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The New Dawn
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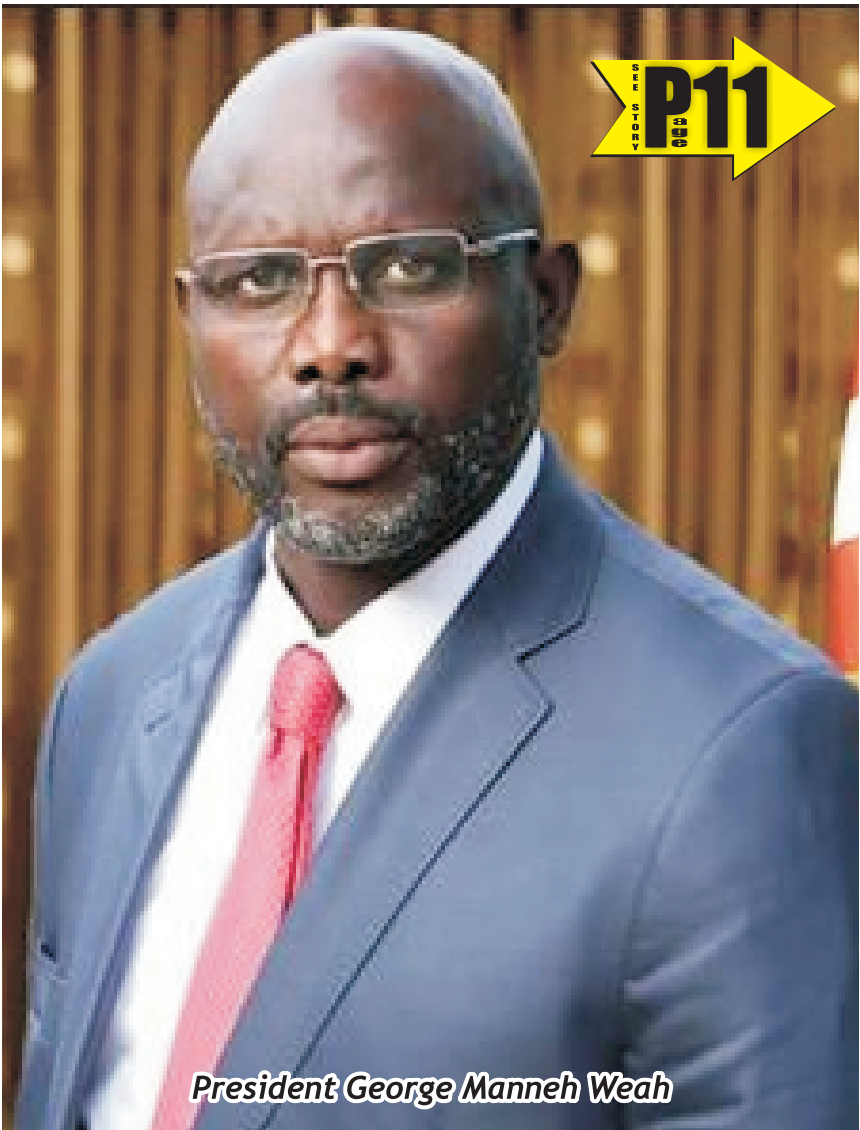
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PRICE LD\$40.00

#Stop prioritizing foreign businesses over Liberian businesses!#

Weah warned



President George Manneh Weah

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Senate probes cargo tracking regime at NPA



Continental News

Boko Haram slaughtered at least 60 in Nigeria

ABUJA (Reuters) - The Islamist militant group Boko Haram killed at least 60 people in the northeast Nigerian town of Rann on Monday, a day after it was abandoned by the military, Amnesty International and security sources said on Friday.

The attack on Rann, home to a camp housing tens of thousands of people displaced by the Islamist insurgency, was one of the group's bloodiest.

It came two weeks after Boko Haram had overrun the same town, driving out Nigerian soldiers and signalling its re-emergence as a force capable of capturing army bases.

The bloodshed is a challenge for President Muhammadu Buhari in particular as he seeks a second successive four-year term in an election on Feb. 16, having been elected in 2015 partly on a promise to restore security.

The military did not respond to calls and messages seeking comment.

The two attacks have driven some 40,000 people to flee, 30,000 of them into nearby Cameroon, according to aid

agencies.

"This attack on civilians who have already been displaced by the bloody conflict may amount to possible war crimes," Osai Ojigho, Amnesty's Nigeria director, said in a statement.

"Witnesses told us that Nigerian soldiers abandoned their posts the day before the

attack, demonstrating the authorities' utter failure to protect civilians." Two security sources told Reuters that Nigerian troops had returned to Rann along with Cameroonian troops from a multinational task force after the first attack on Jan. 14.

After the Cameroonians went back across the border, the Nigerian soldiers left

because they did not have enough troops, weapons or equipment, the sources said.

The next day, Boko Haram came. The militants set the town ablaze and executed its elders and traditional leaders, leaving one alive as a witness, one of the security sources said.

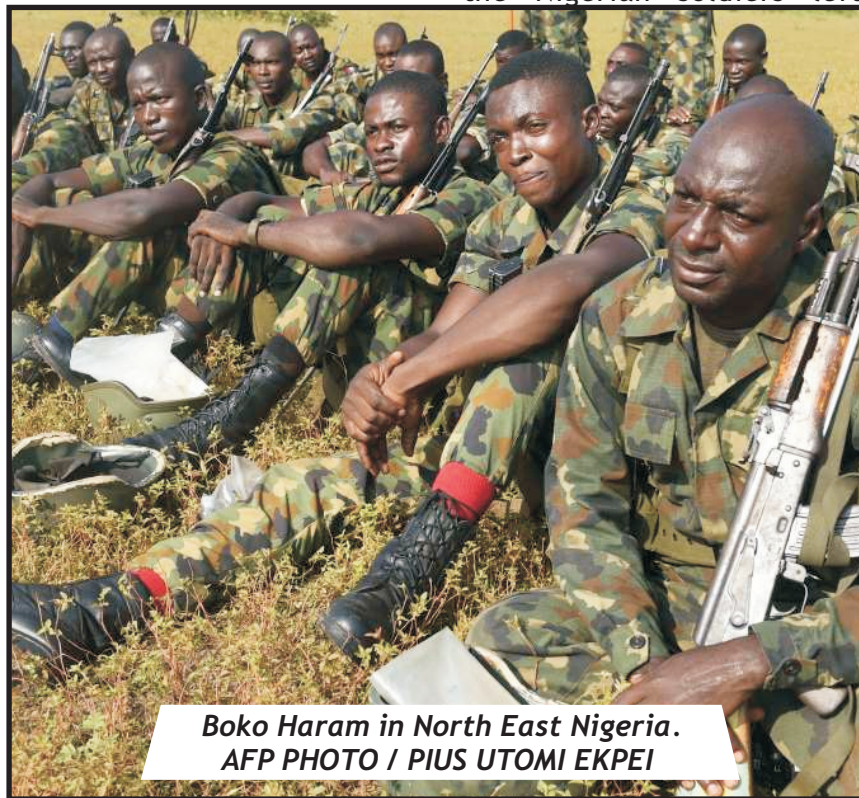
A video of the attack reviewed by Reuters showed people gathering belongings and fleeing, screaming, as the town burned.

A surge in attacks in the northeast by Boko Haram and its now more powerful offshoot Islamic State West

Africa Province is throwing preparations for the presidential election into disarray.

Despite the violence, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo said on Tuesday "the current rate of return of these IDPs (internally displaced people) and refugees is encouraging, and this is due to improving security in many areas that were once completely out of bounds".

(Reporting by Paul Carsten, additional reporting by Alexis Akwagiyam in Lagos and Camillus Eboh in Abuja; Editing by Kevin Liffey)



Boko Haram in North East Nigeria.
AFP PHOTO / PIUS UTOMI EKPEI

Police trace Dusit attack suspects to Dadaab

Twenty days after the terrorist attack at Nairobi's DusitD2 complex, intelligence sources say that 12 suspects have been arrested at the sprawling Dadaab refugee camp — signalling the complex balance between internal security and offering humanitarian aid at the third largest refugee camp in the world.

Sources privy to the ongoing investigations told Nation that one of the Dusit complex attackers passed through Dagahaley camp "where he was not only facilitated to get into communication with other attackers, but also given transportation logistics to Nairobi".

The highly-placed source said that three suspected Al-Shabaab terrorists armed with AK-47 rifles and several rounds of ammunition were also arrested last week in Hagadera refugee camp in Dadaab.

"One of the suspects was found with two New Zealand passports bearing different names," said the source — an indicator that Al-Shabaab



networks are more widespread than earlier thought. The arrest come at a time when a US spy agency in its January 29 report said that Al-Shabaab is likely to continue posing threats to the nations of East Africa in the coming year — with security agents fearing that Dadaab continues to be a soft-landing for terrorists.

Although President Uhuru Kenyatta had in March 2017 ordered the closure of Dadaab camp in the wake of the Garissa University College attack in April 2015 and the Westgate shopping mall raid on September 21, 2013, he was heavily criticised by human rights organisations.

billion).

(Updates with First Quantum shares in final paragraph.) To contact the reporters on this story: Matthew Hill in Maputo at mhill58@bloomberg.net; Taonga Clifford Mitimangi in Lusaka at tmitimangi@bloomberg.net

Zambia to get \$700 Million for Mine

First Quantum Minerals Ltd. has offered to buy the Zambian government's 20 percent stake in Africa's biggest copper mine for as much as \$700 million, according to two people familiar with the transaction.

