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Senate decides Tweah's fate today



P11

Min. Samuel D. Tweah



P11

Remains of the victims

Foreign Missions mourn fire tragedy

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Continental News

Tunisian presidential candidate to stay in jail

A presidential candidate in Tunisia who reached the final stage of the election is set to remain in custody after failing to win an appeal to be freed. Nabil Karoui, 56, was detained last month on charges of money laundering and tax fraud, which he denies.

The media mogul was still able to stand despite his arrest but he was not allowed to vote. He reached the run-off vote which is expected next month. On Wednesday, a judge refused to rule on whether or not he would be released. The judge said the matter was not in his jurisdiction. It is the third time he has had an appeal turned down. It means Mr Karoui, who began a hunger strike earlier this month to demand his freedom, will remain in jail. His lawyer, Kamel Ben Messoud, told AFP news agency his client would challenge the court's decision.

Mr Karoui has never held political office. He founded a charity focused on fighting

poverty and that issue has been a central theme of his campaign. But critics have accused him of using the charity and his TV channel to further his political ambitions. Mr Karoui and another political outsider, Kais Saied, saw off a crowded field of 24 other candidates in

the first round of voting on Sunday.

Mr Saied, an independent candidate and law professor, took 18.4% of the vote with Mr Karoui receiving 15.6% of votes cast.

As no candidate won an outright majority they will both advance to the run-off.

The exact date is yet to be announced. The result marked a blow for Tunisia's political establishment, including for Prime Minister Youssef Chahed and former interim President Moncef Marzouki, who both failed to progress. The winning candidate will be appointed to office for a five-year term. Tunisia's president has control over defence, foreign policy and national security. The

prime minister, chosen by parliament, is responsible for other portfolios. Separately, parliamentary elections are also scheduled to take place next month. This election is the second free presidential poll since the 2011 uprising that toppled ex-President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali and sparked the Arab Spring. It was brought forward after the death in July of the country's first democratically elected president, Beji Caid Essebsi, who took office in 2014. BBC



Nabil Karoui has reached a run-off in Tunisia's presidential election despite being in jail

Ethiopia's ex-first lady 'doesn't miss the palace'

Azeb Mesfin, the widow of Ethiopia's former Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, has told the BBC that she does not miss life in Menelik Palace.

She had lived in the official residence for Ethiopia's prime minister in the capital, Addis Ababa, for 20 years until her husband died in 2012 aged 57. To this day her

abiding memories of the palace are the scenes of mourning after Meles died - with people crying and shouting as they said farewell to his body. "I don't know why I only remember those moments.

"I don't miss the palace and I have no wish to go there," she says - though she does go to the church in the grounds of the

palace, where her husband is buried. Like her husband, Ms Azeb was a veteran of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), one of the rebel groups that overthrew Ethiopia's Marxist military regime in 1991 after a long armed struggle. The couple had three biological children together - and adopted the son of a friend of theirs who died in 2001. After the war, she remained active in politics and became an MP in 2005 for the TPLF, as well as being involved in anti-poverty initiatives.

Over the last seven years, she says she has dedicated herself to sorting through her husband's archive of papers and writings.

Meles was a prolific writer - working on 30 different books on a wide variety of topics, the former first lady says.

She has managed to get eight ready for publication so far - two of them on democracy and agriculture are due to be published soon. She has also been busy working on the Meles Zenawi Memorial Park, which is located in the northern outskirts of Addis

Zimbabwe court allow doctors' march

A court in Zimbabwe ruled on Thursday that police should not interfere with a march planned by striking doctors to protest against the disappearance of the leader of their union, after law enforcement agents blocked two previous demonstrations. The doctors had sought to march to President Emmerson Mnangagwa's offices and parliament to present petitions after Peter Magombeyi, the

argued that doctors wanted to march for a non-political cause, which did not require police authority.

"If they want, they (police) can only provide manpower for security reasons," Alec Muchadehama, a lawyer representing the doctors, told Reuters after the ruling. Police spokesman Paul Nyathi could not immediately comment. Last month, police



Armed riot police block the road as doctors attempt to march in Harare

leader of the Zimbabwe Hospitals Doctors Association, went missing. The group challenged the police actions and High Court Judge Clement Phiri ruled that the doctors could go ahead with Thursday's march after lawyers for the police conceded that the actions by law enforcement agents were unlawful. Association lawyers

banned protests planned by the opposition over Mnangagwa's handling of the economy. The demonstrations were viewed as a test of Mnangagwa's willingness to tolerate dissent in a country tainted by a long history of repression under his predecessor Robert Mugabe, who died on Sept. 6 in Singapore. AFP



Meles Zenawi and his wife Azeb Mesfin were both rebel fighters for the TPLF

Ababa.

The park, which will be open to the public soon, is a place that people will be able to visit to learn about the former prime minister's life, Ms Azeb says. It will have a library, a research centre, guest houses for researchers, a meeting hall and the gardens have been planted mostly with indigenous trees. After these

projects are finished the former first lady says she would like to open up her own business - although she is yet to decide in what area. "I don't know how I will do - and who can give me the starting capital for it," she says. Surviving on the former prime minister's pension of \$483 (£387) a month was not easy, Ms Azeb added. BBC

EDITORIAL

Cautioning the Marshall Committee

IF CARE IS not taken, the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency chaired by governing Coalition for Democratic Change Senator Marshall Dennis of Grand Gedeh County is bent on plunging the economy of Liberia into total collapse and degradation by its rather hasty approval on Monday, 16 September of request from the Executive to print new Liberian bank notes, totaling LRD35 billion to be circulated in an economy of LRD21 billion, raising question of an excess of LRD14 billion.

COMMITTEE CHAIR MARSHALL Dennis had lazily and faultily defended that the proposed new bank notes, when printed and placed in circulation, would automatically resuscitate and boost our ailing economy without technically saying how.

SENATOR DENNIS SHOULD be told in no unclear and decisive terms that loyalty to the ruling party and the President should in no way take precedent over such an important issue like currency that affects lives of the 4.5 million Liberians and state of the economy to rush with decision. We wonder what was his basis or reliance for approving the printing without inviting economists and technicians on fiscal and monetary policies to gather expert opinions on such a crucial matter.

HOWEVER, THANK GOD for intervention by Senator Oscar Cooper of Margibi County whose minority report in plenary Tuesday, 17 September convinced and compelled Senator Marshall Dennis to have somersaulted, withdrawing his earlier approval for the Executive to print LRD35 billion new Liberian bank notes at the cost of US\$31 million, pending appearance by the Minister of Finance and Development Planning Samuel Tweah and relevant authorities from the Central Bank of Liberia to provide adequate clarity and state source of the US\$31 million being requested as printing cost.

WE TAKE CUE from the Zimbabwean experience where the government under the late former President Robert Gabriel Mugabe printed new currencies time without number with no economic strength and value thus, becoming mere papers in the hands of a desperate population scavenging for food and other basic necessities that could hardly be found on shelves of business houses, and warn the Weah administration to proceed cautiously on this matter.

IN BARELY TWO years, this is the second attempt towards printing a new currency though under a new administration that is itself beset by serious economic and financial challenges. The "Legacy bank notes" issued by the Sirleaf administration was characterized by lack of transparency and dishonesty, leading to excess printing and flooding the market thus, depreciating the value of the Liberian dollar.

CURRENTLY, SEVERAL TOP officials of the Central Bank of Liberia, including former executive governor Milton Weeks and deputy governor Charles Sirleaf are being prosecuted on multiple charges, including economic sabotage, money-laundering, and criminal facilitation, among others for printing in excess 146,250,000 Liberian bank notes that was not authorized by the Legislature.

WE FEAR A repeat of such scenario if cautious were not taken now to exercise due diligence before giving green light for the printing of new currency. This will help us in avoiding the errors of the past that has brought the economy on its knees.

SECONDLY, WE DON'T understand why the rush with this matter, for this issue should have emanated from the House of Representatives before going to the Senate, but it is the other way around in this case.

