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Continental News

Heavy rains cause floods in Mombasa

Mombasa residents have expressed fears of possible outbreak of water-borne diseases as heavy downpour continues pounding the region.

The heavy rains that have been pounding the region since Friday afternoon last week have flooded most parts of the county, rendering most roads impassable.

The most affected areas are Nyali, Kisauni, Kongowea, Kaa Chonjo and parts of the Mombasa central business district. These areas were on Sunday heavily flooded after long hours of rains that began on Saturday night. In Bamburi, various estates were flooded with water filling roads, making it difficult for residents move. Motorists had difficulties wading through the flooded tourist city.

Poor drainage has been blamed for the floods in the major roads linking Mombasa island to the north coast. The floods made many roads

inaccessible including Links Road in Nyali, Fidel Odinga Road and Mikindani estate.

The weatherman has warned that heavy rainfall will continue. In a statement, the Kenya Meteorological Department warned of

possible floods and advised people to avoid walking through moving water or open fields.

Fishermen at the Coast and workers in the marine industry have been urged to be on high alert since the heavy rains and

strong winds may result into storm surges.

Mombasa County Commissioner Gilbert Kitiyo said there have been no casualties reported as a result of the heavy flooding. He urged the county government to unclog drainages in order to prevent flooding whenever heavy rains hit the coastal tourist town.

"I have seen that they have tried unclogging the sewages in various parts but they should improve so that we do not experience this [again] when rains fall," Mr Kitiyo said.

Mombasa County Chief Officer for Transport and Infrastructure Albert Keno said

the drainage system has been overwhelmed, hence the flooding.

"We will be expanding the drainage around Mkomani to ease the flow of water in that area," he said. Kenya Red Cross Coast Regional Coordinator Hassan Musa urged those living in lowlands to be on high alert. "People living in urban areas should come together and clear the storm waterways. This will save their houses from being affected by floods," said Mr Hassan.

Other places expected to have rains are the Rift Valley, Lake Victoria basin, counties in the highlands, north-eastern and north-western Kenya. AFP



Zimbabwe doctors enter 43rd day of strike

Striking Zimbabwe doctors on Monday defied a court order to return to work, saying a pay rise offered by the government failed to meet everyday costs.

Doctors remained home for a 43rd consecutive day, striking for better pay after their salaries were eroded by the country's spiralling inflation.

Zimbabwe's labour court ruled the action "unlawful" on Friday and ordered the medics back to their wards within 48 hours. The Zimbabwe Hospital Doctors Association (ZHDA) announced Sunday it would lodge an appeal to the Supreme Court.

"We noted the court order but unfortunately we don't have the means by which to comply," said ZHDA spokesman

Masimba Ndoro on Monday.

"We remain incapacitated... There is nothing we can do when we don't have the means to go to work and to meet our basic needs," he told AFP.

The doctors say their pay has lost value by at least 1,500 percent, a legacy of economic mismanagement under Zimbabwe's ex-president Robert Mugabe.

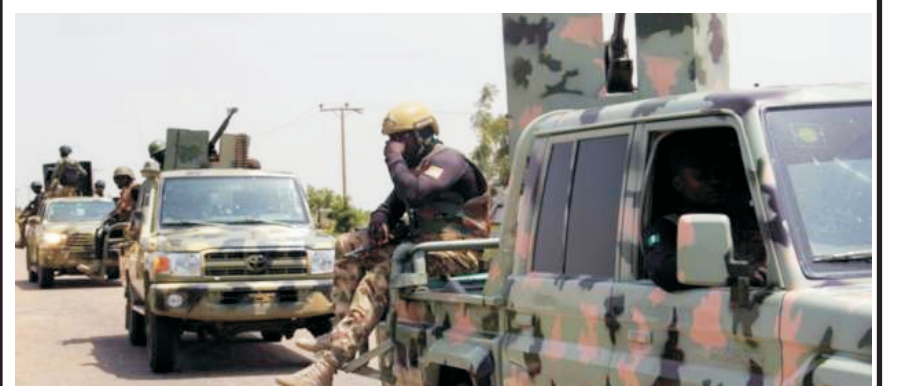
His successor Emmerson Mnangagwa has so far failed to redress the situation. Fuel prices have increased by more than 400 percent since the start of the year, and the ZHDA said that doctors had to use their savings just to show up to hospital each morning.

Negotiations with the government have been deadlocked since the ZHDA rejected a 60 percent salary rise offer.

With pay slips worth less than \$100 (91 euros) in some cases, they are demanding doctors' salaries be pegged to the US dollar and have appealed to international bodies to supplement their wages. "While doctors would want nothing more than to return to work in service of



Nigerian state enlists hunters in Boko Haram fight



Nigeria has stepped up military offensive in the restive northeastern region

The governor of Nigeria's Borno state, the region worst hit by attacks carried out by the Boko Haram Islamist militant group, has enlisted thousands of local hunters to help troops in the fight against the insurgents.

Governor Babagana Zulum says it is part of finding new ways to end the decade-long conflict.

He wants to recruit 10,000 men who are known for their hunting skills and some 2,000 of them have already been enlisted from across northern Nigeria to join the offensive against the militants. "The hunters are from different parts of the north. They are very familiar with different kinds of forests," Isa Gusau, one of the governor's advisers, told the BBC Newsday

programme. "Governor Zulum thought there is a need to combine approaches. He would continue to support the Nigerian military, but he felt there is need to combine approaches."

Mr Gusau added: "They (hunters) will help in navigation, they will also help in increasing the number of government forces going after the militants. We have reached a stage where we have to apply different approaches; you just have to try whatever means that is necessary so long as it's within lawful means."

Boko Haram's attacks are estimated to have killed 27,000 people and forced about two million from their homes since the uprising began in 2009. BBC

their patients, they continue to be incapacitated and lack the resources to comply with the Labour Court judgement," said ZHDA in a statement on Sunday.

Nurses at two of the country's largest government hospitals in Harare last week

joined the action and walked quit the wards, according to local media.

Rural teachers also embarked on strike action on Monday with a stay-at-home protest "against underpayment". AFP

EDITORIAL

Roots FM's closure and media future in Liberia

AFTER LAST WEEK'S closure of independent Roots FM 102.7 and its affiliates by the Government of Liberia, many people in Liberia seem to be more concerned about closing a second radio station, Freedom FM, than the procedure followed by the authorities in the action taken against the first station.

MANY HOLD THE view that Freedom FM 87.9 owned and operated by a senior security officer of the government, Sam Siryon, is involved in broadcasting invectives and hate speech against opposition members, particularly political leaders of opposition political parties just similarly as Roots FM 102.7 had been ranting against President George Manneh Weah and his government.

BUT WE SEE a dangerous sign here for the entire Liberian media if care were not taken in what clearly appears to be beginning of an official clampdown on media institutions that dare to call the government to account. Just as Roots FM 102.7 talk show host Henry Costa has been repeatedly noted for preaching anti-government messages and ranting insults on the President and his officials, so is pro-government Freedom FM 87.9 that directs its broadcast, saturated with profanity, at members of the opposition community.

RATHER THAN CLOSURE of anti-government or pro-government stations, as many are suggesting, including the Press Union of Liberia, we think the real focus should be on whether or not, procedure used by the State last week's Thursday, 10 September in forcibly shutting down Roots FM 102.7 and confiscating its assets for alleged default in payment of taxes and other operational requirements before subsequently issuing a Writ of Search, Seizure and Arrest through a court sheriff was right.

LIBERIA'S SOLICITOR-GENERAL Cllr. Sayma-Cyrenius Cephus, who had earlier served as defense counsel for talk show Henry Costa during the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf regime, argued last week in a news conference at the Ministry of Information in Monrovia that government acted accordingly, because Roots FM 102.7 had operated illegally and broadcast invectives to the public.

THE QUESTION IS: was the Search, Seizure and Arrest Warrant legal for the alleged offenses, as claimed by the Solicitor-General? Or were there excesses by the government? These are the main issues that should be debated in the public domain, instead.

IF WE DIDN'T critically analyze the government's move and begin to call for closure of a second media institution, we may be clearly creating a platform where the authorities would arbitrarily shut down media houses in the country based on their reportage and hide under the pretext of lack of license and operational permits.

SURELY, WE LIBERIANS don't want to return to the dark days of the military junta, People's Redemption Council (PRC) in the 80s or era of jailed former President Charles Ghankay Taylor when journalists were randomly arrested and media institutions shut down.

TODAY IT IS Roots FM 102.7 and its affiliates; no one knows which other critical voices from the media would face the wrath of the government. Lest we are misconstrued, the New Dawn does not in any way suggest that journalists and media institutions are licensed to insult authorities of the State or to ignore professional and ethical standards, but if such breaches were committed, government should react within confines of the law.

ANYTHING SHORT OF that would mean arbitrary clampdown on the media and silencing critical voices against the government.

The New Dawn
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COMMENTARY

By Hans-Helmut Kotz

Germany Versus the ECB

With the German economy close to recession, European Central Bank President Mario Draghi has rightly urged eurozone governments to provide more fiscal stimulus. And acknowledging the interaction between fiscal and monetary policy would leave critics much less room for ECB-bashing.

CAMBRIDGE - Over the past couple of months, the German debate over fiscal and monetary policy has taken an interesting turn. Old, deeply ingrained economic dogmas, including that the public sector must strive to generate a fiscal surplus regardless of macroeconomic conditions, are being reappraised, at least by some.

