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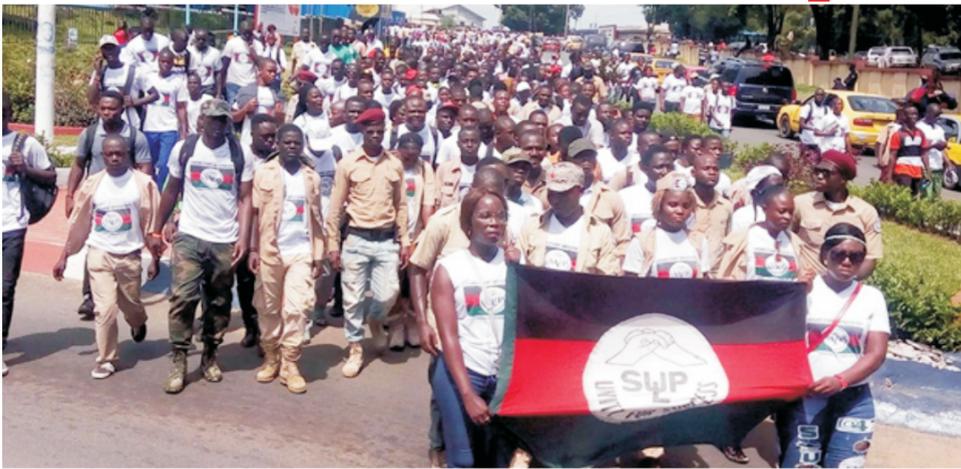
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# Another protest looms

## -as UL instructors poised to boycott lectures



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# Continental News

## 20 ancient coffins found in Egypt

Archaeologists have stumbled upon what is deemed the 'biggest and most important' discovery in years near the Egyptian city of Luxor.

At least 20 well-preserved, vividly painted wooden coffins have been unearthed in the ancient town of West Thebes. The treasure trove includes tombs dating back to the Middle, New Kingdom and the Late Periods, which took place between the years 1994 B.C. to 332 B.C.

Experts have provided few details of the discovery, but have shared stunning pictures of the vibrant coffins with their vivid inscriptions and paintings, according to AP.

The coffins, which are considered one of the 'biggest and most important' discoveries in recent years, are found in the Asasif Necropolis. The area is called the Asasif Tombs because it is surrounded by burials. It sits between the Deir al-Bahri and

the Tombs of the Nobles, and next to the Temple of Hatshepsut on the West Bank of Luxor, reports AncientPages.com

And earlier discoveries had found tombs belonging to Ankh-Hor, Kheru-Ef, Montuemhet, and Pabasa. Beneath the sandy ground

are underground rooms and a gallery leading to the tomb of Kheru-Ef during the reign of Amenhotep III. At first, this period in Egypt was first ruled by

The ministry says it will release further details at a

news conference on Saturday.

Less than a week ago, archaeologists made a discovery inside a coffin that was also astounding -- the oldest oldest copy of a 'map for the soul to attain eternal life'.

'The Book of Two Ways' was supposed to help the deceased navigate through a dangerous landscape of fiery lakes and knife-wielding demons to make it to the realm of Osiris.

The burial shaft housing the coffin was unearthed in 2012, but has now been found to have been constructed 4,000 years ago.

The engravings have also revealed the coffin's inhabitant is not an overlord, but an elite woman. 'The Book of Two Ways' refers to two paths that zig-zag a dangerous route through obstacles and demonic entities towards 'Rostau' or the realm of Osiris.

It was believed that anyone who laid on the body of Osiris would never die.

And now it is determined that the etching found on the side of the coffin is the oldest copy known to man. The ancient map for the dead is etched in two wood panels and although versions have been found on other coffins, this is the oldest in history. Reuter



Archaeologists have stumbled upon what is deemed the 'biggest and most important' discovery in years near the Egyptian city of Luxor

## Liberia ranked number one for helping strangers

Liberia has been named number one in the world when it comes to helping strangers, according to the World Giving Index, an annual ranking of people's generosity.

Helping strangers is one of the three criteria the UK-based Charities Aid Foundation used to draw up the overall index of

generosity.

It also looked at how much money people donate to charity and how much time people give to volunteering. The index was based on a 10-year study that surveyed 1.3 million people across the globe.

In the overall rankings, Kenya was listed as the most generous country in Africa and the 11th most generous in the

world. Liberia was listed as 17th, Sierra Leone 20th and Nigeria 22nd.

But it is in helping strangers that Africa excelled.

Including Liberia, there were seven African countries in the top 10 in that category: Sierra Leone (second), Kenya (fourth), Zambia (fifth), Uganda (sixth), Nigeria (seventh) and Malawi (joint 10th). BBC



## Uganda: No death penalty for gays

Uganda will not impose the controversial death penalty for gay sex, a presidential spokesperson said earlier this week.

LGBT+ activists and aid donors were wrapped in unease and fear after a Ugandan minister took to TV to assert that the government planned to re-introduce an anti-homosexuality all in

minister's message was inaccurate last week. Executive director Ouwono Opondo P'Odell tweeted: "Government hereby clarifies that it does not intend to introduce any new law with regards to the regulation of LGBT activities in Uganda because current provisions in the penal code are sufficient."

The country's current



parliament within weeks.

The bill - colloquially called 'Kill the Gays' in the country - was thwarted on a technicality five years ago. But a spokesperson for President Yoweri Museveni on Monday said the government has no plans to introduce the legislation.

"There are no plans by the government to introduce a law like that," Don Wanyama, President Museveni's senior press secretary told Reuters.

"We have the penal code that already handles issues of unnatural sexual behavior so there is no law coming up." The 180° turn comes days after Uganda Media Centre, the government's of Uganda's public communications body, sought to clarify that the

colonial-era penal code enforces life imprisonment for gay sex. Ethics and integrity minister Simon Lokodo told Reuters that the government was thawing the bill to curb the rise of "unnatural sex" and could become a reality for the east African country in just a couple months. Lokodo claimed lawmakers had been lobbying parliament to get the measure tabled and passed by the end of the year.

Not only did the revamped bill allegedly mandate the death penalty for gay people, but it would also have criminalised anyone involved in "promotion and recruitment" of homosexuality, according to the minister. AFP

# EDITORIAL

## Police teargas on protesting students was unnecessary

THE DISCHARGE OF teargas canisters against protesting public school students by riot officers of the Liberia National Police in Monrovia on Tuesday, 15 October was excessive and unnecessary. The public school students were protesting in demand of their teachers who had laid down chalk in quest of salary arrears owed them by the government.

THE PROTESTING STUDENTS had gathered at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is also being used as temporary office of President George Manneh Weah in anticipation that they would have attracted the President's attention to their plight. But the Presidential convoy carrying the President drove past the aggrieved students with less attention, something that led the students to converge on the grounds of the Capitol where lawmakers work.

INSTEAD OF SOME officials coming to talk to the aggrieved students, riot police unleashed teargas canisters into the crowd, leaving scores of students fallen unconscious, with many of them subsequently rushed to hospital, while others engaged their counterparts from a nearby Seventh Day Adventists-operated high school in fistfight, forcibly asking them to vacate their campus.

THE POLICE REACTION exacerbated tension in the streets, with many passers-by affected by burning sensation from the teargas canisters.

THE PROTESTING STUDENTS were left alone with no authority from the Ministry of Education, the police or the legislature to calm the aggrieved students and ask them to leave the streets, as government was already exerting effort to pay teachers and other members of the Civil Service.

PRESIDENT WEAH HIMSELF missed a glorious opportunity to have stopped and spoken with the students on his way to office, which would have no doubt, calmed the situation. But the President drove by, as if the students' reaction didn't concern him, as leader of the State.

AFRICAN LEADERS ARE noted for running away or avoiding their own responsibility, as if someone from another planet should act, instead. Our leaders should learn to muster courage to face issues that confront their leadership. Only non-innovative and insensitive leaders run away from problems.

THE PROBLEM THAT led public school teachers abandoning classes and their students taking the streets in protest didn't happen abruptly, as salary arrears had passed two months or more with no explanations by appropriate authorities from either the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD put its house in order not just on salary payment, but other issues that affect welfare of the people to avert unpleasant scenarios like strikes by public health workers, public school teachers and subsequent protest by angry students from public schools.

