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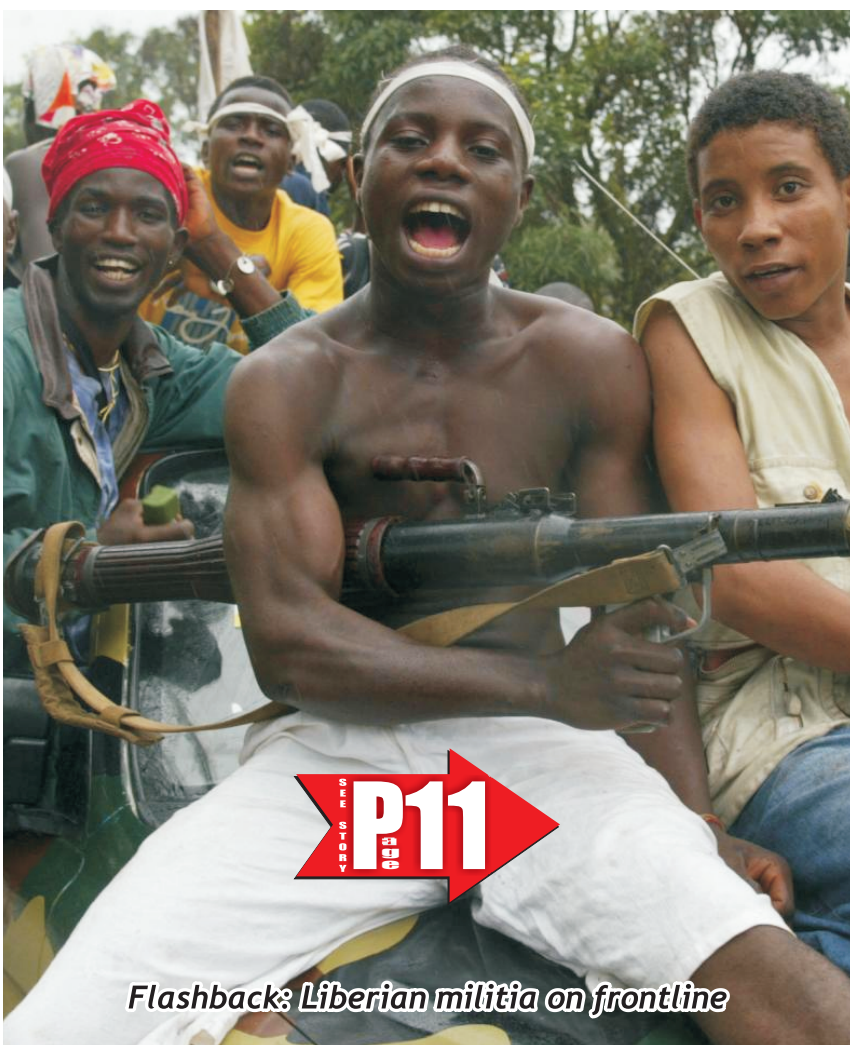
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Rep. Yekeh Kolubah



Flashback: Liberian militia on frontline

Stop remobilizing ex-combatants

-MOJA warns



Continental News

Gunmen kill two tourists in Kaduna

Suspected kidnapers in the early hours of Saturday invaded a resort in the Kajuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State and shot dead two persons including an expatriate, a woman.

It was also learnt that the gunmen abducted three persons.

Also in the early hours of Saturday, unidentified gunmen killed 11 persons in Ngibo and Tse-Aye villages in the Ikyurav-Tiev 1, council ward of Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

Sources told one of our correspondents that after the gunmen killed four persons in Ngibo village and seven in Tse Aye village, they allegedly rustled 28 cattle belonging to one Agwaza Atedze.

Meanwhile, spokesman for the police in Kaduna State, Yakubu Sabo, confirmed the killing of two persons in the crisis-prone Kajuru.

In a statement, Sabo said the suspected kidnapers

stormed the resort, popularly called Kajuru Castle, and killed two guests believed to be tourists from Lagos on the spot.

He said a patrol team, led by the Kajuru Divisional Police Officer, had removed the bodies to St. Gerard Catholic Hospital in Kaduna metropolis.

He said investigation later revealed that 12 tourists from Lagos were partying at the resort before the incident occurred.

Sabo added, "Normally before such a social event happen, the organisers would inform us for security

coverage, but the party was done without the knowledge of the police in the area as traditionally done." According to him, the state Commissioner of Police, Ahmad Abdurrahman, had promised that they would apprehend the perpetrators of the attack.

A source told one of our correspondents that the bandits, who attacked Ngibo and Tse Aye, shot indiscriminately immediately they rode on motorcycles into the villages between 3am and 4am.

It was learnt that many of the villagers had fled the

communities for fear of another attack.

Spokesman for the police in Benue, DSP Catherine Anene, confirmed the incidents.

She said the DPO in charge of Katsina-Ala had responded to directive to deal with the situation.

However, Anene could not confirm the casualty figure. Also confirming the report, Force Commander of the Operation Whirl Stroke, Maj Gen Adeyemi Yekini, said the clash was between the Shitile and Ikyurav people of the area, adding that troops had moved to restore calm to the two communities. AFP



Ghana cops hunt envoy's abductors

The police are on a manhunt for three Nigerians suspected to have kidnapped a Consular General and Head of Mission of Estonia to Ghana, Nabil Makram Basbous, at Labone.

According to a report published on Ghanaian news website, Graphic online, on Saturday, the envoy was reportedly abducted on Thursday.

The police said the victim was on an early morning walk when the suspects, in a white Hyundai Elantra, pulled up in front of him, pulled a pistol on

intelligence and located the house but were met with resistance when they attempted entering the house.

It added that in the process all three occupants of the house jumped over the fence and escaped.

"While police were still at the scene, the victim, Hon Nabil Makram Basbous, 61 years, a Lebanese Consular General and Head of Mission of Estonia to Ghana, came out from one of the rooms in the house," it said. The statement added that the victim, who lived at Labone near

Heavens finally opened in Nairobi

The heavens finally opened in Nairobi last night and the city for the first time in 2019 experienced wet conditions.

In a welcome break from the continuous sweltering heat and dusty streets, Nairobi received a rain, which caught many people unprepared.

Hawkers who were selling their wares in the streets were caught unawares as the rain

pounded the busy streets. Pedestrians and motorists were also in the mix.

Two hours before the rains started, the Kenya Meteorological Department had announced that it would rain in Nairobi and other regions.

"Showers and thunderstorms expected on Sunday especially afternoon over Western Kenya, Southern

and Central Rift Valley and Central highlands including Nairobi. Moderate to heavy rainfall expected over the same areas from Monday and throughout next week," it said in a tweet. City residents who spoke to the Nation said they did not expect it to rain. "I did not expect it to rain and as I was busy going on with my business, the rains came down and was forced to seek shelter," said John Kimani, a hawker. Ms Mary Auma said she was shocked when the rains started. "I did not know that it would rain and had not even dressed warmly, I have to stay here until the rains stop," she said. Last week, the meteorological department said there would be no rains this season.

The announcement was made by acting Deputy Director of the Kenya Meteorological Department Bernard Chanzu.

Mr Chanzu even asked Kenyans to brace themselves for scarcity of water. Thankfully, that may not be the case if the rains continue into the coming weeks. AFP



him and ordered him to enter the car.

A statement issued and signed by the Public Relations Officer of the Accra Police command, DSP Efiya Tenge, said the Charlie SWAT Unit of the command picked up intelligence that some Nigerians residing in H/N/11/B, NTHC Estates, Vivian Farms, Lashibi, were suspicious characters who stayed at home all day but went out only at night. The statement said at about 8am on Thursday, the police followed up on the

Wangara, said he was on his early morning walk when the car pulled up in front of him.

"One of the occupants came out, pulled a pistol on him and ordered him to enter the car or risk being shot if he resists. He obliged, entered and was driven away with the kidnapers pointing a pistol and an axe at him. He could not see his way till they got to the location and was detained in the room and held hostage for payment of ransom," the statement said. Reuters

EDITORIAL

When rebels turn state actors

A GROUP OF former rebels under the banner 'ex-generals' took the entire nation spellbound, especially residents of Monrovia and its environs when they hosted a news conference here last Tuesday, issuing 72 hours ultimatum to Montserrado County District#10 Representative Yekeh Kolubah to report to their command or face forceful arrest.

TRUE TO THEIR threat, they moved to the Old Road residence of Rep. Kolubah the following day to effect the forceful arrest, but met stiff resistance from human shield, predominantly supporters of the lawmaker, who had barricaded the entire premises, waiting for an apparent showdown.

WHAT KEPT THE entire nation dumfounded in the scenario is that the legitimate government with all national security apparatuses kept mute and watched, as the showdown was imminent.

IT TOOK THE authorities three long days before coming out with a rebuke, inviting the ex-generals thru the Ministry of Justice for clarification on their threat to forcibly arrest a sitting lawmaker for his public utterances.

MANY ORDINARY LIBERIANS suspect that the conspicuous silence of the government during this period indicates an official sanction for the non-state actors to have even mobilized and addressed a news conference, issuing threats that sent panic in the public.

WHETHER ACTIVE OR demobilized, rebel activities are never within confines of laws and statutes. As their name depicts, they are rebellious of state parastatals, and are anti-establishment.

WHERE THEY DREW courage and authority from to wanting to effect an arrest by force is the question everyone is asking. What has happened to the police and our court system that former rebels now want to act on behalf of the state? We wonder whether the government realizes what message it sent out there to our partners by its inaction or late response to a situation that could have turned very messy for the entire country and disturbed the current peace.

MONTSERRADO COUNTY ATTORNEY Edward Kla Martin, acting on behalf of the Ministry of Justice last Friday, 19 April claimed to have invited the ex-rebel generals to provide clarity on the 72-hour ultimatum they issued for Representative Kolubah to report to their command or they would have forcibly apprehended him. He provided the explanation after closed door meeting with the ex-generals in his office at the Temple of Justice.

BUT WHERE WAS the County Attorney or the Minister of Justice when the ex-rebels addressed the press last Tuesday and issued the threat which they attempted to enforce the following day?

IF THE WEAH administration or any office of the government believes they can form alliances with rebels and non-state actors to execute what they ought to do under the Constitution, they are making a sad and dangerous mistake, and need to think again. The Weah government could seriously undermine itself if it went this route.