Vancouver-based First

Quantum already owns 80 percent of the Kansanshi mine in Zambia's North-Western Province, while state-owned ZCCM Investments Holdings Plc holds the rest. The proposal, which was submitted last year, includes \$300 million to \$400 million in cash, and an equal

amount in special royalties, over more than 10 years, said the people, who asked not to be identified because they're not authorized to comment.

First Quantum spokesman John Gladston declined to comment. Amos Chanda, Zambian President Edgar Lungu's spokesman, didn't immediately respond to a call and message seeking comment, and neither did a spokeswoman for ZCCM-IH. The deal would also include ZCCM-IH dropping a \$1.4 billion legal claim against First Quantum over a loan the company received from Kansanshi, the people said. The government is still considering the proposal, according to one of the people.

First Quantum and the government have been at loggerheads over other issues too. The country's revenue authority handed it a \$7.9 billion tax bill last year, while an increase in royalties this year prompted First Quantum to announce plans to fire 2,500 workers. The company has since backtracked on the



Photographer: Waldo Swiegers A mine worker displays a handful of cobalt metal nuggets awaiting shipping at the Nchanga copper mine

EDITORIAL

We should work and stop talking agriculture

PRESIDENT GEORGE MANNEH WEAH hit the nail on the head on Monday, 4th February when he frankly told a roundtable with officials and partners that the country is not reaping dividends on its investments in agriculture.

PRESIDENT WEAH STRESSED that it is time Government and its partners derive new strategies to salvage the sector, emphasizing need to organize a technical team that would work in addressing issues and programs to achieve fruitful results.

BRIEFING REPORTERS FOLLOWING the forum, the President explained, “We talked about how we could leave from slash and burn farming methods to mechanized farming. You know there is a huge investment in agriculture, but the outcome is so little.”

INDEED, THIS HAS been the main challenge from two former successive governments - the Taylor era and the Sirleaf administration. Time and time again, government has pronounced huge investments in this sector, sometimes characterized by elaborate agriculture fairs, but the national yields have made no impact on the nation's food basket, which still relies on imported rice.

PAST OFFICIALS AND even now have talked agriculture with grandeur programs and policy papers, but implementation has remained a serious challenge so much so that a nation with a population 4.5 million people rely on other countries for its staple, rice.

NOTWITHSTANDING, WE HAVE a very rich soil that is suitable for growing rice and other food. What a paradox! Something fundamentally is wronged here.

WE THINK IT is about time our policymakers and foreign partners return to the drawing board as President Weah has suggested in order to explore new approaches that would enable us to feed ourselves as a people.

PRESIDENT WEAH SHOULD lead this revolution just he is doing in the road sector, if positive results should be achieved or else, Monday's roundtable may just be another talking shop.

WE BELIEVE VERY strongly that Government should use agriculture as cornerstone for its Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development or PAPD. With support from our international partners, the country's youthful population should immediately be put to work to grow what we eat.

ALL THAT IS required is political will from the authority, because previous administrations had talked agriculture, but they never produced anything substantive. So the nation continues to wallop in hunger, disease and misery.

THIS MUST CHANGE and there is no better time than now! With a youthful President, who is overwhelmingly loved by the population, we must seize the opportunity to make Liberia self-sufficient in food rather than importing yam, pepper, and oranges from neighboring Guinea and Sierra Leone.

The New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

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COMMENTARY

By Otmar Issing

The European Commission's Taxing New Idea

The European Commission is proposing that EU tax policies be subjected to qualified-majority voting just when the balance of power in the bloc is about to shift decidedly to the southern member states. That would set the stage for a rebellion among northern members, which will have effectively lost fiscal sovereignty.

FRANKFURT - Under the Treaty of Lisbon, in effect since 2009, the European Union became a more agile and effective operator, because EU policies across a range of issues were now to be decided by qualified-majority voting instead of unanimity.

But as recent efforts to allocate refugees within the EU show, in some cases, particularly where fundamental issues of national sovereignty are involved, outvoted member states are unprepared or unwilling to implement collective decisions. Nonetheless, the European Commission is now wading into yet another domain where fundamental issues of sovereignty are at stake.

For many years, some EU member states have refused to cooperate fully in the fight against tax evasion and avoidance. And because EU tax policies still require unanimity, each country has a veto. It seems only natural, therefore, that the EU would want to introduce qualified-majority voting here, too. Under a new proposal from Pierre Moscovici, the EU Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation, and Customs, if 55% of member states representing at least 65% of the EU population were to vote in favor of a new tax policy, it would pass.

At first glance, the situation certainly does seem to merit a strengthening of the EU's hand on tax matters, so that it can finally correct a glaring shortcoming. Yet once qualified-majority voting has been introduced as a means of reining in tax evasion and avoidance, it will also determine all future tax policies.

This is not merely an assumption. The Commission's stated objective is to apply qualified-majority voting to all tax-policy initiatives that are “necessary for the Single Market and for fair and competitive taxation.” Such a vague formulation opens the door to all manner of interventions.

As a further justification of his proposal, Moscovici also points to the potential to secure additional EU revenues through new financial-transaction and digital taxes - both of which his proposal explicitly mentions as possible policy options. It remains to be seen whether these special taxes will meet their proponents' expectations. But even if they fail, previous experience suggests that the Commission will nonetheless use the new voting rule to secure ever-higher tax revenues “for Europe” through whatever

means available.

As it happens, the United Kingdom's impending departure from the bloc will dramatically alter the conditions for achieving a qualified majority on tax matters. The UK is among the northern member states that, together, account for 39% of the EU population and tend to resist protectionist measures, tax increases, and transfers to highly indebted countries. By comparison, the Mediterranean countries that generally favor transfers and taxes currently account for 38% of the EU population.

This is as it should be. Under the Treaty of Lisbon, the conditions for a qualified majority have been balanced in such a way as to give both the “North” and the “South” a blocking minority of (at least) 35% of the EU population. As long as the northern member states were aligned, they could prevent any initiatives that were against their interests. After Brexit, however, the North's share of the population will fall to 30%, while the South's share will rise to 43%. In other words, the North will no longer have a veto. Making matters worse, following the upcoming election in May, a similar southward shift is also imminent in the European Parliament, which would also gain a greater say in tax-policy questions if the Commission's proposals are enacted.

The Commission's proposal should be seen for what it is: an attempt to undermine the fiscal competence of sovereign states through a seemingly harmless back door. With the upcoming rebalancing of power within the EU clear for all to see, one need not be a prophet to predict higher taxes in the future. Even if the northern member states' national parliaments are uniformly opposed to tax increases, they will have no way to block them. And, sooner or later, the backlash against this loss of sovereignty and wholesale soaking of the northern EU countries will be directed against the EU itself.

In light of these ramifications, the Commission's proposal to subject tax policies to qualified-majority voting not only runs counter to the already-fraught efforts to achieve an “ever closer union,” but also jeopardizes the successful integration that has occurred to date. Apparently, the Commission has learned very little from the bruising Brexit debate of the past two and a half years. With its latest tone-deaf initiative, it continues to add grist to the Euroskeptics' mill.

O-PED

By Arvind Subramanian
& Josh Felman

The Coming China Shock

CAMBRIDGE - In September 2018, we argued that China's economic and foreign policies were defying the "laws" of economics and geopolitics, and warned that the situation could not last. Since then, our assessment has been borne out, and our concerns have deepened.

Until recently, China had been able to pursue a unique development path, owing to the government's far-reaching control over the economy (and society more generally). But those days are over. The country's internal debts are mounting to unsustainable heights, and domestic investment levels have passed the point of diminishing returns and are veering toward negative territory.

Moreover, China's strategy of fostering exports, promoting industrial "national champions," and expropriating foreign technology has crossed the threshold of what the West, especially the United States, is willing to tolerate. Chinese President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative is showing all the signs of imperial overreach. Not only does the BRI's lending far exceed participating governments' borrowing capacity, but its loan terms have become increasingly onerous - indeed, usurious - as Harvard University's Ricardo Hausmann recently observed.

Back in September, we saw some discontinuity in China's economic performance as inevitable. Even if the country was not heading for a full-blown crisis, we believed it would almost certainly experience some combination of rapidly decelerating growth and a sharply depreciating exchange rate.

That prognosis has since become even more likely. With global economic growth and exports declining, China's economy is on track to slow further relative to the 6.4% growth recorded in the fourth quarter of 2018. The double-digit average achieved from the 1980s until recently has never seemed more distant.

In response to the current global slowdown, the Chinese government has decided to loosen restrictions on private and public borrowing. But this will merely aggravate the country's debt and overinvestment problems. Or, as a famous Chinese saying goes, it is akin to "drinking poison to quench one's thirst."

Even without these macro developments, China's defiance of well-established findings in development economics was never going to last forever. The economists Douglass North, Daron Acemoglu, and James A. Robinson have shown that long-run economic development tends to rely on strong state institutions and open political systems, because these are necessary to foster competition, investor confidence, dynamism, and innovation.

