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TRULY INDEPENDENT  
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# The New Dawn

**French Version Inside**

TRULY INDEPENDENT

**Erratum:**

We mistakenly attributed the Guest Speaker for the University of Liberia Alumni Home-Coming Day program to Alumnus Saydah Taylor, as was published on December 9, 2019 under the caption: UL Alumni urged to be innovative

The official Guest Speaker for the occasion was Madam Lucia Massalee Yallah, not Saydah Taylor.

Management sincerely regrets all inconveniences.

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2019

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# EX-soldiers, civil servants protest today



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# Continental News

## Tech firms sued over DR Congo cobalt mining deaths

Apple, Google, Tesla and Microsoft are among firms named in a lawsuit seeking damages over deaths and injuries of child miners in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The case has been filed by the International Rights Advocates on behalf of 14 Congolese families.

They accuse the companies of knowing that cobalt used in their products could be linked to child labour.

DR Congo produces 60% of the world's supply of cobalt.

The mineral is used to produce lithium-ion batteries used to power electric cars, laptops and smartphones.

However, the extraction process has been beset with concerns of illegal mining,



Artisanal mining is common in DR Congo as people do it as a means to make a living

human rights abuses and corruption. The lawsuit filed in the US argues that the tech companies had "specific knowledge" that the cobalt sourced for their products could be linked to child

labour. They say the companies failed to regulate their supply chains and instead profited from exploitation. Other companies listed in the lawsuit are computer

manufacturer Dell and mining companies, Zhejiang Huayou Cobalt and Glencore, who own the minefields where the Congolese families allege their children worked. Glencore said in a statement to the UK's Telegraph newspaper that it "does not purchase, process or trade any artisanally mined ore" adding that it also "does not tolerate any form of child, forced, or compulsory labour." The BBC has sought comment from Zhejiang Huayou Cobalt. The court papers, seen by the UK's Guardian newspaper, give

several examples of child miners buried alive or suffering from injuries after tunnel collapse.

The 14 Congolese families want the companies to compensate them for forced labour, emotional distress and negligent supervision.

In a response to the Telegraph, Microsoft said it was committed to responsible sourcing of minerals and that it investigates any violations by its suppliers and takes action.

The BBC has also sought comment from Google, Apple, Dell and Tesla. BBC

## Malema re-elected as head of SAfrican radical left

The controversial head of South Africa's far left Economic Freedom Fighters, Julius Malema, was re-elected unopposed as at a party congress in Johannesburg.

"For the position of president, it is Mister Julius Malema, may he please come forward," vote organiser Terry Tselane of the Institute of Election Management Services in Africa announced to some 3,000 delegates late on Saturday. Malema, 38, formed the EFF in 2013 after he was thrown out of the ruling African National

Congress, whose youth league he once led, following hate speech convictions.

Clad in his trademark red beret, Malema portrays himself as the defender of society's most disadvantaged. He backs radical wealth redistribution with the black majority still comprising the bulk of the poor a quarter century after apartheid ended.

His anti-capitalist rhetoric as well as his support for the seizure of white land without compensation has earned him several run-ins with the courts -- as well as his eviction from ANC ranks. In last May's general election the EFF scored almost

11 percent to capture 44 seats.

"We are here as the representatives of the poor and the downtrodden, united by our love for our people, and our determination to unchain them from their inhumane realities," Malema told the EFF congress. "The scars of colonialism and apartheid live on. The failure to undo the ownership patterns of our economy and the failure to give back the land to our people has resulted in our people having political rights, but no economic freedom," he added to applause.

The congress has been marred by the party's refusal to accredit various local media, including the online Daily Maverick news site which has published several articles accusing party leaders of embezzlement.

Malema dismissed the allegations, charging that "sensationalism is now the order of the day; starting storms in a tea-cup against those the media simply declares as enemies of society."

In solidarity with the banned media the eNCA news channel decided to suspend coverage of the congress.

"Good riddance," was the EFF response to that news.- AFP

## ECOWAS leaders meet over Niger army base attack



Image copyright NIGER PRESIDENCY: Niger President Mahamadou Issoufou received the bodies of the dead soldiers on Friday

Leaders from west African countries fighting the jihadist insurgency in the Sahel have held a short prayer service in Niger beside the graves of 71 soldiers who were killed last week during an attack on a military camp.

They were buried on Friday inside a military base close to the capital Niamey.

The Islamic State (IS) group said it carried out the attack.

A regional force, helped by French troops, is battling the jihadists.

Analysts say the insurgency waged in the Sahel by militants linked to IS and al-Qaeda is escalating at an alarming rate despite the presence of thousands of troops.

Last week's attack in Niger's western town of In Ates was described as the deadliest raid against the Nigerien military in living memory.

The presidents of Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania and Chad will be holding a crisis meeting amidst the deteriorating security situation after the deaths of more than 230 soldiers over the last four months.

The 71 soldiers killed in In Ates were part of the G5 Sahel regional force, which is supported by 4,500 French troops.

The five-nation counter insurgency force was launched four years ago when almost all the attacks by the Islamist militants were in Mali.

But since then the area affected by the violence has grown significantly and spread to neighbouring countries. That's partly because the regional force is under equipped and many of the soldiers are poorly trained.- BBC



Controversial former ANC youth head Julius Malema was re-elected as head of the Economic Freedom Fighters -- but a decision to bar some local media caused a rumpus (AFP)



# EDITORIAL

## How pastors abandon Brumskine

THE ARCHDIOCESAN BISHOP of the Bethel Cathedral of Hope, Dr. M. WoloBellehput it bluntly on Friday, 13 December in his discourse at the funeral rites for the late Cllr. Charles Walker Brumskine, former presidential candidate and ex-political leader of the opposition Liberty Party, when he asked, "where are the pastors?" in complete surprise over the conspicuous absence of religious and church leaders at the funeral of a man who supported churches and became a friend to pastors.

**DURING THE 2005** Presidential and General Elections a group of pastors prophesized that God had confirmed Cllr. Brumskine as the next President of Liberia, prophecy that never came to pass, making the men of God liars. Instead, Brumskine came third in the first round of the polls, which was the closest he ever came to the Presidency.

**THAT SINGULAR RECOGNITION** of the absence of pastors and churches at the official funeral of the man whose hand they had lifted as 'God-chosen' for the Land clearly exposes the fake prophecy and deceptive messages that some of our religious leaders preach to their congregation, primarily aimed at satisfying personal interest, using the name of God in vain.

**IT IS SO** regrettable that the late Cllr. Brumskine could have been abandoned so soon by the 'men of God' even prior to his death. Few months ago, the Liberty Party issued statement on the deteriorating health of the political leader, asking the nation for prayers for God to restore his health, but he eventually succumbed to the almighty death in the United States.

**THERE ARE MANY** lessons to learn from the unfortunate scenario involving the late Cllr. Brumskine and the so-called 'men of God' who parade the political corridor of our nation, raining prophecies on politicians desperate for power, deceiving them that God has approved their candidacy in exchange for 'brown envelopes.'

**THEY NEVER GET** tired of declaring prophecies and are currently parading the corridor of this administration, telling President George Manneh Weah not to worry, because all is well, and Liberia will shine with gold and diamond in the streets.

**TODAY, CLLR. BRUMSKINE** is no more. He has departed with an unfulfilled dream despite the 'men of God' prophecy. Those pastors who gave the prophecy should now ask themselves whether they truly heard from God.

**BESIDES, POLITICIANS BRACING** themselves for senatorial elections in 2020 should beware of con-artists moving about under the guise of bringing God's messages. They prey on people in desperate situations, seeking urgent attention from God.

**THEY ALSO DECEIVE** sick people, presenting themselves as spiritual healers when in fact, they are agents from the devil, seeking who to devour. Such individuals are heartless, as they would suck every penny out of a person that is already ill, leaving them naked and dry on their dying bed.

**AND SO, PASTORS** and churches that abandon Cllr. Brumskine on his sick bed and eventually his funeral, are nothing else, but wicked. They are not true children of God, as they parade themselves to be. Rather, they are money seekers, selling prophecy, handkerchief, oil and salt for fake miracle at the detriment of desperate solution seekers.

# COMMENTARY

By Jayati Ghosh

## The Rape of India's Soul

*India's rapid descent into xenophobia, violence, and irrationality has an important economic dimension, but it takes politicians to channel these emotions into nationalism, and to embolden the nationalists to commit violence. Now that the ruling BJP has done so, is it able - or willing - to exorcise the many demons it has unleashed?*

**N**EW DELHI - Injustice, discrimination, and violence are hardly unheard of in India. But today, they are being normalized, enabled, and even encouraged by the state, which is promoting an aggressive form of Hindu nationalism that looks increasingly like mob rule. India's diversity and complex civilizational legacy are now under assault, and it is shaking the very foundations of Indian democracy.

