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Public Service Announcement

THIS IS TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND ALL OUR CLIENTS & READERS THAT THE BUSINESS AND NEWSPAPER OFFICES OF THE NEW DAWN NEWSPAPER HAVE BEEN RELOCATED ON UN DRIVE OPPOSITE THE NATIONAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION (NIC), BEHIND PUBLIC WORKS MINISTRY.

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“Nobody eats GDP”



African Development Bank's President, Akinwumi Adesina



(L-R) Pres. Weah, Min. McGill, Amb. Thangal, Mr. Sachdeva and Justice Min. Dean

India rescues Liberia's Fire Department

-donates 5 fire trucks



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Continental News

Death threats for Tanzania MP over World Bank loan

An opposition party in Tanzania has condemned death threats issued against its leader after he asked the World Bank to withhold a loan to the government over human rights concerns.

ACT Wazalendo said Zitto Kabwe had been vilified and targeted. The speaker of parliament termed Mr Kabwe's letter "treasonous", while a ruling party MP called for him to be killed.

Human rights groups have warned about rising oppression in Tanzania.

They accuse President John Magufuli of repressing political dissent, detaining human rights activists, and muzzling the media. Last week the World Bank reportedly postponed its decision on whether to proceed with a \$500m (£385m) loan to fund education in Tanzania following pressure from civil society activists.

The bank had withheld the money in 2018 amid concerns over the country's policy of expelling pregnant girls from school.

A coalition of Tanzanian activists, who also wrote to the bank, argued that approving the loan would be endorsing the "discriminatory policy" of keeping pregnant girls away from schools. The colonial-era law contains a clause that allows the authorities to expel pregnant girls from school.

Activists said the law had been given a new lease of life by President John Magufuli's government and officials had been "overzealous" in

implementing the controversial clause. In a session in parliament last Friday, Speaker Job Ndugai called Mr Kabwe's letter "treasonous" and equated it to the acts which led to US President Donald Trump being impeached, charges he denies. "He [Mr Trump] has been impeached because he was conspiring with foreign countries to interfere in US domestic issues. We have a member of parliament who has

engaged in similar acts like Trump - there's clearly an element of treason," he said.

Abdallah Bulembo, from the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), called for Mr Kabwe's elimination: "There is one man who took our issues outside the country, he should not be allowed back but should be killed where he is. Treason! What Mr Zitto Kabwe has been doing is treason in our country." His party colleagues stamped and applauded after his comments.

Speaking at a party meeting

over the weekend, CCM youth wing official Kenani Kihongosi said people who "defamed" Tanzania deserved to be killed.

"We are fed up with a few useless people who are defaming our country but we are tired with those being used by colonialists," he said.

"I urge the youth to write about the good that the government is doing but also not to hesitate to criticise those who undermine our nation, they are our number-one enemies and they deserve to be killed." BBC



Mr Kabwe told the BBC he wanted the loan withheld because of human rights concerns

Kenya burst dam suspects cleared of manslaughter

A court in Kenya has acquitted nine people charged with causing the deaths of nearly 50 people following the collapse of a dam in 2018.

The accused - who included the dam owner - were cleared of manslaughter in Naivasha, north of the capital Nairobi.

Delivering the ruling on

Monday, the chief magistrate cited a lack of commitment from prosecutors.

Prosecutors said they would appeal against the decision. The accused had all denied wrongdoing. The dam, near the town of Solai, 190km (120 miles) from Nairobi, burst its banks after heavy rain in May 2018.

A deluge of water swept

through farmland and engulfed parts of Solai, killing dozens and destroying homes.

Investigations into the tragedy found the dam was constructed by unqualified staff and had breached environmental laws.

The dam owner and several government officials were among the nine who were arrested and charged over the collapse of the dam, known as Patel or Solai.

But after 18 months in court, Naivasha Chief Magistrate Kennedy Bilali set the suspects free, citing little progress with the case. He accused the prosecution of holding the court hostage with endless adjournment requests, saying the accused deserved a fair trial. A defence lawyer for the accused, named FI Mburu by local media, welcomed the ruling, telling the court that justice had been done.

"In the period the nine suspects have not missed any single day and we are asking the court to discharge the sureties of the accused," he said, according to Kenyan newspaper, the Star. BBC



The dam, near the town of Solai, burst its banks after heavy rain in May 2018

Rwanda and Uganda agree to swap prisoners

Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni and his Rwandese counterpart Paul Kagame met on Sunday in Luanda, the Angolan capital, and agreed to improve relations after tensions led to the closure of the main border between the two nations.

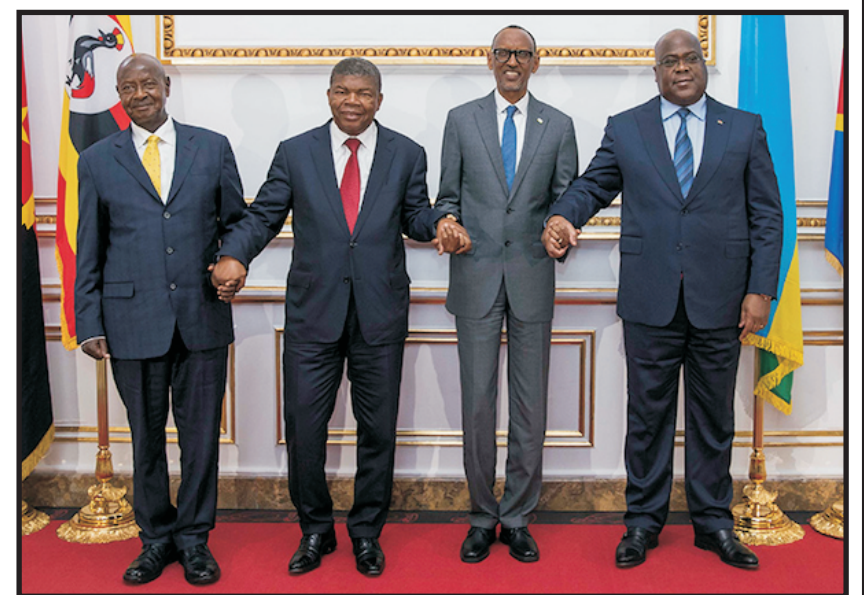
The summit was the second to be hosted by Angola's President João Lourenço and was also attended by Democratic Republic of Congo President Félix Tshisekedi.

President Museveni and President Kagame agreed that

prisoners would be freed nor give details on how or when the exchange would take place, AFP reports.

The two leaders also agreed that the next summit would be held at the Katuna/Gatuna border point between the two countries on 21 February.

President Museveni tweeted that Uganda would ensure the agreement was implemented: Diplomatic relations between Rwanda and Uganda have been strained for more than a year.



their countries would "refrain from the perception of supporting, financing, training and infiltration of destabilizing forces in their neighbour's territory", according to a communiqué of the summit.

They also agreed to "take subsequent steps towards peace, stability, good neighbourliness and restoring mutual trust".

Part of the steps would include swapping of prisoners. But they did not say how many

Rwandan authorities accuse Uganda of supporting an opposition movement, Rwanda National Congress (RNC), led by former Rwandan army chief Gen Kayumba Nyamwasa. They also accuse Uganda of arresting and torturing a number of Rwandans in Uganda.

Uganda, for its part, accuses Rwanda of infiltrating its security services and interfering with its internal politics. BBC

EDITORIAL

Salary reduction is impoverishing Liberians

THE WEAH ADMINISTRATION is determined to impoverish Liberians, especially civil servants by its current "salary harmonization" policy that appears to have no end in sight. Up to now, there is no specific benchmark or ceiling in the ongoing salary reduction exercise that has left public employees here returning home with shrinking disposable income each month. This has constrained civil servants to put less bread on table for their families.

DELIVERING HIS ANNUAL Message recently to the 54th Legislature in joint session at the Capitol, President George Manneh Weah vowed to continue to slash wages to in his words, "perfect the wage system."

THE PRESIDENT INSISTS that reducing the public wage bill will make everyone in his government better off in the long run without saying how, given the country's nose-dive economy hit by hyperinflation, three-digit exchange rate and sky-rocketing prices.

EVEN THE ORDINARY man in the street knows that in such condition, this is not the prudent time to reduce wages when prices are inversely shooting up.

BUT THIS IS the condition Liberians are forcibly being subjected to under the Weah administration. And the government believes such policy is in their best interest.

TIME WITHOUT NUMBER, experienced economists and financial experts have warned that no government had rescued itself out of recession by cutting salaries and increasing taxes. However, President Weah and his government want Liberians to listen to such illusion and live in utopia.

THE GOVERNMENT IS deceptively telling civil servants that after their earning powers have been reduced significantly; their standard of life will improve because the economy will boom. Not under this present administration where accountability and transparency are taboo.

WHEN THE EXECUTIVE paid lawmakers' salaries in fresh 500 Liberian banknotes last December amid serious shortage of cash in commercial banks, leaving senators to demand the source of such money, you don't need a rocket scientist to point that something is amiss.