In the chart above, the upward sloping line represents the positive relationship between political and economic development. As the notable exception to an otherwise robust relationship, China has long posed a problem for this theory. With its closed political system, it should not be anywhere near as rich as it is.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the West made a gamble that China would cease to be an exception and would veer toward normalcy by adopting more open and democratic political institutions (as indicated by the dotted blue arrow). As a practical matter, that bet translated into Western policies to facilitate China's rise, and decisions by US firms to transfer manufacturing capacity there.

But under Xi's leadership, China has instead become less open (as shown by the red arrow). And, as Nicholas Lardy of the Peterson Institute for International Economics shows in a new book, its economy has also shifted back from a private-sector-driven growth model to state capitalism.

In other words, systemic political and economic changes are making China even more of an exception, thereby increasing the odds that its return to normalcy will come in the form of a sharp deterioration in economic performance (the downward dotted black arrow). There is no telling precisely when that correction will happen. But the more China defies the rules of economic development, the more likely it becomes.

Unfortunately, any discontinuity in China's economic performance would have a seismic effect on the rest of the world, because it would lead to a significant weakening of the renminbi. In fact, China itself might engineer a depreciation of its currency in order to promote its exports and cushion the inevitable fall in domestic demand, particularly its investment component.

Such a scenario would have a tsunami-like impact on global currencies. Other major Asian countries would respond by pursuing their own devaluations to maintain their competitiveness, and Europe and the United States would experience sharp deflation as their currencies strengthened in kind.

For a historical comparison, consider that in the 1930s, the US dollar and British sterling depreciated by about 40% over four years, while the French and German currencies remained broadly stable (measured against gold). Like the US and Britain in 1929, just before the Great Depression, today the major Asian economies that would be affected by a Chinese currency shock account for around 30% of world trade.

Making matters worse, trade is much more important to the global economy today than it was 90 years ago. In 2017, merchandise exports accounted for 20-25% of global GDP, compared to just 8% in 1929. That means a depreciation in Asian currencies would have a significantly greater global impact than the dollar/sterling devaluation of the 1930s. Thus, a China shock could potentially dwarf the competitive currency depreciations of the early 1930s - one of the darkest economic periods in recorded history.

One way or another, China's continued defiance of the "laws" of macroeconomics, geopolitics, and economic development will hasten its inevitable return to normalcy. When that happens, the world had better brace itself.

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OPINION

By Steve Tsang

What Is Xi Jinping Thought?

LONDON - In October 2017, at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the CPC enshrined in its constitution a new political doctrine: "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in a New Era." At a time when a rapidly modernizing China is a leading global player, it is tempting to dismiss this doctrine as anachronistic "party-speak" from a bygone age. We succumb to that temptation at our peril.

Five months after the constitutional change, the National People's Congress abolished the presidential term limit, meaning that, barring a political earthquake, Xi - who, at age 65, remains healthy and vigorous - could remain president for perhaps another 20 years. His eponymous doctrine will therefore shape China's development and global engagement for decades to come, and perhaps longer.

In a sense, the inclusion of Xi's name and thought in the CPC constitution delivered to him the exalted status of the People's Republic's founding father, Mao Zedong, as well as the architect of China's modernization, Deng Xiaoping - the only two other leaders mentioned in the document. That, together with the removal of term limits, has led many to argue that Xi is the most powerful Chinese leader since Mao.

But, even if true, this does not mean that Xi is attempting to restore Maoist totalitarianism. While Xi has a much more positive view of China's Maoist past than any other leader since Deng, he is no Maoist.

Instead, Xi's approach to governance closely resembles that of China's first president under Mao, Liu Shaoqi, a devoted Leninist who selectively adapted Confucian ideas to build a Sinicized party-state. For Liu, the party was pivotal; for Mao, by contrast, it was ultimately dispensable, as the Cultural Revolution - of which Liu himself was a casualty - demonstrated. Unlike Mao, who found chaos exhilarating, Xi shares Liu's longing to exercise control through the CPC, which he expects to take the lead - and apply Xi Jinping Thought - in all policy areas: political, military, civilian, and academic.

The contrast with Deng is even sharper. Deng's reforms were defined by pragmatism and experimentation, aimed at identifying the most effective approach to modernization. In the 1980s, Deng even briefly considered the radical possibility of separating the CPC from the state, though he abandoned the idea after the pro-democracy Tiananmen Square protests in 1989.

Nonetheless, Deng and his successors - Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao - continued to open China to the West, and remained willing to tolerate the spread, within limits, of some liberal ideas. This is not the case with Xi, whose repeated commitment to deepening reform is muddled by his redefinition of what that should entail.

Xi sees no place for political experimentation or liberal values in China, and regards democratization, civil society, and universal human rights as anathema. Deepening reform means solidifying control over the CPC, via his "anti-corruption campaign," and over the population, including through the use of advanced technologies enabled by artificial intelligence. Such digital authoritarianism will, Xi hopes, prevent liberal or democratic ideas from taking root and spreading, even as China remains connected to the rest of the world. Chinese citizens may enjoy freedom as consumers and investors, but not as participants in civil society or civic discourse.

Managing this tension between international openness and state control is vital for Xi to achieve another key goal of his doctrine: to "make China great again." On the one hand, this entails instilling a Party-centric nationalism, so that citizens embrace the primacy of the CPC and of Xi himself. Those who are slower to meet this expectation may find themselves under surveillance and even sent to so-called re-education camps, like those in Xinjiang, where hundreds of thousands (or more) Muslim Uighurs are now detained.

On the other hand, making China great again means projecting power and leadership on the world stage. After decades of adhering to Deng's injunction that China should "hide its strength and bide its time," the country's moment, Xi believes, has come.

One way Xi hopes to boost China's global standing is by ensuring that it is on the frontier of technology. To that end, the state is offering its full support to national champions in cutting-edge sectors, as stipulated in the government's Made in China 2025 strategy, which competitors, especially the United States, decry as unfair. It is no coincidence that the US has been targeting Huawei, which has received as much state support as any company in any country in modern times.

Canada's decision to heed America's request to detain Huawei CFO Meng Wanzhou for alleged fraud and violations of US sanctions against Iran amounted, in Xi's eyes, to a failure to respect China's standing and interests, and thus merited retaliation. China soon detained two Canadians on allegations of "engaging in activities that endanger [China's] national security," and resented a Canadian convicted of drug smuggling, imposing the death penalty.

The goal of Xi Jinping Thought is not to launch a cold war with the West, or to export China's political model. Rather, Xi wants to shore up the authority of the party-state - and his own brand of authoritarianism - within China, including by ensuring that Chinese are not exposed to liberal-democratic ideas. Understanding this is vital to enable the world to engage effectively with an increasingly formidable China.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

SUP responds to President Weah's annual message

Proponents of social justice and academic freedom, militant campaigners of popular power and genuine democracy, sons and daughters of the disinherited and defenseless mass of our people, fighting cadres and courageous ideologues of Africa's bulwark of consciousness, the indomitable Vanguard Student Unification Party, eminent statesmen and women, distinguished media practitioners, fellow Liberians:

For twelve (12) years, the poor masses of West Point, Gibraltar, New Kru Town, Soniwein as well as those from the poor rural villages and hamlets lifted ex-Soccer Star George M. Weah from the pitch to the presidency. They saw this soccer star as a genuine option to end their appalling, miserable and hopeless condition. Sadly, the overly harsh realities today have proven them dead wrong! The nation now has a president who owns the largest private estate in less than a year. It is an unchallenged fact that the CDC-led government has become a stronghold of petite crooks and economic pillagers/plunderers who consider TRANSPARENCY as a TABOO.

Today as this soccer star has turned one year old and presented his second State of the Nation Address as Head of State of the Republic of Liberia, what have the masses got in return for coronating this president who is gradually becoming a domineering dictator in all forms. Under Weah, there is an exponential increase in hardship and systemic thievery. While the citizens are entrapped in abject poverty, the president's personal agenda is and has been to construct his mansions, estates, and resorts. The people were actually deceived by populist rhetoric to have elected the most incompetent Head of State who have got no real solution and/or idea to run the affairs of the State. The nation has been entrusted in the hands of political pupils and apprentices. What a SAD MOMENT in our Country's history.

Rule of Law and adherence to its basic principles:

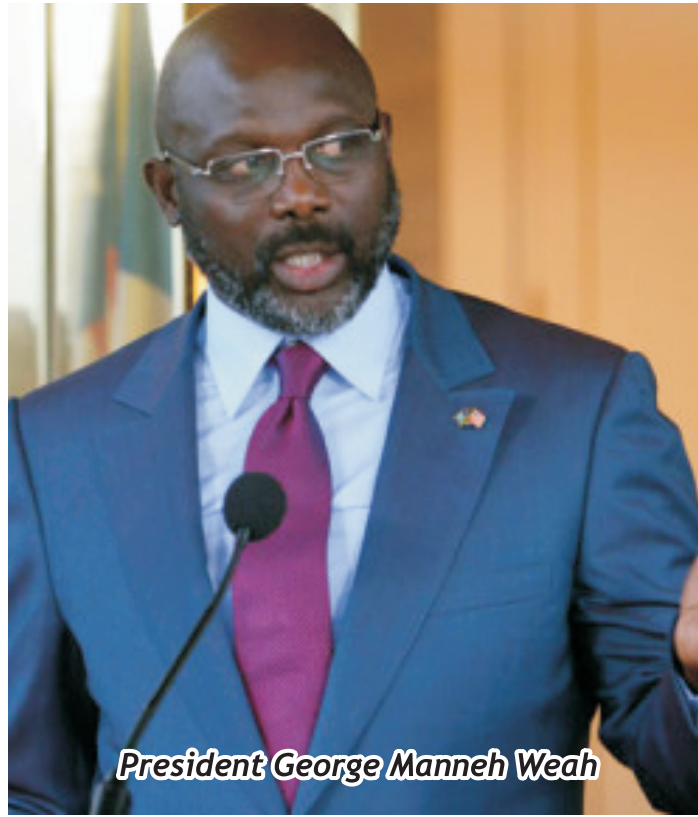
On January 22, 2018, President Weah took an oath to protect, preserve and defend the Constitution of Liberia. Unfortunately for the State, in less than twenty-four hours after taking this oath of office, this president immediately became a constitutional deviant and has since continuously violated almost all of our laws in the Republic. Under the Weah-led government, the Constitution and basic laws of the State are bleeding as he runs Liberia in a dictatorial style while at the same time dancing in the cesspool of gross incompetence and legal naivety.