AS SEN. COOPER recalled, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had warned the current administration to stop taking money from the country's reserves, as they are meant for balance of payment and commodities increase on the world market.

THEREFORE, WE CALL on all 103 legislators on Capitol Hill, particularly members of the committees on banking and currency in both the Senate and the House of Representatives not to rush in approving request from the Executive to print new currency until due diligence is done to save the state from future embarrassment.

COMMENTARY

By Jan-werner Mueller

Can Direct Democracy Defeat Populism?

For three years, we have been told that populist upsets such as Brexit and US President Donald Trump's election are the predictable results of giving too much power to the unwashed masses. In fact, populists owe their recent successes to elite complacency and complicity, and they have as much to fear from referenda as anyone else.

SARAJEVO - Ever since the double disasters of 2016 - the United Kingdom's Brexit referendum and US President Donald Trump's election - there has been widespread anxiety about a "global wave" of populism, and hand-wringing over the follies of so-called direct democracy. In the UK, the electorate was asked to answer an overly simplistic in-or-out question; in the United States, the 2016 Republican Party primaries were handed over to irresponsible voters and radical activists. Since then, there have been calls to re-empower the "gatekeepers," which is a polite way of saying that the unwashed masses should be kept as far away from political decision-making as possible.

Yet this liberal impulse reflects a misreading of recent history: it was elites, not the masses, who enabled Brexit and Trump. Moreover, an unashamedly elitist disdain for direct democracy not only confirms populist rhetoric, but also ignores the fact that referenda can be highly effective weapons against populists.

Trump and Brexit agitators like Nigel Farage do not owe their victories to some fatal flaw in direct democracy, but rather to the elites who collaborated with them along the way. British conservative leaders may have held their noses at Farage, but many ultimately deemed his case for Brexit to be sound, just as the Republican Party establishment granted Trump its formal imprimatur. Yes, millions of British voters would go on to vote for "Leave," and millions of Americans voted for a manifestly unqualified presidential candidate. But that is partly because they had been assured by familiar figures like Boris Johnson and former US Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich that they were doing the right thing.

Moreover, party elites did not just give populists their stamp of approval. They also abdicated their own responsibility for formulating coherent policy platforms. The Brexit referendum was a direct result of Tory leaders' inability to come to a collective, binding decision on the question of EU membership. And the Republican Party effectively outsourced its candidate-selection process to private cable TV stations, whose main concern is attracting viewers.

Still, aren't liberals on to something when they allege a deeper connection between populism and direct democracy? After all, populist politicians usually try to establish a direct link between themselves and the citizenry, cutting out traditional political parties and, when possible, professional journalists. A figure like Beppe Grillo, the founder of Italy's Five Star Movement, invariably criticizes established politicians and traditional media in the same breath. All populists claim to have unique knowledge of the "real people" and their will, and promise to serve as their "voice."

This claim is entirely theoretical: both "the people" and "the voice" are merely symbolic constructions. In practice, no one except the populist leader actually needs to speak. A referendum, then, has a very particular meaning for populists. Having already constructed the "real people," the answer to any question about the people's will is known in advance. Thus, for

populists, the role of "the people" is completely passive. They need only check the right box to confirm what the populists have already been saying.

That is only one conception of direct democracy, though. Another approach views a referendum as one point in a broader and, above all, open-ended process of deliberation, wherein citizens weigh different claims - and the evidence for and against them - before eventually coming to a decision. Rather than playing into populists' hands by re-empowering gatekeepers, we should be asking how referenda can be made to serve their proper democratic function.

Of course, one could point out that the damage is already done, at least in countries like Hungary, Turkey, and Poland, where populists have used elections, and sometimes highly manipulative "national consultations," to consolidate their power. Social scientists are only just beginning to grapple with the question of how authoritarian populist regimes can be transformed back into proper democracies. We need new strategies for confronting what has variously been called "democratic backsliding," "constitutional retrogression," and "autocratization."

One idea is to focus on the fact that many authoritarian populist governments benefit from a highly divided opposition, which is sometimes the result of conscious engineering by the populists themselves. A divided opposition has more difficulty forming coalitions and selecting the best possible candidate for challenging entrenched populists (because every party wants its own champion in the mix). Consider the tortured discussions surrounding Hungary's 2018 parliamentary election. After debating whether the far-right Jobbik party should - or even could - ally with the liberal left, the opposition parties remained largely separate, and Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Fidesz-KDNP alliance took 133 of 199 parliamentary seats.

Needless to say, forming a coalition of the far right and the left is highly problematic. But another problem is that even if voters want a change in government, they may be reluctant to engage in tactical voting that could yield an equally bad or even worse alternative. Hungarian liberals can hardly be blamed for refusing to cast their votes for a Jobbik candidate.

Referenda offer one way out of this dilemma, owing to their binary structure. Although they often bring together unusual coalitions, that scarcely matters to the individual voter. Once the referendum is over, the purpose of the coalition has been served. Even better, referenda can be crafted in such a way as to expose the unpopularity of a populist government, thereby undermining its claim to represent the will of the people.

Understanding the truly democratic potential of referenda, some authoritarian populist governments - in Hungary, for example - have made genuine bottom-up initiatives more difficult. It may seem contrary to the conventional wisdom, but direct democracy could work against populism. There is no guarantee that such a strategy will succeed in any given context; but it is better than just waiting for salvation from the gatekeepers.

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Lord, we inside oo

Dear Father;

Hmm, I say the village is ray-everywhere you turn, the ground is not level. All the friends who used to call their men them and give the small thing sef, it rough-“water don’t pass gari,” Oga will say.

Um, my son da the one you talking slow like that?

Father, da small thing! The other day my friend and I were in the car and I heard one pastor naming all the prayer points and for the first time I heard school fees as a national prayer point. I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. My friend said, you don’t know school fees is a prayer point? I said I know, but not at this national scale until everywhere you pass in the village people na forget the food cries and everywhere is school fees.

But my son, why are they crying, ehn da it they wanted-I mean a millionaire master dribbler?

Uh, Father sefya, millionaire ay? You na heard they say da man was very broke? Anyway, we inside and they people will balance.

Ehn, they have not been able to tell us what happen to our village money and they jumping around here saying they coming to print new money-we inside.

Oh, yes oo, my son da what I heard and I even wanted to ask you sef.

Father, they say they want to print whole 35 billion, but they can’t tell us how much we get right now in the village. Some are guessing that 21 billion and they want to print it according to our village population.

Tell me something!

Oh, Father, you think the people joking around here? The other day I was at the Upper End of the Traditional Council and I heard one of the chiefs there saying how when the 35 billion comes they will not just put all on the market. The shameless old man said they will keep some.

Can you imagine da Father? They will keep some the same place they kept our 16.5 billion and today, today we can’t see a dime on the market-phew!

But listen to the interesting one na Father, they say they want to print LRD1000 notes and all, so they can easily steal it without anybody noticing it, just how they are now embarrass to the point that they can’t even put the LRD500 note outside because they know that we are watching them. Ehn? But is it true that the Country Giant bought a car for one girl from Charlie Land with American people money USD130, 000?

You say whatin?

Yes oo, Father, they say the Country Giant news all over Charlie Land and it has become a talking shop. They say our man can spend on the girls. But they say Sun Shine na what you expect. They will stay long inside, we moving. Da right now the pekin must come and sing his song: “this country you see da technique.”

DEATH ANNOUCEMENT



WITH DEEPEST SORROW
THE APPLETON, DAVIES AND GONGAR FAMILIES
REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THE DEATH OF THEIR
MOTHER, SISTER, DAUGHTER, WIFE, MRS. CYNTHIA
NENYI DAVIES - GONGAR.