REBELS, WHETHER FORMER or active, do not operate within the law or Constitution. Their activities are extrajudicial. Rather, they subscribe to the rule of terror and the jungle. In their world, might makes right and no one dares challenge them even if they are wrong. A legitimately elected government and a rebel group are mutually exclusive. They can't coexist or operate side by side under a democratic governance process.

The
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COMMENTARY

By Shlomo Avineri

The Roots of Right-Wing Dominance in Israel

Most commentators have focused on Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's personal qualities to explain what looked to many to be an unlikely election victory. But there are important structural reasons for Likud's durability in power, and a strong economy is just the start.

JERUSALEM - Binyamin Netanyahu's latest electoral success, winning a fifth term as Israel's prime minister, is by any measure a remarkable achievement for him and his right-wing Likud party. Serious corruption charges did not seem to diminish his popularity among his base, and his close relations with both US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin obviously enhanced his standing in the country.

Trump clearly helped Netanyahu's campaign by scrapping decades of American policies. Not only did he withdraw the United States from the Iran nuclear deal, negotiated by his predecessor, Barack Obama; he also moved the US embassy to Jerusalem and - just a few days before the election - recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights.

Many may deplore Netanyahu's own Trump-style tactics - instilling fear and hatred of real and imagined enemies, delegitimizing the press, and attacking the judicial system - but they worked. This, and Netanyahu's undeniable campaign savvy, helped him beat back the challenge from the newly formed Blue and White party headed by Benny Gantz, a respected but politically inexperienced former military chief.

Not surprisingly, most commentators have focused on Netanyahu's personal qualities to explain what looked to many to be an unlikely victory. But there are important structural reasons for Likud's durability in power: Israel's economy is thriving, inflation is under 2%, and unemployment is at historic lows.

And there are some deeper trends at work as well, beyond politics and economics. The historical liberal and social-democratic nature of the Jewish state was rooted in the worldview of its founders in the early twentieth century. Zionist leaders like Chaim Weizmann, David Ben-Gurion, and Golda Meir wedded the secular idea of national self-determination for the Jewish people to a vision of social justice. Under external and internal pressure, these values were not always successfully implemented, especially during the post-1948 mass immigration, but they continued to define the ideology of a society that viewed itself as both Jewish and democratic.

That worldview is no longer shared by all Israelis. The growth of Israel from a small and poor embattled land with 650,000 Jewish inhabitants at its founding to a thriving nation of almost eight million people today resulted from demographic changes that gradually but decisively altered the country's social structure and politics. It is now clear how dramatic the impact of those changes has been.

One million immigrants from the former Soviet Union who have arrived since the late 1980s are enriching Israeli science, technology, music, and culture. But their political attitudes also reflect decades of life under Soviet rule: though mostly secular, many of them believe in a strong state with a hierarchical leadership structure, having little patience for outsiders or enemies (in this case, Arabs). As one of them quipped to me, "I do not want to live under Putin, but I want my leader

to be like Putin."

The wishy-washy social-democratic ethos of Israel's Labor movement looked to them like a variant of bolshevism, and the kibbutz reminded them of a Soviet kolkhoz. Consequently, many of them felt much more comfortable with Netanyahu's robust nationalism than with left-wing supporters of Palestinians' right to self-determination.

Likewise, earlier immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East - the Mizrahi and Sephardi communities that now comprise almost half of Israel's Jewish population - found the secular, egalitarian ethos of Labor to be deeply at odds with their religiosity and patriarchal values. For many, kibbutzim mean the breakup of the family and enforced secularization. And many brought with them memories of oppression in their Arab-majority countries of origin. Menachem Begin, the first Likud prime minister, capitalized on these immigrants' resentment of the hegemony of the left-wing establishment.

Their descendants, together with immigrants from the former USSR, still form the backbone of support for Likud. And, given Likud's natural alliance with orthodox and ultra-orthodox Jewish parties, the right-wing has gained a built-in advantage which will not disappear when Netanyahu leaves the scene. Israel is not on its way to becoming a Hungarian-like "illiberal democracy"; its democratic structures and norms remain resilient (though this will be tested by Likud's looming attempt to grant Netanyahu immunity from the corruption charges he faces). But the institutional edifices that once made its liberal and social democratic sectors dominant have been significantly weakened.

The Labor Party - which led the country for decades - has suffered from the general erosion of center-left forces currently characterizing Western democracies. These tendencies are strengthened by the Palestinian leadership's inability to convince many Israelis that they are truly willing to accept the Jewish state. By elevating suicide bombers and other terrorists to the status of "soldiers of the nation" and granting their families official pensions, the Palestinian Authority is not encouraging more Israelis to support a two-state solution. Nor does the latent civil war between the Palestinian Authority on the West Bank and the Islamist Hamas movement, which controls Gaza, bode well for any future peace with Israel.

Yet the fact remains that Gantz's Blue and White finished in a near dead heat with Likud, winning 35 of the Knesset's 120 seats (to Likud's 36). Together with a diminished Labor Party (six seats) and the small left-wing Meretz party (four seats), Blue and White could mount a vigorous opposition to Netanyahu's right-wing nationalist and religious coalition, which will control 65 seats. But Netanyahu's opponents will have to come up with coherent alternatives to Likud's attacks on the press and the judicial system if they wish to regain the traction lost in recent elections. Demographics do not favor a center-left alternative in the immediate future, but it is not impossible: the electorate is split right down the middle.

O-PED

By Anne O. Krueger

Mayday for American Protectionism

WASHINGTON, DC - When you try something for 99 years and the situation keeps getting worse, it is time to try something else. The United States Congress passed the Merchant Marine Act of 1920 (also known as the Jones Act) in order to protect America's shipping industry and strengthen national security. But the law has almost destroyed the industry, and imposed huge costs on America's businesses, consumers, and the environment. It needs to be sunk.

The Jones Act requires all cargo shipped between American ports to be carried on US-flagged vessels that are assembled entirely in America, and that have some of their major components manufactured in the US. These ships must be at least 75% owned and crewed by Americans. And if an US-flagged ship needs to be repaired overseas, the US charges a 50% tax on the price.

Shipping goods between two ports in the same country is called "cabotage." The World Economic Forum has called the Jones Act the world's most restrictive cabotage law, and the OECD ranks the US behind only China and Indonesia in the restrictiveness of its maritime-services regulations.

Jones Act requirements have long been a protectionist drag on the US economy and are increasingly detrimental to national security - as Colin Grabow, Inu Manak, and Daniel Ikenon of the Cato Institute pointed out in an important paper last year. (This commentary draws heavily on their work.)

Consider national security. Since 2000, the number of American ships of at least 1,000 tons that comply with the Jones Act has fallen from 193 to 99. When the US military sent materiel to the Persian Gulf in 2002-03, American commercial ships took only 6.3% of the total, and foreign-flagged vessels a further 16%. (The US military transported the rest.)

Shipbuilding and shipping operations in the US have also become inordinately expensive. American-built coastal-size container ships are estimated to cost between \$190 million and \$250 million each, compared to about \$30 million for foreign-made equivalents. And because Jones-compliant ships are so expensive, their owners do not replace them. A ship's economically useful life is generally considered to be about 20 years, but more than 65% of the Jones fleet is over 30 years old, making it inefficient and even dangerous. And whereas America built less than one million gross tons of ships between 2014 and 2016, South Korea and China produced a combined 140 million tons.

According to some estimates, the daily operating costs of US-flagged ships are almost three times higher than those of foreign vessels. Crewing costs on American ships are reported to be about five times greater. And whereas transporting crude oil from the Gulf Coast to the US Northeast on a Jones-compliant ship costs \$5 to \$6 per barrel, it costs only \$2 per barrel to carry crude from the Gulf Coast to Eastern Canada on a foreign-flagged vessel.

Because of the high cost of US coastal and Great Lakes shipping, the volume of American goods carried on these routes has fallen by about half since 1960. Over the same period, US railroad cargo has increased by 50%, and intercity truck freight by over 200%. Today, only 2% of US domestic freight is carried by water, compared to 40% in Europe.

If the Jones Act were repealed, many goods could be transported within the US more cheaply by water than on land. Tellingly, US waterborne freight to and from Canada and Mexico, which is not subject to the Act, has increased by 300% since 1960.

By pushing companies to use land-based transport, the Jones Act increases costs for US firms, raises prices for consumers, and causes more congestion on the country's highways. Moreover, truck, rail, and air transport produce up to 145 times more carbon dioxide emissions than cargo ships do.

The law's negative effects do not end there. Puerto Rico, which has no overland route to the rest of the US, pays a particularly heavy price, because only a handful of Jones-compliant ships regularly serve the island. Whereas the neighboring Dominican Republic buys oil from the US, shipments of imported supplies from Venezuela and other countries cost Puerto Rico less (even though US-sourced oil itself is cheaper). And when Hurricane Maria devastated the island in 2017, US President Donald Trump authorized only a ten-day waiver of the Jones Act - not long enough for some foreign-owned ships to bring much-needed aid.

Subjecting Puerto Rico and other US territories and states to higher shipping charges serves no useful purpose and discriminates against fellow Americans. And with foreign ships and crews entering US ports every day, it makes no sense to argue that commercial sailors should be American for national-security reasons. Environmentalists, too, ought to be outraged, given the costly and unnecessary damage resulting from increased CO2 emissions.

Having destroyed US merchant shipping over the past 99 years, the Jones Act needs to be repealed. Ships plying US waters should be obtained wherever they are cheapest. And without protectionist laws, America's shipbuilding industry might well start rationalizing and become more competitive.

The longer the Jones Act remains on the books, the more expensive US commercial shipping will become and the further it will decline. Rather than celebrating the centenary of a damaging protectionist law, policymakers should throw it overboard.

OPINION

By Fawaz A. Gerges

Netanyahu Means War

LONDON - After a bitter re-election campaign, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has secured his legacy as a leader more committed to domination than to peace. Over the course of the past decade, he has completely sabotaged any chance of reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis, and left Israel itself deeply divided.

All those who desire peace in the Middle East should be deeply worried about the consequences of Netanyahu's policies, which will be felt for decades to come. Annexing occupied territories, disenfranchising Arab Israelis, and brutally subjugating the Palestinian people is a recipe for perpetual conflict between Israel and its neighbors. Even more ominously, Netanyahu's rhetoric has added a culture-war dynamic to the mix, thus transforming a clash over land ownership into a "clash of civilizations." That will encourage the forces of radicalism and extremism on all sides.