This president came to power due to Constitutional adherence by his predecessor but could not conduct a simple By-election constitutionally as well as hold the National Housing and Population Census in line with THE LAW. Additionally, under the Weah 1-year-old administration, we also observed the violation of the Act that established the Liberia Extractive Industry and Transparency Initiative (LEITI), a situation that led to the suspension of Liberia from EITI.

The National Lottery Law of Liberia, the Maritime Law of Liberia, the refusal of the president and his officials to declare their assets as called for by the 2014 Code of Conduct Law and most recently; the unconstitutional appointment and commissioning of Liberia's Ambassador to the United States of America are glaring violations of our organic Laws. SUP wants to say that the Constitution and Basic Laws of the State were the most affected victims under the first-year regime of Pastoral President George M. Weah. Fellow Liberians, as a result of the continuous assault on the rule of law, investors have lost confidence in the country. We are in year two and a single investor is yet to come to Liberia. In fact, service businesses and investment companies including banks are running into insolvency.

The Economy:

Conscious students and patriotic Liberians, the poor-scripted, incoherent and jumbled State of the Nation Address delivered by President Weah was not only



President George Manneh Weah

deceptive but an affront to the harsh prevailing economic condition that our people are faced with daily. The economy is in a downward spiral as the exchange rate is again at an all-time high (L\$163 - US\$1). Inflation has swallowed real wages while wage bill of civil servants remains static even though the cost of basic commodities is rapidly increasing.

In Weah's hegemony, youth unemployment is at an all-time high as partisan identification card remains the primary qualification of the country; thereby depriving qualified and competent Liberians the deserving opportunity to contribute to the growth of the State. In the midst of these, the president deliberately refused to inform the Liberian people about any meaningful and achievable plan to tackle the collapsing economy of the nation; this is a clear demonstration that the government of president Weah is running a clandestine enterprise that is predominantly eclipsed by innovation scarcity.

President Weah promised to take Liberians from the Spectator seat of the economy to the position of full players/participants; sadly, Liberians have now become watchmen and professional onlookers of their own economy as the President and his cabal of looters and foreign capitalists milk the wealth of the nation. Today, the Liberalization policy is now an addendum to the president toiletry as he prioritizes foreign businesses over Liberians-owned businesses.

SUP wants to categorically state that Pres. Weah's deliberate refusal to mention the status of the EBOMAF and ETON loan agreements as well as the report from the US\$25m that was "infused" in the economy to mop up excess liquidity is totally unacceptable. These two loan agreements were passed into law by the 54th National Legislature; as such, the Liberian people deserve to know the status(es) of these loans. SUP also wants to inform the Liberian people that the Weah-led government has failed to stabilize the economy. Prices of basic commodities on the Liberian market are skyrocketing on a daily basis and the living condition of the ordinary citizens is unimaginably appalling. The wage bill of our teachers, nurses, doctors, police officers, army personnel and civil servants remains very low while officials in this CDC-led government are acquiring ill-gotten wealth and swimming in luxury at the detriment of the downtrodden masses.

Education and Health:

Comrades, Liberia remains the only country in the ECOWAS region that is spending less 20% of its national budget on Education. The government's commitment to upgrade the education sector is a complete lip-service as the personal budget of the president and his vice president including the Legislature is far bigger than the

total budget of the entire education sector. Investment in education remains very low, lack of quality in the education sector and the student loan bill still linger under dusty files at the legislature. SUP believes that president Weah's pronouncement on free tuition for all public universities and colleges is a mere publicity stunt that lacks shape in terms of sustainability. There has been poor investment in the education sector since the inception of this government. As it stands, the total amount allotted for education in the current national budget is far less than the 20%; this alone indicates that the paramount concern of the Weah-led administration is not education, but self-enrichment.

Comrades and members of the press, since Mr. Weah took over, there have been exponential increase in rape cases and sexual gender-based violence in the country, noticeable among them is the More Than Me Sex scandal and many rape cases that have led to the death of women and teenagers across Liberia. Sadly, the president did not say a word on these human abuses that have overwhelmed the nation. Instead, this President Weah has become the chief priest of falsehood and pretense as was clearly demonstrated during his SONA at the Capitol when he struggled to present loaded fallacies coupled with deception and fairytale.

As we speak, there is a ban on student political activities at the University of Liberia. The continuous attack on critical media institutions and practitioners which was initiated by president Weah himself when he openly attacked BBC-Liberia correspondent, Mr. Jonathan Paye-Layleh followed by his Information Minister who in recent time branded the Press Union of Liberia as a "useless" body and the nonstop invasion of the campuses of the University of Liberia by armed men and the notorious SABU Unit controlled by the most incompetent GUCCI City Mayor; these incidents are sufficient to declare that the Weah-led government is anti-democratic and does not respect free speech, press freedom, and freedom of assembly. We are calling on president Weah to stop pretending as a democrat and a defender of human rights! Weah is a DICTATOR and a BLACK FASCIST.

Under the Weah first year, the government demonstrated nothing substantive to improve the livelihood of the citizens; the people are still living in sad times - basic amenities such as food, health, sanitation, safe drinking water, quality education, housing, and job remain a mystery; conditions are terribly worsening every day that passes; hospital are closing down; medical standard has deteriorated even at health centers that are still functional; drugs are unavailable at various government hospitals; people are dying daily from a curable diseases! Are these Weah's fulfilled promises - Yes would be appropriate for an answer considering these existing realities.

Agriculture:

Fellow Liberians, agriculture possesses the greatest potential for absorbing the huge level of unemployment in the nation; sadly, the amount allotted under the pro-poor regime to agriculture is less than 2% of the national budget. While the poor peasants who live primarily depend on subsistence farming and the struggling agriculture students at University of Liberia were waiting to hear the government's plan to improve the agriculture sector, their hopes were left in limbo as the president could not say anything genuine or meaningful to improving the agriculture sector of the nation besides empty promises intended to please his fanatic. The only plan we think this government has had in year one is to continuously beg foreign countries for FOOD AID. What a dead strategy indeed!

Long Live SUP - Long Live Massescracy. In pursuit of social justice, academic freedom and peace, the STRUGGLE for an equal and a just society remains unceasingly progressive. Done and issued on this 5th Day of February A. D. 2019.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Liberia's chief zoe dismissed

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan
in Bong

Liberia's chief zoe, referred to as "Darkpannah," Chief Moses Suakollie has been dismissed by the head of the Traditional Council here after bestowing traditional honors on Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor.

His dismissal on Sunday, 3 February has been greeted by mixed reactions, with some fearing that the decision might be politically motivated given the trend of events leading to his dismissal.

Chief Suakollie got promoted from Native Superintendent to Darkpannah of the Republic of Liberia barely weeks after he presented a Leopard tooth to President George Manneh Weah during the president's first visit to Bong County after being elected.

But Chief Suakollie's shocking dismissal comes weeks after he and local Traditional Leaders of Bong County honored and presented an elephant tooth and an eagle wing to Vice President Taylor.

Following his dismissal, a lot of residents of Bong County became to express serious concerns and shaping blame on Internal Affairs Minister Varney Sirleaf for what transpired.



Some citizens are saying this action of the Traditional Leaders to dismiss Chief Suakollie has a serious political undertone and has brought the County to public disrepute.

Citizens in Bong County are calling on President George Manneh Weah and Internal Affairs Minister Varney Sirleaf to intervene in matter, warning that ignoring it will bring misunderstanding in the County.

Chief Suakollie particularly states that he was verbally dismissed by Traditional Council Chief Zanzan Karwoh and Assistant Internal Affairs Minister for Culture and Native Affairs Joseph Janga during

their visit to the county on Sunday, 3 February.

He challenges his verbal dismissal, insisting that he remains the legitimate Darkpannah of Liberia.

He says no one should take the secret action of Chief Karwor and Janga serious, telling this paper that his bosses decided to dismiss him due to his action to have bestowed great traditional honors on President Weah and Vice President Taylor.

Chief Suakollie strongly believes that his verbal dismissal has a political undertone, alleging that Chief Zanzan Karwor and Assistant Minister Joseph Janga are

secretly in favor of the former ruling Unity Party (UP) and so they have expelled him because he comes from the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC).

When contacted, Assistant Internal Affairs Minister Joseph Janga describes the Chief Suakollie's statement as baseless and only meant to demoralize his character.

Minister Janga states that even though Chief Suakollie has been dismissed, his

dismissal was not done or even masterminded by him or Chief Zanzan Karwo.