In August, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government stripped Jammu and Kashmir - India's only Muslim-majority territory - of its special status, which had granted it considerable autonomy, and split it into two "union territories" over which the central government now wields more direct control.

In order to stave off unrest, the government deployed thousands more troops to Jammu and Kashmir before announcing the changes. It then placed prominent local politicians, including former allies of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), under house arrest; enforced a curfew on residents; restricted movement into, out of, and within the state; and imposed media and telecoms blackouts.

Months later, most Kashmiris still lack Internet access. Despite the blackout, sporadic reports paint a dark picture of repression by armed forces. Civilians have reportedly sustained severe injuries from crowd-control tactics (such as the use of tear gas and pellet guns), and thousands of locals - including children as young as nine - are languishing in jails.

Yet, rather than defend the rights of Kashmiri citizens, India's Supreme Court has postponed hearings on relevant pleas. As for the rest of India's population, they have largely ignored, accepted, or applauded the assault on Jammu and Kashmir.

In the northeastern state of Assam, another horror unfolds. In August, authorities released their jurisdiction's National Register of Citizens (NRC), which excluded nearly two million people who could not provide proof of their names or parents' names in the electoral rolls before March 24, 1971 - an arbitrary date essentially directed at identifying Muslim immigrants. Many of these now-stateless people have been sent to detention camps, where they live in appalling conditions.

Betraying the project's xenophobic aims, its architect, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, has called these people - many of whom were born in Assam or whose families have lived there for decades - "termites," his term for illegal Bangladeshi immigrants. He has also promised that the BJP government "will pick up infiltrators one by one and throw them into the Bay of Bengal."

In this case, instead of pushing back, India's Supreme Court has actively instigated and aided the process. It now watches as the BJP government builds detention camps across the country, in preparation for the program's nationwide implementation - a process that is likely to be even more aggressively anti-Muslim.

While the NRC implicitly targeted Muslims, some Hindus were caught in the crossfire. So the government is keen to pass a new Citizenship Amendment Bill, which makes Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Parsi, or Christian refugees from

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan eligible for Indian citizenship. Muslims are excluded.

Though the bill is blatantly unconstitutional, it has already been approved by the Lok Sabha (the lower house of Parliament), and seems to have broad popular support. It now needs only to clear the Rajya Sabha (the upper house) to become law.

Muslims are not the only group facing discrimination and violence in India today. Hindu nationalists have also targeted the long-marginalized Dalits, the lowest-ranked group in India's rigid caste hierarchy. In 2016 alone, more than 40,000 crimes against members of lower castes were reported. And yet last year, the Supreme Court triggered large protests by weakening the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, designed to protect lower-caste communities.

Moreover, India continues to fail its women, who face high rates of sexual violence. Victims who report the crimes committed against them often suffer far harsher punishments - including harassment, job losses, further violence, and even death - than the perpetrators. Legal processes are slow; authorities often treat victims poorly; and justice is rarely served, especially if the accused is powerful or well connected.

Just this month in Uttar Pradesh, a 23-year-old woman who had reported being gang-raped last year was set on fire while heading to a court hearing. Among the attackers were two of the five accused men, who had been released on bail. She died a few days later. Since then, two more rape survivors have been killed in Uttar Pradesh.

Even when perpetrators are punished, it may look more like mob justice than the impersonal application of the rule of law. The recent gang rape and murder of a young veterinarian near the southern city of Hyderabad is a case in point. Initially, local police failed the victim through apathy. When her family attempted to file a missing person's report, they resisted taking action at all, before sending the family to another police station, because the victim's last known location was in that jurisdiction. Several hours passed before the search began.

After four men were accused of raping and murdering the young woman, however, there was a massive public outcry, including calls by prominent women to lynch the rapists. Under pressure, police quickly rounded up the accused, took them under a bridge, and shot them dead. (The police claimed that the men had tried to grab their guns, forcing them to shoot.)

Such extrajudicial killings are being widely hailed in India. Due process and the rule of law are not nearly as satisfying, it seems, as quick revenge. Meanwhile, no one is addressing women's lack of safety, or the impunity of other acknowledged rapists who have more political power.

India's rapid descent into xenophobia, violence, and irrationality - much like support for populist leaders and causes elsewhere - has an important economic dimension. Declining demand, employment, and consumption have left many feeling insecure and frustrated. But it takes politicians to channel these emotions into nationalism, and to embolden the nationalists to commit violence. Now that the BJP has done so, is it able - or willing - to exorcise the many demons it has unleashed?



## O-PED

By Jeffrey D. Sachs

# Europe's Green Deal

**N**EW YORK - Europe has done it. The European Green Deal announced by the European Commission is the first comprehensive plan to achieve sustainable development in any major world region. As such, it becomes a global benchmark - a "how-to" guide for planning the transformation to a prosperous, socially inclusive, and environmentally sustainable economy.

To be sure, the tasks confronting the European Union are daunting. Even reading the new document is daunting: a seeming welter of plans, consultations, frameworks, laws, budgets, and diplomacy, and many interconnected themes, ranging from energy to transport to food to industry.

Critics will scoff at the European bureaucracy. But this is bureaucracy in the finest Weberian sense: it is rational. The goals of sustainable development are spelled out clearly; targets are based on the time-bound goals; and processes and procedures are established in line with the targets. The overarching objectives are to reach "climate neutrality" (net-zero greenhouse-gas emissions) by 2050; a circular economy that ends the destructive pollution caused by plastics and other petrochemicals, pesticides, and other waste and toxic substances; and a "farm-to-fork" food system that neither kills people with an overly processed diet nor kills the land with unsustainable agricultural practices.

And the European Commission understands that this must be a citizen-based approach. Again, the critics will regard the talk of public consultations as naive fluff. But tell that to French President Emmanuel Macron, who has faced street riots for more than a year; or Chilean President Sebastián Piñera, whose country suddenly erupted in riots this fall after the introduction of a small increase in metro fares. Both Macron and Piñera are exemplary environmentalists. Both have committed their countries to climate neutrality by 2050. Both are urgently searching for a path of public consultations, but after the fact.

American neoliberals will scoff, too, arguing that the "market" will sort out climate change. Yet look at the United States today. If neoliberalism does for the planet what it's done for America's infrastructure, we're all in big trouble. Arriving at a US airport means facing elevators, escalators, and people movers that don't work, taxis that don't arrive, rail links that don't exist, and highways with broken lanes and overpasses.

The reason for this dysfunction is obvious: corruption. Each US election cycle now costs \$8 billion or more, financed by billionaires, Big Oil, the military-industrial complex, the private health-care lobby, and vested interests intent on tax breaks and protecting the status quo. Market-based solutions are a sham when politics is subordinated to lobbying, as it is in the US. The European Green Deal shows government as it should be, not government subordinated to corporate interests.

Europe's Green Deal is in fact a demonstration of successful European social democracy (in an operational rather than a narrow partisan sense). A mixed economy, combining markets, government regulation, the public sector, and civil society, will pursue a mixed strategy: public goals, public investments in infrastructure, private investments in industrial transformation, public-private research and development missions, and an informed population. In fact, it is industrial policy at its most sophisticated. (I recently outlined such a social-democratic Green New Deal strategy for the US.)

There are reasons for optimism. Most important, the advanced technologies exist, commercially or pre-commercially, to create a zero-carbon, resource-saving, environmentally sustainable advanced economy. By combining renewable energy, digital technologies, advanced materials, and a sharing economy in transport and other infrastructure, we can decarbonize the energy system, move to a circular economy, and dramatically reduce the flow of primary resources.

Yet three big challenges must be addressed. The first is to overcome status quo interests. Big Oil will have to absorb the losses, but workers and coal regions should be compensated, with income support, retraining, and other public services. Europe's plans rightly call for a "just transition."

The second challenge is financing. Europe, and indeed every region of the world, will have to direct an incremental 1-2% of annual output toward the green economy, including new infrastructure, public procurement, R&D, industrial retooling, and other needs. Much of this will be financed by the private sector, but much must go through government budgets. Europe will need to face down the ideologues who oppose more EU spending. Facts will need to matter.

The last big challenge is diplomatic. Europe accounts for around 9.1% of global carbon dioxide emissions, compared with 30% for China and 14% for the US. Even if Europe fully implements the Green Deal, it will be for naught if China, the US, and other regions fail to match its efforts. European leaders therefore rightly treat diplomacy as crucial to the Green Deal's success.