**The New Dawn**  
TRULY INDEPENDENT

# COMMENTARY

By *simplice A. Asongu*

## Can a West African Currency Union Work?

*•The eurozone's experience showed how unruly currency unions can be, and how important it is to continue experimenting and adapting. A currency union comprising the 15 members of the Economic Community of West African States will be no different - but that doesn't mean it can't work.*

YAOUNDÉ - The 15 countries of the Economic Community of West African States have agreed to adopt, as of next year, a new shared currency, the "ECO." But, as the eurozone's experience has shown, currency unions can be unwieldy. Creating a successful one will require the ECOWAS countries to overcome serious challenges.

The work of the economist Robert Mundell suggests that an "optimum currency area" must satisfy four main conditions. The first is a large and integrated labor market that allows workers to move easily throughout the currency union to fill employment gaps. Price and wage flexibility, together with capital mobility, are also necessary to eliminate regional trade imbalances. These two conditions imply the need for a third: a centralized mechanism for fiscal transfers to countries that suffer as a result of labor and capital mobility. Lastly, participating countries should have similar business cycles, to avoid a shock in any one area.

The ECOWAS member states are well aware of these conditions, which guided the ECO's six convergence criteria. Those criteria include a budget deficit below 3% of GDP; public debt of no more than 70% of GDP; inflation of 5% or less; and a stable exchange rate. Moreover, gross foreign-currency reserves must be large enough to provide at least three months of import cover, and the central-bank financing deficit must not exceed 10% of the previous year's tax revenue.

So far, ECOWAS countries are struggling to meet these criteria. For example, only five countries - Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal, and Togo - meet the requirements on inflation and budget deficits. This disappointing reality led Mahamadou Issoufou, ECOWAS chairman and Niger's president, to confirm that while "countries that are ready will launch the single currency" in 2020, "countries that are not ready will join the program as they comply with all six convergence criteria."

And yet ensuring that all members meet the convergence criteria is only the first step toward creating a successful West African currency union. The ECOWAS countries are beset by insecurity and corruption, and they currently have many arbitrary tariff and non-tariff barriers in place. Furthermore, the region's supply-chain infrastructure remains inadequate.

And, should Nigeria join, the union could be subject to a significant structural imbalance: with Africa's largest economy, Nigeria accounts for 67% of the bloc's total GDP.

Complicating matters further is the extent to which outside forces, especially France, will shape the currency union's trajectory. ECOWAS includes eight Francophone countries - Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo - that have had a single currency, the West African CFA franc, since the days of French colonial rule.

In fact, it was initially proposed that ECOWAS's remaining seven countries - Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone - should first form a monetary union on their own. Once this new currency union had proved functional and valuable for its members, it would be much easier to convince those using the CFA franc to join their West African partners.

After all, the France-backed currency, which is currently pegged to the euro, offers significant advantages, including exchange-rate stability and lower interest rates. Members of the West African CFA franc currency union might not want to risk these benefits by joining an unproven currency union with countries that have a history of high interest and inflation rates. And France itself has an interest in the CFA franc countries' rejection of the ECO, because they deposit half of their foreign reserves in the French treasury.

Despite these formidable challenges, there are reasons to be optimistic about the ECO - beginning with its potential to accelerate regional integration. A successful ECOWAS currency union would likely spur progress on the proposed East and Southern African Monetary Zones. This would go a long way toward advancing progress on the ambitious African Continental Free Trade Area.

The eurozone's experience showed how unruly currency unions can be, and how important it is to continue experimenting and adapting. An ECOWAS union will be no different. But if member countries commit to making it work, the ECO could be a boon to regional - and continental - growth and development.

## O-PED

By Shashi Tharoor

## India's Modi Slowdown

**N**EW DELHI - Until recently, Indians had gotten used to taking economic growth for granted. After a decade of annual growth averaging over 9%, India's economy weathered the post-2008 worldwide recession and grew at a still impressive rate of 7% until 2014-15. Nothing, it seemed, could stop the gravy train from rolling on.

And then came Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government and his biggest economic blunder, demonetization, which took 86% of India's currency abruptly out of circulation (in an effort, Modi claimed, to flush out undeclared wealth). The economy is yet to recover. Millions of jobs were lost and hundreds of thousands of small and micro enterprises - employing 2-7 workers and dependent on daily cash flow to sustain themselves - went under. All that was achieved was that Modi, who prizes appearances above actual results, managed to look bold and decisive.

If demonetization was a bad idea badly implemented, next came a good idea badly implemented: a nationwide Goods and Services Tax (GST). Instead of a simple, flat and all-inclusive GST - as applied in every country where the concept has worked well - the government unveiled a multi-tier GST. Despite having five different rates and a luxury tax on top, the government's hasty and botched rollout retained a number of key exclusions (including alcohol and petrol) and continues to confuse all who are subject to it. These two initiatives derailed economic growth, which is now expected to slow to 5% this fiscal year.

Bad news is everywhere: unemployment is at a 45-year high of 8.4% and rising; the distressed agriculture sector was driving record numbers of farmers to suicide (which is why the government now suppresses the figures); and manufacturing, exports, and the index of industrial production are all down. Output in India's eight core industrial sectors - coal, crude oil, natural gas, refined petroleum products, fertilizer, steel, cement, and electricity - declined 0.5% in August.

Meanwhile, India's banks are reeling under a huge burden of non-performing assets (NPAs), with debts exceeding \$150 billion and one financial institution after another coming under the scrutiny of regulators and law-enforcement authorities. Loans have dried up, owing to banks' leanness of piling up more NPAs; investment has slowed to a trickle as a result. With sinking demand for new housing causing a slump in the residential property market, many builders are struggling to repay their loans to banks, worsening the crisis. With consumers lacking resources, banks unwilling to lend, and investors afraid to borrow, it is unclear where the much-needed fillip to economic growth will come from.

Car sales have collapsed, plummeting 32% in August, the largest annual drop in two decades. The decline continued for an eleventh straight month in September, when sales fell 23.7%, and persisted in October, when three back-to-back Hindu festivals normally loosen consumers' purse strings. A major wave of layoffs by carmakers has followed, with Ford announcing factory closures and an estimated one million jobs in jeopardy.

As with other economic setbacks, policy decisions by India's central and state governments are principally responsible for this outcome. Higher car prices reflect not only luxury taxes on higher-end models and the effects of higher safety and emissions standards, but also hikes in sales taxes on cars in nine states. And the large volume of NPAs means the banks and finance companies that dealers rely on to provide car loans to many purchasers are pulling back. The automobile sector is proof of the extent to which India's economic downturn is the result of policy ineptitude.

The signs of the downturn are everywhere, affecting ordinary Indians' daily lives. Indians are fond of cookies (which we call "biscuits") with our omnipresent cups of tea, but even biscuit sales are down 8%, prompting the popular biscuit manufacturer Parle to announce thousands of layoffs. And the famous "underwear index" proposed by Alan Greenspan, the former US Federal Reserve chairman, confirms the extent of India's slump. Greenspan posited that declining sales of men's underwear was an accurate indication of consumer distress. According to some reports, men's underwear sales are down 50% in Tirupur, the capital of the garment industry in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

The recent increase in oil prices has compounded India's problems in the short term. Advances in robotization and artificial intelligence represent a longer-term drag on growth, because they have reduced many Western countries' dependence on outsourced Indian skills in such areas as code-writing, medical transcription, and business-process offshore call-centers. And with the Indian rupee plumbing record lows against the US dollar, essential imports have become more expensive.

It hasn't helped that in the midst of all this, US President Donald Trump has made India a target of his increasingly acrimonious approach to trading partners. The bonhomie Trump and Modi recently displayed in Houston did not translate into a resolution of the issues the United States has been griping about.

Through it all, the government has appeared clueless. Its proposed budget has prompted despair in the business community, with an unexpected tax increase on foreign investors leading many of them to sell their Indian holdings and leave. Then - as its negative impact became increasingly evident - the government announced a series of U-turns on tax increases and business incentives.

After Modi was overwhelmingly re-elected in May with an even larger majority for his party, many economists expected him to take bold steps to remove the many bottlenecks that have discouraged investors, both Indian and foreign. There have been none, and no short-term stimulus, either. Longstanding issues such as agricultural stagnation, rigid labor laws, and prohibitive land costs are simply absent from the government's agenda.