The economic situation is changing rapidly for the worse. The German economy - long the engine of eurozone growth - is undeniably sputtering. Powerful underlying currents are contributing to the slowdown. As a result, there is a high probability of a typical German recession (in terms of depth and duration), if not worse.

The main headwind, of course, is the uncertainty emanating from the highly contentious global trade environment. This is particularly threatening for open economies like Germany and its neighbors, which are deeply integrated into its manufacturers' value chains.

Rising global trade tensions will hit Europe both ways: indirectly - through the China channel - and directly, for example through announced US tariffs, following the recent World Trade Organization ruling regarding state aid to European aerospace group Airbus. Tit-for-tat retaliation by the European Union against US subsidies for Boeing, probably endorsed by the WTO, will be the logical response.

Gone are the good - or, for some, bad - old days of multilateral trade agreements. Today, tariff and non-tariff barriers are in vogue again, partly because large bilateral trade imbalances, beyond a certain level, inevitably seem to trigger a reflex among some policymakers to shield domestic markets for the benefit of home producers and their employees (often regionally concentrated). Trade, not unlike technological disruption, has redistributive consequences which policymakers ignore at their own peril, and therefore implies a need for adjustment and structural change.

Hence, Germany's persistently large current-account surpluses, long more than 6% of GDP, are causing increasing tensions with other "over-importing" countries, notably the United States, which must run commensurately large, offsetting current-account deficits.

Given the high risk of recession in Germany, the seemingly obvious response would be to use both fiscal and monetary policy - the two macroeconomic "handmaidens," as the US economist Arthur Okun described them - and account for the impact of both.

Fiscal and monetary policy inevitably interact to influence economic activity in what the economist James Tobin called the "common funnel." The economic policy debate in the eurozone often ignores this interaction. Acknowledging it, however, would leave critics much less room for ECB-bashing.

In a federal state, the uppermost level of government, often responsible for the bulk of public expenditures, is typically charged with implementing fiscal policies to counteract a slowdown. These stabilizing measures can be automatic, as budget revenues and expenditures fluctuate with the economic cycle. Or they can be active, intentionally boosting domestic demand with the aim of getting the economy back on track. Meanwhile, the second handmaiden adjusts policy rates and/or access to funds in pursuit of the same stabilization objective.

This is where eurozone-specific factors complicate things. The EU (and, even more so, the eurozone) is more than a confederation, but much less than a federation. Thus, the mechanics of the common

funnel are different. In theory, eurozone member states, being monetary sub-sovereigns, should perform the fiscal stabilization function. But in practice, they do not, either because they are restricted by the quasi-constitutional rules of the EU's "fiscal compact," or because their vulnerable public-sector finances leave them constrained by debt markets. Other eurozone governments, meanwhile, may see no need for counter-cyclical fiscal measures, even though they have the fiscal space to introduce them.

This puts most of the stabilization burden on the European Central Bank - which does not have a mandate to smooth output. The business cycle influences the central bank's policy only indirectly, via its effects on consumer prices.

But the ECB has almost exhausted its unconventional monetary policy tools, such as large-scale securities purchases and negative interest rates. While bringing evidence to bear on these tools' net benefits, the ECB has acknowledged their potential negative side effects, such as their potentially adverse impact on the resilience of the eurozone's banking and insurance sectors. ECB President Mario Draghi has therefore rightly called on national governments that have room for maneuver to shoulder some of the stabilization burden by providing fiscal stimulus.

Not doing so paints the ECB into a corner and erodes its independence, as does not addressing the overcapacity in Europe's banking industry. This is the remit of fiscal policy and would come with budgetary consequences. Sadly, essentially forcing the ECB to use its balance sheet (providing liquidity for ever longer periods to deal with solvency issues) is incomparably more attractive for many national politicians. It also makes bashing the central bank much easier.

The good news for the ECB is that policymakers, including in the frugal Netherlands, are at least discussing counter-cyclical fiscal policies again. Obviously, reasonable people can have different views. Indeed, most of the proposals to handle downturns have always been two-handed, and now the balance finally seems to be shifting in the eurozone.

But the policy debate must become less macro and more concrete. Given their respective national versions of welfare capitalism, eurozone member states have relatively strong automatic stabilizers, much more so than in the United States. Moreover, some countries are quite decentralized fiscally. This is particularly true of Germany, where much of the net disinvestment in public infrastructure - which shows up in aggregate public-sector budgets as savings or as a schwarze Null balanced budget - is the result of a fragile and highly unevenly distributed revenue base within the third fiscal tier (municipalities). Although they follow economically sensible "golden rules" by separating current and capital budget accounts, many municipalities are cash-strapped. To address the German "fiscal space" problem, therefore, one must drill much deeper.

Finally, a reasonable (in terms of size) automatic stabilizing capacity is needed at the eurozone level. While the eurozone's Budgetary Instrument for Convergence and Competitiveness is a start, it is far from sufficient. And, of course, it should not involve a budget line item for "stabilization," but rather a real, democratically legitimized transfer of public-sector national responsibilities and sovereignty.

Unfortunately, current politics in eurozone member states, including France and Germany, is much more inward-looking. This will leave the eurozone, and particularly its weaker members, continuously vulnerable.

O-PED

By Barry Eichengreen

Will Libra Be Stillborn?

CHICAGO - Plans for Facebook's proposed "stablecoin," Libra, appear to be unraveling with the withdrawal of PayPal, Visa, Mastercard, Stripe, eBay, and Mercado Pago as potential sponsors. This is hardly surprising, given growing awareness of Libra's potential adverse consequences. If it offers anonymity to its users, Libra will become a platform for tax evasion, money laundering, and terrorist finance. If, on the other hand, its privacy protections are lax, Libra will give Facebook access to users' most intimate financial details.

Then there are the dangers Libra poses to economic and financial stability. Although Facebook's stablecoin will be backed by a portfolio of "low-volatility assets," anyone who lived through the 2008 global financial crisis will know that low volatility is more a state of mind than an intrinsic attribute of an asset. If the prices of the bonds in the reserve portfolio fall in response to an unexpected rise in interest rates, for example, those bonds may then be inadequate to redeem all the Libra in circulation. At this point, the reserve will be subject to the equivalent of a bank run. And because Libra operates like a currency board, there will be no lender of last resort.

Libra may also undercut the stabilizing capacity of monetary and regulatory policies. If the residents of a country shift out of its national currency, the central bank's interest-rate-setting policies will be vitiated. To appreciate the consequences, one need look no further than Argentina's long, unhappy history of financial dollarization.

Finally, governments that use controls to regulate capital flows will find that they are more easily evaded. Their economies will be fully exposed to the foibles of global financial markets. This will be "disruption" with a vengeance.

Libra's rollout will require the approval of regulators. Its promoters, claiming significant social benefits, argue that it deserves to be approved. Libra will lower the cost of cross-border payments. It will reduce the expense of remittances. It will provide financial services to the unbanked masses.

While these arguments for Libra are not false, they are superfluous. The cost of cross-border payments is already falling. Ripple, a San Francisco-based company, uses distributed-ledger technology and a proprietary cryptocurrency to facilitate transfers between commercial banks at a small fraction of their earlier cost.

Because Ripple cooperates with commercial banks subject to know-your-customer rules and other regulatory requirements, its payments technology doesn't pose the same problems as Libra. Banks like Santander already use this technology to connect Europe with the United States. They are now poised to connect the US with Latin America.

The Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT), through which interbank transfers are traditionally made, is not taking this challenge lying down. It has tested a system, "SWIFT gpi Instant," for transferring funds between banks in North America, Europe, and Asia, settling payments in as little as 13 seconds. SWIFT gpi Instant piggybacks on newly installed nonstop instant payment systems such as Singapore's Fast and Secure Transfers (FAST) and the European Central Bank's TARGET Instant Payment Settlement (TIPS). Once the Federal Reserve implements a round-the-clock real-time payment and settlement system in 2023 or 2024, this network will be further enhanced.

While SWIFT's pilot doesn't rely on distributed-ledger technology, which verifies transactions by recording their details in multiple places at the same time, other initiatives do. For example, the ECB and the Bank of Japan have been exploring use of this technology in domestic and cross-border payments in their "Project Stella" (not to be confused with the video game of the same name).

Moreover, there is already considerable progress in solving the problem of serving the unbanked courtesy of telecom-based services like M-Pesa, which originated in Kenya but is now used from Afghanistan to Albania. Users need only a cellphone and a contract with their telecom-services provider, not even a bank account. They can then top up their balance at the corner store, protect it with a PIN, and use it to make payments to anyone with an account.

Platforms like M-Pesa are being used not just for payments but also to provide other financial services, such as micro-loans. In other words, they already trump Libra when it comes to banking the unbanked.

Criticisms of such services focus on their cost. In countries where the dominant telecom company faces little competition, it can insist on high margins. Here, it would seem, is where Libra could have disruptive, pro-competitive effects.

But this is wishful thinking. The reality is that the same telecoms that successfully lobby against entry into their own industry will lobby against regulatory authorization for Libra.

Where the problem for economies and financial services is lack of competition, residents of developing countries need to look to their own regulators and politicians. The remedy for their woes is not going to come from Mark Zuckerberg.