THIS SAD EVENT OCCURRED AT THE KORLE BU
TEACHING HOSPITAL IN ACCRA, GHANA ON
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2019 AFTER A
PROTRACTED ILLNESS

SHE LEAVES TO MOURN HER LOSS HER CHILDREN,
WARD AND SEVERAL GRANDCHILDREN:

MS. TRACY MONEH APPLETON
MRS. BRENDA APPLETON-SENDOLO
MR. ERASMUS DADDY APPLETON
MS. JULIAN LITTLE GIRL APPLETON
MR. LEO KAITHY APPLETON
MR. BADIO GOE
MS. ESTHER GONGAR

HER BROTHER AND SISTER:
MR. HENRY KOFFA AND MRS. SARAH DAVIES-KENNEDY
AND A HOST OF OTHER RELATIVES AND FRIENDS
WITHIN LIBERIA AND THE USA.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE ANNOUNCED
LATER.

THIS ANNOUNCEMENT WAS BROUGHT IN BY HER
NEPHEW AND NIECE MR. RODNEY NUKUNU KOFFA AND
MRS. MAI EVELYN WILLIAMS-COLE ON BEHALF OF THE
FAMILY

SECOND FAMILY MEETING WILL BE HELD ON
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2019 AT 5:00P.M. AND
SUBSEQUENTLY SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2019 AT
4:00P.M. AT THE DECEASED RESIDENCE ON 9TH STREET
AND RUSSELL AVENUE, SINKOR.
CONTACT CELL NUMBERS: 0775215912, 0777548088,
0886567597, 0886971937

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

GOL & FAO sign project

-To increase animal feed production

A project to enhance animal feed production through corn production in Liberia has been signed in Monrovia. The signing ceremony took place on Thursday, September 19, 2019.

Corn, also known as maize is the grain used in poultry diets because it has good energy content and it is easy to digest. But, the procurement of corn feeds is mostly done from neighboring Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire at a high cost.

The project will be implemented by Government through the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Agriculture and the UN Food

when corn production is increased, local feed producers will have reliable and stable supply of corn for feed production.

The release said the project will also increase the profit margin of both feed producers and poultry farmers.

The project document quotes an FAO data of 2013 as saying many local poultry farmers in Liberia to have challenges in poultry production due to high production cost derived from feed purchase.

The project valued at four hundred thirty-six thousand United States Dollars

Internal Affairs will collaborate with the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO to ensure successful implementation of the project on the ground.

Under the terms of the agreement, Internal Affairs Ministry will ensure that the designated parcel of land for cultivation in each locality is owned and given by the communities.

It was agreed that there will be construction of processing facilities with storage and drying slides, milling machines with accessories and fertilizers, as well as training of the beneficiaries.

Through FOA's Technical Cooperation Program (TCP), equipment, materials and supplies will be provided to enhance the realization of the project.

Speaking at the signing ceremony Thursday, Internal Affairs Minister Honorable Varney A. Sirleaf commended FOA's Country Representative and her team for the board step which he described as the beginning of support to the Communal Farming program that he (Minister Sirleaf) has been pushing in the counties. He assured the success of the project.

Minister Sirleaf lauded authorities of the Ministry of Agriculture for the hard work which has resulted to the signing of the agreement.

On January 23, 2019, the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Agriculture signed technical cooperation aimed at revitalizing Communal Farming system for increased food production and Job Creation for Hunger and Poverty alleviation.

Cooperation between MIA and MOA covers agricultural activities involving joint motivation and support for communities and people to engage in profitable communal farming development commercial agricultural enterprises, design of programs/projects, projects implementation, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, appraisal and impact assessments of programs and projects, reporting.-Press release



and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Internal Affairs Minister Honorable Varney A. Sirleaf and Acting Agriculture Minister Honorable Ernest J. Clarke signed for Government, while Madam MariatouNjie, FAO's Country Representative signed for her organization.

According to a release from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the project seeks to address and ensure increased and sustainable production of maize to support the production of livestock and poultry feed at an affordable cost. It is envisaged that

(USD436,000) is expected to be implemented over a two-year period(September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2021).

As the poultry production will be carried out, a complete market analysis will be conducted as a mechanism to link or connect maize producers to animal feed processors units.

According to the project document, the corn production project is also expected to become a model for the restoration of communal farming in counties and districts.

The communal farming Division of the Ministry of

Save the Children shocks over children's death in fire

Save the Children International (SCI) Liberia Office expresses shock over the death of 28 persons, mostly school children, who died in a fire disaster at an Islamic school during the early morning hours of Wednesday, September 18, 2019, in Paynesville City, Liberia.

Country Manager, Mr. Joseph Yarsiah said, the death of the children is of serious concern to SCI, urging the bereaved families and the Muslim community of Liberia

sympathy with families of the fallen kids, stressing that measures be taken to prevent a recurrence. He expresses his organization's condolence to the bereaved families and the Muslim Community.

Fire gutted the Quran Memory Institute early Wednesday morning in Bassa Community, Paynesville, outside Monrovia. The incident was said to have occurred when the students were asleep in a dormitory attached to the school building.



to take solace in this time of great bereavement.

"The entire country is shock and in dismay, with deep regrets. All our children should be protected and given a chance to live. All of us, INGOs, Government, parents, and citizens have to all commit to doing more for child protection, both physical and emotional", Mr. Yarsiah laments.

According to a release issued in Monrovia, Mr. Yarsiah says SCI's workforce remains in

The cause of the fire has not been established, but some community members have attributed it to an electrical fault. The children have since been buried in accordance with Islamic rites.

Save the Children is the world's leading independent organization for children with a mission to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

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Port Truckers induct new leadership

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Members of the Port Truckers Association of Liberia (PTAL) have inducted a new code of officers following their recent election with call to work in accordance with by-laws and constitution of the

Association for smooth and effective operations.

Rev. John E.T. Harris, an elder of the PTAL made the call during the official induction ceremony on Tuesday, 16 September held at the Association's headquarters in the Freeport Community on Bushrod Island.

He challenged the newly inducted officials to keep in mind they are directly accountable to the entire membership in everything they do, and encouraged them to unite the body thru peaceful co-existence.

Those inducted include, Messrs. Abraham K. Kamara,

President; Lasana D. Konneh, Vice President; Yaya S. Kemokai, Secretary General; James Coleman, Operations Manager; James Kesselly, Deputy Operations Manager, and Ms. Fatu S Larmin, Treasure.

Speaking subsequently, the new President of PTAL

Abraham K. Kamara, expressed gratitude to the entire membership for pledging their determination to work for the development of the Association.

He then dissolved the board of directors, pending constitution of a new board to work with the new leadership.



MTN Launch Music Award For Liberian Artist

By Lewis S. Teh

It was a joyous moment for Artist here in Liberia when one of Liberia leading telecommunication mobile GSM Company LoneStar Cell MTN launch the Music Award for Liberian Artist across the country at the mamba-point hotel.

Addressing cross section of participants, which include officials of government from the Ministry of Information Cultural and Tourism, local and international music artist in a news conference yesterday September, 19, 2019, the head of the Liberia Music Foundation Ms. Dede Dalmeida said the foundation exist to congratulate artist who work tirelessly over the years, and to empower them.

He the brief Press Conference will set the stage for the progress made over



career, adding that the mission of the Liberia Music Foundation is to help develop music industry to our premier award show, because music is

the arts, school talents in order to give mentorship in many exposure, and the LMA provide many opportunity to learn about the rich heritage of

and we are recognizing Liberian talents across the globe”,

He added that the event is the second of it kind to be hosted in Liberia and this event will include, but not limited to a meet and greet, with the main event schedule for November 16, 2019, and it will begin from 4-6pm.

Meanwhile she says there are packages for the top three Award which include Artist, Song, and Album of the year something she says will roll out in the coming weeks leading to the actual day of the LMA Award.

For his part the president of the Music Union of Liberia Mr. Sammy Gboguy express delight of the launch of this year music award, and extended special thanks the organizers and the sponsors of this year event LoneStar Cell MTN for the support giving the music industry, and call on other companies operating in the country to follow suit.