Consider China. After decades of rapid growth that has eliminated mass poverty, China has become the world's leading emitter of CO<sub>2</sub> (though only half of America's emissions per person). China by itself will determine the world's climate future. On one hand, Chinese leaders know that their country is extremely vulnerable to climate change and at risk of becoming diplomatically isolated if it fails to decarbonize. On the other hand, they are confronting the dangers of America's misguided cold war. Government hardliners and China's coal lobby are resisting decarbonization in the midst of US pressures, especially since Trump himself is rejecting decarbonization.

European diplomacy can make the difference if it refuses to go along with America's insidious efforts to contain China, and instead offers China a clear and positive partnership: working together on sustainable Eurasian infrastructure, development, and technology, in the context of a Chinese Green Deal alongside Europe's. Such a partnership would hugely benefit Europe, China, and the dozens of Eurasian countries in between, and indeed the entire world.

Europe has made a historic breakthrough with its ambitious, challenging, and feasible plan. The Green Deal is a powerful beacon of hope in a world of confusion and instability.

## OPINION

By Ian Buruma

# Trump's Racist Ban on Anti-Semitism

**N**EW YORK - US President Donald Trump thinks that anti-Semitism is a serious problem in America. But Trump is not so much concerned about neo-Nazis who scream that Jews and other minorities "will not replace us," for he thinks that many white supremacists are "very fine people." No, Trump is more worried about US college campuses, where students call for boycotts of Israel in support of the Palestinians.

Trump just signed an executive order requiring that federal money be withheld from educational institutions that fail to combat anti-Semitism. Since Jews are identified in this order as a discriminated group on the grounds of ethnic, racial, or national characteristics, an attack on Israel would be anti-Semitic by definition. This is indeed the position of Jared Kushner, Trump's Jewish son-in-law, who believes that "anti-Zionism is anti-Semitism."

There are, of course, as many forms of anti-Semitism as there are interpretations of what it means to be Jewish. When Trump and his supporters rant in campaign rallies about shadowy cabals of international financiers who undermine the interests of "ordinary, decent people," some might interpret that as a common anti-Semitic trope, especially when an image of George Soros is brandished to underline this message. Trump even hinted at the possibility that the liberal Jewish human rights promoter and philanthropist was deliberately funding "caravans" of refugees and illegal aliens so that they could spread mayhem in the US. In Soros's native Hungary, attacks on him as a cosmopolitan enemy of the people are unmistakably anti-Semitic.

Conspiracy theories about sinister Jewish power have a long history. The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a Russian forgery published in 1903, popularized the notion that Jewish bankers and financiers were secretly pulling the strings to dominate the world. Henry Ford was one of the more prominent people who believed this nonsense.

The history of extreme anti-Zionism is not so long. In the first years of the Jewish state, Israel was popular among many leftists, because it was built on socialist ideas. Left-wing opinion in Europe and the United States began to turn against Israel after the Six-Day War in 1967, when Arab territories were occupied by Israeli troops. More and more, Israel came to be seen as a colonial power, or an apartheid state.

One may or may not agree with that view of Israel. But few would deny that occupation, as is usually the case when civilians are under the thumb of a foreign military power, has led to oppression. So, to be a strong advocate for Palestinian rights and a critic of Israeli policies, on college campuses or anywhere else, does not automatically make one an anti-Semite. But there are extreme forms of anti-Zionism that do. The question is when that line is crossed.

Some would claim that it is anti-Semitic to deny Jews the right to have their own homeland. This is indeed one of the premises of Trump's presidential order. There are also elements on the radical left, certainly represented in educational institutions, who are so obsessed by the oppression of Palestinians that they see Israel as the world's greatest evil. Just as anti-Semites in the past often linked Jews with the US, as the twin sources of rootless capitalist malevolence, some modern anti-Zionists combine their anti-Americanism with a loathing for Israel.

In the minds of certain leftists, Israel and its American big brother are not just the last bastions of racist Western imperialism. The idea of a hidden Jewish capitalist cabal can also enter left-wing demonology as readily as it infects the far right. This noxious prejudice has haunted the British Labour Party, something its leader, Jeremy Corbyn, has consistently failed to recognize.

In short, anti-Zionism can veer into anti-Semitism, but not all critics of Israel are anti-Zionist, and not all anti-Zionists are prejudiced against Jews.

Quite where people stand on this issue depends heavily on how they define a Jew - a source of endless vagueness and confusion. According to Halakha, or Jewish law, anyone with a Jewish mother, or who has converted to Judaism, is Jewish. That is the general Orthodox view. But more liberal Reform Jews allow Jewish identity to pass through the father as well.

On the other hand, while most Orthodox Jews consider a person to be Jewish even if they convert to another religion, Reform Jews do not. Israel's Law of Return grants "every Jew" the right to immigrate, but refrains from defining Jewishness. Since 1970, even people with one Jewish grandparent have been eligible to become Israeli citizens. In the infamous Nuremberg laws, promulgated by the Nazis in 1935, people with only one Jewish parent could retain German citizenship, while "full" Jews could not.

The whole thing is so complicated that Amos Oz, the Israeli novelist, once sought to simplify the matter as follows: "Who is a Jew? Everyone who is mad enough to call himself or herself a Jew, is a Jew."

There is, in any case, something ill-conceived about the stress on race and nationhood in Trump's order on combating anti-Semitism. Israel is the only state claiming to represent all Jews, but not all Jews necessarily identify with Israel. Some even actively dislike it. Trump's order might suggest that such people are renegades, or even traitors. This idea might please Israel's current government, but it is far from the spirit of the Halakha, or even from the liberal idea of citizenship.

Defining Jews as a "race" is just as much of a problem. Jews come from many ethnic backgrounds: Yemenite, Ethiopian, Russian, Moroccan, and Swedish Jews are hard to pin down as a distinctive ethnic group. Hitler saw Jews as a race, but that is no reason to follow his example.

To combat racism, wherever it occurs, is a laudable aim. But singling out anti-Semitism in an executive order, especially when the concept is so intimately linked to views on the state of Israel, is a mistake. Extreme anti-Zionists may be a menace; all extremists are. But they should be tolerated, as long as their views are peacefully expressed. To stifle opinions on campuses by threatening to withhold funds runs counter to the freedom of speech guaranteed by the US Constitution. This is, alas, not the only sign that upholding the constitution is not the main basis of the current US administration's claim to legitimacy.



## ARTICLE

# High price to pay now for Power Theft, as new Law takes effect

Compiled by Frank Sainworla, Jr.

Persons and institutions caught stealing power will now go to jail for years and pay fines ranging up to ten thousand US dollars, after Liberia's President George Manneh Weah signed the Power Theft Act on October 4, 2019, following its passage into law by the Legislature.

Every year, 62% of the electricity produced by LEC is lost to power theft, which amounts to US\$51 million, thus prompting government to put this law into place.

This Act amends Chapter 15 of the Penal Law, repealing the 2015 Electricity Law of Liberia and adding Section 15.88, which establishes a system to stop power theft and stipulates penalties to deal with stealing electricity

It defines the crime of staling electricity as "illegal connections, tampering with meters, transmission and distribution of line and theft of assets including light poles, wires and transformers" something the law says "remain the most singular challenge to the operations and maintenance of an effective public utility system in Liberia."

This has caused "electricity tariff in Liberia to remain among one of the



highest tariffs in the world, resulting in high production cost, which disincentivizes investment and frustrates economic development," the law says and the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) loses millions of dollars from theft every year.

Power theft is considered as Second Degree Felony and an individual or institution is guilty of this crime "knowingly and willfully" tampering with transmission and distribution lines and interference or destroying of electric meter and/or improper use of it.

If found guilty in court, violators shall be subjected to tough penalties, which range from no less than 2 years with a maximum of ten in prison and fines ranging from US\$400.00 to up to US\$10,000.00 depending on the gravity of the offense.

At various levels, individual(s) can be punished for power theft if he/she causes or abets or helps in tampering with LEC power lines or meter by seeking, accepting, using, attempting to get or agreeing to receive for himself

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

Bomi County  
Monrovia, Liberia



Press Statement:

There will be no Redundancy of SDPL Takeover

MONROVIA December 14, 2019---"With reference to the recent news on the transition of Sime Darby Plantation Liberia (SDPL) to a new owner, MANO Palm Oil Industries (MPOI), Sime Darby Plantation Berhad (SDP) would like to confirm that we are divesting our 100% equity stake in SDPL to MPOI. Both parties have finalised the terms and conditions of this divestment exercise via a Sale & Purchase Agreement (SPA), and are targeting the legal completion of this transaction in the first quarter of 2020. The approval from the Government of Liberia (GOL) for the divestment to proceed as such has also been obtained.