OPINION

By Bertrand Badré
& Antoine Sire

Financing the Green Transition

PARIS - Four years after world leaders signed the Paris climate agreement and adopted the United Nations' 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the global environmental crisis shows every sign of worsening. Polar ice and glaciers are melting at an accelerating rate. Greenhouse-gas emissions are increasing. The Amazon and Indonesian rainforests are burning, and climate catastrophes such as typhoons, tornadoes, and floods are intensifying, with dire consequences for entire populations.

Why has the world strayed so far from its collective roadmap toward sustainable growth? Over the past decade, climate action has mainly involved praising businesses and governments that adopt "green" practices while naming and shaming those that maintain "brown" policies. But this is not enough. We must fundamentally rethink how to create a more sustainable world.

The financial sector will need to play a leading role in scaling up green initiatives, de-risking projects for investors, and optimizing funding costs. And, given the integrated nature of sustainable growth, financial institutions must work more closely with national and local governments, regulators, businesses, NGOs, and citizens.

To that end, the banking sector, including central banks, recently established the Principles for Responsible Banking and the Network for Greening the Financial System. These platforms, along with the Principles for Responsible Investment that were adopted in 2006, can be the basis for financial initiatives that make all economic actors more sustainable.

Many financial institutions have already committed to the energy transition by shifting capital allocation away from fossil fuels and investing more in low-carbon and more resource-efficient businesses and infrastructure projects. The volume of sustainability-linked loans, which offer better financing terms to companies that reduce their carbon footprint, increased from zero to €40 billion (\$43.8 billion) in Europe between 2016 and 2018. And worldwide issuance of green bonds - which also originated in Europe - is likely to reach \$200 billion this year, with China alone accounting for 20% of this amount.

In order to meet the SDGs and the aims of the Paris accord, we need to encourage everyone to become greener - whether they are large polluting businesses, smallholder farmers, or consumers. That means providing concrete financial support for green transitions, rather than shunning and alienating less environmentally friendly actors.

But changing banks' energy-financing models, or developing sustainability-linked loans and green bonds, will simply not be enough to facilitate such "transition journeys." It is therefore time for a new approach that is effective and scalable, and takes investors' expectations fully into account.

Two possibilities in particular look promising. First, new "transition bonds" can finance projects aimed at helping industries become more sustainable, produce less carbon and waste, and/or improve social wellbeing through fair labor and workplace practices. The cement, mining, steel, gas, and agriculture sectors, for example, are prime candidates for such financing.

Although discussions regarding transition bonds really started only earlier this year, there is already clear interest and demand among investors. They want more data and disclosure, and more diversification in order to include a wider range of sectors. Investors are also strongly committed to engaging with these industries rather than simply divesting from them. Potential issuers, too, are increasingly interested in such bonds: they need to prove to investors that they have embarked on their own transition journeys.

In this regard, the two transition bonds issued so far in 2019 have raised the question of how to define and apply universally accepted standards of "transition." Currently, there are no "transition principles" through which issuers can factor the Green and Social Bond Principles into their financing needs. As a result, bond proceeds are not necessarily being used in ways that respect these principles.

True, issuing companies are expected to be transparent regarding their transition toward a greener footprint and their use of bond proceeds. But for now, what constitutes a transition for issuers is determined on a case-by-case basis with investors. In the future, therefore, transition bonds must be anchored in the same kind of norms, standards, and disclosure mechanisms that exist in the green-bond market.

The second big transition-financing opportunity is in blended finance, or collaborative schemes that raise private capital for public goods. These initiatives bring together a wide range of public and private stakeholders, including multilateral organizations, to finance projects with deep environmental and social impacts. Moreover, the blended approach helps to scale up and de-risk projects and optimize their funding.

The Tropical Landscapes Financing Facility, developed in Indonesia in cooperation with the UN Environment Programme, is a good example. The initiative combines private, public, and philanthropic funds to maximize environmental and social benefits. Furthermore, it provides full transparency and measurable outcomes without compromising the project's risk/return-adjusted profitability.

Such projects aim to make an entire ecosystem virtuous, whether at the level of a single forest or an entire region or country. From the outset, these initiatives must bring together the stakeholders that set the standards (in particular governments, NGOs, and regulators) and those that deliver ecological and social projects locally (including businesses, farming communities, investors, and banks).

LIBERIANS DEBATE

With Sally Gaye

The abrupt closure of independent Roots FM 102.7 last week by the Government of Liberia thru armed police and subsequent seizure of the station's equipment for alleged illegal operation and ranting insults on President George Manneh Weah has generated much public debate as compiled below.



Jerry Weah

“Costa (Talk Show host Henry Costa) is negatively polluting the minds of many young people in Liberia... I know many of you follow his talk show and consider him as a vocal person and you have made him your hero.... A hero is someone who positively imparts great ideas into someone else's life. How could you hail a man who is seeking to create Chaos in our country by bringing up issues that have the potential to make conflict amongst people? On

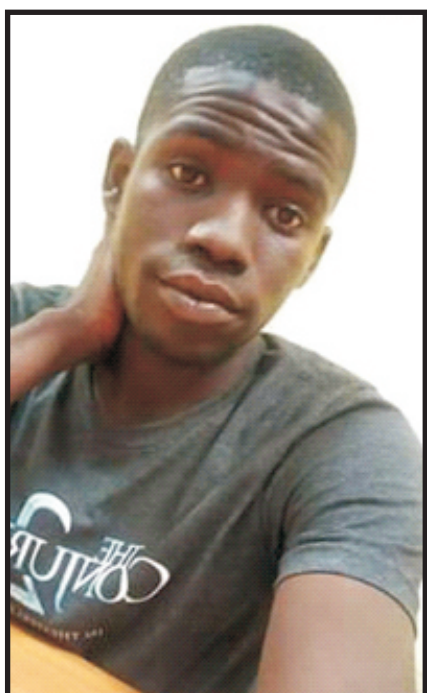
yesterday, 09 October, he brought out issues related to making Fulanis citizens or making it as one of our tribes... Does this guy know anything about the Fulanis? Or he said this to gain favor from the Fulanis? Even Guinea where it is alleged the Fulanis hailed from, have they (Mandingos) or Guineans accepted to make the Fulanis citizens? Please, Liberians, let's never buy into every word that comes out of the mouth of this guy.... He is very, very destructive and dangerous to our fragile peace. Liberia currently has 16 tribes and 15 counties... We are finding it difficult to live together as one people.... How can Liberia keeps on increasing it tribesmen?”



Kpelleboy Ross

“In this case, I'm not against both the Government of LIBERIA and HENRY COSTA, but to be sincere, the action that the government took against Henry was not really right, by destroying and taking away the materials of the radio station. What I expected President George M. Weah to do is to use his words to close down the radio station. If Henry were going to disobey his words and keep going on with the operation of the radio station, that is the time to have taken

the present action that he took.”



Moissalah A. Turay

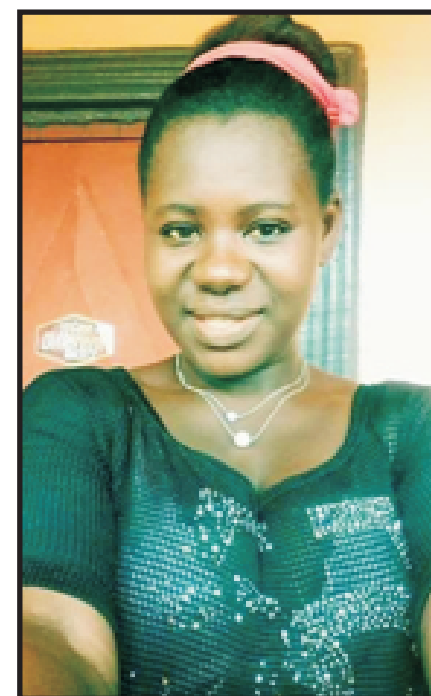
“My view on closing down of Roots Fm as a citizen of Liberia, I noticed so many things under this Government. I have more respect for President Weah and this Government but the Justice system needs to be very careful with the peace of this country. Closing down of the radio station is very easy, but it depends on the way the Ministry of Justice will act. But when it comes to a point, the Minister wanting to take the law in his hands becomes major threat to our fragile peace. If Costa (Henry Costa) disrespected

the government, it should be the same government to maturely handle such issues, but not to enter his office and take away everything in brutal and disgruntled manner; totally wrong. The government needs to rethink for the sake of freedom of speech. During the reign of the past government, I remember the same Costa Show was closed; it was very easy, using civil means, simply because the Justice Minister was great in his thinking.”

Jartu Toe

“This is also the result when people who think they are more Liberians than others, and they are above the law and choose to challenge the government. As a good citizen, whenever you are issued court orders, all you need to do is to contact your lawyer and whosoever that needs to be informed about your court orders. But, you can't involve people who are not legally connected to the matters; only for them to come and physically and illegally prevent the court orders from

being implemented. Let us all learn to respect the law. Because it is the same law we hope to protect us tomorrow when we want to see the right things done in our favour and that of our neighbors'. God bless Liberia.”



Prince parley

“That is the same man that was the voice of the voiceless in the days of campaigns by our present leaders. I can see how we hold strong onto kinsmen, but looking towards a general good is peace and greatness. Just read a little in Romans 12: 17 to 23 before coming to Chapter 13 and then you will see the premise. This is not governance, it is arrogance. Our government has all the power to follow the rule of law and that should remain the course.”