With the economic downturn leaving revenues well short of projections, pressure on India's tax officials to catch evaders has mounted, prompting intrusive investigations that have been decried as "tax terrorism." Many Indian millionaires are voting with their feet; 5,000 migrated last year, and the number this year is likely to be much higher.

The conclusion is inescapable: the Great Indian Growth Story is on hold. And no one should expect the Modi government get the gravy train back on track.

## OPINION

By Shang-Jin Wei

## Anti-Globalization Bias and Public Policy

**N**EW YORK - Opponents of globalization constantly point to the uneven impact of open trade. Although trade liberalization can make the overall economic pie bigger, not everyone gets a larger slice, and many may receive a much smaller piece than before because of competition from foreign-made products. Such concerns help to explain why many blue-collar American workers voted for Donald Trump in the 2016 US presidential election, and why French farmers and workers often take part in anti-globalization demonstrations.

But we should not exaggerate the importance of this point. In fact, three other inherent anti-globalization biases are at work in many societies, and often contribute to the emergence of misguided public policies that benefit neither employers nor workers.

First, although globalization frequently creates many more winners than losers, even before government redistribution programs, many winners mistakenly think they are losers because they fail to recognize globalization's significant indirect benefits.

Consider the example of US imports from China. As many often point out, US sectors or regions that compete most directly with Chinese imports tend to fare less well, because these imports displace US jobs. But as my colleagues and I highlighted in a recent paper, US sectors that use relatively more Chinese-made intermediate inputs - such as computers and other electronic equipment, furniture, and lab coats - tended to experience faster job growth and larger increases in real wages between 2000 and 2014. Yet, opponents of globalization often ignore such findings.

Moreover, whereas only a subset of US manufacturing jobs is displaced by imports from China, America's much larger service sector (and many of its manufacturing industries) benefits from cheaper Chinese-made inputs. Less than one-fifth of all US jobs are in manufacturing, while the service sector accounts for about three-quarters of employment - a pattern that also holds for all US states and almost all US cities.

We therefore estimate that when the total effects of US-China trade are considered, the real wages of three-quarters of American workers have increased (whereas if one focuses only on the direct competition effect, real wages would appear to have declined for most workers). In other words, even before the redistribution of some gains from employers to workers, an overwhelming majority of the US labor force already benefits from trade with China, and the total gains for workers are also positive.

However, although most Americans understand the direct effect of Chinese imports on jobs and wages, they do not recognize the positive indirect effect. That is not surprising. When a US firm fires workers, its human-resources manager may say, "Sorry we have to let you go, but you should blame our country's imports from China." Trump and much of the US media have repeatedly reinforced this idea. Our analysis, however, suggests that US job expansion is also linked to trade with China.

On the other hand, when a US firm hires new workers, often at higher wages than they would receive in shrinking sectors, its boss is highly unlikely to say, "Congratulations, and you should thank imports from China for your new jobs." Instead, they are far more likely to say, "You've got your jobs because I am a great entrepreneur." This asymmetry in perception generates an inherent anti-globalization bias.

The second source of such bias is an asymmetry in public discourse. Technology, education, and globalization all contribute to the reshuffling of the job market and its impact on individuals. But national politicians and media often find it more convenient to blame societal woes on foreign firms or governments than on technological advances, the failure of public education systems, inadequate parenting, or individual shortcomings. After all, teachers and parents vote, and technology firms donate to political campaigns. Foreigners, by contrast, do neither.

Finally, the asymmetric benefits of bad policies also fuel an anti-globalization bias. Companies and individuals who profit from trade barriers have a strong incentive to organize themselves and lobby for such measures. By contrast, most people who lose out as a result of protectionism do not spend enough time and effort to understand the issues, or lack the resources to lobby for better public policies.

These three sources of bias suggest that societies can all too easily adopt anti-globalization measures that hurt most people. In fact, most countries have barriers to economic openness which, upon careful scrutiny, tend to hurt citizens' wellbeing.

To be sure, societies need to do a better job of distributing the gains from globalization and new technologies. But they also must step up their efforts in two other areas.

Higher-quality research and journalism would help citizens to understand better the indirect as well as the direct effects of open trade. Furthermore, better education systems and greater individual efforts would improve skills and boost workers' ability to seize opportunities arising from technological progress and globalization.

The globalization debate is often tinged with nationalism, self-interest, and lack of economic understanding, resulting in misguided public policies. Redressing the negative bias in the discussion could enable more enlightened policies.

# LIBERIANS DEBATE

With Sally Gaye

**P**rotesting public school students demanding teachers Tuesday, 15 October clashed with their colleagues from a Seventh Day Adventist High School in central Monrovia amid teargas canisters fired by riot police, leaving many students unconscious and taken to hospital.



**Elwood Gbessagee**

“How can Big Brother Gboimah T. K. Genegbanyan, II feel empathy for these poor kids when they have no blood relations with him; when his children are comfortably seated in private schools, learning and don’t ever have to experience what it’s like to be gased with lachrymator (tear gas)? Imagine such terrible experience! Why won’t he applaud and justify the devilish acts carried out by the Liberia National Police against those school-age children only because they are standing up and fighting for their

fundamental right to education, with hope of having their plight addressed? I guess he was and is one of the few privileged Liberians out there who just don’t care about anyone else or don’t care that their neighbors’ roof is on fire because it hasn’t reach theirs. Well, I just hope that you continue living in denial big brother, and that the power that be to whom you pay homage, will always be there for you. Just want to remind you since it seems like you have forgotten the adage that says ‘Pepper can’t hurt in dog one eyes’. Continue Big Brother; we are getting to know who truly you are.”



**Ambroseline Moulton**

“As much as I’m not in favor of actions taken by the National Police against the students yesterday, I’m also not in favor of what the students did as well! I’m so sorry to students who were victims and others who got hurt as well as those whose property got damaged of such a very disorganizing and indecent act carried on by the National Police and the students. The instructors should have known better instead of allowing poor kids to go in the streets, damaging private property and getting themselves hurt in the name of protest!

Parents send their kids to school and if teachers are not teaching, the children should be sent home until the problem of teachers not being paid, and why they are not teaching is solved. The entire school administration as well as the government and the students should have known better or else this wouldn’t have resulted to what happened yesterday! We should try to change our mindset in handling issues as leaders and citizens in order for peace to reign amongst us, please Liberians. Being violent in trying to solve issues has not solved problems neither is it solving problems nor will it solve problems, but rather, it is creating more problems for us, fellow Liberians.”

**D Foeday Zinnah**

“Nothing is worth arguing about the mandate to the society to painfully reach out to the children, who are requesting for quality education. The Liberia National Student Union should use all the best approaches to demand the most effective justice for those kids that were injured in the process of advocating for their educational right. Protest seems to be the answer across this leadership. My God! I want to use this medium to say big sorry to the victims (injured Students) and I wish every one of you speedy recovery. In the process of demanding the students to speak out through peaceful protest,



speaks volume of a father refusing to practice parental responsibilities. The right of people, especially, the low class people is on the threading line which is against human rights, and peaceful gathering. Like father, like son. Father, stop teaching our children conflicts!”

**Moisalah A. Turay**

“Liberia is the oldest country in Africa, but here the government keeps showing difference between children whose parents are fortunate to be rich and children whose parents are unfortunate to meet benchmarks of life. Why in my country students from public schools are in tears and brutalized by the state security without any justification? You must stand up for your rights; quality education is a privilege granted by the Constitution; it affects students when they are not getting teachers in the classroom to teach due to delays in salary payment by government.



Since the government has failed to listen to the plight of teachers, they decided not to go back to class until salary arrears are settled. If some government officials’ children were in public schools, they couldn’t have allowed this to happen to the common people’s children. After skyrocketing fees in public schools the authorities have refused to pay teachers just to deny the poor masses’ children quality education. We expect student leaders who should speak for everyone. But they only speak for themselves, as most of them have turned to self-seekers of glory.”



