Considerable literature has appeared in recent years speculating on future Sino-American cooperation, competition, or conflict. While there is no shortage of theories of international relations to inform conjecture on likely future scenarios, two in particular highlight the sharp contrasts in approach and perspectives that characterize this debate regarding Washington and Beijing.

These two perspectives promote very distinct U.S. approaches for dealing with the challenges posed by a rising China. Realists, who believe that states operate in an unsentimental and unforgiving environment, would advise current American President Donald trump to keep ample powder dry, to leverage existing and acquire new allies, and to occasionally accommodate when relevant U.S. interests are much less than those of China.

The current government domestically remained popular which the government should use to reinforce its foreign policy and international relations with the outside world especially Liberia's development partners and friendly nations and governments. Accurately, Liberia would not have received the worldwide benevolence it got during the 12-year of former president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf administration if not for apt diplomatic initiatives and had serious negotiations not taken place sometimes long hours to balance the country's diplomatic dealing with Washington and Beijing.

The current administration primarily need to focus on economic diplomacy in the formulation of the CDC-led government foreign policy and the practice of international relations with Washington and Beijing on one hand and the West on the other hand especially Europe and Africa.

Those who are given the responsibility to project Liberia's images in the international system especially countries accredited at the various embassies and diplomatic missions abroad must be sharp, cognizant of global prevailing dynamics political and diplomatic issues to drive the desire results back home, and not just sit and wait to be tele-guided (push and start). They need to understand that diplomacy goes far beyond sparkling red and white wines, champagne, ceremonial dinner and soliciting financial and other hand-outs for personal enrichment.

The noble profession which goes with greater demands is not an end but a means; not a purpose but a method. It seeks, by the use of reason, conciliation and the exchange of interests to prevent major conflicts arising between sovereign states and other civil organizations.

But nowadays diplomacy and international relations are wrapped up with domestic policy-making and political demands about governance across an extended spectrum of pressing national issues such as President George M. Weah's administration pro-poor agenda and jobs creation for the greater population.

In an advanced technically era, diplomats sometimes

are merely the messengers of their governments rather than important advisers and policy makers, since technology has brought about a psychological warfare and propaganda that has become a powerful weapon to diplomacy and foreign policy.

For the purpose of efficiency and productivity, the Weah's administration should institute decisive measures that the serious issue of diplomats negotiating which missions to be assigned should be halted; they should be posted to counties by those with the appointing powers, the president and the foreign minister.

This was one of the major weaknesses of the former Sirleaf's regime. It was common for these so-called influential diplomats to lobby for posting to "prestigious" diplomatic missions in Europe, Asia, America and multilateral organizations, as greater numbers were not willing to be posted to African missions, especially the underdeveloped ones, while the stayed of a diplomat at one mission in most instances rendered the diplomat or Foreign Service officer inefficient.

Can this administration regularly rotate diplomats every four years, just as hundreds of states continue managed well. For example, nowadays most of the countries from Africa to America and Asia to Europe and South America to Meddle East regularly rotate diplomats; after four years at one diplomatic mission, the individual is brought home to render service at the foreign ministry while his successor move to replace the person; this strategic is intended to ensure effectiveness and not complacency.

While another concern is the existence of too many diplomatic missions abroad, which place a heavy financial burden on the scarce resources of this poor country Liberia, decisively, maintaining more contacts with non-African states. Studies have shown that Washington, Paris, London or Beijing wouldn't post diplomats to countries of their choice or where diplomats do not have command over the language of the host state or uninformed diplomats to countries of strategic importance in a particular region or continent.

Considering Liberia's current economic burden and scarce resources, President Weah need to establish a core group of financial, legal, foreign policy and diplomatic experts and political connoisseurs to review the past regime action to maintain existence of too many embassies and diplomatic missions in one region while the country has no embassy or diplomatic mission in other region or continents.

For instance, the existed several missions in the Middle East countries including Qatar, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, while Liberia has no diplomatic missions or embassy in South America, Central America, Australia, Scandinavia and Oceania regions.

At present, diplomats are engaged in an expanding range of functions, from negotiation, communication, consular, representation, and reporting to observation, merchandise trade and services promotion, cultural exchange, and public relations. Diplomats restrict their interactions and deal solely with other members of an exclusive club, comprised of governmental officials, fellow diplomats, and, occasionally, members of the business community.

A nation's diplomat required function as his or her country's eyes, ears, and voice abroad, must be aware of national interests and values while being able to understand foreign politics and cultures. At the same time, the skills required of professional diplomats include intelligence, tact, discretion, circumspection, patience, self-control, teamwork, adaptability, creative imagination, the ability to signal and communicate messages precisely to the target audience.

In certain cases, diplomats also give occasional speeches to members of the community of their host country. It is admirable profession of integrate, intelligent, honesty, political and edification elegance, free of corrupt and other unwholesome practices especially greed for financial gains. But, now new issues such as technical matters are coming to the forefront. Out of this sphere of unfolding developments and uncertainties a diplomat, in this modern era, should

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forefront. Out of this sphere of unfolding developments and uncertainties a diplomat, in this modern era, should obtain the 'requisite tools' of education, skills, and a marketable reputation.