SDP would like to clarify that this take-over exercise will not involve any redundancy of SDPL's current employees. The new buyer will honour its commitment for continued employment of all SDPL's employees and as such, questions on severance payment do not arise. SDP believes the new owner acknowledges the importance of maintaining existing well trained workforce. The new owner has also given its commitment to honour all contractual commitments made with the local communities in our Memorandum of Understanding, Memorandum of Agreement and Concession Agreement.

As part of SDP's commitment to a smooth transition of ownership, there will be a 12-month period of transition for a proper transfer of knowledge to the new owner. SDP will assign our existing expatriates with operational expertise and experience to ensure that the new owner will be able to continue running the operations and managing relationship with existing stakeholders with minimal disruption. MPOI technical competencies will be reviewed progressively and existing local talents will be strengthened. Out-grower expertise will also be deployed to expedite the out-growers and community oil palm scheme.

SDP has left an indelible legacy here in Liberia, not just in the development of palm oil operations but also in making a positive socio-economic impact to local communities.

SDP is proud of our legacy in developing 10,401 hectares of oil palm plantation and the human resources capabilities (including estate managers, engineers, executives and staff) to enable the new owner to continue running the operations and offer continued employment for communities surrounding SDPL's estates.

SDPL operates one mill with the current capacity of 35MT/hr located in Grand Cape Mount. The average age profile of the trees is 6 - 8 years old, with the oldest being 8 years old and latest planting activity took place in March 2019. Currently, the estates are producing an average yield of 2 MT/ha of oil and FFB volume of 10 MT/ha.

SDP has also developed fundamental facilities such as schools, houses, roads, clinics and important amenities like hand pumps and latrines that will continue to benefit and be used by SDPL employees and surrounding local communities.

We believe the new owner MPOI is excited to continue the journey where SDP has left off and it would be in their interest, as well as the interest of this country and Liberians to ensure the success of this venture moving forward.

MPOI, a company that is majority-owned by Mano Manufacturing Company (MANCO) has been a very proud business partner and a primary buyer of SDPL's Crude Palm Oil (CPO) since 2016. In addition, MANCO is a local Liberian company with more than 50 years of experience, which gives them the leverage of operating in the region.

The new owner, MPOI in their testimony is committed to upholding the sustainability agenda by remaining in full compliance to the RSPO principles and reactivating the Outgrowers' Programme for the community and forest conservation.

SDP would like to reiterate our commitment towards a Responsible Exit from Liberia. SDP and new owner are committed to a responsible transfer of ownership. All current businesses will continue "as-is-basis" with only SDPL's ownership changing hands to MPOI.



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Liberians in DED to get permanent status in U.S

Reports from the Liberian communities in the United States of America say a new bill expected to pass the U.S. Senate Monday would give some Liberian immigrants in Minnesota and

called it a major victory for the Liberian community, which has established deep roots in Minnesota with an estimated population of 30,000. The population of DED holders nationwide is estimated at

been so politicized and it has made it so difficult to come to agreement," Smith said. "So to have this issue today reach a bipartisan agreement, I think is really a tribute to the strong voices in the Liberian



Flags of the U.S. and Liberia flew at a rally to call for the extension of a program that gives thousands of Liberians legal status in the United States

across the country permanent residency and a path to citizenship, according to the NPR.

Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) holders would be eligible to apply for permanent status under a provision in the widely supported National Defense Authorization Act.

The NRP says, Lawmakers

4,000.

Full story:

Original cosponsors of the Liberian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act include both DFL senators from Minnesota, Tina Smith and Amy Klobuchar.

Smith called it a historic win and said she expects the bill will pass the Senate and be signed by President Trump.

"Immigration issues have

community and so many others who have fought hard to make sure that these members of our community have a chance to become a citizen."

DED, which began as a Temporary Protected Status program, has given some Liberian immigrants who fled civil war the chance to live and work legally in the United

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

## Bong Supt. suspends Paramount Chief

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

Reliable report from Bong County says Superintendent Esther Nyamah Walker has unilaterally suspended Yellequelleh District Paramount Chief Johnny Cooper for time indefinite.

The suspended paramount chief of Yellequelleh District has been replaced by Chief KerkulahKponoquelleh with immediate effect.

Briefing journalists recently in Gbartala, Yellequelleh District, Cooper alleged that his suspension is a total witch hunt, on grounds that he did not sympathy with Superintendent Walker during her leaked audio saga in the Country.

The suspended Paramount Chief who was appointed on August 10, 2019 by President Weah, has vowed not to dignify Superintendent Walker's suspension letter.

At the same time, two sons of Yellequelleh District, Richard Parry Kollie, and J. Larmah Paypay believe, Cooper's indefinite

suspension is not in the interest of the District.

Kollie and Paypay have threatened to stage vigorous peaceful demonstration at the compound of Superintendent Walker in demand of their legitimate paramount chief Johnny Cooper.

"We need our Paramount Chief back, we do not need

new person to serve our Clan," Mr. Kollie says.

But when contacted by journalists over the weekend, Superintendent Esther Walker and the Ministry of Internal Affairs Communications Officer promised to address the media in subsequent time.--Edited by Winston W. Parley



Madam Esther Nyamah Walker

## Liberia hosts child protection conference

By Winston W. Parley

The Sixth Convening for child protection within the Mano River Union (MRU) has been held in Liberia, with speakers suggesting the need for stakeholders to involve communities as partners in the intervention to stop violence of all forms against children.

At the start of the regional conference Tuesday, 10 December which assembles participants from Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone in Congo Town, Defence for Children International Liberia Charter's Executive Director Atty. FodayKawah says they are making sure that communities take ownership of the campaign.

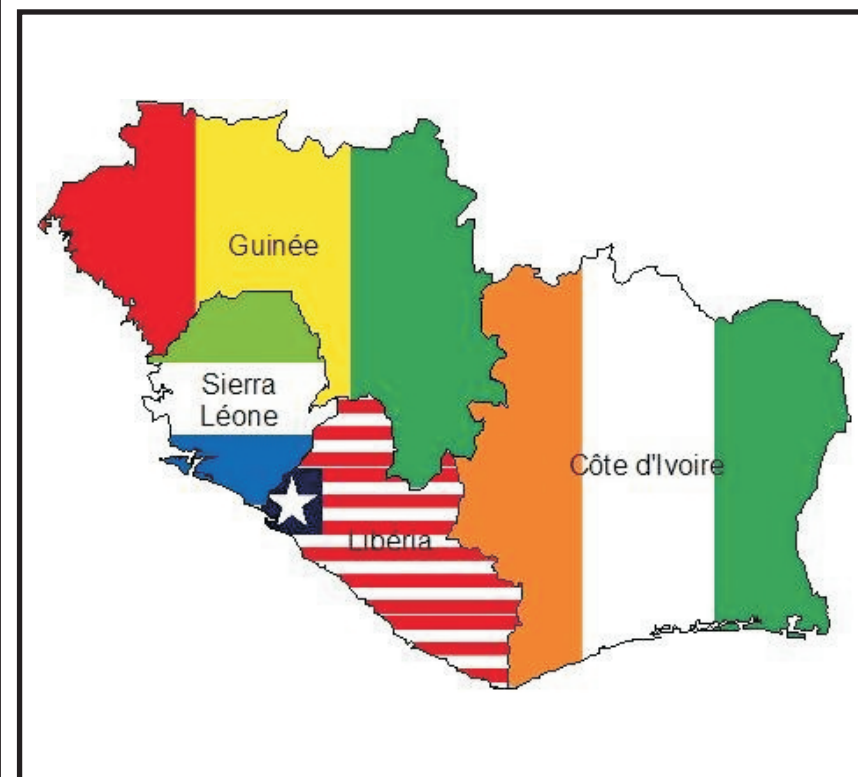
He notes that there is a report that violence against children in the three Mano River Union countries - Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea - is

take ownership of the campaign.

"Because of this, we have been meeting annually to design the strategies and make sure that communities take ownership, instead of Civil Society. They will be more sustainable as compared to only government or Civil Society advocating," Atty. Kawah explains.

According to him, this year's convening is aimed at finding ways on how CSOs in the MRU basin can fight against all forms of violence against children, adding that there is an expert from Uganda who will be deliberating and sharing ideas to the participants during the meeting in Monrovia.

Further, Atty. Kawah notes that Defence for Children is partnering with many institutions including Unicef,



very high.