At home, Netanyahu has systematically turned Israel into an illiberal democracy. Through fearmongering and racism, he has sought to drive a permanent wedge between Israel's Jewish majority and the Israeli Arab community, which accounts for around 20% of the country's population.

Last year, for example, Netanyahu pushed through a "nation-state law" that affords Jews the "unique" right to self-determination, thus formally classifying Arab Israelis as second-class citizens. When the law drew criticism from the Israeli actor Rotem Sela, Netanyahu replied that Israel is "the national state, not of all citizens, but only of the Jewish people." Given this open hostility, it is little wonder that voter turnout among Arab Israelis in this election was 15 percentage points below that of 2015. When your own prime minister declares in no uncertain terms that you are not an equal member of the political community, participating in it can feel futile.

But in addition to undermining democracy at home, Netanyahu has also sabotaged the peace process and jeopardized Israel's long-term security. Though he often boasts of keeping Israel secure and strong, his definition of security is so narrow and transitory as to be meaningless. His approach is based entirely on short-term calculations and balancing power, at the expense of actual peace. Courting Arab strongmen will not deliver Israel lasting security. Only by making peace with the people of the Arab world, not with the dictators that rule over them, can Israel guarantee its long-term security.

Ultimately, genuine security will be achieved only when Israelis and Palestinians find a way to resolve their century-old conflict and live side by side, either in two states or together in one democratic state. There is no other viable solution. As long as the Palestinians are oppressed and denied a nation-state of their own, there will be conflict.

Nonetheless, over the past 13 years, Netanyahu has enthusiastically supported the expansion of Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem. As he well knows, the settlements are a physical roadblock standing in the way of a contiguous, independent Palestinian state.

Moreover, during the recent election campaign, Netanyahu pledged that, if re-elected, he would prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank by "controlling the entire area." We should take him at his word. His annexation pledge is consistent with his long history of opposing a two-state solution. With a new electoral mandate and a blank check from US President Donald Trump, he will feel even more emboldened to bury the prospects of Israeli-Palestinian peace for good.

Regardless of how reckless his policies become, Netanyahu will face no major deterrents. The political center in Israel has shifted dramatically to the right, and his own coalition is made up of ultra-nationalist parties that are pressing for annexation. He may now meet their demands in exchange for legislative measures to protect him from forthcoming indictments on corruption charges.

Whereas US President Barack Obama checked Netanyahu's most radical instincts, Trump has encouraged them. To rally support for Netanyahu in the election, Trump formally recognized Israel's sovereignty over the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, bragging later that he arrived at the decision after receiving a "quick" history lesson from his son-in-law, Jared Kushner. Then, when asked by CNN if he thought Netanyahu's talk of extending Israeli sovereignty to West Bank settlements would hurt the Trump administration's long-gestating peace plan, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo replied bluntly: "I don't."

This response indicates that Netanyahu will have carte blanche from the US and that the Trump administration will not be calling for the creation of an independent Palestinian state. That means the peace process is dead; Netanyahu wins. Clearly, Trump and Netanyahu are two sides of the same political coin. They will do almost anything to please their conservative bases, and questions of right and wrong will not enter into their calculus.

The Palestinian people have been forsaken. Palestinian leadership is too weak and divided to resist Israel's occupation and settlement expansion. Saudi Arabia and other leading Arab regimes that once provided a check on Israel's policies are now focused on Iran, not on the Palestinian question.

Still, conflict is not inevitable, and even the Israeli-Palestinian problem can eventually be resolved. But that can happen only with both sides bridging divides. For the region, normalization of diplomatic ties with Israel and its integration in the Middle Eastern neighborhood will always remain conditional on its reconciliation with the Palestinians.

Netanyahu has shown no desire to come to terms with the Palestinians. His racist policies and bellicosity toward Palestinians and Israel's neighbors have deepened divides, not bridged them. The path he is on can only end in more war and suffering.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Public Procurement & Concession Commission: A Critical Tool for Nation Building or a Toothless Bull Dog?

By Kerkula G. Mulbah

International Perspective

Public procurement is the process through which hard-earned taxpayers' monies are used to better the lives of its citizens. Contemporary public procurement has gone beyond just buying goods, works, and services. Developed countries like the France, Singapore and the United Kingdom (UK), for example, are now using public procurement to mitigate climate change, fight corruption, bribery, human trafficking, child labor, etc.

A new public procurement trend that has helped to continuously improve nations in Europe is their ability to constantly review their laws and incorporate sustainable procurement objectives. Sustainable procurement addresses three critical areas of national development: (i) social inclusion (e.g. people with disabilities/disadvantaged groups), (ii) environmental considerations and (iii) improving economic conditions. Within the European Union (EU) public procurement regime, Article 18(2) 2014 Directive clearly mandates contracting authorities to incorporate sustainable considerations in their procurement practices. For example, a public entity can award contracts to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); reserve contracts for firms whose businesses primary focus is supporting people with disabilities. Developed countries around the world with public procurement

Liberia accounts for the largest portion of the country national budget (approximately sixty percent - 60%). Prior to the establishment of the Public Procurement & Concessions Commission in 2005, public procurement was done solely by the General Services Agency of Liberia. This single oversight did not yield the needed reforms in the public financial management sector of Liberia. Major donors like the World Bank at the time could not invest in Liberia due to lack of best practice to public procurement standards.

The Government of Liberia saw the gaps and the lack of trained professionals to handle public procurement, initiated a number of procurement training interventions, including the Intensive Procurement Training Program (IPTP); the amendment and restatement of the Public Procurement and Concessions Act of 2005; strengthening of the Public Financial Management Laws, among others.

The Intensive Procurement Training School is run through the aegis of the World Bank and other partners. I was fortunate to be one of many Liberians who benefited from the one-year intensive procurement training. IPTP was on steady progress till KehleboeGongloe took the helm of leadership and subsequently decided to drive the prestigious institution (the Financial Management Training Program & IPTP)



The Author

Development Bank (AFDB) donor funding are subject to straight procurement guidelines that borrowing countries need to follow with caution. Public procurement reforms are not only necessary for donor funding, but also for the onward development of a country. Procurement reforms go beyond just having laws on the book. Accordingly, there are critical success factors associated with reforms: (i) are the laws on the book independent and enforceable? (ii) are there people with integrity running those institutions (like PPCC and contract awarding bodies)?

One of the reasons why the EU looks like a shining beacon (procurement wise) is because of its strong public procurement enforcement mechanisms. There are clear reporting standards and public officials are answerable and accountable to the people they serve. Contrariwise, many public officials in Liberia see procurement procedures as a waste of time. What those officials fail to realize is that they are not implementing private procurement; instead, public procurement which has to do with using hard-earned taxpayers' money. Even in the private sector, there are standard operating procurement procedures.

PPCC Under James Dorbor "The Integrity Idol" Jallah

Dorbor 'The Integrity Idol' has left a high standard at PPCC. 'Skip', as he is affectionately called, served this integrity agency for four years. During his leadership at PPCC Dorbor laid a solid foundation that the new Executive Director can build on. In my opinion, Dorbor's strength was building and empowering a professional team at PPCC. 'The first rule of accessing the intelligence of a leader is to look at the caliber of people around him'. A Japanese proverb says, "When the character of a man is not clear to you, look at his friends". Mr. Jallah always told public procurement officials in almost all his speeches to keep their glass clean. Meaning procurement practitioners should walk with integrity. My last interaction with 'Skip' was at the Foreign Affairs Ministry in August 2018. I had gone to explain some critical Concessions my entity was implementing at the time and Dorbor was called to corroborate some of the information I provided as lead procurement person at the time. I am an FMTP/IPTP trained and as such, I had read PPCC guidelines from cover to cover. It was my walking stick.

My few interactions with Dorbor showed his leadership abilities and clever way of answering difficult questions. If 'Skip' was placed in a difficult compromising position, he would explain the laws in simplest terms using Liberian 'koloqua' and sometimes rhetorically rephrasing the question to the public official like this (speaking slowly): 'This is what the law says...and if we don't follow what is written, these are some of the bad things that can happen...hospitals might not get the needed drugs, roads are likely not being



best practice do not depend on grants or aids to maintain their forward match to visible improvements. Those developed countries use hard-earned TAXES. It is no magic! According to the Institute for Government, the UK spends approximately 284 billion euros annually on procuring goods, works, and services.

That money doesn't come from any donor partners or philanthropist, but citizens themselves. Value for money is obtained in the EU as a result of clear public procurement guidelines and strong enforcement mechanisms. No law will be one hundred percent perfect, that is why there are provisions for amendments. However, in terms of international best practice for public procurement, the EU and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), World Bank, etc. are some of the instruments that are used for procurement reforms around the world.

Public Procurement: The Liberian Scenario

The need to strengthen public procurement in Liberia cannot be overemphasized. Public procurement in

into reversed mode. Mr. Gongloe who probably did not understand how donor funding works decided to cut down cost at the demise of the most talk about (read, read & read, read) FMTP/IPTP.

The one- and two-years professional training is so challenging that students are given good learning conditions to thrive. For example, laptops, accessing to 24 hrs internet services, stake of the art classrooms, monthly stipend to complement the full-time study, among others. Sadly, the last batch of final students (batch 6) are currently being trained and the school will be officially turned over to the University of Liberia (UL) to manage. UL, in my opinion, is not prepared to fully take over IPTP in the absence of donor funding. Arguably, the glorious days of IPTP can be attributed to batches 1 - 4. Thanks to AagonTingba, Sylvia Squire and others for their professional guidance and leadership.

Liberia had to go through public procurement reforms due to many reasons. Top on the list was the country desire to use donor funding. World Bank and African

TO Be Continued

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

“Low interest in the Sciences”

-says UNESCO Regional Officer

The Director of UNESCO Regional Office in Abuja, Osuji Otu has said at a forum in the Liberian capital that students have declined greatly when it comes to the sciences, thus leading to failure during public examples.

“Science subjects in school has declined, students are more focus on arts,” said Mr. Otu at the start of three days training organized by UNESCO for some 60 science teachers in Liberia on Wednesday, April 17, 2019.

“Not that students do not love science, but the presentation by teachers has made them student interest to decline,” the UNESCO official added.

When asked if his assertion about the low interest in the sciences was based on a proven statistics or survey, the UNESCO Regional Director said: “in the UN system that E and S in the UNESCO stands for Education and Science so we have the mandate to promote

science and technology, but over the years it has declined in the subjects of science.”