**Jeremy Sonpon**

“You should be condemning the organizers, and not the government. The government was protecting lives and properties. My brother, there is nothing called children demonstration. Do you know that the people you called children, took the main streets and blocked the President’s convoy from passing? I think what the so-called students did, should be condemned by all well-meaning Liberians. Pictures depicting SDA students are as the result of aggressive exchange of rocks between

students of Tubman High, Gibson, and Richard Nixon, and SDA...The government never brutalized any private school students, nor public schools. What happened in the capital, Monrovia, involving public school students is condemnable. They left their campus and attacked private school students; obstructed movement of peaceful citizens, and damaged properties. That was wrong!”

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**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**Paynesville City to benefit library valued US\$2m**

**-V.P. Taylor, PCC, partners break grounds**

Paynesville, a densely populated city on the outskirts of Monrovia, is expected to benefit its first ever modern public library at an estimated cost of US\$2 million.

The City which has thousands of privately-owned institutions with few public schools is yet to have a public library for school-going kids to perform research and other academic works.

The Liberia Learning Center is a collaborative project spearheaded by Canadian Charity "Empowerment Squared" in partnership with the Rotary International, Rotary Club of Hamilton, Rotary Club of Monrovia, the Paynesville City Corporation, McCallum Sather and the Hamilton Public Library, respectively.

As part of efforts in making the long-awaited dream a reality, Liberia's Vice President, Jewel Howard-Taylor joined scores of government officials, and international partners on Monday October 14, 2019 to break grounds for the construction of the library.

The project is expected to be executed in multiple phases on the site of the Paynesville City Hall.

Vice President Taylor notes that library is a critical component of the educational sector of Liberia, as such, it is a welcoming development that students in the City of Paynesville and suburbs will benefit from the initiative.

She said research is now a

challenge among the student populace of Liberia due to the inaccessibility of Libraries across cities and communities.

Madam Taylor commended the Paynesville City Government, and its partners for working tirelessly to achieve this dream, and hoped that upon completion, it will serve as a center of wisdom and understanding for Liberian students and children in general.

Giving an insight of the

proposed center, the Mayor of the City of Paynesville, E. Pam Belcher-Taylor, no relations to Veep Taylor, noted that the new learning center will help provide a calm and healthy learning environment for Liberian children.

The transformational project according to Mayor Belcher-Taylor will include Liberia's first postwar comprehensive learning center and library, co-working and business incubation space, sports and recreation and events facilities, amongst others

She further revealed that the facility when fully constructed, will develop students' vocabulary skills as well as enhance their comprehensive and individual developments, amongst others.

She added that it will also provide traditional and modern means to conduct research with the assistance of qualified Librarians and many others.

Mayor Belcher-Taylor said the project will benefit the local communities especially in the absence of Libraries which now makes it difficult for students to access information while during assignments, making reference to the Sciences.

The Center will also show case the accessing of information electronically through the means of tablets, she added.

In remarks, the Executive Director of the Empowerment Squared Leo Nupolu Johnson encouraged Liberians to change current tense political

discussion in the country and focus on addressing solutions, noting, "We need to save Liberia ourselves, if not, we are on our own."

Mr. Johnson, a Liberian based in Canada, said it is now time for Liberians to have a few faithful and committed leaders to move the Country forward, instead of having more people who are not committed to the cause of development and peace.

He re-echoed the need for national government to invest in the people whom he described as the Nation's greatest assets.

Mr. Johnson who is also a partner to the Liberian Learning Center urged his few compatriots in the diaspora to think about their Country by coming back to invest.

Mopntserrado County Electoral District # 6 Representative, Samuel Enders noted: "This is the reason that I joined my Colleagues on Capitol Hill sign the dual citizen bill, I don't know the status of this young man who have so much passion for his Country"

Using the case of Executive Director of the Empowerment Squared Leo Nupolu Johnson, Rep. Enders said there are many Liberians aboard who took out citizenship of other countries and are willing to invest here, but need some form of protection.

He commended the Canadian teams and other partners for a great vision to a place that would enable students do their academic works.



**Expand Rural Financial Services to Boost Agricultural Investment**

**-says Dr. Dukuly**

The Deputy Governor for Economic Policy of the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL), Dr. Musa Dukuly, has emphasized the importance of financial inclusion in enhancing

Panel Discussion was held on 8 October 2019 at CBL with the aim of reviewing, validating and endorsing the National Financial Inclusion Strategy.

According to Dr. Dukuly, a national financial inclusion strategy that prioritizes financial services to the

expressed optimism that investment in agriculture has the propensity of not only transforming the broader Liberian economy, but also the rural sector through banking-related services by enabling the rural poor to have bank accounts, access loan facilities



investments in the agricultural sector. Dr. Dukuly made the statement when he facilitated a panel discussion organized by the National Financial Inclusion Steering Committee (NFISC). The

agriculture sector through digital channels is crucial for stimulating sustainable and inclusive economic opportunities for the rural population, especially smallholder farmers. He

and use mobile money, all of which can significantly promote financial inclusion.

Highlighting the implications for macroeconomic developments, the Deputy

Governor for Economic Policy said that through financial inclusion CBL could deepen financial intermediation, support the growth aspirations of the economy and ease price instability through a reduced cost for financial transactions.

Dr. Dukuly informed participants that Liberia ranks

112 out of 190 in terms of the ease of getting credit, implying that access to credit is generally low. In closing, he admonished stakeholders to collaborate in raising the threshold of financial inclusion. -Press release

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**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**UN commends Liberian peacekeepers**

The High Command of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has commended the Liberia Contingent (LIBATT 6) for being extremely professional and well-trained in all aspects of peacekeeping activities in Mali.

According to the Ministry of Defense, the commendation was made recently when the MINUSMA Force Headquarters (FHQ) evaluated the training of the Liberian Force Protection Company (LIB FP Coy) which comprises of 105 personnel.

According to a Defense Ministry release, the LIB FP Coy is operating fixed sites in Timbuktu Camp/ SWHQ with good disciplinary records and predictable weekly and monthly schedules of personnel rotation.

The Unit Commander and Training officers are involved in all training activities, coupled with high interest of all personnel.

LIB FP Coy is exhibiting training commitments despite operational roles. LIB FP Coy has a very good performance in Quick Response Force (QRF) readiness.

Meanwhile, the Armed

Forces of Liberia (AFL) has successfully deployed its sixth batch of Peacekeepers under the command of Maj. Picos L. Flemming, as part of MINUSMA.

The deployment exercise followed the return of the fifth batch of the Liberian Contingent (LIBATT 5), commanded by Major James D. Fahnbulleh, II, after nearly 2 years and eight months of service in Mali.

The fifth batch of peacekeepers graciously returned on the 5th and 6th of

October 2019 respectively through the Roberts International Airport (RIA).

Personnel of the fifth Liberian contingent served the UN mission in Mali with distinction, bringing pride to Liberia among the comity of nations.

"We salute them for the job well done," defense authorities say, and acknowledge that indeed personnel are "A Force for Good".

The Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia, Maj.

Gen. Prince C. Johnson, III, welcomes back home members of the AFL's fifth contingent and thanks them for their high level of discipline and outstanding performance at the UN Mission in Mali.

He also admonishes personnel of the outgoing contingent to exhibit high level of discipline, be committed to duty, and serve with integrity.

He further calls on them to maintain the oath of the AFL by protecting one another.

The 6th AFL Peacekeeping Contingent departed Liberia on the 5th and 6th of October 2019, respectively.

Meanwhile, personnel of LIBATT 5 are now undergoing a two-week post deployment training at the Armed Forces Training Command in Careysburg, Montserrado County before finally going to join their family and specific units in the AFL.

This training enables the personnel to cope with post deployment trauma, and it also builds their resilience to coping with present-day realities in both the military and their social environments with which they are expected to reunite. --Press release



**Students were rude**

*Starts from back page*

several students were rushed to hospital during the latest protest after riot police fired dozens of tear gas canisters to disperse protesting public schools students.

The protesting students, mainly from public schools within the city center erected road blocks in front of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where the office of the president sits temporarily, thinking that President Weah's convoy would have stopped to allow him interact with them.

Instead, the convoy drove through the crowd of students to the amazement of the protesters and many who had witnessed the situation.

This prompted the students to resort to throwing stones, while the police responded by firing tear gas canisters to disperse the protesters.