According to Atty. Kawah, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and youth - led organizations within the Mano River Union are trying to fight violence against children and making sure that communities

Plan International and the Liberia Child Rights Representative Forum.

For her part, UNICEF Child Protection Officer Madam Ina Christensen stresses the need

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10





MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Weah preaches peace

By Winston W. Parley

President George Manneh Weah has urged members of the University of Liberia (UL's) centennial graduating to sustain the peace for the growth of the country, cautioning them to come into the world not as job seekers, but as job creators.

innovators. For you, members of this special graduating class, you must not depend on a job market, that in practical terms can never absorb all of you," he says.

The University put out 3671 students from undergraduate, graduate and professional schools at a single event

opportunities in the space of their chosen specializations, to carve out a niche for themselves where they can not only become self-employed, but eventually create employment for others.

"We look forward to feeling the positive impact you are going to make in our Nation and in the world at large, in the very near future," he continues.

Meanwhile, President Weah has pledged his fullest support to the University for its growth and success, noting that his administration will continue to invest in quality education for sustainable national development.

"For as long as I am the Visitor to the University of Liberia, and President of Liberia, I pledge my fullest support, and that of my Government, to the growth and success of this Institution," President Weah says.

Addressing the President of the University Dr. Julius Sarwolo Nelson, President Weah indicates that the challenge of he and his faculty and staff to endeavor to continue to provide quality higher education that will be relevant to the specific requirements of the national economy, and yet produce globally competitive graduates that have the capacity to cope with the challenges of the modern world.



"Congratulations my dear friends, sisters and brothers. May sustain the peace so we gain the growth of this noble land," he said Wednesday, 11 December at UL's centennial convocation held at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex in Paynesville.

"You must deploy these skills as entrepreneurs, and

Wednesday, the largest so far in its history.

President Weah's caution to the graduates comes at a time jobs are scarce in the country, while those that are employed also face challenges in getting their pay, mainly in the public sector.

President Weah urges that graduates to seek to create

# Boryorma lacks clinic, school and drinking water

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

A NewDawn survey has discovered the lack of clinic, school, latrine facilities and safe drinking water in the entire Boryorma Clan in Sanoyea District, Bong County.

Recently, the NewDawn's Bong County correspondent paid a visit to Boryorma Clan to inquire about the situation there.

The Clan Chief of the area Jerry Momah explained difficulties local residents of the clan are going through.

During a tour of the clan, our correspondent in observed the absence of school or clinic in Boryorma. Residents use the nearby bushes to ease themselves because of the lack of latrine.

Our reporters also observed the inhabitants drinking from nearby streams due to the lack of hand pumps in the area.

Speaking with this paper during the tour, the local dwellers said the lack of these basic social needs has caused several of them to contract diseases.

According to them, they do not have nearby health facility

to treat them.

They narrated that the only health facility is in Totota, which is a distance away from Boryorma clan.

They warned that if nothing is done by the government to address the situation, death toll might rise and the place

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



# Rethinking Productivity

By Diane Coyle

CAMBRIDGE -The word "productivity" typically calls to mind industrial assembly lines pumping out cars or washing machines, breakfast cereal or shoes. The word may also conjure images of crops being harvested, livestock being butchered, or houses being built. It is less likely to elicit thoughts of haircuts, streaming television, or mortgages. Yet nowadays, it is largely these kinds of intangible goods and services that define economies.

Many economists equate "total factor productivity" with technological progress. Northwestern University's Robert Gordon, for example, predicts that productivity growth will continue to slow - as it has done in most developed economies since the mid-2000s - because today's digital innovations are, in his view, less transformative than earlier advances like the flush toilet, radio, and the internal combustion engine.

But, today, about four out of every five dollars spent in the leading OECD economies purchase services or intangible goods. This "dematerialization" of economies - which I observed in the 1990s, and which figures like digital economy expert Andrew McAfee have lately been exploring - is complicating our understanding of productivity.

In fact, in much of today's global economy, even the production of tangible goods is shaped by a growing number of intangible factors. As Seth Lloyd of the Santa Fe Institute has pointed out, a farmer hedging against bad weather or disease now operates largely in the realm of ideas.

Whereas in the past, farmers would "insure" against the failure of one type of crop by planting others or raising livestock - that is, through physical diversification - today they do so largely by applying agricultural science, like testing soil and assessing climate conditions, or even by participating in options markets. Such intangibles - in addition to new technologies, such as irrigation - produce the discrepancies McAfee observes in crop tonnage produced from the same amounts of inputs.

Still, when it comes to agriculture, the end result is easily quantifiable. That is not the case for many other modern productivity-boosting innovations.

In a recent presentation, Leonard Nakamura of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia offered several examples, including energy-efficient buildings, lane-keep-assist and parking sensors in automobiles, and GPS navigation. Innovations in health-care treatment also qualify. For example, using the cancer drug Avastin to treat macular degeneration is far less expensive than using Lucentis, one of the drugs originally approved for that purpose.

In theory, the effects of some of these innovations on productivity could be quantified through quality-adjusted pricing. Cars with sensors that facilitate parking and improve road safety might be discounted, resulting in a higher "real" measured output for cars.

But, in practice, such adjustments pose a significant statistical challenge, owing to the pervasiveness of the underlying technologies. Consider GPS navigation: how do you quality-adjust for the use of apps like Waze or Google Maps?

When it comes to medical, legal, and other professional services, quantifying productivity is even trickier. One approach focuses on outcomes - say, a longer career (thanks to better health care) or higher profits (thanks to management consultants).

But these improvements cannot be traced back to a single factor. Doctors and hospitals are essential to extend people's healthy lives, but so are living conditions, diet and exercise, social connections, and even having a pet. Luck - for example, not being exposed to a disease outbreak - also plays a role.

Some of my University of Cambridge colleagues are working to deepen our understanding of these dynamics by examining the connections between social capital and productivity. This approach - which reflects a shift toward a broader view of productivity - is a step in the right direction.

Diane Coyle is Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge.

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# Français

## Le FMI s'est dit prêt à accorder des capacités de crédit de 213,6 millions USD au Libéria

Le Conseil d'administration du Fonds monétaire international (FMI) s'est dit prêt mercredi 11 décembre à accorder des capacités de crédit d'un montant de 213,6 millions de dollars américains à la république du Libéria.

Le montant devrait être échelonné sur une période de quatre ans en vue d'aider le pays à rétablir la stabilité macroéconomique, à jeter les bases d'une croissance durable et à remédier aux faiblesses de la gouvernance.

Après avoir fait face à des défis économiques et financiers pendant plus d'un an, il s'est dégagé un consensus sur la nécessité des réformes à grande échelle. Le programme vise à soutenir les efforts d'ajustement vigoureux des autorités, à catalyser un financement important des donateurs et à fournir un cadre dans lequel l'ambitieux programme de réforme des autorités pourra être mis en œuvre. La décision du Conseil d'administration permettra un décaissement immédiat d'environ 23,4 millions de



dollars.

À l'issue des débats du Conseil d'administration, le premier directeur général adjoint et président par intérim, M. Mitsuhiro Furusawa, a déclaré :

« La situation économique du Libéria est difficile et fragile. L'inflation et la dépréciation du taux de change annuel se sont élevées à 30% et la croissance est modérée. Les autorités sont déterminées à mener les politiques macroéconomiques prudentes et les réformes

structurelles ambitieuses nécessaires pour rétablir la stabilité macroéconomique et pour placer le Libéria sur une trajectoire de croissance financièrement viable et inclusive dans le cadre de la capacité de crédit élargie de quatre ans du Fonds.

« Le récent resserrement budgétaire initial est le bienvenu. Pour préserver les gains et maintenir la crédibilité budgétaire, il est important que l'ensemble de contrôles fiscaux récemment

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9

## L'apparition soudaine des nouveaux billets de banque suscite la polémique

Le représentant du comté de Nimba, Larry P. Younquoi, s'interroge sur l'origine des nouveaux billets de 500 dollars libériens qui ont soudainement fait leur apparition dans les banques commerciales et remis aux législateurs, tandis que les populations continuent de recevoir des billets mutilés.

L'émergence soudaine des nouveaux billets pendant que le gouvernement se plaignait d'une pénurie de billets suscite de vives inquiétudes parmi le public. Beaucoup se demandent si les autorités ont imprimé et apporté des billets supplémentaires.

Le député Younquoi ne comprend pas surtout

l'impression illégale d'argent supplémentaire en attendant l'approbation du pouvoir législatif avant d'être injecté sur le marché est source d'inquiétude.