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MCSS teachers boycott classes

By Emmanuel Mondaye

A boycott of classes by public school teachers, particularly from the Monrovia Consolidated School System (MCSS) in Monrovia and its environs on Monday, 14 August led many students disappointed as they could not write their scheduled first marking period tests.

The leadership of the MCSS Teachers Association on Sunday, 13 October issued a statement, threatening go-slow in demand of two months' (August and September) salary arrears and better working environment.

Students of the State-owned Williams V. S. Tubman High School, who arrived on campus Monday in readiness to write Biology and Geographic tests were shock to learn that no instructors were available to administer the tests.

Observing that the



students were angry with the absence of their instructors from the classrooms, the Principal of Tubman High School Mr. Alassis Goldore, immediately cited the students in the school's basketball court for dialogue.

During the dialogue, Principal Goldore first apologized to the students for

any in connivances the absence of teachers of the school have caused them, assuring that everything is being done to ensure teachers return to the classroom.

He attributed the situation to what he described as a text message from GN Bank Liberia (Limited) informing MCSS teachers about their August

2019 salary being ready for payment, compelling them to troop at the bank for pay.

He assured the students that teachers of the school would return class today, Tuesday, 15 October to administer the scheduled tests, pleading with the students to exercise patience.

At the Slipway Elementary School operated by the MCSS in Slipway Community opposite Water Street, Monrovia students of the afternoon session were outdoor playing football due to teachers' boycott of classes.

Similarly, when this reporter visited the A. Glenn Elementary School on 12th Street in Sinkor, only the administrative staff of the institution was seen quietly seated at the front entrance of the school building, as teachers abandoned the classroom to receive their pay at the GN Bank.

The absence of teachers

paralyzed regular academic activities at the school, while students were asked to go home and return today, Tuesday at which time their teachers would be in the classroom.

The boycott by public school teachers followed similar action last month by health workers across the country in demand of salary, tools and improved conditions at their respective places of work.

It took the intervention of the Minister of Health Doctor Wilhelmina Jallah, who dialogued with the leadership of the National Health Workers Union of Liberia or NAHWUL to call off the strike.

Health workers across Liberia and the government thru the Ministry of Health reached a compromise on Friday, 27 September which led the former to call off the weeklong strike that nearly paralyzed the entire health sector of the country.

The protest led a group of pregnant women to erect roadblocks in Du-Port Road community, Paynesville in demand of health services amid reports of deaths in some parts of the country because of absence of doctors and nurses in hospitals.

The situation forced the Minister of Health Doctor Wilhelmina Jallah, who had formed part of President George MannehWeah's official delegation to the 74th General Assembly of the United Nations in New York to immediately return home in order to dialogue with the NAHWUL leadership on the strike.

- *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

AfDB launches Africa Disaster Risk Financing Programme

The African Development Bank, in partnership with the Government of Madagascar and the African Risk Capacity (ARC), has launched the Africa Disaster Risks Financing Programme (ADRFi) in Madagascar.

ADRFi is intended to

strengthen Madagascar's systems and contingency plans.

It would also support its participation in the African Risk Capacity sovereign risk transfer mechanism. The Bank has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ARC to join forces to prepare, develop and implement

Madagascar's geographical location makes it very vulnerable to climate shocks, which in particular cause severe droughts in the south of the country. Over the past 20 years, it has been hit by more than 63 natural disasters, which have badly affected the country's economy.

"Natural disasters exercise considerable pressure on the public finances and on the growth of the country's real GDP. In 2017, the cost of damage caused by natural disasters was estimated at around 4% of GDP, that is, some \$420 million," Général Mamy Nirina Razakanai vo, Executive Secretary of Madagascar's Emergency Prevention and Management Unit said.

More than 13 million people, or close to one third of the country's population, have been affected by these disasters, usually among the most vulnerable groups. The Bank is working to fight fragility and build resilience, thus contributing to strengthening the country's institutional capacity in order to promote better economic, social and political management.

"Through this programme, we will strengthen the capacity of the agencies responsible for the management of disaster risks.



strengthen Madagascar's country's resilience and increase its capacity to manage climate-related disasters. Over the next five years it will also strengthen the country's capacity to evaluate disaster risk and provide early warning

projects and programmes in climate change and risk resilience in member countries. As a key partner, ARC will assist member countries with policies on drought risk pools and other sovereign disaster risk measures.

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This will benefit small farmers and vulnerable populations in the Grand South part of the island. Particular attention will be paid to women and children," said Mohamed Chérif, African Development Bank country manager for Madagascar.

The Bank's portfolio in

Madagascar, with a net total commitment of some €333.4 million, covers 16 active operations across three broad sectors: transport (52.6%), agriculture (37.5%) and governance (8%). - *Press release*

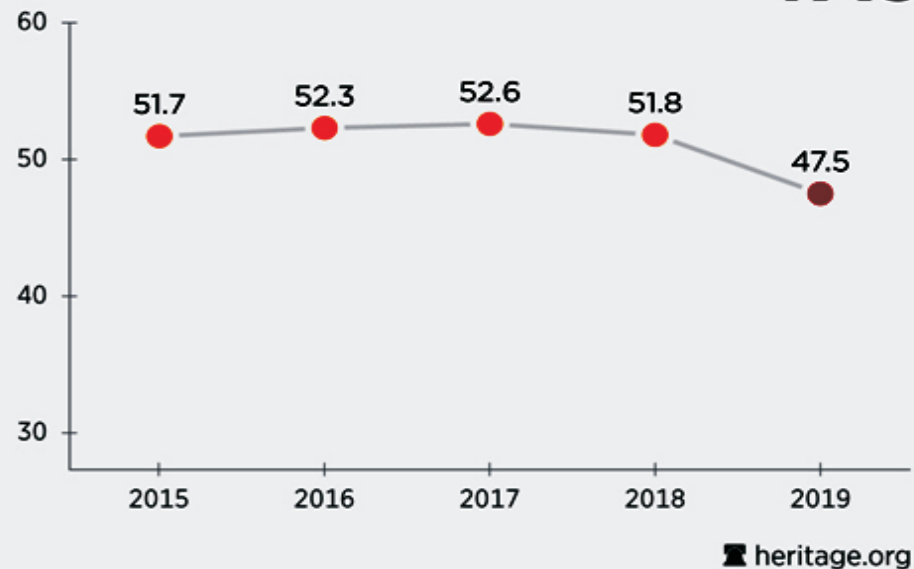
ARTICLE

By: Ponmile Orija

Why Sierra Leone's Economy is in Such a Heartbreaking State

SIERRA LEONE

2019 INDEX OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM SCORE: **47.5**



The 2019 Economic Freedom of the World report (EFW), which measures the economic progress of a country by considering factors such as the ease of doing business and taxation, ranks Sierra Leone 42 among 47 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Sierra Leone's 47.5 score is well below the regional and world averages and this puts it in the lower quartile on the ranking (167 among 180 countries). But things did not turn bad for Sierra Leone overnight.

In the last two years, the country has been categorized as an economically-repressed country because it practices protectionist economic policies that support restricting imports from other countries through measures like high tariffs or embargo. Moreso, with a steep plunge in fiscal health and lower scores for labor freedom—a measure that considers a country's labor market, minimum wages and regulatory restraints on hiring, Sierra Leone has remained at the bottom of the economic freedom index. Its economy did, however, once showed progress, especially at the end of the 2002 Civil War. The economy recovered with a GDP growth rate that topped 7 percent and the value of the country's currency became stronger.

In 2014, though, things went downward with the devastating outbreak of the Ebola Virus. The Ebola epidemic killed nearly 4,000 Sierra Leoneans and the country was not Ebola-free until 2016. By then, Sierra Leone's economy which had grown by 7.8 percent on average in 2013 through 2014, contracted following a global decline in the price of iron ore, which is the country's main export.

Also, Sierra Leone has remained extremely poor in the last decade and many of its people depend on subsistence agriculture. Unfortunately, the country also experiences lots of setbacks in agriculture. Floods and poor water reservation is common and there are reports that women are often forced to trade their bodies in exchange for clean water. But Sierra Leone's problems have a political dimension, too.

Political instability hinders the country's development as is the case in many African countries. According to the 2019 Global Corruption Barometer Africa, Sierra Leone is the third most corrupt country in Africa with 52 percent of its citizens attesting to this fact. The protection of property rights is equally almost non-existent. It is why Transparency International's 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Sierra Leone 130 out of 180 countries.

Whereas, economic freedom is the fundamental right of every human; the right to control one's labor and property. Sierra Leone's lack of economic freedom has prevented its citizens from pursuing happiness and fulfillment. Whereas, continuous improvement of the legal and commercial frameworks, low tax and responsible debt management by the Sierra Leonean government would go a long way to improve the country's economy.

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Correction Officers receive training in investigation and intelligence

Twelve (12) staff of the Bureau of Corrections (BCR) of the Ministry of Justice, have completed a one-week training in investigation and intelligence.

The intensive exercise held at the Gbarnga Regional Security Hub, 07-12th October, covered Correction Officers from five Counties-Lofa, Maryland, Grand Gedeh, Bong and Nimba.

