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The New Dawn

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TRULY INDEPENDENT

#Revoke rock and sand mining licenses from Chinese and Lebanese#

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P11

Daniel Kaye was hired to attack telecommunications company Lonestar

LTA ignores cyber-attack?

GOBET231 workers cry for salaries



P7



Continental News

Zimbabwe troops accused of 'systematic torture' of protesters

A government-appointed human rights group in Zimbabwe has accused soldiers of using "systematic torture" in a crackdown on protests.

The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission strongly criticised authorities for using troops to quell demonstrations.

Unrest broke out more than a week ago following a sharp rise in fuel prices.

A government spokesman defended the crackdown, telling the BBC: "When things get out of hand, a bit of firmness is needed."

Reports have emerged of assaults allegedly carried out by the military in various parts of the capital, Harare.

Soldiers in Harare were seen beating a large group of minibus drivers on Tuesday.

The BBC's Andrew Harding in Harare spoke to a man who said he and about 30 others had been rounded up and beaten by soldiers for "more than two hours".

The continuing violence raises further questions about President Emmerson Mnangagwa's control over the military, which helped bring him to power 14 months ago, our correspondent adds.

President Mnangagwa has promised that abuses against civilians will not be tolerated.

What has been alleged?

In a blunt statement, the commission said at least eight deaths had been reported since last week, "mostly attributed to use of live ammunition".

"Armed and uniformed members of the Zimbabwe National Army and the Zimbabwe Republic Police instigated systematic torture."

It said the torture was "organised" in that security forces targeted men close to where barricades had been erected, and near areas torched by protesters or looted. The commission detailed reports of security forces entering houses at night and making men, and even boys as young as 11, lie on the ground where they were then beaten.

"The deployment of the army in quelling civilian disturbances leads to loss of life and serious bodily injuries and other human rights violations, yet the

government continues to make such deployments," the statement said.

Other reports say at least 12 people have been killed and scores treated for gunshot injuries.

More than 600 people have been arrested in relation to the protests - with rights groups and opposition lawmakers saying many have been detained arbitrarily.

Pastor Evan Mawarire, a prominent activist who led the 2016 protests against Robert Mugabe, was arrested on 16 January and remains in detention. -BBC



Image copyright GETTY IMAGES: Protests erupted over a steep increase in fuel prices

Ethiopia arrests ex-minister for mismanagement of funds: FANA

ADDIS ABABA (Reuters) - An Ethiopian ex-minister was arrested on Wednesday on suspicion of "mismanagement of public funds" while he was head of a regional public investment fund, the state-affiliated Fana Broadcasting said.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed

has been pursuing a nationwide crackdown on graft in the public sector since taking office last year.

Bereket Simon, who served as minister of communication in the 1995-2012 government of Meles Zenawi and was widely considered his right-hand man, co-founded the

fund, TIRET Corporation, in 1995 and led it until 2017. TIRET belongs to the Amhara regional administration and owns firms in the brewery, construction, transport and logistics sectors.

Also arrested on the same allegations on Wednesday was Tadesse Kassa, a former board



FILE PHOTO: Ethiopian government spokesman Bereket Simon (R) makes the official announcement of the death of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa August 21, 2012. REUTERS/Tiksa Negeri/File Photo By Aaron Maasho

US supports DR Congo's new president



Felix Tshisekedi denies doing a deal with former president Joseph Kabila

The US State Department says it is committed to working with the new president of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Felix Tshisekedi, who is to be sworn in on Thursday.

But it has urged him to address reports of electoral irregularities.

The US had previously condemned the lack of transparency over the result, which many

observers say was rigged by Mr Tshisekedi and the outgoing president, Joseph Kabila.

A rival opposition candidate, Martin Fayulu, says he won about 60% of the vote, but his challenge was dismissed by the Constitutional Court.

Following the Constitutional Court ruling African presidents also came out to congratulate Mr Tshisekedi. -BBC

member of TIRET.

Neither Bereket nor Tadesse were immediately reachable for comment.

The two suspects were taken to Bahir Dar, capital of Amhara region, from their residences in Addis Ababa, and were due to be charged, Fana

quoted the head of Amhara's anti-corruption commission as saying.

Earlier this month, Ethiopia charged the former head of the military-run industrial conglomerate METEC and other officials with corruption. -Reuters

EDITORIAL

We need collective security

A GROUP OF lawmakers under the banner "Independent Lawmakers" wants security of lawmakers and their families placed on special consideration, but members of that august body have turned blind eyes on the wave of gruesome killings across the country sometimes, characterized by abuses.

IN A JOINT press release Tuesday, 22 January at the Capitol, seven lawmakers called on President George Manneh Weah, Senate President Pro-Tempore Albert Chie, Speaker Chambers and the entire Leadership of the 54th National Legislature to see the recent violence during a children party organized by Montserrado County District#10 Representative Yekeh Kolubah in Smythe Road community as a threat to national security and the consolidation of peace in the country.

"WE WISH TO state here very clearly that there can be no amount of justification to these violent acts, even if the voices and tunes of citizens are not palatable. The use of guns and stones at these separate instances on the Oldroad must be contained and disposed of so as not to have a contagious effect on our democracy", the lawmakers warned.

BUT JUST WHEN did the lawmakers realize that violence is a threat to national security? We wonder where are they when violence permeates in communities and districts across the country.

IS IT BECAUSE Sunday's (20 January 2019) violence at a children party along the Smythe Road in Old Road community was extended to the residence of Representative Yekeh Kolubah that they now ask for special security consideration for themselves and their families?

WHAT ASK; WHAT about the people they represent? Aren't their lives as very important as anyone else - whether that person is a lawmaker or an ordinary citizen?

WE RECOMMEND RATHER than seeking special security consideration for themselves and their immediate families, members of the First Branch of government should emphasize collective security for Liberia, because no official of government is safe or should feel secure when the lives of the people are at risk.

IN DISTRICT#13, MONTSERRADO County, a teenager girl was sexually abused and killed in December 2018, while in Nimba County several citizens have lost their lives, including an 11-year-old girl to violence.

LAWMAKERS HAVE REMAINED in their comfort zones, keeping a conspicuous silence on such issues.

WE BELIEVE STRONGLY collective security for surety is the best approach to maintaining the peace and keeping Liberia stable for both citizens and foreign residents, including investors.

AND LAWMAKERS ON Capitol Hill have been mandated by the people to make sure peace, tranquility and unity prevail across the country, not only for themselves and their immediate families, as they now plead.

The New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

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COMMENTARY

By Robert J. Shiller

Morality and Money Management

Following his recent death, Vanguard Group founder Jack Bogle was widely and generously eulogized - and justifiably so. But if everyone followed Bogle's investment strategy, market prices would turn into nonsense and would provide no direction to economic activity.

NEW HAVEN - The death on January 16 of Jack Bogle, the founder of the investment company Vanguard Group, was met with a slew of flattering obituaries. Of course, obituaries often praise their subjects. But Bogle's seemed more laudatory than usual. And I think there is a reason: Bogle was an unusually morally directed man.

Of course, we cannot judge his success by his personal wealth. When Bogle established Vanguard in 1975, he set it up as a nonprofit. The company has no outside shareholders; all profits are reflected in lower fees, not dividends.

By metrics other than founder wealth, the Vanguard Group is a huge success. It invests for 20 million people in 170 countries. It has \$4.9 trillion in assets under management. It may be the world's most significant investment company.

But this does not mean that we must agree with everything Bogle said, or malign others who are not nonprofit. His is not the only way to be moral.

Bogle's morality was rooted in his conviction that trying to beat the market is futile. This was reflected in his 2007 book *The Little Book of Common Sense Investing: The Only Way to Guarantee Your Fair Share of Stock Market Returns*. His investment strategy is "the only way," and the opening paragraph of the tenth-anniversary edition sums it up:

"Successful investing is all about common sense. As Warren Buffett, the Oracle of Omaha, has said, it is simple but it is not easy. Simple arithmetic suggests, and history confirms, that the winning strategy for investing in stocks is to own all of the nation's publicly held businesses at very low cost."

This means that one should simply invest in an index fund that represents the whole market and then call it a day. But it is a little odd to be quoting Buffett in support of such a strategy, given that the Oracle of Omaha owes his fame (and his moniker) entirely to his ability to outperform the market.