Evidently, diplomat presents his or her government's policies to the foreign and domestic publics in a persuasive and persuading tone, not a demanding one, as such; a diplomat always represents the interest of the nation but at the same time cannot ignore the public opinion on national and international issues that go beyond defined borders.

Diplomat should be fully aware of work every day to be able to partner with local businesses and companies in host country to enhance economic growth back home in his country. That is why those tasked with economic activities at embassy must be sharp, cognizant of global prevailing wheeling and dealing; keep check of the financial movers and shakers, be well-schooled and knowledgeable of economic diplomacy which encourages greater cooperation and relations that protect investment and bilateral ties between two states or among companies.

Diplomacy serves states in three useful channels of communication including means of negotiating agreements between states, a source of information about what is happening in host states and representing the interest of the sending state.

But considering Liberia's present poor economic situation, economic diplomacy should be given greater priority in our international relations with powerful states and government since economic diplomacy is now key factor in the development of contemporary international politics. It is clear that economic and commercial interests, particularly those related to investment, trade, exports, protection and assistance could be essential aspects of the diplomatic activities of a considerable number of countries.

Diplomacy today takes place among multiple sites of authority, power, and influence; at its essence is the conduct of relationships, using peaceful means, by and among international actors, at least one of whom is usually governmental. The typical international actors are states and the bulk of diplomacy involves relations between states directly, or between states, international organizations, and other international actors.

In the modern world, the issues of economic interests, trade, protection of nationals, and security have become much more difficult, with major challenges affecting the practices of diplomacy being influenced by major actors and powerful states, and some time the continued experiment of global, continental and regional groupings. Other factors such as bad political decisions in domestic politics, economic growth, and technological development, among others have greatly affected the international system.

At the same time, the skills required of professional diplomats include intelligence, tact, discretion, circumspection, patience, self-control, teamwork, adaptability, creative imagination, the ability to signal and communicate messages precisely to the target audience.

The Weah's leadership foreign policy and international relations should base its interaction with states and international players on interest since international relations is the study of relations between political entities such as states, empires, international non-governmental organizations, among others.

The CDC led-government foreign policy and international relations, by all account, should be formulated solely for the national interests and its primary and obvious objectives should entails the maintenance of national security and the preservation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country, the promotion of peace and harmony based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, and respect for international orders. This will led to securing the much-needed strategic partnerships with international players in support of the Weah's administration agenda.

The expectations of Weah's leadership are sky-high among Liberians who believe are positives that the president will deliver on his promises of pro-poor agenda equality, rule of law, unity and better living standard for the poverty-stricken population.

53rd Legislators mute on 10bn

By Othello B. Garblah

Members of the 53rd Legislature are said to be mute over claims that they surreptitiously authorized the printing of the additional 10 billion Liberian bank notes in 2017, months after they publicly approved the printing of an initial 5 billion in 2016.

Former Central Bank Governor Milton Weeks said Thursday in what he said was a clarification that the bank did obtain authorization for the printing of the additional 10 billion Liberian Dollar bank notes in 2017.

"I wish to state emphatically clear that we did obtain authorization for the printing of the currency. The first authorization was for the 5 billion and the second authorization was in 2017 for the 10 billion we printed; that authorization came from the legislature," the former CBL governor told journalists.

Many members of the 53rd Legislature contacted by this paper Monday September 24, 2018 to comment on claims by former Governor Weeks, an assertion echoed by former President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf proved futile as many of



the lawmakers contacted deferred their comments to today (Tuesday September 25).

This development comes as the government continues its probe into the allegation of missing containers with cash worth 16 billion Liberian bank notes, an equivalent of about US\$104 million. The Financial Times put the amount as 5 percent of Liberia's GDP.

However, ex-Governor Weeks says as far as he is concerned there is no missing

container of currency.

"There is no missing container of currency and I want that to be cleared," said Weeks. Weeks said the first 5 billion printed came in 2016 and that in 2017, agreement was signed to print the 10 billion following an approval from the Legislature.

"In 2017, we signed an agreement for the printing of 10 billion that is all the money I am aware of that was printed. The 10 billion some came in

October 2017 and the other came in early 2018, Weeks continued.

Mr. Weeks said some of the 10 billion came by air, while others were imported by sea. He also stated that the entire amount the first 5 billion and

the second 10 billion were printed in Sweden.

Mr. Weeks comments leave more room for answers as members of the 53rd Legislature mainly Senators are still mute over the issue of authorization.

House Speaker Chambers, a member of the 53rd Legislature has been vocal insisting that he was only aware of the 5 billion that was printed.

But like Weeks, former President Sirleaf also insists that as an autonomous agency the CBL obtained its authorization from the Legislature to print the now missing currencies.

As the debate for who the missing container continues, it is becoming clear by the day that there are more questions than answers. It remains to be seen who is actually telling the truth and hence the need for reputable external investigators like the FBI to come in.

Devilish appeal

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Ruling Coalition for Democratic Change Chairman Mulbah Morlu, terms as "devilish", protesters asking the European Union and other bilateral partners to stop financial aids from President George Manneh Weah's administration.