The aim is to increase the knowledge, understanding and professionalism of the BCR Investigation unit.

The task of Correction Officers, is to investigate misconduct/failure to comply with rules and regulations and to take actions aimed at improving the safety and security for inmates in the BCR facilities.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with funding from the Government of Sweden in partnership with Irish Aid, Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights

assignment. "We expect you as investigators not to abuse your authority, neither use sentiments as a basis for your investigation but rather report on facts and evidence," the BCR Director stressed.

Mr. McGill lauded the support from UNDP and its partners toward the training needs of the Bureau, emphasizing ownership and sustainability of the programme.

Also making remarks on behalf of UNDP Resident Representative Pa LaminBeyai, Joel Gblee, Programme Associate under the Justice and Security Programme, encouraged beneficiaries to use the skills and knowledge acquired to bring pride to the Bureau of Corrections.

"The training has added to your transformation as dignified and astute officers. You must apply the knowledge to bring glory and integrity not only to your institutions but to Liberia as a whole," Gblee pointed out.



and the Bureau of Corrections organized the capacity development training to strengthen and improve accountability in BCR facilities, which will also lead to building public confidence.

BCR's Director of Training Edwin McGill described the initiative as the "heartbeat" of the Bureau, urging the new investigators to ably represent their institutions with integrity, accountability and transparency.

"You are the distinct Frontliners under the radar of the public that must stay above the fray. The code of conduct must be seen through you. We will expect nothing less than high standards in the execution of your duties in weeding out unwholesome acts that impede the security of inmates at your prisons," McGill noted.

He called their attention to the use of the code of conduct which serves as the guide to their impartial performance in dealing with inmates and other colleagues at their places of

He praised the facilitation of the training performed by Liberians versed in the field. "You are top notch and the best in the business. I was astoundingly impressed with your facilitation," Joel emphasized.

Comments also came from the Deputy Director of Training S. BallahMassaquoi, the office of the Deputy Superintendent of the Gbarnga Prison and the Hub Management.

The three Representatives admonished the trainees to use their new roles to dispense justice with fairness.

Topics covered during the training included Security Threat Groups, Investigation and intelligence information, Code of Conduct, Early Warning, evidence gathering, security management, and incident investigation process among others.

Français

Libéria/Politique : L'opposition durcit le ton

Les quatre principaux partis politiques de l'opposition réunis au sein d'une alliance menacent d'organiser un mouvement de protestation de grande envergure contre le régime du président George Manneh Weah pour dénoncer la fermeture de la station de radio locale, Roots FM, qui est considérée comme anti-Weah dans l'entourage du pouvoir.

Le Parti de l'Unité (UP, ancien parti au pouvoir), le Parti de la Liberté (LP), l'Alternative National Congress (ANC) et le Parti de tous les libériens (ALP), demandent au gouvernement de rouvrir la radio privée et de restituer immédiatement tout son équipement.

« Nous appelons donc le président Weah à rouvrir immédiatement et sans condition Roots FM et à



restituer tous ses équipements et installations. Nous attendons avec impatience une action rapide, sinon nous n'aurons aucune autre alternative que de mener une action de masse pacifique, non-violente, directe et soutenue », a

déclaré M. Wilmot Paye, président national de l'UP.

Le gouvernement libérien voit d'un mauvais œil l'animateur Henry Costa connu pour ses propos durs à l'égard des responsables de ce régime. Il apprécie cependant la station de radio dite pro-

gouvernementale dont les propos à l'égard des responsables des partis politiques de l'opposition ne sont pas moins véneux.

Il y a une semaine, Costa avait sonné l'alarme comme quoi la police refusait de permettre à une certaine Justina Taylor, qui aurait été enlevée, violée et torturée, de quitter l'hôpital catholique pour se faire soigner aux États-Unis. Il s'en était suivi une manifestation à la suite de laquelle Justina a pu quitter afin l'hôpital Catholique.

La police a décidé la semaine dernière de fermer Roots FM, alors que la radio émettait en direct son émission matinale habituelle. Mais elle s'est heurtée à une résistance farouche lorsque des supporters de M. Costa s'y sont opposés et ont affronté les éléments de la police anti-émeute bien armés devant Roots FM, à Ashum Street à Monrovia.

Dans sa déclaration vendredi 11 octobre, M. Paye a averti que « le gouvernement se rendra bientôt compte qu'il a franchi la ligne rouge et abusé de la patience et la tolérance de l'opposition ». « Le régime Weah ne peut pas continuer à agir de manière illégale sous prétexte d'appliquer la loi », s'est-il indigné.

Les hommes en tenue et armés jusqu'aux dents ont pris d'assaut les locaux de la radio Root FM et vandalisé ses installations, provoquant la panique générale dans le centre de Monrovia. Les commerces ont dû fermer pour se mettre à l'abri de toute éventualité.

M. Paye estime que le gouvernement donne un traitement préférentiel à la radio Freedom FM, une radio

privée pro-Weah qui appartiendrait au directeur adjoint des services spéciaux de la NSA (Agence de sécurité nationale), M. Sam Siryon, mais dont les propos ne sont pas moins incendiaires que ceux de Root FM. M. Paye accuse Freedom FM d'avoir prêché des messages de haine contre les détracteurs du gouvernement et a incité à la violence dans de nombreux cas sans que la police ne lève le petit doigt.

M. Paye prend à témoin le groupe régional de la CEDEAO, la Commission africaine, les Nations Unies, l'Union européenne et le gouvernement des États-Unis d'Amérique tout en faisant croire que la dernière initiative du président Weah et de son gouvernement est une tentative criarde de la suppression et de l'étouffement de la liberté d'expression. C'est pour lui, une tentative de la part du régime en place de museler toutes les voies dissidentes et insoumises avant les élections sénatoriales de l'année prochaine.

« Ces élections auront lieu sur toute l'étendue du territoire national, c'est pourquoi les quatre partis politiques de l'opposition ne vont pas croiser les bras et permettre au président Weah de prendre des mesures qui mettront en péril la paix et la démocratie au Libéria », a-t-il déclaré.

« Au lieu de s'attaquer au malaise de la gouvernance et aux difficultés économiques que les Libériens sont obligés de supporter, ce régime insensibles n'a pour solution que recourir à des moyens oppressifs qui ne feront que détruire davantage l'image du Libéria », a-t-il martelé.

Selon l'opposition, le régime Weah a perdu la confiance de ses propres citoyens et des partenaires bilatéraux et multilatéraux du Libéria en raison de son incompétence inhérente.

« Même au moment où nous vous parlons, de nombreux enfants ne vont pas à l'école cette année et doutent de leur avenir tout simplement parce que leurs parents dépossédés ne peuvent pas payer leurs frais de scolarité », a dit Paye, avant d'ajouter « les prix des denrées alimentaires ont grimpé en flèche, l'inflation grimpe à un rythme alarmant, ce qui signifie que la situation économique du Libéria ne fera que s'aggraver dans les mois et les années à venir ».

Burkina : quatre morts dans une nouvelle attaque dans le Nord

Quatre civils burkinabè ont été tués samedi à Samboulga, dans la province septentrionale du Loroum où un couvre-feu a été instauré, a appris l'AFP dimanche de sources sécuritaires.

« Quatre personnes ont été tuées samedi soir par des individus armés à Samboulga au cours d'une attaque », a déclaré à l'AFP une source sécuritaire.

« Selon les habitants, les assaillants ont fait irruption dans le village et ont tiré sur les personnes sans distinction », a expliqué cette

source.

Lundi, non loin de là, « un groupe d'hommes armés avaient également attaqué le village de Bouna, à 10 km de Titao (le chef-lieu de la province du Loroum), faisant huit morts » parmi ses habitants, selon la même source.

Une autre source sécuritaire a confirmé ces deux attaques dans le Loroum. « Il est instauré dans le ressort de la province du Loroum un couvre-feu de 18H00 à 06H00 du 15 octobre 2019 au 14 novembre 2019 », écrit le gouverneur de la région Nord

Justin Somé dans un arrêté, soulignant que la décision a été prise « au regard de la situation sécuritaire dans la province du Loroum ».

Spirale de violences jihadistes

« Durant cette période la circulation des personnes, de véhicules à quatre roues, à deux roues, des tricycles et des vélos est formellement interdite. La circulation des ambulances est soumise à un laissez-passer ou un ordre de mission », précise l'arrêté.

Vendredi soir, au moins seize personnes ont été tuées et deux grièvement blessées dans une attaque contre une mosquée à Salmossi dans la province de l'Oudalan, à une vingtaine de kilomètres de Gorom-Gorom.

Le Burkina Faso, un pays pauvre d'Afrique de l'Ouest, est pris depuis quatre ans et demi dans une spirale de violences attribuées à des groupes armés jihadistes, certains affiliés à Al-Qaïda et d'autres au groupe Etat islamique.

Depuis début 2015, les attaques jihadistes, de plus en plus fréquentes et meurtrières, en particulier dans le nord et l'est, ont fait près de 610 morts, selon un comptage de l'AFP.



Français

Le Libéria crée sa première capsule temporelle fin octobre

L'Université du Libéria (UL) devrait créer le 30 octobre prochain sa première capsule temporelle qui permettra de conserver des informations importantes sur l'Université et ses partenaires qui sont dans les secteurs public et privé pendant au moins une période de 100 ans.