TODAY, CIVIL SERVANTS going to various commercial banks to receive their monthly pay are returning with frowning faces because their purchasing power is being reduced each month, thus, they cannot plan the family budget because of uncertainty.

HOW LONG WOULD they bear such harsh condition, only God knows. One thing however, seems clear: Most ordinary Liberians would become poorer at the end of the first tenure of the government than when it came to power in 2018, for grinding poverty is already written on the faces of the people. This is not a prophecy of doom. It is the unfolding reality in the country.

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COMMENTARY

By Kenneth Rogoff

Fantasy Fiscal Policy

Many leading central bankers now argue that, instead of just playing its traditional role of deciding the allocation of government spending, investment, taxes, and transfers, fiscal policy must substitute for monetary policy in economic fine-tuning and fighting recession. That would be a big mistake.

LONDON - Will the next recession be worse than you think? With the major central banks having little space for further interest-rate cuts, might the next cyclical downturn become a crash? In theory, fiscal policy can go far in filling the void. The past decade has seen a rise in fiscal evangelism among many economists and policymakers, and it is indeed likely that fiscal fine-tuning will be widely tested in the next downturn. Are they right?

I am skeptical. Fiscal policy is far too politicized to substitute consistently for modern independent technocratic central banks, which until now have largely taken the lead in short-term stabilization. Fiscal policy takes the lead in fundamental but hugely contentious issues - concerning growth, long-term stability, and allocation - that need to be decided in a democratic fashion, at least in advanced economies. And yet academic depictions of fiscal policy as an objective technocratic tool often make one feel like we are living in an episode of the American television series *The West Wing*.

In that critically acclaimed series, the fictional Democratic US president, Jed Bartlet, is an economist by training. A good and moral person, supported by similarly well-intentioned and brilliant staff, Bartlet exhibits a gift for weighing sophisticated advice from experts to reach nuanced economic-policy decisions that strike a balance between efficiency, fairness, and political realities. Of course, he often faces opposition in getting his legislation passed, but Bartlet and his staff generally prevail. It does not hurt that the ideologues on the right who oppose Bartlet are not only bad people, but also intellectual lightweights.

It is not just academic economists who are arguing that the time has come for activist fiscal policy, given the limits to monetary policy in an environment of ultra-low interest rates. Many leading central bankers also maintain that, instead of just playing its traditional role of deciding the allocation of government spending, investment, taxes, and transfers, fiscal policy can substitute for monetary policy in economic fine-tuning and fighting recession.

Touring the economic journals and major meetings of academic economists, one sees model after model of *West Wing* fiscal policy - thoughtful, reliable, and credible - that seems to buttress such arguments. But the recent literature and debate almost completely ignores political-economy issues that were studied intensively in the 1980s and 1990s. The lessons learned then are now largely forgotten.

It is precisely because fiscal policy inevitably involves messy, hard-fought compromises - often overturned by future elections anyway

- that most countries have turned to central banks for short-term stabilization policy. The modern, independent, technocratic central bank is arguably the greatest innovation in macroeconomics since John Maynard Keynes pioneered demand management. Governments can and should make the big decisions about the long-term direction of policy, but anyone who thinks that legislatures can consistently make fine-tuned decisions is living in an alternative reality.

The fact is that in most countries today, economic policy is highly polarized, with decisions being made by razor-thin majorities. In the United States, for example, fiscal policy for Democrats largely means an opportunity to engage in more spending and transfers. For Republicans, it means cutting taxes in order to downsize government. Such differences are a recipe for seesaw policy. As a short-run stabilization tool, fiscal policy will inevitably be difficult to time and calibrate in the same way that central banks have succeeded in doing with monetary policy.

Especially over the past 20 years, central bankers have increasingly recognized that consistent, stable, and predictable policies are just as important as any short-term decision-making. Indeed, at conference after conference, central bankers can be heard weighing the nuances of slight changes in messaging and their effects on expectations.

But in *West Wing*-style academic papers, fiscal-policy functions - government spending and tax policy - are assumed to be totally stable and predictable. All problems concerning credibility and consistency are assumed away.

It is possible that in the next recession, fiscal policy in some countries will land a lucky punch, getting the calibration and timing just right. And yes, central bankers sometimes get it wrong. But the idea that we should cast aside the division of assignments between the two is naive. So is the idea that strengthening "automatic stabilizers" such as unemployment insurance and transfers can solve all problems of fiscal-policy credibility by enabling adjustment to occur without political action. The fact is that stabilizers invariably have incentive effects, and political battles over how far any should be expanded are inevitable. But the deeper problem is that in any given circumstance, policymakers can - and often do - override automatic stabilizers.

The right solution is not to cast aside monetary policy, but to find ways to strengthen its effectiveness in a low-interest-rate environment, possibly by finding ways to use negative rates more fairly and effectively. Until then, with monetary policy hampered and fiscal policy the main game in town, we should expect more volatile business cycles.

O-PED

By Ricardo Hausmann

Europe's Green Future Starts in Ethiopia

The European Union's ambitious new Green Deal promises to make the bloc carbon-neutral by 2050, while creating new jobs and raising living standards. But, given that Europe accounts for only 10% of global carbon emissions, the true test of its green agenda lies in its willingness to help others with their own sustainable development.

CAMBRIDGE - Devastating fires from the Amazon to Australia, powerful storms, and changing rain patterns have made it hard for policymakers to remain silent about climate change. In the United States, Democratic lawmakers and presidential candidates now talk of a Green New Deal, which they would be able to deliver if they were to reclaim the White House and the Senate in November's presidential and congressional elections.

Similarly, in December, the European Commission approved a European Green Deal, which promises a carbon-neutral economy by 2050, widespread job creation, and a better quality of life. With a proposed budget of €1 trillion (\$1.1 trillion), the plan is not lacking in ambition. But some have questioned whether the European Green Deal can have a meaningful global impact on climate change. After all, the European Union accounts for only around 10% of global carbon dioxide emissions, which means that even major local achievements in Europe could be swamped by increasing emissions elsewhere.

One would expect Europeans to lead the way in supporting other countries - especially in the developing world - in their efforts to decarbonize their energy mix. If there is one country that stands out for its potential to realize the ideals of the European Green Deal, it is Ethiopia. If Europe follows up its words with action, it could help Ethiopia decarbonize, create jobs, and improve living standards not in 2050, but in the near term.

Two decades ago, Ethiopia was among the world's poorest countries. But by the 2010s, it had become the world's fastest-growing economy. Since 2003, its sustained growth boom has lowered the poverty rate by 40% and increased average life expectancy from 54 to 66 years. Ethiopia's development strategy is notable because it is homegrown and driven not by natural resources, but by expanding human and social capabilities.

The country's charismatic, humble, and visionary prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019, owing to his success in securing a peace agreement with neighboring Eritrea. He is dedicated to unifying the country, strengthening democracy and human rights, and implementing economic reforms designed to ensure macro stability and promote diversification. While the World Economic Forum used its annual meeting in Davos this month to call for one trillion new trees to be planted, Ahmed has already led a national campaign that planted 350 million tree seedlings in a single day. This has reversed a deforestation trend that had reduced Ethiopia's forest cover for decades.

But to maintain its dynamism, Ethiopia needs much more energy - and that energy must be green. To that end, the authorities have been developing two hydroelectric dams: the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and the Koysha Hydroelectric Project. Jointly, these dams would generate more than 20,000 gigawatt-hours of energy annually, saving the world 21.5 million metric tons of CO2 emissions every year. They would also help power the country's rail network and industrial parks with renewable energy, generating both employment and surplus energy for export.

Unfortunately, Ethiopia has not been able to secure financial resources to finish these dams. As a result, both projects are far behind schedule, and the world is poorer and dirtier for it. To be sure, as with all dams, these projects would cause some collateral damage. Because the GERD would temporarily disrupt flows into the Nile River while the dam's reservoir is filled, Egypt opposes it.

Similarly, the Koysha Dam would have an impact on Lake Turkana, which is located only partly in Ethiopia. Yet the government of Kenya, where most of the lake lies, wants the dam completed so it can buy some of the energy it would generate. But some in the international community have seen fit to object to the project. Clearly, there is a double standard at work: although dams can affect river flows and displace populations, it is not as if solar, wind, and mining for silicon and iron ore have no environmental impact.

The Italian infrastructure group Salini Impregilo is the main contractor on both of Ethiopia's dams, but the Italian export-import bank, SACE, withdrew €1.5 billion in planned investment from Koysha. That has forced policymakers to finance the project domestically, which creates serious macroeconomic imbalances, including balance-of-payments problems, financial repression, inflation, and a lower growth rate.

Europe's Green Deal looks well intentioned. But its credibility should be judged in no small part by what happens in Ethiopia. An International Monetary Fund program signed in December should reassure European and SACE officials of Ethiopia's creditworthiness, allowing Italian engineers to get back to work on the dams. Just as miners use a canary to determine whether the air in a mineshaft is safe, the world should regard Ethiopia as a test of its own resolve to achieve a clean, prosperous future.