According to him, the action was taken by the "Bush Minister and Traditional Leaders" who gave him the position last year.

Mr. Janga further clarifies that Chief Suakollie's dismissal was not on the basis of bestowing honor on President Weah and Vice President Taylor, but because he violated seven rules of the tradition.

But Minister Janga fails to disclose the alleged rules violated by the dismissed chief.

Minister Janga states that Chief Suakollie as per the mandate of the Bush Minister and traditional Leaders, will not participate in any traditional activities in the Country.

He tells our Bong County correspondent via mobile phone that Chief Suakollie has over the past time taken the tradition as a play toy.

The Assistant Minister indicates that the Bush Minister listed seven counts against Chief Suakollie, which have brought the tradition to public disrepute in the country.--**Edited by Winston W. Parley**

Health Minister Jallah on drug shortage

The Minister of Health Doctor Wilhelmina Jallah assures health workers across the country of ongoing effort by the Ministry in reaching out to partners for seed funding that would immediately address shortages of essential drugs within the health sector.

Doctor Jallah emphasizes the need for county health team officials' advocacy to

donors for the erection of solar plates in referral hospitals and solar suitcases in various clinics to buttress government's effort.

She urges county health officials to take the lead in collaborating or liaising with the Ministry of Health before formulating contracts with partners to avoid future embarrassment.

According to a press

release, Doctor Jallah spoke recently while on a three-county tour in Western Liberia to assess health institutions in those areas.

The tour covered Grand Cape Mount, Bomi, and Gbarpolu counties, respectively aimed at assessing the health care system there.

The Minister held meetings with county health teams, hospital management teams, partners, health workers, civil society organizations, women groups, and superintendents. She also interacted with patients and community residents.

She lauds health practitioners for their dedication in providing quality health care to Liberians in the remotest parts of the country.

The county health officers and health workers applaud the Minister for her farsightedness and professional thoughts in reaching out to know the health status in the counties, and challenge the Minister to continue checking on health facilities across the country. -

Press Release



Minister Wilhelmina Jallah (center) being led on a guided tour

Health officials

Starts from page 10

Reference, roadmap, development, interoperability, and focus persons and key stakeholders.

The panelists came from the Ministry of Health, J.F.K. Hospital, ELWA Hospital, Redemption Hospital, Partners in Health, respectively.

Liberia's Chief Medical Officer and Deputy Minister of Health, Doctor Francis S. Kateh, stresses that data is important but the initial investment is very high, and it's incumbent on national government to make the needed decision to move the

health sector.

Besides, he adds that data management improves efficiency in the health sector.

Doctor Kateh notes that the Ministry of Health is ready to sit in the driver's seat and turn this idea against people who have been playing without data.

The day-long brainstorming session was fruitful as discussion centered on the importance of the health system of Liberia operating with technological orderly electronic medical records. (EMR). -**Press Release**

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

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Govt incompetent to fight corruption

-CENTAL alarms
By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL) says it is deeply concerned about Liberia's continuous underperformance, especially its position among the 'worst decliners' worldwide for the Corruption Perception Index (CPI).

CENTAL's comment came Tuesday, 5 February while announcing results of the 2018 CPI, putting in low marks for Liberia.

In the report, globally Liberia ranks 120 out of 180, with a CPI score of 32.

CENTAL furthers that Liberia's CPI score has declined from 41 in 2012 to 32 in 2018 correspondingly.

Compared to other countries, Liberia is among the biggest decliners since 2012, dropping by 9 points from 41 to 32.

While countries like Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso and Senegal are improving their governance and democratic credentials, CENTAL says Liberia is fast declining in its fight against corruption.

According to CENTAL's statement, this decline speaks to government's inability to address entrenched culture of impunity and enforce existing anti-corruption laws and policies.

CENTAL intimates that no effort has been made to comprehensively audit the past administration of former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf and prosecute allegedly corrupt officials, and violation of the Code of Conduct for

public officials.

CENTAL warns that limited moral and financial support to public integrity institutions as well as plans to remove tenured positions are counterproductive to the fight against corruption in the country.

The report evaluates the first year of President George Manneh Weah and the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) - led government, highlighting the

need for concrete and deliberate actions to deal with corruption and impunity in Liberia.

CENTAL recommends that to reverse the trend and improve Liberia's standing in the region and globally, officials of all three branches of government here should declare their assets, incomes and liabilities, in full compliance with the Code of Conduct for public officials.

CENTAL says the Liberia Anti Corruption Commission recently reported a limited compliance by current officials, especially among those in the executive and legislature, saying it needs urgent attention.

"Such declarations, including those of officials from the previous government, must be verified, findings published and recommendations fully implemented," the statement adds.

CENTAL also recommends that a comprehensive audit of the past administration is commissioned to ensure that those who embezzled public resources are identified and prosecuted.

CENTAL urges government to ensure the independence and vibrancy of anti-corruption institutions by giving them full moral, financial and logistical support to effectively operate.

It also urges government to ensure safe and secure environment for the media, civil society and other advocates to thrive.

The CPI was established in 1995 and is used to measure perceptions of corruption in

the public sector in different countries and territories around the world.

CPI scores and ranks countries based on how corrupt their public sectors are perceived, drawing on 13 surveys of experts and business people.

The score ranges from 0 to 100, where 0 equals the highest level of perceived corruption, while 100 equals lowest level of perceived corruption.

This year, 180 countries were targeted, just as in 2017.

The results paint a sadly familiar picture: more than two-thirds of countries score below 50, while the average score is just 43.

Perhaps most disturbing is that the vast majority of countries assessed have made little to no progress, including Liberia that is among the worst declining countries since 2012.

From a CPI score of 41 in 2012, which showed appreciable progress, Liberia has since dropped by 9 points to 32.

Only 20 have made significant progress in recent years, including Ivory Coast that has increased by 8 points since 2013.

In Africa, the best performers include Seychelles (66), Botswana (61), Cape Verde (57) Rwanda (56) respectively.

Meanwhile, in West Africa, the best performers include Senegal (45), South Africa (43), and Ghana (41), while the worst performers are Guinea (28), Sierra Leone (30), and Liberia (32).--**Edited by Winston W. Parley**



AFL arrests 2 impersonators

-as Chief of Staff Gen. Johnson leads outreach campaign

By Emmanuel Mondaye

The Armed Forces of Liberia discloses the arrest of two individuals impersonating as soldiers.

Chief of Staff Maj./Gen. Prince C. Johnson, III, who made the disclosure here Tuesday, 5 February says the imposters are being investigated by the army.

Addressing hundreds of youth and students representing the Federation of Liberian Youth (FLY) and the

Liberia National Student Union or LINSU, as part of Armed Forces Day 2019 Citizens Engagement Roundtable held at the African Methodist Episcopal University (AMEU) on Camp Johnson Road in Monrovia, Maj./Gen. Johnson urges the public to report people impersonating as AFL soldiers, including misconducts by legitimate soldiers to the Liberia National Police (LNP).

He says this is the first instance civic procedure,

which shall notify the AFL Liaison Officer working along with the police in handling such situation.

The outreach is being held on the Theme: "Building a Force for Good through Service and Welfare", ahead of the official celebration of Armed Forces Day on February 10, 2019.

The Chief of Staff did not however disclose names of the arrested impersonators, but notes that a soldier of the Armed Forces of Liberia may be arrested by the police, investigated and prosecuted, once that soldier violates the Laws of Liberia.

He recalls instances where soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia violated the rights of peaceful citizens and they were severely punished in accordance with law.

General Johnson recounts responsibilities of soldiers of the AFL, including civil duty to the State and its people as well as engagement with citizens, among others.

Speaking of recruitment, education and medical benefits and other incentives for female soldiers of the AFL and their dependants, Brigadier General Geraldine J. George encourages female



Chief of Staff Maj./Gen. Prince C. Johnson, III

graduates from universities and high schools to take advantage by applying for military service, noting that the army offers lots of opportunities for career development and growth.

She says there is nothing in the army that male soldiers can do, which female soldiers cannot do, stressing that it takes courage, resilience, and commitment to serve in the National Army which is achievable by being discipline and law abiding.

Earlier, the Minister of Youth and Sports, Zeogar Wilson, highlights gains by the Government of Liberia in building human resource and economic empowerment for the youth through smallholder's loans to establish businesses in a group of eight persons thereby, giving them some livelihood as human beings.

Minister Wilson discloses that the Ministry has also

cultivated 25 acres of land with agriculture products thru support from Government and donors, adding that these initiatives are done through community-based participation and support.

In remarks, the Presidents of the Federation of Liberian Youth, Amos Williams, and the Liberia National Students Union, Mohammed G. Kamara, both express gratitude to the Ministry of National Defense for the frank exchanges between students and the Military, something they describe as first in history.

The two youth leaders urge the AFL to take similar awareness to market places and in densely populated communities to educate the public on the workings of the army.

This year's Armed Forces Day will be officially celebrated on Monday, February 11th. --**Editing by Jonathan Browne**

Français

L'armée compte soigner 700 personnes gratuitement

Dans le cadre des activités relatives à la célébration de la 62ème journée nationale des forces armées du Libéria, le ministère de la Défense a annoncé que 700 personnes devraient être traitées gratuitement à Yarkpai, c'est dans le district de Todee, dans le comté de Montserrado, le 9 février.