Mr. Osuji Otu, Director of UNESCO Regional Office in Abuja

“Even in West Africa, you find out that the West African Examinations Council (WAEC Exam) there is a decline in student passing those science subjects,” the UNESCO

One thing he was quick to say was that the problem is not only in Liberia, but is what he called “global problem”.

Regional Officer said. Mr. Otu further said that the interest in science subjects have dropped to the point that

if a school had passing record of about 100 students during public examinations, it is declining from 100 to 50, and below.

According to him, as a mean of reawaking the lost interest, UNESCO saw the need to train teachers in basic science lab demonstrations; something he said will help students regain the interest.

UNESCO is seeking other donors’ support, in order to see how best they can help improve the Liberian school system when it come to the science. Mr. Otu indicated that since the Liberian government cannot afford to provide standard lab for the schools.

“We will provide micro science kits to the schools that are participating this training and when we get funding and corporation with the Liberian we will extend the provision of the micro science kits to other

institutions in Liberia,” the UNESCO Regional Officer explained.

Also speaking were some of the participants who praised UNESCO for the training opportunity and pleaded with them to more of such trainings as means of helping Liberian kids.

Mr. David Taigbailee, Natural Science Specialist at the Kakata Ural Teachers Training Institute (KRTTI) outside Monrovia said, “refresher trainings are very good for teachers because it helps teachers to present the right lectures to students. You cannot give what you don’t have.”

The UNESCO training workshop for some 60 science teachers in Liberia, which is being coordinated by UNESCO Liberia office, is expected to end in Monrovia today, Friday.

Patients at risk at Phebe

-As hospital goes without power for weeks

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

Making the disclosure in an interview with this paper at the compound of the Hospital in the county, the Administrator of the Hospital, Mr. Kerson Saykor said fuel used to operate the hospital has finished and the hospital is not capacitated to get additional fuel due to the lack of funds. Mr. Saykor said the hospital has been in darkness for about two weeks adding Doctors

and Nurses are using Chinese lights to cater to patents. He said the situation is serving as serious impediment to the smooth operation of the only referral hospital in the central region.

“We can’t be operating at a hospital like Phebe with touch lights, we want the support of the government and humanitarian organizations” he adds. Our Bong County Correspondent says the situation has grown wide public outcry in the County with many of the citizens shaping blame on the County Legislative Caucus. Some of the citizens

mostly women said it appears that their various Lawmakers have forgotten about them evidence by their silence on the current problem at Phebe Hospital.

“If they were really seeking our interests, then by now some of them have given some money or talk with partners and government to provide fuel but since darkness covered the hospital, none of them have made even a single contribution to the Hospital’s administration” Sarah Kerkulah a Pregnant Woman (seven months) told this paper.

According to her, besides the lack of electricity at the hospital, it is difficult to even find a Paracetamol or oral rehydration sault (ORS) which is worrisome. “I carried my little sister at Phebe on Friday, April 19 for treatment, but we were forced to leave the place in the night as a result of the lack of electricity and other medical equipment. We took her to Baptist clinic where she was operated on” Nowai Freeman another resident of the County told a local Radio station through telephone call.

Mrs. Freeman stated that even though she had the money to pay at Baptist clinic, but she is mostly concern about the poor people that are going to seek medication at Phebe because they do not have money to pay.

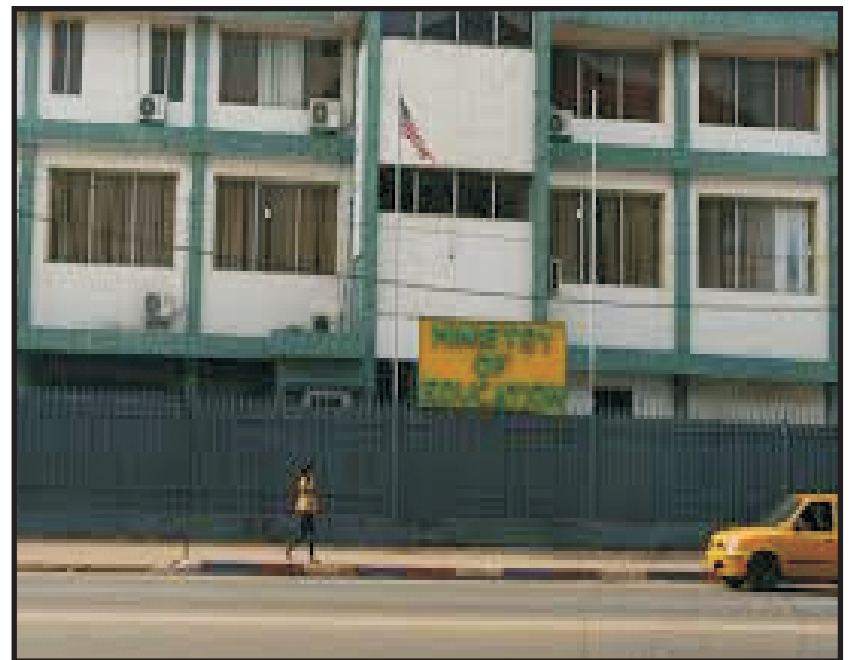
Our Bong County Reporters says, during the County

MOE releases WAEC schedule

The Ministry of Education on Thursday released the timetable for this year’s West African Exams, saying the WASSCE will run from April 24 to May 24, 2019. In the release which was issued just days before the start of the exams the ministry said the scheduled was derived in collaboration with the West African Examinations Head

nationwide,” the release said.

The Ministry said all 12th Graders should take notes that the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) will be administered on Wednesday commencing April 24 through May 20, 2019, beginning 8:00 AM prompt.



Office (WAEC).

“The WASSCE will begin on April 24 - May 20, 2019 for all 12th Graders nationwide. WAEC -May 22, 2019 for selected 6th Graders as a pilot program for Mathematics & English. WAEC - May 23-24, 2019 for all 9th Graders

It cautions all students to assemble at their various WASSCE Centers in their Uniforms with their School Identification Cards for proper identification and easier recognition at least one hour prior to the Exam’s time. --Press release



MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

GoL, World Bank sign 1.5M grant for vulnerable youth

The World Bank and the Liberian Government have signed the Youth Opportunities Project (YOP) Additional Financing (AF) Grant Agreement of US\$1.5 million to provide additional support to youth under the Productive Public Works component of the YOP. It will also strengthen various aspects of project implementation, including monitoring and evaluation.

World Bank Country Director for Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone, Dr. Henry Kerali and Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Hon. Samuel Tweah, signed the Agreement in Washington, DC, during the Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund. The signing ceremonies were attended by members of the Liberian Government delegation and the World Bank Country Manager for Liberia Larisa Leshchenko.

This AF is the first tranche of US\$3.5 million provided by the Swedish Government through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). This funding aims at supporting the harmonized

approach to youth agenda through a Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MTDF) on "Improving Access to Income Generation Opportunities for Youth". The YOP is being implemented by ministries of Youth and Sports and Gender, Children and

Social Protection, including Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE).

This Additional Financing will help address critical gaps in financing for the project to achieve its development objectives and will deepen the impact of interventions in rural areas, which were particularly affected by the economic downturn following the Ebola Virus Disease crisis. Given the success of the original YOP, the Swedish Government committed to support the project with an additional financing of US\$3.5 million.

To help improve labor market outcomes of youth and labor productivity in Liberia, the World Bank Board approved an International Development Association (IDA) credit of US\$10 million on November 6, 2015 to support the implementation of the Youth Opportunities Project (YOP). The project aims to improve access to income generation opportunities for youth and strengthen the government's capacity to

implement its cash transfer program, with a target of reaching 15,000 poor and vulnerable young people by December 31, 2020. At least 50 percent of beneficiaries will be female.

Since January 2017, the project enrolled over 8,000 beneficiaries, over 7,000 of whom are youth living in hard-to-reach rural areas in Liberia. Through its Productive Public Works component, the project has so far helped create 258 youth-led farms in all 15 counties. The youth in urban areas under the Support to Household enterprises have set up 99 small businesses in the greater Monrovia area. Youth who are entering the labor market (15-17 years old) in urban areas will also benefit from job-readiness training and psychosocial support. Finally, YOP supported technical assistance to help lay the foundation for an effective social protection delivery system with the design of Liberia's Household Social Registry. -Press release



Lawmaker wants GoL disburse 1.7 Million

Nimba County District # 2 Representative Prince Tokpah has called on the Liberian Government through the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) to fast-track the disbursement of the US\$1.7 million allocated to Rubber farmers in the country.

The Nimba County Representative made the statement recently in Morris' Farm, Montserrado County, at the program marking the groundbreaking ceremony of the Rubber Planters Association of Liberia (RPAL) headquarters.

The lawmaker said the stimulus package, when released by government, will help the struggling rubber farmers to greatly improve.

He vowed that under his administration as the House Chairman on Agriculture, he will lobby with his colleagues at the National Legislature in making sure that the sector is rescued.

Representative Tokpah believes that agriculture is the bedrock of the Country's economy and the rubber sector is of no exception.

"I can recalled that farmers in the country have been complaining that the sector is not making money at all, but through my help and RPAL's President, Wilhelmina G. Mulbah-Siaway, we work to ensure that the sector is liberated," he stressed.

Representative Tokpah said based on these conditions, he wants the rubber stimulus package that the government

should make available the US\$1.7 million to ensure that the sector reawaken itself.

According to him, if farmers are empowered positively, where production is booming and no mutiny is ongoing, it will also help government in its efforts to creating jobs for Liberians.

"Although, the government is putting in some money, it is not much, maintaining I want to use this occasion to call on MFDP to fast-track the payment to ensure that the farmers receive it to help improve the sector".

The tough talking Nimba County District # 2 Representative revealed that most of the rubber farms are closed down, adding we don't want that to happen because the farmers are the ones helping government to reduce unemployment rate in this country.

"Some rubber farmers are trying to build a factory, machines and to do other activities, but how will they do it when the money is not there, because once the factory is operational it will be of no regret for farmers to pay back government money," Rep. Tokpah said.

It can be recalled, during a one-day forum on the Liberian rubber sector, organized by the Liberia Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI) in Monrovia last year, Minister Tweah assured the rubber planters of government's continued support to improve the sector.

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Patients at risk

Cont'd from page 6

Council sitting, sixty thousand United States Dollars was allotted in the budget for the hospital but up to press time, the money has not been given.

Our Correspondent says the Chairperson of the County Legislative Caucus Henry Willie Yallah has not spoken about the issue but his colleague Senator Henrique Flomo Tokpa has stated that the county has received some funds from the government but it has not been

disbursed.