Addressing a news conference here Monday, 24 September at his party's headquarters in Congo Town outside Monrovia, Morlu says CDC-led government respects freedom of association and civil liberty as enshrined in the Constitution of Liberia, but it is demonic for people to be calling on foreign missions not

to help Liberia on grounds that money went missing is just not unpatriotic, but scaring.

He claims Monday's protest was organized by the former ruling Unity Party, opposition Liberty Party and the Alternative National Congress, but still suffered massive defeat like during the 2017 Presidential election, when the three political parties were similarly defeated at the poll.

Chairman Morlu notes the government had already set up an investigative team, and invited the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the United States, the Liberia Council of Churches, the Federation of Liberia Youth and experts to

probe the allegation, so the protest was nothing but mere political bluff.

He recalls that during the days of former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Johnson, protesters including himself, were allegedly wiped off the streets by police, but today, people were protected by the police despite some of them allegedly raining insults on President Weah.

He brags that in next protest; he will appeal to the government to provide protesters matching band to escort them, adding the CDC-government is very tolerance to the extent that employees of government abandoned work that they are being paid for to join protest against the government.

Hundreds of Liberians peacefully took to the streets on Monday to demand the return of newly printed Liberian banknotes stacked in containers and bags that allegedly went missing from the Freeport of Monrovia and the Roberts International Airport, respectively. Authorities here confirmed the incident transpired on March 31, 2018.

The scandal had saddled President George Weah with his biggest political crisis since he took office in January.

"This money is for our country, for our children, for tomorrow," says Precious

Equality Now conducts sensitization on FGM

By Bridgett Milton

A non-governmental organization, Equality Now conducts two-day training for journalists and civil organizations in Liberia on the need to accelerate implementation of the Maputo Protocol and the Sustainable Development Goals towards an anti-Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) law in Liberia.

Program Officer Felister Gitonga, says the focus is on ending discrimination against women and girls.

She says the organization is working with women solidarity incorporated to train media practitioners how to use the SDGs and the Maputo Protocol

to fight for women's rights and ensure Liberia has an anti-FGM law.

Felister argues having a FGM law in Liberia is necessary to set up a legal framework that protects women and girls from the practice, noting that it is the highest form of discrimination for women and girls.

She says to address FGM, a law should be enacted to make perpetrators to account.

Equality Now was founded in 1992 to achieve legal and systemic change in the fight against violence and discrimination against women and girls. -Editing by Jonathan Browne



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Williams, 43, who braved a rainstorm and a heavy police presence to protest in the seaside city. "We are here to get our money back. We want justice for our missing money."

Meanwhile, Morlu discloses partisans of the CDC will over

the weekend storm the Roberts International Airport to welcome President George Manneh Weah back home after attending the U.N. Assembly in New York. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Protesters petition Int'l Community



By Lewis S. Teh & Ben P. Wese

Hundreds of Liberians protesting the alleged disappearance of newly printed Liberian banknotes that one official account put at 16 Billion LRD petition the Economic Community of West African States, the United Nations, the European Union and the United States Embassy here, calling on the international community to intervene in retrieving the

missing billions, which authorities here confirmed transpired on March 31, 2018.

The protesters under the banner, Coalition of Citizens United to Bring Back Our Money or COCUBOM on Monday, 24 September also petition the international community to withhold funding to the Liberian government until the alleged missing billions are accounted for.

Liberia's Information Minister Lenn Eugene Nagbe recently told the Voice of America that nearly 16 Billion Liberian dollars went missing from the Freeport of Monrovia and the Roberts International Airport in Harbel, Margibi County, respectively. But the Minister of Finance and Development Planning Samuel Tweah disputes Nagbe's account; instead, putting the amount at 1.5 billion.

President George Weah has called for calm while the investigations are ongoing to get to the bottom of the crime and bring those responsible to justice.

Monday's peaceful protest was organized by several civil society organizations, including the Economic Freedom Fighters of Liberia (EFFL), People Action Network (PAN) and Traditional Justice of Liberia, among others was meant to draw the Government of Liberia and other international partners' attention.



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Luka Modric wins The Best FIFA's Men Player award

Luka Modric ends Messi-Ronaldo Monopoly to win The Best FIFA Men's Player Award 2018.

Real Madrid and Croatia midfielder Luka Modric has been named the Best Men's Player at The Best FIFA Football Awards on Monday evening, fighting off competition from fellow nominees Cristiano Ronaldo and Mohamed Salah.

The award caps off an incredible year for Modric, who won his fourth Champions League title with Real Madrid in May, before leading his country to a World Cup final in July and being crowned UEFA Men's Player of the Year last month.

The Best Men's Player of the year award, formerly named the Fifa World Player of the Year, has long been dominated by both Ronaldo and Lionel

Messi, but Barcelona forward Messi failed to make the shortlist for this years award for the first time since 2006.

Modric's other accolades from last season include him being awarded the Golden Ball for his performances during the 2017 Club World Cup, whilst the former Spurs man was also included in the Champions League team of the season for a third consecutive year and named the best



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