Selon le directeur des affaires publiques du ministère de la Défense, M. Anthony D. Langer, il y aura aussi une campagne d'assainissement à Battery Factory, Gardnerville, le samedi 9 février.

Depuis le 11 février 1957, la journée nationale des forces armées est célébrée chaque année pour rendre hommage aux hommes et aux femmes des forces armées du libériens qui ont consenti des sacrifices inlassables pour le maintien la sécurité et la défense de l'intégrité territoriale.

Selon M. Langer, la campagne d'assainissement et l'assistance médicale ont pour objectif de renforcer les



relations entre les militaires et les civiles. « Cela montre également que les forces armées du Libéria ont été transformées en des forces professionnelles », a déclaré M. Langer.

Ce 11 février 2019 marquera la 62e célébration de la Journée nationale des forces armées du Libéria et le 111e anniversaire de la

création de l'armée qui remonte à 1908.

L'armée profite de cette journée pour informer le public, les ressortissants étrangers et les dignitaires des activités qu'elle a entreprises pour le développement et le progrès des forces armées du Libéria.

Une partie du protocole comprend une table ronde

interactive avec la Fédération de la jeunesse libérienne (FLY) et un groupe d'étudiants de l'Université africaine méthodiste épiscopale le mardi 5 février.

M. Langer a révélé que le chef d'état-major de l'armée, le major général Prince C. Johnson III, ainsi que certains cadres supérieurs, échangeront directement avec des groupes d'étudiants mardi.

Un symposium aura également lieu le jeudi 7 février à la mairie de

Monrovia sur le thème : « Maintien de la paix et de la sécurité au Libéria grâce au renforcement des capacités et à la fourniture de services de bien-être à l'AFL ».

Quatre personnes de l'AFL et une organisation appelée Sea Shepherd devraient recevoir l'Ordre distingué de cette année.

Ces personnalités distinguées ont servi les forces armées du Libéria depuis 2007. Il s'agit des lieutenants colonels David Huber, Mustapha Jimoh, Emmanuel Larbi Sarpong Gyadu et du Sergent Brima A. Massalay, membre actif du personnel des AFL et d'une organisation appelée Sea Shepherd.

Sea Shepherd est une organisation internationale à but non lucratif pour la conservation de la faune marine et qui travaille avec les garde-côtes libériennes au fil des ans.

L'Armée a en outre déclaré que la journée serait couronnée par une démonstration, une présentation du matériel militaire et un défilé dans les principales rues de Monrovia, en commençant par le centre de formation de Barclay (BTC).

Les accords controversés d'Eton et d'Ebomaf refont surface

Le représentant du district 3 du comté de River Gee, Francis S. Dopoh, souhaite que les ministres des Finances, de la Justice et des Travaux publics et les autorités de la Banque centrale du Libéria (CBL)

donnent des explications sur le statut des accords de prêt qui avaient été signés par l'Etat du Libéria avec Eton et Ebomaf.

Les prêts controversés avaient été ratifiés par les parlementaires après avoir été présentés par le

président George Manneh Weah en 2018.

Dans leur quête de frustrer davantage les Libériens qui exigeaient une diligence raisonnable avant que leurs députés n'adoptent les accords qui leur avaient été soumis par l'exécutif, les législateurs s'étaient engagés à accepter tout emprunt soumis par le président Weah, même s'il provenait du diable.

Les deux accords de prêts controversés signés par le gouvernement au tout début de la première année du président Weah totalisaient près d'un milliard de dollars américains, mais le processus de déblocage des fonds est en standby depuis leur adoption précipitée par le parlement et leur promulgation par le président en juin.

Mais le représentant Dopoh demande maintenant à l'exécutif d'être clair sur ces accords de prêts en indiquant s'ils ne sont pas

possibles afin que les législateurs puissent les abroger.

Parlant récemment à Brewerville, Dopoh a déclaré que l'exécutif ne peut pas lier l'Etat du Libéria à des accords dont on ignore le statut après avoir été approuvés par le parlement.

Il s'est dit préoccupé par ce dossier, car dans son message annuel, le président Weah, n'a rien dit à propos des accords de prêt d'Eton et d'Ebomaf en ce qui concerne leur place dans les accords bilatéraux et multilatéraux.

Dopoh craint qu'avec de tels accords, lorsque l'Etat du Libéria ira chercher de l'aide auprès de ses partenaires bilatéraux, ces derniers pensent que le pays est toujours lié par des accords qui, en toute évidence, sont au poids mort.

A en croire le législateur de River Gee, il aurait adressé une communication à la plénière de la chambre des représentants depuis septembre 2018, mais la question n'a jamais figuré à l'ordre du jour depuis la rentrée parlementaire.



Articles traduits

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Français

Musa Bility démissionne des instances de la CAF et charge Ahmad Ahmad

Musa Bility, membre du Comité exécutif de la Confédération africaine de football (CAF), a démissionné de deux de ses fonctions au sein de la CAF. Le Libérien, ex-opposant à Issa Hayatou et ancien candidat à la présidence de la FIFA, s'en prend cette fois à l'actuel patron du foot africain, Ahmad.

Près de deux ans après son élection à la tête de la Confédération africaine de football (CAF), Ahmad a subi une violente charge de la part d'un de ses anciens soutiens. Le Libérien Musa Bility, connu pour son franc-parler, s'en est pris cette fois au Malgache, dans une lettre datée du 1er février 2019. « Je pense que nous sommes dans une situation pire qu'il y a deux ans », y affirme-t-il.

Ce membre du gouvernement du foot africain, le Comité exécutif (ComEx) de la CAF, accuse en effet son président d'abus de pouvoir, notamment. « L'ironie dans tout ça, c'est que c'est la raison pour laquelle nous nous sommes battus pour que les choses changent », tacle-t-il, en référence aux derniers mandats du prédécesseur d'Ahmad, Issa Hayatou.

Une première polémique, sur la CAN 2021

« Le pouvoir exécutif de la CAF est conféré au COMITE EXECUTIF, écrit Musa Bility dans un courrier adressé au Malgache. En d'autres termes, vous ne pouvez pas assumer des prérogatives que vous n'avez pas. Chaque décision du président de la CAF doit être approuvée par le Comité exécutif. Or, ce n'est clairement pas le cas actuellement. » L'ancien candidat à la présidence de la Fédération internationale de football fait notamment référence aux bouleversements survenus dans l'attribution des Coupes d'Afrique des nations 2021 et 2023.

Musa Bility avait surpris en déclarant à la presse ivoirienne que le Comité

exécutif n'avait jamais décidé le 30 novembre 2018 d'attribuer la CAN 2021 aux Camerounais, en guise de réparation pour la CAN 2019 qui leur avait été retirée. La version du Libérien allait totalement à l'encontre de celle d'Ahmad et de ses vice-présidents. L'ex-patron de la Liberia FA assure qu'on lui en veut encore en haut lieu pour cette sortie médiatique, malgré une médiation : « Étonnamment, j'ai été stupéfait de constater que le président en avait encore après moi par rapport à cette affaire. »

Démission de deux postes

Musa Bility assure avoir donc pris la décision de démissionner de deux de ses fonctions à la CAF : président de la Commission d'organisation du Championnat d'Afrique des nations, et membre du Comité d'urgence de la Confédération africaine de football. Concernant la première fonction, Ahmad aurait initié une réunion sur le CHAN, sans consulter le Libérien. De la même manière, il aurait été tenu à l'écart de la dernière réunion du Comité d'urgence. « Je ne peux plus supporter le fait de travailler à ces postes face aux lubies et aux caprices d'un président qui, je pense, est en train de diriger cette noble institution dans la mauvaise direction », lâche-t-il.

Musa Bility conclut, après avoir évoqué un mystérieux virement de 200 000 dollars effectué sur le compte d'une entreprise en Pologne : « J'espère que ma démission servira de réveil afin que nous restions fermes et que nous assurions que la CAF soit dirigée comme il faut, en accord avec les statuts, de manière à apporter un réel changement au football africain. C'étaient nos lignes directrices lors de notre quête de changement. Ne laissons pas notre mission et notre vision détournée en plein vol. »

COMMENTAIRE

Par Otmar Issing

La nouvelle proposition de taxe de la Commission européenne

FRANCFORT - Au travers du traité de Lisbonne adopté en 2009, l'Union européenne est devenue un acteur plus agile et plus efficace, les politiques de l'UE dans une multitude de domaines étant depuis décidées par un vote à la majorité qualifiée, plutôt qu'à l'unanimité.

Mais dans certains cas, comme l'illustrent les récents efforts de répartition des réfugiés au sein de l'UE, et notamment lorsqu'interviennent d'importantes problématiques de souveraineté nationale, les États membres en minorité de voix ne sont pas préparés ou ne sont pas disposés à appliquer des décisions collectives. Voici pourtant que la Commission européenne entreprend de régir un autre domaine dans lequel des problématiques fondamentales de souveraineté sont en jeu.

Depuis de nombreuses années, certains États membres de l'UE refusent de coopérer pleinement dans la lutte contre la fraude et l'évasion fiscale. Et dans la mesure où les politiques fiscales de l'UE nécessitent un vote à l'unanimité, chaque État dispose d'un veto. Il semble par conséquent naturel que l'UE entende introduire sur cette question également un vote à la majorité qualifiée. En vertu d'une proposition nouvelle de Pierre Moscovici, Commissaire européen aux Affaires économiques et financières, à la Fiscalité et à l'Union douanière, si 55 % des États membres, représentant au moins 65 % de la population de l'UE, votaient en faveur d'une nouvelle politique fiscale, la mesure en question serait adoptée.