But the police's action did not stop the protesting students, as they soon gathered in front of the Capitol Building and interrupted the free flow of traffic.

However, the police continued to fire more tear gas, prompting a running battle between both parties on the main boulevard near the Liberia National Police (LNP) headquarters and the Capitol Building.

Angered by the police tear gas, the students ran to a nearby private school owned and operated by the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church, where it is believed most government officials have their children.

The public school students justified their engagement with the private school students by saying "if they can't be in school, then the children of state officials should also be out of school as well."

At the SDA School, a stone throwing battle intensified, as police further responded with the firing of more tear gas canisters and left many students unconscious.

The victims were taken to hospital. One of the parents name withheld, called this paper and sent multiple photos of her daughter who was taking treatment at the government run John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital.

But Mr. Isaac Solo Kelgbeh says it's quite unfortunate that people are blaming the injuries of the students on state securities, arguing that he hasn't seen anyone condemning the students for throwing stones at the president's convoy.

**UNICEF sponsors refresher w'shop for teachers**

*By Emmanuel Mondaye*

A five-day refresher teachers training workshop sponsored by the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) began here Wednesday, 16 October at the Bentol Public School in Bentol City,

Montserrado County, with at least 200 classroom teachers, 50 of them females, from government, private, and faith-base schools attending.

In opening remarks, the Resident District Education Officer (DEO) of Montserrado 2 Left Bank 2B, Mount Barclay,

Mr. Elijah G. Freeman, said the workshop is intended to increase teachers' ability to conform to professional teaching ethics.

The DEO said he is appreciative of the presence of new female teachers who need continuous refresher training to build their skills and knowledge to more effectively perform their role of building the nation's educational system with sound and quality education for students.

He then cataloged the numerous and invaluable support to the Liberian Educational Sector by UNICEF over the years that has immensely contributed to the education system.

He encouraged the participants to be focus, attentive in order to acquire the desire professional skills, knowledge, and ability to adequately play their role of imparting knowledge onto students thus, building the human resource of Liberia.

The workshop continues today with several presenters lecturing on different topics including teachers' code of conduct, among others.



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# Français

## Le régime de Weah est accusé d'être entièrement responsable du malaise économique

Le sénateur du comté de River Gee, Conmany B. Wesseh, a accusé le président George Manneh Weah d'être entièrement responsable du malaise économique dont souffre le pays. Il reproche au chef de l'Etat d'avoir pris des décisions hasardeuses qui ont aujourd'hui un impact négatif sur l'économie et ont créé une crise de confiance chez les investisseurs.

Lors d'un entretien avec ce quotidien le mardi 15 octobre dans son bureau, le sénateur Wesseh a déclaré que l'économie a des problèmes aujourd'hui parce que la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC) au pouvoir a commis des erreurs graves dans la composition de son



gouvernement.

Il estime que l'approche du gouvernement dans le cadre de la disparition présumée des 16 milliards de dollars libériens et la gestion des 25 millions de dollars américains décaissés par l'Etat pour éponger l'excès

de liquidité de la monnaie nationale sur le marché « a envoyé un message inquiétant au monde et à la communauté des investisseurs qui pourraient avoir conclu que le Libéria n'est pas prêt pour l'investissement ».

Le sénateur Wesseh, qui est un membre influent du Parti de l'Unité (Opposition), reproche à la jeune administration du président Weah de n'avoir pas maîtrisé l'information sur la disparition présumée des milliards de dollars, au point que l'on ait eu l'impression que le Libéria n'est pas capable de gérer d'énormes investissements.

Le sénateur Wesseh qui fut ambassadeur regrette la destitution « illégale » du juge Kabineh M. Ja'neh, ancien juge associé de la cour suprême. C'est pour lui l'un des moments les plus difficiles en tant que législateur. A son avis, la constitution libérienne de 1986 n'a pas été respectée.

C'est selon lui, l'une des raisons pourquoi les investisseurs ne veulent pas investir au Libéria, car personne ne veut investir des millions de dollars là où règne l'anarchie et où l'état de droit n'est pas respecté.

Se prononçant sur la série de manifestations qui ont secoué tout le pays ces derniers temps, Wesseh a fait observer qu'au cours des deux mandats de la présidente Sirleaf, les Libériens n'ont jamais connu de retards dans le versement de leurs salaires, mais sous ce régime, ils n'arrivent pas à recevoir leurs salaires à temps, car le gouvernement actuel a du mal à préparer les salaires avant la fin de chaque mois.

Il trouve que les citoyens ont raison de descendre dans la rue parce que leurs préoccupations n'ont jamais été satisfaites et qu'ils ont du mal à joindre les deux bouts.

Parlant de River Gee, son comté, le sénateur Wesseh a affirmé que la réduction des salaires et des autres avantages des législateurs de 31% affectera grandement sa contribution personnelle au développement du comté.

Il a fait savoir qu'il a personnellement entrepris la construction d'une école primaire qui est sur le point d'être achevée, et que ce bâtiment sera le premier de son genre depuis que la localité a été érigée en comté.

## Punch FM intente une action en justice contre le gouvernement du Libéria

Punch FM, une nouvelle station de radio et de télévision privée, a porté plainte contre le ministère de l'information qui aurait « gelé » son agrément en juin 2018 après qu'elle ait importé son matériel pour commencer à émettre.

Punch FM a saisi le tribunal de droit civil pour que justice soit faite. M. Patrick Honnah, ancien directeur général adjoint de LBS, serait le directeur exécutif de cette chaîne.

Selon la plainte déposée mardi 15 octobre à 12 h 30 devant le tribunal de droit civil, la demande d'autorisation de Punch FM a été acceptée le 10 janvier 2018 par le ministère de l'Information et approuvée par son ministre Eugene Nagbe. L'agrément lui donnait le droit d'émettre sur toute l'étendue du territoire national.

Mais à sa grande surprise, le ministère de l'Information a publié le 18 juin 2018 un

communiqué de presse annonçant la suspension de toutes les nouvelles licences et nouveaux agréments accordés aux institutions médiatiques du 1er janvier au mois de juin 2018.

A la plainte de préciser en outre que la suspension des licences qui est entrée en vigueur le mercredi 20 janvier 2018 avait pour objet de réviser le régime réglementaire en raison d'anomalies techniques et administratives, notamment

Articles traduits

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**ONE MEDIA INCORPORATED**  
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la duplication des fréquences de radio et de télévision.

La suspension des licences a touché non seulement Punch FM, mais aussi Spoon FM qui, selon la plainte, aurait eu par après l'autorisation d'émettre, contrairement à Punch FM dont l'agrément fait jusqu'à l'objet de suspension.

À la suite de cette plainte, le tribunal civil de Monrovia a ordonné, le mardi 15 octobre, au ministère de l'Information de comparaître devant le

tribunal le 17 octobre au plus tard afin de répondre à la demande du requérant en vue d'un jugement déclaratoire.

La Cour ordonne au Ministère de l'information de se présenter officiellement au plus tard le 25 octobre.

En outre, elle a indiqué que la défense doit déposer son argument dans les 10 jours qui suivent la réception de la requête en jugement déclaratoire, faute de quoi un jugement par défaut sera rendu à son encontre.

# Français

## Éditorial

### L'avenir des médias Libériens après la fermeture de Roots FM

Après la fermeture la semaine dernière du groupe indépendant Roots FM 102 et de ses organisations affiliées par le gouvernement libérien, les Libériens semblent réclamer à l'unisson la fermeture de Freedom FM, une radio pro-Weah, au lieu de parler de la procédure que les autorités ont suivie pour fermer la première radio.

Beaucoup estiment que la radio Freedom FM 87.9 qui appartient à un haut gradé de l'appareil sécuritaire du pays, Sam Siryon, est aussi coupable que Root FM car elle diffuse des invectives et de discours de haine contre les opposants, en particulier contre les leaders politiques de l'opposition. C'est bien d'ailleurs ce que faisait Roots FM 102.7 à l'encontre du président George MannehWeah et son gouvernement.