La Capsule temporelle fait partie des projets de centenaire de l'Université du Libéria qui aura 100 ans en décembre prochain.

La Capsule temporelle, après son lancement, sera enterrée dans un site idéal du point de vue géographique entre le 12 et le 18 décembre 2019, dans le cadre d'un grand programme organisé par l'Université.

La Capsule temporelle est définie par l'Université comme étant « unemalle scellée contenant une collection de documents ou une œuvre de sauvegarde collective de biens et d'informations, comme témoignage destiné aux générations futures. Les capsules temporelles sont créées puis enterrées lors de cérémonies comme l'exposition universelle ; ou ensevelies de manière involontaire comme à Pompéi ».

Lors d'une conférence de presse tenue le vendredi 11 octobre à Capitol Hill, Dr. William Ezra Allen, Vice-président de l'UL chargé des questions académiques, a déclaré que pour commémorer son 100ème anniversaire, l'Université a décidé d'entreprendre plusieurs projets clés, notamment la création d'une capsule commémorative.

« L'une des choses qui seront révélées lors du lancement du 30 octobre sera l'endroit où la capsule sera enterrée », a déclaré le Dr Allen, qui a ajouté que « nous ne connaissons aucune capsule temporelle » ici au Libéria. Le vice-président de l'UL a affirmé qu'une équipe technique décidera lequel des quatre campus de l'Université du Libéria sera géographiquement et écologiquement bien indiqué pour installer la capsule temporelle.

« L'équipe étudie la question de l'humidité car l'Université souhaite installer la Capsule temporelle dans un endroit sec et s'assurer que le contenant est assez étanche à l'air pour éviter la dégradation des matériaux stockés », a-t-il indiqué.

Il a également révélé que l'Université enverrait des

lettres à des groupes de partenaires apparentés tels que les Archives nationales, le ministère des Affaires étrangères, le ministère de l'Information et les autres groupes, à savoir les partenaires généraux.

« Les autres partenaires sont nos partenaires généraux. Nous leur demanderons de venir - Club Beer Factory, le ministère des Finances, les différents ministères afin de leur faire connaître la valeur de la capsule temporelle », a-t-il déclaré.

M. Allen a déclaré lors de la conférence de presse que l'Université n'a encore reçu aucun don pour la Capsule temporelle. Mais, elle aurait déjà rencontré l'UNESCO, l'un de ses partenaires. Elle aurait même demandé à l'UNESCO, lors d'une réunion, de lui dire ce qu'elle pourrait faire en tant qu'université afin qu'elle déclare site historique la zone où sera stockée la capsule temporelle.

Il a expliqué que l'Université considère le début de 2019 comme sa 100e année d'existence, en excluant les années blanches dues à la guerre civile et à d'autres situations telles que le faible taux d'inscription des étudiants.

Selon le Dr. Allen, l'objectif de la Capsule temporelle est de conserver des documents et des artefacts dans un conteneur pendant de longues années, c'est-à-dire cent ans, à compter de la date d'ensevelissement. L'Université compte ouvrir la capsule à l'occasion de son 200e anniversaire, c'est-à-dire en 2119, s'il n'y a pas eu d'années blanches.

L'Université pourrait écrire sa propre histoire et parler du programme du centenaire, ou enregistrer dans la capsule le programme de souvenirs qui sera imprimé en décembre, lors de la célébration de son centième anniversaire.

L'enregistrement qui sera conservé dans la capsule temporelle pourra également permettre aux générations futures de savoir, par exemple, que le maître conférencier de l'université en 2019 était le président George Manneh Weah, ainsi que les noms des diplômés.

Le ministère des Finances voudra peut-être stocker, par exemple, le Programme pour la prospérité et le développement (PADP) en faveur des pauvres, afin que, dans 100 ans, les gens sachent que le Président Weah disposait d'un programme en faveur des pauvres.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Hans-Helmut Kotz

Allemagne versus BCE

CAMBRIDGE - Le débat allemand autour de la politique budgétaire et monétaire a pris ces derniers mois une tournure intéressante. Les dogmes économiques d'hier, profondément ancrés, notamment le principe selon lequel le secteur public devrait s'efforcer de générer un excédent budgétaire quelles que soient les conditions macroéconomiques, sont en effet aujourd'hui réexaminés, du moins par certains.

La situation économique se dégrade actuellement rapidement. L'économie allemande - depuis longtemps moteur de croissance de la zone euro - est aujourd'hui incontestablement vacillante. De puissants courants sous-jacents contribuent à ce ralentissement, à tel point que la probabilité d'une récession allemande typique (en termes d'ampleur et de durée), voire pire, est actuellement élevée.

Le principal vent de face réside bien entendu dans l'incertitude qui émane d'un environnement commercial mondial de plus en plus litigieux, lequel menace particulièrement les économies ouvertes telles que l'Allemagne et ses voisins, tous profondément intégrés aux chaînes de valeur des fabricants du pays.

Les tensions commerciales mondiales croissantes sont vouées à frapper l'Europe de deux manières : indirectement par la voie de la Chine, et directement à travers par exemple les droits de douanes annoncés par les États-Unis, après la récente décision de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce concernant les aides d'État au groupe aérospatial européen Airbus. En retour, des représailles de la part de l'Union européenne contre les subventions américaines à Boeing, probablement approuvées par l'OMC, devraient logiquement s'ensuivre.

Il est loin le bon vieux temps (mauvais pour certains) des accords commerciaux multilatéraux. Aujourd'hui, les barrières douanières et non douanières font leur grand retour, notamment parce que d'importants déséquilibres commerciaux bilatéraux, au-delà d'un certain niveau, semblent inévitablement entraîner un réflexe consistant pour certains décideurs politiques à protéger les marchés domestiques, pour le bien des producteurs nationaux et de leurs employés (souvent régionalement concentrés). Les échanges commerciaux, à l'instar de la rupture technologique, revêtent des conséquences redistributives que les dirigeants politiques ignorent à leurs risques et périls, et impliquent par conséquent une nécessité d'ajustement ainsi que de changement structurel.

C'est la raison pour laquelle les excédents de balance courante allemands, importants et persistants, à hauteur de plus de 6 % du PIB, entraînent des tensions croissantes auprès d'autres pays « surimportateurs », notamment les États-Unis, qui doivent enregistrer d'importants déficits de balance courante proportionnels pour compenser.

Compte tenu du risque élevé de récession en Allemagne, la réponse a priori évidente consisterait à user à la fois de la politique budgétaire et de la politique monétaire - les deux « outils à tout faire » macroéconomiques, comme les décrits l'économiste américain Arthur Okun - ainsi qu'à prendre en compte l'impact des deux.

Politique budgétaire et politique monétaire interagissent inévitablement pour influencer l'activité économique, dans ce que l'économiste James Tobin a appelé « l'entonnoir commun ». Le débat mené par la zone euro autour de la politique économique ignore souvent cette interaction. Or, le fait de la prendre en considération laisserait aux critiques beaucoup moins de place pour le BCE bashing.

Dans un État fédéral, le niveau le plus élevé de gouvernement, souvent responsable de l'essentiel des dépenses publiques, est généralement chargé d'appliquer les politiques budgétaires de réponse à un ralentissement. Ces mesures stabilisatrices peuvent être automatiques, les recettes budgétaires et la

demande domestique fluctuant avec le cycle économique. Elles peuvent également être actives, et dynamiser volontairement la demande domestique dans le but de rétablir l'économie sur une bonne trajectoire. Dans le même temps, le second outil à tout faire vient ajuster les taux directeurs et/ou l'accès aux fonds, dans ce même objectif de stabilisation.

C'est ici que les facteurs spécifiques à la zone euro viennent compliquer les choses. L'UE (et encore davantage la zone euro) est plus qu'une confédération, mais beaucoup moins qu'une fédération. La mécanique de l'entonnoir commun devient alors différente. En théorie, les États membres de la zone euro, infra-souverains sur le plan monétaire, doivent assurer une fonction de stabilisation budgétaire. En pratique, ils ne le font pas, soit parce qu'ils sont contraints par les règles quasi-constitutionnelles du « pacte budgétaire » de l'UE, soit parce que les finances vulnérables de leur secteur public les rendent contraints par les marchés de la dette. Dans le même temps, d'autres gouvernements de la zone euro sont susceptibles de considérer comme inutiles les mesures budgétaires contracycliques, même s'ils disposent de l'espace budgétaire qui leur permettrait de les appliquer.

Ceci vient faire peser le poids de la stabilisation sur les épaules de la Banque centrale européenne, dont la mission n'implique pas de lisser la production. Le cycle des affaires influence seulement indirectement la politique de la banque, via ses effets sur les prix à la consommation.

Or, la BCE a pour l'essentiel épuisé tous ses outils de politique monétaire non conventionnelle, de type achats de titres à grande échelle et taux d'intérêt négatifs. Tout en s'appuyant visiblement sur les bénéfiques nets de ces outils, la BCE en reconnaît les potentiels effets secondaires négatifs, tels que le risque de les voir impacter négativement la résilience des secteurs de la banque et de l'assurance dans la zone euro. Le président de la BCE Mario Draghi a ainsi appelé à juste titre les gouvernements nationaux à disposer d'une marge de manœuvre suffisante pour prendre en charge une partie de la stabilisation via une relance budgétaire.