“The LMA Award is a great moment for us to celebrate our own, and to appreciate our superstars and rebrand the industry”

He said it was time that various artist forget about what had happen in the past,

and focus on the future by joining hands to rebrand the music industry, noting that it is not about the individuals but rather the country, this he says will unify them, and will take the industry to another level.

Meanwhile the Chief Marketing officer of LoneStar Cell MTN Yaw Agyapong said music excite people especially when they are caught up with distress, saying when we have the opportunity to partner with the Liberia Music Award Foundation we thought it wise to welcoming the ideas to help our artist.

According to him it was the second time that LoneStar Cell is sponsoring such award here in Liberia, and this is something that we are all excited about, as a company we want to give the best to our customers in whatever way in order for them to have a brighter future.

Also speaking on behalf of the Information Ministry a proxy of the Assistant Minister for Culture welcoming the launch of the Liberia Music Award, and use the occasion to pledge the government support the music industry for the development of their carrer.

According to the organizer of this year event they have contact an Auditing Firm that will ensure transparency in the voting process, speaking on behalf of the Bahertily Auditing Firm, Mr. Kofi Abedu- Bentsi said his firm was contacted to work in partnership, and to make sure that every votes cast during the voting process are verify, and authenticated.

He said at the conclusion of the voting process 70% of rights will go the general public, while 30% will go to the board that will be set up. He said when the process is completed the auditing firm will be responsible to tally, check, and arrange all the votes and make sure its goes to the right nominee.



the past six years, and put together strategic plans of Liberians Arts, Culture to the rest of the world.

According to her this year marks the endorsement of the six annual event of the Liberia Music Award that will be held in Liberia for the second time, she however thanked LoneStar Cell MTN for the confidence repose in the foundation, and for providing sponsoring for this year award.

She narrates that the foundation was aware of the many challenges that Liberians entertainers encounter on a daily basis in the music industry, saying and at such we are pleased to work with positive mindset in bringing a tangible result to the table for the music industry here in Liberia.

Dalmeida pointed out that since the 18th of February 2018, the foundation had registered with the government of Liberia, and they been engaging artist in communities to support their

not just for entertainment but for education, reconciliation, uplifting, and healing.

She indicated that the foundation pledge to facilitate the exposure, promotion, and celebration of

Liberia to promote more values, to the music, and to embark on community development.

“We have consistently organized this even in 2014, and 2017, in the United States



MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Mansion journalists raise security fears

Accredited journalists covering the Executive Mansion in Monrovia say they see as an attempt to compromise their safety, claims by Deputy Presidential Press Secretary Smith Toby that they are “opposition journalists” and referring to assigned female journalists as ‘lazy set of people who do not take their work seriously.

“We also consider Toby’s dangerous statement of calling us opposition journalists as having the proclivity to compromise the safety of members of the EM Press Corps because we come in contact with State security and protocol officers every time in the discharge of our journalistic duty, a call we owe to our country,” the group’s statement issued Thursday, 19 September says.

Further, the group under the banner Executive Mansion Press Corps strongly condemns as an act of harassment of two of its members by the head of the General Services Agency (GSA), Madam Mary Broh, prior to the arrival of President George Manneh Weah at the Ministerial

Complex in Congo Town on Monday, to grace an ECOWAS Parliamentary session.

Before President Weah’s arrival, the group narrate that its members were duly screened at the first entrance by Executive Protection Service (EPS) officers but were stopped by other officers posted to the main doors to the conference hall.

Eventually, the statement says Madam Broh surfaced in

an uncivil manner and instructed the security to push the journalists away.

“Our colleagues however complied and continued to display their professional identification cards including Executive Mansion Press Pass issued to them, but Broh could not stop bellowing at them condescendingly,” the group notes.

According to them, Broh had argued that the journalists

should have been at the venue as early as 4:00 A.M. as she, a sexagenarian, had done.

“Even though our colleagues told her that all they needed [to] do was be there before the President; but, Broh said: “I myself will tell President Weah that you are late.”

“As the journalists keenly watched Broh woof at them—a clear deal of abuse of power—she, however, finally gave them access but not without pouring a scorn on them after she saw the President disembarked his vehicle and approached the building with his entourage,” the statement continues.

The EM Press Corps sees these “regressive acts” on the parts of Smith Toby and Mary Broh as “avenues reawakening threats against journalists in the country.”

Further, they believe that these are planned actions intended to hinder freedom of the press and dampen the recent steps by the Government to promote a society where journalists can carry out their duty without any form of fear or intimidation.

The EM Press Corps strongly condemns the unprovoked verbal attack launched against its female members by the Deputy Presidential Press Secretary Smith Toby and for branding members of the group as “opposition journalists.”

According to the group, Toby had asked that it submit a name of a representative to the office of his immediate boss, Solo Kelgbeh, for that reporter to travel with President Weah to the United States to attend

the upcoming United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The Press Corps’ leader Samukai Dukuly did submit the name of Journalist Denise Nimpson, one of the assigned female journalists from a private broadcast house.

Suddenly the group observes that Toby made a U-turn and began jabbering unfavorable comments against their female colleagues and the entire media group.

Ms. Nimpson was finally rejected because Toby had labeled female journalists as ‘lazy set of people who do not take their work seriously, and that he wouldn’t want any of them taken to the U.S. just to be taking selfie pictures.’

The group say Toby repeated the utterances in a meeting with the press corps following a regular Tuesday press briefing at the Foreign Affairs office of the President.

“...[We] condemn the unwarranted outburst on us by Toby as not only outrageous, insulting, pejorative, provocative, and uncivilized, but an attempt to undermine the “Feminist-in-Chief” acclamation being enjoyed by President Weah.

As a subset of the Press Union of Liberia, the group calls on the PUL leadership and all others concerned to seriously take note of these occurrences with an understanding that assigned journalists at the Mansion now work in a fragile environment.

“No journalist deserves to be bullied or threatened in her/his line of duty,” the group warns.--*Press release*



Deputy Presidential Press Secretary Smith Toby

LINSU, FLY urged to dialogue

The Minister of Youth and Sports (MYS) Mr. D. Zeogar Wilson urges the Liberia National Student Union (LINSU) and the Federation of Liberian Youth (FLY) calling for the dismissal of the Minister of Education Professor D. Ansu Sonii to instead, dialogue with the Minister.

The two youth groups insist that they want the Education boss to leave for alleged arrogance towards stakeholders in the education sector.

But the Minister of Youth

and Sports his concern has been drawn to the call, because his Ministry is the regulatory body for all youth activities in the country, including those of LINSU and FLY.

Minister Wilson’s concern was contained in a news release issued in Monrovia on Wednesday, September 18, 2019.

He says recognizing the important role of youth in the promotion of peace and security through dialogue, LINSU and FLY should reflect on the positive outcomes that

have been derived from negotiations involving them over the years.

“In light of this, I am urging LINSU and FLY to kindly engage in dialogue with the education minister and other stakeholders as means of resolving issues concerning our education sector,” the release quotes Min. Wilson as saying.

Detail of the alleged arrogance by Minister Sonii towards stakeholders in the education sector has not been disclosed, but the Education Minister has been in the news for his inaction over hike in school fees by private institutions across the country, leaving most parents unable to enroll their kids in school this academic year due to lack of money.

Besides hike in the fees, school administrators are compelling parents to purchase uniforms, including socks, T-shirts and berets being sold in U.S. dollars on campuses.

The Liberian Senate recently invited the Education Minister, who owns a school himself, to appear before plenary and speak on the situation that is affecting enrolment across the country amid the prevailing economic hardship.



Minister D. Zeogar Wilson

Port Truckers induct

Starts from page 5

Mr. Kamara pledged the leadership commitment and dedication to implementing promises made during the political campaign for the benefit of the entire membership.

Also making remarks, Madam Jackline Doe, Chairlady of the Liberia National Labor Congress reminded the officials they are leading people and not office, so they should concentrate on developing programs that would seek the wellbeing of PTAL membership.