Bogle's statement is best interpreted as applying to his audience of individual retail investors. Because the market portfolio is the average investment for all investors, the average investor can do no better than the average for the market. But the excitement of the market causes people to lose sight of that. As Bogle puts it in his book: "The stock market is a giant distraction from the business of investing."

He is right about the distraction. People look for excitement, and the stock market is one game they can play. People will gamble anyway, if not in the stock market, then in a casino. On the other hand, it is no doubt better

overall if people learn lessons about business and real economic activity, rather than card-counting tricks. There may be rough rides for some, but the hurly burly of the stock market is also a sign of a vibrant economy.

Advising people simply to hold the market is advising them to free-ride on the wisdom of others who do not follow such a strategy. If everyone followed Bogle's advice, market prices would turn into nonsense and would provide no direction to economic activity.³

I remember exactly when I began to appreciate the complexity of the moral issues money management entails: October 8, 2009. I received a phone call from the eminent MIT economist Paul Samuelson, who had been my teacher when I was a graduate student in the early 1970s. He was 94 years old at the time, and two months later he died. I was so impressed by the call that I took notes on it in my diary.

Samuelson was responding to my recent publications advocating expanded insurance, futures, and options markets to mitigate the financial risks - for example, those related to housing prices and occupational incomes - that ordinary people face. He said that these markets could, if pitched to the general population, turn into "casino markets," with people using them to gamble, rather than to protect themselves.

He then brought up the example of Bogle, who "gave up a billion dollars for a concept," Samuelson said. "He could easily have cashed this in," but he didn't. "The miracle that was Vanguard came from Bogle's principles."

I thought he was right. In the long run, markets reward principled people. But there is still need for an expanded set of risk markets, because these markets can - and do - carry out useful functions, including risk management, incentivization, and orienting business.

The problem is that attention to these markets requires intelligent and hard-working people to help others in their investing. Theirs is not a zero-sum game, for they help direct resources to better uses. And these people must be paid. Even Vanguard, which now has a number of different index funds, hires investment managers and charges a management fee, albeit a low one.

Not every fund needs a low fee. We live in a world where constant and rapid change and innovation require more attention, and attention is costly. While many financial managers are at times unscrupulous, a higher management fee is not always a sign that something is wrong.

But Bogle is still a hero of mine, because he provided an honest product and was motivated by a sincere desire to help people. And he should be a hero to all, because he showed that markets eventually recognize integrity.

O-PED

By Gabriela Ramos
& Mario Pezzini

Data-Driven Gender Equality

PARIS - At the current rate of progress, it will take more than 200 years to achieve gender equality and female empowerment at work. In many countries, girls are still forced to marry young, which limits their access to education and future employment opportunities. In Niger, for example, in 2016, 76% of girls aged 15-19 were married, which partly explains why 73% of lower-secondary-school-age girls are out of school. Child labor is also common, and almost a third of the world's women believe that domestic violence is a justifiable punishment under certain circumstances, such as burning meals.

Legal frameworks enshrine such values. Today, ten countries still allow marital rape, and nine permit rapists to avoid punishment by marrying their victims. And, for many more women, such values inform social arrangements that deny them opportunities. Around the world, the absence of paid maternity leave, childcare facilities, or family-friendly job policies prevents women's participation in the formal economy. Even when women do manage to have a career, they still assume three-quarters of household responsibilities.

Clearly, a more equal, gender-inclusive world will require far-reaching change: in perceptions, attitudes, stereotypes, and laws. Promoting such change is justified not only on moral grounds, but also in economic terms. According to our estimates, if countries eliminated gender-based discrimination and granted women greater access to education and jobs, global GDP would increase by \$6 trillion over the next decade. But while the rationale for change may be strong, countries often struggle to develop gender-based policies rooted in solid data and evidence.

To address this gap, in 2009 the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) developed the Social Institutions and Gender Index with data for some 180 countries. Together with the SIGI Policy Simulator, which launched this year, governments can assess how inclusive their gender policies are, identify areas for reform, and evaluate the programs they implement.

The data have already yielded important insights. Consider Germany. Although the country ranks high on world gender-equality indexes, SIGI shows that it could enter the top ten with a relatively simple change: legally mandating equal pay for equal work. The absence of such a requirement costs Germany the equivalent of 1% of GDP, according to estimates calculated from the most recent OECD Economic Outlook.

In Chile, granting married women the same property rights as married men would increase total investment by 1%. In Vietnam, helping women access the same professional opportunities as men would increase labor-force participation by 1%.

In many countries, only mothers are entitled to parental leave. But this reinforces the perception that unpaid care work is a woman's job, which in turn skews the distribution of domestic duties. Women in Pakistan and India spend, on average, ten times longer on housework than men do, which means less time engaging in market-related activities, studying, or simply relaxing. Nor is this trend unique to South Asia.

So how can governments use SIGI to change laws and advance gender equality? The best way is to learn from the experiences of others. In South Africa, the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act of 1998, combined with the 2006 Civil Union Act, have effectively eliminated forced and child marriage. In Liberia, a law passed in 2015 entitles women to receive equal pay for equal work. In 2000, Ethiopia repealed language that gave only men the right to administer family assets. In 2015, Bulgaria eliminated male-only professions. And in 2002, Sweden sought to help balance childcare responsibilities between parents by increasing the "father's quota" in the parental leave law from one month to two.

Data and planning made these initiatives possible, and the OECD's new datasets are designed to help other countries follow suit. Armed with information, leaders can turn rhetoric about gender equality and empowerment into meaningful action. Ultimately, such action will help to create environments of equality for both women and men, and to build sustainable, respectful, and peaceful societies for all of us. We now have the data to help women fulfill their potential - and to see what happens to all of us when we fail to do so.

OPINION

By Zuneid Yousuf

An African Opportunity for Post-Brexit Britain

LUSAKA - The World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos has long been the political and business world's equivalent of the Vanity Fair Oscar party: by invitation only, it is a place to be seen. This year, however, it should also be a place for the world - and especially a Brexit-bound United Kingdom - to reconsider its approach to Africa.

Having faced growing criticism for the event's perceived elitism in the last few years, the WEF has been trying to revitalize Davos as a jumping-off point for innovation and action for the common good. This year's theme is "Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution" - the phrase "Fourth Industrial Revolution" may conjure images of bustling Victorian factories and steam trains chugging through the English countryside, but actually describes the technology-driven, globalization-fueled economic revolution taking place today.

Managing this transformation will be challenging for everyone, but there is no doubt that a UK set to depart from the European Union faces a particularly high degree of uncertainty. As a post-Brexit Britain seeks its place in the world, focusing on Africa would hold considerable promise.

For many Africans, globalization represents opportunity, entrepreneurship, and aspiration. Indeed, globalization is what enabled me to transform a modest Zambian family business into a diverse multinational company - the MBI Group - that is active across three continents in the mining, energy, agriculture, fast-moving consumer goods, and soft-drink industries.

Of course, I am hardly alone. Globalization is part of why, last year, six of the world's ten fastest-growing economies were in Sub-Saharan Africa. The International Monetary Fund expects this region's GDP growth to average 3.6% in 2019-20.

Many African countries' economies have long relied on significant natural-resource endowments, along with productive agriculture. Zambia, for example, is the continent's second-largest producer of copper - a commodity used in many tech products in the UK and in growth markets around the world. In 2018, Zambia mined over 800,000 tons of copper. As energy infrastructure is improved, that figure could soon reach one million tons per year.

Now, African countries are increasingly taking advantage of their strengths - commodities and agriculture - to spur the development of broader business sectors, diversify agriculture, and attract foreign direct investment. African countries are also doing better at leveraging the needs and resources of private local business, the public sector, multilateral institutions, and multinational corporations to secure the huge volumes of funding required to finance investment in roads, ports, communications, and other infrastructure projects.

Thanks to these efforts, Zambia and other African countries have been rising in the ranks of the World Bank's Doing Business report. This is good news for the rest of the world, which can now engage economically with Africa more easily and effectively than ever. That is why many in Davos will probably be looking to Africa as a key component of their economic strategies in the years ahead.

British leaders should be among them. Last August, Prime Minister Theresa May visited Sub-Saharan Africa - the first such visit by a UK leader in five years - where she pledged that her country would become Africa's biggest foreign investor within four years. More recently, the UK appointed new trade envoys to some African countries in order to help British business seize trade and investment opportunities on the continent.

