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The New Dawn

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TRULY INDEPENDENT

#Stop prioritizing foreign businesses over Liberian businesses!#

VOL. 9 NO. 014

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2019

PRICE LD\$40.00

Weah's convoy in bloody crash



P11



The late Gabriel Wilson



The late Victoria Wlue



Former Associate Justice Cllr. Michael Wilkins Wrights

Police link accident to drunk driving



Continental News

DR Congo election loser calls for rematch

The runner-up in DR Congo's controversial presidential election has proposed staging the poll again within six months.

In a letter to the African Union summit in Addis Ababa, Martin Fayulu restated his allegation that the vote result had been rigged, and suggested "holding the elections again within six months".

Felix Tshisekedi was declared winner of the December 30 ballot with 38.5 percent of the vote, against Fayulu's 34.8 percent.

Fayulu, whose letter was made public on Monday, said the DRC's Independent National Election Commission (CENI) had "quite simply fabricated the results it published".

He pointed to reports from independent election monitors and observers from his own coalition, Lamuka, as well as to vote tallies by the CENI itself that have been

leaked to the press.

"(All) attest that I was elected president of the Democratic Republic of Congo with more than 60 percent of the vote," he charged. Fayulu suggested setting up an AU special committee to verify the

results.

The two-day AU summit, which was winding up on Monday, was attended by Tshisekedi, who was elected the organisation's second vice president for 2019. He also met UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres

and the European Union's foreign relations chief, Federica Mogherini.

Fayulu's bitterness over the election outcome has mingled with relief outside the country that the vote was calm by DRC standards and led to the country's first-ever peaceful transition of power.

Tshisekedi succeeded Joseph Kabila, whose 18-year

tenure was criticised for authoritarianism, rights abuses and corruption.

Both Fayulu and Tshisekedi are from the ranks of the opposition.

The election should have taken place at the end of 2016 but Kabila stayed in office for an additional two years, invoking a caretaker clause in the constitution. AP



Election bitterness: Fayulu, left, and Tshisekedi

Zimbabwe VP in India for treatment

The government of Zimbabwe has confirmed that its Vice-President Constantino Chiwenga is receiving medical treatment abroad.

This comes days after he dismissed reports of being airlifted to South Africa.

Deputy Information Minister Energy Mutodi said on social media that Mr Chiwenga was recovering well from a minor abdominal ailment in the Indian capital, Delhi.

The former head of Zimbabwe's military played a

since December.

The company said homes and businesses would experience power cuts, known as load-shedding, because of "continued pressure" on the national grid.

Power cuts, without warning, could last for about four hours at a time.

Mr Ramaphosa said Eskom had reached the stage of "dysfunctionality".

"Energy is really the important generator of economic growth in our country and we are addressing

Nigerian president attacked at rally

Security detail of Nigeria president Muhammadu Buhari, rushed to shield him when irate supporters at a campaign rally began throwing objects at the stage during the event.

The ruling All Progressives Congress, APC, top executives were also on stage at the rally in the southwestern Ogun State as part of Buhari's

nationwide campaign stops.

The president could not finish his address at the MKO Abiola International Stadium in Abeokuta where a mammoth crowd had gathered to hear him. Local media portals say the rally ended abruptly when Buhari raised the hand of Dapo Abiodun, the APC's gubernatorial candidate.

The reason for the violent

response being because supporters were behind a different candidate. The APC national chairman, Adams Oshiomhole, had earlier been similarly attacked and supporters of the APC candidate chased from the venue of the event. Outgoing State governor Ibikunle Amosun is known to be backing one Adegunle Akinlade, though the preferred candidate lost the governorship ticket.

Akindele, a lawmaker on the APC ticket, defected to an opposition party, the Allied Peoples Movement, APM, after failing to secure the ticket. Reports also indicate that thugs destroyed party paraphernalia bearing the images and messages of Abiodun. Buhari is contesting for a second and final term in office with his main contender being former vice-president Atiku Abubakar. The February 16 race is seen as a two-horse race between the two even though the ballot paper is expected to have over seventy aspirants. BBC



Mr Chiwenga (L) is seen as a potential successor to President Emmerson/Mnangagwa (R)

key role in ousting former President Robert Mugabe in 2017.

Correspondents say he is widely seen as a potential successor to the current leader, Emmerson Mnangagwa.

The president last week denied there was a power struggle between himself and his deputy.

South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa says he is "quite angry" with the state-owned electricity firm Eskom over the rationing of power in the country for the first time

it," he said.

Mr Ramaphosa also raised concern that many people were failing to pay for electricity, causing a revenue shortfall at Eskom.

"Many of our people are not paying for electricity, and users must know if we want electricity, and if we want Eskom to survive, we have got to pay for the electricity that we use, just like you pay for the airtime that you use for the cellphone," he added.

EDITORIAL

Drug shortage undermines healthcare delivery

THE COMMITTEE ON Health at the House of Representatives on Capitol Hill has been mandated to probe the alarming shortage of essential medical drugs in various hospitals across the country and submit findings in a week.

THIS FOLLOWED SEPARATE communication from Representatives Ivar K. Jones of Margibi County electoral district#2 and Matthew Joe of Grand Bassa County district#3 to plenary last week, seeking the indulgence of the House to invite the Minister of Health and her principal deputies to appear before full plenary to brief that body on the status of the public health sector in the country, specifically shortage of essential medical drugs and logistical supplies to public health facilities.

THE CURRENT HEALTH situation in the country has moved from bad to worse, with services at major hospitals and health centers reduced to providing prescriptions to patients to go out and purchase drugs at private drugstores.

THE LACK OF drugs in hospitals is reaching crisis proportion and some of the affected hospitals include G.W. Harley Memorial Hospital in Sanniquellie, Nimba County, Phebe Hospital in Suakoko, Bong County and the Charles Henry Rennie Hospital in Kakata, Margibi County, among others.

LIBERIA'S MINISTER OF Health, Doctor Wilhelmina Jallah, who ended a three-county tour to western Liberia recently, is fully abreast of the looming health calamity, as she assured health workers across the country of ongoing effort by the Ministry to ask partners for seed funding that would immediately address shortages of essential drugs within the health sector.

DOCTOR JALLAH AND delegation toured Grand Cape Mount, Bomi, and Gbarpolu counties, respectively aimed at assessing the health care system in these areas.

CHALLENGES IN THE health sector are enormous, ranging from inadequate qualified staff, lack of equipment, ambulances and drugs as well as poor incentives. Besides, some health workers are even not on government payroll.

WE URGE THE Health Committee and members of the House to go beyond just hearing from the Ministry of Health and her deputies, and come up with policy measures to rescue the health system from collapse.

IT IS TIME that we address health matters with urgency, for we all are aware that recent history is replete with officials going abroad to seek medication because of the poor quality of health services in Liberia.

WE ALSO CALL on authorities of the Ministry of Health to introduce stringent regulatory measures for drugs brought into country, so that distribution processes are not just transparent, but done with accountability to make service accessible and affordable to all.

New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

Published by the Searchlight Communications Inc., Crown Hill-Broad Street,
Adjacent Afriland Bank Monrovia-Liberia.

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COMMENTARY

By Nouriel Roubini

A Mixed Economic Bag in 2019

Since the global synchronized growth of 2017, economic conditions have been gradually weakening and will produce an across-the-board deceleration in the months ahead. Beyond that, the prospect for markets and national economies will depend on a broad range of factors, some of which do not bode well.

NEW YORK - After the synchronized global economic expansion of 2017 came the asynchronous growth of 2018, when most countries other than the United States started to experience slowdowns. Worries about US inflation, the US Federal Reserve's policy trajectory, ongoing trade wars, Italian budget and debt woes, China's slowdown, and emerging-market fragilities led to a sharp fall in global equity markets toward the end of the year.

The good news at the start of 2019 is that the risk of an outright global recession is low. The bad news is that we are heading into a year of synchronized global deceleration; growth will fall toward - and, in some cases, below - potential in most regions.

To be sure, the year started with a rally in risky assets (US and global equities) after the bloodbath of the last quarter of 2018, when worries about Fed interest-rate hikes and about Chinese and US growth tanked many markets. Since then, the Fed has pivoted toward renewed dovishness, the US has maintained solid growth, and China's macroeconomic easing has shown some promise of containing the slowdown there.

Whether these relatively positive conditions last will depend on many factors. The first thing to consider is the Fed. Markets are now pricing in the Fed's monetary-policy pause for the entire year, but the US labor market remains robust. Were wages to accelerate and produce even moderate inflation above 2%, fears of at least two more rate hikes this year would return, possibly shocking markets and leading to a tightening of financial conditions. That, in turn, will revive concerns about US growth.