Meanwhile, Bong County Health Team has promised to quickly intervene the situation.

The health Team through its Chief Administrator Jonah N. Tokpah stated that they are currently engaging the Liberian government through the Ministry of Health to speedily provide fuel for the Hospital. -

By: Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong County

He observed that rubber planters are struggling for loans from various banks to improve their businesses and, therefore, he would approach the government to assist the sector. Minister Tweah at that time further revealed that

authorities of LBDI, a development bank that has played a significant role in revamping the rubber sector, should make more strides to revamp the sector. -By: Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong County



Français

Un bouclier humain autour du député Kolubah

Plusieurs centaines de personnes se sont rendues mercredi chez le député Yekeh Kolubah, représentant du district n° 10 du district de Montserrado, à Old Road, banlieue de Monrovia, pour le protéger de toute tentative d'arrestation par un groupe d'anciens généraux rebelles.

Le déploiement fait suite à un ultimatum de 72 heures lancé lors d'une conférence de presse mardi à Monrovia par les ex-généraux au représentant Kolubah pour se présenter sous leur commandement ou faire face à une arrestation pour avoir critiqué le gouvernement, en particulier le président George Manneh Weah.

Les anciens rebelles se seraient rendus au domicile du Représentant Kolubah mardi, à peine un jour après leur réunion et leur ultimatum. Ils semblent avoir eu l'autorisation du gouvernement pour agir bien que celui-ci nie avoir rencontré les ex-généraux.

Le représentant Yekeh Y.



Representative Yekeh Kolubah

Kolubah avait été invité par le procureur général du comté de Montserrado, Edwin Kla Martin, pour donner des explications sur des propos qu'il aurait tenus lors d'une manifestation dans son district le dimanche 14 avril 2019.

Parlant à notre correspondant chez lui à son domicile, le législateur du

district n° 10 a expliqué qu'il n'a reçu aucune convocation de quelque tribunal que ce soit jusqu'à ce jour, ajoutant que s'il en avait reçu une et que celle était conforme à la Constitution, il la respecterait.

Selon lui, ces anciens généraux rebelles qui lui ont donné 72 heures pour se mettre à leur disposition

parlent au compte de leur patron, le président George M. Weah. Il s'est dit déçu car aucun président ne peut normalement donner l'autorité à des anciens rebelles pour arrêter un citoyen paisible.

Depuis son ascendance, le représentant Kolubah a été un critique acerbe de l'administration Weah, critiquant chaque geste du président, invoquant des allégations de violation de la Constitution et de corruption.

Vêtu d'une tenue militaire, le représentant du district 10 s'est mis à la tête d'un groupe de plusieurs milliers de personnes pour manifester pacifiquement au siège du Parti de l'unité (UP), ancien parti au pouvoir, à Congo Town.

« Nous sommes venus dire que nous voulons que nous restions ensemble. Nous sommes venus donner un soutien à nos aînés, à savoir le

vice-président Joseph Nyumah Boakai, Benoni Urey, Me Charles Brumskine et Alexander Cummings », a-t-il déclaré.

Selon lui, le président Weah, en moins de deux ans, son administration a enfoncé le pays dans la boue et ramené les libériens aux jours tristes du pays, au lieu de la joie tant promise.

« Nous avons observé que ce footballeur a enfoncé notre pays dans la boue et nous ne continuerons pas à croiser les bras pour le laisser faire. C'est pourquoi je suis venu me rejoindre à vous afin que vous puissiez m'utiliser à tout moment pour dénoncer les méfaits du président Weah et de ses escrocs afin qu'ils fassent ce qui est juste », a déclaré le législateur aux dirigeants des trois partis politiques de l'opposition alliés.

Mardi dernier, le chef des anciens généraux rebelles Ofori Diah a annoncé l'ultimatum de 72 heures depuis son siège à Monrovia, notant que le représentant Kolubah lui-même était un ancien général rebelle, il devait donc répondre à leur convocation.

Mais le Représentant Kolubah a dit que toute personne ou groupe de personnes qui tentera de se rendre de force dans sa résidence se heurtera à une puissante résistance des habitants du district 10.

Plusieurs partisans ont affirmé qu'ils ne permettraient pas l'arrestation de leur représentant, car, selon eux, il n'a rien fait de mal qui puisse justifier son arrestation.

Burkina Faso : peu de détails ont filtré de la lettre de l'ex-président Compaoré

Au Burkina Faso, la lettre écrite par l'ancien président Blaise Compaoré, et adressée à l'actuel président Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, suscite à la fois interrogation et optimisme. Dans ce courrier, Blaise Compaoré, en exil en Côte d'Ivoire depuis sa chute en 2014, fait part de sa « disponibilité » à soutenir son

pays, en proie à des problèmes sécuritaires réguliers ces derniers mois. Seulement, à ce jour, peu de détails ont filtré sur le contenu de cette lettre, datée du 29 mars, et réceptionnée par la présidence le 12 avril dernier.

C'est un courrier privé, rédigé par un ancien chef de l'État à un président en

fonction. La lettre n'a pas été rendue publique. Plusieurs sources proches de l'entourage de Blaise Compaoré voient à travers ce geste, une volonté de ressouder les rangs autour d'une « union sacrée contre le terrorisme ».

Au MPP, parti de la mouvance présidentielle, on utilise des mots mesurés pour commenter ce courrier. « La lettre veut dire qu'il est inquiet. Il est prêt à apporter sa contribution et je pense qu'on peut prendre acte de cela. Nous verrons la suite à donner », estime Ousseni Tamboura, un des porte-parole du parti.

Demande de transparence

Dans l'opposition, certaines voix se sont levées pour exiger plus de transparence : la main tendue de Blaise Compaoré est-elle acceptée ? Si oui, sur quels termes ? Mais certains responsables de l'opposition tempèrent et remettent cette lettre en perspective.

A l'image d'Ablassé Ouedraogo, leader de la Coder, qui regroupe plusieurs formations politiques : « Certains grimpent vers la réconciliation nationale parce

que cet acte tombe au moment où le président Kaboré lui-même envisage d'ouvrir un dialogue politique. Et nous, nous disons que le dialogue politique qui est envisagé pour les 27 et 28 avril doit très vite se transformer en dialogue national. »

Au CDP, le parti de l'ancien président, on estime que cette lettre est une « valeur ajoutée dans la démarche de réconciliation », selon les termes employés par Eddie Komboïgo, le président de cette formation.



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Français

"Nous ne nous taisons pas" (opposition)

Le régime du président George Weah est mis en garde contre toute tentative de museler l'opposition et de faire obstacle à la liberté d'expression.

En effet, le président national du Parti de l'Unité, ancien parti au pouvoir, a déclaré que même si le gouvernement arrêta le représentant du district 10 du comté de Montserrado, Yekeh Kolubah, et tous les autres opposants pour l'avoir critiqué, il aurait des gens qui continueront de parler pour dénoncer les tares du régime actuel.

Selon le président J. Wilmot Paye, il est impossible que le gouvernement réduise au silence le bloc de l'opposition ou toute autre personne qui s'oppose au gouvernement Weah.

S'exprimant mercredi 17 avril à la résidence du représentant Kolubah dans

McGill les a accusés de comploter pour renverser le pouvoir, mais les autorités ne lui ont jamais demandé des explications quant à la justesse de ses propos.

« Nous sommes aux côtés de Yekeh, et rien de ce que fera le gouvernement ne nous réduira au silence. J'espère que la police nationale du Libéria aura assez de places pour nous tous dans leurs prisons, car nous irons jusqu'au bout avec le législateur du district 10 », a promis M. Paye.

Il a appelé la communauté internationale à témoin, lui demandant de prendre note de tout ce qui se passe dans le pays. Selon lui, le gouvernement a intérêt à respecter la liberté d'expression, car chaque Libérien a le droit de parler s'il croit que quelque chose ne va pas.

"George Weah doit



la communauté de Old Road, Monrovia, le président Paye a ajouté que si le gouvernement le souhaite, il peut interdire les émissions de Henry Costa, de Mo Ali et du reste des opposants, mais ces derniers ne se taisent jamais. Ils continueront de parler des maux de la société et de dénoncer les défaillances de ce régime.

Vêtu de son uniforme kaki, avec un gilet et une casquette du parti de l'unité, le président de l'ancien parti au pouvoir a indiqué que le représentant de Kolubah est poursuivi pour avoir rejoint l'opposition, et ils veulent l'arrêter parce qu'il refuse de fermer les yeux sur les nombreuses défaillances du régime en place et a décidé d'en parler.

Selon lui, lorsque Kolubah a rejoint les quatre partis de l'opposition alliés, le ministre d'État Nathaniel

comprendre qu'il n'a pas gagné légitimement ; C'était le 28 décembre 2017, lorsque l'ancien vice-président Joseph Boakai, appuyé par les autres dirigeants de l'opposition, avait décidé de laisser tomber pour des raisons de paix », a-t-il déclaré.

Il a affirmé que le gouvernement fait tout ce qui est en son pouvoir pour empêcher la manifestation pacifique prévue le 7 juin. « Pourtant », déclare-t-il « en tant que citoyens, il est de notre droit constitutionnel de tenir des manifestations pacifiques, et ce droit ne nous devrait pas être refusé ».

Pour conclure, il a dit que la communauté internationale en avait maintenant assez du Libéria, car chaque jour, il y a des abus du pouvoir et d'autres actes inconstitutionnels dans le pays.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Shlomo Avineri

Aux racines de la domination de la droite en Israël

JÉRUSALEM - Le dernier succès électoral de Benjamin Nétanyahou, qui lui assure un cinquième mandat de Premier ministre, est, de quelque façon qu'on l'aborde, une réussite remarquable, pour lui et pour son parti, le Likoud. Les graves accusations de corruption dont il fait l'objet n'ont pas altéré, semble-t-il, sa popularité auprès de sa base, et sa proximité tant avec le président des États-Unis Donald Trump qu'avec le président russe Vladimir Poutine a évidemment renforcé son prestige en Israël.

Trump a indéniablement aidé Nétanyahou en renonçant à des décennies de politique américaine. Non seulement il a retiré les États-Unis de l'accord sur le nucléaire iranien, négocié par son prédécesseur Barack Obama, mais il a aussi déménagé l'ambassade des États-Unis à Jérusalem et - quelques jours seulement avant le scrutin -, reconnu la souveraineté d'Israël sur le plateau du Golan.