« De plus, ce qui semble être une grave préoccupation, ce sont les billets de cinq cents dollars qui ne sont remis qu'aux législateurs alors que les autres citoyens continuent de recevoir de l'argent mutilé. Cette tendance actuelle des événements obscurcit notre intégrité, en particulier au milieu de la demande de l'Exécutif pour l'impression de nouveaux billets de banque et de la spéculation selon laquelle les législateurs ont donné leur approbation à la

## Le ministre de la Défense guinéen a reçu son homologue libérien

Le ministre d'Etat chargé de la Défense nationale a reçu vendredi matin son homologue libérien, porteur d'un message du président Georges Weah.

Les deux hommes d'Etat ont discuté de questions d'intérêt commun, notamment le renforcement de la coopération militaire entre la Guinée et le Libéria.

A cet effet, en application

des accords précédents entre les deux armées, des missions de reconnaissance ont déjà débuté du côté libérien et seront suivies dès le mois de janvier par celles des Forces armées guinéennes.

Dr. Mohamed Diané et Daniel Ziankahn sont convenus de tout mettre en œuvre afin que les patrouilles mixtes le long de nos frontières commencent courant février 2020.

Les deux ministres de la Défense n'ont pas manqué de rassurer les populations de leur ferme volonté d'œuvrer au renforcement de la sécurité dans l'espace de la Mano river union.

Le ministre libérien de la Défense a réitéré que son pays ne servira jamais de base arrière pour déstabiliser la Guinée. Il a remercié Dr. Diané du soutien apporté à l'armée libérienne dans le cadre de son



pourquoi de nouveaux billets de 500 dollars sont remis aux législateurs, alors que les citoyens ordinaires continuent de recevoir de l'argent mutilé.

Dans une communication datée du mercredi 12 décembre adressée au président de la Chambre Bhofal Chambers, le représentant Younquoia fait part de son incompréhension quant à l'apparition soudaine des nouveaux billets de dollars libériens sur le marché après que le gouvernement a fait état de la rareté de la devise nationale dans les banques commerciales, et que ce soit disant manque de liquidité a causé de sérieux inconvénients pour ceux qui ont l'argent en banque, qui n'ont pas eu la possibilité de retirer de l'argent de leurs comptes d'épargne.

Selon lui, le flux inhabituel de nouveaux billets du dollar libérien sur fond de spéculations au sujet de

Banque centrale du Libéria pour ladite impression », a dit le législateur.

« Honorable Président, c'est au vu de ce qui précède que nous écrivons, demandant à l'Assemblée Plénière d'inviter les autorités de la Banque centrale du Libéria pour expliquer à cet organe la source de ces sommes suite à la pénurie de dollars libériens », conclut la lettre.

Cependant, le ministre libérien de l'Information, Lenn Eugene Nagbe, a déclaré que le gouvernement n'apas imprimé de billets supplémentaires, ajoutant que les nouveaux billets mis en circulation provenaient des coffres de la Banque centrale du Libéria.

S'adressant à Voice of America mercredi, le ministre Nagbe a affirmé que la CBL atoujours de l'argent dans ses coffres et, de temps en temps, elle met cet argent en circulation.





# Français

## Le FMI est dit prêt à accorder des capacités

institué soit pleinement mis en œuvre. En outre, le renforcement de la politique et de l'administration fiscales au cours de la période de programmation est essentiel pour permettre au secteur public de fonctionner efficacement.

« Le resserrement monétaire imposé par la Banque centrale du Libéria (CBL) en novembre 2019 était nécessaire pour réduire l'inflation. Une condition préalable essentielle au succès serait la pleine adhésion à l'interdiction du programme d'emprunter auprès de la CBL.

« Les vulnérabilités extérieures du Libéria sont importantes et les stocks de réserves de change sont tombés à de faibles niveaux. En plus d'éliminer le financement du budget, le renforcement de la résilience exigera de contenir les dépenses opérationnelles de la CBL et de limiter les interventions en devises.

« Étant donné qu'une légère détérioration des termes de la dette ou un défaut d'ajuster suffisamment l'orientation budgétaire pourrait rapprocher le Libéria d'un risque élevé de surendettement extérieur, les autorités se sont engagées à respecter le plafond des emprunts non concessionnels et à s'abstenir des accords de garantie non transparents dans le cadre du programme soutenu par le Fonds.

« Assurer la stabilité du secteur financier est un élément important du programme. L'amélioration de la communication des données, l'obtention d'une vue d'ensemble de la santé du système bancaire et la prise de mesures décisives au besoin permettront d'identifier et de remédier aux vulnérabilités du secteur financier. Dans le même temps, il est important de renforcer le cadre juridique pour permettre à la CBL de disposer des instruments nécessaires si une correction est nécessaire.

« Les réformes structurelles visant à améliorer la gouvernance aideront à réduire les vulnérabilités à la corruption et à promouvoir une croissance tirée par le secteur privé. »

Annexe

Développements économiques récents

Au cours de la dernière période, une baisse de l'aide extérieure combinée à une faible génération de recettes intérieures, des ajustements limités des dépenses - en particulier sur les salaires - et une politique monétaire accommodante ont entraîné de nombreux défis macroéconomiques. Il s'agit notamment d'une position budgétaire insoutenable, de l'émergence d'arriérés, d'un financement excessif de la banque centrale, de l'épuisement des tampons budgétaires et externes et de la pression sur l'inflation et le taux de change.

Le président George Weah a lancé l'Agenda en faveur des pauvres pour la prospérité et le développement (PAPD) en octobre 2018, mais ses objectifs de construction de routes et d'amélioration des services sociaux ont été largement retardés en raison d'un manque de financement. Le programme soutenu par le FMI aidera à stabiliser l'économie - qui est une condition nécessaire à une transition durable hors de la fragilité - et à catalyser le financement de leur plan de développement (le PAPD), plaçant finalement le Libéria sur une trajectoire de croissance durable à moyen terme.

Résumé du programme

Le programme se concentrera sur :

- Rétablir la stabilité macroéconomique, qui est une condition préalable essentielle à une transition durable hors de la fragilité, tout en protégeant le segment le plus pauvre de la population du fardeau de l'ajustement ;

- Placer le Libéria sur une trajectoire de croissance financièrement viable, qui est le principal objectif du PAPD ; et

- Remédier aux faiblesses de la gouvernance et des institutions du secteur public, ce qui aidera à protéger les ressources rares et facilitera la réalisation des deux premiers objectifs.

Le programme vise également à catalyser un soutien extérieur substantiel, ce qui est essentiel car cela permettra à l'ajustement programmé d'être contenu à des niveaux politiquement et économiquement réalisables tout en garantissant la viabilité de la dette publique et extérieure.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Jayati Ghosh

## C'est l'âme de l'Inde qu'on viole

**N**EW DELHI - L'injustice, les discriminations et la violence n'ont rien d'exceptionnel en Inde. Mais elles sont aujourd'hui normalisées, permises, voire encouragées par l'État, qui défend une forme agressive du nationalisme hindou, favorisant une justice de plus en plus sommaire. La diversité de l'Inde et son héritage civilisationnel complexe sont aujourd'hui menacés et, avec eux, les fondations mêmes de la démocratie indienne.

Au mois d'août, le gouvernement du Premier ministre Narendra Modi a ôté à l'État du Jammu-et-Cachemire, seul territoire à majorité musulmane du pays, le statut particulier qui lui accordait une large autonomie, pour le diviser en deux « territoires de l'Union », sur lesquels le pouvoir central exerce désormais un contrôle plus direct.

Afin d'éviter des troubles, le gouvernement a déployé des milliers de soldats au Jammu-et-Cachemire avant d'annoncer le changement de statut. Puis il a assigné à résidence des dirigeants politiques locaux de premier plan, dont certains anciens alliés du Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), le parti hindouiste actuellement au pouvoir, décrété le couvre-feu pour les résidents, restreint les déplacements vers l'État, vers l'extérieur et à l'intérieur, imposé, enfin, le silence aux médias et coupé les télécommunications.

Des mois plus tard, la plupart des Cachemiris n'ont toujours pas accès à Internet. Malgré l'isolement, des informations sporadiques dressent un sombre portrait de la répression par les forces armées. Des civils semblent avoir été sévèrement blessés en raison des techniques de maintien de l'ordre employées (usage de gaz lacrymogènes et de fusils à plombs) ; des milliers d'habitants, dont des enfants de neuf ans, croupissent en prison.

Mais plutôt que de défendre les droits des citoyens du Cachemire, la Cour suprême indienne a reporté les audiences des cas qui lui ont été soumis. Quant au reste de la population du pays, il ignore dans sa grande majorité, quand il ne les accepte pas, voire ne les applaudit pas, les violences commises dans l'État du Jammu-et-Cachemire.