Second, as the slowdown in China continues, the government's current mix of modest monetary, credit, and fiscal stimulus could prove inadequate, given the lack of private-sector confidence and high levels of overcapacity and leverage. If worries about a Chinese slowdown resurface, markets could be severely affected. On the other hand, a stabilization of growth would duly renew market confidence.

A related factor is trade. While an escalation of the Sino-American conflict would hamper global growth, a continuation of the current truce via a deal on trade would reassure markets, even as the two countries' geopolitical and technology rivalry continues to build over time.

Fourth, the eurozone is slowing down, and it remains to be seen whether it is heading toward lower potential growth or something worse. The outcome will be determined both by national-level variables - such as political developments in France, Italy, and Germany - and broader regional and global factors.

Obviously, a "hard" Brexit would negatively affect business and investor confidence in the United Kingdom and the European Union alike. US President Donald Trump extending his trade war to the European automotive sector would severely undercut growth across the EU, not just

in Germany. Finally, much will depend on how Euroskeptic parties fare in the European Parliament elections this May. And that, in turn, will add to the uncertainties surrounding European Central Bank President Mario Draghi's successor and the future of eurozone monetary policy.

Fifth, America's dysfunctional domestic politics could add to uncertainties globally. The recent government shutdown suggests that every upcoming negotiation over the budget and the debt ceiling will turn into a partisan war of attrition. An expected report from the special counsel, Robert Mueller, may or may not lead to impeachment proceedings against Trump. And by the end of the year, the fiscal stimulus from the Republican tax cuts will become a fiscal drag, possibly weakening growth.

Sixth, equity markets in the US and elsewhere are still overvalued, even after the recent correction. As wage costs rise, weaker US earnings and profit margins in the coming months could be an unwelcome surprise. With highly indebted firms facing the possibility of rising short- and long-term borrowing costs, and with many tech stocks in need of further corrections, the danger of another risk-off episode and market correction can't be ruled out.

Seventh, oil prices may be driven down by a coming supply glut, owing to shale production in the US, a potential regime change in Venezuela (leading to expectations of greater production over time), and failures by OPEC countries to cooperate with one another to constrain output. While low oil prices are good for consumers, they tend to weaken US stocks and markets in oil-exporting economies, raising concerns about corporate defaults in the energy and related sectors (as happened in early 2016).

Finally, the outlook for many emerging-market economies will depend on the aforementioned global uncertainties. The chief risks include slowdowns in the US or China, higher US inflation and a subsequent tightening by the Fed, trade wars, a stronger dollar, and falling oil and commodity prices.

Though there is a cloud over the global economy, the silver lining is that it has made the major central banks more dovish, starting with the Fed and the People's Bank of China, and quickly followed by the European Central Bank, the Bank of England, the Bank of Japan, and others. Still, the fact that most central banks are in a highly accommodative position means that there is little room for additional monetary easing. And even if fiscal policy wasn't constrained in most regions of the world, stimulus tends to come only after a growth stall is already underway, and usually with a significant lag.

There may be enough positive factors to make this a relatively decent, if mediocre, year for the global economy. But if some of the negative scenarios outlined above materialize, the synchronized slowdown of 2019 could lead to a global growth stall and sharp market downturn in 2020.

O-PED

By Asad Jamal

Can Pakistan Ride the New Tech Wave?

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA - In the old days, it was the discovery of natural resources, such as gold or hydrocarbons, that drove the world's most dynamic economies. Today, it's technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship. As we all know by now, a one- or two-person tech start-up with no physical assets can become a multi-billion-dollar company and transform entire industries, almost in the blink of an eye.

This tech-driven revolution potentially gives developing countries a great chance to speed up the modernization of their economies. For example, Pakistan - which has 130 million young people and a largely traditional economy - and other developing countries could look for inspiration to China, which just two decades ago had a small tech start-up industry, but is now home to nine of the world's top 20 digital companies.

I first experienced this Chinese tech dynamism when, inspired by the late-1990s Internet start-up culture, I moved to Silicon Valley and founded ePlanet Capital, a venture capital firm. I was new to the field and unsure what to expect. In 2000, I met Robin Li, a Chinese entrepreneur in his twenties who was seeking funding for his new company, Baidu. Based on conventional investment criteria, Baidu's chances of success seemed low. The company had no track record, limited funding, and an inexperienced team, yet they were aiming to challenge search giants Google and Yahoo.

But I soon learned that in the new Internet world, these obstacles were perfectly normal and surmountable by visionary, passionate entrepreneurs with big dreams and ideas. Consequently, my firm went ahead and invested in Robin's vision. Within five years of that first meeting, Baidu went from little more than an idea to being the leader in China's Internet search industry, leaving Google and Yahoo far behind. Today, it is one of China's top three Internet companies, forming the so-called BAT triumvirate along with Alibaba and Tencent. Robin himself is now the Larry Page (or Bill Gates) of China, with a net worth of over \$10 billion.

Baidu's story is similar to that of many other successful tech firms. Like Alibaba, Apple, Google, and Facebook, the company was driven by young founders rather than older business tycoons. In addition, Baidu initially relied on venture capital for equity funding, avoiding the conventional bank debt that would have been a kiss of death for a young start-up. Like its successful US peers, Baidu posed a radical and disruptive challenge to incumbent market leaders. Finally, Baidu showed that good ideas can grow at an exponential pace, as its market share rose from zero to market leadership in five years.

Since then, the pace of technological innovation has accelerated further, with the computing and Internet revolution morphing into a new one powered by artificial intelligence, nanotech-biotech, and cyber-physical systems. Here, too, the opportunities for visionary entrepreneurs are huge. And here, too, the global leaders are the US and China, with the latter continuing its remarkable recent tech development.

What, then, should the priorities be for a developing country such as Pakistan, which today is where China was economically 25 years ago?

At present, Pakistan's economy is focused on traditional industrial sectors, agriculture, textiles, fertilizer, and cement, leaving it trapped somewhere between the first and second industrial revolutions. The combined market value of all 559 companies listed on the Pakistan Stock Exchange is about \$60 billion, equivalent to that of a single top-100 technology company.

To break its cycle of poverty, Pakistan must create conditions enabling its broad participation in the technology revolution. Only through radical reform can the country leapfrog to the AI-led Fourth Industrial Revolution of today. To achieve this, Pakistan must recognize that its young people are its most precious resource. It should educate and empower them, and cultivate their success, particularly in science and technology. If they succeed, Pakistan succeeds.

The good news for Pakistan and other countries in a similar position is that tech start-ups require far fewer resources than traditional large-scale industrial firms. Whereas the latter typically need hundreds of millions of dollars in capital, plant and machinery, and bank loans, tech companies need only a small team of smart people, computers, modest funding, and mentorship. Young Pakistani entrepreneurs are just as well placed as their Chinese counterparts were two decades ago: they need big ideas and encouragement to build on them.

Here, of course, the provision of venture capital is essential. Pakistan should therefore establish a national venture capital fund to promote technology entrepreneurship. Moreover, China's rise as an economic and technology leader gives Pakistan a unique opportunity to learn from its neighbor and collaborate with it in education, science, and technology. And Pakistan should leverage its historical ties with US and British universities in these areas.

Technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship are the key ingredients for economic success in the twenty-first century, as the US and China are demonstrating. Pakistan has huge untapped potential in these fields that must now be realized. The payoff could be enormous: a more dynamic Pakistan that is better placed to solve many of its other problems.

OPINION

By Gene Frieda

China's Difficult Balancing Act

LONDON - After a long period of investment-driven growth, China is finally changing its policy playbook. Having recognized the costs of relying on excessive credit growth in the medium term, now it is emphasizing tax cuts, further market opening, and incentives to boost consumption over investment. This means accepting lower growth rates in the future.

Yet, seven months into this shift, it is clear that these new policy measures alone will not be enough to stabilize growth at a sufficiently high rate. The targeted nature of the fiscal stimulus announced so far, together with regulatory efforts to limit the adverse side effects of earlier policy easing, suggest that the stabilization process will be longer and more arduous than expected.

There will be strong temptations to return to the old model as the economy adapts. But China's leaders seem to accept that unless there are major negative shocks, they should not open the credit floodgates again to address cyclical weakness.

As a result, China must perform a difficult balancing act. It needs to keep growth high enough to maintain social stability, while also maintaining external stability, as reflected in the renminbi's exchange rate. How China manages its currency during the policy shift could have important global consequences.

Other Asian economies faced a similar problem two decades ago. A central lesson from the 1997-1998 Asian crisis was that rigid exchange rates were incompatible with rapid, debt-driven growth. Fueled by cheap debt, fast-growing Asian economies tried to maintain high investment rates for far too long. Their current accounts deteriorated, and growth slowed as their currencies remained pegged to a sharply appreciating dollar. Eventually they were forced to devalue their currencies as capital fled and foreign reserves dwindled.