Si beaucoup déplorent la tactique de Nétanyahou, qui évoque celle de Trump - distillant la peur et la haine d'ennemis réels ou imaginaires, délégitimant la presse et attaquant la justice -, elle a néanmoins fonctionné. Elle lui a permis, jointe à un indéniable talent pour faire campagne, de relever le défi lancé par le parti Bleu Blanc, nouvellement créé, dirigé par Benny Gantz, ancien chef militaire respecté mais inexpérimenté en politique.

Sans surprise, la plupart des commentateurs ont mis en avant les qualités personnelles de Nétanyahou pour expliquer ce qui paraissait à beaucoup une improbable victoire. Mais la pérennité du Likoud au pouvoir a d'importantes raisons structurelles : l'économie du pays est prospère, l'inflation est inférieure à 2 % et le chômage est à un niveau historiquement bas.

Au-delà même de la politique et de l'économie, des tendances plus profondes sont également à l'œuvre. La nature historique libérale et sociale-démocrate de l'État juif était consubstantielle à la vision du monde de ses fondateurs au début du XXe siècle. Dans l'idée laïque du droit à une autodétermination nationale pour le peuple juif, des dirigeants sionistes comme Chaim Weizmann, David Ben Gourion et Golda Meir embrassaient une vision de justice sociale. Soumises à des pressions extérieures et intérieures, ces valeurs n'ont pas toujours été appliquées avec succès, notamment durant la période d'immigration massive après 1948, mais elles ont longtemps continué à définir l'idéologie d'une société qui se considérait elle-même comme juive et démocratique.

Cette vision du monde n'est plus aujourd'hui partagée par tous les Israéliens. L'essor du pays, petit territoire pauvre attaqué de toutes parts à sa création, peuplé de 650 000 habitants juifs, devenu une nation prospère de presque huit millions de personnes, résulte d'évolutions démographiques qui ont peu à peu mais irrémédiablement bouleversé sa structure sociale et sa vie politique. On comprend aujourd'hui à quel point l'impact de cette évolution est considérable.

Le million d'immigrants venus de l'ancienne Union soviétique à partir de la fin des années 1980 fut un apport à la science, à la technologie, à la musique et à la culture en Israël. Mais des dizaines d'années sous la férule soviétique ont donné à ces citoyens récents une mentalité politique particulière : quoique laïcs pour la plupart, beaucoup croient aussi en un État fort, avec une structure de direction hiérarchisée, et n'ont guère de patience à l'égard des tiers ou des ennemis (en l'occurrence les Arabes). Comme l'un d'entre eux me l'a confié : « Je

ne veux pas vivre sous Poutine, mais je veux que mon dirigeant soit comme Poutine. »

L'éthos social-démocrate falot du parti travailliste israélien leur apparaît comme une variante du bolchevisme, et le kibboutz leur rappelle le kolkhoze. Nombre d'entre eux se sentent par conséquent plus à l'aise avec le solide nationalisme de Nétanyahou qu'avec les soutiens de gauche au droit des Palestiniens à l'autodétermination.

De même, les premiers immigrants d'Afrique du Nord et du Moyen-Orient - les juifs d'Orient, les mizrahim, et les communautés sépharades, qui forment presque la moitié, aujourd'hui, de la population juive d'Israël - perçoivent l'éthos égalitaire et laïc du parti travailliste comme une atteinte à leur religiosité et à leurs valeurs patriarcales. Beaucoup associent les kibboutz au démantèlement de la famille et à une laïcisation forcée. Beaucoup ont aussi ramené avec eux la mémoire de l'oppression vécue dans les pays à majorité musulmane. Menahem Begin, premier ministre du Likoud à accéder au poste de Premier ministre, a construit sa popularité sur le ressentiment de ces immigrants envers l'hégémonie des élites de la gauche.

Leurs descendants forment encore, avec les immigrants de l'ancienne URSS, la colonne vertébrale des partisans du Likoud. Si l'on considère qui plus est l'alliance naturelle du Likoud avec les partis juifs orthodoxes et ultra-orthodoxes, la droite jouit d'un avantage structurel qui ne disparaîtra pas lorsque Nétanyahou quittera la scène. Israël ne se dirige pas vers une « démocratie illibérale » à la hongroise ; ses structures et ses normes démocratiques demeurent solides (même si elles seront probablement mises à l'épreuve par un Likoud qui tentera d'en appeler à l'immunité de Nétanyahou pour le protéger des chefs d'accusations dont il devra probablement répondre). Mais l'édifice institutionnel qui avait autrefois permis la domination de ses secteurs libéral et social-démocrate est significativement affaibli.

Le parti travailliste - qui a dirigé le pays pendant des décennies - souffre de l'érosion générale des forces de centre-gauche qui caractérise actuellement les démocraties occidentales. Ces tendances sont renforcées par l'incapacité de la direction palestinienne à convaincre nombre d'Israéliens que les Palestiniens sont réellement disposés à accepter l'État juif. En discernant aux responsables des attentats-suicides et aux autres terroristes le statut de « soldats de la nation » et en accordant des pensions officielles à leurs familles, l'Autorité palestinienne n'encourage pas les Israéliens à soutenir en plus grand nombre une solution à deux États. Quant à la guerre civile latente entre l'Autorité palestinienne établie en Cisjordanie et le mouvement islamiste Hamas qui contrôle la bande de Gaza, elle n'augure pas non plus d'une paix future avec Israël.

Le fait est, pourtant, que le parti Bleu Blanc de Gantz a fini au coude-à-coude avec le Likoud, remportant 35 sièges sur les 120 que compte la Knesset (contre 36 attribués au Likoud). Avec un parti travailliste affaibli (six sièges) et le petit parti de gauche Meretz (quatre sièges), Bleu Blanc pourrait constituer une opposition vigoureuse à la coalition de droite, nationaliste et religieuse, dirigée par Nétanyahou, qui contrôlera 65 sièges. Mais les opposants à Nétanyahou devront présenter des solutions crédibles pour contrer les attaques du Likoud contre la presse et la justice s'ils veulent regagner le pouvoir d'attraction perdu lors des derniers scrutins. La démographie ne plaide pas en faveur d'une alternance et d'un prochain retour du centre-gauche au pouvoir, mais celui-ci n'est pas impossible : l'électorat est très exactement coupé en deux.

FEATURE

FEATURE

A Thoughtful Recollection of the Fearful Month of April in Liberian History

By: Josephus Moses Gray

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The aim of this article is to analyze the historical roots and causes which led to the still ongoing political disunity in Liberia. Starting with the declaration of independence in 1847 until the 1980 bloody coup and the evolution of 1989 rebels' incursion, a brief historical review provides information on how the political interests of and power struggles among the elites have influenced or shaped ethnic and religious cleavages in the country. These power struggles among the colonial-elites, and by extension the native-progressives or educators and other cleavages are assumed to be root causes that generated conflicts in the country until today. This instructive article further analyzed among other the international peacekeeping attempts, mediation efforts, and the interference of regional neighbors in Liberia's internal politics, to determine lessons learned from previous failures, and suggest several workable avenues for the sustainability of peace.

It concludes with remedies that must be observed for stability and peaceful coexistence and suggest amicably resolutions how the dynamics of planned "June 7" protest can be properly resolved.

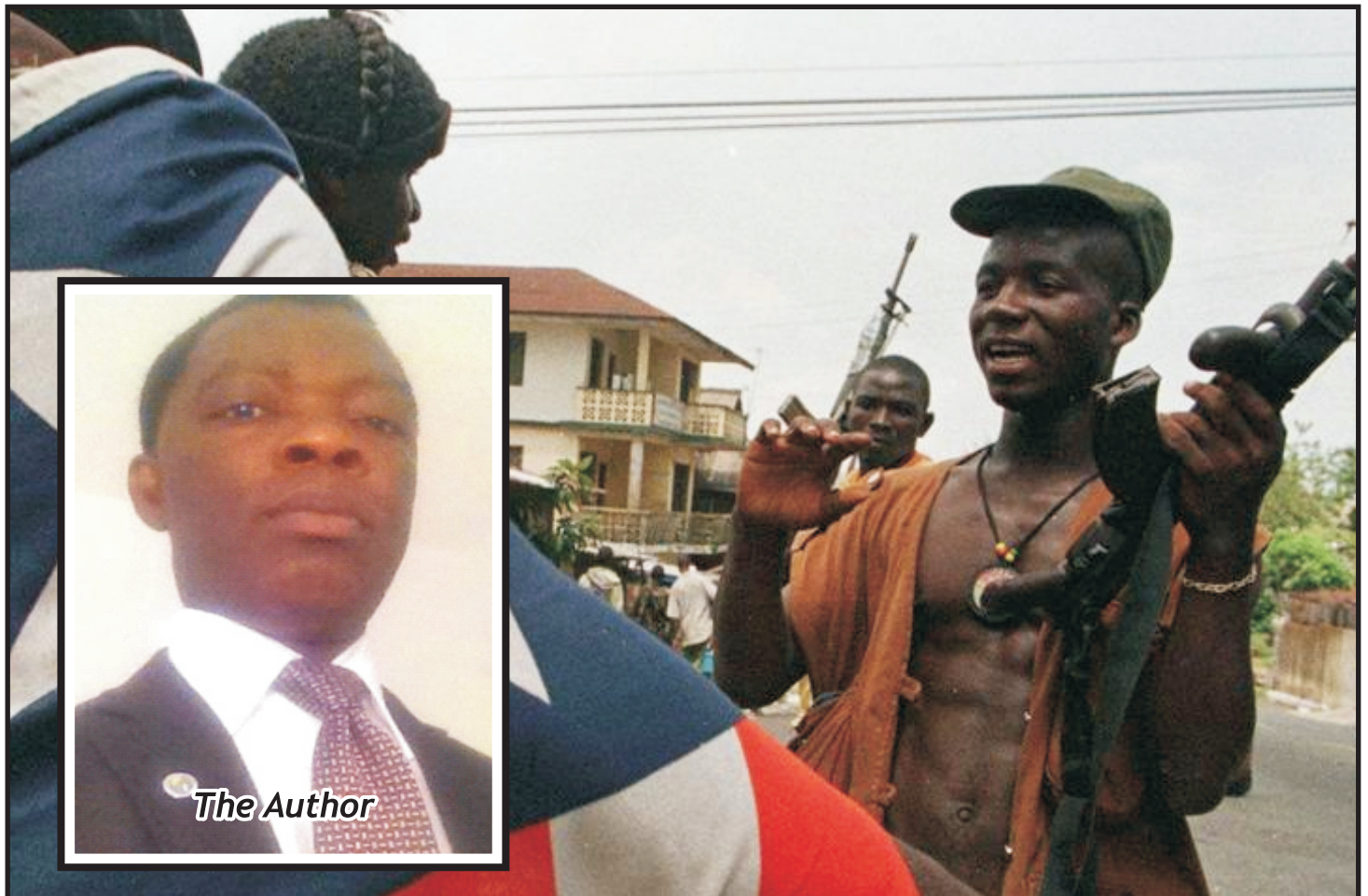
The cold war is over; new international order is in placed while the world is interconnected in all aspects. In recent decades, the vast majority of armed engagements in the world occurred within states basically reflective of internal matters, rather than between states. Apart from perpetrating great human suffering in the immediate areas of conflict, civil wars have major impacts on stability and prosperity throughout the region where they have occurred.