Mais nous voyons ici un signe dangereux pour l'ensemble des médias libériens si l'on n'y prend pas garde. Nous assistons clairement au début d'une répression officielle contre les institutions des médias qui osent demander des comptes au gouvernement. Tout comme l'animateur de l'émission Roots FM 102.7, Henry Costa, qui est accusé d'avoir prêché des messages antigouvernementaux et proféré des insultes à l'égard du président et de ses dirigeants, il en va de même pour Freedom FM87.9, une organisation progouvernementale dont les émissions visent les opposants au régime actuel.

Au lieu de parler de la fermeture des radios antigouvernementales ou progouvernementales, comme beaucoup le suggèrent notamment l'Union de la presse du Libéria, nous pensons que la vraie question qui se pose est de savoir si oui ou non la procédure utilisée par l'État jeudi dernier, en fermant de force Roots FM 102.7 et en confisquant son matériel pour défaut présumé de paiement d'impôts et d'autres impératifs opérationnels, avant de délivrer par la suite un mandat de perquisition, est légale.

Le Solliciteur général du Libéria, Me Sayma-CyreniusCephus, qui, par le passé, a servi d'avocat pour la défense de Henry Costa sous le régime de la présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, a déclaré la semaine dernière lors d'une conférence de presse au ministère de l'Information à Monrovia que le gouvernement a agi conformément à la loi, car Roots FM 102.7 fonctionnait illégalement et diffusait des invectives.

La question qui se pose est la suivante : Est-ce que le mandat de perquisition, la saisie et la fermeture de la radio étaient légaux ? Ou devons-nous parler d'excès et d'abus de la part du régime en place ? Voilà des questions qui devraient faire l'objet de débats dans le domaine public.

Si nous n'analysons pas de manière critique la décision du gouvernement et demandons la fermeture d'une deuxième institution des médias, nous risquons clairement de créer une plate-forme qui permettra aux autorités de procéder à la fermeture arbitraire des maisons de presse du pays selon que le contenu des reportages de ces médias ne leur soit pas favorable en s'appuyant sur le prétexte de manque d'agrément.

Bien attendu, aucun Libérienne veut retourner dans les jours sombres de la junte militaire, du Conseil de la Rédemption du Peuple (CRP) dans les années 80 ou de l'époque de l'ancien président Charles Ghankay Taylor, où les journalistes étaient arrêtés au hasard et des institutions de la presse fermées arbitrairement.

Aujourd'hui, il s'agit de Roots FM 102.7 et de ses filiales ; personne ne sait quelles autres voix critiques des médias feront demain face à la colère du gouvernement. Encore faut-il que nous soyons claires sur cette question, le New Dawn ne suggère aucunement que les journalistes et les organes de presse sont autorisés à insulter les autorités de l'État ou à faire fi des normes professionnelles et éthiques. Toutefois, si de telles infractions étaient commises, le gouvernement devrait réagir dans les limites de la loi.

À part cela, il ne peut que s'agirait d'une répression arbitraire des médias et d'une tentative de musèlement des voix critiques contre le gouvernement.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Simplicite A. Asongu

### Une union monétaire pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest ?

YAOUNDE - Les 15 pays de la Communauté économique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO) ont convenu d'adopter dès l'année prochaine une devise commune, l'ECO. Mais comme l'expérience de la zone euro le montre, une union monétaire peut être difficile à gérer. Pour qu'elle réussisse, les pays de la CDEAO devront surmonter de sérieuses difficultés.

Selon l'économiste Robert Mundell, une union monétaire optimale doit satisfaire à quatre conditions principales. Premièrement il y faut un marché du travail étendu et intégré qui permette aux travailleurs de se déplacer facilement au sein de l'union pour répondre aux besoins en terme d'emplois ; deuxièmement il doit y avoir flexibilité des prix et des salaires et libre circulation des capitaux pour supprimer les déséquilibres commerciaux régionaux. Ces deux conditions supposent qu'une troisième soit remplie : l'existence d'un mécanisme centralisé pour réaliser des transferts budgétaires au profit des pays qui seront les perdants de la mobilité du travail et des capitaux. Enfin, pour éviter une crise dans un secteur ou un autre, les pays participants doivent avoir des cycles des affaires qui se ressemblent.

Les pays membres de la CEDEAO ont parfaitement conscience de la nécessité de remplir ces conditions qui sont à la base des six critères de convergence de l'ECO : 1) un déficit budgétaire inférieur à 3% du PIB ; 2) une dette publique qui ne dépasse pas 70% du PIB ; 3) une inflation qui ne dépasse pas 5% ; 4) un taux de change stable ; 5) des réserves brutes en devises étrangères permettant de couvrir au moins 3 mois d'importation ; 6) un déficit de financement de la banque centrale inférieur à 10% des recettes budgétaires de l'année précédente.

Jusqu'à présent, les pays de la CEDEAO se débattent difficilement pour respecter ces critères. Ainsi seuls 5 pays (le Cap-Vert, la Côte d'Ivoire, la Guinée, le Sénégal et le Togo) respectent les critères relatifs à l'inflation et au déficit budgétaire. Cette situation peu encourageante a conduit Mahamadou Issoufou qui est à la fois président de la CEDEAO et du Niger à souligner que les pays qui y sont prêts vont adopter la devise commune en 2020, tandis que les autres le feront quand ils respecteront les 6 critères de convergence.

Or le respect des critères de convergence par tous les pays participants n'est que la première étape vers le succès de l'union monétaire de l'Afrique de l'Ouest. Les pays de la CEDEAO sont confrontés à l'insécurité et à la corruption, auxquelles s'ajoutent beaucoup de barrières tarifaires et non tarifaires arbitraires. Par ailleurs,

l'infrastructure de la chaîne d'approvisionnement de la région reste encore inadéquate. Et si le Nigéria rejoint l'union, cela créera une instabilité structurelle significative en son sein, car ce pays compte pour 67% du PIB du bloc.

La situation sera encore plus complexe dans la mesure où des forces extérieures, notamment la France, chercheront à exercer leur influence sur cette union monétaire. La CEDEAO inclut 8 pays francophones (le Bénin, le Burkina Faso, la Côte d'Ivoire, la Guinée-Bissau, le Mali, Niger, le Sénégal et le Togo) qui disposent d'une monnaie commune, le franc CFA, depuis la présence coloniale française dans cette région.

L'idée initiale était que les 7 autres pays de la CEDEAO (Le Cap-Vert, la Gambie, le Ghana, la Guinée, le Liberia, le Nigeria et la Sierra Leone) forment dans un premier temps leur propre union monétaire. Une fois celle-ci fonctionnelle et ayant fait preuve de son utilité, il serait alors bien plus facile de convaincre les pays utilisant le franc CFA de se joindre à leurs partenaires d'Afrique de l'Ouest.

Le franc CFA qui est adossé sur l'euro offre des avantages significatifs, en particulier la stabilité du taux de change et des taux d'intérêt faibles. Les pays membres de la zone CFA ne voudront peut-être pas prendre le risque de perdre ces avantages en rejoignant une union monétaire qui n'a pas fait ses preuves, et dont les membres ont un passé de taux d'intérêt et d'inflation élevés. Quant à la France, elle préférerait sans doute que les pays de la zone CFA rejettent l'ECO, car ils déposent la moitié de leurs réserves en devises étrangères dans les caisses du Trésor français.

Malgré ces défis considérables, il y a des raisons d'être optimiste pour l'avenir de l'ECO - à commencer par le coup de fouet qu'il pourrait donner à l'intégration régionale. Une union monétaire réussie au sein de la CEDEAO encouragerait probablement la création d'une union monétaire en Afrique de l'Est et en Afrique australe. Cela serait un grand pas en avant vers le projet ambitieux de création d'une zone de libre-échange continentale africaine.

L'Histoire de l'euro montre d'une part à quel point une union monétaire peut être instable, et d'autre part l'importance qu'il y a à expérimenter et à adapter - les pays membres de la CEDEAO doivent en tenir compte. Néanmoins, s'ils s'investissent suffisamment dans la création et le fonctionnement de la zone ECO, celle-ci pourrait être un atout pour la croissance et le développement de la région - et du continent.