À première vue, la situation semble clairement justifier un renforcement du pouvoir de l'UE sur les questions de fiscalité, ce qui permettrait enfin à l'Union de remédier à une lacune évidente. Seulement voilà, une fois introduit le mécanisme de vote à la majorité qualifiée pour contrôler la fraude et l'évasion fiscale, ce type de vote s'appliquerait également pour toutes les politiques fiscales à venir.

Et ce n'est pas une simple hypothèse. La Commission a en effet pour objectif affirmé d'appliquer le vote à la majorité qualifiée à toutes les initiatives de mesures fiscales « nécessaires aux fins du marché unique et d'une fiscalité équitable ». Une formulation aussi vague ouvre la porte à toutes sortes d'interventions.

Pour appuyer sa proposition, Pierre Moscovici évoque également l'entrée potentielle de revenus supplémentaires pour l'UE via de nouvelles taxes liées aux transactions financières et au numérique - deux aspects explicitement mentionnés dans sa proposition en tant qu'options de mesures possibles. Il reste à savoir si ces taxes particulières répondront aux attentes de leurs partisans. Et quand bien même elles échoueraient, l'expérience passée nous conduit à penser

que la Commission userait de cette nouvelle règle de vote pour faire entrer des recettes fiscales sans cesse plus élevées, « destinées à l'Europe », via tous les moyens disponibles.

Dans le contexte actuel, la sortie prochaine du Royaume-Uni hors du bloc est vouée à modifier considérablement les conditions permettant d'atteindre une majorité qualifiée sur les questions fiscales. Le Royaume-Uni compte parmi les États membres du nord, qui représentent ensemble 39 % de la population de l'UE, et qui ont par ailleurs tendance à s'opposer aux mesures protectionnistes, augmentation d'impôts, et autres transferts en direction de pays hautement endettés. De leur côté, les pays méditerranéens, généralement favorables aux transferts et à l'imposition, représentent actuellement 38 % de la population de l'UE.

Les choses ont été bien faites. En vertu du traité de Lisbonne, les conditions d'une majorité qualifiée ont été équilibrées de sorte que soit conférée aux États membres du « nord » comme du « sud » une minorité de blocage d'au moins 35 % de la population de l'UE. Tant que les États membres du nord étaient en phase, ils pouvaient empêcher toute initiative contraire à leurs intérêts. Mais avec le Brexit, la part du nord dans la population est vouée à retomber à 30 %, et celle du sud à passer à 43 %. Autrement dit, le nord ne disposera plus d'un veto. La situation est d'autant plus problématique qu'à l'issue des prochaines élections du mois de mai, une redistribution comparable concernera le Parlement européen, qui gagnerait lui aussi à peser davantage sur les questions de politiques fiscales si les suggestions de la Commission étaient adoptées.

La proposition de la Commission doit être considérée comme ce qu'elle est : une tentative d'affaiblissement de la compétence fiscale d'États souverains, via une petite porte à première vue sans danger. Le rééquilibrage prochain du pouvoir dans l'UE s'annonçant clairement à tous, nul besoin d'être prophète pour prédire des taxes plus élevées à l'avenir. Même si les États membres du nord s'opposent unanimement aux augmentations de taxes, ils ne seront pas en mesure d'y faire obstacle. Et tôt ou tard, les réactions face à cette perte de souveraineté et taxation massive des pays du nord se retourneront contre l'UE elle-même.

Compte tenu de ces ramifications, la proposition de la Commission consistant à soumettre les questions de politiques fiscales à un vote à la majorité qualifiée s'inscrit non seulement à l'encontre des efforts déjà difficiles visant à atteindre une « union sans cesse plus étroite », mais menace également l'intégration acquise à ce jour. Il semble que la Commission n'aient pas tiré les leçons du débat éprouvant des deux dernières années et demie autour du Brexit. À travers sa toute dernière et sourde initiative, elle continue d'apporter de l'eau au moulin des eurosceptiques.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Bong County: midwives get refresher training

About 30 local midwives have completed a weeklong midwifery skills sharing workshop training at Phebe, Bong County.

The training was organized by Life for African Mothers (LFAM), a non for profit and non-governmental organization; aims are to reduce maternal mortality in Sub-Sahara Africa.

The training which ran from Monday January 28 to Friday February 1, 2019 focused on normal labour, shock, obstructed labour, pre-eclampsia & eclampsia. Other part of the training includes obstetric emergencies, sepsis, post-partum haemorrhage and care of the new born.

Making remarks at the closing program, the county health officer of Bong, Dr. Adolphus T. Yelah cautioned the participants to make ample use of the knowledge gained from the experienced registered midwives from the United Kingdom as to enable them safe the lives of many mothers and their babies.

"I am very much confident that you guys learned a new skill, as you are go back to your working sites, I just want to admonish you to share the knowledge you're your colleagues who did not go for the training for the system to benefits," he concluded.

Also speaking, Bong county health team Reproduction health Supervisor, Ciazue B. Melvin warned midwives to always take those babies at birth as their own as to



carefully focus on pregnant women and their babies for safe delivery.

Speaking on behalf of the participants, Madam Tetima Kollie Commended the organizers and promised to make proper use of the training as to make mothers happy at birth.

However, the trainers, Jayney Shaw, Kate Wooler and Maria Shaw expressed their happiness of being with the midwives and commended them for grabbing all necessary things thought them and be patience during the workshop.

They expressed their optimism that whatever acquired from the training by the local midwives will help save the lives of mothers and their kids.

They urged them to adequately use the skills learned to impact other midwives within their

vicinities.

Moreover, the winner of the Dr. Dada's award Evon Vesselee asserted that winning the award will serve as motivation to apply more efforts in the work that she has passion for.

The Bong Mines hospital OB wall supervisor disclosed that she will use the new skills obtained from the refresher training workshop to train other midwives in order to enable them learn the new skills in midwifery.

The award is usually given to midwife who spectacularly performed during the workshop training.

Meanwhile, the Country Director of Life for African Mothers (LFAM), Abdul Bah commended the health team of the county for the coordination and applauded the trainers for coming to Liberia to train midwives.

Director Bah acknowledged

the challenges faced by the midwives in Liberia in performing their duties, promised to work with them in other capacity to make their work as more lives saving.

He added that the workshop

is an effort to support the government of Liberia efforts in revamping the health sector of the country.

Life for African Mothers is an international charity group which has trained over 250 midwives in 2017 in six counties in Liberia.

The organization is working to address the tragedy and injustice to women who die every year in pregnancy and childbirth.

According to statistics, over 303,000 women die every year from complications in childbirth which occur mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa. 99% of all these deaths are avoidable with the right medical care and resources.

According to them parents should be happy when they are about to give birth, there should be no hinder to worry them. **-Press release**

"Economy in

Starts from back page

delivered by a Liberian politician.

The President's annual message has been greeted by mixed reactions from several quarters including the opposition blog which said the speech lacked substance.

Major opposition groups including the Unity Party, Liberty Party and the All Liberian Party criticized President Weah for his failure to address some pertinent issues including the dwindling economy, high cost of living and the increasing number of unemployment.

But Wolokolie rubbished their claims and backed the President, saying Liberia is far better off under the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) - led government.

"I stand before you with confidence and declare that the state of our nation is strong, peaceful, united, stable and promising with great prospect for a better future for all," he said.

Mr. Wolokolie characterized the president's message as one of the best messages he has ever listened to or one of the best scriptures of messages that he has ever read since the foundation of Liberia.

"The difference between the message of President Dr. George Manneh Weah and that of other state of the nation messages that I have listened to in my young age is that his message focused on results of what have been achieved," Mr. Wolokolie continued.

He argued that the

president focused more on achievements and giving account of report of what has been achieved in the last one year and what will be achieved in the year to come.

Speaking further, Wolokolie noted that the message was deeply embedded with tangibles that are worth boosting about.

He named the construction of the Chubgor Road in the Old Road Community, the Bishop Michael Francis Road and the Doe Community Road as some of the tangible deliverables of CDC's one-year administration.

"The president and his team of officers in the governance of the Republic have turned dust into asphalt on major street corridors in Monrovia," he contended.

Wolokolie asserted that the president's pledge to pave the last road leading to the remotest part of the country demonstrates his exuberance and dedication to fix the roads here and improve the lives of the citizenry.

Also speaking, CDC Rep. Acarus Gray indicated that the government's ability to pay civil servants regularly despite inheriting a broke economy is a significant stride.

"What we inherited was US\$5 million as operational fund. And the government needs US\$23 million to pay civil servants. So, it is part of the improvement the president talked about," Gray said. **--**

Edited by Winston W. Parley

Health officials brainstorm on EMR

The Ministry of Health in collaboration with partners ends a day-long brainstorming session aimed at formulating

The session stresses coordination to better understand the EMR experience, provides participants a broad overview

among others.