OPINION

By Kaushik Basu

The Approaching Debt Wave

The World Bank has warned that a massive debt wave is building worldwide. There is no telling who will be hit the hardest, but if vulnerable countries, from the United Kingdom to India, do not act soon, they may face severe economic damage.

NEW YORK - Over the last decade, the world economy has experienced a steady build-up of debt, now amounting to 230% of global GDP. The last three waves of debt caused massive downturns in economies across the world.

The first of these happened in the early 1980s. After a decade of low borrowing costs, which enabled governments to expand their balance sheets considerably, interest rates began to rise, making debt-service increasingly unsustainable. Mexico fell first, informing the United States government and the International Monetary Fund in 1982 that it could no longer repay. This had a domino effect, with 16 Latin American countries and 11 least-developed countries outside the region ultimately rescheduling their debts.

In the 1990s, interest rates were again low, and global debt surged once more. The crash came in 1997, when fast-growing but financially vulnerable East Asian economies - including Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, and Thailand - experienced sharp growth slowdowns and plummeting exchange rates. The effects reverberated worldwide.

But it is not only emerging economies that are vulnerable to such crashes, as America's 2008 subprime mortgage crisis proved. By the time people figured out what "subprime" meant, the US investment bank Lehman Brothers had collapsed, triggering the most severe crisis and recession since the Great Depression.

The World Bank has just warned us that a fourth debt wave could dwarf the first three. Emerging economies, which have amassed a record debt-to-GDP ratio of 170%, are particularly vulnerable. As in the previous cases, the debt wave has been facilitated by low interest rates. There is reason for alarm once interest rates begin to rise and premia inevitably spike.

The mechanics of such crises are not well understood. But a 1998 paper by Stephen Morris and Hyun Song Shin on the mysterious origins of currency crises, and how they are transmitted to other economies, shows that a financial tsunami can make landfall far from its source.

How the source of financial trouble can vanish, leaving others stranded, was illustrated in the delightful short story "Rnam Krttva" by the celebrated twentieth-century Indian writer Shibram Chakraborty. In the story - which I translated into English and included in my book *An Economist's Miscellany* - the desperate Shibram asks an old school friend, Harsha, to lend him 500 rupees (\$7) on a Wednesday, to be repaid the following Saturday. But Shibram squanders the money, so on Saturday, he has little choice but to ask another school friend, Gobar, for a loan of 500 rupees, to be repaid the next Wednesday. He uses the money to repay Harsha. But when Wednesday rolls around, he has no way of repaying Gobar. So, reminding Harsha of his excellent repayment record, he borrows from him again.

This becomes a routine, with Shibram repeatedly borrowing from one friend to repay the other. Then Shibram runs into both Harsha and Gobar one day at a crosswalk. After a moment of anxiety, he has an idea: every Wednesday, he suggests, Harsha should give Gobar 500 rupees, and every Saturday, Gobar should give the same amount to Harsha. Shibram assures his former school friends that this will save him a lot of time and change nothing for them, and he vanishes into Kolkata's milling crowds.

So who are the likely Harshas and Gobars in today's debt wave? According to the World Bank, they could be any country with domestic vulnerabilities, a stretched fiscal balance sheet, and a heavily indebted population.¹

There are several countries that fit this description and run the risk of being the conduit that carries the fourth debt wave to the world economy. Among advanced economies, the United Kingdom is an obvious candidate. In 2019, the UK narrowly avoided a recession, with a growth rate a shade above zero - the weakest growth in a non-recession period since 1945. The country is also about to undertake Brexit. Conservatives in Britain have promised that a "tidal wave" of business investment will follow. This is unlikely: if there is a tidal wave, it will probably be one of debt instead.

Among emerging economies, India is especially vulnerable. In the 1980s, India's economy was fairly sheltered, so the debt wave back then had little impact. At the time of the East Asian crisis in 1997, India had just begun to open up, and it experienced some slowdown in growth. By the time of the debt wave in 2008, the country had become globally integrated and was severely affected. But its economy was strong and growing at nearly 10% annually, and it recovered within a year.

Today, India's economy is facing one of its deepest crises in the last 30 years, with growth slowing sharply, unemployment at a 45-year high, close to zero export growth over the last six years, and per capita consumption in the agricultural sector decreasing over the last five years. Add to this a deeply polarized political environment and it is little wonder that investor confidence is rapidly declining.

It is not too late for countries to build seawalls to protect against debt tsunamis. While India's political problems will take time to solve, the Union budget - to be presented on February 1 - is an opportunity for preemptive action. The fiscal deficit needs to be controlled in the medium term, but the government would be wise to adopt expansionary fiscal policy now, with money channeled into shoring up infrastructure and investment. Managed properly, this can boost demand without increasing inflationary pressures, and strengthen the economy in order to withstand a debt wave.

The country's leaders must seize this opportunity. The alternative is to adopt the brace position.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

The Coronavirus: How Bad Will the Crisis Get?

*Knvul Sheikh, Derek Watkins,
Jin Wu and Mika Gröndahl*

As the coronavirus outbreak continues to spread across China, a flurry of early research is drawing a clearer picture of how the pathogen behaves and the key factors that will determine whether it can be contained. While the virus is a serious public health concern, the risk to most people outside China remains very low, and seasonal flu is a more immediate threat. To avoid any viral illness, experts advise washing your hands frequently and avoiding your office or school when you're sick. Most healthy people don't need masks, and hoarding them may contribute to shortages for health workers who do need them, experts said.

— How contagious is the virus?

The scale of an outbreak depends on how quickly and easily a virus is transmitted from person to person. While research has just begun, scientists have estimated that each person with the new coronavirus could infect somewhere between 1.5 and 3.5 people without effective containment measures.

That would make the virus roughly as contagious as SARS, another coronavirus that circulated in China in 2003 and was contained after it sickened 8,098 people and killed 774. Respiratory viruses like these can travel through the air, enveloped in tiny droplets that are produced when a sick person breathes, talks, coughs or sneezes.

These droplets fall to the ground within a few feet. That makes the virus harder to get than pathogens like measles, chickenpox and tuberculosis, which can travel a hundred feet through the air. But it is easier to catch than HIV or hepatitis, which spread only through direct contact with the bodily fluids of an infected person.

If each person infected with the new coronavirus infects two to three others, that may be enough to sustain and accelerate an outbreak if nothing is done to reduce it.

Compare that with a less contagious virus, like the seasonal flu. People with the flu tend to infect 1.3 other individuals, on average.

But the transmission numbers of any disease aren't set in stone. They can be reduced by effective public health measures, such as isolating sick people and tracking individuals they've had contact with. When global health authorities methodically tracked and isolated people infected with SARS in 2003, they were able to bring the average number each sick person infected down to 0.4, enough to stop the outbreak.

Health authorities around the world are expending enormous effort trying to repeat that.

So far, the number of cases outside China has been small. But in recent days, cases have turned up in several countries, including the United States, with people who have not visited China. And the number of cases within China has

accelerated, far surpassing the rate of new SARS cases in 2003.

— How long does it take to show symptoms?

The time it takes for symptoms to appear after a person is infected can be vital for prevention and control. Known as the incubation period, this time can allow health officials to quarantine or observe people who may have been exposed to the virus. But if the incubation period is too long or too short, these measures may be difficult to implement.

Some illnesses, like influenza, have a short incubation period of two or three days. SARS, however, had an incubation period of about five days. In addition, it took four or five days after symptoms started before sick people could transmit the virus. That gave officials time to stop the virus and effectively contain the outbreak, said Dr. Allison McGeer, an infectious disease specialist at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, who was at the front lines of the Canadian response to SARS.

Officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that the new coronavirus has

the outbreak face a shortage of testing kits and hospital beds, and many sick people have not been able to see a doctor.

"There's still a lot of uncertainty about what this virus is like and what it is doing," said McGeer, of Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto.

Early indications suggest the fatality rate for this virus is considerably less than another coronavirus, MERS, which kills about 1 in 3 people who become infected, and SARS, which kills about 1 in 10. All of the diseases appear to latch onto proteins on the surface of lung cells, but MERS and SARS seem to be more destructive to lung tissue. As of Jan. 31, fewer than 1 in 40 of the people with confirmed infections had died. Many of those who died were older men with underlying health problems.

Pathogens can still be very dangerous even if their fatality rate is low, McGeer said. For instance, even though influenza has a case fatality rate below 1 per 1,000, roughly 200,000 people end up hospitalized with the virus each year in the United States, and about 35,000 people die.

— How effective will the response be?

In addition to closing off transportation, officials shut down a market in Wuhan selling live poultry, seafood and wild animals, which was thought to be the origin of the coronavirus, and later suspended the trade of wild animals nationwide. Schools have been closed, Beijing's Great Wall is off-limits, and tourist packages from China have been halted. World Health Organization officials have praised China's aggressive response to the virus.

But the measures have also had unintended effects. Residents in Wuhan who are unwell must walk or cycle for miles to get to hospitals. There, many complain that they are being turned away because of shortages of hospital beds, staff and supplies that have been made

worse by the lockdown.