Despite these efforts, however, the UK still lags behind other countries - notably China - that pursue more aggressively what they view as key strategic economic alliances in Africa. More must be done to ensure that British business does not miss out.

Davos is a good place to start. British representatives should take time between meetings with their counterparts from traditional powers like Germany and the United States to speak with African business leaders and politicians. Such conversations should continue over the next nine weeks, as the UK approaches the deadline for Brexit.

For years, African leaders have been sending the same message at Davos: Africa is open for business. Now would be an ideal moment for the UK to heed that message.

LIBERIANS DEBATE

With Sally H. Gaye Cell#: 0886726282 Email:sh0770291004@gmail.com



President George Manneh Weah observed his first year in office here on Tuesday, 22 January with a thanksgiving service at the Isaac Winker's Global Dominion Christian Fellowship Central Church along Tubman Boulevard near St. Joseph's Catholic Hospital Junction outside Monrovia. One year on, the New Dawn asks some Liberians how they rate the Weah government one year in office.



Michael Tipayson

“Fast forward, in the first five months, we were hit by inflation, our local currency depreciated in value because of the US Dollar. We were also informed that the government was still planning and developing in theory its working document called [Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development], and the President was still appealing to our consciences to give him time, which some of us felt was reasonable enough to consider. As

a result of the myth that the country was broke, Articles 37 & 39 of the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia were violated because the government said there was no money to conduct the senatorial by-elections in Montserrado and Bong Counties respectively, and the conduct of national census within the legal timeframe. The government negotiated and signed into law loan agreement with Elton and Ebomah in the sum of \$USD1 billion without proper background check about the legitimacy of those bogus and 419 companies. To our dismay, everything about those companies turned out to be fake. President Weah then promised the reduction in the price of our staple food, rice and other commodities, yet the prices skyrocketed. The President promised to reduce his benefit by 25% and also challenged the legislature to follow, yet the budget of the President for his first fiscal year 2018/2019 surpassed that of his predecessor. We didn't hear anything from the Legislature. Salary disparity remains a huge challenge for the hard working civil servants whose salaries cannot commensurate with the high cost of living. Many other things and promises were made and yet they remain dreams.”



Umaru Sesay

“One year on and the nation started the celebration of this great milestone with a Thanksgiving and Prayer Service. In his first year in office, President Weah has done so much with so little that he is set to go down in history and be forever remembered as Liberia's "human and infrastructure development President". If knowledge is power, learning is superpower. President Weah has learned so much on the job, that in just one year, it looks like he has been on the job as President forever. All I hope to see in the years to come is more development and roads to make our lives better and keep the peace.”

Soon Prestige Noring

“My view on President Weah in his first year has been both a sham and scam meant to delude the mass of impoverished people. The latest being the purported reduction in salary and benefits of the ministerial clique, but the numbers in the budget reveal the wage bill increased to US\$ 310 million. Spending more money on the bosses at the top of the state bureaucracy which serves as the hanger on of foreign monopoly capital has adverse consequences, especially reduction on spending in social programs such as healthcare, infrastructure, education, among others that are key to moving the needle on poverty. The government's wage bill which was US\$297million in the 2017/2018 fiscal budget experienced a sudden jump to US\$ 310million in the 2018/2019 fiscal budget. This is a whopping 13million increment and considering the fact there was no increment in the salary and benefits of civil servants, teachers and health workers, the GOL payroll was not only paddled with partisan employees, salary and benefits of those who call the shots were increased.”



Amos Tarr

“Congratulations, President Weah on the completion of your first year in office. You inherited an economically challenged country. But in the interest of the masses, you've demonstrated more desire and energy to positively transform Liberia through the implementation of tangible Pro-Poor initiatives. Your first year achievements are clearly show in communities, schools, universities & community colleges, hospitals and health centers, etc. Let God bless and give you more wisdom. God bless Liberia. Please stay focused, you are appreciated by well-meaning Liberians for the development process, so far. We hope to see more in the years to come as we move Liberia [forward]”



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Sando Johnson risks lawsuit

By Winston W. Parley

Bomi County Senator Sando Johnson risks being sued for damages by businessman James Cooper in the aftermath of a Criminal Court “A” ruling that overturned a decision by a magisterial court which initially found Cooper guilty and sentenced him to a year in prison.

The rubber farm manager says in an interview with journalists Wednesday, 23 January at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia that if his legal team advises him to sue Sen. Johnson, he will seek legal redress.

“Exactly ..., if mine legal team comes back and says ... we should seek legal redress, that’s the work, that’s what we’ll do,” Mr. Cooper says in the interview.

In 2018 Sen. Johnson filed a legal action against Cooper for making public accusation on the Costa Show that the lawmaker allegedly solicited US\$1.4m as precondition to



guarantee the farmer’s request for a US\$7.2 million loan from the Rubber Stimulus Fund.

Cooper was tried on charges of menacing and criminal malevolence, with claims that he issued threats on Sen.

Johnson and his family’s life via several text messages.

At the end of hearing at the Monrovia City Court, Stipendiary Magistrate Kennedy Peabody found Mr. Cooper guilty and sentenced him to serve a prison term of

one year.

But that decision was overturned by Criminal Court “A” Judge Roosevelt Z. Willie on Monday, 21 January, setting the accused free.

Mr. Cooper laments that what Sen. Johnson and all those that worked along with him did has damaged his (Cooper’s) character and the image of his company.

He says he has asked his legal team to look at the matter and give options in terms of way forward.

According to Mr. Cooper, the impact this matter has on his rubber factory is tremendous, but he is focused now on building his reputation for his local and international partners.

He says his factory is closed down, putting up to 150 people, each of whom is supposed to feed eight to ten persons out of work.

Cooper concludes that they are trying to reopen the factory to begin processes to manufacture tyres in Liberia.

IDAY International opens office here

By Lewis S. Teh

The International Day of the African Youth (IDAY), a non-government and non-profitable organization based in Belgium has opened its office here to provide education for destitute kids in Liberia.

IDAY International founder and CEO Jean Jacques Schull told an interview Wednesday, 23 January that he is proud to come to Liberia to create a coalition where Liberia is about to be a member with five organizations.

Speaking at a one - day workshop on international regulation and program policies of IDAY at the ECOWAS Women Office on 11th Street, Sinkor, Mr. Shull says they promote quality education for children and youth.

He says the training was aimed at giving participants the opportunity to exchange ideas on the working of IDAY in Liberia.

He recalls that IDAY International was created in 2008 upon the request for multiple African civil societies, saying their idea is to regroup into international network in order to act together.

IDAY is a network of African civil society organizations that come together in order to promote the quality of basic education for all.

They are entering various countries to have a constructive dialogue with the governments on the

importance of children and youth education.

Mr. Schull indicates that IDAY International presence is felt in Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, DR Congo, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Ghana, Conakry and Kenya.

According to him, the group also has presence in Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia and Liberia where its new office was opened Wednesday.

He says one of IDAY’s programs is building schools and medical corps, among others.

He notes that his visit to Liberia is to meet IDAY Liberia coalition and to make sure that they are on the same path.

He adds that IDAY International mission is to get every child in school and to provide a proper and basic education for all.

Meanwhile, IDAY Liberia Coalition CEO Ebenezer S. Thomas says the organization is basically focused on children and youth education.

He says since IDAY Liberia was recognized by IDAY International in October 2018, this is the first official visit of the founder to the Liberian coalition.

“His mission here is to train us on IDAY International policy and internal regulation including the opening of Liberia office,” Thomas concludes.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

Darkness takes over Phebe Hospital --As Doctors and Nurses use Chinese light to treat patients

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

Report emerging from Bong County says the only referral hospital in the county, the Phebe Hospital in Suakoko District is currently in darkness due to lack of fuel.

Making the disclosure in an interview with this paper on 22 January at the health facility, Phebe Hospital Administrator Mr. Kerson Saykor says fuel used to operate the hospital has finished.

According to him, the hospital is not capacitated to get additional fuel due to limited funding in the

hospital’s budget.

Mr. Saykor explains that the hospital currently has hundred gallons of fuel for operations. He says this situation compels the hospital to put its generator on only when there is an emergency case.

The Phebe Administrator terms the situation as serious impediment to the smooth operation of the only referral hospital in the central region.