The exercise brought together health workers and partners, who fully



Photo courtesy: Augustine K. Ngaima Photographer Communication Unit Ministry of Health

electronic medical records (EMR) to strengthen data information sharing in the health sector of Liberia.

of universal health coverage, evidence based strategic development, and full adherence to sustainability,

participated in the moderate technical session to form the Terms of



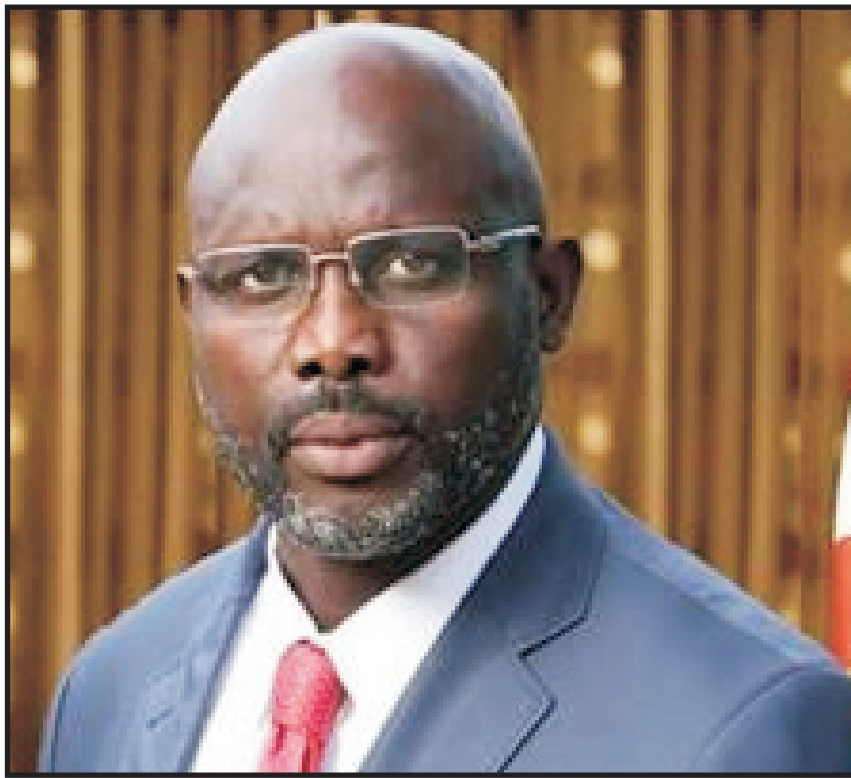
Weah warned

By Winston W. Parley

Incidents of political violence involving stalwarts and supporters of ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) against opposition have prompted former Public Works Minister Atty. Samuel Kofi Woods to warn President George Manneh Weah against abusing the opportunity he has as product for the struggle for multiparty here.

Speaking on the Costa Show Tuesday morning, 5 February, Atty. Woods, a former Public Works Minister in former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf's regime, says "the political violence" in Montserrado County District #13 last year and the violence in Rep. Yekeh Kolubah's district last month "are not good signs."

These incidents cited by Atty. Woods related to the bloody violence that erupted in Montserrado County District #10 when Rep. Kolubah was holding a program for kids during which ruling CDC supporters staged a violent protest in demand of the living



body of Kolubah's security aide over accusation wounding a guy during some tussle.

The violence saw several others including some kids and a riot police officer sustaining injuries and the program disrupted. Police fast tracked charges against Kolubah's aide, and later charged several others believed to be linked to the incident.

This case came after another deadly political violence in Montserrado District #13 when CDC supporters and opposition Unity Party candidate Cornelia Kruah - Togba's supporters clashed on the day of campaign for a representative seat which both sides lost at the ballot box.

Atty. Woods says he is not

very happy about these developments, urging the Weah regime to take responsibility to protect everyone.

The 54 - year old warns that Liberia cannot slip back to the ugly past, lamenting that he still sees tribal divides getting wider; social divides getting wider and still sees ruthless self - enrichment today than in previous time.

In further cautioning President Weah about the sycophantic nature of those hailing everything he does, Atty. Woods told a story about a young mosquito and its parents in which the young mosquito told its parents that it was being hailed with hand claps by so many people while hustling out there.

Contrary to the young mosquito's account, Atty. Woods narrates that its parents were instead advising it to be thankful that it was not hit by any of those "slaps" that it mistook to be "claps" by so many people.

According to Atty. Woods, the parents informed the young mosquito that the slaps it heard were actually intended to kill it and not that the people were hailing it with claps.

Atty. Woods uses this mosquito story to try to alert President Weah of how sycophants around leaders would hail everything even for things that deserve corrections.

He cautions President Weah not to fall prey to the historic sycophancy that has haunted and destroyed this country for years.

Atty. Woods believes that President Weah owes it to lift Liberians out of poverty and promote integrity institutions.

He notes further that President Weah owes it to Liberians to perform well, rather than to think that he is celebrated or somebody owes him anything.

He additionally encourages the regime to stop referring to former President Sirleaf's standard of rule as an excuse for failing to perform well to move the country forward.

Atty. Woods reminds the government that Liberians had a change when they voted President Weah to power in 2017, stressing that the government cannot continue to refer to what former President Sirleaf and her government did or did not do.

He cautions that this government will be graded by what it will do, noting that President Weah is a product of the struggle for multiparty here and must not abuse the opportunity he has today to rule.

Atty. Woods urges the regime to respect and protect freedom of speech, adding that the Constitution cannot be undermined.

He observes that suggestions coming from those outside of government are not being embraced with opened minds but they are rather misunderstood as envy and job - seeking.

He warns that this undermines the sanctity of the governance efforts here, challenging government not to see its critics as enemies but rather as partners who help to move the country forward.

Atty. Woods concludes that the Legislature cannot continue to be rubber stamp, and adds that if the Judiciary is politically subservient, it has to wake up.

Senate probes cargo tracking regime at NPA

By Ethel A. Tweh

The Liberian Senate is conducting an inquiry into a new cargo tracking regime at the National Port Authority (NPA) due to concerns that the measure has economic complications in an economy that is already in worse condition.

Following a request through a communication by Grand Cape Mount County Sen. Varney Sherman, the Senate has invited the NPA, the Global Tracking and Maritime Solutions Holdings and the Liberia Chambers of Commerce to give evidence of a cargo tracking regime at NPA.

The NPA and Global Tracking and Maritime Solutions Holdings are parties to this new cargo tracking regime at the Liberian port of entry, but the LCC is the institution that recently alarmed the new measure.

Sen. Sherman's communication requests the Senate to invite the NPA, the Global Tracking and Maritime Solutions Holding and the Liberia Chambers of Commerce to give evidence of a cargo tracking regime at NPA.

He observes that the cargo tracking regime at NPA has been an alarming issue of the LCC and has been reported in various newspapers here.

The Senate Chairman on

Judiciary and member of the Committee on Commerce and Industry reminds the Senate that the LCC which has alerted the public to this new cargo tracking regime is an institution that has so many business groups under its umbrella.

He names the Liberia Business Association, the Fula Business Association, the World Lebanese Cultural Union, the Indian Association, Bankers Association and Custom Brokers Association, among others.

According to Seb. Sherman, the House of Representatives Committee on Contract, Concessions and Investment has invited both the NPA and the Global Tracking and Maritime Solutions Holdings because of the seriousness of the matter.

"I therefore urge the Liberian Senate to take the same initiative as the House of Representatives by having our committee on Commerce and Industry to investigate into this regime before it takes effect," Sherman notes.

He informs his colleagues in the Senate that in November 2018, the Sierra Leone Port Authority cancelled a cargo tracking regime it had with a private company.

However, Bong County Sen. Henry Yallah made a motion that the communication be received by plenary and send to the committee to report in two weeks.--**Edited by Winston W. Parley**



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

Lonestar Cell MTN

Starts from back page

issues," the company said adding, "we have extended our hours at several service centers across the country to give our customers more flexibility in addressing their needs"

"We are also available online via social media

(Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn), where customers can send in their concerns, questions or issues using the hashtag #AskUche to get help and support at any time. Our CEO, Uche Ofodile is 'here for you'!" the release added.

"Economy in steady growth"

-Min. Wolokolie claims amid biting hardship



By E.J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Deputy Finance Minister for Fiscal Affairs Samora Wolokolie is claiming here that the economy is growing steadily, in the face of biting economic woes suffering vast majority of Liberia's poor population.

Speaking when he appeared alongside Montserrado County

District #8 Rep. Acarous Gray on a live radio talk show recently to dissect President George Weah's state of the nation address, Minister Wolokolie said the economy here is growing steadily at 2.5 percent and is expected to increase to 3 percent by the end of 2019 as projected.

Prices of goods continue to go on the rise here while the

Liberian Dollars perpetually remains devalued against the US Dollars to the disadvantage of vast majority of the population, many of whom are unemployed or lack sustainable business opportunities.

According to two officials, government is making significant strides in resuscitating the weak economy that it inherited in January 2018.

Commenting on reduction of debt stock, Wolokolie noted that government has paid to the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) more than US\$9 million out of US\$10 million debt that government inherited for power supply to government institutions.

Responding to a barrage of criticisms against the president's annual message, Wolokolie contended that it was one of the best speeches ever



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Lonestar Cell MTN launches new promotion

-to improve customers experience

Liberia's leading GSM service provider, Lonestar Cell MTN has announced the launching of its new promotion aim at improving customers' experience.

The new promotion, "Here for You" campaign is

to improve customers' experience on our network," the company said in a release issued Tuesday February 5, 2019.

As part of the new promotion the company announced that it will be conducting a 'Here for You'

Roadshow which will include prize competitions and performances by Liberian artists.

"Customers should be on the lookout for our mobile Y'ello Clinic where they can get help and support for any network related



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