Le nord-est de l'Assam est le théâtre d'une autre horreur. Au mois d'août, les autorités ont rendu public le « registre national des citoyens de l'État » (National Register of Citizens - NRC), qui exclut quelque deux millions de personnes n'ayant pu fournir la preuve que le nom d'un de leurs ascendants figurait sur les registres électoraux du 24 mars 1971, une date arbitraire, essentiellement fixée pour identifier les migrants musulmans. Beaucoup de ces gens, devenus de fait apatrides, ont été envoyés dans des camps de rétention, où ils vivent dans des conditions scandaleuses.

Trahissant la finalité xénophobe du projet, son architecte, le ministre de l'Intérieur de l'Union a qualifié ces personnes, dont beaucoup sont nées en Assam ou dont la famille y vit depuis des décennies, de « termites », le terme utilisé pour les immigrants bangladais illégaux. Il a aussi promis que le gouvernement du BJP « attrapera un par un les infiltrés et les jettera dans le golfe du Bengale ».

Ici, au lieu de temporiser, la Cour suprême indienne est active ; elle est à l'origine du processus et y contribue. Elle veille, tandis que le gouvernement du BJP construit dans tout le pays des camps de rétention, à la préparation de l'extension du programme à l'ensemble du pays - une initiative probablement plus agressivement encore dirigée contre les musulmans.

Si le NRC vise implicitement la marginalisation des musulmans, certains hindous en ont été écartés. Raison pour laquelle le gouvernement tient à faire valider un nouveau projet d'amendement à la loi sur la citoyenneté, favorisant la naturalisation des réfugiés hindous, jains, bouddhistes, sikhs, zoroastriens ou chrétiens d'Afghanistan, du Bangladesh et du Pakistan. Les musulmans en sont exclus.

Quoique le projet soit ouvertement inconstitutionnel, il

a déjà été approuvé par la chambre basse, le Lok Sabha, et semble jouir d'un large soutien dans la population. Il lui manque seulement l'aval de la chambre haute, le Rajya Sabha, pour avoir force de loi.

Les musulmans ne sont pas le seul groupe confronté aux discriminations et aux violences dans l'Inde d'aujourd'hui. Les nationalistes hindous prennent également pour cible les dalits, longtemps marginalisés, qui forment les groupes inférieurs dans la rigide hiérarchie indienne des castes. Lors de la seule année 2016, plus de 40 000 crimes et délits ont été répertoriés contre des membres des basses castes. L'année dernière pourtant, un arrêt de la Cour suprême, affaiblissant la loi sur les castes et tribus « répertoriées », dite de prévention des atrocités (Scheduled Cast and scheduled tribes [Prevention of Atrocities] Act), destinée à protéger les groupes des basses castes, avait déclenché d'importantes manifestations.

En outre, l'Inde continue de manquer à ses devoirs envers les femmes, confrontées à des taux élevés de violences sexuelles. Les victimes qui témoignent sont souvent sanctionnées beaucoup plus sévèrement (harcèlement au travail, licenciement, recrudescence des violences, et parfois même la mort) que leurs agresseurs. L'institution judiciaire est lente ; les autorités méprisent souvent ouvertement les plaignantes ; et la justice est rarement rendue, surtout lorsque l'accusé est puissant et a des relations haut placées.

Ce mois-ci, dans l'Uttar Pradesh, une femme de vingt-trois ans qui avait déposé plainte après avoir été victime d'un viol collectif l'année dernière, a été brûlée vive tandis qu'elle se rendait à une audience au tribunal. Parmi ses agresseurs se trouvaient deux des cinq accusés, qui avaient été libérés sous caution. La jeune femme est morte quelques jours après, des suites de ses blessures. Depuis, deux autres femmes ayant survécu à un viol ont été tuées dans ce même État de l'Uttar Pradesh.

Même lorsque les agresseurs sont condamnés, c'est parfois plus par une justice expéditive qu'en application des règles de droit. Le viol collectif et l'assassinat d'une jeune vétérinaire, près de la ville méridionale d'Hyderabad, en offrent un triste et récent exemple. La police locale s'est d'abord montrée négligente et indifférente. Lorsque la famille de la victime a voulu signaler la disparition, les agents ont refusé de prendre sa déposition et l'ont renvoyée vers un autre poste de police, au prétexte que celui-ci était compétent pour le dernier domicile connu de la jeune femme. Plusieurs heures se sont ainsi écoulées avant que les recherches ne commencent.

Quatre hommes ont été accusés du viol et du meurtre de la jeune femme, qui ont déclenché une vague de protestation, certaines femmes ou responsables politiques appelant même au lynchage des violeurs. Soumise à cette forte pression, la police a rapidement arrêté les suspects, les aurait amenés à une restitution, sous un pont, où auraient été retrouvés les restes de la victime, et les a abattus (assurant qu'ils avaient tenté de s'emparer de ses armes et qu'elle avait été contrainte de tirer).

Ces exécutions extrajudiciaires sont assez populaires en Inde. Les procès équitables et le respect du droit sont loin d'apporter, semble-t-il, autant de satisfactions qu'une vengeance rapide. Pendant ce temps, personne ne lutte sérieusement contre l'insécurité à laquelle les femmes sont quotidiennement confrontées, ni contre l'impunité de violeurs avérés qui ont plus de pouvoir politique.

La plongée rapide de l'Inde dans la xénophobie, la violence et l'irrationalité - évoquant le soutien dont jouissent, ailleurs dans le monde, les leaders et les causes populistes - est sous-tendue par d'importants problèmes économiques. La baisse de la demande, de l'emploi et de la consommation a créé beaucoup de fragilités et de frustrations. Mais c'est la responsabilité des politiciens d'avoir canalisé ces émotions vers le nationalisme et d'avoir poussé les nationalistes à des comportements violents. Maintenant que le BJP a fait tout cela, est-il capable - le veut-il seulement ? - d'exorciser les démons qu'il a libérés ?



# Liberians in DED

Cont'd from page 6



States since the 1990s. It's always been a temporary program that has been renewed under different administrations.

President Trump had intended to cancel it but decided earlier this year to extend it until March 2020.

Abdullah Kiatamba, executive director of the nonprofit African Immigrant Services, has been involved in efforts to find a permanent solution for DED holders. Kiatamba said the community has been contributing to the state's economy and setting down roots in Minnesota. He said many people would be separated from U.S.-born children if they were to lose their DED status.

Kiatamba added that Liberia's economy hasn't recovered enough to take on more people and that America's history with Liberia should be considered when deciding whether to allow them to stay in the country.

"Liberia was established as a state by free slaves from the United States, and this has not been highlighted," he said. "The capital Monrovia is named after James Monroe, a

U.S. president. All the major institutions are named after Americans. The schools are American curriculum."

Kiatamba said the provision is the closest thing to reform for DED holders and that it has a strong chance of passing given that it's included in the National Defense Authorization Act, it doesn't cost anything, and that the criteria for qualifying are narrow.

According to the bill, DED holders are eligible to apply for permanent residency if they've been living in the United States continuously since Nov. 20, 2014, and not been absent for more than a total of 180 days. They would need to apply within one year of the bill becoming law.

Rules that would apply under the Immigration and Nationality Act would also apply under this provision, such as criminal history and crimes of "moral turpitude."

"The progress in this bill will be the most significant progress in immigration campaign for Liberians that are on DED, ever," Kiatamba said. "This is a huge moment for this community."

# Liberia hosts child

Cont'd from page 6

for community involvement in the fight against violence against children, saying it is the communities that will tell that this intervention is meeting their needs in changing the lives of their children.

She says the gains are enormous when communities are made to understand the dividends when they invest in children and change the narratives by stopping child marriage and harmful practices that affect the growth and development of children.

She recognizes the contribution of community members who volunteer their services in this intervention, encouraging stakeholders to see community members as partners to the work.

Children Parliament National Speaker for Liberia Prince Y. Saydee says the purpose of convening in Monrovia is to respond to calls

from different CSOs within the MRU sub - region.

"If we are to protect children, it is not about one institution. It's about everyone of us working together collaboratively so that the children of Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and the entire Africa can be protected as long as we intend to see them," he says.

Saydee calls for serious action to be taken in the interest of children, adding that the involvement of children in decision making is key.

"There can be no way that we plan programs in the absence of children. Children need to be there to make that decision," Saydee adds.

He underscores that it is important that the children of the world celebrate a year of violence free, further calling for more serious actions to be taken.

# Boryorma lacks

Cont'd from page 7

might become uninhabited.