He explains that nurses and doctors assigned at the hospital are currently using Chinese lights to treat patients at the entity.

Concerning other

challenges, Mr. Saykor cites the lack of ambulance as serious setback to the hospital.

According to Mr. Saykor, the two ambulances at the hospital are down and need repairs.

He discloses that some of the vehicles have problems that will cost a little over US\$3,000.00 to repair them.

Mr. Saykor calls on Bong County Legislative Caucus, well-meaning citizens and the government to quickly intervene into the situation to save the lives of patients that are on hospital beds in the county.

He says if the hospital must continue to carry on its normal operations, government needs to quickly come to their aid.

“Imagine if someone is using Chinese light to carry on operation, you know what happens? The person’s life can’t be saved,” Mr. Saykor explains.

Meanwhile, the Bong County Health Team has promised to make quick intervention in the situation.

The Health Team through its Chief Administrator Jonah N. Tokpah states that they are currently engaging the Liberian government through the Ministry of Health to speedily provide fuel for the Hospital.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



#Stop prioritizing foreign businesses over Liberian businesses!#

GOBet231 workers cry for salaries

By Ben P. Wesee

This paper is receiving complaints from some employees of newly established sports betting company GoBet231, located at Palm Spring Hotel Resort in Congo Town, outside Monrovia of unpaid salaries.

The employees, who beg not to be identified, have complained of working without pay from the management for the past three months.

They allege that they have only survived on little stipends in the past months, creating hardship for them and their families.

According to the employees, they were hired by the Management of GoBet231 and allegedly promised to receive salary at the end of every month.

However, they narrate that after working for over three months, including the preparation period for the opening of the betting outlets, management has allegedly only given them little stipends with promises upon promises to pay salaries.

The aggrieved employees lament that they are going through severe hardship as a result of the company's alleged failure to pay salaries



owed them.

GoBet231 is owned and operated by Palm Springs Resort in Congo Town, an entity that itself is said to be besieged with workers publicly demonstrating in demand for salaries, spanning several months.

According to some workers of GoBet231, they are victims of empty promises as are their counterparts at the Palm Spring Hotel where they have worked for so many months without pay from

management.

The workers report that the lack of their salary payment so early in the company's operations has them worried as to the financial viability of the entity, wondering whether the company will be able to pay legitimate winners when customers play.

It may be recalled that several weeks ago, concern were raised from various quarters in society regarding what appeared to be series of illegal activities occurring at

the National Lottery Authority regarding the issuance of sport betting licenses to entities without first conducting due diligence and verifying their financial abilities.

GoBet231 allegedly received sports betting license to operate in Liberia without immediately paying into government revenue required license fees.

Instead, it was alleged that the National Lottery Authority and GoBet231 reached an understanding to grant the license in advance while payment were to done on a stipulated basis.

There has been growing calls for Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor to urgently investigate what is allegedly happening at the Lottery Authority because she has oversight.

For past three days this paper has been making contacts with GoBet231 through phone calls and going to the company's office from 21 January to 23 January, but the company has failed to respond so far.

On Monday, 21 January, our reporter was told to check back the next day - Tuesday, 22 January because administration had allegedly

gone out of the office by then.

Again on Tuesday, 22 January, our reporter visited GoBet231 head office when some employees, including a Nigerian national, who claims to be the Operation Director, began making mockery of our reporter.

The Nigerian later introduced our reporter to the owner of the entity. However, a man who our reporter encountered refused to mention his name, but issued threats that he would sue lot of media institutions for bad mouthing his company.

The unidentified man later referred our reporter to company Spokesman Woods Nyonton, though the spokesperson would tell our reporter to return at 7pm for the company's side of the story on Tuesday.

Yet the company failed to give its response, and instead indicated that it would have responded on Wednesday in the morning.

Throughout Wednesday, the company did not give its response to this paper in spite of efforts made by our reporter ranging from phone calls to going to the company's office to hear their side.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Drugs, fuel shortage hit C. H. Rennie Hospital

By Ramsey N. Singbeh, Jr in Margibi

The Charles Henry Rennie Hospital in Kakata, Margibi County has been hit by serious drug shortage and lack of electricity.

A highly placed source, who disclosed this to the New Dawn on Tuesday, 22 January said the situation has persisted for about two months.

According to the source, due to fuel shortage,

authorities of the hospital have reduced power supply from 24 hours to 12 hours.

Electricity comes around 9:30 or 10:00 in the morning and goes off by 3pm, while at night it comes by 7:30 pm and goes off by 3:00 A.M. daily.

"It's really a serious problem for us especially, we as care givers; this situation makes more unfriendliness between us and the patients and their caregivers because

we can't operate in darkness. It is just difficult for us to operate in darkness. Even when it comes to emergency, patients coming and we have to do lab and current [power] is not on, you have to start running around to just put current on for emergency situation; it becomes a problem for us."

The source notes that initially, the Partnership on Research and Ebola Virus in Liberia or PREVAIL was providing the hospital electricity for 12hrs, but discontinued as of January 1, 2019, on grounds that the institution is overburdened and its donors could no longer help the C.H. Rennie Hospital.

Meanwhile, the hospital is also faced with drug shortage with patients being asked to purchase drugs from private drug stores following prescription.

The Government of Liberia in the 2018/2019 national budget allocated US\$200,000 for the hospital, but it is not clear whether the amount is being disbursed to hospital authorities.

C.H. Rennie provides

services to thousands of Liberians from Margibi, Gbarpolu, Bong, Grand Bassa and Montserrado counties and the current situation is impeding its smooth operation.

Hospital Administrator, Mulbah Saywala could neither confirm nor deny situations at the hospital, but promised to speak to the media soon.

However, the Clinical Communication Manager of PREVAIL, Journalist Hassan Kaiwu, admits that the hospital was disconnected because an agreement signed between the two entities ended in December, 2018.

Hassan explains that funds PREVAIL receives are intended for research purposes and not for clinical care.

He points out that in 2016 when PREVAIL started operation at Du-port Road in Paynesville and C.H. Rennie Hospital in Kakata, respectively, it entered into an agreement with the Managements of both institutions to provide electricity up to 2018 December, and C.H. Rennie was particularly to provide 30 percent contribution to the electricity supply, but it failed to live up to said commitment.

He further narrates six months prior to the decision, PREVAIL executives informed the hospital management verbally time was running out followed by written communication, officially calling on the management to get prepare to shoulder the burden.--*Editing by Jonathan Browne*



#To empower Liberians, enforce the exclusive Liberians business act. #

Français

L'an un du président Weah

Le 22 janvier 2018 à 16h30, le pays tout entier avait retenu son souffle, le président George Manneh Weah prêtait serment en tant que le 24e président élu de la république du Libéria. Il s'agissait de la première transition démocratique du Libéria en 72 ans.

Selon les résultats officiels du second tour de l'élection présidentielle, qui s'est déroulé le 26 décembre 2017, tels que publiés par la Commission des élections nationales, M. Weah avait reçu 61,5% des suffrages exprimés contre 38,5% pour le vice-président Joseph Nyumah Boakai (38,5%). George Weah fut déclaré vainqueur le 28 décembre 2017 par la Commission électorale nationale.

Quelques semaines plus tard, le 22 janvier 2018, le pays tout entier et des inviteurs venus de tout horizon, y compris des chefs d'Etat, ont convergé au stade Samuel K. Doe de Paynesville pour assister à la cérémonie d'investiture de l'ancien footballeur. C'était un événement historique, c'était

il y a un an. Le Président Weah a officiellement célébré l'an un de son premier mandat à la tête du pays le mardi 22 janvier 2019. Des citoyens se pressaient dans les rues de Monrovia pour exprimer leurs encouragements et célébrer avec le président les 12 premiers mois de son mandat.

L'ambiance était festive, les enfants, essayant de

s'approcher du président pour le toucher ou simplement l'embrasser. Ils ont donné du fil à retordre aux éléments de la garde présidentielle lors du service d'action de grâce qui avait lieu dans la cathédrale nouvellement construite de l'église centrale de la Dominion Christian Fellowship en bordure de la route Tubman Boulevard.

Un an après donc, ce

quotidien aimerait faire le bilan du président.