# PERSPECTIVES PERSPECTIVES

Public Policy. Economics. Democratic Politics. Political/Economic Decentralization. Public Dishonesty. Dual Citizenship

## A REJOINDER TO “FIXING THE NATIONAL ECONOMY NOT WAR CRIMES COURT”

In a recent article (*Analyst Liberia, September 20, 2019*), Lawyer Abraham T. T. Barlou Mitchel declares that:

- “Certain politicians are, today, holding President Weah obligatory for implementing the TRC recommendations . . . as if he was the one responsible for the crimes committed . . .” but, “it is the current so-called 'leading opposition' in Liberia that grabbed the TRC Report as an opposition agenda, including the very Unity Party of former President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Vice President Joseph N. Boakai”;
- “Folks must stop the TRC hypocrisy and wrongful blame-shifting. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the principal architect of the Liberia Civil War and one of he accused by the TRC Report, was coincidentally the sitting as first post-war constitutional president of Liberia when the TRC Report was promulgated. Those in opposition today were part of the ruling elite at the time”;
- The call for “War and Economic Crimes Court (was) a Conspiracy (against) against President George Manneh Weah (who) has now become the scapegoat and therefore all those involved in the power struggle in Liberia have ganged-up against the Weah Administration using the TRC as the opposition agenda . . . precondition for support grossly in bad faith and smells with conspiracy”;
- “We don't need to establish special war and economic crimes court in Liberia or elsewhere to punish people accused for having committed war and economic crimes during the Liberian civil war. The International Criminal Court (ICC) is sitting in The Hague and provides adequate venue and jurisdictional scope to address the war crime issues in Liberia . . . In other words, the Weah Administration does not have to establish war crimes court in Liberia before the ICC can act . . . On the other hand, Liberia's current judicial system does have jurisdictions to deal with any and all aspects of economic crimes”.
- And finally that “*The centerpiece (of the opposition conspiracy) is to use President Weah as the Police man to arrest Prince Johnson and have him turned over to the war crimes court - that begins the push factor for renewed conflict in Liberia.* Remember Prince Johnson was used to capture Doe. The aftermath of this tragedy has become the source of the incurable conflicts between the Nimbaians and the Grand Geddeans in Liberia as well as the Diaspora; the old colonial strategy of divide, conquer and rule must not further be allowed in post-conflict Liberia - putting ethnic Liberians against each other to create space for the political resuscitation of the pre-1980 immigrant political class in their desperate bid to recapture political power”.

### Our Response

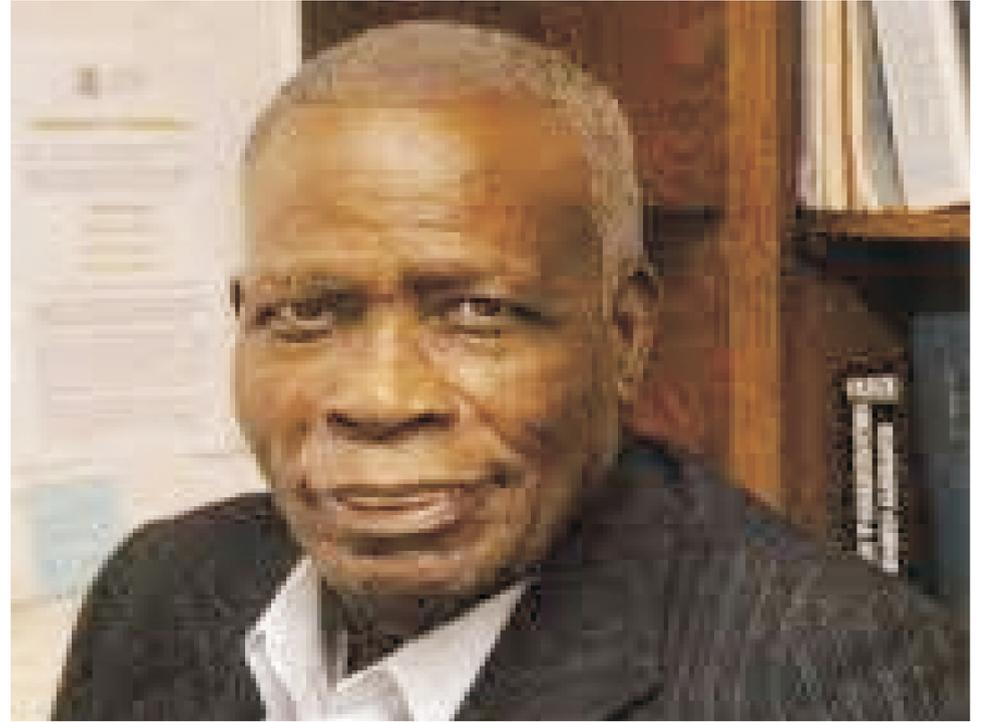
As to items A, B & C, it is a necessity, indeed mandatory, to remind Lawyer Mitchell, the apparent legal/political counsel to young President Weah, the Liberian people and our readers, that the Republic of Liberia has been, and is, engaged in lawful *multi-Party, pluralistic, competitive, democratic electoral political system under the rule of law, since the April, 1980 Event*. As such political parties, a group of citizens of like minds and political ideology representing a segment of the Liberian Nation, are engaged in friendly, lawful competition for political power with criticism of each other. The parties in opposition, therefore, hold the ruling party and government responsible with obligation to abide by constitutional prescriptions and all other such laws made and provided.

Now, any government of an organized political community that experienced *mind-boggling criminal activities of brutalities, destruction, human suffering and death, had been, and has, the legal responsibility/obligation to institute and institution of comprehensive legal house-cleaning by arrest, prosecution of all suspects and punishment of the guilty, throughout human history, since the institution of the Social State*.

Therefore, the Liberian political community which suffered such brutal, criminal activities adopted the South African, relatively successful example of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)* during the All-Liberia Peace Conference and, also, adopted the *Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)* upon which the TRC was introduced into Liberian Law in the effort to institute the required *legal house-cleaning* for post-conflict transition to modern democratic administration. But the TRC recommendations were side-lined for obvious reasons *that the-then President of Liberia was the architect of the civil war conflict and the overwhelming majority of her law enforcement officials - police, security, military, paramilitary, prosecutors, judges, etc. - were the major human rights violators of the civil war conflict; therefore, national/international expectations shifted to the incoming government*.

But young politician *George Weah*, then Standard Bearer of CDC Political Party and candidate for President of Liberia, not only announced publicly that “*there will be no war crime court in Liberia*”, apparently, during his administration, a policy commitment to the *on-going impunity*, but also, selected the *Standard Bearer of the NPP, the notorious rebel Party, massive human rights violator and killer of an estimated quarter of a million Liberians, as vice presidential running mate, Mrs. Jewel Howard-Taylor, estrange wife of the founder-leader of the NPP and leader of the civil war insurgents, former President Charles Taylor now serving a 50-year prison term for crimes against humanity, while the Chairman of the CDC, of which young George Weah is Leader and President of Liberia, announced publicly that “we will not shy away from Taylor”*.

Moreover, President Weah's close Political Alliance with *Prince Yormie Johnson (PYJ), now Nimba County Senior Senator, former Field Marshall/General and Commander of*



the rebel INPFL, performed the most major summary executions without trial, committed the most gruesome, brutal human rights violations of the civil war, tortured, mutilated by cutting off ears and private body parts while alive and, eventually, murdered Samuel K. Doe as President of Liberia on live video.

These gruesome acts raised eye-brows and concerns not only of Liberians who suffered the brutal civil war killing shenanigans by the Field Marshall turned-senator politician, but also, the concerns of the sub-regional (ECOWAS) and the general African leadership, including world leaders. In the of these available factual, historic activities to which the ruling party and government are connected and others committed directly, *offered excellent opportunities for the competitive opposition political parties to maximize lawful criticism of their competitor, the same ruling party and government, NOT CONSPIRACY THEORIES, WHICH ARE SPECULATIONS IN THE ABSENCE OF CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF JUICY, PUBLIC/PRIVATE WRONG-DOING.*

As to Item D, we admit that the International Criminal Court (ICC) . . . sitting in The Hague provides adequate venue and jurisdictional scope to address the war crime issues . . .” But the Court is designed to complement existing national judicial systems and may, therefore, only exercise jurisdiction where and when the United Nations Security Council or individual member-states refer cases to the Court, also, where and when national courts are unwilling or unable to prosecute suspects, as is the case now prevailing in Liberia.