Le fait pour les États de ne pas répondre à cet appel vient mettre en difficulté la BCE, tout en affectant son indépendance et en ne remédiant pas à la surcapacité dans le secteur bancaire européen. C'est pourtant précisément l'objet de la politique budgétaire, et cette absence de réponse devrait avoir des conséquences. Malheureusement, le choix de contraindre la BCE à user de son bilan (en apportant des liquidités sur des périodes sans cesse plus longues face aux problèmes de solvabilité) s'avère incomparablement plus attractif pour de nombreux responsables politiques nationaux. Cette démarche permet également beaucoup plus facilement de s'en prendre à la banque centrale.

La bonne nouvelle pour la BCE, c'est que les dirigeants politiques, y compris aux Pays-Bas, pourtant très économes, acceptent à tout le moins de discuter à nouveau de politiques budgétaires contracycliques. Évidemment, tous les acteurs raisonnables peuvent avoir des points de vue différents. La plupart des propositions de réponse aux ralentissements ont en effet toujours revêtu une dualité, et il semble enfin que cet équilibre change dans la zone euro.

Enfin, une capacité de stabilisation automatique raisonnable (en termes de taille) est nécessaire au niveau de la zone euro. L'instrument budgétaire de convergence et de compétitivité de la zone euro constitue un bon début, mais il ne suffit pas. Par ailleurs, il ne doit évidemment pas impliquer une ligne budgétaire dédiée à la « stabilisation », mais davantage un transfert démocratiquement légitimé de la souveraineté et des responsabilités nationales sur le plan du secteur public.

Malheureusement, la politique actuelle des États membres de la zone euro, France et Allemagne incluses, se révèle beaucoup plus autocentrée. Cette réalité rendra inévitablement vulnérable la zone euro, et en particulier ses États membres les plus fragiles.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Going Forward: The Legislature Must Redeem Its Image



By: Peter Quaqua

Cont'd from last edition

The transition was smooth and colorful, but the road to the inauguration was rocky and nearly impassable. The campaigns for the 2017 elections were acrimonious and the results marred by series of litigations. Of course the uneasiness and tensions were understandable - the polls were hugely contested, as candidates were desperate to get their chance to lead. There were 20 candidates on the presidential ballot, 4 more than the 2011 elections; while a total of 984 representative candidates were cleared to contest - an increase of 192 more than the previous elections in 2011. Some of these people had been waiting for 6 to 12 years to contest one of the 73 seats in the House of Representatives.

The 30 seats in the Senate were not up for elections at this time because, by law senators must spend 9 years before other capable Liberians can have the opportunity to seek the mandate of the population to occupy one of those seats. At best, this is prearranged corruption and an anti-thesis to the democratic aspiration of participation. The country needs some reordering. This is especially an imperative because it has been posited that power, wealth and marginalization were some of the underlining factors that instigated and prolonged the civil conflict.

The Blame

Some drafters of the 1986 Constitution appeared to put the blame at the feet of the People's Redemption Council (PRC) for the long presidential and legislative tenures. It is said that the military junta insisted on a 6-year term for the President and the representatives, and 9 years for senators. Some believe the writers of the Constitution were selfish because a number of them would end up being the first beneficiaries of the law with seats in the legislature. But for the exigency of the time, others believe it may have been foolhardy to disagree with the coup makers then.

The country has had three general elections (2005, 2011 and 2017) in peace time since the disappearance of the military and the war-like regimes. But the country still maintains the law. The time is right to amend the Constitution ahead of the 2023 elections. The country is too edgy and appears to be in another transition with vigilantism, militancy, as well as the recurring cry for economic justice taking root into our body politics.

The endless political bickering aside, a multi-

partisan approach on this subject will be reassuring. The country cannot continue to benefit from what was thought to be the evil of a despotic regime. Ideally, democracy means the rule of law that protects the rights of all citizens, and limits the power of government. The people should have the power to choose their leaders frequently.

Why Reinvent the Wheels?

From a distance, there appeared to have been some genuine efforts to right some of the wrongs of the past, when in 2012, the administration of President Sirleaf commissioned a Constitutional review process. For more than three years or there about, Liberians at home and abroad spoke about the defects and anomalies in the country's Constitution in a consultative process under the auspices of the Constitution Review Committee (CRC), spearheaded by former Chief Justice, Gloria Scott. If there was any issue in the review that enjoyed the popular approbation of the people, it was the need to shorten the legislative and presidential terms. The people spoke in chorus for the presidential term of office to be sliced from 6 to 4 years, senatorial term from 9 to 6 years and representative term from 6 to 4 years. So why not harken onto the voices of the people instead of reinvent the wheels. Did I hear the Senate approved five years for the President and Representative and seven years for Senate? Isn't this another self-interest at play?

The views from the nationwide consultative process were reinforced at the validation conference in Gbarnga, Bong County, in March 2015. Delegates at

the Gbarnga conference endorsed 25 proposals which were submitted to the House of Representatives for approval through the office of the president. In the wisdom of the representatives, only 7 of the 25 proposals were good enough to be ratified and forwarded to the Senate for concurrence before putting it to a referendum. In fact, the first three items on the list of the seven propositions selected by the House were the terms of the President, the Senate and the House of Representatives. The popular opinion has been four years for the president and the house of Representative and six years for the Senate, not the five and seven being proposed by the President and the 54th Legislature.

Again, one needs not be surprised because there's always a competition between the self-interest of politicians and the public interest. Liberians must insist on structural reforms of the political system and a drastic reduction in the unrealistic salaries and allowances officials take home. The people must push for reforms because there is no guarantee that the next bunch of leaders will be any different. A shorter term limit will definitely have a multiplier effect on the overall governance paradigm and strengthen our fragile democracy.

About the Author: The author [Peter Quaqua] is the current head of the West African Journalists Association, former president of the Press Union of Liberia, a campaigner for free expression, media rights and democratic governance. Contact: pqua31@yahoo.com/0886529611



Salary is by law

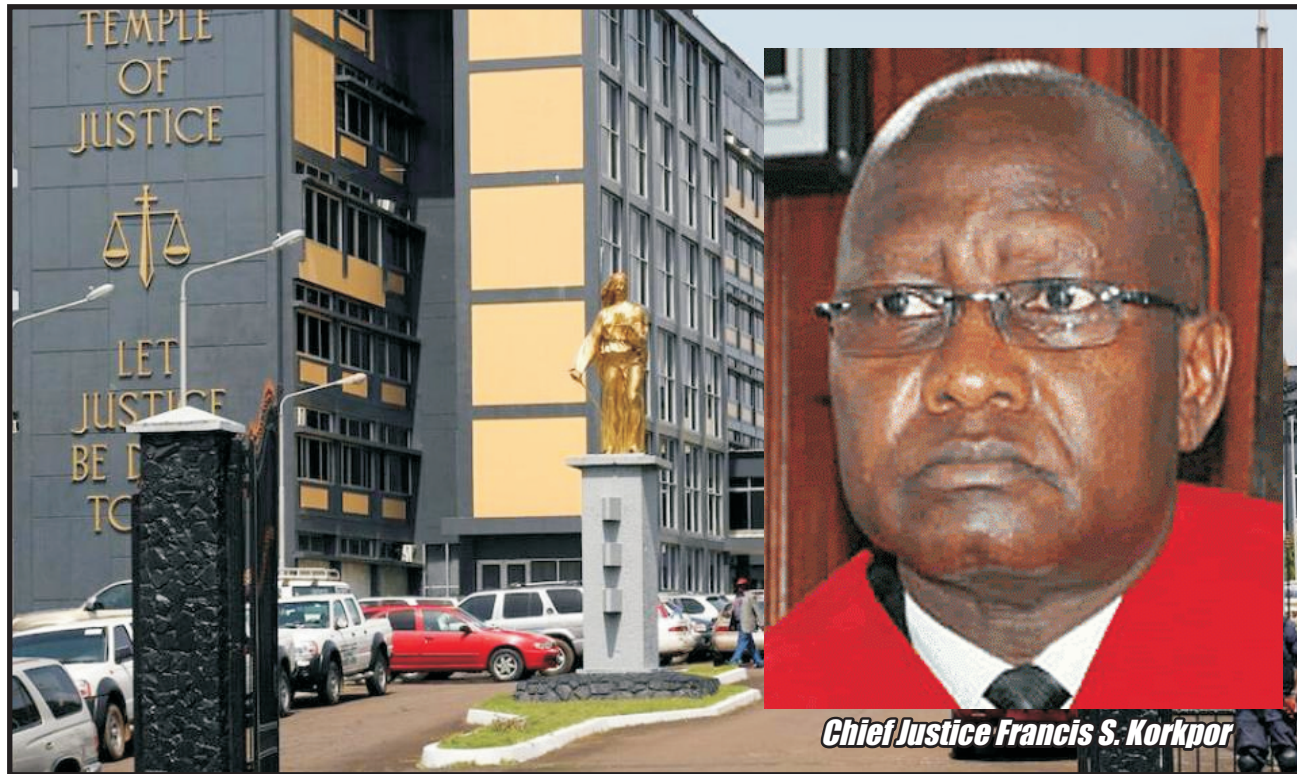
By Winston W. Parley

In the wake of government's salaries harmonization exercise across its three branches, the Supreme Court here cautions that requisite provisions of the law be taken into consideration especially, when applying to the Judiciary to ensure justice and equity.