Le président Weah a dirigé ambitieusement le processus de construction de 400 kilomètres de routes à travers le Libéria, notamment Fish Town / Harper Road, Greenville / Barclayville, Buchanan / Cestos, Rivercess / Sinoe et Ganta / Sanniquille et Zwedru / Ganta, respectivement.

Les autres routes en construction comprennent les autoroutes Gbarnga / Voinjama, l'évêque Michael Francis et la route de Chugbor. La route Doe Community - Clara Town est terminée, ainsi que la route Rehab Community, Jamaica Road vers Logan Town Broad Street sur Bushrod Island, les rues de Central Gbarnga, la Fair Ground Road à Buchanan, le comté de Grand Bassa, la Tusa Field Community Road et Johnsonville - et pipeline community Road.

Le président Weah ne s'intéresse pas qu'aux routes, il a également investi des ressources dans le projet de défense côtière à New Kru Town, sauvant ainsi le lycée D. Tweh Memorial et d'autres communautés de l'érosion maritime meurtrière. La défense côtière est la première de son genre depuis la fondation du Libéria. Le président a aussi initié le projet de construction d'un hôpital militaire.

Selon des responsables du ministère de la Défense nationale, le projet ambitieux, le premier de l'histoire du Libéria, est sur le point d'être achevé. Le président accélère également la construction du complexe ministériel situé à Congo Town, à Monrovia. Le projet a été lancé par Madame Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, prédécesseur du Président Weah.

Le gouvernement dirigé par la Coalition pour le changement démocratique a réorganisé le contrat concernant le projet de construction d'un échangeur afin de réduire les embouteillages sur la route qui relie Congo Town et Center Monrovia.

En tant que père de la nation, le président Weah est préoccupé par la question de l'analphabétisme, il a ainsi annoncé la gratuité de l'enseignement universitaire. Cela signifie que tous les enfants libériens peuvent désormais s'inscrire dans n'importe quel établissement d'enseignement supérieur

appartenant à l'Etat sans payer un centime. La dynamique qui consiste à s'efforcer pour éclairer l'avenir de la jeune génération du pays pour lui permettre d'être au même niveau d'information avec ses pairs à l'échelle mondiale est maintenant en cours.

Et comme si cela ne suffisait pas, l'ancien meilleur footballeur africain, européen et mondial a décidé d'offrir des bourses d'études à 18 médecins pour leur permettre de suivre une formation spécialisée dans le secteur de la santé dans des pays étrangers. Le gouvernement dirigé par la Coalition pour le Changement Démocratique a également augmenté les salaires des travailleurs de la santé, plaçant le secteur de la santé au rang des fonctionnaires les mieux rémunérés, pour le moment.

Pour encourager les élèves du secondaire, le président Weah, lui-même titulaire d'une maîtrise, a décidé de payer les frais d'examen des élèves de la 12e année et accordé des bourses à certains pour aller faire des études en Chine par exemple.

Sur le plan économique, l'administration Weah a octroyé un prêt de plus de 2 millions de dollars à la Banque libérienne pour le développement et l'investissement (LBDI) en faveur des petites et moyennes entreprises.

Le président maintient une tolérance zéro en matière de corruption, ce qui lui a fourni une base solide dans la lutte contre la corruption avec l'arrestation récente d'un directeur en exercice pour corruption. Actuellement, l'ancien directeur de la National Housing Authority est confronté à une bataille juridique pour avoir sollicité des pots-de-vin.

Le Président Weah mène également une bataille acharnée contre les stupéfiants et les substances dangereuses pour la jeunesse du Libéria. Son gouvernement a procédé à plusieurs arrestations d'utilisateurs et de saisies de substances en vue de leur destruction ultérieure.

N'ayant pas oublié ses débuts modestes avant de passer à la conquête du monde par le sport, le président Weah a personnellement refait le toit des maisons des habitants de Gebriatal, Clara Town, érigé des lampadaires à Duala à St. Paul Bridge et construit la route Ganta-Yekepa.



Guinée : les députés de l'opposition hésitent à siéger à l'Assemblée

Les discussions se poursuivent au sein de l'opposition en Guinée. Faut-il siéger ou non à l'Assemblée ? Cette question suscite beaucoup de débats.

Les députés de l'opposition sont partagés entre ceux qui souhaitent conserver une capacité d'action parlementaire et ceux qui considèrent qu'en

siégeant à l'Assemblée, ils cautionnent ce report électoral, voire même qu'ils pourraient avoir du mal à s'opposer à d'éventuels autres reports de scrutins dans les mois ou années à venir.

Pour l'instant, les discussions sont toujours en cours au sein du principal parti d'opposition, l'Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG), comme l'explique son président, Cellou Dalein Diallo. « La prolongation du mandat du président n'est pas liée à cela, mais ceci dit c'est un élément qu'il faut prendre en considération ».

Les députés de l'opposition se trouvent face à un choix difficile. Selon l'un des responsables de l'Union des forces républicaines (UFR), le parti au pouvoir (le RPG, le Rassemblement du peuple de Guinée) dispose d'une majorité suffisante pour fonctionner sans l'opposition. Boycoter reviendrait donc à laisser les mains libres au parti présidentiel.

« Je préfère qu'il y ait un vide institutionnel »

Ce n'est pas l'avis du député Ousmane Kaba du Parti des démocrates pour l'espoir (Pades),

qui a déjà pris sa décision : « Si on continue comme ça, je suis certain que les élections législatives vont être tenues au-delà de 2020, sans même parler des présidentielles qui sont programmées pour 2020. Je préfère qu'il y ait un vide institutionnel. C'est une pression sur le gouvernement et la Céni [Commission électorale nationale indépendante] d'organiser au plus tôt les élections ».

Enfin, du côté de l'Union pour le progrès de la Guinée (UPG), allié de la majorité lors des dernières législatives, on préfère attendre encore un peu. Le premier conseiller du parti explique qu'une décision sera prise lors du congrès de mars prochain.



Français

Salubrité : le grand défi de la capitale Monrovia

Le maire de la ville de Monrovia, Jefferson T. Kojjee, a lui-même admis que les ordures ménagères ont englouti la capitale et les communautés environnantes, ce, à cause de l'incapacité de la Monrovia City Corporation de ramasser ces ordures ménagères.

Devant cette situation beaucoup déplorable, le maire Kojjee a affirmé que la mairie seule ne peut pas tout faire.

La sortie de Kojjee a eu lieu ce mardi 22 janvier lors d'un échange avec le public et la presse. Les discussions ont été retransmises en direct par la chaîne de télévision Monrovia City Corporation Television (MCC TV).

« Avec toutes les critiques selon lesquelles les ordures ont englouti cette ville, je dis oui, c'est vrai que la saleté a pris le dessus, et c'est parce que nous, au sein de cette mairie, nous sommes mis au défi. Mais pour une fois, la question de la propreté de cette ville ne doit pas reposer uniquement sur les épaules de la MCC, il doit plutôt s'agir d'un effort collectif », a-t-il dit.

Selon lui, la MCC est en train d'adopter une approche holistique pour remédier à la situation. Il a affirmé que « c'est pourquoi nous appelons nos partenaires et les donateurs à apporter leur aide pour la logistique et le soutien nécessaire pour tenir nos promesses de rendre cette ville propre. »

Le maire a ajouté que si les gens ne font que critiquer la municipalité à cause des ordures qui jonchent les rues de Monrovia sans faire preuve de patriotisme, alors cela est regrettable. Selon lui, l'un des objectifs de la démarche de la mairie était de faire en sorte que chaque citoyen soit impliqué dans l'entretien de la ville en prenant les mesures nécessaires premièrement dans leurs différentes communautés.

La capitale libérienne Monrovia et ses villes environnantes sont submergées par des tacs d'ordures, ce qui crée un risque grave de pollution de l'environnement et de déclenchement d'une épidémie. C'est donc en réalité une situation dangereuse pour les habitants, en particulier les enfants, ce, en dépit de la campagne très médiatisée de « Ville verte » du maire Jefferson Kojjee.

Impuissants devant cette situation d'insalubrité, les habitants de la capitale ont recours à la combustion de déchets non collectés, vu l'incapacité de la mairie de

Monrovia, qui est dirigée par le maire de Kojjee, à s'acquitter de son obligation, c'est-à-dire ramasser les ordures ménagères. Ça fait plusieurs mois que cette situation perdure.