In the wake of the global financial crisis, China managed to maintain high rates of investment growth only through rapid credit expansion. As a result, aggregate debt levels surged to around 270% of GDP in 2018 from approximately 150% in 2008. Over the same period, China's current-account surplus fell from 9% of GDP to less than 1%.

Because these high debt levels limit China's policy options, the renminbi's exchange rate could play a more important role in stabilizing growth than in the past. But the perceived political constraint on depreciating the currency to support growth, and the increasing role of the state sector in the economy, are adding to cyclical headwinds and making stabilization more difficult.

There are also uncertainties regarding China's future growth model, stemming from Western challenges to Chinese participation in the global trading system and the inconsistencies between the old and new policy playbooks.

These uncertainties, in turn, create negative feedback loops. Risk-averse lenders shun private-sector borrowers because of a lack of good collateral and the implicit guarantees on loans to the state sector. The role of the state naturally strengthens as the government tries to stabilize growth rates at lower levels. A lack of alternative financial assets channels savings into the property market, but high-real estate prices force consumers to borrow more to buy property, crowding out consumption. And the bias toward infrastructure investment limits investment in services spending on education, health care, and financial inclusion, preventing the economy from producing what consumers want.

To be clear, the near-term risk of a Chinese crash or crisis remains low. Despite higher debt levels, China retains plenty of fiscal and regulatory tools to stabilize its economy. But, as with any major policy shift, the risk of accidents is substantial. The greatest risk concerns exchange-rate management, which is currently preventing China from using monetary policy to help stimulate the economy.

China currently is unwilling to ease monetary policy because it doesn't want the renminbi to depreciate, in part for geopolitical reasons but also due to its bad experience with currency flexibility in August 2015. But, following the sharp rise in debt over the last decade, debt-service costs are now equivalent to 70% of the total monthly flow of credit. Interest-rate cuts have become imperative.

If China fails to ease monetary policy to complement the fiscal stimulus, it risks falling into a trap similar to the one that ensnared its Asian peers in the 1990s. The best way for China to avoid a sharper, more destabilizing currency devaluation is to stabilize growth quickly, before doubts deepen about the economy's longer-term trajectory.

China has embarked on a huge policy shift aimed at putting the economy on a lower-growth but more sustainable trajectory. How its leaders manage this transition is crucial for China's future, and how well it performs its balancing act will have major implications for global stability.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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NEC conducts training in Bassa

A comprehensive 5-day training for 19 election magistrates is being conducted by the NEC Hearing Section in Buchanan

city, Liberia from 11 to 15 February with the assistance of UNDP project "Support to the 2015-2018 Liberian Electoral Cycle."

The project financially sustained by the United Nations Development Programme, European Union, Ireland, Sweden and Canada with a fund of USD16 million and in partnership with the National Elections Commission (NEC).

The training will strengthen the electoral dispute resolution mechanisms, one of the Achilles' heel of electoral process as per 2017 General election experience, and support further capacity building of the NEC magistrates in dispute resolution.

The 2017 General elections produced important case law in a form of the Supreme Court decisions that will be used as guide for the practical exercises together with practice of moot court hearings and drafting decision.

Complaint reporting system will be also tested.



Sen. Doe - Sheriff dead

Starts from backpage

Monday at the 62nd Armed Forces Day celebration in Monrovia, President Weah described the late Sen. Doe - Sheriff as a patriot and one of the pillars of contemporary women movement.

He recalls that before setting out to leave Monrovia for a program in Gbarnga, Bong County on Sunday, 10 February, he received the sad news of the death of Sen. Jeroldine Doe - Sheriff.

According to the president, the passing of Sen. Doe - Sheriff does not only serve as

a big blow to her family and the Senate, but to women in leadership and the young girls and women that are aspiring to be great leaders for tomorrow.

President Weah indicates that the late Senator paved the way for women

to rise up to the top and become voices in the political spectrum here when she rose to the position of Chairlady of the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC).

UNDP, CI and GOL signed conservation agreement

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has announced here that it is working in collaboration with Conservation International (CI) to support the Liberian Government to promote conservation and sustainable livelihood activities.

The UNDP said the support is being channeled through the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry Development Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Under the GEF financed Good Growth Partnership (GGP), UNDP said it aims to encourage sustainable practices for oil palm while conserving forests and safeguarding the rights of smallholder farmers and forest dependent communities while also supporting the sustainable development of the oil palm sector in Liberia, through the application and promotion of a holistic manner and integrated approach to tackling the challenges related to unsustainable oil palm production across the entire oil palm supply chain.

UNDP recognizes the landscape approach as a land use and management theory that seeks to simultaneously reconcile competing land uses to achieve social, environmental and economic goals.

It focuses on multi-stakeholder participation in decision-making and management to understand the processes of change,

provide solutions at multiple scales and improve the resilience of local communities and their environments.

UNDP works closely with and channels resources through Conservation International to target the reduction of deforestation through the oil palm supply chain.

The Conservation Agreement approach is being used to promote the protection of the forests, improve community livelihoods and capacity development.

Three Conservation Agreements are therefore being piloted in the beneficiary communities as a result of a series of processes of engagement and negotiation including

feasibility analyses that recognized and applied the Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and rights based approach.

The conservation agreements represent a negotiated exchange of benefits in return for changes in resource use, all tied to verified performance.

The Conservation Agreement establishes a framework for parties involved in the implementation of conservation and livelihood activities in the landscape to relate.

These Conservation Agreements were signed on Wednesday February 6, 2019, with three Zodua clan concession communities (Karnga, Falie and Gohn) in Garwulah District, Grand Cape Mount County- to protect the



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Welcome To The New World

Zodua Community Forests and surrounding forest areas.

The agreement was signed by the leaders who represented the three towns as well as representatives from the Forest Development Authority, Conservation International, local leaders, civil society and Sime Darby who all affixed their signatures to the agreement.

The ceremony which took place in Falie, was approved and witnessed by residents of the three communities, the communities' local leadership, civil society organizations, youth and women groups and Sime Darby.

Members of the Communities, local leadership, central government representatives, civil society groups and development partners voiced their appreciation for the initiative, pledging to work together in sustaining the partnership for the benefits of the next generation.

Residents were encouraged to take full ownership of the agreement, and also apply the provisions laid out in the Grievance Redress Mechanism available.

Forestry is everybody's business. Don't eat all or else your generation will hold you responsible," said the FDA representative attending the ceremony.

The Conservation Agreement being implemented for a period of one year (renewable) seeks to protect the integrity of the Zodua community forests and surrounding forests by providing sustainable improved livelihood options for communities in return for verified conservation action, strengthening and building the capacities of local communities with respect to sustainable forest management and governance as well as to raise awareness on the importance of biodiversity conservation.

The GGP through the agreement approach also supports Liberia's responsibilities as a signatory to the convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and provides a framework for the relationship between and among parties involved in the implementation of conservation and development activities.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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Senate passes Kamara Abdullah Kamara Press Freedom Act

By Ethel A. Tweh

The Liberian Senate has concurred with the House of Representatives for the passage of the Kamara Abdullah Kamara Act of Press Freedom.

During the 8th sitting of the 2nd session on Thursday, the Senate's agreement with the

It was submitted by President George Manneh Weah to amend the "Liberian Codes Revised, Penal Law of 1978 of the Republic of Liberia, Chapter 11, by repealing Sections 11. 11, 11.12 and 11.14, to be known as the Kamara Abdullah Kamara Act of Press Freedom." Before the passage of the

convinced members of the Committee on Information, Broadcasting, Culture and Tourism for the passage of the Bill.

During the hearing, PUL president Mr. Charles B. Cuffey, Jr., and the other Panelists argued strongly that the press freedom has been the "heart" of the media struggle in Liberia.

The Panelists said anti media laws are used against the Liberian media, naming criminal libel against the President, sedition and criminal malevolence as examples.

The PUL president and his colleagues argued that those laws prohibit the media from providing balanced and timely stories, noting that the existing law limits the media from adequately reaching out to the general public.

The panelists said repealing those provisions will allow citizens to cultivate a sense of ownership and challenge the laws they [do not] believe in.

The Senate committee voted in concurrence with the House following a motion by the Chair on Information, Broadcasting, Culture and Tourism, Grand Bassa County Sen. Jonathan Kaipay.

The Bill will be sent to the President for his approval after which it will become a law.-- Edited by Winston W. Parley



House came about when the Senate Committee on Information, Broadcasting, Culture and Tourism brought their report on the public hearing of the Committee room.

The Act is named after the late former Press Union of Liberia (PUL) president Mr. Kamara Abdullah Kamara.

Bill into law, the committee conducted public hearings to ascertain the importance attached to it.

The hearing was attended by PUL, West African Journalist Association, InterNews, and Center for Media Studies and Peace Building.

The Panelists presentation

CBL sells Bill

The Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) invites businesses, financial institutions and the public to invest at least 10,000 Liberian Dollars in its Bill and receive as much as 7 percent interest.