She calls on the defeated contestants to forget the past and work along with the inducted leadership in ensuring peace and harmony in the Association irrespective of political affiliation.

PTAL outgoing board chair Mr. Sekou Kamara said, while it is true that the board is dissolved, he will work along with the new leadership, pending constitution of a new board of directors. -*Editing by Jonathan Browne*

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Français

Liberia : un incendie tue 26 élèves dans une école coranique

Un incendie d'origine indéterminée a causé la mort de 26 élèves et de deux enseignants d'une école coranique des environs de la capitale libérienne, Monrovia, dans la nuit de mardi à mercredi, a annoncé la présidence.

Les secours "ont indiqué au président qu'il y avait 28 victimes", a dit à l'AFP Solo Kelgbeh, porte-parole du président George Weah qui s'est rendu sur place mercredi matin. "Elles ont entre 10 et 20 ans. Il y avait seulement deux adultes, deux enseignants".

"Nous sommes ici pour encourager les parents des victimes à avoir de la force parce que c'est douloureux de perdre des enfants de cette manière. Notre compassion va aux familles endeuillées. Nous ne savons pas encore les causes de l'incendie mais nous allons



pousser nos enquêteurs à chercher comment il est survenu", a déclaré à la presse le président libérien, sur le lieu du sinistre, à Paynesville, faubourg de Monrovia.

"J'adresse mes prières aux

familles des enfants qui sont morts la nuit dernière à Paynesville dans l'incendie qui a ravagé leur école", avait-il tweeté auparavant. "C'est un moment éprouvant pour les familles des victimes et pour tout le Liberia".



Les proches venus chercher des nouvelles de leurs enfants se pressaient mercredi matin autour du bâtiment de plain-pied jaune et vert qui abrite une école et un internat et dont la toiture en tôle a brûlé, a rapporté un correspondant de l'AFP.

Arrivée tardive des pompiers? Les enfants ont été

surpris pendant leur sommeil, a dit à l'AFP Amadou Sherrif, un responsable de la communauté peule dans laquelle s'est produit le drame selon lui.

Il a dit avoir été appelé sur place dans la nuit et avoir compté 37 enfants tués, et deux rescapés. Mais ce bilan n'a pas été confirmé par ailleurs.

"Je dormais quand j'ai entendu du bruit dehors. Mon épouse a ouvert la porte de derrière et nous avons vu de la fumée en face.

Nous sommes sortis et avons vu un grand incendie", a raconté à la presse un témoin, ZazayBallah,

dont la maison est située près de l'école.

"Nous avons cherché de l'eau pour éteindre le feu. Nous avons continué à mettre de l'eau jusqu'à 02H30. Quand les sapeurs-pompiers sont arrivés, le feu avait commencé à s'éteindre. Nous ne savons pas la cause de l'incendie", a-t-il poursuivi.

RCA : la CPI se penche sur les charges portées contre Ngaïssona et Yekatom

A partir de ce jeudi et jusqu'au 27 septembre, les juges de la Cour pénale internationale étudient les charges portées par la procureure contre les ex-chefs anti-balaka Patrice-Édouard Ngaïssona et Alfred Yekatom. Les deux hommes sont suspectés de crimes contre l'humanité et de crimes de guerre.

Avec notre correspondante à La Haye, Stéphanie Maupas Mahamat

Babakar, ancien habitant du kilomètre 5 de Bangui dont la maison et la plantation ont été pillées, a des trémolos dans la voix quand il évoque ce qu'il a vécu il y a cinq ans.

Les deux Centrafricains sont suspectés de meurtre, extermination, déportation, torture, persécution, disparitions forcées, attaques contre les civils et contre des mosquées. Une longue liste de crimes contre

l'humanité et crimes de guerre commis lors du conflit de 2013 et 2014 opposant la Seleka aux anti-balaka, la milice à laquelle appartenaient les deux suspects.

Au cours des audiences qui débutent ce jeudi, tout l'enjeu pour la procureure va consister à convaincre les juges de mettre les deux suspects en accusation. Car les deux hommes ne sont pas encore en procès : ces audiences visent à confirmer ou non les charges portées à leur encontre.

Décrié comme le plus haut dirigeant des anti-balaka, Patrice Ngaïssona avait été arrêté en France en décembre 2018 et rejoignait quelques semaines plus tard Alfred Yekatom dans la prison de la CPI.

Le député est tombé presque par hasard dans l'escarcelle de la procureure. A Bangui, en pleine séance de l'Assemblée nationale, il avait sorti son revolver avant de se retrouver en prison puis dans un avion pour La Haye en novembre 2018. Lors de la guerre, il aurait pris la tête

d'un bataillon de près de 3 000 hommes, selon l'accusation, semant la terreur et ciblant les musulmans.

Les deux suspects sont les premiers Centrafricains à comparaître devant la Cour. Mais la procureure poursuit son enquête ouverte en 2014 à la demande de Bangui. Au terme de ces audiences, prévues jusqu'au 27 septembre, les juges auront soixante jours pour délibérer.

Les autorités centrafricaines ont demandé aux médias publics nationaux de retransmettre ces audiences. Une façon, assure le porte-parole du gouvernement Ange-Maxime Kazagui, de permettre aux Centrafricains de mieux comprendre ce qui s'est passé et d'avancer vers la réconciliation.

« Nous attendons que les charges soient clairement établies et que les Centrafricains, ceux qui attendent la vérité et la justice, soient édifiés. Nous

voulons que les Centrafricains entendent, écoutent, regardent, soient informés. Que s'est-il passé? Sont-ils réellement coupables? Qu'ont-ils fait? Sont-ils les seuls à l'avoir fait? C'est avancer vers la compréhension de ce qui est arrivé aux Centrafricains. C'est donc des efforts vers la paix. »

Le ministre note toutefois, comme le font de nombreux concitoyens, que pour l'instant ce sont les anti-balaka qui sont jugés au travers de ces deux hommes. Les Seleka n'ont pas encore eu à répondre de leurs actes devant la justice internationale.

« Il faut aussi de l'équité. Les Centrafricains pensent qu'il y a eu beaucoup d'efforts pour que la justice soit rendue mais souhaitent que ce soit équitable. Qu'il n'y ait pas un camp plutôt qu'un autre. Nous pensons que le mouvement qui avance s'inscrit dans ce sens-là. »



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Français

Éditorial

Mise en garde du comité du sénateur Marshall

Le Comité sénatorial sur les affaires bancaires et monétaires, présidé par le sénateur Marshall Dennis du comté de Grand Gedeh, membre de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique au pouvoir, risque de plonger l'économie du Libéria dans un effondrement total, si rien n'est fait.

Ce comité recommande une approbation hâtive de la volonté de l'exécutif d'imprimer de nouvelles coupures de la monnaie locale, le dollar libérien, d'une valeur de 35 milliards, pour une économie de 21 milliards de dollars. Bien évidemment, cela suscite plus d'interrogations en ce qui concerne l'excès de 14 milliards de dollars libériens.

Le président de ce comité, Marshall Dennis, avait paresseusement défendu l'idée de l'exécutif tout en tentant d'induire les Libériens en erreur en faisant croire que les nouveaux billets de banque proposés, une fois imprimés et mis en circulation, ressusciteraient et stimuleraient automatiquement notre économie qui est sérieusement en difficulté sans toutefois donner d'explication techniques.

Le sénateur Dennis devrait être informé en termes clairs et décisifs que sa loyauté envers le parti au pouvoir et le président ne devraient en aucun cas prévaloir sur une question aussi importante que la monnaie qui affecte la vie des 4,5 millions de Libériens et l'économie.

Nous nous demandons sur quelle base il recommande l'approbation du parlement de l'impression des nouvelles coupures sans inviter des économistes et des techniciens en matière de politiques fiscales et monétaires afin de s'enquérir de leur opinion sur une question aussi cruciale.