And during the critical first days of the outbreak, Chinese authorities favored secrecy and order over openly confronting the crisis, silencing medical professionals who raised red flags. The reluctance to go public delayed a concerted public health response.

On Thursday, the WHO declared the outbreak a global health emergency, acknowledging that the disease represents a risk beyond China.

The United States and Australia are temporarily denying entry to noncitizens who recently traveled to China, and several major airlines said they expect to halt direct service to mainland China for months. Other countries — including Kazakhstan, Russia and Vietnam — have temporarily restricted travel and visas. But critics fear that these measures will not be enough.

— How much have infected people traveled?

Wuhan is a difficult place to contain an outbreak. It has 11 million people, more than New York City. On an average day, 3,500 passengers take direct flights from Wuhan to cities in other countries. These cities were among the first to report cases of the virus outside China.

TO BE CONTINUED



an incubation period of 2 to 14 days. But it is still not clear whether a person can spread the virus before symptoms develop or whether the severity of the illness affects how easily a patient can spread the virus.

"That concerns me because it means the infection could elude detection," said Dr. Mark Denison, an infectious disease expert at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee.

— How deadly is the virus?

This is one of the most important factors in how damaging the outbreak will be, and one of the least understood.

It's tough to assess the lethality of a new virus. The worst cases are usually detected first, which can skew our understanding of how likely patients are to die. About one-third of the first 41 patients reported in Wuhan had to be treated in an ICU, many with symptoms of fever, severe cough, shortness of breath and pneumonia. But people with mild cases may never visit a doctor. So there may be more cases than we know, and the death rate may be lower than we initially thought.

At the same time, deaths from the virus may be underreported. The Chinese cities at the center of

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Nimba lawmaker calls for awareness on Coronavirus

By Emmanuel Mondaye

The Chairman of the House Committee on Health at the National Legislature, Nimba County Electoral District #3 Representative Joseph N. Somwarbi, says in the wake of the outbreak of the Corona Virus in China, the Ministry of Health should embark on vigorous public awareness and education campaign about the virus.

Rep. Somwarbi says while he encourages Liberians to adhere to measures already taken by the Ministry, there is urgent need to start broadcasting messages about the virus in the various Liberian vernaculars to keep

the public alert.

He also calls on the National Public Health Institute of Liberia or NPHIL to decentralize such awareness program to hospitals, schools, market places, parking stations, churches and mosques, among others to enable Liberians know symptoms of the virus to protect themselves, if there should be any outbreak here.

The Nimba lawmaker further underscores it is necessary that Liberians adhere to measures already announced which are surest ways of preventing the virus that is contracted by people-to-people contacts and is airborne.

The lawmaker notes that upon hearing news about the outbreak of the virus, members of the House are troubled.

He discloses that hereafter, Representative Dixon Sebo of Montserrado County Electoral District #16 communicated with the Plenary of the House, requesting it to invite the Minister of Health, Dr. WilliminaJallah, to appear before that body to explain in detail measures being instituted to avoid an outbreak in Liberia.

He adds that doing discussion, the Minister of Health was advised to properly screen travelers coming from China and neighboring countries.

Representative Somwarbi continues that adequate public awareness and education at different levels of society will better prepare Liberians in taking the necessary preventive measures to save their lives.

He recommends that emergency health response units be deployed at all border points of entry into the country to ensure the virus does not enter Liberia.

Health authorities here thru the National Public Health Institute of Liberia say vigilant surveillance is in place at the Roberts International Airport in Margibi County and entry points to screen travelers arriving into the country.

- Editing by Jonathan Browne



Representative Joseph N. Somwarbi

Fishermen decry high fees

By Bridgett Milton

Local fishermen here under the banner, Fishermen Association of Liberia want license fee of US\$475 levied by the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) reduced by 20 percent or US\$95.00.

The Secretary of the Fishermen Association of Liberia Paul Asmah, laments that taxes levied by NaFAA are too high.

He explains that since 2017 up to 2019 they have been paying 10,000 Liberian Dollars per each canoe fishing in Liberian waters, but the NaFAA has increased it to \$475, which is exorbitant for them.

He says as a result of the 100 percent increase in the fee, fishermen in nine of the 15 counties in which they operate, have abandoned the trade because they cannot

afford the amount being levied.

He says members of the Fisherman Association of Liberia have made frantic effort to meet with the Director General of NaFAA to

put forth their plight but to no avail.

He discloses that the NaFAA boss has issued instructions, banning all canoe owners

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Gov't donates 3 buses to UL

By Winston W. Parley

The University of Liberia (UL) says government has donated three new buses to assist with the transportation system at the University.

Announcing the donation recently at a joint meeting of Council and Senate, UL President Julius Sarwolo Nelson said at President George MannehWeah's Annual Message on Monday, 27 January, he met with the Director of the National Transit Authority (NTA) and they are making arrangement for the presentation of the buses to the University.

"This is to inform you that the government of Liberia has donated three new buses to assist with our transportation system, out of the 45 that had

working partner for resource mobilization and investment has been appointed, detailing that the committee met and approved the Article of Incorporation for what we will be called "Lux Investment Cooperation," with the expectation that registration will be done when completed in February 2020.

He also announces plan to place Information Communication Technology (ICT) on all UL campuses, noting that the team in ICT at the University will continue working hard to move all UL Family to the technology of the 21st century, starting with email address.

He also discloses plan for improving resource



been given to the National Transit Authority," Dr. Nelson says.

Meanwhile, Dr. Nelson reported at the joint meeting that the University has revitalized the President - Students Advisory Council that had the membership of presidents or chairpersons of all student organizations, county associations, religious groups, political parties and discipline - based groups.

"We had that meeting for two to three hours sometime last week, and they were all happy that we revitalize the council, and committing themselves to working together in good partnership," he says.

Further, he says an advisory

mobilization and investment to ensure that UL expands its resource envelop, indicating that Administration is preparing for public - private partnership and income generating projects.

He notes that the [Fendall Land] Committee is back to work and will give the University a report in 90 days to get the blueprint of the University Village or the University City.

The UL president reveals that a meeting has been held with the Minister of Public Works and his team at the Ministry of Public Works with focus on the possibility of signing an MOU for closer partnership.

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Rep. Dopoh to partner with U.S.-based College to improve education in River Gee

By Bridgett Milton

River Gee County District # 2 Representative Francis S. Dopoh is closed to partnering with the Williams Collage based in the United State for the improvement of the educational system in River Gee County. Speaking to this paper

educational emergency in River Gee County, specifically in his district, that requires the collaboration of the teachers, parents and even the students to find a solution.

He explains that there are some areas in the county where student sit on the floor; while in other areas, students

For some of the schools, he says there is no laboratory and there is a lack of teachers, noting that he is doing all his best to provide a laboratory and teachers for those schools.

Rep. Dopoh has presented a bill to the House of Representatives for the establishment of a vocational training institute in River Gee County, as he announces a plan to divert some of his resources from other areas to education in his district.

Further, grounds have been broken for the construction of the Williams School to be used as an early childhood program in River Gee County which is hoped to be completed before the end of this year.

Additionally, Rep. Dopoh indicates that from the assessment done by Williams School, it is observed that there is a serious challenge in the school system in the county.

He announces plans to make his case for the establishment of a Williams Collage in Liberia and to also partner with other schools in Liberia to help build the country's school system.

For his part, the President of the University of Liberia Dr. Julius Sarwolo Nelson thanks the delegation for coming to Liberia and expresses hope for partnership.

Williams College was established in 1793 in Williamstown, Massachusetts, U.S.A.—*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



Representative Francis S. Dopoh

Monday, 3 February at his Capitol Building office, Rep. Dopoh said a team from the Williams Collage came here and did an assessment, and provided specialized training for math and science teachers in River Gee County.

According to Rep. Dopoh, there is very serious

in second and third grades cannot spell common things like 'second' or 'third.'

The River Gee County lawmaker adds that the exercise also gives him an insight into what is happening because he was in the classroom and he interacted with students.

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Fishermen decry

failing to register with the government from fishing in the waters of Liberia.

However, Paul notes that members of his association are not refusing to pay registration fees, but the government should find a way to reduce the amount being levied.

In January this year, the Director-General of the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA), Emma Glasco, announced a new fee structure for fishermen operating in Liberia's territorial waters, based on their engines' capacity.

Madam Glasco said the new measure is part of management's programs to resuscitate the sector and increase revenue generation.

She said under the new structure, which takes effect immediately, owners of paddling canoes will pay the sum of LRD,200 annually,



while operators of 1Hp (House power) to 14Hp will pay a yearly fee of US\$200.

The previous fee was LRD5,500 per canoe; while 15Hp to 40 Hp fees have been increased from LRD10,000 to US\$475.

Fishermen operating machines with capacity between 41Hp and 100Hp will now pay US\$1,000 annually,

while operators of migrant or seasonal canoes are being charged US\$1,250 yearly.