The CBL says although the minimum investment required is LRD10,000.00 there is no limit to how much one can invest in the CBL savings program.

A release from the CBL says

by the CBL so there are no risks to those who invest in it, and even if there is a change in the exchange rate, it will have no impact on the investment.

"The purpose of the CBL Bill is to create a culture of savings among Liberians and promote financial inclusion for the Liberian People."

Besides, the release details that those who invest



the Bill will be launched on February 15, 2019.

The release says investors who do not want to wait for one year can re-sell their CBL Bill to any prospective buyer and still make a profit on their initial investment. "For example, investors who re-sell their LD10,000 after six months will gain a profit of LD350", the CBL explains.

It says the Bill is guaranteed

in the Central Bank Bill may use it as collateral to obtain loan so that they can invest in other business ventures.

The release notes this is not the first time CBL has issued its Bill. CBL has been issuing bills since 2013 through financial institutions. All previous Bills have been redeemed. - Press Release

Rep. Younquoi wants MFDP, LISGIS appear

By Bridgett Milton

Nimba County District #9 Rep. Larry P. Younquoi has requested the appearance of Finance Minister Samuel Tweah and Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo Information Services (LISGIS) Director General Francis F. Wreh to provide update to avoid delay in conducting census this year.

Rep. Younquoi pleaded with the House of Representatives last week to invite the officials along with LISGIS Board Chairman, recalling that the Legislature has already taken enough steps to ensure a successful holding of census this year.

Younquoi remarks that an appropriation of US\$3,000,000 was made as government's initial contribution to the counterpart funding that is needed for the project.

According to him, development partners are to



Rep. Larry P. Younquoi

raise a large [amount] of the overall budget in excess of US\$19,000,000.

In respect to the 2019 census, Rep. Younquoi laments that it is appalling to note that

up to date not a cent out of the appropriated amount in the 2018/2019 fiscal budget has been remitted into special account for the census.

Meanwhile, the plenary of

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

the House of Representatives has forwarded Younquoi's communication to the committee on Ways, Means and Finance to report in one week.

But the proceedings did not go down well with Montserrado

County Rep. Adolph Lawrence, as he walked out of session in protest against House Speaker Bhofal Chambers' alleged habit of always protecting government ministers whenever they are invited.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Uncertainty brews among US-based Liberians again

Uncertainty has begun brewing again among Liberian communities in the United States as a federal program protecting thousands of Liberian immigrants could soon come to an end, the 5 Eyewitness ABC News report.

The Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) program has allowed those immigrants to stay in the U.S. legally for 20 years.

President Donald Trump decided in March, 2018 to terminate the program, providing a 12-month window to phase it out. He said conditions have improved in the country since DED was implemented by President Bill Clinton following civil war in Liberia.

The program was extended by both President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama. But it expires March 31.

"The fear is enormous," said Erasmus Williams, chairman of the Liberian Immigration Coalition. "Their home is here, so you're sending them to a land that they no



longer have any relationship with.

"We think it's even more alarming and calls for an emergency urgent action."

Williams has family members who will be affected.

So does Abdullah Kiatamba, the executive director of African Immigrant Services. "The extension of DED is critical," Kiatamba said.

They want to see the program extended by two

years. They believe that will give Congressional leaders time to develop a long-term solution.

"Create a more sustainable pathway for citizenship and permanent resident status," Kiatamba said.

A delegation, including Williams, will head to Washington on Monday to meet with lawmakers.

Democrat U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar put a spotlight on the

issue Tuesday by bringing a Liberian immigrant to the State of the Union Address, pushing for a path to citizenship.

According to Williams, parents are afraid they'll be separated from their kids who were born here.

"They are afraid to even call the police if there is something going on because they're afraid the police might turn them over to ICE," he said.

There are about 5,000 to 6,000 Liberians living in Brooklyn Park. The City Council just passed a resolution supporting the community and calling on Congress to create a path to citizenship.

"I think the unknown is the worst," Mayor Jeffrey Lunde said. "Their kids are American citizens. They live and were born here. They've gone to schools here. They own homes here."

He said the city doesn't know how many residents have DED status, but estimates it could be around 1,000.

Lunde said the city would not be involved in deportation proceedings if the program does expire.

"We don't ask status in Brooklyn Park," Lunde said.

"We concentrate on police issues and let national authorities focus on that."

Lunde would like to see the program extended, but he would rather see permanent action.

"We need a full solution," he said. "I think the left and right, they're going to have to compromise and that's very clear."

The community plans to rally at the State Capitol at 1 p.m. on Feb. 22.

Senator Tina Smith issued a statement on the matter.

"It's simple: the Trump administration should extend DED," it read.

"Thousands of Minnesotans with DED immigration status have been living in our state legally for more than twenty years. They do important work - especially in health care - pay taxes, and contribute to our communities. Forcing them to return to the country they had to flee from decades ago would break up families and devastate the communities here in Minnesota where they have made their homes.

"We should extend DED, and then take the next step and make sure these Minnesotans have the opportunity to become citizens."

Weah commits more to military

By Winston W. Parley

President George Manneh Weah has announced more commitments to the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), saying his government will take tangible measures to make their lives easier and better.

In special remarks at the 62nd Armed Forces Day Celebration at the Ministry of National Defense Monday, 11 February in Monrovia, President Weah instructed the Ministry of Defense to commence an immediate evaluation of all military barracks around the country and begin urgent repair and

renovation of damaged housing units.

At the event graced by former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf, current and past officials and foreign guests, President Weah remarked that one of the hallmarks of civilized nations is their role to support and respect those who fight in defense of their country, including their families.

He expresses confidence that when renovations and repairs are completed at these military barracks, the problem of congestion at military facilities will be finally eliminated.

President Weah indicates that the men and women that are trained to defend and protect Liberia "should not dwell in congested and low standard housing facilities."

"Our government will take tangible measures to make their lives easier and better," President Weah promises the army.

According to him, the theme for this year's Armed Forces Day celebration - "Building a Force for Good Through Service and Welfare" is designed to highlight the fact that the services and sacrifices made by the men and women in uniform fundamentally exceed the care and benefits they receive from government.

President Weah assures the army the government under his watch, is committed to upholding the welfare of the men and women who continue to put their lives on the line to keep the citizenry safe.

He believes that "we" cannot have a well - respected military if they are not assured of their welfare, saying as their Commander - in - Chief, he is obligated to cater to their wellbeing at all times.

He notes that in keeping with his first Armed Forces Day message in 2018 to build a military hospital, the facility is now at roofing level and is expected to be completed by the middle of 2020.



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President Weah says the army's welfare remains a primary concern of the administration, saying the men and women in arms should not have to pay for their own welfare.

He also recognizes that military families are Liberia's unsung heroes, calling for a keen attention to be paid to them by the nation.

President Weah emphasized the need to ensure that families of military personnel are provided with basic necessities saying because when they are stressed, it impacts negatively on the overall readiness of the soldiers.

To tackle this problem, President Weah says his administration will strive to create a secured environment and awareness program for the military families and provide them with the quality of life.

During the celebration, Defense Minister Daniel Ziankahn reported that the military is stable, adding that the men and women in arms are even vigilant and remain a force for good.

Minister Ziankahn boasts that the military has gained its

rightful place in society, stating that the soldiers here are well - trained, respected, trustworthy and represent the hope and aspiration of the Liberian people.

According to Minister Ziankahn, with the help of international partners, the army has experienced remarkable changes, saying the men and women in arms are the most trained, disciplined and combat - ready force that Liberia can boast of.

While applauding President Weah, Minister Ziankahn also appreciates former Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf and his predecessor Brownie Samukai and international partners for their contributions that brought the changes in the army.

He cites the peacekeeping efforts that the Liberian army is part of in Mali, saying the Liberian troops in Mali are serving with honor and distinction.

The Guest Speaker at the event, retired Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia, Cllr. Philip A.Z. Banks called for an army that serves humanity, not in armed combat.

Français

L'économie libérienne inquiète

La Commission économique pour l'Afrique (CEA), une agence des Nations Unies, prévient que l'économie libérienne est beaucoup vulnérable aux chocs externes car elle n'est toujours pas diversifiée.

S'exprimant lors d'un entretien le jeudi 7 février au Boulevard Palace de Monrovia, M. Bakary Dosso, Directeur par intérim du Bureau sous-régional de la CEA pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest, a fait observer que l'essentiel des recettes d'exportation du Libéria est principalement tiré par le minerai de fer et l'hévéa, deux produits qui représentent à eux seuls près de 75% des recettes des exportations.

La CEA a notamment pour mandat de promouvoir le développement économique et social de ses États membres, de favoriser l'intégration inter-régionale et de promouvoir la coopération internationale pour le développement de l'Afrique.