Heureusement, le sénateur Oscar Cooper du comté de Margibi était là. Il est intervenu. Dieu merci. Son rapport de minorité, lors de la séance plénière du mardi 17 septembre, a convaincu et contraint le sénateur Marshall Dennis de revoir sa copie. Il a dû retirer sa recommandation, celle de permettre au pouvoir exécutif d'imprimer 35 milliards de nouveaux billets de la monnaie libérienne au coût de 31 millions de dollars américains. Il a finalement décidé d'inviter le ministre des Finances et de la Planification du développement, Samuel Tweah, et les autorités compétentes de la Banque centrale du Libéria, afin de clarifier et de préciser d'où le gouvernement sortira les 31 millions de dollars américains qu'il faut pour imprimer les 35 milliards de dollars libériens.

Il faut s'inspirer de l'expérience du Zimbabwe sous le régime de l'ancien président Robert Gabriel Mugabe qui imprimait de nouveaux billets sans tenir compte des réalités économiques. Ces billets étaient devenus de simples papiers, tandis que la population désespérée cherchait de la nourriture si difficile à trouver.

Nous demandons donc au gouvernement de ne pas se précipiter car la question monétaire n'est pas une chose qu'il faut prendre à la légère. Il faut prendre toutes les dispositions pour éviter le chaos.

Déjà en deux ans, c'est la deuxième tentative du gouvernement d'imprimer de nouveaux billets, avec une administration qui est assaillie par de graves problèmes économiques et financiers. Les billets de banque émis par l'administration Sirleaf souffraient d'un manque de transparence et de malhonnêteté, ce qui a entraîné l'impression d'un excès de billets dont le marché a été inondé, provoquant une dépréciation de la valeur du dollar libérien.

Actuellement, plusieurs hauts responsables de la Banque centrale du Libéria, dont l'ancien gouverneur exécutif, Milton Weeks, et le gouverneur adjoint, Charles Sirleaf, font l'objet de poursuites pour plusieurs chefs d'accusation, notamment sabotage économique, blanchiment d'argent et facilitation pénale.

Nous craignons que ce scénario ne se reproduise si nous ne faisons pas beaucoup attention dès maintenant. Le parlement doit ainsi faire preuve de diligence raisonnable avant de donner le feu vert à l'exécutif. Cela nous aidera à éviter les erreurs du passé qui ont mis l'économie à genoux.

Deuxièmement, nous ne comprenons pas pourquoi cette précipitation. Cette affaire aurait dû passer par la Chambre des représentants avant d'aller au Sénat, mais c'est l'inverse dans ce cas.

Comme le sénateur Cooper l'a rappelé, le Fonds monétaire international (FMI) a mis en garde l'administration actuelle contre le retrait de l'argent des réserves du pays, car ces réserves sont destinées à la balance des paiements et à l'augmentation des produits de base sur le marché mondial.

Par conséquent, nous appelons les 103 législateurs de Capitol Hill, en particulier les membres des comités sur les affaires bancaires et monétaires, tant du Sénat que de la Chambre des représentants, à ne pas se précipiter pour approuver la demande de l'exécutif sans avoir étudié la question en profondeur.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Jan-Werner Mueller

La démocratie directe peut-elle vaincre le populisme ?

SARAJEVO - Depuis les deux catastrophes de 2016 - le référendum du Brexit au Royaume-Uni et l'élection du Président des États-Unis Donald Trump - on remarque de nombreux cas d'anxiété au sujet d'une « vague mondiale » de populisme ainsi qu'une forte agitation quant aux folies de la démocratie directe. Au Royaume-Uni, l'électorat a été invité à répondre à question excessivement simpliste (rester ou sortir) ; aux États-Unis, les primaires du Parti Républicain de 2016 ont été mises entre les mains d'électeurs irresponsables et de militants radicaux. Depuis, il y a eu des demandes de responsabiliser à nouveau les « gardiens », ce qui est une façon polie de dire qu'il faut tenir la populace aussi loin que possible de la prise de décision politique.

Pourtant cette impulsion libérale témoigne d'une mauvaise lecture de l'histoire récente : ce sont les élites et non pas les masses, qui ont permis au Brexit et à Trump de l'emporter. En outre, un mépris élitiste éhonté envers la démocratie directe confirme non seulement la rhétorique populiste, mais ignore également le fait que les référendums peuvent être très efficaces contre les populistes.

Trump et certains agitateurs du Brexit comme Nigel Farage ne doivent pas leur victoire à un vice rédhibitoire de la démocratie directe, mais plutôt aux élites qui ont collaboré avec eux tout au long du processus. Les dirigeants conservateurs britanniques se sont peut-être pincé le nez face à Farage, mais un grand nombre d'entre eux ont en fin de compte considéré son argument en faveur du Brexit comme un argument solide, tout comme l'establishment du Parti Républicain a accordé à Trump son imprimatur officiel. Oui, des millions d'électeurs britanniques allaient voter « Leave » et des millions d'Américains ont voté pour un candidat manifestement non qualifié. Mais c'est en partie parce que des personnages familiers, comme Boris Johnson et l'ex-Président de la Chambre Newt Gingrich, les ont assurés qu'ils faisaient le bon choix.

En outre, les élites du parti populiste n'ont pas seulement apposé leur sceau d'approbation. Ils ont également renoncé à leur propre responsabilité de formuler des plateformes politiques cohérentes. Le référendum du Brexit a été une conséquence directe de l'incapacité des dirigeants conservateurs à aboutir à une décision contraignante collective sur la question de l'adhésion à l'UE. Et le Parti Républicain a efficacement confié son processus de sélection des candidats à des chaînes de télévision du câble, dont la principale préoccupation consiste à s'attirer des téléspectateurs.

Pourtant les libéraux ne sont-ils pas sur la bonne voie lorsqu'ils font état d'une connexion plus profonde entre populisme et démocratie directe ? Après tout, les politiciens populistes tentent habituellement d'établir un lien direct entre eux-mêmes et les citoyens, en court-circuitant les partis politiques traditionnels et, quand cela est possible, les journalistes professionnels. Une figure comme Beppe Grillo, fondateur du Mouvement Cinq Étoiles italien, critique invariablement les politiciens et les médias traditionnels dans un même souffle. Tous les populistes prétendent avoir une connaissance unique des « vrais citoyens » et de leur volonté - et promettent d'être leur « porte-parole ».

Cette prétention est purement théorique : les « citoyens » tout comme le « porte-parole » ne sont que des constructions symboliques. Dans la pratique, seul le dirigeant populiste a effectivement besoin de parler. Un référendum a donc un sens très particulier pour les populistes. Ayant déjà construit les « vrais citoyens », la réponse à une question sur la volonté du peuple est connue à l'avance. Ainsi, pour les populistes, le rôle des « citoyens » est complètement

passif. Ils n'ont qu'à cocher la bonne case pour confirmer ce que les populistes ont déjà dit.

Ce n'est cependant qu'une conception possible de la démocratie directe. Une autre approche considère un référendum comme une étape dans un projet plus vaste et, surtout, des processus de délibération ouverts, dans lesquels les citoyens présentent des revendications différentes - ainsi que des preuves pour et contre - avant de prendre une décision. Plutôt que de jouer le jeu des populistes en réhabilitant les gardiens, nous devrions plutôt nous demander comment les référendums peuvent être mis au service de leur fonction démocratique.

Bien entendu, on pourrait dire que le mal est déjà fait, au moins dans des pays comme la Hongrie, la Turquie et la Pologne, où les populistes ont utilisé des élections - et parfois des « consultations nationales » fortement manipulées - pour consolider leur pouvoir. Les chercheurs en sciences sociales s'attaquent tout juste à la question de savoir comment les régimes populistes autoritaires peuvent être transformés à nouveau pour redevenir des démocraties. Il nous faut de nouvelles stratégies pour faire face à ce qui a été diversement appelé « recul démocratique », « régression constitutionnelle » et « autocratisation ».