Director Glasco explains that this will allow government to provide subsidy to fishmongers and develop a robust semi-industrial program, including a value-added component such as processing facility. -*Editing by Jonathan Browne*

AFL sets high

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As part of activities for the 63rd Armed Forces Day, he says the Armed Forces here is trying to generate the spirit in females to join security services, whether it is in the army or the police, among others, because there is confidence that women have a lot to offer.

High school graduates and above are encouraged to sign up to join the army.

As part of the AFL's community relations program, Mr. Collins discloses that on 8 February the AFL will lead a massive cleanup campaign with community dwellers in Caldwell, and will also carry out medical outreach in Careysburg, Montserrado County to residents free of charge.

According to Collins, the assurance received is that the residents of Caldwell are going to turn out in their numbers to work along with the AFL in its massive cleanup campaign on 8 February.

"The reason is that we want to make the community feel part of the military. The men in uniforms are not animals. The men in uniforms are not people for community dwellers to be afraid of. We need to build relationship with the community because the personnel in the armed forces live in the community, they are part of the community," Collins explains.

He adds that the outbreak of any virus or any disease will affect them, their relatives and break the officers down and make them not to concentrate on missions or to be mission-prepared.

Giving a historical background of the Armed Forces Day earlier, AFL's Acting Information Officer Major El-Dorado Jebboe says the Day was set aside by an Act of Legislature to remember soldiers who lost their lives in battle against foreign military personnel seeking to overthrow late President Arthur Barclay's government, and active and past AFL

soldiers.

Major Jebboe explains that February 11, 1909 was a date to remember, when officers of the Liberia Frontier Force (now Armed Forces of Liberia) dislodged the foreign troops comprising of 71 British and 279 Sierra Leonean army officers who had been deployed to work along with the Liberian army.

Prior to the mutiny, Major Jebboe says the British Majesty Service officer who lead the mutiny had been deployed as head of the Liberia Frontier Force under an arrangement intended for the British government to get Liberian resources as payback for a loan that late President Edward J. Roye got from Britain which Liberia could not pay up to president Barclay's rule.

But during the British and Sierra Leonean soldiers' deployment here, Major Jebboe recalls that their commander from the British Majesty Service had no respect for Liberia's then sitting president Barclay and took no instruction from the president at the time.

"So he incited mutiny among his soldiers with the intention to unseat President Arthur Barclay," Major Jebboe says.

He notes that the British military commander put his men in the streets on February 11, 1909, claiming that President Arthur Barclay was owing them salaries areas, seizing a military camp which was located to where Liberia's current Executive Mansion is seated today on Capitol Hill to hold government hostage.

However, Major Jebboe notes that President Barclay mounted the courage and mandated the Liberian troops to avert the mutiny, which he says successfully contained the mutiny and forced the foreign troops to flee Liberia within 24 hours.

Jebboe notes that this move gave Liberia its freedom and redeemed the nation's sovereignty.

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Français

L'opposition déconstruit le message annuel du Président Weah

Le message annuel du Président George Manneh Weaha fait l'objet d'un décortiquage minutieux de la part de la plateforme des quatre principaux partis politiques de l'opposition qui s'est inscrit en faux concernant plusieurs points dans le discours.

Le Message annuel est une obligation constitutionnelle du Président en vue de faire un rapport complet sur l'état de la République pour l'année terminée et de présenter ses programmes pour la nouvelle année, ce qui se fait le quatrième lundi ouvrable de janvier de chaque année.

Dans son discours, le président Weah a affirmé que l'année 2019 a été marquée par l'incertitude économique mondiale, la reprise de la dynamique économique mondiale étant restée lente, en grande partie en raison des

pays de la région auraient connu des situations économiques similaires, sinon identiques.

La plateforme de l'opposition a fait valoir qu'au contraire les pays de la région connaissent une croissance économique et prévoient une croissance élevée pour 2020 contrairement au président Weah, qui prévoit une croissance de 1,4% pour 2022, soit environ trois ans à partir de maintenant ou cinq ans de leadership, tandis que la Sierra Leone voisine projette 4,20%, la Guinée 6,10% et la Côte d'Ivoire 6,5%, respectivement, pour la même période.

« Ce que cela signifie, c'est que notre pays continuera de prendre du retard sur nos voisins pendant que notre peuple continue de souffrir », a martelé l'opposition dans son communiqué.

Elle a en outre démontré que le commerce et la géopolitique ne sont pas

en commençant par le programme d'harmonisation des salaires en cours qui consiste à réduire de moitié les salaires des fonctionnaires, y compris les médecins et les infirmières, les enseignants et les agents de la sécurité, sur fond d'une inflation galopante et de la montée des prix des produits de première nécessité.

Ils accusent le gouvernement d'aggraver la souffrance des fonctionnaires qui travaillent dur en réduisant leurs salaires. Réduire les salaires des fonctionnaires de 30 à 50% alors que les prix des produits de base augmentent de 30% n'est pas une harmonisation, surtout que les fonctionnaires n'arrivent même pas à toucher ce maigre salaire à temps, estime l'opposition.

« Il s'agit d'une attaque malveillante et malsaine contre le niveau de vie de notre peuple. Au lieu d'harmoniser les salaires des travailleurs, il est temps que le président harmonise ses

George Weah cherche à renflouer les caisses du Liberia grâce aux hydrocarbures

Le président libérien George Weah annonce un appel d'offres pour de l'exploration pétrolière et gazière. Devant être officiellement lancé en avril, il vise la reprise des opérations de forage au large des côtes du Liberia, après une longue période d'inertie. L'appel d'offres concernera neuf des 33 blocs libériens et permettra « à des compagnies pétrolières et gazières internationales à la compétence reconnue de faire acte de candidature, en espérant une relance des programmes d'exploration après des années d'inaction », a détaillé George Weah lors de son traditionnel discours

potentielles, indiquent des experts.

Défense de son action Dans une vue d'ensemble datée de 2019, l'International Trade Administration soutenant les entreprises américaines à l'international écrivait que l'exploration à la recherche d'hydrocarbures avait commencé dans les eaux territoriales libériennes à la fin des années 1960 et avait cessé pour une série de raisons.

George Weah, confronté à la déception d'une partie de ceux qui ont porté à la présidence l'ancienne star du football, s'est aussi livré à une défense de son action, plaidant à la fois pour la



tensions commerciales et géopolitiques, y compris des effets spécifiques aux pays, a-t-il dit, des contraintes qui ont nui à la performance de l'économie nationale.

« L'environnement macroéconomique intérieur a été difficile en 2019. Il s'est caractérisé par une faible croissance économique de moins de 1%, une inflation annuelle de plus de 20% et une dépréciation du dollar libérien de plus de 20% », a indiqué le Président Weah.

Mais dans une réaction commune à l'adresse, le Parti de l'unité, le Parti de la liberté, le Congrès alternatif et le Parti de tous les libériens, réunis au sein d'une plateforme de l'opposition, ont rejeté l'attribution des problèmes économiques du pays au commerce et aux facteurs géopolitiques, indiquant que si tel était vraiment le cas, les pays voisins du Libéria et d'autres

responsables des problèmes économiques du Libéria. Elle a plutôt pointé du doigt la corruption massive et le vol pur et simple des responsables gouvernementaux, la mauvaise gestion des ressources publiques, l'incompétence pour mettre en œuvre la croissance économique et la mauvaise politique de création d'emplois couplées avec des dépenses imprudentes. Voilà, selon l'opposition, les causes profondes des problèmes économiques auxquels fait face le pays.

" A titre d'exemple, le président vole dans le monde entier en jet privé alors que le pays ne peut pas se permettre un tel luxe."

Les partis politiques de l'opposition ont examiné les politiques économiques du président un par un, décortiquant les problèmes, s.

nombreux voyages en jet privé, cesse de se construire davantage de duplexes et lutte pour la réduction de la corruption qui occupe désormais le devant de la scène dans son gouvernement.

Le président George Weah n'a pas fait preuve d'honnêteté dans son adresse annuelle à la nation devant une séance conjointe des deux chambres du parlement libérien, a fait observer mardi la plateforme de l'opposition libérienne.

« Il n'a pas du tout été honnête pour avoir déclaré qu'il a tenu sa promesse de la baisse de son salaire de 25% et qu'il a été le premier à harmoniser son salaire. Malheureusement, le président a encore mentir pour avoir déclaré que des citoyens ont librement exercé leurs droits sous cette administration et qu'il n'y a eu

annuel devant le Parlement sur l'État de la nation lundi 27 janvier.

Le chef de l'État, à son poste depuis deux ans, a rappelé qu'à sa prise de fonctions il avait promis de favoriser la recherche de pétrole et de gaz, potentielles sources de revenus dans un pays affligé par la pauvreté. Des amendements apportés en 2019 à la loi sur le pétrole permettent à présent de lancer des appels d'offres internationaux, a-t-il dit.

Le bassin dans lequel se trouvent les neuf blocs fait partie des dernières régions au large de l'Afrique de l'Ouest inexplorées pour leurs réserves

patience et la confiance des Libériens.