Sur le front social, M. Dosso a indiqué que le taux de la pauvreté au Libéria est élevé et est estimé à 54,1% en 2014



et se répartit comme suit : 70% dans les milieux ruraux et 43,3% dans les zones urbaines.

« La pauvreté est également étroitement liée au niveau d'éducation : 69,3% des personnes non éduquées sont touchées par la pauvreté », a-t-il dit.

La CEA a profité de la présence de son réseau de journalistes économiques lors

de la réunion de Monrovia pour diffuser le Profil du Libéria pour l'année 2017.

La CEA salue toutefois l'engagement du gouvernement libérien à apporter une réponse durable à ce fléau grâce à la mise en œuvre effective de son nouveau plan de développement, le Programme en faveur des pauvres pour la

prospérité et le développement 2018-2021.

Pour que ce plan soit une réussite, suggère la CEA, le Libéria doit développer des chaînes de l'agro-industrie pour un développement durable et inclusif.

« Nous appelons également à des interventions intégrées pour améliorer l'environnement des entreprises, y compris les infrastructures, le secteur financier, la gouvernance et le capital humain », a déclaré Dosso.

Selon la CEA, le système de santé du Libéria reste fragile, comme c'était le cas avant l'épidémie d'Ebola, qui a causé la mort de près de 4 000 personnes.

La CEA conclut que le taux de mortalité maternelle s'est détérioré au fil des années, passant de 260 décès pour 100 000 naissances en 1986 à 1 072

décès pour 100 000 naissances en 2013.

En réponse, le vice-ministre libérien de l'Agriculture chargé de la Planification, M. Robert Fagans, a déclaré que le gouvernement a pris l'engagement d'accorder la priorité au secteur de l'agriculture.

Il a toutefois attiré l'attention de la CEA sur les difficultés auxquelles est confronté l'Etat du Libéria, qui, pour les besoins nationaux en riz s'élevant à 565 000 tonnes par an, importe plus de la moitié, soit 350 000 tonnes de riz, avec un peu plus de 200 000 tonnes de riz produits localement principalement par des petits agriculteurs et quelques entrepreneurs de taille moyenne qui viennent d'entrer dans le secteur.

Selon M. Fagans, le gouvernement vise à réduire les importations de riz en 2019. Un plan directeur quinquennal a été élaboré à cet effet, à en croire le ministre.

"Ce gouvernement va mettre l'accent sur la chaîne de valeur ... comme le riz, le manioc, le cacao, nous allons nous intéresser au bétail ...", a-t-il déclaré.

Il note que le gouvernement aide le secteur privé à s'acquitter de ses obligations et à aider le gouvernement à réduire les importations massives de riz.

Représentant le ministère du Commerce, M. Lowell Wesley a pour sa part déclaré que le gouvernement a hâte de voir le Libéria transformer l'hévéa en produit fini, exprimant l'espoir que les investisseurs en tireront parti.

Manque de médicament dans les hôpitaux, le parlement interpellé

La Chambre des représentants demande à la commission parlementaire sur les questions de santé d'examiner les détails entourant la question du manque criard de médicaments essentiels dans la plupart des hôpitaux du pays et de faire un rapport dans une

semaine.

L'instruction fait suite à des communications des représentants Ivar K. Jones de la circonscription électorale n° 2 du comté de Margibi et Matthew Joe du district n° 3 du comté de Grand Bassa, qui exigent que le ministre de la Santé et ses principaux députés soient invités à comparaître

devant la plénière pour se prononcer sur l'état actuel du secteur de la santé publique, surtout donner des informations sur la pénurie de médicaments essentiels et les moyens logistiques des établissements de santé publics.

Selon le député Jones, les informations qu'il a reçues des centres de santé publics de son district et de l'hôpital CH Rennie de Kakata font état d'un manque criard de médicaments essentiels, de moyens logistiques et de carburant pour faire fonctionner les hôpitaux. Cette situation, estime-t-il, n'est pas n'est pas unique au comté de Margibi, car l'ensemble des 15 subdivisions politiques du Libéria connaissent des problèmes similaires.

Dans sa communication, le représentant Joe a attiré l'attention de ses collègues sur la fermeture imminente de l'hôpital gouvernemental de la ville de Buchanan. Il se souvient que l'hôpital avait été créé le 15 décembre 1946 dans le seul but de répondre aux

besoins en matière de santé de la population du comté de Grand Bassa. Mais force est de constater que l'hôpital ne répond plus aux besoins de santé des habitants de Grand Bassa, encore moins des habitants des comtés de Rivercess, River Gee et Sinoe.

Le manque de médicaments dans les hôpitaux a atteint une proportion inquiétante car

presque tous les grands hôpitaux du pays sont pratiquement vides et les services ont été réduits à une simple prescription d'ordonnance. Récemment, dans son message à la nation sur l'état de la nation, le président George Manneh Weah n'a présenté aucun programme détaillé pour le secteur de la santé.



Articles traduits

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Français

Côte d'Ivoire : Guillaume Soro libère le tabouret la tête haute

Guillaume Soro a démissionné du poste de président de l'Assemblée nationale lors d'une session extraordinaire convoquée pour l'occasion, vendredi 8 février. L'ancien chef de la rébellion ivoirienne occupait ce poste depuis 2012. Alors qu'on lui prête des ambitions présidentielles en 2020, cette démission consacre une longue déchirure avec Alassane Ouattara.

Dans les textes rien ne pouvait contraindre Guillaume Soro à « libérer le tabouret » comme l'y exhortaient depuis des mois nombre de cadres RHDP. Pour autant rester au perchoir aurait allumé une crise institutionnelle sans précédent entre l'exécutif et le législatif dont, dit-il, il ne voulait pas. Mais il a été mis au pied du mur en janvier par Alassane Ouattara le sommant d'adhérer au RHDP ou de quitter ses fonctions.

A la sortie de l'hémicycle vendredi, réaction du député Alpha Yaya Touré, partisan de Guillaume Soro : « Je suis triste pour ce à quoi nous venons d'assister. C'est dommage pour la démocratie ivoirienne. C'est un fait inédit. C'est la première fois que nous constatons la démission de l'Assemblée nationale sur ordre et instruction de l'exécutif, tant bien qu'il y ait séparation des pouvoirs dans notre pays. »

C'est une question de cohérence, estime pour sa part la députée RHDP Belmonde Dogo : « Sa démission n'est que consécutive à sa mise en retrait de la majorité représentative. Dans une Assemblée nationale, c'est la majorité qui a le perchoir. Dès l'instant que M. Guillaume Soro ne se reconnaît plus dans la majorité, il va de soi qu'il démissionne. La nation n'est pas en péril, il ne s'agit pas de sauver la paix, il s'agit d'être logique avec ce qu'on est et avec ce qu'on dit. »

L'alliance politique formée par Alassane Ouattara et Guillaume Soro en 2000 a vécu. Devant les atermoiements de Guillaume Soro quant au RHDP ces derniers mois, Alassane Ouattara lui a demandé de clarifier sa position. C'est ce qui a

abouti à cette démission. « J'ai eu le privilège de plusieurs audiences avec le président de la République, notamment les 5 janvier et 24 janvier. Il a été question de mon engagement politique et de mon positionnement idéologique vis-à-vis du RHDP. Oui, j'ai choisi de ne pas m'engager au sein du RHDP unifié », a-t-il déclaré.

C'est la fin solennelle d'une alliance politique de près de vingt ans. Tout au long de son discours le désormais ex-président de l'Assemblée aura jeté des cailloux dans le jardin du chef de l'Etat pour laisser penser qu'il démissionne contraint par l'exécutif, mais animé par un sens plus grand des responsabilités et de l'unité de la Côte d'Ivoire, son maintien en poste créant nécessairement une crise institutionnelle grave. « Refuser de démissionner conduirait inmanquablement à la crise institutionnelle déstabilisante avec le cortège de dommages pour la nation. L'on ne peut risquer de mettre en péril la paix fragile acquise après tant de souffrances de nos concitoyens. »

Guillaume Soro a déclaré qu'il continuerait à travailler pour une Côte d'Ivoire qui « repose sur l'Etat de droit et des bases démocratiques fiables », sous-entendu : pas comme aujourd'hui. Il a rendu hommage à l'un de ses proches, le député Alain Lobognon, condamné à un an de prison pour un tweet, au terme d'un procès rocambolesque. Autant de critiques à peine voilées du régime de son ex-allié, dorénavant adversaire déclaré.