Une idée est de se concentrer sur le fait que de nombreux gouvernements populistes autoritaires bénéficient d'une opposition très divisée, ce qui est parfois le résultat d'une mécanique délibérée de la part des populistes eux-mêmes. Une opposition divisée a plus de difficulté à former des coalitions et à choisir le meilleur candidat possible pour s'opposer à des populistes bien établis (parce que chaque parti veut que son propre champion soit dans la course). Il suffit de suivre les discussions houleuses autour des élections parlementaires de Hongrie en 2018. Après avoir débattu sur la question de savoir si le parti d'extrême-droite Jobbik devrait - ou pourrait même - s'allier au parti libéral de gauche, l'opposition s'est tenue en grande partie à l'écart et le Premier ministre Viktor Orbán, de l'alliance Fidesz-KDNP a remporté 133 sièges sur 199 au parlement.

Il va sans dire que la formation d'une coalition entre l'extrême droite et la gauche est très problématique. Mais un autre problème est que, même si les électeurs veulent un changement de gouvernement, ils peuvent être réticents à s'engager dans un vote tactique qui pourraient produire une alternative aussi mauvaise, sinon pire. Il est difficile de reprocher aux libéraux hongrois d'avoir refusé de voter pour un candidat du Parti Jobbik.

Les référendums offrent un moyen de résoudre ce dilemme, en raison de leur structure binaire. Bien qu'ils rassemblent souvent des coalitions inhabituelles, cela n'a pas une grande importance pour un électeur individuel. Une fois le référendum passé, l'objectif de la coalition est accompli. Mieux encore, les référendums peuvent être conçus de manière à exposer l'impopularité d'un gouvernement populiste, en sapant sa prétention à représenter la volonté du peuple.

Parce qu'ils ont compris le potentiel réellement démocratique du référendum, certains gouvernements populistes autoritaires - en Hongrie, par exemple - ont rendu d'authentiques initiatives ascendantes plus difficiles. Cela peut paraître contraire à la croyance populaire, mais la démocratie directe pourrait fonctionner contre le populisme. Il n'y a aucune garantie qu'une telle stratégie permette de réussir dans un contexte donné. Mais cela vaut mieux que d'attendre d'être sauvés par les gardiens.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

NBC establishes MSP in Kokoyah

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan
in Bong

The National Bureau of Concession (NBC) in collaboration with partners has established another branch of the Multi-Stakeholders Platform (MSP) in mineral-rich Kokoyah District, Bong County.

The MSP according to its Regional Coordinator Emmanuel F. Karneh, Sr. intends to cement cordial relationship between MNG Gold mining company Liberia and residents of the affected communities in the District.

He told our correspondent that the project also seeks to enhance peace, security and support to communities livelihood undertakings in the area.

The MSP which is being sponsored by UNDP's Peace Building Fund is geared towards promoting peace, food and human security in and around communities affected by MNG Gold Liberia operations in Bong County.

Mr. Karneh Sr. explains that the MSP is a politically and religiously unaffiliated legal body consisting of a 20-

man committee with the leadership of seven persons.

Currently, the MSP is operating in one of Liberia's 15 Counties.

According to the resolution, LAN will be the intervening party to negotiate with conflicting parties.

Following the gathering, the LAN is expected to engage



NBC Boss Gregory Coleman

Following the three days consultative gathering in David Dean Town, Kokoyah District, a resolution of the Leseah Advocacy Network (LAN) was reached and signed.

friendly partners, both national and international in order to promote sustainable development for all affected communities in Kokoyah District.

The resolution states that the LAN will be recognized by the management of MNG Gold Liberia as an established legal body to advocate, negotiate and dialogue.

During the gathering, Madam Rose Somah including 6 persons were appointed by their colleagues to steer the affairs of the newly established MSP.

Some residents of MNG Gold affected communities have lauded the NBC and partners for the establishment of the MSP.

According to Rose Somah and James Tarr the MSP will discourage the constant

unlawful dismissal of the company's employees and will strengthen relationship among citizens and MNG Gold.

Also speaking, the community liaison officer of MNG Gold Keith Gboe termed the establishment of the MSP as a good beginning by the NBC.

The consultative gathering was facilitated by Madam Cecelia Danuweli, a representative of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Monrovia.

The ceremony brought together Kokoyah District local leadership headed by Commissioner Dennis Chapay, cross session of citizens including elders, Civil Society actors, amongst others.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley

BOCORNET identifies with radio stations in Bong

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

The Bong County Community Radio Network (BOCORNET) has identified with several community radio stations in the County.

BOCORNET was established February 22, 2012 in Gbarnga, Bong County by a group of community radio managers from the County as the umbrella organization for community radio stations there.

Speaking to our correspondent recently, BOCORNET president Mr. Samuel Dorweh said the gesture comes through the allotment made last year during the Bong County Council Sitting.

Mr. Dorweh said US\$15,000 was allotted and disbursed to the organization as financial support to community radio stations in the County.

According to him, about ten community radio stations across the County have benefited cash and materials.

He said the three biggest community radio stations in the County - Kwatekeh FM, Super Bongese and Radio Gbarnga benefited US\$2,500 each, while the rest of the stations benefited advanced studio equipment and a motorbike.

BOCORNET is a legally incorporated and notarized institution as required by the laws and regulations of the Republic of Liberia.

"Its aim is to strengthen networking among community radios in Bong County while seeking resources to enhance their capacity for better service delivery of news and information for the inhabitants of Bong County," he said.

Mr. Dorweh adds that the aim is to help promote professionalism among journalists throughout Bong County that are seeking support locally and nationally for the sustainability of community radios.

Some of the station managers lauded the leadership of BOCORNET for establishing the organization in the County.

According to the radio managers, since the formation of the Bong community Radio Network in 2012, there have numerous gains at the various community radio stations across the County.

The managers are also appealing to well-meaning citizens of the County to aid BOCORNET to enable it achieve its goal.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley

Africa Rice Liberia extends project

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan
in Bong

Africa Rice Liberia Smart Valley Innovation project under the SAWAH system has been extended to December 2019, according to its Country Representative to Liberia.

The SAWAH System is a low-cost participatory development approach for rice cultivation in inland valleys in Liberia.

The project which was expected to end in September, according to the Country Representative of Africa Rice Liberia, Dr.

Innosa Akintayo has been extended for three months due to the improvement of farmers in the targeted Counties.

Speaking at a day-long ceremony Dr. Akintayo lauded Bong County Agriculture Coordinator Kollie K. Nahn, the Regional Agriculture coordinator for Bong, Lofa and Nimba Counties Moses Gbanyan including farmers for supporting the project.

He told the gathering that the goal of the SMART-VALLEYS project is to improve the livelihood and food security of rice producers by

augmenting and securing rice production in inland valleys through improved land and water management and improved agronomic practices.

According to him, the project seeks to achieve augmented and stable yields through improved site-specific agronomic practices.

Dr. Innosa Akintayo has meanwhile underscored the importance of the SAWAH system of rice production in Liberia.

The system focuses on the bonding of plots of similar height, ploughing, puddling and leveling of plots, providing inlet for irrigation and outlet for drainage.

He explains that SAWAH is a man-made, improved rice-growing environment with demarcated, bonded, leveled, and puddled fields for water control.

According to him, it has been tested in several Africa Countries to include Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Togo, Nigeria and Ghana, among others

The County Agriculture Coordinator of Bong County Kollie K. Nahn and the Regional Agriculture Coordinator for Bong, Lofa and Nimba Counties Moses R. Gbanyan thanked Africa Rice Liberia for advancing farming activities in

the three targeted Counties.

The duo said due to Africa Rice's involvement in the Liberian Agriculture sector, farmers are greatly making impact in their various counties in terms of productivity.

Also speaking, some of the farmers thanked Africa Rice for the extension of the Smart Valley Innovation project in the three counties.