« Beaucoup des problèmes dont mon gouvernement a hérité viennent de l'extérieur » et certains « existent depuis des décennies », a-t-il dit. « Le changement que j'ai promis se fait sentir », a-t-il assuré sans nier l'ampleur des difficultés tout en disant ressentir et comprendre « l'impatience » de ses compatriotes. « Je vous demande d'être indulgents avec moi et, comme nous disons, nous autres Libériens : 'Donnez-moi une petite chance de réparer, ouais' ».

ni arrestation ni coup de feu en réponse aux protestations », a déclaré M. Alexander B. Cummings qui a lu la déclaration des partis de l'opposition mardi.

M. Cummings accuse le gouvernement Weah d'aggraver plutôt les souffrances des Libériens qui travaillent dur. L'opposition a indiqué que la décision du régime de Weah de réduire les salaires des fonctionnaires de 30 à 50%, alors que les prix des produits de première nécessité

- riz, huile, poulet, transports, - ont augmenté de 30% est inacceptable.

« Chers Libériens, il est intéressant de noter qu'après avoir examiné le budget du président, en particulier la composante salariale du budget du président pour 2018-2019 et 2019-2020, il n'y a eu absolument aucune réduction du salaire du président Weah. En fait, notre recherche a révélé que la portion rémunération du budget de ce

Français

L'opposition déconstruit

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président actuel, qui était de 381414 USD en 2018-2019, a été portée à 494949 USD en 2019-2020. Pourtant, le Président, dans son message, vous a remercié de votre patience et de votre compréhension durant cette harmonisation qu'il promet de poursuivre, tandis que son budget et sa richesse se multiplient », a ajouté l'opposition.

La plateforme de l'opposition a également dénoncé une érosion de la liberté civile sous l'administration Weah, affirmant que "les opposants et les critiques du président et du gouvernement sont régulièrement intimidés et menacés".

« Malheureusement, le président a de nouveau menti pour avoir déclaré que les citoyens jouissaient de leurs droits sous cette administration et qu'il n'y a eu ni arrestation ni coup de feu en réponse aux protestations. Au contraire, une action civile pacifique, qui est le fondement de la démocratie, a été empêchée comme nous l'avons vu avec la dispersion injustifiable de citoyens pacifiques protestant contre les difficultés économiques actuelles et la corruption gouvernementale, comme l'a noté la Commission nationale indépendante des droits de l'homme », a ajouté l'opposition.

« En ce qui concerne la corruption et le manque de reddition des comptes du point de vue gouvernance politique, ils restent les principales caractéristiques de ce gouvernement. Cela est même confirmé par le rapport de l'indice de perception de la corruption 2019 publié la semaine dernière, classant le Libéria comme l'un des pires déclinés dans la lutte contre la corruption dans le monde. La preuve en est la gestion des 25 millions de dollars US pour l'opération de réduction de l'excès de liquidité et la saga de 16 milliards de dollars LD. Un an après ces scandales, le gouvernement n'a pas encore jugé tous les coupables, comme l'indiquent divers rapports. Le président n'a montré aucune intention de ralentir la construction de ses palais et ses duplex, surtout après avoir refusé de publier la déclaration de ses avoirs. Nous n'avons d'autre choix que de considérer que la source de la nouvelle richesse retrouvée du président est douteuse.

POLITIQUE FISCALE ET MONÉTAIRE

Pour la plateforme de l'opposition, la gestion des ressources publiques par cette administration est catastrophique. Elle dénonce une irresponsabilité fiscale rendue évidente par les arriérés de salaires que le gouvernement doit aux travailleurs et par l'augmentation injustifiée de la masse salariale publique à environ 320 millions de dollars contre 297 millions de dollars afin de donner de l'emploi à tout prix à des militants politiques qui n'ont aucune qualification ni compétence.

« Cette irresponsabilité fiscale a attiré la colère des partenaires au développement comme le FMI qui ont insisté sur la réduction de la masse salariale au niveau de 2018. Le gouvernement était tenu de remplir cette condition préalable avant d'obtenir un soutien budgétaire, comme l'a mentionné le président dans son discours annuel », a dit l'opposition.

Elle a néanmoins félicité le président pour avoir exprimé sa volonté de travailler avec les partenaires internationaux pour renforcer le cadre de politique monétaire du pays et pour les mesures visant à rendre la Banque centrale plus autonome.

L'opposition s'est en outre dite alarmée par le rapport du président concernant l'augmentation de la dette du pays qui est passée de 987,8 millions fin 2018 à 1,27 milliard fin 2019, soit une augmentation de 282 millions en un an seulement.

Mais, le président Weah a déclaré que la dette publique a augmenté en grande partie parce que le pays a dû financer de grands projets d'infrastructure au cours des dernières années. Selon le Chef de l'Etat, la dette publique du Libéria s'élève maintenant à 1,27 milliard de dollars américains fin 2019.

EMPLOI

Le président Weah s'est vanté dans son discours d'avoir employé environ 15 000 personnes en un peu plus de deux (2) ans, mais pour l'opposition, « l'Etat n'est pas le lieu idéal pour créer des emplois et réduire le chômage des partisans politiques et des amis ». Elle appelle l'administration à créer plutôt un environnement propice au développement du secteur privé et à la création d'emplois, accusant le régime de n'avoir pas permis au secteur privé de s'émanciper et de s'affirmer au cours des deux dernières années.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Kenneth Rogoff

La politique budgétaire fantasmée

LONDRES - La prochaine récession sera-t-elle pire que nous le pensons ? Les grandes banques centrales ne disposant que d'une faible marge de manœuvre dans la réduction des taux d'intérêt, le prochain ralentissement cyclique se changera-t-il en effondrement ? En théorie, la politique budgétaire peut aller loin dans le comblement du vide. La décennie écoulée a été marquée par la montée en puissance d'un évangélisme budgétaire parmi de nombreux économistes et décideurs politiques, et il faut s'attendre à ce que cet exercice de réglage budgétaire de précision soit largement mis en œuvre face au prochain ralentissement. Ces acteurs ont-ils raison de procéder de cette manière ?

Je suis sceptique sur ce point. La politique budgétaire est beaucoup trop politisée pour pouvoir se substituer systématiquement à des banques centrales modernes indépendantes et technocratiques, qui jusqu'à présent ont largement pris les rênes de la stabilisation à court terme. Cette politique budgétaire prend en effet l'initiative sur des problématiques à la fois fondamentales et immensément controversées - concernant la croissance, la stabilité à long terme, et la répartition - qui nécessitent d'être tranchées de manière démocratique, à tout les moins dans les économies développées. Or, les représentations académiques de la politique budgétaire en tant qu'outil technocratique objectif nous donnent souvent l'impression d'assister à un épisode de la série télévisée américaine *À la Maison-Blanche*.

Dans cette série encensée par la critique, le président américain démocrate, Jed Bartlet, est un économiste de formation. Homme de qualité, attaché à la morale, épaulé par une brillante équipe aussi bien intentionnée que lui, Bartlet est doué pour jauger les conseils complexes que formulent les experts, et ainsi aboutir à des décisions nuancées de politique économique, qui établissent un juste équilibre entre efficacité, équité, et réalités politiques. Il rencontre bien entendu une opposition dans la promulgation des lois qu'il défend, mais Bartlet et son équipe parviennent généralement à l'emporter - d'autant plus facilement que les idéologues de droite qui s'opposent au président sont non seulement les méchants de l'histoire, mais également légers sur le plan intellectuel.

Les économistes universitaires ne sont pas les seuls à considérer que le temps est venu d'appliquer une politique budgétaire militante, compte tenu des limites de la politique monétaire dans un environnement de taux d'intérêts ultra-faibles. Nombre de grands banquiers centraux estiment eux aussi qu'au lieu de se contenter de jouer son rôle traditionnel de décision dans la répartition des dépenses publiques, investissements, impôts et transferts, la politique budgétaire peut se substituer à la politique monétaire dans l'ajustement économique et la lutte contre la récession.

Il suffit de faire le tour des journaux économiques et des grands rassemblements d'économistes universitaires pour observer combien les modèles de politique budgétaire façon *À la Maison-Blanche* - réfléchis, fiables et crédibles - semblent appuyer de tels arguments. Or, la littérature et les débats récentes ignorent presque totalement un certain nombre de problématiques de politique économique pourtant intensément étudiées pendant les années 1980 et 1990. Les enseignements tirés à l'époque sont en effet largement oubliés aujourd'hui.

C'est précisément parce que la politique

budgétaire implique inévitablement des compromis houleux et durement obtenus - souvent renversés par les élections suivantes - que la plupart des États se sont tournés vers les banques centrales pour l'élaboration d'une politique de stabilisation à court terme. La banque centrale moderne, indépendante et technocratique, constitue probablement la plus formidable invention dans le domaine de la macroéconomie depuis que John Maynard Keynes a lancé la gestion de la demande. Si les gouvernements peuvent et doivent prendre les grandes décisions qui concernent une direction de politique à long terme, quiconque pense que les législatures sont capables de prendre des décisions systématiquement ajustées avec précision vit dans un monde parallèle.