Liberia is a tiny state but politically large and complex with a fascinating but a sober political history; politics is wildly practices in the country. Regrettably, the month of April in Liberia portrays images fear, destruction, looting and deaths. Generally, the month of "April" in the recent history of Liberia signals all the wrong feelings among Liberia, since the month is mostly associated with conflict in Liberia. Think about the Rwandan conflict which claimed about a million lives, started in the month of April; labeled the third worse genocide in human history. Liberians since 17 years have said: "Goodbye to war! Goodbye, carnage! Goodbye guns, Goodbye Violence and Goodbye fighting".

But the biggest opportunity to enhance domestic confidence lies in how public officials maintain the right tone in all aspects of publicity, how they discipline their words and deed when addressing national issues; they should be aware that criticism and self-criticism will do the nation no good, instead they should find the balance and communicate effectively since clarity is very essential in communication. There have been inconsistent regarding information dissemination on the local and international fronts. Positive publicity should be attractive and appealing; truth and accuracy are the lifeblood of information dissemination. Therefore public officials closely investigating the missing money should strengthen their ability to effectively communicate with international audience, and have a stronger voice and properly coordinate information reaching the domestic audience.

Throughout the short history of the Liberia, feelings of exclusion, discrimination, and marginalization spilled over from one identity group to another, accelerating the wish for persistent regime change, while national identity has yet to be developed. The population of Liberia continues to witness power struggles among political elites and bureaucrats which helped them lose their belief in the state structure and weakened national identity. As a result, people derive their identity along ethnic or tribal lines and religious faith communities, as concerns, national identity has not been issued for most of the rural population.

There are reasons, for the planned "June 7" protest to be cut off by engaging the organizers of the protest



The Author

reflecting on the fashion that "April 14, 1979" and "April 12, 1980" coup in the country. The month of April is not promising for Liberia, therefore, all the tensions building up in the country must be amicably resolved and handled peacefully. Considering our ugly past to the present where Liberians and foreign residents can sleep in peace without the echoes of guns and other deadly weapons, or without the country being divided between factional lines, the nation especially state actors must sustain the peace.

As a recollection of the recent political struggles and reflection of events which have torn the nation apart, it is time that we seek peaceful means to resolve our disagreements; calm down the bullets from our mouths—since unusable words are most destructive, let try to discipline our words especially on issues that concerns national interest and wellbeing of the population.

The History of April Month in Liberia

The assassination of ex-president of Liberia and then Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, now African Union William R. Tolbert William R. Tolbert also took place in the month of April. Let us also be reminded of the "April 14, 1979" Rice Riot was characterized with violence, mayhem, anarchy, death and destruction in Monrovia and its environs; the riot or protest came about as a result of the backdrop of a proposed increase in the price of a 100lb bag of rice.

The demonstration drew a massive crowd for the first time in many decades, that Liberians had seized the opportunity to stayed national protest against the government-Tolbert regime. According to several researchers, the miss information was that rice—the nation's staple food could be imported and sell for US\$9.00 per 100lb bag. Such political rhetoric and sugar coated statement persuaded many Liberians to buy the sentiments of these "progressive" political leaders. Frantic efforts should also be made at the national levels by policy makers, politicians, state actors, religious and traditional leaders, scholars, to ensure national peace and security in the country, and find the root causes of conflicts and finding solutions to issues that affect the nation's growth and well-being.

The hostilities of 14 years warfare in the country, from 24th December 1989 to 18th August 2003, in which an insurgent groups killed thousands of persons, ruined the various sectors and destroyed billion dollars' worth properties across the country, have also witnessed 17 years of an uninterrupted peace across country guns

have fallen silent since the Ceasefire and Cessation of Hostilities triggered by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed on 18 August 2003 in Akosombo, Accra Ghana.

The 17 years of an uninterrupted peace across the country which has witnessed three successive politically-driven democratic exercises of 2005, 2011 and 2017 General Elections which came about on the back of the assurances and commitment by Liberians to bury their differences and demonstrate the will-power in resolving all trials and tribulations in order to protect the years of fragile peace and co-existence in the interest of genuine peace and sustained stability.

Credit first to the ex-war factions and their belligerent groups; the late Gyude Bryant's transitional government that was able to piece together the fragmented puzzles that significantly oiled the political wheels thus resulting into the conduct of a peaceful democratic elections with the Ellen Jonson-Sirleaf's and George M. Weah's regimes being ushered in that thereafter continue to maintain the democratic space.

The late Bryant's administration, although was a difficult one due to its hybrid- composition, succeeded in bringing about a negotiated settlement of the conflict and successful disarmament and demobilization of ex-fighters; and ended the loss of innumerable lives, wanton destruction of our infrastructure, factors of production, properties and massive displacement of people which as an open secret also led to brain drain in the country. Then came the Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's administration with all eyes focused on to keep the peace, this display has witnessed a 12 years of an uninterrupted peace again came as a direct result of the Sirleaf administration's initiatives undertaken and purposely supported by the people of Liberia and its development partners and key international actors.

Therefore, the Weah's administration has a national duty to play a leading role to hold discussion of the June 7 planned protest organizers, sugar coated situations and concerns, listen to the populace and peacefully engage all the state actors and independent institutions; speak with one voice instead of several speakers which give out contradictory messages. This entails instituting the right policy at the right time by the right people at the right place, while those at the helm of leadership on the continent must be proactive not reactive.

To Be Continued

Don't bother to arrest me

By Ethel A. Tweh

Montserrado County District #10 Rep. Yekeh Kolubah has warned that government should not bother to arrest him, a day after a mass gathering of supporters at his residence to show solidarity against his planned arrest by ex-rebel generals to face inquiry with Montserrado County Attorney Cllr. Edwin Martin.

Rep. Kolubah told a local broadcaster Thursday, 18 April that government should wait for June 15 so he can appear for conference with Cllr. Martin because the letter requesting his appearance is dated June 15.

"I'm acting in accordance with the letter. Let them wait for June 15," Rep. Kolubah says.

In the midst of the standoff between Rep. Kolubah and Cllr. Martin, former rebel generals here were strangely



Representative Yekeh Kolubah

holding press conference in Monrovia, issuing ultimatum for the lawmaker's appearance or they would arrest him.

But it remains astonishing

how these former fighters are now going about ascribing onto themselves a role of the Liberia National Police (LNP) to arrest an individual, especially a lawmaker in the face of an

active police force and other national security apparatuses that work for the Liberian Government. Meanwhile, the letter written under the signature of Montserrado County Attorney Cllr. Edwin Martin, dated June 15, 2019 calls on Rep. Kolubah to appear for a conference on Tuesday, April 16, 2019 at the Temple of Justice in Room 108.

The letter says Rep. Kolubah made troubling public comments on April 14, 2019 at the opposition Unity Party (UP) Headquarters.

It says Rep. Kolubah asserted that "We will move and they will solve the problem: enough is enough...when you need us (demonstrators) tomorrow, we'll be available to tell this President, this squatter will soon be leaving in less than

three months because he's not able the country."

But Cllr. Martin argues that President George Manneh Weah was democratically elected and sworn into office for a six-year term.

At the moment Cllr. Martin says there is no election until 2023. He says for Rep. Kolubah to defiantly utter this statement is troubling and needs further clarification. But Rep. Kolubah maintains that he is not refusing to attend the conference with Cllr. Martin, except that he will attend it on June 15, 2019 because the letter was dated June 15. He urges Martin and the people of Liberia to wait for June 15 at which time will discuss what he said when he joined the four collaborating political parties here.--Edited by Winston W. Parley

Stop remobilizing ex-combatants

The Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) is warning here against the remobilization of all ex-combatants, including "generals" and ordinary fighters of former warring factions so as not to create fear in Liberia.

"...[Any] action taken directly or indirectly to call ex-combatants to action in any manner, shape or form will definitely create fear and undermine the ongoing efforts

comprising ex-fighters from the disbanded Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), and numerous defunct warring factions that waged terror against Liberians during the civil crisis here, last week demanded Rep. Kolubah's appearance to an inquiry ordered by Montserrado County Attorney Cllr. Edwin Martin.

In spite of the existence of an active police force and other national security agencies here, the ex-rebel

through the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) since 2003," MOJA says in a statement.

Meanwhile, the Movement says it implores President George Manneh Weah to tame the disruptive forces within his ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) and promote the rule of law so as to engender public confidence and interest in his proposed national dialogue.

It notes that the level of



of peacebuilding and national development," MOJA says in a recent statement issued in Monrovia.

The warning comes in wake of ex-generals' threat issued in a press conference to arrest sitting Montserrado County District #10 Rep. Yekeh Kolubah for allegedly asserting that President George Manneh Weah is unable to govern and would soon flee Liberia under protest.

The ex-generals,

generals shockingly planned to move in to arrest Rep. Kolubah upon his failure to appear, forcing loyalists of the lawmaker to shield his home from the ex-generals.

"Finally, MOJA calls on all state and non-state actors to stop the remobilization of all ex-combatants, including "generals" and ordinary fighters of former warring factions, who were demobilized by the international community

intolerance has intensified in the country and the threat of the use of violence against perceived political opponents of government continues unabated.

"MOJA is the latest victim of such attacks as her anniversary program was disrupted by thugs on Saturday, 23 March, 2019."

MOJA warns that it is now widely feared that the country is gradually reverting to the era of impunity that facilitated

60 housing units for New Kru Town fire victims

By Emmanuel Mondaye

The Government of Liberia (GOL) through the Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE) has begun digging foundations for 60 housing units to be constructed for scores of fire disaster victims in the Popo Beach Community of New Kru Town.