Invoquant le « jugement de l'Histoire », Guillaume Soro, vingt-cinq ans de politique, s'est aussi posé en homme neuf et entier : « Je demeure serein tout en quittant mon poste pour l'aventure de mes convictions. » En somme, le simple député de Ferké se place au-dessus de la mêlée, comme un chef d'Etat potentiel, ou du moins un présidentiable. Ne reste plus qu'à compter ses troupes et sortir du bois, en vue - peut-être - de 2020.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Nouriel Roubini

Bagage économique mitigé pour 2019

NEW YORK - Après l'expansion économique mondiale synchronisée de 2017 est venue la croissance asynchrone de 2018, lorsque la plupart des pays, à l'exception des États-Unis, ont connu un ralentissement. Les craintes concernant la reprise de l'inflation aux États-Unis, la trajectoire de la politique monétaire de la Réserve fédérale, les guerres commerciales en cours, le budget des Italiens et les soucis que leur crée leur dette, le ralentissement chinois ou encore les fragilités des marchés émergents ont amené une chute brutale des places boursières à la fin de l'année dernière.

Bonne nouvelle : les risques d'une véritable récession mondiale pour 2019 sont faibles. Mauvaise nouvelle : nous nous orientons vers une année de décélération synchronisée ; la croissance va retomber vers son potentiel - voire en dessous - dans la plupart des régions.

Certes, après le bain de sang du dernier trimestre de 2018, lorsque les inquiétudes concernant les hausses des taux d'intérêt de la Fed et la croissance chinoise et américaine ont fait couler les marchés, l'année 2019 a commencé avec un rebond des actifs à risques (valeurs américaines aussi bien que mondiales). Depuis lors, le discours de la Fed a repris ses intonations de colombe, les États-Unis ont conservé une croissance solide, et la politique d'assouplissement macro-économique de la Chine a montré quelque efficacité à contenir son ralentissement.

Il dépendra de nombreux facteurs que cette situation positive se maintienne. La Fed est la première chose qu'il faut considérer. Les marchés intègrent désormais une pause dans sa politique monétaire qui se prolongerait toute l'année, mais le marché du travail aux États-Unis demeure dynamique. Il suffirait que la hausse des salaires s'accélère et produise une inflation même modérée, de l'ordre de 2 %, pour que se réveillent les craintes de deux hausses supplémentaires des taux cette année, ce qui pourrait heurter les marchés et conduire à un resserrement de la situation financière. Se raviveront alors les inquiétudes concernant la croissance américaine.

Deuxième point : tandis que le ralentissement chinois se poursuit, le gouvernement américain a choisi un panachage de mesures de relances modestes sur les plans budgétaire et monétaire et sur celui du crédit, qui pourrait s'avérer inopérant étant donné le manque de confiance du secteur privé et les niveaux élevés de surcapacité comme de dette. Si les inquiétudes concernant un ralentissement chinois devaient réapparaître, les marchés pourraient en être sévèrement affectés. D'un autre côté, la stabilisation de la croissance renouvellerait, comme il se doit, leur confiance.

Les échanges sont un facteur connexe. Si tout laisse penser qu'une escalade du conflit sino-américain freinerait la croissance mondiale, la continuation de la trêve actuelle par un accord commercial rassurerait les marchés, quand bien même la rivalité géopolitique et technologique entre les deux pays se prolongerait dans le temps.

Quatrième point : la zone euro ralentit. Reste à voir si elle se dirige vers une baisse de sa croissance potentielle, ou pire. L'issue sera déterminée tant par des variables nationales - l'évolution de la situation politique en France, en Italie et en Allemagne - que par des facteurs plus généraux, aux échelles régionale et mondiale.

Evidemment, un Brexit « dur » aurait sur la confiance des entreprises et des investisseurs au Royaume-Uni mais aussi dans l'Union européenne des conséquences négatives. Si le président des États-Unis Donald Trump s'avaisait d'étendre sa guerre commerciale au secteur automobile européen, c'est dans toute l'UE que la croissance serait gravement compromise, et pas

seulement en Allemagne. Beaucoup dépendra, pour finir, des résultats obtenus par les partis eurosceptiques aux élections du Parlement européen du mois de mai. À quoi s'ajouteront les incertitudes concernant le successeur de Mario Draghi à la présidence de la Banque centrale européenne et par conséquent l'avenir de la politique monétaire de la zone euro.

Cinquième point : les dysfonctionnements de la vie politique américaine pourraient ne faire qu'ajouter à l'irrésolution générale. La récente fermeture du gouvernement augure d'une guerre d'usure partisane dans les négociations à venir sur le budget et le plafond de la dette. Les conclusions attendues de l'enquête du procureur spécial Robert Mueller peuvent ou non conduire au déclenchement de la procédure de mise en accusation contre Trump. Et d'ici la fin de l'année, la relance budgétaire des allègements d'impôts votés par les républicains se muera en handicap budgétaire, lequel pourrait ralentir la croissance.

Sixième point : les marchés boursiers aux États-Unis et ailleurs sont toujours surévalués, même après la récente correction. Une hausse des coûts salariaux, des bénéfices et des marges de profits s'étiolant aux États-Unis dans les mois qui viennent pourraient constituer une mauvaise surprise. Avec des entreprises endettées qui se trouveraient confrontées à une hausse des coûts de l'emprunt à court et moyen terme, avec des actions technologiques qu'attendent de nouvelles baisses, le danger d'un nouvel épisode de défiance et d'une correction des marchés ne peut être écarté.

Septième point : les prix du pétrole pourraient être entraînés à la baisse par la surabondance d'offre qui s'annonce, en raison de l'exploitation des schistes bitumineux aux États-Unis, d'un possible changement de régime au Venezuela (dont on peut attendre qu'il conduirait avec le temps à une hausse de la production) et des échecs des pays de l'OPEP à coopérer les uns avec les autres pour réduire les volumes. Si la baisse des prix du pétrole est bonne pour les consommateurs, elle tend à fragiliser les cours des actions et les marchés dans les économies exportatrices d'hydrocarbures, ce qui relancerait les craintes de faillite pour les entreprises du secteur de l'énergie et des secteurs connexes (comme ce fut le cas au début de l'année 2016).

Pour finir, les perspectives des économies de nombreux marchés émergents dépendront des incertitudes générales énumérées plus haut. Les risques principaux concernent un ralentissement aux États ou en Chine, une hausse de l'inflation aux États-Unis, qui pousserait la Fed à resserrer sa politique monétaire, des guerres commerciales, un dollar plus fort, et la chute des prix du pétrole et des matières premières.

Si un nuage plane effectivement sur l'économie mondiale, son effet positif est d'avoir rendu les principales banques centrales plus conciliantes, à commencer par la Fed et la Banque populaire de Chine, rapidement suivies par la Banque centrale européenne, la banque d'Angleterre, la banque du Japon, et les autres. Pour autant, la position accommodante adoptée par la plupart des banques centrales tient à la faible marge d'action dont elles disposent pour un nouvel assouplissement monétaire. Et quand bien même la politique budgétaire ne connaîtrait aucune entrave dans la plupart des régions du monde, la relance ne se manifeste généralement qu'après que le décrochage de la croissance est en route, et le plus souvent avec un certain décalage.

Les facteurs positifs sont peut-être en nombre suffisants pour que l'économie mondiale connaisse une année décente, voire même médiocre. En revanche, si certains des scénarios négatifs mentionnés plus haut venaient à se matérialiser, le ralentissement synchronisé de 2019 pourrait conduire à un décrochage de la croissance et à un retournement brutal des marchés en 2020.

THE ENDLESS ROAD TO NOWHERE

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE PURSUIT OF PROGRESS IN LIBERIA

Author's note

This article was written as a critical analysis of a particular behavioral trend observed across several generations in Liberia.

It should not be construed as criticism of any particular political administration; but rather as a critical assessment of the Liberia Experience over a protracted period of time.

It is my ardent hope that the "New Generation" of leaders in Liberia and the people of Liberia will assess my conjectures critically and draw on a few lessons learned in avoiding some of the pitfalls that have perpetually befallen their predecessors.

He, who has ears, let him hear.

M.A.B

Liberia is in trouble. In spite of the commendable political gains made over the last decade and a half, the primary social, cultural and economic issues facing Liberia persist and the prospects of any effective, sustainable solutions remain elusive. Why does the phenomenon of social, cultural and economic stagnation continue to present a major obstacle to Liberia's progress especially in the midst of globalization and progress being made by countries previously placed in the same category as Liberia? This question has eluded the leadership and people of Liberia for many generations. Given that there have been spurts of economic growth and the potential for stability and prosperity for all, Liberia seems unable to break the proverbial cycle of mediocrity, self-hatred and denial.

Over the generations, there have been multiple attempts to create structures that would result in sustained political stability, economic expansion and social cohesion. Interestingly, while some of these attempts produced limited successes, they did not result in the desired impact when measured using human growth and development indices. Policies associated with Tubman's "Unification" and "Open Door" Initiatives; Tolbert's "Total Involvement" (Mats to Mattress); Doe's "In the Cause of the People, the Struggle Continues;" Taylor's "Above all else, the people;" and Sirleaf's "Lift Liberia" have not catapulted Liberia anywhere near the ultimate goal of becoming a Middle Income country in the foreseeable future. As a matter of fact, although the verdict is not yet in concerning Weah's "Pro Poor" agenda, after all previous attempts, Liberia remains one of the five poorest countries in the world.