"Why will people be saying that the government is in our interest? This government is not in our interest including the very lawmakers we elected from here in Bong County. If it [were] so, then they [would] have come to our cry long ago," Prince Boimah, the Youth president of the area told our correspondent.

He said the only way they will be convinced that the

government of President George Manneh Weah is for the poor is when officials of the government start to intervene in situations that are affecting the livelihood of the ordinary citizens.

For his part, the clan chief of Boryorma Jerry Momah said he has communicated with the representative of Sanoyea District, Mr. Joseph Papa Kolleh about the prevailing situation in the clan.

Mr. Momah said the clan, with over 65 towns, currently appears not to be part of Bong County at all because of the way the area has been allegedly marginalized by authorities of Bong when it comes to development.

He wants the construction of a clinic, school, hand pump and latrine facilities in Boryorma clan.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

# High price to pay now

Cont'd from page 7

or others electric current through illegitimate means, either connection or reconnection.

For example, Section 3 d of the Power Theft law states: "Any person who has been convicted of Second Degree Felony for tampering with transmission facilities of electric power shall be sentenced to a definite term of imprisonment which shall be no less than three (3) years, and no more than five (5) years maximum, and shall be sentenced to pay a fine of One Thousand United States Dollars (US\$1,000.00) or double the gain realized from the commission of the crime."

Also, harsh penalties are also stipulated in the law for industrial, commercial entities or other organized groups or syndicates that are caught involved in power theft directly or by aiding and abetting this crime.

Section 6 g of the Act states: "Any Industrial, Commercial entity or organized group or syndicate who has been convicted of second degree felony for Tampering with transmission and distribution lines, or interference with, or improper use of electric meter of a licensee, shall be sentenced to pay a fine of Ten Thousand United States Dollars (US\$10,000.00) or double the gain realized from the commission of the crime."

At the same time, the Law says criminal group or syndicate caught involved in power theft will, in addition to paying a ten thousand UD dollars fine, shall see the "seizure and forfeiture of assets associated with the offense including vehicles, properties and bank accounts owned by the syndicate and each of the officers and operatives thereof, who shall have knowingly permitted, failed to prevent or was otherwise involved and responsible for the commission thereof," Section 6i of the Act.



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# Ex-soldiers, civil servants protest today

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Hundreds of disbanded soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) are expected to regroup in a general muster today, Monday, 16 December in Monrovia, as their assembly coincides with the commencement of a go - slow today by the Civil Servants Association of Liberia in

home going of the late Cllr. Charles Walker Brumskine, former political leader of the opposition Liberty Party (LP).

Cllr. Brumskine was laid to rest over the weekend in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County.

Captain Kollie, flanked by dozens of former soldiers, says during their gathering at the

disbanded AFL soldiers who came for the first round of the general muster did not return to their places of destinations based on the directive of their leaders.

In another development, the Civil Servants Association of Liberia in a release announces here that its members will not go to work today, Monday, 16 December as a way of claiming government's attention concerning the plights of its members.

The Government of Liberia owes civil servants several months of salary arrears and incentives.

The civil servants' planned go - slow is expected to affect normal government functions at ministries and agencies, including health institutions.

Government workers have complained of the challenges of transporting themselves to and from work on a weekly basis, especially in bad economy where workers' salaries are delayed for several months.

There are claims that a lot of vehicles assigned to these ministries and agencies to commute workers have either broken down or facing fuel shortages.

Series of protests have been held by government workers since this year to demand their salaries.

Public school teachers at some point abandoned schools over their pay delays, leaving students to block President George MannehWeah's convoy in their quest to speak with him for redress to their teachers' demand.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



demand of arrears.

Following a failed muster called last month, the ex-soldiers say they are regrouping today in a general muster at the Slipway soccer pitch in Central Monrovia to highlight their plight to the government of President George Manneh Weah.

Captain Jerry Kollie, one of the official spokespersons of the group, hinted reporters in Monrovia that the muster is scheduled for 16 December as a mark of solidarity over the

sport stadium in Slipway, the leadership of the disbanded soldiers would order the roll call of ex-soldiers three times a day.

Ex-soldiers from the 15 counties here will all assemble in Monrovia for the ceremony which according to them, continues until they receive response from President Weah - the Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL).

Information obtained indicates that most of the

# Schools ordered closed

By Winston W. Parley

Public schools across the country have been ordered close ahead of a plan go slow by both public and civil servants-this include public schools' teachers.

The government through the Ministry of Education ordered the closure of all public schools here as of December 13, 2019, a pronouncement that have left private schools' operators panicking and thinking to do likewise for the safety of their students.

A recent demonstration by public schools' students ended up in a bloody clash with some private schools' students when police fired tear gas canisters to disperse the students.

A statement from the Ministry of Education shared on social media, said the government's decision to close all public schools is predicated upon the pronouncement made by the National Teachers

academic activities on the private school campuses.

Earlier this year, another go - slow by public school teachers in demand of their salaries prompted mass street protests by public school students to claim government's attention over their teachers' absence in class and to settle the salaries issue.

The protests extended to private school campuses, and police used teargas canisters against kids who had blocked President George MannehWeah's motorcade in hope of hearing from him concerning their demand for their teachers' salaries payments.

The public school teachers' plan to stage a go - slow comes ahead of the December 30 mass protest planned against President Weah's regime by the Council of Patriots (COP), the same group that staged the



Association of Liberia (NTAL) in conjunction with the Monrovia Consolidated School System Teachers Association (MCSSTA's) proposed stay home action as of December 16.

Private schools here might be affected by the planned action of the public school teachers, as lot of panicking parents and guardians may not want to risk sending their kids to school while public school students are out of school.

Public school students have in past times vented anger against their counterparts in private schools for not showing solidarity when public school teachers abandoned classes, most often leading to tussles and disruption of normal

June 7 protest here this year.

The Ministry of Education says it is cognizant of the fact that additional five instructional days will be missing, adding that the days will be added when schools resume 3 January 2020 for 3rd, 4th and 5th periods, respectively.

The Ministry adds that in protection of the interest of students and children who will be affected adversely by the teachers' stay away action and who shall be most at risk in the event of any unforeseen situations counterproductive to peace, it is resolved to close all public schools across the country.

## PROMOTION

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# Arsenal board 'must decide soon'-Ljungberg



The caretaker boss is operating without a proper coaching staff after the backroom team of sacked boss Unai Emery left along with the Spaniard

Arsenal caretaker manager Freddie Ljungberg has told the club's board they 'must make a decision' on their next appointment soon as the team continue to drift deeper into crisis.

The Swede had just watched his team lose meekly 3-0 at home against Manchester City, leaving him with just one win from his five games in charge.

Ljungberg is operating

without a proper coaching staff after the backroom team of sacked boss Unai Emery left along with the Spaniard, and he has not been allowed to make any new appointments during his two-week tenure.

Against City, Arsenal suffered a first-half collapse, conceding three goals by the 40th minute and looking unlikely to lift the gloom that has enveloped the club any time soon.

"I've said to them [the board] they need to make a decision," Ljungberg told Sky Sports. "We are here to help and the staff are trying to chip in but a decision has to be made so we can have the same

resources as other clubs.

"When I say that they say I have to wait and see."

The champions put Arsenal to the sword early at the Emirates, Kevin de Bruyne scoring twice and setting up a goal for Raheem Sterling as the hosts lost for the fifth time in the league this season.

"It shows the quality Manchester City have in their side," said Ljungberg. "Kevin de Bruyne showed his quality. We had worked on our structure and we had five against two but they still managed to score.

"They are the champions. I was proud of our boys. When you look at the age of the side that finished it was not an old side.

"I felt we kept the ball OK and played well. But we couldn't get that final spark and when you are 2-0 and 3-0 down early it takes the edge off.

"The players showed spirit but it is hard to play at 3-0 down. "If you look you see the players and price tags they put in from the bench, we have young kids who we put on. There is a gulf but I am still proud of the boys."

# Benzema rescues point for Real Madrid

Karim Benzema scored a dramatic equaliser for Real Madrid against Valencia but it was not enough to take them top of the La Liga table.

Real goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois came up for a corner in stoppage time and had a header saved by Jaume

Domenech with Benzema lashing home the rebound.

Valencia had led with 12 minutes to go when Carlos Soler was unmarked to blast home Daniel Wass' clever cutback.

Real are behind Barcelona on goal difference going into El Clasico.

The arch rivals meet at Barcelona's Nou Camp on Wednesday (19:00 GMT).

Gareth Bale came on in the second half for Real, who are unbeaten in 11 games. It was his first appearance for two weeks, but he has not scored for his club since 1 September.



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