We admit, also, and agree that “the Weah Administration does not have to establish war crimes court in Liberia”, but the the Rome Statute, the governing rules for operations of he ICC, requires the United Nations Security Council or individual member-states must refer cases to the Court before it can act, because the Court designed and established by the United Nations, of which Liberia is active founding member, to complement existing national judicial systems and may therefore, exercise jurisdiction, also, only where and when national courts are unwilling or unable to prosecute suspects, as is the case now prevailing in Liberia, where the ruling political class has failed/refused to prosecute suspected war and economic criminals.

We admit further that “Liberia's current judicial system does have jurisdictions to deal with any and all aspects of economic crimes”, but the body of validated, available evidence shows that the entire Liberian Judicial process or national System - Justices of the Supreme Court, Judges of the lower courts, court officials, trial juries, prosecuting and defense attorneys, the Liberia National Bar Association - is infested with massive dishonesty and corruption. A sitting Justice of the Supreme Court, for example, was impeached recently by the Senate for acts of corruption.

And finally, importantly as to Item E, Lawyer-writer Mitchell raised some fundamental issues and questions with implied answers but without explicit treatment with relevant evidence. gi are that “Prince Johnson was used to capture Doe”; who are the users and reasons? “The old colonial strategy of divide, conquer and rule”; who are the colonial strategists? “Create space for the political resuscitation of the pre-1980 immigrant political class . . . desperate . . . to recapture political power”; who is or are the pre-1980, immigrant political class?

Significantly, these statements imply belief in and the old, outdated *Americo/Congo Liberian versus Indigenous Country Liberian Divide*, a concept which does not sit well with educated under age 30 Liberians now the majority of nation's population that speaks no dialect nor interested in returning to Rural Liberia, home of their parents and older, 21<sup>st</sup> century pro-democracy Liberian.

Incidentally, Lawyer-writer Mitchell advocates “Fixing the national economy, not war crimes court” by printing additional 34 Billion Liberian banknotes and digging new holes to cover old holes, according to Information Minister Lenn Eugene Nagbe's new Theory of Macroeconomic Analysis.

# Another protest looms

This paper is receiving reports both from the Capitol Hill and Fendall campuses of the University of Liberia that lecturers are poised to go-slow in demand of salaries and other benefits, just barely a day after public school students protested in the streets of Monrovia in demand of teachers.

According to multiple sources from both campuses, lecturers have resolved to abandon classes beginning today, Thursday, 17 October.

The situation is even expected to be exacerbated by university students taking the streets in apparent solidarity with their lecturers over delay in salary payment by the government, something that is becoming widespread in the public sector of late.

Teachers of the Monrovia Consolidated School System (MCSS) a subsidiary of the National Teachers Association of Liberia had laid down chalk since this week in demand of salary arrears spinning over three months.

Protesting public school students waged stone-



throwing battle with their counterparts from a Seventh Day Adventist High School in the central Monrovia community of camp Johnson Road Tuesday, amid teargas canisters fired by riot officers of the Liberia National Police that left several students unconscious and admitted in hospital.

However, deputy Information Minister Eugene Fahngon, told an OK FM interview Wednesday that

following a meeting with authorities of the MCSS attended by the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Nathaniel McGill, Acting Minister of Finance and Development Planning Samoura Wolokollie and the Minister of Education on the campus of the government-owned William V.S. Tubman High School yesterday, teachers, who have been receiving pay as of Tuesday, have agreed to return to the

classroom today.

Several students were rushed to hospital during the latest protest against the George Weah administration here on Tuesday October 15, after riot police fired dozens of tear gas canisters to disperse protesting public schools' students.

The students had taken to the streets demanding that their teachers return to their classrooms, a day after public schools' teachers here laid down their chalks in protest for unpaid salaries and wages running into months. The teachers took the action a day before a schedule test which should have taken days could begin.

The protesting students, mainly from public schools within the city center erected road blocks in front of the Foreign Ministry, the temporary office of the Liberian Presidency thinking that the President's convoy would have stopped to allow him interact with them, rather

the convoy drove through the crowd of students.

This prompted the students to resort to throwing stones, while the police responded by firing tear gas canisters to disperse them. But the action by the police did not stop them as they soon gathered in front of the Capitol Building interrupting the free flow of traffic.

However, the police continue to fire more tear gas, as a running battle ensued between both parties on the main boulevard not far from the National Police headquarters and the Capitol Building housing the National Legislature.

Angered by the police tear gas, the students ran to a nearby private school own and operated by the Seven Day Advantage Church, where it is believed most of the government officials have their children.

The students justified their engagement with the private school by saying "if they can't be in school, then the children of state officials should also be out of school as well."

At the SDA School, a stone throwing battle intensified, the police then fire several more tear gas canisters which left many students unconscious and taken to hospital.

One of the parents name withheld, called this paper and sent multiple photos of her daughter taking treatment at the government run John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital.

This is the third major protest against Weah's Coalition for Democratic Change or CDC government which came to power on the campaign slogan "Change for Hope" in 2017 in less than two weeks.

## Students protest for dormitory at UL

*-As others demand action against disturbances*

By Winston W. Parley

Students have protested at the State-run University of Liberia (UL) Fendall campus to demand that a dormitory being used to host kids attending the University's pilot demonstration school be made available to University students, instead.

During the protest on

prompted other students to call on UL administration to take action against the constant protests which they say have sometimes disrupted normal activities there.

The University decided to use the dormitory to run its early childhood pilot demonstration school following years of struggle for a place where its students in the William V.S. Tubman

October, protesting University students moved to the demonstration school to demand that their dormitory be returned to them.

Following the protest, some UL students expressed anger over the action taken by some of their colleagues at Fendall, terming it as unfortunate.

The students opposed to the protest for the dormitory have called on UL administration to take some stringent measures



Flashback: Protest at Fendall Campus

Wednesday, 16 October, UL students moved to the Early Childhood Pilot Demonstration School housed in the University's dormitory on Fendall Campus, demanding that administration makes the facility available to them.

But the latest protest at Fendall campus has

Teachers College could go and practice their teaching career.

128 students have enrolled in the University's Early Childhood Pilot Demonstration School on Fendall campus for this academic year.

But while the kids were in classes Wednesday, 16

to prevent the disruption of normal activities by some of their colleagues, especially at a time efforts are being made to improve conditions at the University.

A male student who prefers to be anonymous says he equally blames UL administration for allegedly failing to act on

recommendations to either suspend or expel some of his colleagues that are said to be responsible for constant disturbances on UL campus.

According to him, he gets worried when he sees his colleagues protesting because his target to complete his studies within the prescribed time could be undermined when chaos erupts at the University.

Also speaking with this paper, a female student observes that politics within the UL administration could be the reason for some of the failures to take decisions against the continuous disturbances at the University.

No injury was reported so far, but other students frowned against the protest especially at a dormitory where kids are schooling.

But the University has over the years witnessed a series of protests which sometimes lead to injuries, disruption of normal activities and other things.

The government of President George Manneh Weah in 2018 announced free tuition at the University and other public universities and colleges following repeated protests at UL.

# Students were rude

## -Weah's office reacts to protest



By Winston W. Parley

President George Manneh Weah's office has branded protesting students as rude, saying he couldn't meet them because of their behavior, a day after the presidential motorcade forcefully drove through kids who had blocked the main street and demanded the president to speak with them about their

teachers' unpaid salaries.

Presidential Press Secretary Mr. Isaac Solo Kelgbeh told local broadcaster Prime FM on Wednesday, 16 October that President Weah authorized relevant authorities from the Ministries of Education, Finance, Gender and Youth and Sports to meet with the students instead.

"The president did not meet the students because of

their behavior. Yes, they were rude. His life was, he was at risk and so the security advised you cannot meet them because you do not know what will happen next," Kelgbeh says.

"If you were in a convoy and you are being attacked with stones - they threw stones at the convoy. They did. So if they were peaceful and any day they become peaceful and they want to see the president, like he has done with other groupings, they will see the president," Kelgbeh explains.

He argues that Mr. Weah couldn't see the students because it was not healthy for his security "according to his security advisor."

Quoting a release from the Ministry of Education, Kelgbeh says the teachers in question "are now receiving their August and September salaries."

The situation outside the President's office on Tuesday was terrifying as






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