The primary reason for the lack of significant and sustained progress is that all attempts to foster real growth and development have been built on a defective social and cultural foundation. This defect points to two interconnected facts. First, Liberia was born out of crisis; and, second, Liberians have lived under a cloak of "national denial."



Liberia evolved out of a series of well-known (but little examined) crises: the crisis of inter-ethnic conflicts; the crisis of slavery; the crisis of exploitation of a dominant group over all others; the crisis of failed attempts at true integration; and the crisis of elitism. Failure to fully address these crises and atone for them is manifested in Liberia's national denial leading to a splintered diversity with multiple, conflicting agendas. Liberia will continue on this "endless road to nowhere" if Liberians do not find unity in their diversity and agree to a common national destiny.

The Liberian dilemma is further exacerbated by the proclivity of new political administrations to, not only pay little or no attention to the weak and crumbling foundation, but to charge full steam ahead attempting to build new development initiatives on the proverbial weak foundation.

During the many robust political campaigns in Liberia's political history, much of the rhetoric has centered on Liberia's weak social, cultural and economic foundation. Deep sentiments are eloquently articulated about how Liberia's developmental progress is hampered by Corruption, Nepotism, Absence of Capacity, Social Inequities/Marginalization, Injustice, Apathy, Impunity etc.

One could safely conclude that there is significant national knowledge and appreciation of societal malaise. Liberian politicians have mastered the art of articulating social problems and bringing them to the forefront of social consciousness as they persuade voters to elect them. Presumably this approach works because, more than anything else, voters desire a society free of social evils.

In the midst this phenomenon, newly elected officials take office and immediately embark upon development initiatives rather than addressing the "weak foundation" which was paramount in their passionate campaign rhetoric. Perhaps this is a manifestation of the politicians' desire to derive tangible deliverables for their constituents who harbor high expectations of immediate benefits positively impacting their lives.

The obvious question is, "Why would one invest significant amounts of time, financial resource and effort, for example, in implementing a new education development initiative, and expect it to thrive when it is built on a system fraught with corruption, nepotism, absence of capacity etc.?" The notion of diving into building infrastructure without first examining and correcting major social ills is especially baffling as building on the same fragile foundation has never historically yielded the desired sustainable results.

Every country on this globe has experienced crisis and poverty. Those that are considered successful have come to grips with the realities presented within these two paradigms and have been able implement solutions to overcome them. The fundamental drivers behind sustained solutions to crisis and poverty have historically been a cohesive, reconciled and disciplined society that is prepared to deal with its disparities in an environment of inclusiveness and justice. The Liberia paradigm lacks the essentials of inclusiveness and justice which may be an indicator of its national denial. Throughout its history, Liberia has encountered very difficult issues; and, unfortunately, Liberians have chosen "flight" (as reflected in denial) as opposed to "fight" (as reflected in confronting tough issues directly). As a result, Liberia has an axiomatic closet full of skeletons that have

accumulated over generations of denial, that are now, like chickens, "coming home to roost."

Until Liberians come to grips with these stubborn facts, the faulty foundational pillars of our national desires, dreams and visions, will be unable to support any serious initiative for sustainable growth, development and prosperity.

There have been historical attempts to establish peace-building and reconciliation platforms in Liberia. From Tubman's Unification Program to the Post-Civil War Truth and Reconciliation Commission, attempts have been made to address inequities, injustices and other social and cultural stumbling blocks to progress. However, these have met only limited success because they examined symptoms rather than the deeply rooted causes of the Liberian crises.

While there may be no "silver bullet" which could immediately address and resolve all of the challenges Liberia faces today, effective and visionary leadership certainly lies at the epicenter of the solutions.

An intriguing phenomenon which has long existed in Liberia has been the general inability to differentiate between "good and effective politicians" and "good and effective leaders."

A good and effective leader is by definition an effective politician. On the contrary, a good and effective politician does not necessarily translate to an effective leader. The political history of Liberia is strewn with countless instances where politicians have successfully attained political power only to fail to transition into leaders properly equipped with the requisite tools, skills and qualities to effectuate meaningful change for the nation and people. Thus, as politicians, they constantly resort the single mastery they possess in order to address all of the challenges and opportunities confronting them. Hindered by their lack of the requisite skills and tools to confront tough issues, elected officials resort to more rhetoric and superficial ribbon cutting.

In order to effectuate real and sustainable change that leads to progress, growth and prosperity, experienced and effective leaders understand that politics is only one tool out of an array of mechanisms available to the process of nation-building.

While politics can be an efficient and useful tool, it must in some instances be subordinated to other instruments and methods in addressing the dynamics of change. One method that could be useful in bringing about effective change is decentralizing power and responsibility. Decentralization, throughout the governance hierarchy, leverages empowerment of county and municipal authorities as well as the private sector. This encourages leaders, at all levels, to take ownership and bring their skills and experiences to bear in the nation-building enterprise.

Building institutions populated by a pool of technical experts without regard to ethnicity, political affiliation or gender is another strategy to address mediocrity in government. For example, government institutions should managed by technocrats as opposed to political appointees. Every government employee below Deputy Minister should be a highly-trained, professionally recruited, vetted, technocrat who serves regardless of who is in political power.



Given our history of small successes, multiple failures and numerous "false starts," Liberia is at a precarious point. Liberians must scrupulously examine their national quest for peace, reconciliation, growth and prosperity. Liberia should expend all of its energy, resources and resolve to expose, shore-up and permanently fix its "BROKEN FOUNDATION"!

A solid and reliable national foundation supported by Justice, Reconciliation, Unity, Integrity, Honor, Accountability, Transparency, Strong and Reliable Institutions, among others, will take a collective effort led by both elected officials and technocrats. Leaders must exploit an array of tools, methods and approaches that will insure unity and social cohesion, prosperity, economic growth and expansion. To accomplish this, our leaders must exude all of the key characteristics inherent in effective leaders by far the most important of which is COURAGE!

Once the foundation is stable and firm, Liberia can build systems, processes and projects that will endure thus providing a surefire way towards the elusive peace, stability and prosperity that Liberians have sought for generations.



Weah's convoy in bloody crash

By Winston W. Parley

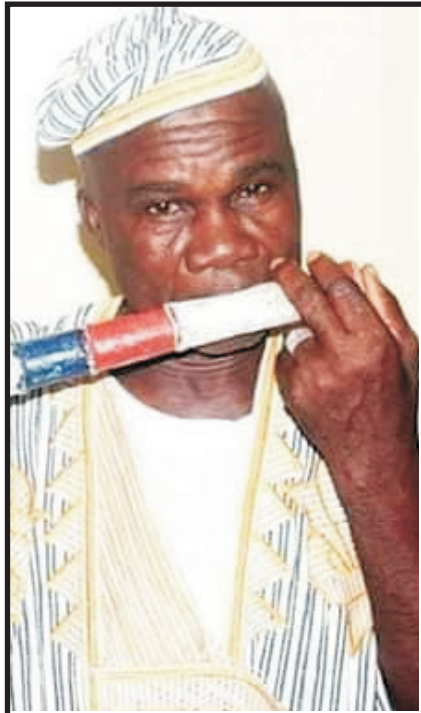
Two persons are confirmed dead and several journalists seriously wounded in a car crash involving President George Manneh Weah's official motorcade when former Associate Justice Wilkins Wrights' vehicle intruded into the presidential convoy Sunday, 10 February along the Monrovia- Gbarnga highway.

President Weah and his entourage were returning from Gbarnga, Bong County following a Church Service when the intruding van collided with the Executive Mansion Press jeep (Toyota Land Cruiser Jeep) in the Presidential convoy, killing two persons instantly and seriously injuring the driver and all occupants of the press car.

The dead include Mr. Gabriel Nyanti Wilson, alias "Executive Horn", an employee of the Ministry of State, who was well known for blowing a traditional horn at presidential occasions held inside the country.

The late Wilson notably served four Liberian Presidents, beginning with slain President Samuel Kanyon Doe, jailed former President Charles Ghankay Taylor, former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and incumbent President George Manneh Weah, up to his demise.

The second deceased was a



The late Gabriel Wilson



The late Victoria Wlue

female occupant of the intruding vehicle of Justice Wrights' identified as Victoria Wlue.

This paper has not established whether she had any relations with the Minister of Transport, Samuel Wlue.

Some members of the press corps, who were not part of the accident, have seen their injured colleagues undergoing medical attention at the JFK Medical Center in Monrovia during a visit on Monday afternoon.