Lors de sa tournée de la ville de Monrovia et ses environs, le reporter du quotidien New Dawn a dit avoir vu des montagnes d'ordures, des essaims de mouches et de cafards et des rongeurs dans presque tous les quartiers de la capitale, devant des restaurants et dans les marchés.

Le marché de Nancy B. Doe à Sinkor, qui accueille des milliers de commerçants et leurs enfants qui fréquentent l'école du marché, l'école publique de Slipway, West Point, Randall Street, Water Front et d'autres endroits font face à un grave danger de santé publique. On constate d'épaisses fumées échapper de certaines décharges. Certains habitants ont mis le feu à ces dépotoirs, en violations flagrante des mesures de l'agence de l'Environnement (EPA) qui avait interdit la calcination des ordures ménagères.

Le maire Kojjee a annoncé cependant que la MCC a entamé

un exercice de recensement à Monrovia dans le but de localiser et de suivre les déchets dans la ville ».

« Comme je l'ai dit il y a quelques jours lors de ma première conférence de presse, la numérotation des habitations est un projet qui vise à inciter les habitants à adopter une approche de gestion durable des déchets et à fournir une solution adéquate dans les foyers et dans les marchés. »

Selon lui, l'exercice permettra à la MCC de disposer de données complètes sur les ménages et les structures situées dans la ville et l'aidera à calculer un montant minimum à payer pour le ramassage des ordures. « Le Libéria est le seul pays au monde où nous ne payons pas pour les déchets. Vous prenez les déchets et vous les déposez sur le goudron. Nous vous disons que lorsque nous aurons les données, nous pourrions avoir une compréhension complète, un calcul correct du nombre de structures dans les différents quartiers. Sur la base donc des données, nous serons informés pour prendre une décision éclairée. Mais on demandera aux gens de payer pour leurs déchets », a-t-il révélé.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Robert J. Shiller

Moralité et gestion financière

NEW HAVEN - La mort, le 16 janvier, de Jack Bogle, fondateur de la société d'investissement Vanguard Group, a généré un grand nombre de notices nécrologiques flatteuses. Bien sûr, les nécrologies font souvent l'éloge de leurs sujets. Mais celles concernant Bogle semblaient plus dithyrambiques que d'habitude. Et je pense qu'il y a une raison: Bogle était un homme exceptionnellement dirigé par la morale.

Bien sûr, nous ne pouvons pas évaluer son succès à l'aune de sa fortune personnelle. Lorsque Bogle créa Vanguard en 1975, il choisit la forme d'une société à but non lucratif. La société n'a pas d'actionnaire externes; tous les bénéfices se traduisent par des frais moins élevés et non des dividendes.

Si on en juge par d'autres critères que la richesse de son fondateur, le Vanguard Group est un énorme succès. Il investit pour le compte de 20 millions de personnes dans 170 pays. Il gère 4,9 billions de dollars d'actifs. Elle est sans doute l'une des entreprises d'investissement les plus importantes du monde.

Mais cela ne signifie pas que nous devons être d'accord avec tout ce qu'a dit Bogle, ni calomnier les autres fonds d'investissement qui ne sont pas à but non lucratif. Son modèle n'est pas la seule façon d'être moral.

La moralité de Bogle était enracinée dans sa conviction que tenter de battre le marché est futile. Cela se reflète dans son livre de 2007 *The Little Book of Common Sense Investing: The Only Way to Guarantee Your Fair Share of Stock Market Returns*. Sa stratégie d'investissement est « la seule façon » et le paragraphe d'ouverture de l'édition du dixième anniversaire le résume bien:

« Investir avec succès n'est qu'une question de bons sens. Comme Warren Buffett, l'Oracle d'Omaha, l'a dit, c'est simple mais pas facile. Les simples règles de l'arithmétique suggèrent, et l'histoire confirme, que la stratégie gagnante pour investir dans des actions est de posséder toutes les entreprises cotées en bourse du pays à très faible coût ».

Cela signifie que l'on devrait tout simplement investir dans un fonds indicel qui représente l'ensemble du marché, puis en rester là. Cependant, il est un peu étrange de citer Buffett à l'appui d'une telle stratégie, étant donné que l'Oracle d'Omaha doit sa renommée (et son surnom) uniquement à sa capacité à battre le marché.

La meilleure manière d'interpréter la déclaration de Bogle est de considérer qu'elle s'adresse à son auditoire de petits investisseurs individuels. Etant donné que le portefeuille de marché constitue l'investissement moyen pour tous les investisseurs, l'investisseur moyen ne peut pas faire mieux que la moyenne du marché. Or, l'excitation du marché pousse les gens à perdre ce principe de vue. Comme Bogle l'écrit dans son livre: « Le marché boursier est une énorme distraction de la tâche d'investissement. »

Il a raison à propos de la distraction. Les gens recherchent l'excitation, et le marché boursier est un jeu auquel ils peuvent jouer. Les gens vont parier de toute façon, soit sur le marché boursier, soit dans un casino. D'autre part, il ne fait aucun

doute qu'il est préférable dans l'ensemble que les gens apprennent des leçons sur les affaires et l'activité économique réelle, plutôt sur des trucs de comptage de cartes. L'expérience sera peut-être douloureuse pour certains, mais le tumulte du marché boursier est aussi un signe d'une économie dynamique.

Conseiller aux gens de se contenter de détenir le marché revient à leur conseiller de profiter des connaissances des autres personnes qui ne suivent pas une telle stratégie. Si tout le monde suivait les conseils de Bogle, les prix du marché se transformeraient en un non-sens et ne donneraient aucune direction à l'activité économique.

Je me souviens exactement quand j'ai commencé à apprécier la complexité des questions morales impliquées par la gestion financière: le 8 octobre 2009. Ce jour-là, je reçus un appel téléphonique de l'éminent économiste du MIT Paul Samuelson, qui avait été mon professeur alors que j'étais doctorant au début des années 1970. Il était âgé de 94 ans à l'époque et il est mort deux mois plus tard. J'ai été tellement impressionné par l'appel que je l'ai consigné dans mon journal.

Samuelson répondait à mes publications récentes, préconisant un élargissement des marchés d'assurance, des opérations à terme et des options pour atténuer les risques financiers - par exemple, ceux liés aux prix des logements et aux revenus professionnels - auxquels les gens ordinaires sont confrontés. Il me dit que ces marchés pourraient, en cas de promotion auprès du grand public, se transformer en « marchés casino », utilisés par les gens pour prendre des risques au lieu de se protéger.

Il évoqua ensuite l'exemple de Bogle, qui « a renoncé à un milliard de dollars pour un concept », dit Samuelson. « Il aurait facilement pu encaisser cet argent », mais il ne l'a pas fait. « Le miracle qu'était Vanguard provenait des principes de Bogle. »

Je pensai qu'il avait raison. À long terme, les marchés récompensent les gens qui ont des principes. Mais il y a malgré tout besoin d'un ensemble élargi de marchés du risque, parce que ces marchés peuvent exercer - et exercent - des fonctions utiles, y compris la gestion des risques, la transmission d'incitations et l'orientation des affaires.

Le problème est que l'attention sur ces marchés exige que des gens intelligents travaillent dur pour aider les autres à investir efficacement. Leur action n'est pas un jeu à somme nulle, car ils aident à diriger les ressources vers de meilleures utilisations. Et ces gens doivent être payés. Même Vanguard, qui détient maintenant de nombreux fonds indicels, embauche des gestionnaires de placements et facture des frais de gestion, quoique limités.

Tous les fonds ne doivent pas nécessairement demander des frais modiques. Nous vivons dans un monde où l'innovation et les changements constants et rapides nécessitent plus d'attention, et l'attention est coûteuse. Bien que de nombreux gestionnaires financiers soient parfois peu scrupuleux, des frais de gestion plus élevés ne sont pas toujours un signe que quelque chose ne va pas.

Mais Bogle reste un de mes héros, parce qu'il a fourni un produit honnête et a été motivé par un désir sincère d'aider les gens. D'ailleurs, il devrait être un héros pour tous, parce qu'il a montré que les marchés finissent par reconnaître l'intégrité.



MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
 REQUEST for EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
 FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES
 (REPAIR OF GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA E-BILLBOARD)
 (RFP No. MFD/PCBS/001/18-19)



1. The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning anticipates funds from the Government of Liberia National Budget for Fiscal Year 2018-2019 and intends to apply part of it to eligible payments under the contract Repairs of Government of Liberia E-Billboard (RFP No. MFD/PCBS/001/18-19)

2. Background:

In 2014, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFD/PCBS), through USAID GEMS hired the services of an Italian Firm (Tecno Vision) to erect a digital billboard to be used for the Government of Liberia Open Budget Initiative. The intent of the billboard was to create public awareness of the Government of Liberia commitment for increased efficiency, accountability, and economic development. It gives detailed information on budget allocation across spending entities, developmental projects spanning across all sectors, revenue collection and how it is expensed. The billboard has for the past years stopped working, the CPU that connects the monitoring displayed is no longer working. The lighting of the billboard has some technical problem as it doesn't send light to the entire screen. The technology used is "Tecno Vision".

The E-billboard Repairs will scale to support the display of detail information on budget allocation across spending entities, developmental projects spanning across all sectors, revenue collection, expenditure reports, etc. The e-billboard will display other governmental activities that are to come in the near future. This process is geared toward identifying a qualified vendor that would repair the e-billboard.

Firms with the requisite qualification can provide a complete proposal to successfully implement this project. MFD/PCBS is seeking a qualify consultant firm with the requisite experience to perform this task as indicated in the Terms of Reference (TOR) below.

3. The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning now invites Expression of Interests (EOI) from eligible registered ICT Consultant firm for this service.

4. The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality Cost Based Selection (QCBS) consultancy selection method procedures enshrined in the 2010 Public Procurement & Concessions Act (PPCA) of Liberia.

5. The selected consultant firm shall perform the consultancy services for the execution of the project;

6. Scope of Work:

This assignment seeks a competent firm to fulfill set requirements that the MFD/PCBS has identified as it relates to the E-billboard. Namely, the conducting of assessment, cataloging the issues, bringing back online the Government of Liberia E-billboard and training of ICT staff to take over the management of the e-billboard.

7. Qualification Requirements:

- Show proof of experience in providing consultant service for similar projects in the last ten years. (list project title, project cost, project location(addresses, emails and phone numbers-minimum Three clients);
 - Conduct an assessment on the E-billboard to enable the consultant presents a Detailed understanding of the Requirements and Tasks
 - The lead on the project must have a degree in electrical engineering with at least five years of post-degree experience. CVs should be provided.
 - Provide Current Business Registration certificate
 - Provide Article of Incorporation
 - Provide Recent Tax Clearance certificate
 - Provide Reference list of past clients, addresses and contacts(minimum three)
 - Must show proof of PPCA Vendor registration
8. Sealed Expression of Interest (EOI) must be delivered to the Procurement Unit not later than 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 7, 2019. Late EOI will be rejected and returned to consultants unopened. EOI will be opened/recorded in the presence of consultants who choose to attend or their representatives on Thursday, February 7, 2019 at 1:00 p.m in the 10th Floor Conference Room of the Ministry of Finance and Development, Broad & Mechlin Streets, Monrovia, Liberia.
9. Consultant firms that meet the qualification requirements will be short-listed and invited to submit final proposals.

10. Expression of Interest (EOI) must be submitted in one (1) original set and two (2) copies

11. The address referred to is:

Procurement Unit
 Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
 Broad and Mechlin Streets
 Monrovia, Liberia
 Cell#: (+231) 88 657 9455 or 88 075 3568
 Email: ebarkoi@mfdp.gov.lr or mglaydor@mfdp.gov.lr

Signed:
 Eric B. Arkoi
 Procurement Director

Approved:
 Hon. Rebecca Younger McGill
 Deputy Minister for Administration



Ministry of Public Works
 P.O. Box 9011
 South Lynch Street
 1000-Monrovia, 10-Liberia



NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (NCB)

Supply and Delivery of two Double Cabin Pickups and one Sedan, to the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) as stated in the tables below with IFB Numbers.

The Ministry of Public Works has received funding from the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning for the Fiscal Year 2018/2019 and intends to apply part of it to procure the below listed items under contracts:

ITEM 1: Provision of 2 Double Cabin Pickup
 (IFB No. MPW/G/NCB/002/18/19)

No.	QTY	Issue Date	Submission Date and Time	Opening Date and Time	Bid Security	Bid Document Price
1	2	January 21, 2019	February 19, 2018, 10:00am	February 19 10:05am		US\$50.00

ITEM 2: Provision of one Sedan
 (IFB No. MPW/G/NCB/006/18/19)

No.	QTY	Issue Date	Submission Date and Time	Opening Date and Time	Bid Security	Bid Document Price
1	1	January 21, 2019	February 19, 2019, 10:00am	February 19, 2019, 10:00am		US\$50.00

The Ministry of therefore, invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the supply and delivery of items as stated in the tables above to the Ministry. Bidders are informed that only Bidding will be conducted through National Competitive Bidding (NCB) Method specified in the PPCA and approved by the PPCC.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the Procurement Division through (0778779161 Bidders are required to pay a non-refundable sum as stated in the tables above to obtain the Bidding Document as per the issue date stated in the tables above beginning at 9am.

Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before the submission dates stated in the tables above. Late bid will not be accepted.

All Bids must be accompanied by the followings:

- ❖ Current Liberian Business Registration Certificate
- ❖ Current Tax Clearance
- ❖ PPCC Vendor's Registration Receipt
- ❖ List of previous clients

Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend on the date and time stated in the tables above in the Ministry's Large Conference Room.

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 Ministry of Public Works
 South Lynch Street,
 P.O. Box 9011
 Monrovia, Liberia

Signed:
 Max T. Jardiah/Procurement Director

Sierra Leonean refugees

Starts from back page

in the state of dilemma," Bangura asserts.

Another protester, Siaffa Kamara also explains that those Liberians who were refugees in Sierra Leone have been resettled.

"Unlike Liberia, the case is not the same. We have gone through all of the processes and acquired all of the necessary documents, but there is no benefit," Kamara claims.

He says the LRRRC used to supply them ration, but it allegedly stopped later and closed all of the camps. He laments that LRRRC turned the camps over to Liberian citizens.

Mr. Kamara says under the resettlement plan, some of them opted for local resettlement while others sought foreign travels.

Since the inception of the George Weah led government, Kamara says they have tried many times to reach the President through letter and in person, but complains that the bureaucracy at

the President's Foreign Ministry office has not favored them.

Reacting to the Sierra Leonean refugees' claims via mobile phone Wednesday, 23 January, LRRRC Deputy Director for Operations Alphonso Wallace disclosed that there is no Sierra Leonean refugee in Liberia.

He argues that Sierra Leonean refugees were resettled more than 8 years ago, and narrates further that those who requested repatriation were sent back home while those who preferred local integration were provided homes in the Blamacee Community, Brewerville by the LRRRC.

"The UNHCR informed us that there is no Sierra Leonean refugee in Liberia," Wallace asserts.

Meanwhile, he says a meeting has been arranged for Thursday, 24 January in the conference room of the LRRRC with the head of the protesters where the UNHCR will be present.--Edited by Winston W. Parley

#Revoke rock and sand mining licenses from Chinese and Lebanese#

LTA ignores cyber-attack?

By Othello B. Garblah

Authorities at the Liberian Telecommunication Authority (LTA), the regulatory arm of the country's telecommunication industry appears to have totally ignored reports of cyber-attack that was launched against the Lonestar Cell Company in late 2016 and early 2017.

The attack caused the company's revenue to take a nose dive, although others have argued that the company was already losing revenue before the attack was launched. This also caused reduction in government's revenue in terms of taxes.

As if that was not enough, the LTA has remained mute almost two weeks after a British court sentenced one of its citizens to jail for hacking the LoneStar Cell internet services here, an act that disrupted the country's internet services.

The BBC reported on Saturday January 12, 2019, that an English commercial court convicted British national Daniel Kaye to 32 months in jail after he pleaded guilty that he was hired by a Cellcom (now Orange) operative to launch a cyber-attack on LoneStar in 2016.

There are reports within the corridors of LTA suggesting that authorities there are playing hands off to this ongoing issue simply because Lonestar Cell MTN did not file a formal complaint during the time of the attack and therefore they remained arms folded as they watch the two companies to destroy each other.

But sources within the LTA told this paper last week that LoneStar Cell MTN had complained just around the same time that their network was being attack but did not know where the attack was coming from. The source said even the British Ambassador to Liberia went to the LTA headquarters during the time of the attack to help that body.