Le fait est que dans la plupart des pays d'aujourd'hui, la politique économique est extrêmement polarisée, les décisions étant prises par des majorités sur le fil du rasoir. Aux États-Unis, par exemple, la politique budgétaire est pour les Démocrates largement synonyme d'opportunité d'engager davantage de dépenses et transferts. Pour les Républicains, elle signifie réduire les impôts pour mieux réduire en taille le gouvernement. Ces différences constituent la recette parfaite d'une politique à bascule. En tant qu'outil de stabilisation à court terme, la politique budgétaire sera inévitablement difficile à inscrire dans le temps et à calibrer avec autant de réussite qu'y parviennent les banques centrales en matière de politique monétaire.

Depuis une vingtaine d'années en particulier, les banquiers centraux sont de plus en plus nombreux à reconnaître que des politiques cohérentes, stables et prévisibles sont tout aussi importantes que n'importe quelle décision à court terme. En effet, conférence après conférence, les banquiers centraux ne cessent de peser les nuances de changements minimes dans le message à projeter, ainsi que de leurs effets sur les attentes.

Or, dans les travaux académiques façon *À la Maison-Blanche*, les fonctions de politique budgétaire - dépenses publiques et politiques fiscales - sont considérées d'emblée comme totalement stables et prévisibles. Toutes les considérations de crédibilité et de cohérence sont systématiquement évacuées.

Il est possible que lors de la prochaine récession, la politique budgétaire de certains États ait la chance de viser juste, qu'elle soit parfaitement calibrée et fixée en termes de timing. Et oui, les banquiers centraux se trompent parfois. Pour autant, l'idée selon laquelle nous devrions ignorer la séparation des tâches entre les deux camps est une conception naïve. De même pour l'idée selon laquelle le renforcement des « stabilisateurs automatiques » tels que l'assurance-chômage et les transferts pourraient résoudre tous les problèmes de crédibilité de la politique budgétaire, en permettant à l'ajustement d'opérer sans action politique. Le fait est que les stabilisateurs entraînent invariablement des effets d'incitation, de la même manière que des querelles politiques autour de la mesure dans laquelle les développer sont inéluctables. Mais le problème plus profond encore, c'est qu'en toutes circonstances, les décideurs politiques peuvent passer outre ces stabilisateurs automatiques - ce qu'ils font souvent.

La solution idéale ne consiste pas à écarter la politique monétaire, mais à trouver les moyens de renforcer son efficacité dans un environnement de faibles taux d'intérêt, possiblement en parvenant à utiliser les taux négatifs de manière plus juste et plus efficace. À défaut, en présence d'une politique monétaire entravée, et d'une politique budgétaire seule à régner, nous pouvons nous attendre à de nouveaux cycles économiques volatiles.

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LRA urges staff to progressively raise revenue

The Commissioner General of the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) Thomas Doe Nah urges employees and partners to think and progressively collect revenue for the Country.

He wants the national budget increased from US\$500 million to US\$1 billion.

Commissioner General Nah notes that for too long, "Our budget has been around US\$500 million, but we have to work together and progressively to take it to US\$1 billion. It is possible and we can do it."

According to a press release, the LRA boss made the call at climax of this year's International Customs Day (ICD) celebration, also calling on the joint security deployed at the country's borders to work in harmony with Customs officers as they collect lawful revenue for the State.

The global theme for this year's ICD celebrations is



Partial view of participants of the indoor program commemorating International Customs Day 2020 at Bo Waterside

"Customs fostering Sustainability for People, Prosperity and the Planet," with the intent of Customs administration around the world focusing on the contribution of Customs towards a sustainable future where social, economic,

health and environmental needs are at the heart of its actions.

The Government of Liberia has been hit by decline in revenue generation in the last two years with a corresponding budget shortfall, leading to salary reduction in the public

sector amid inflation and rising prices.

The Commissioner General says when other security units at the borders work with the LRA to collect revenue from international trade, it would increase the country's annual budget from around US\$500 million and boost the government's capacity to fund development programs and improve basic social services in the country.

Annually held on January 26, International Customs Day (ICD) recognizes the role of custom officials and agencies in maintaining border security. It focuses on the working conditions and challenges that customs officers face in their jobs.

This year marked the 68th Observance, celebrated in Liberia by the LRA from

January 27 to 28 in Grand Cape Mount County at Bo Waterside. Bo is a major border town between Liberia and Sierra Leone.

The celebration included sporting activities and cultural performances with the local community, the joint security and Customs officers on both sides of the border.

CG Nah urges the joint security (Liberia Immigration Service, Liberia National Police and the Liberia Drugs Enforcement Agency along with Customs) at Bo Waterside to be patriotic by putting Liberia first in their duties – to help make the country prosperous and successful among the comity of nations.

"You have to collaborate to collect the lawful revenue for Liberia," the Commissioner General referred to the border management team, adding, "Remember that you are working here for your country and you have to do it with sincerity and diligence, and when you do that you will help lift Liberia among the comity of nations."

He says despite the rough economic situation, there is a radiant of hope, vowing that his administration will take the LRA to another level of revenue collection.

Customs is uniquely mandated and positioned at borders to play a prominent role across the international supply chain, ensuring a sustainable, secure, and inclusive future for all. -Press Release

Military hospital 95% completed

-as MOD announces tour with Pres. Weah

By Winston W. Parley

Assistant Defense Minister for Public Affairs Sam Collins says the Commander - in - Chief of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), President George Manneh Weah is expected to lead an array of government officials on a tour of the Military Hospital which according to him is 95 percent completed.

Making the disclosure Monday, 3 February at the headquarters of the AFL, Collins indicated that the military hospital called "14 Military Hospital" has a paved road leading to the facility

which is being constructed off the Roberts Field Highway.

At the press conference, Mr. Collins indicates that the AFL troops serving in peacekeeping mission in Mali are stable, saying information coming from Mali points to the fact that Liberia has one of the best performing security missions within Mali.

For the first time in the history of Liberia, Collins says this new army has been able to deploy an attaché in Washington, D.C., as well as another attaché to Ethiopia, ECOWAS and MRU.

He notes that the army is involved with different

activities both in and outside of Liberia, adding that the troop in Mali is now using sophisticated military equipment.

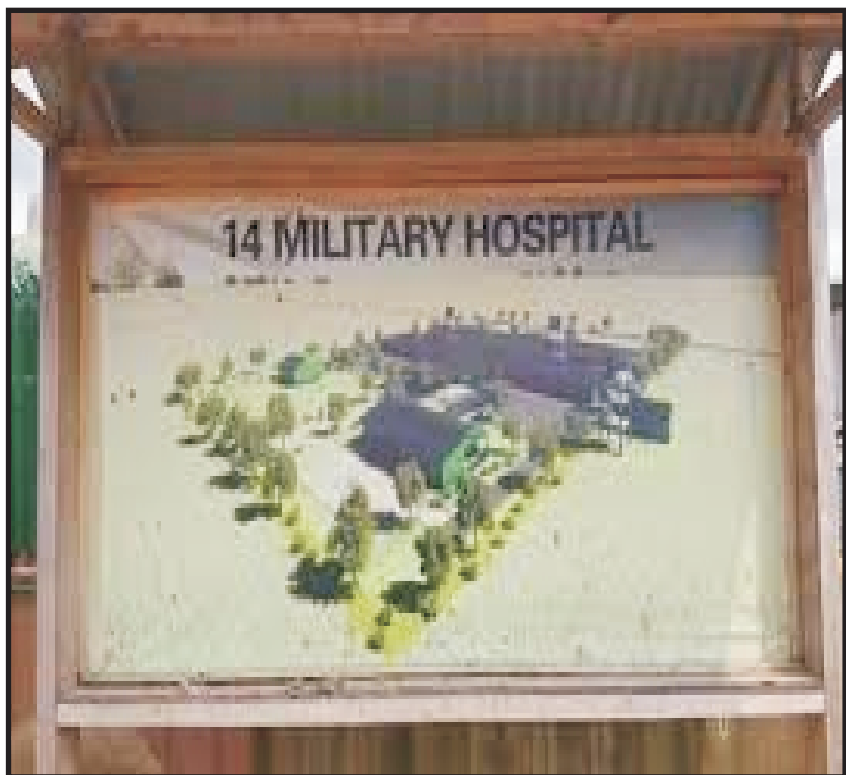
Mr. Collins indicates that the military is encouraging people to join the AFL, with specific emphasis placed on women.

This year's Armed Forces Day will be observed under the theme: "Strategies to incorporate more Females in the Security Sector: AFL in Perspective."

The celebration is expected to commence with a symposium on Wednesday, 5 February at the Monrovia City Hall with Associate Justice Jamesetta Wolokollie serving as keynote speaker.

Discussants at the symposium include Deputy Army Chief of Staff Brig. Gen. Geraldine J. George; International Rescue Committee Liberia Country Director Madam Faith A. Cooper; Independent Information Commission Media Officer Miss Facia Harris and Swedish Ambassador to Liberia Madam Ingrid Wetterqvist, among several others.