Victims suffering serious injuries and pains from the crash include the Ministry of State employees Gabriel Mills, press car operator Samuel Zor, Suprano, Reuben Gongloe,

ELBC's Isaac Freeman, Joseph Sayon and privately-owned Prime FM's Jerry Gaye and KMTV's Godfrey Matthews.

Justice Wrights himself was also seen at JFK in a hospital bed, while his driver was said to be held there in cuff.

The press car operator Samuel Zor and ELBC's assigned cameraman Isaac Freeman were initially kept at the Phebe Hospital in Bong County Gbarnga to stabilize their conditions, but there are unconfirmed reports that they would have been transferred to Monrovia later on Monday.

The driver of Justice Wrights' vehicle, who was reportedly unharmed in the accident, was apparently

awaiting to be discharged by doctors to face police inquiry.

Before a team of the Executive Mansion press corps departed the hospital, officers of the Liberia National Police (LNP) were seen disembarking a police vehicle and entering the facilities, apparently to take custody of the convoy intruder.

On Monday, President George Manneh expressed that his heart was saddened by the many deaths which had occurred recently, particularly in the last 24 hours.

He says while returning from Gbarnga, his "convoy was intruded upon by a vehicle" which ran into a car carrying the press corps of the Executive Mansion, "resulting in two fatalities" and seriously injuring several others.

Before setting out for Gbarnga on Sunday morning, President Weah notes that he had received the death news of Montserrado County Sen. Jeroldine Doe-Sherif, a one-time staunch member of Mr. Weah's Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) party, who later broke alliance with the CDC long before the party won the presidency and her death.

Earlier on Sunday,

Information Minister Eugene Nagbe confirmed that a vehicle belonging to former Associate Justice Wrights, intruded into the presidential motorcade, causing two fatalities.

Minister Nagbe narrates a lady identified as Victoria Wlue, a passenger riding in Justice Wright's vehicle and Gabriel Wilson, commonly called "Executive Horn", an employee of the Ministry of State were the two fatalities.

No other vehicle was affected by the impact, according to the Information Minister.

"The President stresses that the government will ensure that those injured receive the best treatment possible," Minister Nagbe says in a statement issued Sunday.

He says further investigation by the Police and the Executive Protection Service (EPS) into the matter is ongoing.

Meanwhile, the EPS has reiterated earlier warnings against illegal intrusion into the Presidential motorcade, saying it poses serious danger to the safety of those onboard, including the President. -

Editing by Jonathan Browne

Police link accident to drunk driving

Initial reports quote the Liberia National Police as saying former Associate Justice Cllr. Michael Wilkins Wrights and his driver, who intruded into the motorcade of President George Manneh Weah Sunday, 10 February killing two persons and wounding several others along the Monrovia-Gbarnga Highway were under the influence of alcohol.

According to the Executive

Mansion, the crash occurred when a car transporting Justice Wrights and a lady identified as Victoria Wlue, intruded into the presidential motorcade at Gbonkorneima near Gbarnga, Bong County, specifically hitting the Executive Mansion Press Corps Jeep.

Justice Wrights and his driver were reportedly unhurt in the crash, but the female riding with them, Victoria Wlue and an employee of the

Ministry of State from the Presidential convoy are confirmed dead.

Journalists riding in the Executive Mansion Press Corps Jeep sustained serious injuries, one of them life-threatening.

A release issued Monday by Presidential Press Secretary Isaac Solo Kelgbeh says, President Weah has promptly ordered that long-serving Executive Mansion Videographer Gabriel W. Mills be flown to Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire, for further treatment.

Doctors at the John F. Kennedy Medical Center in Monrovia referred Gabriel Mills for further treatment. Learning of the need for his medical referral,

the Liberian leader facilitated Gabriel's overseas treatment, including travel and medical costs.

Another staff of the Ministry of States for Presidential Affairs,

Gabriel Wilson popularly known "Executive Horn", and Victoria Wlue, a passenger riding in Justice Wright's vehicle, died at the Phebe Hospital.

JUDICIAL BRANCH
PUBLIC OF LIBERIA

00001074

5TH DAY'S CHAMBERS SESSION
DECEMBER TERM A.D. 2018
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2018

BEFORE HIS HONOR: YUSSIF D. KABA ...RESIDENT CIRCUIT JUDGE

THE PETITION OF SEANY BROWN PETITIONER, BY AND THRU HER LEGAL COUNSEL PRAYING THIS HONORABLE COURT FOR A DECREE OF CHANGE OF NAME TO BE, REGARDED, CALLED AND KNOWN AS "LAWRINA HANNAH BROWN"

COURT'S DECREE OF CHANGE OF NAME

The Petitioner by and thru her legal counsel filed a Petition before this Court requesting this Honorable Court to order the Change of her name from SEANY BROWN to "LAWRINA HANNAH BROWN".

During the hearing, the Petitioner testified that the Change of her name requesting this Honorable Court is intended to reflect her husband's name and render her identity more explicit and absolute.

After conducting the necessary interrogations requested by law in these proceedings, the Court observed that the intention is just and legal and that there is no objection to the change of name proposed by her.

That the Petitioner having shown with justification and satisfaction that she was born on October 28, 1998 in the City of Monrovia, Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia, and that she was born unto the union of MR. ALEXANDER BROWN AND MADAM MARY G. BROWN all of the Republic of Liberia; and that the Change of her name will substantially promote her interest in all of the understanding and help to establish just identity more firmly, and being satisfied that she has met all legal requirements for the Change of her name in this Jurisdiction, it is therefore DISCREED as follows:

That the petition having been heard, same is hereby ordered granted and we now render that the name SEANY BROWN to "LAWRINA HANNAH BROWN" beginning this 21ST day of December, A.D. 2018. That all documents signed by the petitioner herein prior to this decree remain valid.

THIS DECREE shall be registered in the Office of the Registrar of DEEDS and other Official Documentations within 10 days from this date and also be published twice in any recognized Newspaper operating in the Republic of Liberia within twenty (20) days from this date. AND IT IS HEREBY SO ORDERED.

GIVEN UNDER MY HANDS IN OPEN COURT, THIS 21ST DAY OF DECEMBER, A.D. 2018

COURT SEAL: YUSSIF D. KABA
RESIDENT CIRCUIT JUDGE PRESIDING
SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, CIVIL LAW COURT

REGISTERED ACCORDING TO LAW IN VOLUME OF 2019 PAGES 00001074

LIBERIA NATIONAL ARCHIVES CENTER/MONT. CO. R.I.

THIS DECREE HAS BEEN LEGALLY REGISTERED AND FILED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES ON THIS 20TH DAY OF 12 2018 AT 11:48 AM

#Stop prioritizing foreign businesses over Liberian businesses!#

Gabriel Wilson was a traditional horn blower to the President. He was recruited by the late President Samuel K. Doe in Maryland County in the early 1980s.

Several others were injured. Four of the injured persons have been treated and discharged.

Meanwhile, President Weah has conveyed his sympathies to families of the bereaved and empathizes with the injured. The Liberian Leader reiterates the government's commitment to ensuring that all those injured receive the best treatment possible. -Press Release



Sen. Doe - Sheriff dead



By Winston W. Parley
Montserrado County Sen. Jeroldine Doe Sheriff has died, following a prolonged illness that she battling nearing the end of former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf's regime. There are reports that she had been battling cancer up to the time of her death on Saturday, 9

February while seeking medication in Ghana. Mrs. Doe - Sheriff was an official of President George Manneh Weah's Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) when the party was still in opposition, but she broke political alliances with the CDC long before it entered political agreement with two other parties that became the

Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC).

Mrs. Sheriff supported former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf's second term bid which the CDC lost in 2011, but the CDC at the time saw her move as a stab in the back of President Weah who had supported her bid for the Senate in 2009 in a by-election against contender Clemenceau Urey and others.

It seems the late Doe - Sheriff and the CDC may have had no political reconciliation of their differences even up to the most recent election that brought President Weah to the helm of power, given her presence at the former ruling Unity Party's convention in Gbarnga, Bong County ahead of the 2017 election to show support for Mrs. Sirleaf.

The illness may have deprived her of enjoying the remaining part of her senatorial terms up to her death, as she could not easily be seen in public.

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Sala's cause of death revealed

Emiliano Sala died of head and chest injuries when his plane crashed into the English Channel last month, an inquest heard today.

The 28-year-old footballer, who had just signed for Cardiff City, was identified by his fingerprints after his body was recovered from the sea by a

specialist team.

Wales Online report that: "The inquest has heard Emiliano Sala was identified by fingerprint evidence.

"The cause of death, which was established after a post-mortem, is given as head and chest injuries. A pathologist described the cause of death as "head and trunk injuries".

"The inquest has been adjourned. The full AAIB investigation into the plane crash is expected to take between six and 12 months, although an interim report is due within a fortnight."

Assistant Dorset Coroner Brendan Allen, sitting in Bournemouth, adjourned the inquest until November 6.



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