The project is part of government's intervention to shelter hundreds of residents after more than 25 zinc shacks were recently gutted by fire in New Kru Town, a densely congested slum community on the Bushrod Island.

President George Weah visited the fire disaster site and assured that the Government of Liberia would have constructed houses for the dwelling of both the victims and other residents who were not affected by the fire disaster.

During his visit there, President Weah donated assorted food stuff to the victims with the assurance that he would have provided shelters for them.

The Chairman of the Municipal Borough of New Kru Town (NKT), Christine Cole has disclosed here that LACE is registering owners and caretakers of houses destroyed by the fire disaster.

The aim is to have a clearer picture of the total amount of people to live in the units when completed, he says recently.

According to him, the first phase of the construction would target 30 housing units for victims of the disaster and their dependents.

Thereafter, he says LACE will commence the project second phase of the project to house non-affected residents of the same community who live in zinc shacks.

Chairman Cole adds that when the structures are completed, they will include modern latrine, bathroom, kitchen, and sitting room for the comfort of occupants.

Meanwhile, Chairman Cole has expressed gratitude to President Weah for his show of love and care to the people of New Kru Town during the time of distress.

The implementing partner, LACE, was established by the government to improve the living standards of poor communities through the provisions and strengthening of basic social services.

It has a mandate to promote a community-based implementation, administration and maintenance.--Edited by Winston W. Parley

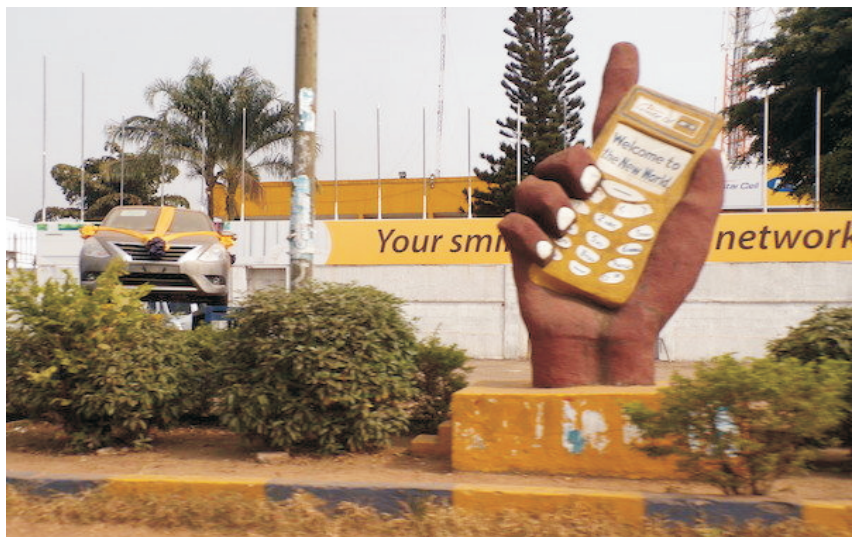
the catastrophic civil war in Liberia.

"These sad developments" it notes, "have reinforced MOJA's support for the full implementation of the Recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, with emphasis on

the establishment of the extraordinary court for war and economic crimes."

The Movement calls on all peace-loving Liberians to support the establishment of this court as the best way to end impunity here.--Press release

Lonestar Cell MTN upgrades its network



Liberia's GSM giant, Lonestar Cell MTN announced Thursday that it had embarked on upgrading its network sites in Monrovia. It said as of April 14, 2019, the following sites were upgraded to receive a stronger data signal: Swankamore Community (Ghana dumboy shop to LIB Girl grill); Chugbor Community (Solomon Jua community); Gaye Town (Tupee Taylor curve); Duport Road (Mickey Gray junction) and 72nd (checkpoint).

Others were Lekley Town (Amagahsie, Jacob Town); Lott Carey (Mission); Capitol Bypass (University of Liberia); Banjor Community and Sinkor (16th and 20th streets).

According to the company, the upgrade means that people living in these communities will now enjoy a stronger, improved data experience whether they are at home or out and about.

Commenting on the upgrade, Lonestar Cell MTN's Chief Technology Officer,

Henri ChimbaNghemning said, "In Liberia, the use of the internet and digital platforms to connect to family and friends is growing exponentially. Our continued network upgrade program is our way of ensuring that our customers always get the highest speed and quality of service when they access the internet."

Lonestar Cell MTN is making significant investments aimed at improving the experience for its customers by delivering high-speed data and high-quality voice calls across Liberia. To enjoy fast speed data on the superfast Lonestar Cell MTN network, customers need to ensure that their Lonestar Cell MTN SIM cards are in their internet-enabled phones or smartphones. If customers have dual-SIM phones, they need to ensure that their Lonestar Cell MTN SIM card is the primary SIM for data access to enjoy the fastest speed available. -Press release.

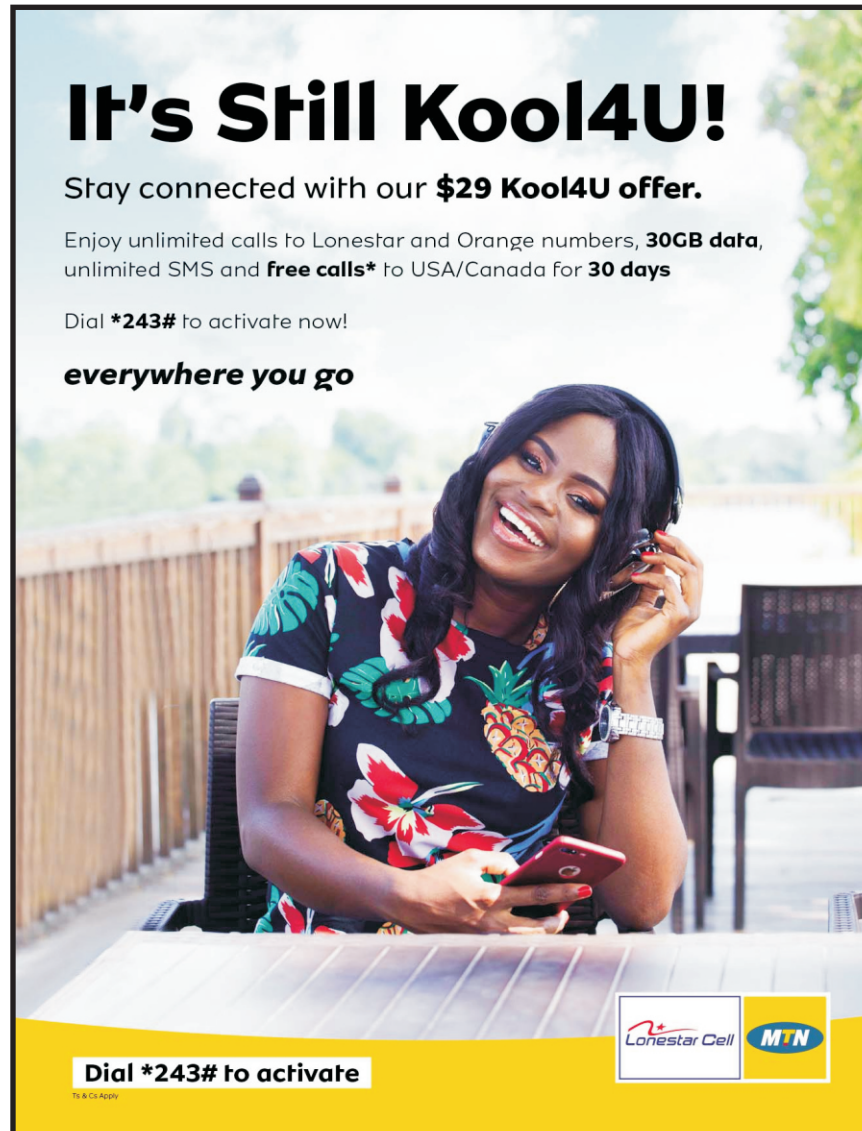
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Ronaldo shuts transfer rumours

Cristiano Ronaldo said he was "1,000 percent committed to staying" with Juventus next season as he claimed his first Serie A title and Juventus their eighth in a row on Saturday.

Massimiliano Allegri's side had needed just one more point for a 35th Scudetto and their latest title triumph helped ease some of the pain of their shock Champions League exit at the Juventus

Stadium to Ajax on Tuesday.

And a come-from-behind 2-1 win over Fiorentina was enough to give them a 20-point lead on nearest rivals Napoli with five games to play.

Serbian defender Nikola Milenkovic put Fiorentina ahead after less than six minutes.

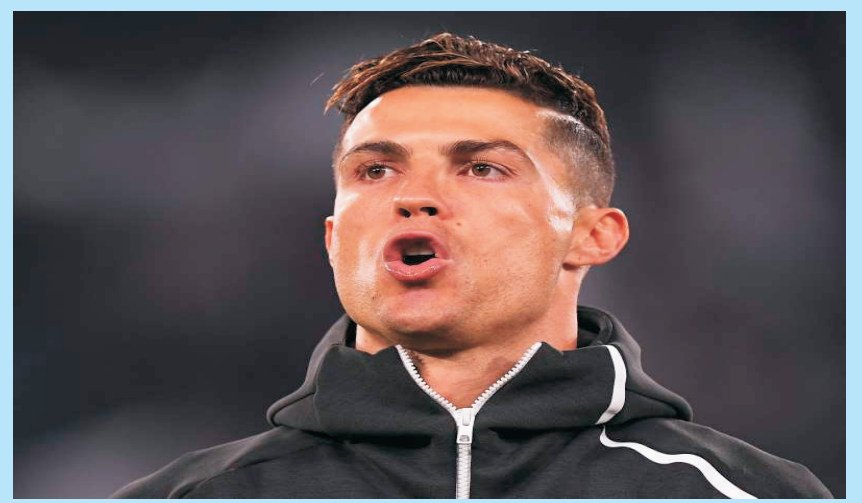
But Alex Sandro's diving header on 37 minutes and an own goal from Fiorentina defender German Pezzella after a Ronaldo cross in the 53rd

minute sealed another title to ease their European disappointment.

"It was a great season and I adapted well. We won the Scudetto and the Italian Super Cup, which is not easy to achieve," said Ronaldo.

"It didn't go well in the Champions League but next year is a new page, the fans all want it and so do we.

"I'm staying at Juve, 1,000 percent."



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