The farmers explained that

through Africa Rice Liberia they have over the years made numerous gains in their various counties through low land rice production.

During the ceremony, the farmers recommended that a good policy be made to support the rice industry, support farmers, enhance the capacities of researchers at the Ministry of Agriculture, among others.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley



Senate decides Tweah's fate today

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Members of the Liberian Senate will today, September 20, decide the fate of Liberia's Minister of Finance and Development Planning Samuel Tweah, for his 'deliberate' failure to appear before that august body to provide information and documentary evidence why the Liberian banknotes should be changed at this critical time of the country.

The Senate committee on banking and currency with instruction from plenary, had on two separate occasions officially invited Minister Tweah to appear, but the Minister, who controls the fiscal policy of the state snubbed senators without giving any reason.

On Thursday, September 19, following the regular session of the senate, senators convened in their chambers with full



understanding that Finance and Development Planning officials, including Minister Tweah and authorities of the Central Bank of Liberia would have appeared to explain the

currency change process.

However, after hours of waiting, senators were left with no option but ruled that the matter will be before full plenary of the senate to decide

the fate of Minister Tweah.

Grand Gedeh County Senator Marshall Dennis, who chairs the banking and currency committee, regretted that the action of Minister Tweah's has stalled the working of the committee and the senate at large.

Article 34 of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia, gives the Liberian Legislature the sole authority to decide printing of new banknotes and minting of coins.

Article 34 (d) (ii) of the Constitution states: "no monies shall be drawn from the treasure except in consequence of appropriations made by legislative enactment and upon warrant of the President; and no coin shall be minted or national currency issued except by the expressed authority of the Legislature. An annual statement and account of the expenditure of all public monies shall be submitted by the office of the President to the Legislature and published once a year".

The Executive has sought approval of the Legislature to print new banknotes with suggestion from the senate committee on banking and currency that denomination should range from LRD 100 to LRD20, while the rest be

transmitted to coins. But the decision was resisted hugely by senators on size of the denominations and the committee report was sent back to committee room.

Indications and expression on the faces of senators' yesterday evening following their disappointed waiting in the chambers appear to suggest that Minister risks senate contempt charges.

Article 44 of the Constitution of Liberia says, "Contempt of the Legislature shall consist of actions which obstruct the legislative functions or which obstruct or impede members or officers of the Legislature in the discharge of their legislative duties and may be punished by the House concerned by reasonable sanctions after a hearing consistent with due process of law. No sanctions shall extend beyond the session of the Legislature wherein it is imposed, and any sanction imposed shall conform to the provisions on Fundamental Rights laid down in the Constitution. Disputes between legislators and non-members which are properly cognizable in the courts shall not be entertained or heard in the Legislature."

Foreign Missions mourn fire tragedy

The European Union Delegation and the Heads of Mission of France, Germany, Ireland and Sweden in Monrovia say they are deeply saddened by the tragic fire which killed at least 28 people, including many children in the Bassa Town Quranic Recitation Center in Paynesville early Wednesday morning, 18 September.

"We are deeply saddened to have learnt of the tragic fire which occurred in the Bassa Town Quranic Recitation Center in the early hours of Wednesday in the Bassa Community in Paynesville in which at least 28 people, including many children, died," the Foreign Missions said in a statement Thursday, 19 September.

"At this difficult time, we wish to express our deepest and most heartfelt condolences to the bereaved

families, to the Islamic Community of Paynesville, and to the people of Liberia. We also wish a swift recovery to those who have been injured."

Raging fire dreadfully consumed at least 28 persons most of them students at an Islamic dormitory in Bassa Town Community in Paynesville where kids go to recite the Quran.

Redlight, Paynesville was a scene of sorrow and tears on account of the tragedy as community dwellers struggled unsuccessfully to rescue at least 28 dying kids who could not stop screaming for help through hot iron bar windows until they were finally consumed painfully by fire.

Eyewitnesses who rushed to the scene explained that kids inside the blazing Quran Memory Institute facility screamed through the windows of the dormitory,

seeking help at about 12 a.m. on Wednesday.

Efforts to get the victims out were undermined because they would tragically come in contact with hot iron bars that are installed at the widows and then run back inside the building in fire.

At least two kids were rescued, but there are reports that the lady who rescued them reportedly died when she returned inside the building to get additional kids out.

Hundreds of residents from Bassa Town Community and its environs, including women, men, children, bike riders, taxi drivers and marketers gathered in mass at the incident scene on Wednesday.

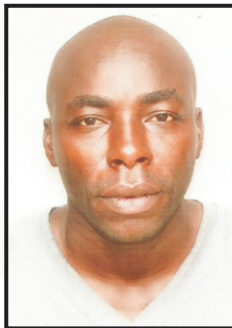
They could not hold back their tears as everyone had their own narrative of the incident.

Following the incident, President George Manneh Weah visited the scene early Wednesday morning, encouraging families of the victims "to have strength" as he describes the death of the "28 kids" as a disaster.

"It's painful, it's hurtful! So there's not much we can say but to extend our sympathy to the bereaved families," he told reporters in an interview.

"We will do all our best to make sure that they establish what happened and then whatever assistance the government can render the family, we will be there," he said.

A lady identified as Massa Kromah who claimed to be a relative to the caretaker of the school, FatuJalloh narrated that the students were all males, aged seven years and



Change of Name

I, BILL B. KING, will be changing my name to BILL K. HOFF as of the date of the publication of this notice as a requirement by the Liberia National Police regarding change of name. Hence, my name will officially be changed from BILL B. KING to BILL K. HOFF.



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above.

The caretaker of the dormitory FatuJalloh could not speak immediately due to the trauma caused by the incident.

However, Massa narrated that the building had eight rooms, but only the front door was accessible to the students due to constant attacks by criminals in the community.

She said in the building were over 30 students, including a teacher who was also sleeping

in the building with them.

However, Massa detailed that the teacher and the Imam's wife who tried saving the children died along with the victims.

The Imam's wife is said to have saved the first two kids and then returned in the building, but she never survived this time around. The cause of the fire is not yet known.

Academy graduates shine as Arsenal beat Eintracht Frankfurt



Goals from academy graduates Joe Willock and Bukayo Saka helped Arsenal overcome a difficult test against Eintracht Frankfurt and begin their Europa League campaign with a victory.

Willock put the Gunners in front with a deflected shot in the first half before Saka smashed in his first senior goal for the club in the 85th minute. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang added a third two minutes later as Arsenal ended their three-game winless run.

The Gunners had created further chances but also

relied on goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez to come to the aid of their fragile defence.

The Argentine produced excellent low saves to deny Filip Kostic and Andre Silva in the first half.

The second period was frantic in front of a vociferous home crowd with Arsenal's late goals only coming after Dominik Kohr was shown a second yellow card for a cynical foul.

The Gunners, beaten finalists in last year's Europa League, are top of the early Group F table on goal difference after Standard Liege beat Vitoria in the night's other game.

Manager Unai Emery opted for a mix of youth and experience for the game in Germany, despite it arguably being Arsenal's toughest test in Group F, and it was their young players who stood out.

Eighteen-year-old Saka, playing for the first team for the first time this season and fifth time in total, was excellent on the left flank, scoring once and setting up the other two goals.

He created Willock's goal by beating his marker with fine skill in midfield and was the main threat for the Gunners in the first half.

The only criticism was he spurned a number of chances to increase Arsenal's lead but he silenced those doubts with an emphatic finish from the edge of the area late on.

Willock played as the Gunners most advanced central midfielder and offered a goal threat but also linked play well, notably with a fine driving run in the second half which ended with Martin Hinteregger excellently blocking an Aubameyang shot.

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MTN Launch Music Award For Liberian Artist



It was a joyous moment for Artist here in Liberia when one of Liberia leading telecommunication mobile GSM Company Lonestar Cell MTN launch the Music Award for Liberian Artist across the country at the mamba-point hotel. See page 6 for full pictorial.

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