Opening the Supreme Court Monday, 14 October, Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor cited Article 72 (a) of the Constitution which partly says allowances and benefits of Supreme Court Justices and Judges of subordinate courts may be increased, but may not be diminished except under a national program enacted by Legislature.

The Supreme Court's caution came Monday at an official judicial event attended by President George Manneh Weah and leaders of the Legislature, all of whom have vital roles on the National Budget which was delayed in the wake of the government's pronounced salaries harmonization programs.

The idea of the harmonization exercise here appears to be the regime's political strategy of accommodating recent mass recruitments of new employees into state entities by reducing others' earnings.



Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor

Apparently in the Chief Justice's first public comment about the harmonization, he says "we" have followed with keen interest, national discussions on the issue of salary harmonization to the point that the Legislature has promulgated an Act to establish the National Remuneration Standardization of 2019.

"The Justices of the Supreme Court and all other judges shall receive such salaries, allowances and benefits as shall be established by law. Such salaries shall be subject to taxes as defined by law, provided that they shall not

otherwise be diminished," Chief Justice Korkpor says, quoting Article 72 (a).

"Allowances and benefits paid to Justices of the Supreme Court and judges of subordinate courts may by law be increased but may not be diminished except under a national program enacted by the Legislature; nor shall such allowances and benefits be subject to taxation," he notes further.

Additionally, the Chief Justice references the Judicial Canon #6 which provides that the judge is a government paid official and must be paid adequately.

Reading Judicial Canon #6, the Chief Justice states that [the judge] holds an exalted position which prevents him from engaging in any business pursuit.

The provision therefore indicates that the judge must be provided with the necessities of life and with every means by which he will be able to perform his judicial duties effectively, efficiently and speedily.

"The judge must be encouraged and given the incentive to live a decent and dignified life that would prevent financial and domestic worries and enable him to repel temptation which is susceptible to human life," the Chief Justice reads on.

According to the provision, a judge as priest of justice should not be given the cause to be corrupted in the performance of his judicial duties so as to be justified for any disciplinary action taken against him if found deficient in those qualities.

In light of the provisions cited by the Chief Justice, he urges that any process of harmonization or standardizing salaries of government officials and senior civil servants take into consideration requisite provisions of the law especially when applying to the Judiciary in order to ensure justice and equity.

"We are prepared to work with and engage the requisite

government functionaries to provide necessary input(s) for proper application of the Act to the Judiciary," he adds.

Chief Justice Korkpor has meanwhile assured Liberians and foreign nationals within the country's borders of the Court's unfettered commitment to ensure justice for all.

"The primary duty of court is to hear and decide cases; we always underscore fair and impartial decisions. Without the courts, there is no other adequate forum in our society to settle disputes," he says.

He asserts that the court is not unmindful that it carries the heavy burden of protecting the economy of the nation on its shoulder by its decision in matters involving private investments.

"I have said before and I will say again - that under the laws of this Country, the Republic of Liberia, as a party litigant before court has no special rights and enjoys no special privileges that are not available to the ordinary citizens," says the Chief Justice.

According to him, the Republic is subject to all applicable laws and procedural rules of court and shall be treated as such.

"The only exception is when the application of the general rule would compromise national security or a vital national interest. Our people should therefore avoid violence and taking the laws into their own hands and resort to court actions as a means of settling disputes," he concludes.

In response, the president of the Liberian National Bar Association Cllr. Tiawan Gongloe says the work of the Judiciary will always be judged by lawyers, party - litigants, investors, international institutions, historians and legal scholars against the standard provided by Article 20(a) of the Constitution of Liberia.

He applauds the Supreme Court's decisions against lawyers and judges who violate the professional code and cannon, respectively, which control the noble offices that they occupy as lawyers and judges.

Bishops, pastors get Gov't jobs

By Emmanuel Mondaye

President George Manneh Weah has appointed five top Clergymen to various positions in government.

Those appointed include Bishop Dr. Isaac Samuel Winker of the Dominion Christian Fellowship Central Church; member of the board of the government-owned John F. Kennedy Medical Center in Monrovia; Bishop

emeritus Dr. Arthur F. Kula of the United Methodist Church of Liberia (UMC) member of the board, Bong County Technical College; Rev. Matthew Guah, member of the board of directors, National Port of Authority (NPA), Rev. Samuel Reeves, member of the board of directors, Liberia Electricity Corporation, and Pastor LahaiSesay, member of the board of directors, Bong

County Technical College, respectively.

Meanwhile, President Weah has also appointed the former Managing Director of the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) and former Vice Presidential Candidate of the Liberty Party (LP) Mr. Harrison Karnwea, Chairman of the board of directors, FDA.

Speaking in separate interview with this paper recently in Monrovia following their respective appointments by President Weah, the clergymen expressed gratitude to the President for the confidence reposed in them to positively contribute to the government Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development.

They assured President Weah of their commitment and preparedness to ensuring the right things are done on the boards on which they are appointed serving the people of Liberia.

According to them, their appointment in government will go a long way in tackling some of the critical and challenging problems affecting the various institutions in which they have been called to serve.



Bishop Dr. Isaac Samuel Winker

Dr. Arthur F. Kula

Rev. Samuel Reeves

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Cristiano Ronaldo fires 700th goal in Portugal defeat

GOALS PER CLUB	
REAL MADRID	450
MANCHESTER UNITED	118
PORTUGAL	95
JUVENTUS	32
SPORTING CP	5

GOALS VS	
SEVILLA	27
ATLÉTICO DE MADRID	25
BETAFE	23
CELTA DE VIGO	20
BARCELONA	18

TYPE OF GOAL	
RIGHT FOOT	442
LEFT FOOT	129
HEADER	127
OTHER	2
INSIDE THE BOX	595
OUTSIDE THE BOX	105
PENALTY	113
FREE KICK	55

GOAL RECORDS	
MANCHESTER UNITED	100
REAL MADRID	200
REAL MADRID	300

COMPETITION	
LA LIGA	311
CHAMPIONS LEAGUE	127
PREMIER LEAGUE	84
WC QUALIFICATION	30
EU CHAMPIONSHIP	25
SERIE A	24
COPA DEL REY	22
INT. FRIENDLIES	17
FA CUP	13
EURO QUALIFICATION	11
WORLD CUP	7
CLUB WORLD CUP	7
SPANISH SUPERCUP	4
ENGLISH LEAGUE CUP	4
UEFA N. LEAGUE	3
PRIMEIRA LIGA	3
PORTUGUESE CUP	2
UEFA SUPER CUP	2
CONFEDERATIONS CUP	2
ITALIAN SUPERCUP	1
UCL QUALIFICATION	1

GOAL RECORDS	
REAL MADRID	400
REAL MADRID	500
REAL MADRID	600

Cristiano Ronaldo reached a career landmark on Monday by scoring his 700th career goal in Portugal's Euro 2020 qualifier at Ukraine.

The 34-year-old scored a penalty as Portugal lost 2-1.

His 700 goals so far have come from 973 matches - and he has scored at least once in 458 of those.

His goal in the 2-1 loss to

Ukraine was also his 95th for Portugal, leaving only Iranian Ali Daei in front in the international charts on 109 goals.

Ronaldo's goal means he joins an elite group of players to have hit at least 700 goals in their career.

According to data from Rec.Sport.Soccer Statistics Foundation, Juventus forward Ronaldo is still some way

behind the most prolific player of all time, with Czech-Austrian Josef Bican scoring 805 career goals.

Next on the list is Brazil legend Romario, who bagged 772, while his compatriot Pele is third on 767.

Hungary legend Ferenc Puskas hit 746 goals, while former Germany striker Gerd Muller rounds out the top five with 735 goals.

Real Madrid were the biggest beneficiary of Ronaldo's goals.

He scored 450 times for the Spanish giants, with 118 of his 700 goals coming during the early part of his career at Manchester United from 2003 to 2009.

His 95 goals for Portugal is more than double the tally of any other player to have featured for the national team. Pauleta has the second most with 47.

Andorra, Armenia, Latvia and Sweden are the countries to have suffered the most at the hands of Ronaldo, who has scored five goals against each of them.

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'No racism problem in Bulgarian football'

Bulgaria manager Krasimir Balakov believes that English football has a bigger problem with racism than they do.

The build-up to Monday's European Qualifier in Sofia has been dominated by concerns over possible racist abuse at the Natsionalen Stadion Vasil Levski.

England players suffered racist abuse on their last visit to Bulgaria in 2011 and Gareth Southgate briefed the squad



about the UEFA protocol on dealing with such issues at the start of the international

break.

The players have also been speaking about the issue, which

enraged Bulgarian Football Union president Borislav Mikhaylov to the point that he said English players should face sanctions from UEFA if they continue to talk about the possibility of racist abuse in the Bulgarian capital.

Mikhaylov spoke of "unjust" comments being made by England and after initially insisting he was unwilling to discuss the subject, Balakov proceeded to offer his take on the problem - or otherwise - of

racism in Bulgarian football.

"What I can say is that I don't think we have a problem," he said. "In the Bulgarian championship, we have a lot of players of different ethnicities and skin colour. I don't think that we have this big problem like, for example, England do."

"I would like to focus on football because at the end of the day we're all civilised Europeans and we're all working for this sport and that's all the matters."

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