LTA's in action to come up with a formal comment on the issue is raising eyebrows as to whether officials at the regulatory body have failed to realize the magnitude of such attack on a company dully registered and operating under its watch or better still the dangerous signal its sending out there to the public as a result of its silence over such a national security issue.

Orange issued a statement two days following the conviction of Kaye indicating that it has launched its own investigation into the matter, while Lonestar Cell MTN also issued a statement indicating that it had filed a lawsuit against Orange, Cellcom and

some individuals who may have had link with Cellcom as at the time of the cyber-attack.

On Monday a group of individuals besieged the front view of the offices of Orange, accusing the company of engaging into acts that were undermining the country's economy.

These development have come at the time there is an ongoing GSM war between both companies and yet LTA remains silent. It is yet to issue any statement as it relates to this ongoing fracas that could undermine the viability of GSM operations in the country.

A questionnaire sent to the LTA concerning this and other developments within the Liberian telecommunication industry remain unanswered, despite several follow up calls.

It could be recalled that on Saturday January 12, the BBC reported that British cyber-

Kaye wept as he was taken down.

Kaye, from Egham in Surrey, is a self-taught hacker who began selling his considerable skills on the dark web - offering individuals opportunities to target and destroy their business rivals. According to court papers, Kaye was hired in 2015 to attack Lonestar, Liberia's leading mobile phone and Internet Company, by an individual working for Cellcom, its competitor.

There is no suggestion that Cellcom knew what the employee was doing - but the individual offered Kaye up to \$10,000 (£7,800) a month to use his skills to do as much as possible to destroy Lonestar's service and reputation.

Robin Sellers, prosecuting, told Blackfriars Crown Court that in November 2016 Kaye had built a "botnet" - a

to a "zombie" cyber army to attack his target.

In November 2016, working secretly out of Cyprus and controlling the botnet via his mobile phone, Kaye ordered it to overwhelm Lonestar's systems. On his command, hundreds of thousands of the webcams began firing data requests at Lonestar Cell MTN. The system began to struggle to manage the demands and parts of the infrastructure crashed.

He then tried to pull in additional firepower by sending further attacks from Germany, where he had sought to hijack part of Deutsche Telekom's national infrastructure. Researchers found that at the peak of the attack, the Mirai #14 code had compromised about one million devices worldwide.

In Liberia, mobile phone users began to see their

many different connection routes.

Kaye had sent so much traffic at Lonestar, the entire national system jammed. According to investigators, the country's internet repeatedly failed between 3 November and 4 November 2016 - disrupting not just Lonestar but organisations and ordinary users up and down the state.

This is believed to be the first time that a single cyber attacker had disrupted an entire nation's internet - albeit without intending to do so. Hack attacks cut internet access in Liberia. In written submissions to the court, Babatunde Osho, Lonestar's former chief executive, said Kaye's criminality had been devastating.

"The DDOS perpetrated by Daniel Kaye seriously compromised Lonestar's ability to provide a reliable internet connection to its customers," said Mr Osho. "In turn, Mr Kaye's actions prevented Lonestar's customers from communicating with each other, obtaining access to essential services and carrying out their day-to-day business activities.

"A substantial number of Lonestar's customers switched to competitors." In the years preceding the DDOS attacks, Lonestar's annual revenue exceeded \$80m (£62.4m). Since the attacks, revenue has decreased by tens of millions and its current liabilities have increased by tens of millions."

How did investigators catch Kaye?

Kaye was already suspected of being behind the attack - and he was arrested when he returned to the UK on holiday in February 2017.

He was carrying \$10,000 which the National Crime Agency says was part of the payments he received for the Lonestar attack.

Germany asked for Kaye to be extradited - and later that year he was convicted in a Cologne court of interfering with the Deutsche Telekom system. More than 124,000 Deutsche Telekom customers had seen their services crash - including Cologne's main sewage facility.

The German authorities then extradited Kaye back to the UK to face the far more serious Liberia charges - because British law allows a cyber-criminal to be prosecuted for an offence anywhere in the world.

By this time, National Crime Agency cyber specialists had also linked Kaye's Mirai #14 botnet to attacks against three British banks - Lloyds, Barclays and Halifax - in January 2017.



Daniel Kaye was hired to attack telecommunications company Lonestar

criminal, Kaye admitted attacking Lonestar Cell MTN network something which inadvertently ended up crashing Liberia's internet - in 2016, according to the BBC.

Kaye, 30, remains at the heart of a major international investigation into hundreds of acts of cyber sabotage around the world. The National Crime Agency says Kaye is perhaps the most significant cybercriminal yet caught in the UK.

Jailing Kaye for 32 months at Blackfriars Crown Court in London, Judge Alexander Milne QC said Kaye had committed a "cynical" financial crime. He added: "Paradoxically, what is urged on your behalf is that you are an intelligent young man who knows what your powers can do." But that makes it all the more worrying that you used your abilities to carry out this attack."

particularly powerful form of cyber-attack that is designed to overwhelm a target's systems, making it impossible to carry out normal business. This type of attack is known as a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS). It is different to a ransom demand that locks up systems, such as the "Wannacry" attack on the NHS.

What did Kaye's botnet do?

The weapon, known as "Mirai #14" worked by secretly hijacking a vast number of Chinese-made Dahu webcams, which are used for security in homes and businesses around the world.

He identified that the cheap cameras and other similar equipment had a security flaw - and he exploited that to take over the devices without owners knowing. That meant he could turn them into what amounted

devices go offline. The company called in cyber security consultants who attempted to repel the attack, but by that point it was too late because the botnet ran out of control. The National Crime Agency spearheaded the investigation

What charges did Daniel Kaye admit?

Making the Mirai #14 botnet for use in a Computer Misuse Act 1990 offence Launching cyber attacks against Lonestar in Liberia - another crime under the Computer Misuse Act Possessing criminal property - relating to \$10,000 found on him when he was arrested At the time, Liberia's internet was dependent on both a small number of providers and a relatively limited Atlantic cable. European nations, by comparison, have a vastly more secure internet because traffic can reach users through

Sierra Leonean refugees want resettlement benefits

--Accuse LRRRC of denouncing their stay in Liberia



when their country faced civil unrest.

"Our resettlement benefits include legal, social and economic [benefits], but the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) has told us that they are not aware of our being in Liberia," Bangura notes.

According to Mr. Bangura, they have written series of letters to the UN and the LRRRC but to no avail.

He laments that they are about 471 family heads in the Samuka Town, VOA and Banjor communities display camps.

"Whenever we go to the UN they will send us to the LRRRC; and when we get to the LRRRC, we will be informed that the UN has not given them any money for resettlement," he explains.

"At times, we are even being insulted and thrown out of the LRRRC compound, as such we have been left

By Roosevelt G. Jabah

A group of Sierra Leonean refugees staged a peaceful protest on Wednesday, 23 January, calling on the LRRRC and the United Nations to have them resettled.

The protest which was held opposite the United Nations

(UN) office in Monrovia brought together children, men, women and elderly carrying placards with diverse messages for resettlement benefits.

Nevison P. S. Bangura, one of the protesters narrates that some of them trooped into Liberia between 1991 and 1992

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Salah goes offline post cryptic tweet

Fans were left baffled on Wednesday after Liverpool's star Egyptian striker Mohamed Salah appeared to have deleted all of his social media accounts where his followers number in the millions.

The Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts of Salah, who is idolised in Egypt and Liverpool, went offline without warning a

day after he posted a cryptic tweet.

"2019 Resolution: Time to get in touch, for real," said the final tweet, screenshots of which were shared widely on social media.

Those navigating to his Twitter account on Wednesday could only see a message reading "Sorry, that page doesn't exist!".

On Instagram, the message read "The link you followed

may be broken, or the page may have been removed." A similar message appeared on Facebook.

It was not immediately clear whether the shutdowns were deliberate.

Some fans speculated that Salah deleted his accounts due to a dispute he has had with the Egyptian Football Association over his image rights.



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#Revoke rock and sand mining licenses from Chinese and Lebanese#

#To empower Liberians, enforce the exclusive Liberians business act. #

#It's shame that only in Liberia foreigners are siphoning billions thru sand and rock mining.#

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#Stop prioritizing foreign businesses over Liberian businesses!#