According to the Ministry of Defense, General Services Agency (GSA) Director General Madam Mary T. Broh will serve as the Guest Speaker for the 63rd Armed Forces Day celebration on 11 February 2020. Several local and international guests will receive high honors.



India rescues Liberia's Fire Department

Amb. Thangal (middle) flanked by Acting Min. of MoFA and Mr. Sachdeva

The government and people of India on Monday February 3, donated five fire trucks to the Liberian National Fire Service or LNFS which has been without a functioning fire truck for months.

The LNFS is the government's institution responsible to fight fire outbreak within the country, but it has been near non-functional for the past months due to the lack of fire trucks.

The LNFS lost its only functional fire truck to angry crowd about three months ago in "Black Gina", a community located in Jacob Town, a suburb of Paynesville, simply because fire fighters failed to rescue a burning house in the community.

Monday LNFS Fire Chief Alex K. Dickson told the audience with President George Weah seated and flanked by his Minister of



Amb. Thangal (middle) flanked by Acting Min. of MoFA and Mr. Sachdeva

State, Mr. Nathaniel F. McGill that due to the lack of fire trucks, fire fighters had resorted to using buckets to help citizens in putting off fire.

The lack of fire trucks in the country is not a new phenomenon here, in fact, according to Director Dickson, this is the first time since 1949,

that the department is welcoming five fire trucks at once.

Meanwhile, presenting the fire trucks, H.E. Y. K. Sailas Thangal, Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary of India to Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia said the donation demonstrates

that the Liberia/India relations is at another level.

Accompanied by the Honorary Indian Consul General to Liberia, Mr. Upjit Singh Sachdeva, popularly known as Jeety here, Amb. Thangal appraised the bilateral ties between the two countries, saying it is being strengthened by the day and that these forms of donations only speaks to the healthy relations between the two countries.

This donation comes few months after the India Government donated 45 buses to be used in the metropolitan areas to ease transportation services here.

Amb. Thangal said experts from the company that manufactured those buses were already in country to train operators and that containers loaded with its spare parts were already on their way to Liberia.

He added that in the same vein, an expert from the company which produced the fire trucks will also be in the country soon to train fire

fighters on how to use machines.

Amb. Thangal urged personnel of the Liberia fire department and staff at the Liberia National Transport Authority to make use of the experts that are coming in country to train them.

He thanked President Weah for his presence at the donation ceremony saying it indicates seriousness to which he attached the India-Liberia relationship.

Speaking on behalf of President Weah and the government and people of Liberia, State Minister McGill thanked the government and people of India for their kind gesture, saying that the Liberian government is pleased with the donations.

He asked that Amb. Thangal extends the Liberian government's thanks and appreciation to the President and Prime Minister of India.

Mr. McGill also reminded the Indian Government of the Mahatma Gandhi Conference Hall and the Balli Island protects, adding that President Weah is committed and concern.

"Nobody eats GDP"

Africa's economies are growing strongly, but growth alone cannot meet the needs of the continent's poorest citizens, because "nobody eats GDP," the African Development Bank's President, Akinwumi Adesina, said as he unveiled the Bank's flagship economic report on Thursday.

The 2020 African Economic Outlook (AEO) showed that the continent's economies are growing well, higher than the global average. The report projected a steady rise in growth in Africa from 3.4% in 2019 to 3.9% in 2020 and 4.1% in 2021.

According to the report, these figures do not tell the whole story. Across the continent, the poor are not seeing enough of the benefits of robust growth. Relatively few African countries posted significant declines in extreme poverty and inequality, which remain higher than in other regions of the world.

Inclusive growth occurred in only 18 of 48 African countries with data, the report revealed.

According to Adesina "Growth must be visible. Growth must be equitable. Growth must be felt in the lives of people."

The theme of the 2020 Africa Economic Outlook report, Developing Africa's workforce for the future, calls for swift action to address human capital development in African

countries, where inclusive growth has been held back by a mismatch between young workers' skills and the needs of employers.

The Bank's flagship report states that increased investments in education is key as well as progressive universalism in education spending—setting high priorities for the poor and disadvantaged and focusing on basic education first where social returns are highest. Its recommendations include improving access to education in remote areas, incentives such as free uniforms and text books, banning child labour and improving teaching standards.

To better match skills with job opportunities, the report recommends that governments need to develop a demand-driven education system in tune with rapidly emerging jobs in the private sector, including software engineers, marketing specialists and data analysts, the report says.

"Africa is blessed with resources, but its future lies in its people...education is the great equaliser. Only by developing our workforce will we make a dent in poverty, close the income gap between rich and poor, and adopt new technologies to create jobs in knowledge-intensive sectors," said Hanan Morsy, Director of the Macroeconomic Policy, Forecasting and Research Department at the Bank.

Press release



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JUDICIAL BRANCH
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA



IN THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, CIVIL LAW COURT
MONTSERRADO COUNTY, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
SITTING IN ITS DECEMBER TERM A.D. 2019

BEFORE HIS HONOUR: ROLAND F. DAHN, ASSIGNED, CIRCUIT JUDGE PRESIDING:

IN RE: THE PETITION OF MARK MADAVE OF THE CITY OF MONROVIA PETITIONER, PRAYING THIS HONOURABLE COURT FOR A DECREE OF CHANGE OF NAME TO BE REGARDED, CALLED AND KNOWN AS "EMMANUEL SOKAN PHILLIPS"

COURT'S DECREE OF CHANGE OF NAME

WHEREAS, Petitioner herein named in the above entitled cause of action, having file a petition with affidavit attached thereto, requesting an order from this Honourable Court to have the Change of Petitioner's name to formally and legally change from MARK MADAVE TO "EMMANUEL SOKAN PHILLIPS".

DURING THE HEARING, the petitioner Petition that the change of his name requesting this Honourable Court is intended to reflect his Adopted family name and render his identity more explicit and absolute. After Concluding the Necessary Interrogations Requested by Law in These Proceedings, the Court observed that the intention is just and legal and that there is no objection the change of name proposed by her; therefore it is adjusted as follow:

THAT THE PETITIONER having shown with justification and satisfaction that he was born on the 20th day of February, A.D 2006, in Montserrado, County, Republic of Liberia, and that the Change of his Name in this jurisdiction, it is therefore ordered decreed as follow:

That the Petition already heard be and same is hereby granted and we now render that the name MARK MADAVE be changed to "EMMANUEL SOKAN PHILLIPS" beginning this December, A.D. 2019.

THIS DECREE shall be registered in the office of the Registrar of Deeds and other Documents for Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia, and shall also be published twice in any recognized Newspaper, operating in the Republic of Liberia, within Twenty (20) days from today's date. AND IT IS HEREBY SO ORDERED.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF COURT
THIS 1st DAY OF DECEMBER, A.D. 2019.

COURT'S SEAL

ROLAND F. DAHN
ASSIGNED CIRCUIT JUDGE PRESIDING
SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, CIVIL LAW COURT

REGISTERED ACCORDING TO LAW IN VOLUME: _____ PAGE (S) _____

REGISTRAR, NATIONAL ARCHIVES CENTER/MONT.CO,RL

AFL sets high bar for women recruitment



By Winston W. Parley

In commemoration of its 63rd Armed Forces Day celebration, the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) says it is encouraging more female participation in the military

and other security services, but it sets the bar high for the recruitment of females into the military.

Addressing a press conference on activities leading to the Armed Forces

Day celebration Monday, 3 February at the headquarters of the AFL, Assistant Defense Minister for Public Affairs Sam Collins said in the soonest of time, authorities will encourage females to turn out for recruitment and to justify their own inclusion into the new AFL.

“We are not just encouraging females because we want to have women in their numbers within the Armed Forces of Liberia; we are encouraging qualified women to sign [up] for the Armed Forces of Liberia,” Mr. Collins says.

“Women whose capacities are built, women who believe in the forward movement of our country; women who have the requisite educational background; women who live up to standard in terms of human rights, those are the kinds of women that we want to join the Armed Forces of Liberia,” he adds.

Mr. Collins says the age requirement is set from 18 and above for recruitment.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

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Pep Guardiola Locks Man City Players in Dressing Room

Pep Guardiola is reported to have locked his Manchester City players in the dressing room for 40 minutes following their defeat to Tottenham on Sunday, as their dwindling title defence took yet another blow.

City dominated for long spells at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium and registered 18 shots to their hosts' three. After Sergio Aguero had spurned a number of good chances, however, a

red card to Oleksandr Zinchenko turned the game on its head, and goals from debutant Steven Bergwijn and Son Heung-min left them ruing their earlier profligacy.

While the defeat itself was cause for concern, it's perhaps even more damning when you put it into context. It represented their sixth defeat in 25 Premier League games, and means they have now dropped 24 points with 13 games remaining - after dropping just 30 over their two



previous seasons combined.

Their dramatic dip has coincided by a similarly notable improvement from Liverpool, who now sit 22 clear of City and within six wins of prying the title from their grasp. In summary, there was plenty for Guardiola to be unhappy about at the close of play on Sunday.

And various outlets, including Liverpool Echo, are reporting that the players were kept in the away dressing room for as many as 40 minutes

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